

DRAFT
READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY
JULY 10, 2025

ATTENDANCE

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Scott Vottero, PennDOT 5-0, Chair
Nyomi Nonnemaker, PennDOT Central, Vice Chair*
Alan Piper, Berks County Planning Commission, MPO Secretary
Keith Boatman, South Central Transit Authority
Michael Golembiewski, Berks County Planning Commission
Kyle Zeiber, City of Reading
Timothy Krall, City of Reading

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT ATTENDING

Zackary Tempesco, Reading Regional Airport Authority

*Tie-breaking vote only

OTHERS

Michael Donchez, PennDOT 5-0
Nick Raio, PennDOT Central
Ronique Bishop, FHWA
Matt Boyer, CommutePA
Lauri Ahlskog, South Central Transit Authority
Elvin Herrera, City of Reading
Craig Lutz, Senator Chris Gebhard
Daniel Bost, Senator Chris Gebhard
Ryan Noffke, HDR Inc.
David Hunter, Executive Director, Berks County Planning Commission
Ashley Showers, Assistant Director, Berks County Planning Commission
Amanda Timochenko, Berks County Planning Commission
Matthew McGough, Berks County Planning Commission
Melissa Lewis, Berks County Information Systems
IS Production, Berks County Information Systems

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Vottero called the meeting to order at 1:42 PM.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT/BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no business from the floor. Mr. Golembiewski stated that there was no public comment. There were six (6) anonymous users listed as viewing the presentation online. Mr.

Golembiewski asked that all individuals viewing the meeting please list your name and affiliation in the chat option for the meeting.

3. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 1, 2025 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Chairman Vottero asked if there were any questions or comments on the March 1, 2025 Technical Committee meeting minutes. There were no questions or comments.

MOTION: Mr. Golembiewski made a motion to recommend approval of the May 1, 2025 Technical Committee meeting minutes. Mr. Boatman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. RECOMMENDATION ON FY 2025-2027 SOUTH CENTRAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (SCTA) REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT

Mr. Piper presented that associated with the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) agreement between the Reading MPO and PennDOT there is a sub-agreement between the Berks County/MPO and SCTA to reimburse SCTA for transit planning that is done in support of tasks identified in the UPWP. Mr. Piper asked the committee for a recommendation to proceed with developing the SCTA reimbursement agreement. This recommendation will be forwarded to the Coordinating Committee for their approval at their meeting on July 17, 2025.

MOTION: Ms. Nonnemaker made a motion to recommend development of the South Central Transit Authority reimbursement agreement for FY 2025-2027 to the Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee. Mr. Golembiewski seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. REVIEW/RECOMMENDATION ON FY 2025-2027 SOUTH CENTRAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2025

Mr. Boatman presented that the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) requires transit agencies to update their Transit Asset Management Plans (TAMs) every four (4) years. Transit agencies are allowed to update their plans sooner than that if they have significant changes in asset inventory, condition assessment, and/or investment prioritization. The TAM plan is used to assist transit agencies in reporting annually to the National Transit Database on asset inventory and asset condition data. The South Central Transit Authority (SCTA) TAM plan includes the following:

1. An inventory of the number and type of capital assets
2. A condition assessment of all direct capital assets
3. A description of analytical processes used to estimate needs
4. A project based prioritization of investments;
5. A TAM policy and plan of implementation
6. A summary of resources

7. An outline to monitor, update and evaluate the TAM plan.

Mr. Boatman continued that SCTA's last update to the TAM Plan was 2020-2021. Mr. Boatman provided a summary of the changes to the 2025 TAM Plan. The changes summarized included changes to:

1. The Introduction was updated to current information on fleet and ridership.
2. The Asset Inventory was updated to include new fleet, equipment and facilities information.
3. The Condition Assessment was updated to include ratings on current fleet equipment and facilities.
4. Analytical Processes for Investment Needs was updated for the Long-Range Transportation Plan and Federal Budget
5. Asst Management Policy was updated to 2025
6. Implementation Strategy was updated with current self-assessment results taken by current staff.
7. Plan Activities were updated with current dates
8. Resources were updated with current information
9. Appendices were updated with current information

The SCTA Board approved the updated 2025 TAM Plan at their June 18, 2025 Board meeting. Mr. Boatman asked the committee to recommend approval of the TAM and forward it to the Coordinating Committee.

MOTION: Mr. Piper made a motion to recommend approval of the South Central Transit Authority 2025-2027 Transit Asset Management Plan and forward it to the Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee for their final approval. Mr. Golembiewski seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

6. PENNDOT REQUESTED AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS TO FFY 2025-2028 TIP

Mr. Donchez gave an update on PennDOT's requested Amendments/Modifications to the FFY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) from April 24, 2025 to July 2, 2025.

- There were two (2) Statewide Administrative Actions – the first action involved assigning redistributed Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) funds received through our Planning Agreement with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and associated STU flex funds to supplement final design and to help cover advance construction funds for the West Shore Bypass Phase 1. The second involves assigning TIFIA funds to the Angelica Creek Trail Extension to maintain fiscal constraint. The second action involved assigning PROTECT funds to the Race Street over Swamp Creek and Long Lane over West Pine Creek bridge projects.

- There were five (5) Administrative Actions – the actions address increases to cover funds from advance construction from 2023 TIP, decreases due to low-bid savings, and increases to address low-bid amounts.
- There was (1) Interstate Management Administration Action – this action involved adding a construction phase to the 2025 program for the I-78 Weigh Station project.

None of the modifications presented in the chart adversely affect project delivery schedules or air quality conformity.

7. SCTA REQUESTED AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS TO FFY 2025-2028 TRANSIT TIP

Ms. Ahlskog gave an update on South Central Transit Authority’s (SCTA) requested transit Amendments/Modifications to the FFY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) from January 10, 2025 to July 1, 2025.

- There are three (3) Amendments:
 1. Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan - Adding \$38,780 in federal 5307 funds and \$9,695 in state 339 funds in FFY 2025. Also adding funding in FFY 2026, 2027, and 2028. As provided for under federal guidelines of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, 0.75% of the annual federal funding allocation to the Reading Urbanized Area will be used to fund elements of the Agency Safety Plan including but not limited to establishing a risk reduction program; establishing performance targets; purchasing replacement rolling stock; modifications to rolling stock; and preventive maintenance activities that ensure SCTA’s fleet is safe and in a state of good repair.
 2. 11th Street Operations Center Upgrades - Adding \$1,956,319 in federal 5307 funds, \$473,307 in state 339 funds and \$15,773 in local funds in FFY2025. This project provides for upgrades and improvements to the N 11th Street Operations Center in the total amount of \$2,445,399.00 that includes, but not limited to, replacement of the underground unleaded fuel tank to an above ground fuel tank; replacement of the oil-water separator; completion of the solar panel project; rehab the driver breakroom and shop bay; and associated miscellaneous facility updates and improvements.
 3. BARTA Transportation Center Solar Panel Array - Adding \$640,000 in federal 5307 funds, \$154,840 in state 339 funds, and \$5,160 in local funds. This project includes the installation of a rooftop solar panel array at the BARTA Transportation Center in the total amount of \$800,000.00.

None of the modifications presented in the chart adversely affect project delivery schedules or air quality conformity.

MOTION: Mr. Piper made a motion to forward these amendments to the Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee for their approval. Mr. Krall seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- There are five (5) Administrative Actions:
 1. Americans with Disabilities Act Services - Decreasing federal 5307 funds by \$133,392, state 338 funds by \$30,203, and local funds by \$3,145 in FFY 2025 to match the current cost estimate. This project funds the cost of providing ADA paratransit service for persons with disabilities that complements the existing fixed route service operated in Berks County. As provided for under federal guidelines, an amount up to ten percent (10%) of the annual federal funding allocation to the Reading Urbanized Area is allowable to be used to fund ADA Services.
 2. Fixed Route Bus Purchase - Increasing federal 5307 funds by \$328,526, reducing state 338 funds by \$21,889 and local funds by \$729 in FFY 2025 to match the current cost estimate. This project provides for the purchase of one (1) 40 foot Fixed Route bus that has met its useful life of 12 years. This bus will replace one (1) 2015 Gillig hybrid electric-diesel bus in FY 2028.
 3. Fixed Route Bus Purchase - Increasing federal 5339 funds by \$38,501, state 339 funds by \$110,687 and local funds by \$3,688 in FFY 2025 to match the current cost estimate. This project provides for the purchase of one (1) 40 foot Fixed Route bus that has met its useful life of 12 years. This bus will replace one (1) 2015 Gillig hybrid electric-diesel bus in FY 2028. The Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities program is continued under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act federal transportation authorizing legislation.
 4. Paratransit Bus Purchase - Decreasing federal 5307 funds by \$424,553, state 339 funds by \$92,595, and local funds by \$13,543 in FFY 2025 to match the current cost estimate. This project provides for the purchase of 16 shared-ride cutaway buses to replace 16 2021 Ford Phoenix cutaways that have met their useful service life of 5 years.
 5. Mobile Ticketing Equipment Purchase - increasing federal 5307 funds by \$120,000, state 339 funds by \$29,033 and local funds by \$967 in FFY 2025 to match the current cost estimate. This project includes the purchase of mobile ticketing fare collection equipment for the shared-ride vehicles; an upgrade to the fixed route bus mobile ticketing fare collection equipment; and miscellaneous hardware components and software to ensure the authority is operating at its most efficient.

