

**RATS FFY 2027 - 2050 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN  
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #5  
AUGUST 18, 2025, VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**Attendance:**

Amanda Timochenko (BCPC staff)	Michael Donchez (PennDOT District 5-0)
Michael Golembiewski (BCPC staff)	Christopher Kufro (PennDOT District 5-0)
Lawrence Peterson (PennDOT District 5-0)	Lisha Rowe (RATS Coordinating Committee Board Member, Cumru Twp. Commissioner)
Lauri Ahlskog (South Central Transit Auth.)	Donna Reed (RATS Coordinating Committee Board Member, City of Reading Council Pres.)
Scott Vottero (PennDOT District 5-0)	David Mattes (BCPC Board Member)
Nick Raio (PennDOT Central Office)	Alan Piper (BCPC staff)
Alex Roche (Greater Reading Chamber Alliance)	Devon Hain (BCPC staff)
Ron Young (PennDOT District 5-0)	Keith Boatman (South Central Transit Auth.)
Zackary Tempesco (Reading Regional Airport)	Matthew McGough (BCPC staff)

**Meeting Notes:**

Ms. Timochenko started the meeting at 1:01 PM. She welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

Ms. Timochenko mentioned that staff members would review their draft sections with the Steering Committee. She introduced Devon Hain to review the Berks County specific results from the Pennsylvania State Transportation Commission's (STC) public survey that was conducted in spring, 2025. Some items of note included:

- Out of over 3,700 responses statewide that were mapped, there were 165 mapped issues specific to Berks County.
- The Berks responses referenced various concerns by type: 115 roadway, 24 bridge, 13 biking/walking, 6 transit, 7 freight, and 6 concerns that will be addressed by currently programmed projects.
- There were six (6) specific corridors mentioned (I-78, US 222, US 422, SR 100, SR 183, and SR 1010). Additionally, 87 non-corridor specific Highway and Bridge issues were listed in 30 municipalities; 11 Active Transportation issues were identified in five (5) municipalities; and three (3) Public Transportation issues were identified in Reading and Boyertown.
- The top 3 transportation priorities by rank included Road Pavement, Traffic Flow, and Bridges.
- These results, along with those received in a separate municipal survey, and the issues and needs identified during public outreach meetings will be used as part of the overall

process to guide the project selection process for both the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

- Of note, 44 of the 165 responses were specific to Womelsdorf Borough, highlighting truck impacts within the Borough including tight turns, speeding, and issues at intersections.

Mr. Donchez made note that PennDOT District 5-0 staff have had conversations with MPO staff regarding the issues in Womelsdorf Borough, and “a placeholder” has been added to the draft FFY 2027 -2030 TIP for consideration to add study phase funding.

With no other questions, individual document section discussions followed.

- A. **Freight:** Mr. McGough gave a brief overview of the draft Freight section. He discussed the impacts of increasing freight traffic on roadways and in neighborhoods. The role of the Berks County roadway system in freight was discussed. Federal, state and local freight planning efforts were investigated, as were the recently completed Eastern PA Freight Infrastructure Plan and Eastern PA Freight Alliance (EPFA). Non-roadway freight modes were reviewed including rail and air cargo.

Mr. McGough asked for questions. Mr. Donchez commented that he liked the Truck Parking discussion as it will continue to be a growing concern both nationwide and locally. The appropriateness of asking municipalities to address these concerns in their local zoning and land development ordinances was discussed. Mr. Piper added that this specific recommendation was included in the EPFA Freight Plan, so it will be included. Mr. Donchez then commented specifically about the Freight Workplace Access Policy Actions (page 11, second bullet point, “*Partner with transit operators to identify opportunities to expand workforce access options, including: active transportation improvements; public transit service expansion; and private or public-private partnership van services*”). He said that this should be expanded-on based on any prior experiences in the region. Finally, Mr. Tempesco commented that he would attempt to gather data about one particular user at the airport (Quest Diagnostics) as they fly a significant amount of cargo into and out of the airport. He suggested adding a line referencing that “Reading Regional Airport is ready to support increased air cargo operations and intends to market itself as a potential location for air cargo carriers looking to expand their operations in the region.”

