



Online Public Forum Questions & Answers

The State Transportation Commission (STC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) held the 2021 Public Outreach Campaign for the update of the 2023 12-Year Program (TYP) from March 1 – April 14, 2021. An online public forum was held on March 23, 2021. A total of 71 questions were submitted in advance of and during the public forum. Ten of these questions were responded to during the forum's Question & Answer session. Questions are restated as they were received with the exception of corrections to spelling and punctuation, and the removal of inappropriate language. The questions below are in a bold font, and the responses are in a standard font. Personal information has also been removed from this content. Questions were not solicited by topic, but questions and answers have been placed into the following categories for the convenience of finding a specific topic of interest: safety, transportation projects, planning process, multimodal, technology, budget and funding, other, and questions answered during the Online Public Forum.

Safety

1. State Route 30 on Ardmore Boulevard bisects our community. The traffic flow is too fast with no separation from pedestrian walkways. The sidewalks in many areas have zero elevation separation from traffic, and truck tracks can be seen on the sidewalks in some places. What can we do to reduce speed in our business district, lengthen the crosswalk periods for pedestrians to get across a divided highway, and lessen the burden of high-speed 18-wheel trucks through our community?

Thank you for your comments regarding SR 30 Ardmore Blvd. PennDOT is currently constructing Ardmore Blvd – the section from Lenox Ave to SR 48 is completed; the section from Brinton Road to Bevington Road will be under construction this summer. Both projects include minor sidewalk improvements as part of the ADA curb ramps and the bus stops. Additionally, there are some areas where the sidewalk was bumped out around utility poles to help provide additional room for pedestrians. Currently, there is no speed change planned. If Forest Hills would like to investigate a change to the posted speed, they will need to send a written request to our district Traffic Unit – Safety Section for a traffic study.

2. What are your thoughts about setting 20 mph top speeds in urban areas, so type 2 electric bikes can keep up with their angry motorists' compatriots?

We recognize crashes at lower speeds are generally less severe for vulnerable road users including bicyclists and pedestrians, however, arbitrarily lowering speed limits alone has not been shown to reduce motor vehicle speeds and can lead to a false sense of security for these and other roadway users. In addition, PennDOT's authority to set speed limits is established in PA Title 67 § 212.108, which generally requires they be set within 5 miles per hour of the average 85th percentile speed or the safe-running speed on the section of highway, based on an engineering and traffic study.



To improve safety due to speeding on a specific corridor, PennDOT may use an overall Speed Management approach which includes the 4 Es of traffic safety: Engineering, Education, Enforcement, and Emergency Medical Services. Engineering-based solutions such as narrowing lane widths and other traffic calming strategies are effective in lowering traffic speeds. PennDOT includes traffic safety in our driver education programs and regularly conducts public outreach campaigns to raise awareness of aggressive driving issues including speeding. Our partnerships with law enforcement provide resources to improve speed limit compliance.

Lastly, a quick emergency response can make all the difference in saving the lives of crash victims. PennDOT supports technologies to improve emergency response including sharing traffic condition and incident information and live traffic camera video feeds with local Emergency Management Agencies/911 centers. In addition, we are monitoring the experience of other states as they struggle with the national issue of aggressive driving, and where possible, implement practices and programs that are practical and successful.

3. SR2019 is too narrow and for much of it the posted speed limit is unsafely high. Specifically, the section between Spring Mills and Coburn which is posted at 45 mph when the safe speed for much of that stretch would be 30 mph. But people in 4WD vehicles often exceed the 45 mph limit.

The Pennsylvania Vehicle Code, Title 75 establishes certain maximum lawful speeds for vehicles traveling in urban, residential, and other locations. These statutory speed limits can be found in Section 3362(a) of Title 75. In addition, municipalities are given the authority to establish speed limits on their roads, as spelled out in Section 6109(a)(10) of the Vehicle Code. When a roadway does not satisfy the requirements for a statutory speed limit, a municipality must conduct an engineering and traffic study to determine the most appropriate speed for conditions. Engineering and traffic studies are not required for statutory speed limits, but documentation should be on file for urban districts and residential districts to show that the requirements defined in the Vehicle Code are satisfied.

Traffic speeds are posted by speed studies. If there are specific areas of concern, we can have our traffic unit do a speed study in that area.

4. Public transportation is vitally important to us in Jenkintown. We are a hub for SEPTA rail and bus lines. We have a vibrant bicycling community, and we are a walkable town. We are VERY CONCERNED about the unending stream of vehicular traffic on Rt. 611 that creates a chasm through the middle of our town. It is unsafe and unwelcoming to the kind of community life we want to foster. What can be done?

PennDOT takes your safety concerns very seriously. Speeding is possibly the most common complaint the department receives. The most effective and comprehensive safety solutions typically involve a focus on the “4 Es of traffic safety: Engineering, Education, Enforcement, and Emergency Medical Services.” It is challenging to address aggressive driving behavior solely from an engineering perspective. PennDOT provides grants to local enforcement agencies to focus on aggressive driving behavior, including speeding. Please keep in mind that the inappropriate application of traffic calming measures without carefully reviewing the local area

roadway network can result in some unintended consequences such as traffic diversion to other local streets, longer emergency response times, noise pollution, and diversion of heavy vehicles.

Department personnel have had recent discussions with borough officials about the implementation of traffic calming measures to address speeding and pedestrian safety along this stretch of Old York Road (Route 611) through the borough.

The following are traffic calming measures the borough is willing to consider:

- **Transverse Rumble Strips** - Transverse rumble strips are applied to the pavement surface with pavement marking material. They may be considered on approaches to reduced speed zones, as is the case on Old York Road (Route 611), where an engineering study found that excessive speeding is a problem in a reduced speed zone and adequate trial of other regulatory devices has failed to reduce the occurrence of speeding. Please be aware that transverse rumble strips generate noise, so their application needs to be considered thoughtfully.
- **Speed Reduction Signs** - These signs are installed 500 feet to 1000 feet in advance of a reduced speed limit zone. In this case, before the start of the 25 mph zone.
- **Speed Limit Pavement Marking Legends** - The application of speed limit pavement marking legends on the road is intended to increase driver awareness of the environment through which the person is driving.
- **Dynamic Speed Display Signs** - These signs detect and indicate to the approaching driver the current travel speed.
- **Updating and increasing the size of the 25 mph speed limit signs.**
- **Updating Pedestrian Signs** - The borough may want to consider a pedestrian study to determine where to upgrade pedestrian facilities.

Transportation Projects

5. When were the PennDOT studies done for the Duke Warehouse project on Long Lane and Rt 222 in Maxatawny Township?

The Transportation Impact Study was approved March 19, 2021.

6. PennDOT is planning to widen Route 80 through Stroudsburg, PA. This will be very expensive and ineffective in decreasing the bottleneck before reaching the NJ border where the road remains two lanes in each direction. In order to widen the "Water Gap" area it would require widening the lengthy Delaware River bridge and cantilevering the roadway over the river as it weaves through the Gap. A far more effective alternative would be to tunnel under the ridge (bridge maybe) between Sciota, PA and Columbia, NJ which would shorten the journey from NJ to Route 33 and act as a bypass for "through Stroudsburg" commercial traffic. There is already a much shorter Delaware river bridge at Columbia which could be duplicated to double its traffic capacity. The modern tunneling technology would allow efficient and economical construction of the bypass and the rural farmland would be far less expensive than tearing up the developed Stroudsburg properties.

Based on 2019 traffic volumes (pre-COVID), the busiest section of I-80 in eastern Pennsylvania was from Route 33 to Route 209 North/Marshalls Creek. The daily volume of traffic on I-80 west of the 209 North/Marshalls Creek interchange is over 70,000 vehicles per day, but immediately east of this interchange, the daily volume drops to just under 50,000 vehicles per day. The section of I-80 in Stroudsburg that is to be widened is shared with Route 209 that carries traffic heading in a north-south direction. This is the reason that this section of I-80 has been and will continue to be a focus of the Department.

7. Route 22 and Rt 100 is now an obsolete design. Truck traffic and warehousing have caused the cloverleaf unsafe and overly congested. There are no heavy merge or smart sign technologies used to warn commuters. East and westbound on 78 or north and south on Rt 100.

The Department has also observed this over the last several years. Preliminary engineering is just getting underway for the section of I-78 that includes this interchange. A complete traffic study will be undertaken and a new design for the interchange for I-78/Route 22 and Route 100 is anticipated as part of that project. A construction letting is anticipated in 2028.

The traffic volume on Rt 22 corridor both east and westbound from the Lehigh River Bridge to New Smithville exit is also an obsolete design and in need of three driving lanes in both directions.

Preliminary engineering is underway to widen Route 22 from four lanes to six lanes on the most heavily traveled portion from 15th Street to Route 378, but additional funding is needed to progress that project into the final design/right of way phases.

8. Please rethink pending approvals for the proposed Valley Logistics Park and the incredible, projected increase in traffic and safety concerns for Rt 222 and its feeder back roads. As a former superintendent of the Kutztown Area School District and township resident, I see the everyday congestion, traffic accidents (including the most recent tractor-trailer/horse and buggy accident), and the danger increased truck and other vehicle traffic will bring to our community. Encouragement for trucks to use Rt 737 as a means to access Rt 78 puts our weekday school bus runs in jeopardy. In this case, corporate profits and subsequent increased PennDOT revenues equal unsafe roadways and potential loss of lives.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation does not have direct control over proposed land development including warehouses, businesses, or home building developments; land development is controlled at a municipal level. PennDOT is authorized under Sections 411 and 420 of the State Highway Law to issue Highway Occupancy Permits for occupancy of State highway right-of-way, opening the surface, placing a facility or structure, or opening an access, but cannot outright stop land development from occurring. The Department reviews each Permit application (Including Transportation Impact Studies (TIS) and/or Transportation Impact Assessments (TIA)) consistent with published statewide policy and procedure to verify that the application, studies, and plans are complete, accurate, and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Department regulations require developers to meet legal and engineering

requirements that address impacts to roadways within the area directly affected by their proposed land development at the cost of the developer including prescribed fees.

9. Please consider putting a stoplight and Rt 863 and old Rt 22 in Kutztown PA. The addition from all the warehouses and the new Sheetz is really putting a strain on this intersection.

The Department has a project currently in the design phase to implement a flashing signal which can be converted to a traditional red-yellow-green traffic signal controlled remotely when an incident occurs on I-78 to efficiently address traffic diverting to this intersection. As growth continues in the area, the signal may be considered if it meets traffic signal warrants during normal operation.

10. I have an idea that would really reduce traffic backups following a crash particularly on Rt 78 and other limited-access highways such as the PA Turnpike. It would be very beneficial if there were emergency gates that could be opened by the police to allow vehicles, stuck between exits, to get off the main highway and alleviate the sometimes hours long delays until a wreck is cleared. The use of the locked gates would only occur when the police come to the gate from a parallel or nearby road. This could be easily accomplished along Rt 78 between Allentown and Harrisburg where there are parallel roads (old Rt 22) very close to Rt 78. These emergency gates (normally locked) would allow vehicles to get off the main highway under the metered and direct control of the police. These emergency gates would also allow quicker and easier access to accidents sites. I hope whoever gets this message will bring the idea up at your next meeting.

Seven interchanges from Shartlesville to PA 100 (Exit 23, Exit 29, Exit 30, Exit 35, Exit 40, Exit 45, and Exit 49) will have manually operated ramp emergency closure gates along Interstate 78 in Berks and Lehigh Counties upon completion of active design and will be constructed under the current reconstruction Interstate project (78-12M) from milepost 35 to milepost 44.

11. Will Apple Tree Rd in Harding be resurfaced at any point? The patches throughout the years have slowly been crumbling.

Apple Tree Rd, SR 1040 in Luzerne County, is not currently on our resurfacing plan. It is tentatively scheduled to receive a seal coating in the spring of 2023.

Planning Process

12. Since the STC approves the 12-Year Program without an approval vote from the regional RPO/MPOs and the RPO/MPOs approve the regional MTP without a vote or approval from the STC, which one is the true plan with the Federal Highway Association and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania?

PennDOT commences these planning activities together with other agencies, stakeholders, MPO/RPOs, and the public to ensure that transportation investment decisions align with established targets and goals. These activities are carried out as part of a cooperative, continuing,

and comprehensive (3C) planning process which guides the development of many documents such as the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), the 12-Year Program (TYP), Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs), and Public Participation Plan (PPPs).

In Pennsylvania, the STIP/TIPs are updated every two years during the TYP process, based on the state-mandated requirements of Act 120. The STIP is considered the short-term plan (years 1-4), the TYP is considered the mid-term plan (years 5-12) and the LRTPs is the long-term plan (years 13 +). Regional LRTPs are updated every four or five years which does not always align with the TYP/STIP/TIP process timelines. The goal is to align all plans and programs as best we can to assure the planning tools and systems are as current as possible, which sometimes means adjusting a current TYP or current LRTP project list as the other is being updated. As the data-driven, performance-based planning and programming process continues to evolve, it is crucial that system data is accurate and consistent for reporting requirements. This includes the 10-year Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP) federal reporting requirement that is encompassed by the TYP and system performance reporting requirements for regional LRTPs. To ensure PennDOT and our MPOs and RPOs can meet federal performance management requirements we will continue to collaborate to ensure alignment between all transportation plans and programs.

13. As indicated on the TPR website, PennDOT's assessment criteria do not include environmental impacts such as emissions, runoff, and land use. Although this might be considered the responsibility of DEP, environmental problems are heavily influenced by transportation and thus require a systemic (vs. siloed) approach.

How is PennDOT's 12-Year Program addressing the interrelated issues of environmental protection and transportation, as well as the need to develop a sustainable multimodal transportation system that includes, for example, high-speed intercity rail?

- 1. For questions submitted, respond directly to the submitter, so if unable to attend they can receive an answer. Additionally, I never received a reply to my questions emailed on March 22, 2021.**
- 2. Post the recording (of the Online Public Forum) and Q&A within a day or two of the event, so the public has time to review prior to the end of the comment period.**
- 3. Provide another means for participating (e.g., phone) to accommodate those with slow or no internet (Zoom might be a better option).**
- 4. While it may seem as though PA is being proactive at soliciting public comment via the PTC website, those most affected by lack of public transportation (i.e., the disadvantaged who do not have computers or internet) are unable to provide input. Thus, the review and comment process is, by design, socially discriminatory.**

PennDOT is committed to making opportunities for public participation as accessible as possible, and a key goal for this outreach campaign is to make transportation planning information readily accessible and inclusive for our diverse statewide audience. The Online Public Forum was conducted via Zoom and streamed through Commonwealth Media Services' platform, PAcast, and Facebook Live since the event was to be available statewide. To

accommodate an unlimited number of participants and manage the production and security of the event which included closed captioning in English and Spanish, live question submissions from the audience, a meeting facilitator, four speakers, and support staff – each working from their own homes rather than a studio due to COVID-19 safety protocols; this was the safest and most reliable approach for us to use at the time. We will continue to evaluate available technology and platforms for our public broadcasts in order to afford the broadest reach, maximum accessibility, and inclusivity on a statewide basis.

The event was also available for participation by telephone for anyone who wanted or needed audio access only. Our advertisements for the event invited interested individuals to contact PennDOT at 717-783-2262 to obtain the call-in number.

A recording of the Online Public Forum was posted on the website at the end of April 2021, along with a transcript in HTML to allow individual web browsers to translate the content to a user's preferred language. We appreciate your suggestion to post the recording of the forum as soon as possible, however, our video recording and transcript undergo an extensive Quality Control and Quality Assurance (QC/QA) process to ensure that our subtitles and transcript are correct. This is particularly beneficial for those who might be hearing impaired or non-English speakers.

This document contains the responses to all of the questions we received during the Online Public Forum. As the number of questions we received increased, it became a more efficient and collective process to post all of the questions and responses on our website, including those answered during the public forum.

