RATS FFY 2027 - 2050 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETING #6 CITY OF READING, METRO REGION MEETING, APRIL 2, 2025

Mr. Piper started the meeting at 6:05 PM. He welcomed everyone and gave a brief overview of the purpose of tonight's meeting which was to review and gather public input during the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update development process. He mentioned that specific projects will be discussed in the second half of the meeting.

Ms. Timochenko next shared a PowerPoint presentation (see attachment at the end of these notes).

Ms. Timochenko described the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) and the Committee structure.

Mr. Lerch asked what exactly is a Long Range Transportation Plan? Mr. Piper briefly explained what an LRTP is and informed Mr. Lerch that as the meeting progresses staff will be informing the audience on all of the aspects of an LRTP and how it is developed.

Ms. Timochenko then explained what the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is along with some of the necessary items to be included under federal requirements; planning horizon and update process; performance measures; and serving as the foundation for the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Ms. Timochenko summarized the ten (10) Federal Planning Factors that must be incorporated into the LRTP:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight.
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvement and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
- Promote efficient system management and operation.
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
- Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation.
- Enhance travel and tourism.

The LRTP must be consistent with state and local transportation plans and programs.

Ms. Timochenko then summarized the public outreach staff has done to date and plans on doing in the future. Ms. Timochenko informed the audience that in 2024 staff held 4 in-person meetings in multiple municipalities throughout Berks County. Staff also held one virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams and distributed a survey for public input.

Ms. Timochenko informed the audience that staff has 7 in-person meetings scheduled in various municipalities in 2025. As well as two scheduled virtual meetings via Microsoft Teams. The meetings schedule is as follows:

- 1. April 2, 2025 City of Reading
- 2. April 14, 2025 Womelsdorf Borough
- 3. April 16, 2025 Tilden Township
- 4. April 22, 2025 Colebrookdale Township
- 5. April 23, 2025 Virtual Meeting
- 6. April 24, 2025 Cumru Township
- 7. April 29, 2025 = Maidencreek Township
- 8. May 1, 2025 Virtual Meeting
- 9. May 13, 2025 Caernarvon Township

Ms. Timochenko then presented the vision statement for the plan. This provides the context for why the plan is done and its relationship with other federal, state, and local plans. The **Vision Statement** is: *The Reading Area Transportation Study will promote a well maintained and balanced multimodal transportation system that will safely and efficiently move people and goods.*

Ms. Timochenko introduced Goal #1: Keep Travelers safe and secure for all modes of transportation. The six (6) Objectives attached to Goal #1 were also read.

 Mr. Lerch commented that the LRTP is not only interested in vehicular modes of transportation but all modes including, pedestrian, bus, train, air, and boat. Mr. Piper explained that Mr. Lerch is correct – the LRTP involves all modes of transportation

Ms. Timochenko reviewed Goal #2: <u>Maintain and improve the existing multimodal transportation</u> <u>system and services within fiscal constraints.</u>, then read the associated five (5) Objectives.

Ms. Timochenko reviewed Goal #3: <u>Invest in projects that strengthen and enhance economic development and tourism opportunities.</u>, then read the associated eight (8) Objectives.

Ms. Timochenko reviewed Goal #4: <u>Give travelers a variety of well-designed transportation choices that</u> are in good condition., then read the associated three (3) Objectives.

Ms. Timochenko reviewed Goal #5: Enhance the County transportation system to address environmental impacts., then read the associated six (6) Objectives. Ensuing discussion included:

- Mr. Lerch inquired if the environment plays a factor in project selection. Mr. Piper explained that yes, the environment does play a factor when planning for projects. Projects should not have any adverse impacts to the environment. That determination is made during project planning/preliminary engineering phases of a project.
- Mr. Lerch asked how air quality is monitored? Mr. Piper explained that air quality is monitored by a variety of sensors that are located at various points across Berks County. Projects must not negatively affect air quality.