- B. **Transit:** Mr. Golembiewski began the Transit section with an overview of the South Central Transit Authority (SCTA) and their role in overseeing the operations of two separate systems [Red Rose in Lancaster County and Berks Area Regional Transportation Authority (BARTA) in Berks County]. Ridership figures for BARTA were reviewed, which show a general increase and recovery in ridership since the COVID pandemic in 2020. The various planning documents that SCTA is required to undertake were reviewed, including the Transit Development Plan (TDP) in 2024 and the Transit Asset Management Plan (TAMP) in 2025. Mr. Golembiewski noted that another required

planning document, the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan should have also been included in this discussion but was inadvertently omitted. Staff will be amending this part to include a discussion on the Safety Plan. Other parts of this section that were discussed included more specific ridership demographics for both BARTA fixed route and Special Services divisions as derived from on-board surveys taken as part of the TDP process. Additionally, other transit-like services such as private intercity transit, ride sharing, taxi services, and the CommutePA program were discussed. Mr. Golembiewski asked for any questions; none were given. Mr. Boatman and Ms. Ahlskog from SCTA both expressed their concurrence with the section as written.

- C. **Safety:** Ms. Timochenko gave a brief overview of the Safety Section. She mentioned that the RATS Annual Traffic Safety Report highlights many of the statistics shown in this section and is used to develop project recommendations. She went on to discuss relevant Performance Measures (PM) and Targets, and some of the countermeasures used in the field to address those PM's. Various statistics were reviewed, such as crashes, persons and vehicles, crash corridors and locations, trends in crashes, and others. She noted that the data was derived from PennDOT's Pennsylvania Crash Information Tool (PCIT) and the data on PCIT is available to the public. She asked for questions/comments.

Mr. Donchez noted that the 20-year trend in fatal crashes graph shows an overall decrease, which is great, despite overall increases in Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and vehicle registrations. He also noted that overall, 2020-2024 data show increases in many categories. He asked if we could include a chart that combines the trends in registrations, VMT, and population growth with crashes and the overall trend line. Ms. Timochenko said that can and will be included.

- D. **Security:** Ms. Hain gave a brief overview of the Security section. She discussed many of the physical tools deployed that add to the security of the roadway system. These measures include Dynamic Message Signs, cameras, Highway Advisory Radio and associated beacons, and the Freeway Service Patrol. Something new is the addition of access gates at newly reconstructed interchanges along eastern Interstate 78. These are used to restrict access to the Interstate during times of a crash incident or weather incidents and can be closed by local law enforcement. Ms. Hain asked for questions/comments; none were received.

There being no further discussion on the draft sections, Ms. Timochenko described some of the next immediate steps in the LRTP development process (in no specific order):

- A. Make changes to the sections as discussed today.
- B. Continue developing and revising additional draft sections.
- C. Once today's sections are revised and the meeting notes from today are generated, the information will be uploaded to the online LRTP Portal.

The sections to be reviewed by the Steering Committee in November include Amendment Procedures, Congestion Management Process, Issues and Needs, and Roads & Bridges. Additionally, the draft Plan will be presented at an Agency Coordination Meeting (ACM) on December 10<sup>th</sup>. The next meeting of the LRTP Steering Committee will be on November 17 @ 1:00 p.m. via MS Teams. Mr. Tempesco mentioned an Aviation Career Fair happening at the Reading Regional Airport on October 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> and invited all to stop in.

Ms. Timochenko asked for any additional comments or questions. Hearing none she thanked everyone for their time and input. The meeting concluded at 2:13 PM.

*Prepared by,  
Michael D. Golembiewski  
Transportation Modeler*

*BERKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION*