

Reading Area Transportation Study

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c/o Berks County Planning Commission
Berks County Services Center
633 Court Street, 14th Floor
Reading, PA 19601-4309

March 20, 2025

Randall P. Miller, Borough Manager
Borough of West Reading
500 Chestnut St
West Reading, PA 19611
(sent via-E-Mail)

**RE: WalkWorks Funding Opportunity for
the Development of an Active
Transportation Plan
West Reading Borough, Berks
County**

Randy Miller, West Reading Borough Manager:

The Reading Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is in receipt of the West Reading Borough proposal for the development of an Active Transportation Plan under WalkWorks Development of Active Transportation Plans to Guide the Establishment of Activity-Friendly Routes that Connect to Everyday Destinations.

The WalkWorks Development of Active Transportation Plans to Guide the Establishment of Activity-Friendly Routes that Connect to Everyday Destinations application process requires applicants to provide a letter from the appropriate MPO certifying that the proposed project is in compliance with relevant MPO plans. This letter fulfills that requirement.

The 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan can be found at the following link: bit.ly/BC2045LRTDP. Goal #4 of this plan on page 128 focuses on improved connections and choices to provide travelers a wide variety of well-designed transportation choices that are in good condition. The strategic performance measures for this goal include supporting projects that expand the county trail and sidewalk network and working closely with municipalities to ensure the safe interaction of vehicles, transit, and bicyclists/pedestrians, which can be achieved through the development of municipal active transportation plans.

The Berks County Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan 2020 can be found at the following link: bit.ly/BerksBikePedPlan. The Funding section of this plan specifically encourages the pursuit of funding through the WalkWorks grant program, on page 66 it states, "WalkWorks, developed in partnership with the state Department of Health and the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health Practice, seeks increased opportunities for physical activity in a community through safe walking routes, support of walking groups, walk-to-school programs, and local policies designed to increase safe walking. The organization also provides mini-grants that municipalities can use to develop active transportation plans, "complete streets" policies, and "vision zero" policies. This

West Reading Borough Development of an Active Transportation Plan
March 20, 2025
Page 2

grant money helps communities implement policy and infrastructure improvements that will optimize physically active lifestyles for residents, such as increasing active transportation (walking, biking, and public transit) and connectivity to common destinations."

An Implementation Goal on page 68 of this plan encourages municipalities to formalize active transportation infrastructure needs/desires within municipal planning documents. Many of the County and Municipal Implementation Goals listed on page 67 through 69 encourage working with municipalities to create plans, policies, and programs that focus on active transportation and the associated infrastructure.

In 2023 PennDOT released a statewide Vulnerable Road User (VRU) report, Pennsylvania A-VRU Safety Assessment Report, can be accessed at this link: <https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/penndot/documents/travelinpa/safety/documents/a-20vru%20safety%20assessment%20report%20final%20-%20apr%2010%202024%20.pdf>. The improvement of VRU safety is intended through this assessment, by identifying specific improvement strategies and prioritizing areas through a process that is guided and supported by quantitative and qualitative data, land use context, and community input. The process resulted in identification of 198 high-risk areas throughout Pennsylvania. US 422, Penn Avenue from 8th Ave to 3rd Ave, located in West Reading Borough is identified as the top Specific High Risk Area in Berks County as shown on page 94 (3-31).

Other relevant county plans prepared in coordination with the Berks County Planning Commission also find the development of an Active Transportation Plan for West Reading Borough compliant. Three such plans would be the Berks County Comprehensive Plan Update 2030, IMAGINE Berks, and the Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan. Specific citations and links to these plans can be found in the Berks County Planning Commission letter of compliance for this application.

The proposed development of an Active Transportation Plan for West Reading Borough meets all of these objectives and, as such, is compliant with Reading MPO plans.

The Reading MPO thanks you for the opportunity to review this grant application.

Sincerely,



Devon B. Hain
Transportation Planner II
Berks County Planning Commission