Ms. Timochenko reviewed Slide #14 and asked the question: "What transportation issues do you currently experience?" Responses included:

- Mr. Lerch added that he sees a need for intercity public transit. Although he does not currently use public transit there is a need. Mr. Lerch explained that in the past he would use the previous intercity bus service for trips from Reading to New York City. Mr. Lerch added that since the operations have ceased he is not sure how people are traveling between Reading and New York City. Mr. Piper explained that there are other providers that are operating a similar service just not from the same intercity bus station that was utilized in the past.
- Mr. Lerch added that there are conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, especially in the more urban areas. Mr. Lerch stated that pavement maintenance is important because the lack of well-maintained sidewalks is directing pedestrians into the street where there is more opportunity for vehicle and pedestrian conflicts to occur. Mr. Piper answered by agreeing that pavement maintenance/ADA accessibility can be an issue. Mr. Piper proceeded to describe the process for maintaining and/or adding pedestrian infrastructure when planning road projects.
- Mr. Lerch commented that bridge repair is important and the maintenance of the existing
 infrastructure is a hard issue to address. Mr. Piper explained everything that goes into planning
 and ultimately constructing a project.

Ms. Timochenko and Mr. Piper presented planned projects that are currently on the County's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Piper explained the TIP and presented a visual (slide 15) describing the relationship between the TIP and the LRTP.

Ms. Timochenko shared a Countywide map depicting the locations of current TIP projects throughout the County. The TIP map was further reduced to show only projects located within the Metro region of the County. Mr. Piper went on to describe the projects that were located within the Metro region.

Mr. Piper described the US 422 Corridor (West Shore Bypass) project to the attendees. Some of the key takeaways from this presentation included:

- Project includes the complete reconstruction to 6 lanes including: Lancaster Avenue interchange, Penn Avenue interchange, Bingaman Street Bridge, and bike and pedestrian connections.
- Preventative maintenance on the bridges over the Schuylkill River and Brentwood Drive
- Complete replacement and ramp adjustment at I-176 NB to US 422 WB
- Final design is currently in progress
- Estimated bid opening in approximately 2027
- Estimated completion date post 2030

Mr. Piper presented and went over a list of significant projects anticipated to start during the Reading MPO's FFY 2025-2028 TIP in the Metro Region. Mr. Piper provided more detailed information on the projects presented on slide 23 of the presentation.

Ms. Timochenko presented slide 24 regarding the State Transportation Commission's Program Update and the availability of a survey. Ms. Timochenko explained how results from the survey will come back to the MPOs and any information listed as pertinent to Berks County will be reviewed and could make its way onto one of the programs for potential implementation. Ms. Timochenko presented the link to the survey: https://survey.talkpatransportation.com/#/survey

Ms. Timochenko asked for any final questions/comments, particularly related to roadways, bridges, or other transportation issues in the area that are considered problematic.

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Ms. Reed presented about the City's need for improved safety along Hampden Boulevard. Ms. Reed explained some of the ideas that have been brought up and how the City is currently in the process of working with PennDOT to improve the problems they are having along Hampden Boulevard.

Hearing no other comments, Ms. Timochenko and Mr. Piper thanked the attendees for coming. The meeting concluded at 7:23 PM.

Prepared by,
Matthew McGough
Transportation Planner
BERKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

FFY 2027-2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Public Outreach Meeting Wednesday, April 2, 2025 City Hall, City of Reading

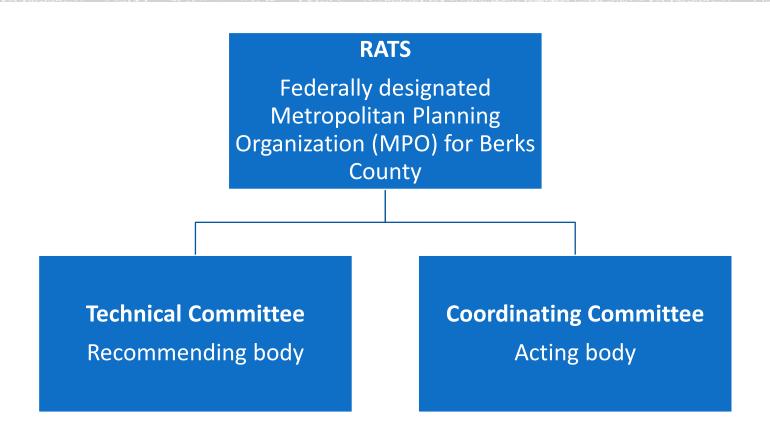
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ALAN PIPON		BCPC/RATS
Amanda Timochenko		BCPC/RATS
MATT MCGOULIX		BCPC / RATS
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READING MPO LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN METRO REGION MEETING

April 2, 2025, City of Reading, City Hall



READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (RATS)





TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

PENNDOT DISTRICT 5-0 (1)

PENNDOT
CENTRAL OFFICE
(1)

BERKS COUNTY
PLANNING
COMMISSION (2)

CITY OF READING (2)

SOUTH CENTRAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (1) READING
REGIONAL
AIRPORT
AUTHORITY (1)



COORDINATING COMMITTEE

PennDOT
District 5-0 (1)

PennDOT
Central Office
(1)

Berks County Commissioners (1) Berks County
Planning
Commission (1)

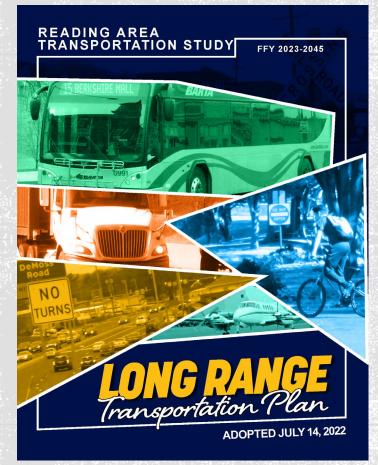
City of Reading (1)

Berks County Boroughs (1) Berks County 1st Class Townships (1) Berks County 2nd Class Townships (1) South Central Transit Authority (1) Reading Regional Airport Authority (1)



- Required by federal transportation regulations
- Has a minimum 20-year planning horizon reflecting program goals and their application to project prioritization
- Identifies transportation system assets and their conditions, sensitive environments and the evolving needs of the users of that system
- Reflects needs related to safety, maintenance, congestion, and climate change
- Includes Performance Measures for achieving plan goals
- Must be fiscally constrained and identify funding sources
- Must be updated every four years through cooperative process that includes federal, state, local agencies and the public
- Serves as the foundation for the development of the Transportation Improvement Program
 - Projects must be identified in the LRTP prior to programming phases for construction on the TIP

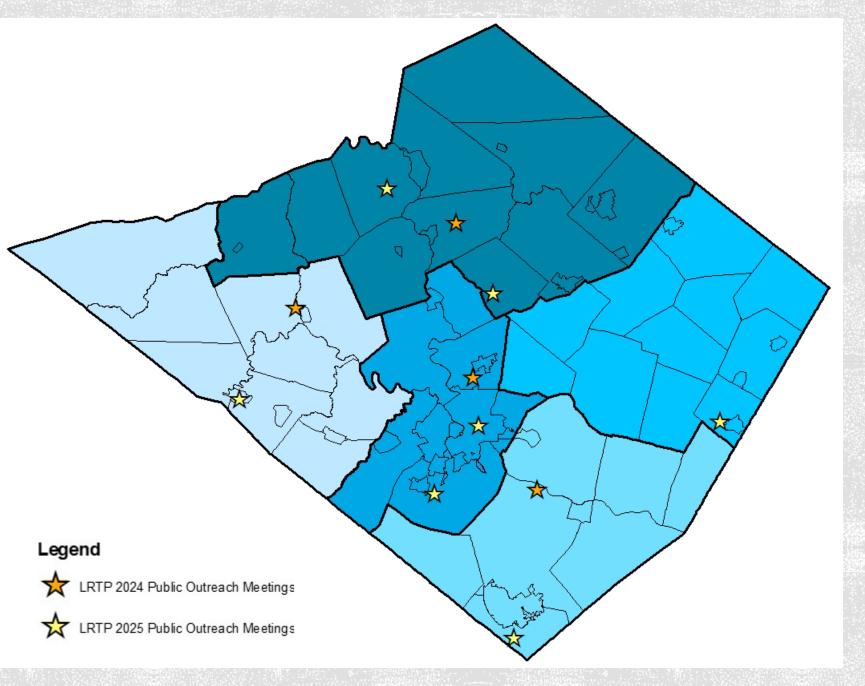
WHAT IS THE LRTP?





FEDERAL PLANNING FACTORS

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight.
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvement and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
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- Promote efficient system management and operation.
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
- Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation.
- Enhance travel and tourism.



SUMMARY OF PUBLIC OUTREACH

- **2024**
 - 4 In Person Meetings
 - Robeson, Jefferson, Muhlenberg, Perry
 - 1 Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams
 - Survey
- **2025**
 - 7 In Person Meetings
 - City of Reading, Womelsdorf, Tilden, Colebrookdale, Cumru, Maidencreek, Caernarvon
 - 2 Virtual Meetings via Microsoft Teams



The Reading Area
Transportation Study will
promote a well maintained
and balanced multimodal
transportation system that
will safely and efficiently
move people and goods.



Goal 1

Keep travelers safe and secure for all modes of transportation.

Reduce the number, frequency, and severity of crashes on our highway system by implementing projects to address safety issues for all users.

Work closely with municipalities, PennDOT, and SCTA/BARTA to ensure the safe interaction between all transportation modes and users.

Increase public awareness of construction zone safety for workers and users.

Evaluate proposed land development plans to identify potential transportation safety issues during local and PennDOT review processes.

Educate the public on future transportation projects and changes to increase safety awareness.

Coordinate with appropriate agencies to identify and provide efficient emergency vehicle access to the transportation system where feasible.

Goal 2

Maintain and improve the existing multimodal transportation system and services within fiscal constraints.

Minimize maintenance costs of roadways, bridges, and public transportation through proper routine maintenance using Transportation Asset Management planning.

Improve the efficiency of the existing transportation system and services.

Major roadway widening or relocation should only be considered if efforts to improve capacity and safety of existing roadways can not meet desired service levels.

Reduce congestion, improve air quality, and increase the reliability of the transportation system.

Develop a full range of public transportation options using available funding.

Goal 3
Invest in projects
that strengthen and
enhance economic
development and
tourism
opportunities.

Implement best practices that will enable the efficient movement of people and freight.

Ensure that major activity centers are designed to accommodate a range of transportation modes.

Increase the region's global and national competitiveness by improving and enhancing regional freight infrastructure.

Support the Reading Regional Airport Authority in strengthening the use of the airport for both business and commercial aviation activities.

Support the efforts of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority to reestablish passenger rail service between Reading and Philadelphia.

Provide multiple modes of convenient transportation to tourist destinations.

Coordinate with the agricultural community to identify and address obstructions to the movement of equipment and products.

Coordinate with appropriate agencies to review, update as needed, and implement recommendations identified in the EPFA Regional Freight Plan.

Goal 4
Give travelers a variety of well-designed transportation choices that are in good condition.

Promote coordinated regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit, and rail routes.

When designing roadways, include bicycle and pedestrian accommodations and transit stops where applicable and feasible.

Support Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs such as ridesharing, using public transportation, walking, biking, or working from home.



Goal 5
Enhance the County
transportation
system to address
environmental
impacts.

Identify transportation system assets that are vulnerable to natural hazards and continue coordination with appropriate agencies to develop protection and recovery strategies through hazard mitigation planning.

Maintain the County's Air Quality attainment status for fine particulates and improve the marginal nonattainment status for Ozone.

Work closely with federal, state, municipal, and private entities to implement alternative fuels use (i.e. electric, natural gas) throughout our region.

Collaborate with local, regional, state and federal organizations and agencies to prevent, minimize, or mitigate potential negative environmental and social impacts from planned projects.

Assist in identification of potential environmental issues by maintaining and providing geographic information system data layers in a readily accessible format.

Work with PennDOT to implement stormwater best management practices and mitigation strategies on transportation projects.