Ms. Ahlskog informed the committee that there will be some changes to the fiscal constraint table prior to presentation to the Coordinating Committee. These changes reflect that SCTA will be moving the amendments to the Transit TIP from FFY 2025 to the FFY 2026. This is to accommodate the changes in review and submission timeframes for grants at the Federal level.

The identified Administrative Actions do not require a formal approval and are for information purposes only. None of the requested Amendments adversely affect air quality conformity.

8. RECOMMENDATION ON EASTERN PA FREIGHT ALLIANCE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Mr. Piper presented the Eastern PA Freight Alliance (EPFA) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to the committee. Mr. Piper explained that with the adoption of the Eastern PA Freight Infrastructure Plan the MOU is a way of formalizing the working relationship between the participant MPOs – Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO, Lebanon County MPO, Lehigh Valley MPO, Northeastern PA MPO, and the Reading MPO. Once signed by all the MPOs the MOU will establish a working alliance between the MPOs to collaborate on mutually beneficial freight transportation studies, plans, programs, and/or efforts. Upon adoption, the MOU will result in the formal establishment of the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance.

MOTION: Mr. Zeiber made a motion to recommend execution of the Eastern PA Freight Alliance Memorandum of Understanding and forward it to the Coordinating Committee for their final approval. Mr. Krall seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

9. UPDATE ON FFY 2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PROCESS

a. State Transportation Commission 12-Year Program Survey Results

Ms. Timochenko presented the results from the 2025 State Transportation Commission (STC) 2027 Twelve Year Program (TYP) survey. In the STC's effort to gain public input for the TYP, they opened a 60-day public comment period in spring of 2025. This public outreach generated 9,186 survey responses with 3,710 transportation issues identified statewide. 165 survey responses with mapped transportation issues were received in Berks County. The County results were separated by responses focused on highways and bridges, active transportation, and public transportation. Examining the data from the 165 responses has provided us with the following information.

Eighty-seven (87) distinct highway and bridge issues were identified. Approximately 20% of the highway issues identified showed public concern with congestion, maintenance, and safety along major corridors within Berks County including I-78, US 222, US 422, SR 183, SR 100, and SR 1010. The remaining issues were identified on

highways and bridges within 30 of the 72 municipalities within Berks County. Issues identified include intersection improvements and realignments, interchange improvements, enforcement of speeding, congestion, inadequate sight distances, bridge and highway maintenance, and issues with tractor trailers within multiple boroughs. The most comments regarded specific issues within the City of Reading and the Borough of Womelsdorf. Thirty-six (36) of the eighty-seven (87) identified issues are addressed by projects that are underway or currently planned.

There were eleven (11) active transportation issues identified in this survey. Places where conflict between vehicles and pedestrians were identified that could include a need for active transportation infrastructure where it does not currently exist, filling sidewalk gaps, need for sharrows or bicyclist accommodations, and pedestrian safety improvements such as signage or crosswalks. These issues were identified in Exeter and Maiden creek Townships, as well as St. Lawrence, Topton, and West Reading Boroughs. Staff noted that many of these fall in areas where the Berks County Planning Commission is working with municipalities to update their joint comprehensive plans.

Public Transportation comments consisted of three (3) identified issues. There was one (1) request for public transit into and around Boyertown. Two (2) requests were made for public transportation into and out of the City of Reading via rail and bus to major cities such as Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

The issues identified will be considered in upcoming transportation plans and programs. MPO staff has provided a listing of the issues identified, broken down by corridor and municipality. Where applicable, it also notes projects that address these issues. The STC TYP results and summaries and the interactive map are also available to achieve a broader view of what was identified within Berks County.

