Appendix D

MPO Organizational Structure and Self-Certification Resolution

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READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

March, 2024

Transportation Planning Process

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Berks County is the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS). It was created in 1964 through a legal agreement between the City of Reading, Berks County and the Pennsylvania Department of Highways (now the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation). The study was founded in response to the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 that stated, in part, that any urban area with a population of more than fifty thousand people must maintain a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative ("3C") transportation planning process consistent with the comprehensively planned development of the urbanized area in order to be eligible to receive Federal funding for transportation projects. RATS satisfies this planning requirement and assures Berks County the continued eligibility to receive state and federal funding for highway and transit system capital improvements and operations.

As originally configured, an area was delineated as the Reading urban area in accordance with the U.S. Bureau of Census boundaries for the Reading urbanized area and the identified area became the subject of continuous transportation planning which has proceeded from 1964 to date. In 1992, in response to both the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 and the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990, the study area was expanded to cover all of Berks County. This encompasses 72 municipalities within an area of 864 square miles and has a 2020 Census population of 428,849. The Reading urbanized area 2020 population was 276,278. On July 8, 2002, the Reading MPO was officially designated as a Transportation Management Area (TMA). This special designation applies to MPOs with an urbanized area of greater than 200,000. Additional planning regulations apply to these areas.

RATS is composed of two committees – the Coordinating Committee and the Technical Committee. The Technical Committee reviews items brought before the group and recommends actions to the Coordinating Committee. The Coordinating Committee is the policy body that formally adopts items reviewed by the Technical Committee. The role of the MPO is to promote transportation plans, programs, projects and policies that are consistent with current federal transportation planning legislation and the Clean Air Act. The "Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)", also known as the "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law" is the current planning legislation. The transportation planning staff of the Berks County Planning Commission serves as the administrative and technical staff to RATS.

RATS recognizes the interconnection between transportation and land use issues. The Berks County Planning Commission works closely with local governments throughout Berks County on land use planning issues. However, under Pennsylvania law, implementation of land use policies is the responsibility of local governments. As such, RATS has no authority over local land use planning or zoning.

Coordinating Committee

The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) Coordinating Committee is the designated MPO for Berks County. The Committee is composed of the following ten members:

Member	Organization Represented
Mr. Mark Tobin	PENNDOT – Central Office
Mr. Chris Kufro	PENNDOT – District 5-0
Mr. Greg Downing	South Central Transit Authority
Mr. Dante Santoni, Jr.	Reading Regional Airport Authority
Mr. Michael Rivera	Board of County Commissioners*

Mr. Thomas McKeon	Berks County Planning Commission
Ms. Donna Reed	City of Reading
Mr. Brian Hoffa (Sinking Spring)	Berks County Boroughs*
Ms. Lisha Rowe (Cumru Twp.)	Berks County 1st Class Townships*
Mr. Michael Kocher (Spring Twp.)	Berks County 2nd Class Townships*

* Appointed by Board of County Commissioners

The Chairman of the Committee is elected annually and votes only in the event of a tie. The staff of the Berks County Planning Commission serves as the staff and Secretary to the Coordinating Committee and performs transportation planning activities as defined through annual work programs developed in coordination with Federal, state, and local priorities.

Technical Committee

A Technical Committee assists the Coordinating Committee in its activities. This committee is responsible for providing a technical review of data, plans, and programs at the direction of the Coordinating Committee and for forwarding recommendations for actions by the Coordinating Committee. The Technical Committee is composed of the following eight members:

Member	Organization Represented
Mr. David Alas	PENNDOT – Central Office
Mr. Scott Vottero	PENNDOT – District 5-0
Mr. Alan Piper	Berks County Planning Commission
Mr. Michael Golembiewski	Berks County Planning Commission
Mr. Timothy Krall	City of Reading
Mr. Kyle Zeiber	City of Reading
Mr. Keith Boatman	South Central Transit Authority
Mr. Zackary Tempesco	Reading Regional Airport Authority

The Long Range Transportation Plan for Berks County

To be considered for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program, projects must first be included in an approved Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). RATS adopted the FY 2023 - 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan in July 2022. The LRTP discusses socioeconomic trends affecting travel, the current state of the county transportation network and characterizes transportation needs and multimodal transportation strategies to address these needs. The plan must be reviewed and updated every four years. A new plan is scheduled for development and adoption by 2026. The RATS LRTP must be consistent with federal guidelines and the Pennsylvania statewide LRTP.