PEDESTRIAN



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



AVIATION



BRIDGE



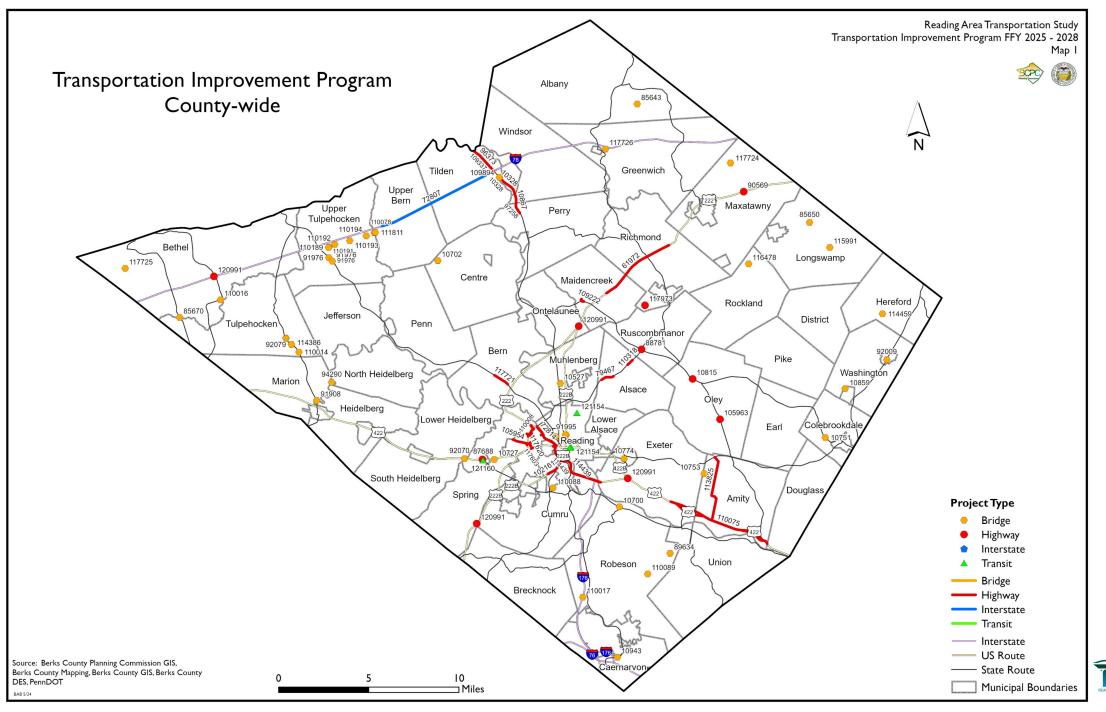
HIGHWAY

WHAT TRANSPORTATION ISSUES DO YOU CURRENTLY EXPERIENCE?