Mr. Krall asked if it would be appropriate to answer some questions regarding some of the items listed in relation to the City of Reading. Mr. Piper stated that staff would welcome any input Mr. Krall would have on the projects.

b. Municipal Project Solicitation Survey Results

Ms. Timochenko presented the results from the RATS FFY 2027 Transportation Improvement Program Municipal Project Solicitation survey. Ms. Timochenko stated that our FFY 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program development process began in March 2025 with the MPO actively promoting the State Transportation Commission's online public survey and public meeting. The STC survey was followed by a solicitation of transportation project recommendations from Berks County municipalities in May 2025. Municipalities were given details of the eligibility requirements for new project additions as well as resources for completing the survey. The municipal transportation project solicitation survey was available from May 6, 2025, through June 27, 2025. The survey was promoted through email correspondence, the Berks County Planning

Commission E-Flash, and at several RATS Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Public Outreach meetings.

In total, six municipal transportation project survey responses were received. These include:

Municipality	Problem Type	Problem Location	Problem Category
Fleetwood Borough	Bridge	Park Road over Willow Creek	Bridge Maintenance - deteriorating concrete
City of Reading	Highway	Hampden Blvd. near College Ave.	Safety - intersection improvements to reduce speeds and crashes
Cumru Township	Bridge	Werner St. over Wyomissing Creek	Safety - posted bridge at 27/40 tons
Upper Tulpehocken Township	Highway	Intersection of SR183 and Old Route 22 (SR4040)	Safety - Intersection improvements
Douglass Township	Highway	Ben Franklin Highway near Squirrel Hollow Rd.	Safety, Land Use & Economic Development, Transit, Bicycle/Pedestrian - reduce roadway from 4 lanes to 2 lanes with center left turn lanes
Caernarvon Township	Highway	Intersection of Main St. and Morgantown Expressway	Congestion

These projects will be considered through the TIP development process and LRTP development process. New projects are evaluated based on their ability to address Performance Measures and consistency with other state and regional plans. The addition of new projects to either the TIP and/or the LRTP is also based on available funding.

Recommended projects through the municipal transportation project solicitation are added to an ongoing list of potential projects for consideration in future updates to the TIP and LRTP if the projects are unable to be included during this TIP and LRTP update.

10. UPDATE ON FFY 2027 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Ms. Timochenko provided the committee with the status of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update. Ms. Timochenko presented that the LRTP Steering Committee last met on May 19th via Microsoft Teams (virtually). At that meeting the outcomes from the public outreach meetings were discussed. The Steering Committee was also presented with draft sections of the LRTP update for their review and comment. These sections included Rail Freight, Passenger Rail, Aviation, and Non-Motorized Transportation. Ms. Timochenko also informed the committee on the public outreach that was conducted as part of the Berks County Area Agency on Aging Open House on Friday, June 6, 2025. During that outreach staff received nine comments on transportation in Berks County.

Next steps in the update process include reviewing and incorporating information gathered during public outreach as well as the State Transportation Commission's survey results. The next sections of the document that will be updated include the sections on Safety, Security, Transit, and Freight. Staff will continue to update the LRTP Development Portal and website and the next LRTP Steering Committee will be held via Microsoft Teams on August 18, 2025 from 1PM -2:30PM.

Ms. Timochenko then presented a slide deck summarizing the public outreach that has been done to date. In 2024 the outreach included four (4) in-person meetings at Robeson, Jefferson, Muhlenberg, and Perry Townships. One (1) virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams, and the preparation and distribution of a survey. In 2025 staff held seven (7) in-person meetings at the City of Reading, Womelsdorf Borough, Tilden, Colebrookdale, Cumru, Maiden creek, and Caernarvon Townships. Two (2) virtual meetings via Microsoft Teams were also held.

Ms. Timochenko finished the presentation by summarizing the public comments received during the public comment period and showing specific locations identified by the public on maps contained within the slide deck presentation.

11. UPDATE ON TRANSPORTATION SET-ASIDE (TASA) PROGRAM AND TIMELINE FOR 2025 SUBMISSIONS

Mr. Piper presented that the 2025 round of the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program opened on Wednesday, June 18, 2025. This program is funded through 2026 by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The TASA Program provides funds to construct pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improve access to public transportation, create safe routes to school, incorporate community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management, provide environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity, create trail projects that serve a transportation purpose, while promoting safety and mobility, and provide for vulnerable road user safety assessment program projects. PennDOT's Guidance can be found at the TASA Program landing page.