This plan uses performance-based and data-driven planning to support more effective and structured project selection and programming decisions. The plan outlines the region's long-range transportation vision and identifies the projects that are necessary through the year 2045 in order to attain that vision. Most importantly, federal funding cannot be allocated to transportation projects unless they are included within this plan. The projects must be fiscally constrained, meaning that RATS cannot plan to spend more money than it reasonably expects to receive.

The primary focus of this plan is not only maintaining the existing infrastructure, but also making proactive investments to make it safer and work better for Berks County residents - with emphasis on making better

use of existing transportation facilities, while seeking to improve safety and reduce traffic congestion, energy consumption, and motor vehicle emissions. Due to its size and topography, Berks County has significant transportation assets – over 3,300 miles of roads, nearly 1,000 bridges, sidewalks and trails, hundreds of miles of rail track, fleets of buses and three airports. Parts of the County transportation network are nearing or have already reached the end of its designed life span and have deteriorated over time. The amount of financial resources available to preserve every bridge and road is small in comparison to need. This plan leverages expected revenues to best address the needs of maintaining the transportation system through proper asset management and the implementation of low-cost operational improvements where feasible.

RATS has considered all locally available modes of transportation in compiling this plan, including the existing and future highway system, railroads, air travel, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel, and methods for improving intermodal connections for freight. Elements of the plan include an inventory of the County's transportation system and a discussion of current and future problems that will need to be addressed. The plan has five fundamental goals:

Safety: Keep travelers safe and secure, no matter the mode of transportation.

Maintenance: Maintain and improve the transportation system and services we enjoy today where financially feasible.

Economic Development: Invest in projects that strengthen the ability of Berks County commerce to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development and tourism opportunities.

Improved Connections and Choices: Give travelers a variety of well-designed transportation choices that are in good condition.

Environmental Sustainability: Enhance the performance of the County transportation system in environmentally sustainable ways that increases resiliency to both climate change and vulnerability to natural disaster.

Clean Air Act Amendments

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA) mandate improvements in the nation's air quality. The CAAA directs the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement regulations that will provide for reductions in pollutant emissions. An air quality analysis is performed on the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to determine the impact of major transportation system improvements on vehicle emissions. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) require that the implementation of projects in the TIP and the LRTP do not result in mobile source emissions greater than the current emission budget assigned for Berks County in the State Implementation Plan (SIP).

The EPA published the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS on March 27, 2008, (73 FR 16436), with an effective date of May 27, 2008. EPA revised the ozone NAAQS by strengthening the standard to 0.075 ppm. Thus, an area is in nonattainment of the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS if the 3-year average of the individual fourth highest air quality monitor readings, averaged over 8 hours throughout the day, exceeds the NAAQS of 0.075 ppm. Berks County was designated as a marginal nonattainment area under the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS, effective July 20, 2012 (77 FR 30088).

In October 2015, based on its review of the air quality criteria for ozone and related photochemical oxidants, the EPA revised the primary and secondary NAAQS for ozone to provide requisite protection of public health and welfare, respectively (80 FR 65292). The EPA revised the levels of both standards to 0.070 ppm, and retained their indicators, forms (fourth-highest daily maximum, averaged across three consecutive years) and averaging times (eight hours). Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA administrator is required to make all attainment designations within two years after a final rule revising the NAAQS is published. However, the deadline for EPA to issue designations for the 2015 NAAQS for ozone passed on October 1, 2017. Once designations are final,

transportation conformity would be required within 12 months for any areas designated nonattainment under the standard.