Another aspect of our outreach effort involves collaboration with other state agencies, key stakeholders, regional planning partners, and each of our Engineering District Offices. We work with these transportation planning advocates to facilitate more of a grassroots outreach effort among their specific constituencies and local communities across the state. They are familiar with the vulnerable populations within their regions and are willing to serve as a local resource for individuals to obtain paper copies of the survey and other collateral materials that may be needed to participate in the Public Comment Period. Additionally, this outreach effort was coordinated with the Bureau of Equal Opportunity to ensure compliance with all related federal and state nondiscrimination laws, regulations, directives, and executive orders.

Regarding your questions about the TPR, PennDOT, the STC, and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), they use a variety of tools including programs, plans, and reports to complete the transportation planning process. The Transportation Performance Report (TPR) is an evaluation tool within the process that, along with many other plans and programs, serves as a vital component of PennDOT's overall planning and programming process. It explains the progress and needs of Pennsylvania's transportation system in the most recent two-year period. It covers the areas of safety, mobility, preservation, accountability, and funding.

The TPR reflects how the implementation of the 12-Year Program is affecting transportation system performance. As we measure performance, the TPR helps shape the strategic direction of Pennsylvania's Long Range Transportation Plan, which in turn advances the policy recommendations and initiatives that shape our program.

You asked why PennDOT's assessment criteria for the TPR do not include environmental impacts such as emissions, runoff, and land use. In general, PennDOT as a state organization and recipient of federal funding is obligated on the federal and state level to be a responsible and diligent steward of the environment. For an overview of information regarding our environmental practices, please visit this link:

<https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/RoadDesignEnvironment/Environment/Pages/default.aspx>

More specifically, an assessment of environmental justice impacts, air quality analysis documentation, and transportation performance measures can be found within each Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) submission. A TIP lists planned projects and assigns funding over a four-year period. TIPs cover regional projects and statewide initiatives. The links to the TIPs of each respective MPO/RPO within the state can be found at:

<https://talkpatransportation.com/how-it-works/tip> (click on the Pennsylvania map within the region of interest).

Additionally, PennDOT Connects is a PennDOT-created system established to improve the transportation program development and project delivery process and link it to environmental processes and procedures. PennDOT Connects identifies the most urgent infrastructure needs and provides the opportunity for details unique to communities, including potential environmental resource impacts, to be identified and discussed for each project in the planning phase. Identifying those elements in the planning phase provides a better understanding of the issues that may affect the project delivery schedule and budget.

14. On behalf of the Port Authority of Allegheny County, I am submitting the following comments on the 12-Year Program Update:

The previous Long Range Transportation Plan, PA On-Track (issued in 2016), is more of an inventory rather than a document for advancing a vision for the Commonwealth's transportation system. Unless the update proposes such a vision, it should not be called a plan.

It would be helpful if the website included some material on the update so that the public, stakeholders, and participating agencies would have more information and context to provide input.

The Transportation Performance Report and associated Scorecard is too limited in its metrics for public transit and other transportation systems. Other metrics could include:

- Senior citizen ridership (since the lottery provides funding to support Seniors' ridership without fare payments).
- Amount and percentage of non-state funding to cover transit system operating expenses and to cover the costs of bus purchases and other capital expenses.
- Percentage of state's population with access to non-automotive modes (broken down for local, regional, and statewide travel).
- Percentage of environmental justice populations served with transit.
- Percentage of bus fleet using technologies other than straight diesel (Allentown's system just retired the last of its diesel-only buses).
- Mileage of transit-only road lanes (alternatively, mileage of transit guideways)
- Safety for transit users.
- Local transit connections to intercity (air, bus, and Amtrak) transportation.

The Transportation Performance Report (TPR) is an evaluation tool within the process that, along with many other plans and programs, serves as a vital component of PennDOT's overall planning and programming process. It explains the progress and needs of Pennsylvania's transportation system in the most recent two-year period. It covers the areas of safety, mobility, preservation, accountability, and funding. The TPR is evaluated biannually by the subject matter experts to assure the proper measures are included in the document.

The TPR reflects how the implementation of the 12-Year Program is affecting transportation system performance. As we measure performance, the TPR helps shape the strategic direction of Pennsylvania's Long Range Transportation Plan, which in turn advances the policy recommendations and initiatives that shape our program.