There are two general allocations of funds: statewide and by population. The statewide funds may be used on any project within the state, whereas "by population" funds must be spent in the MPO to which they're allocated. Approximately \$70 million is available for award through the Statewide 2025 Application Round. Approximately \$1.186 million is available for award through the Reading MPO 2025 Application Round.

A webinar for potential project sponsors, their consultants, and other interested parties was held at 10AM on Wednesday, July 9th.

The Application Cycle then opens on Monday, July 14th. As draft applications are submitted, the PennDOT District 5 TASA Coordinator will schedule a meeting with the project sponsor and Reading MPO staff to discuss the project. The last day project sponsors can submit draft applications in the system is Friday, September 5th by 4:00 PM. Sponsors

are strongly encouraged to submit their draft applications early to allow adequate time to coordinate the Draft Application Meeting.

Following draft application meetings, project sponsors can alter their applications appropriately and submit their final applications by 4:00 PM on Friday, October 31st. Final applications are available to be reviewed by Reading MPO staff on Monday, November 10th. At this point, staff will compile and provide the applications, a project summary table, project selection criteria, and a scoresheet to members of the RATS Technical Committee to evaluate and prioritize these applications.

A special meeting including Reading MPO staff, District 5 staff, and scoring members of the RATS Technical Committee will be held between November 24th and December 19th to review the projects and allow the opportunity to ask questions. Those attending will then be able to adjust their preliminary scoring. The scoresheets will then be tallied by staff to provide final recommendation. The final recommendations will be reviewed by the RATS Technical Committee at the Thursday, January 8th meeting, which will then be voted on for approval by the RATS Coordinating Committee at their January 15, 2026 meeting.

Following the final vote, the list of awarded projects with funding amounts will be sent to PennDOT Central offices TASA Coordinator. Projects that are not funded through the Reading MPO 2025 Round will still be reviewed by MPO staff providing scoring, comments, and details in the Planning Partner Reviews section within the TASA Application System. The applications and comments will be reviewed throughout February and March of 2026 by the Statewide Project Selection Committee. The awarded projects will be based on a combination of reviews from Statewide Project Selection Committee members, District 5 staff, and Reading MPO staff and will be announced April 2026.

12. PENNDOT UPDATES ON TASA/MTF AND HIGHWAY PROJECTS

Chairman Vottero gave an update on the status of TASA/MTF and highway projects.

13. COMMUTEPA UPDATE

Mr. Boyer presented the May and June 2025 Monthly Activity Report to the committee for their information. In May CommutePA added 167 new members, recorded 10,075 commuter trips, saved commuters \$122,853 in gas money, and reduced 175,504 miles on the road by carpooling, biking, or using public transit. Participants in the program burned a combined 393,451 calories by using other modes of transportation like biking or walking and saved 7,380 gallons of fuel.

In June, CommutePA added 134 new members to the database, recorded just over 9,400 trips, reduced 166,000 miles on the road by carpooling, biking, or using public transit to get to work, and saving members \$116,00 in gas money.

Mr. Boyer also presented to the committee that May was Bike Month. He shared slide decks on recorded bike trips and the Berks County Bike to Work event. Outreach was performed at various businesses and agencies throughout the months.

Mr. Boyer commented on the status of the Susquehanna Regional Transportation Partnership's Regional Congestion Management Process web mapping portal. Mr. Boyer commented on how this project has been a collaborative effort among the member MPOs. The project will be the topic of session at this year's PennDOT Planning Partners Meeting to be held in September 2025.

14. OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENT

a. Other Business:

Mr. Golembiewski presented an update to the committee on the status of the Federal Aid Functional Classification review. Mr. Golembiewski continued by informing the committee that prior to the functional classification review the urban area smoothing was completed based on the 2020 Census. Once approved by the Federal Highway Administration the next step was updating the planning agreements with adjacent MPOs. The Federal Functional Classification Review is the third step in this process.

This process takes the previously approved urban areas in the County and reviewing the roadway network to see if any changes need to be made to the functional classification designations based on both the new urban area boundaries and any changes in the function of the highway.

In August staff will be meeting with various stakeholders to go over the proposed functional classification updates.

b. Public Comment

Mr. Golembiewski stated there was no public comment.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Piper made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Krall seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 3:02PM.

Date: _____

Alan D. Piper

(MPO Secretary)

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