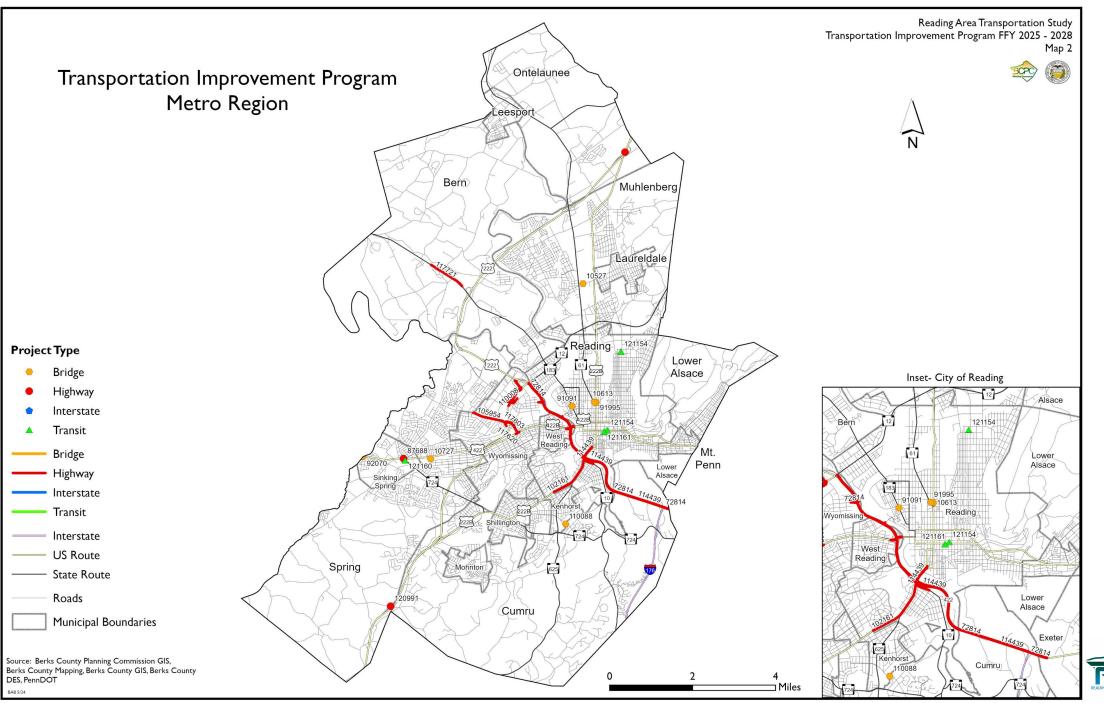


PLANNED PROJECTS

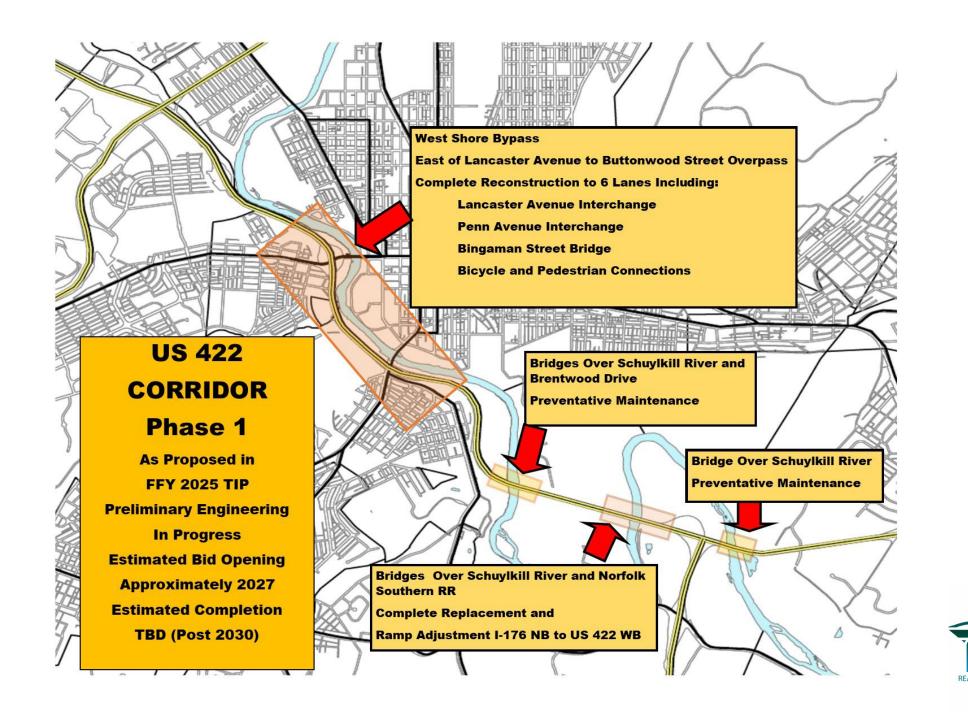
- The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is an agreed upon list of specific priority transportation projects that intend to use federal funds along with non-federally funded projects that are regionally significant.
 - It covers a four-year period and is updated every two years.
 - It shows estimated costs and funding sources and documents the anticipated schedule for each project and project phase.
 - It must be fiscally constrained to the amount of funding available.
 - It is NOT a final schedule of project implementation or guarantee of implementation.
 - Projects are drawn from the Long Range Transportation Plan and must help meet the goals of the LRTP.