PennDOT's project team for this effort will evaluate the effectiveness of this process to determine what worked well and where improvements may be needed. We will plan to revisit your suggestions at that time as well.

15. How is PennDOT working with land-use planners to combine transportation with wise land use?

Land use management in Pennsylvania is centered with local governments. Counties, townships, boroughs, cities, and one town are responsible for planning land use, transportation facilities, the implementation of land use management, and transportation goals per PA Act 247, the Municipalities Planning Code (the MPC).

The State (PennDOT) has a very limited direct role in land use/growth management, but it does interact with municipalities regularly, and it offers different tools to assist local governments with their land-use management planning and implementation. These tools are:

1. **PennDOT Publication Resources** – PennDOT has developed several planning publications that provide municipalities with tools and strategies to better link land use management and transportation. These specifically address linkages between the transportation components of the local comprehensive plan; using and developing an Official Map; street system hierarchies in suburban development.

2. **Planning Technical Assistance** – The PennDOT Center for Program Development has professional planners available to provide technical support and assistance to a municipal government.
3. **PennDOT Connects** – The PennDOT Connects program is a locally focused program specifically designed to collaborate and coordinate at a project level to identify various local needs (including land use) that will be addressed with other dimensions of a local transportation project, for example, the construction of sidewalks to connect neighborhoods and facilities to the community or the need to improve safety for pedestrians.
4. **PennDOT HOP process** – The Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) is one of the earliest stages of site development planning that addresses land use and access needs at the location of a project whether it is residential, industrial, or commercial in nature.

Multimodal

16. DHS recently held a similar session related to the Medical Assistance Transportation Program. How can PennDOT transportation programs like SSR, PWD, and ADA rides better be cross coordinated with MATP? How is information about different program eligibility, use, and standards communicated to participants? Thanks.

One of the strengths of Pennsylvania's human service transportation industry is the degree to which the different programs use the same coordinated service. It is not uncommon for Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) riders to be sharing vehicles with Shared Ride Service (SSR), Persons with Disabilities program (PWD), and American with Disabilities Act (ADA) riders. With that said, improvements could still be made and PennDOT and DHS will continue to work together to find more and better ways to coordinate and improve the services they fund.

Most of the information communicated to the participants of SSR, PWD, and ADA comes from the providers of those services. As local decisions determine most aspects of shared-ride service, this tends to be the most effective way of communicating the needed information to the users of the service. To supplement transportation providers' existing means of communication, new technology-based tools to reach more people have been under development for the past year. In the next few months, an online application tool will be rolled out which will allow people to apply online for SSR, PWD, ADA, and MATP. In the first half of 2022, an online portal containing information about human service transportation will also be launched. Hopefully, these tools will help put more people who need human service transportation in touch with the providers of the service.

17. Is there any chance for bicycle-safe infrastructure improvements? We have a very beautiful state for tourists, and more are choosing to tour on bicycles. However, we must have safe infrastructure to fully benefit from this type of tourism. Bicycle tourism can help our business interests, the tourism industry, and the general public health of our population.

PennDOT recognized the value of supporting the needs of people who ride bicycles, both out of necessity and for recreational purposes. The new Active Transportation Plan - <https://www.penndot.gov/TravelInPA/RideaBike/Pages/default.aspx> - highlights the value of a safe connected non-motorized transportation network and the recently updated chapter in our design manual offers a wide range of facility types to achieve those goals. <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/pubsforms/Publications/PUB%2013/Pub%2013%20Title%20Page.pdf>

18. Why not build mass transit rings around perimeters of cities at fixed distances and based on population?

Public transportation comes in many forms and can be designed in countless ways to meet the needs of local travelers. In Pennsylvania, state and federal funds are provided to support public transportation, but the design and implementation of public transportation systems are a local effort.

19. Are you considering employing union workers for laying the rail work?

PennDOT does not own the rail network. Individual rail owners such as private freight railroads, SEPTA, and Amtrak have individual requirements for utilizing union workers to perform rail work.

20. Do you take into consideration motorcycles when determining the safety and condition of roadways? Dips at stoplights, buckled roads, and even small potholes can be deadly to motorcyclists.