The EPA published the 2012 annual $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS on January 15, 2013, (78 FR 3086), with an effective date of March 18, 2013. The EPA revised the annual $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS by strengthening the standard from 15 µg/m^3 to 12 µg/m^3. An area is in nonattainment of this standard if the 3-year average of the annual mean $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations for designated monitoring sites in an area is greater than 12.0 µg/m^3. On December 18, 2014, EPA issued final designations for the standard that were revised on April 7, 2015 (80 FR 18535). Berks County is designated in attainment of the standard.

AGENCY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee, as the MPO, has the lead responsibility to ensure that the transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with federal and state regulations. Members of the Coordinating Committee are expected to represent the concerns of the respective group that they represent. Several other agencies also play key roles in the transportation planning process, as discussed below.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (PENNDOT)

The MPO works cooperatively with PENNDOT in carrying out all of its transportation planning and air quality planning activities. PENNDOT representatives serve on the Coordinating Committee. PENNDOT is also responsible for other activities that affect the metropolitan planning process. They are charged with the development of a statewide long range plan, which will reflect the Long Range Transportation Plan developed by the Coordinating Committee. They also develop a Statewide Transportation Improvement Program that must include the appropriate sections of the TIP developed by the MPO for Berks County. As such, PENNDOT participates actively in the development of the local TIP.

The State has the lead responsibility in developing asset management strategies for highways and bridges (including the Interstate system) – providing meaningful, timely and accurate bridge, pavement and roadway management, design, standards, strategies, inventory and conditions. The State is also responsible for the development of a Highway Safety Improvement Program to identify and address high crash locations. These systems help identify transportation needs. PENNDOT also serves as the primary intermediary between the MPO and federal transportation agencies (Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and Federal Aviation Administration).

BERKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

The Berks County Planning Commission (BCPC) provides the staff to the Coordinating Committee. The BCPC is responsible for the development of the County's Comprehensive Plan, its long range guide to land use. The BCPC staff is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the County's transportation demand model and, since 1998, the performance of air quality conformity analyses using this model.

The BCPC is represented on the Coordinating Committee.

SOUTH CENTRAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

The South Central Transit Authority (SCTA) is the only provider of public transportation in Berks County providing these services as BARTA. It is responsible for both its capital and service needs within its service area. They are the principal source of identifying transit projects for inclusion in the transit portion of the Transportation Improvement Program and Long Range Transportation Plan. They also carry out many of the transit planning activities.

SCTA is represented on the Coordinating Committee.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has overall responsibility for compliance with the Clean Air Act, including development and adoption of air quality plans known as State Implementation Plans. This agency relies on the MPO as the lead planning agency for highway-related control measures for air quality in the metropolitan area. The MPO also provides transportation data used in emissions inventories and identifies and analyzes potential air quality strategies. The DEP must approve the Air Quality Conformity Analysis prepared in conjunction with both the region's Transportation Improvement Program and the Long Range Transportation Plan.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA) and FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)

The Federal Highway and Transit Administrations have the ultimate jurisdiction in determining compliance with the Federal regulations and in distribution of funding to either PENNDOT or eligible recipients of transit funds. Non-compliance with the regulations can result in the loss of funding. The Federal Highway and Transit Administrations are not directly represented on the Coordinating Committee as voting members but do serve in an ex-officio capacity.

READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY COORDINATING COMMITTEE (READING MPO)

SELF CERTIFICATION OF THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING and PROGRAMMING PROCESS

WHEREAS, the US DOT Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming Regulations (23 CFR Part 450 Subpart C and 49 CFR Part 613 Subpart A) which implement the planning provisions of 23 USC Sec.134 and 49 USC Sec.5303, requires the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to certify that its transportation planning and programming process is in conformance with all applicable regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Planning and Programming Regulations require the MPO to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive performance-based multimodal transportation planning and programming process; and

WHEREAS, the requirements of Sections 174 and 176(c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act as amended (42 USC Sec 7504 and 7506 (c) and (d) and 40 CFR part 93), which require an air quality implementation plan that will bring the Metropolitan Area into conformance with requirements of the Clean Air Act; and require that the MPO not approve any project, program, or plan which does not conform to the implementation plan, have been met; and

WHEREAS, private citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, other affected employee representatives, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties were provided with reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed Transportation Improvement Program, Long Range Plan and planning process; and

WHEREAS, the TIP has been financially constrained as required by 23 CFR 450.324(h) of the Planning Regulations and includes a financial plan that demonstrates how the TIP can be implemented, indicates resources from both public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be available, and is supportive of innovative financing techniques; and

WHEREAS, the Congestion Management Process (CMP) requirements of 23 CFR 450.322 for non-attainment Transportation Management Areas has been met; and

WHEREAS, 23 U.S.C 150, 23 CFR Part 450, and 49 CFR part 613 require MPO's to establish and use a performance-based approach to transportation decision making. The Reading MPO continues to work with its partners to plan for the integration of performance measures and targets into the development of the Long Range Plan, the TIP, the CMP, and other appropriate regional planning documents in accordance with federal and state statutes and guidance; and

WHEREAS, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act of 2015 added two new planning factors to the scope of the metropolitan planning process that MPOs shall consider: Section 450.306 (b)(9) – improve resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate storm water impacts of surface transportation; and Section 450.306 (b)(10) – enhance travel and tourism. The Reading MPO will work with its partners to consider these new factors in the planning process; and,

WHEREAS, the provision of 49 CFR part 20 regarding restrictions on influencing certain activities has been met; and

WHEREAS, the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title VI assurance executed by each state under 23 USC Sec.324 and under 49 USC Sec.794 have been met and the requirements of Executive Order # 12898 (Federal Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations) are being addressed; and,

WHEREAS, the requirements of 49 USC 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment have been met; and

WHEREAS, the requirements of 23 CFR and 49 CFR and Section 1101(b) of the FAST Act regarding the involvement of disadvantaged or minority business enterprises in Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funded planning projects have been met; and

WHEREAS, the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (Public Law 101-336, 104 Statute 327, as amended), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), and US DOT regulations entitled "Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities" (49 CFR, Parts 27, 37 and 38) have been met; and,

WHEREAS, the provisions of the Older Americans Act, as amended (42 USC 6101) prohibiting discrimination of the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance have been met; and

WHEREAS, the provisions of Section 324 of Title 23 USC regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender have been met; and

WHEREAS, provisions of 23 CFR Part 450.310 (d) (1) (ii) and 49 CFR Part 613.100, require MPOs policy boards to include officials of public agencies that provide public transportation; and,

WHEREAS, the Reading MPO recognizes the federal standards that are in place, but strives to exceed those standards, whenever possible, to ensure the health of the region's citizens and the sustainability of Berks County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Reading metropolitan area (Berks County), certifies that the metropolitan transportation planning and programming process is being carried out in conformance with all applicable federal requirements and certifies that the local process to enhance the participation of the general public, including the transportation disadvantaged, has been followed in developing all plans and programs, including the FFY 2025-2028 TIP.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for inclusion with the State certification that the planning process complies with FHWA/FTA joint regulations on Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution was adopted, in accordance with the By-Laws, by the Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee (Reading MPO) at a meeting duly called and held on the 16th day of May, 2024, and that said resolution is now in full force and effect.

ATTEST:

Alan D. Piper Digitally signed by Alan D. Piper Date: 2024.05.17 12:50:04 -04'00'

Alan D. Piper
Reading MPO Secretary

By: Christopher J. Kufro Digitally signed by Christopher J. Kufro Date: 2024.05.20 16:14:16 -04'00'

Chris Kufro
Reading MPO Chairman