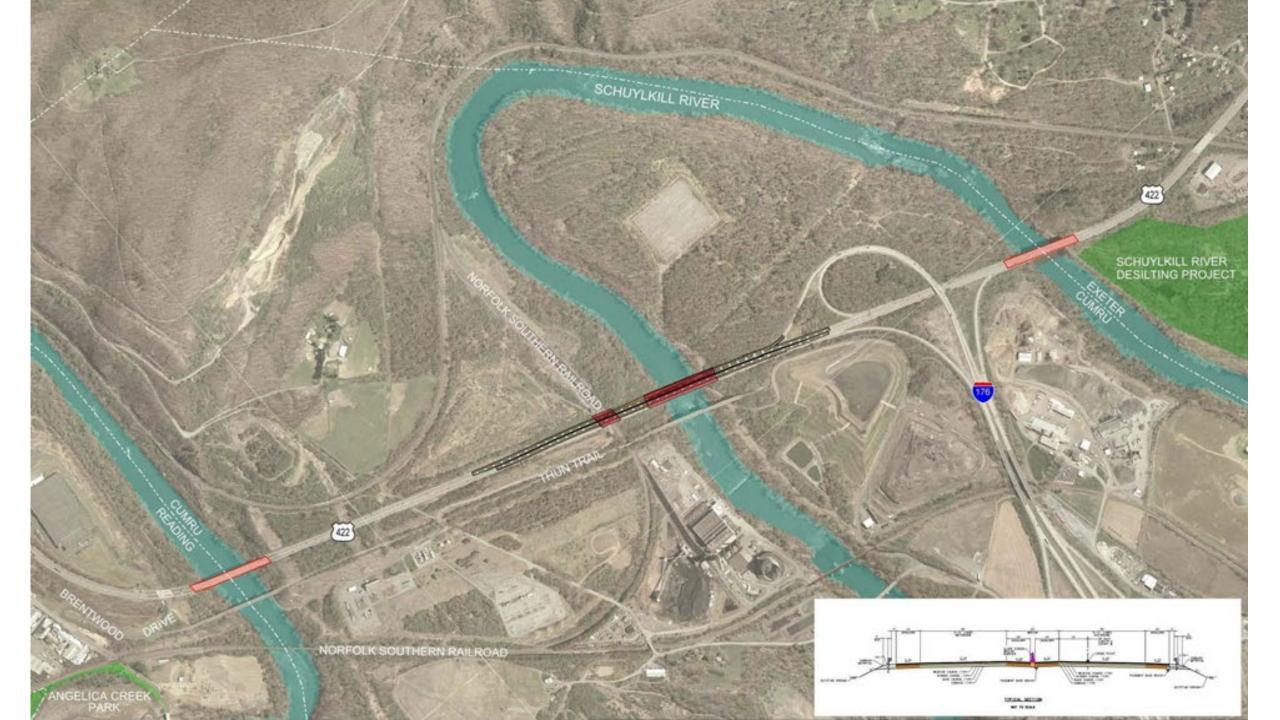


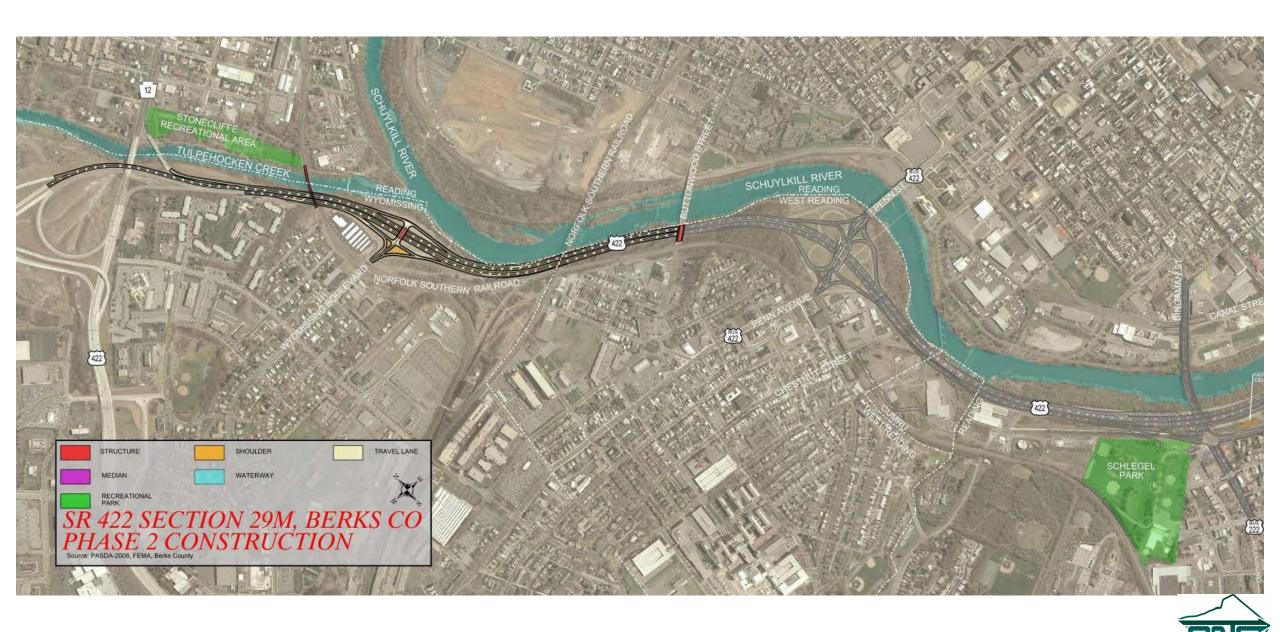


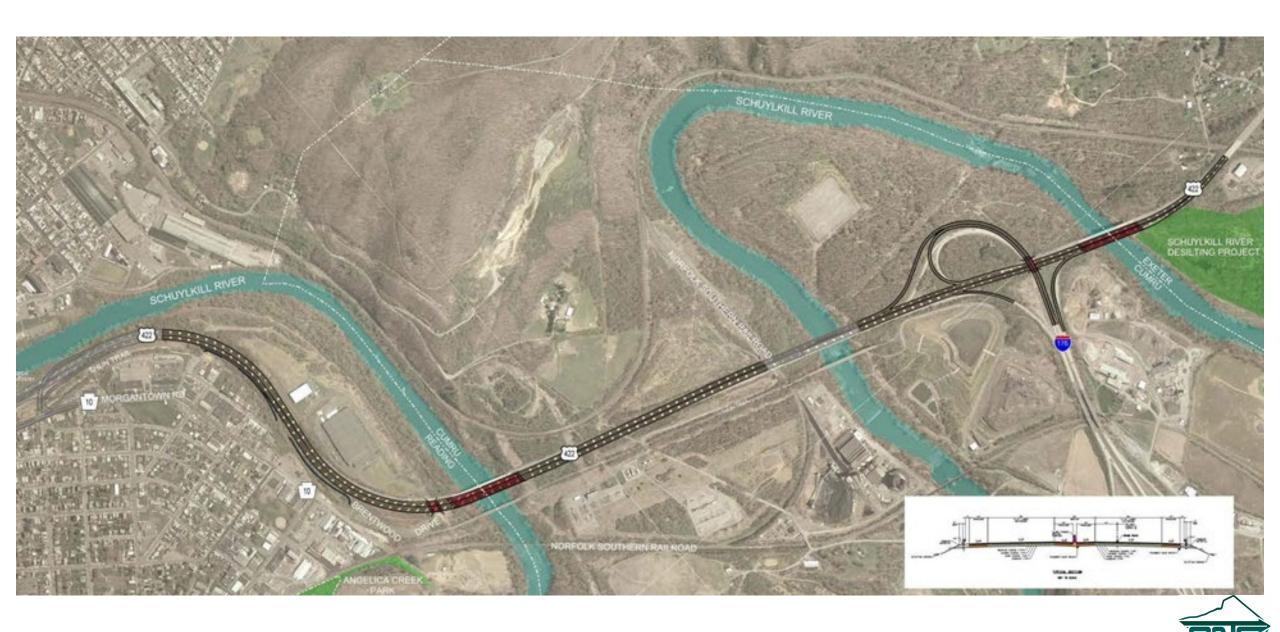












Federal Fiscal Year	Project Description/Municipality	Estimated Total Project Cost (2023\$)
FFY 2025		
MPMS# 10527	SR 2016 Bellevue Avenue Bridge over RBMN RR – Muhlenberg Twp.	\$15,883,300
FFY 2026		
MPMS# 110008	US 222 Auxiliary Lanes – Wyomissing Borough	\$17,150,000
MPMS# 87688	US 422 Intersection – Sinking Spring Borough	\$8,817,153
FFY 2027		
MPMS# 114439	US 422 West Shore Bypass Phase 1 – City of Reading, West Reading Borough, Cumru Township	\$375,550,000
MPMS# 105954	SR 3023 State Hill Road – Colony Drive to Mall Drive – Wyomissing Borough	\$12,560,000
FFY 2028		
MPMS# 117603	SR 3023 State Hill Road – Mall Drive to NS RR – Wyomissing Borough	\$12,355,000
MPMS# 91995	SR 2087 Centre Avenue over NS RR – Reading	\$9,998,750
MPMS# 10613	SR 2005 Fifth Street over NS RR – Reading	\$4,594,000

SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS ANTICIPATED **TO START** DURING READING **MPO FFY** 2025-2028 TIP

METRO REGION





STC 12-YEAR PROGRAM UPDATE SURVEY

https://survey.talk patransportation. com/#/Survey



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