Yes, relative to determining safety. We have motorcycle-specific strategies in our Strategic Highway Safety Plan. From there, we evaluate crash data to determine what is impacting motorcycle crashes to identify possible corrective needs. Generally, we are concerned with the factors stated but do not typically look at it only from a motorcycle perspective.

21. Any chance of changing PA law to allow for parking-protected, separate bike lanes to become legal (finally)?

PennDOT continues to support legislation that would allow the design and installation of parking-protected bicycle lanes. For additional information on the status of the related bills, you may visit the PA House and Senate Transportation Committee websites.

House Transportation Committee Link -

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/cteeInfo/Index.cfm?Code=38&CteeBody=H>

Senate Transportation Committee Link -

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/CteeInfo/index.cfm?Code=19&CteeBody=S>

22. How will paratransit agencies and shared-ride options be impacted by prospective funding cuts and the decline in fixed-route service? What measures are being taken to ensure the improved accessibility of both Amtrak and local train stations?

All of our transit agencies are dependent on state and federal funding for subsidies. Today most shared-ride systems are funded by state program subsidies that cover 85% to 100% of the fare. There is no question that if that funding were no longer available, those systems would be impacted. While the decline in fixed-route service would likely have little impact on paratransit ridership, growing ridership on paratransit systems will continue to be a main focus of transit agencies. The more riders they have for each trip lowers the cost per rider making the service more financially sustainable. Most systems faced huge ridership losses as the pandemic hit and are seeing riders return (albeit at a very slow pace) as people start to travel more and medical and shopping facilities open.

23. Has there been consideration toward expanding a passenger railroad from Harrisburg into Cumberland County to provide enhanced transportation access to those commuting from locations such as Chambersburg and Carlisle?

There has been consideration in the past, but this is no longer a consideration at this time. Please note there are significant challenges in expanding rail service in terms of ownership, right-of-way, and cost, both in establishing service and in terms of maintaining and operating service.

24. Places in the world with the most efficient transportation systems (i.e. Northern Europe) rely much less on cars than we do. What are our plans to move to greater use of trains, bicycles, etc.?

Pennsylvania supports multimodal transportation options as part of a complete transportation network. What makes a viable transportation choice depends on many things, from individual preference and ability to land-use and development strategies that include density. Pennsylvania, by its nature, is a Commonwealth that puts land-use decisions in the hands of local communities.

25. What is PennDOT doing to make Persons with Disabilities (PWD) cross county lines and provide evening, weekend, and holiday service statewide? This would increase access to employment, healthcare, and community life (religious services, volunteerism, recreation, etc.). Thanks.

Shared-ride providers are local counties, municipal authorities, or non-profit organizations that are locally governed. Decisions on when and where shared-ride providers operate are made locally. There are no restrictions on crossing county lines put in place by the program.

A Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) study done in 2008 determined that to expand service to 9 p.m. for all agencies (that did not include Port Authority or SEPTA), it would cost an additional \$18 million annually. Adding service on Saturday and Sunday would be an additional \$8.8 million annually. Since then, costs have risen in the program. Aside from the cost of expanding service, the study noted the following factors that would limit their ability to

expand service to evenings and weekends: lack of demand, recruiting drivers and dispatchers, and safety. While the study is outdated, the limiting factors cited by transportation providers for expanding service would still be relevant today.

Each local entity determines their hours of service and geographical coverage based on their limited resources. This allows for them to operate at the lowest cost per hour and spread the fixed costs between riders, keeping costs lower. For FY 19-20, the average cost per trip on shared ride was \$36. In FY 14-15, that cost was \$24. Transit agencies must always balance their efforts to increase service and still maintain financial sustainability into the future.

26. Sidewalks are a critical component in our transportation infrastructure network that link neighborhoods and businesses, provide access points for transit riders, and create more freedom to choose our preferred mode of mobility. Pennsylvania, like most states, neglected to build and maintain an adequate pedestrian network in the past half-century. Now, while other states are working to fill in the gaps through capital improvements and policy shifts promoting more active maintenance, Pennsylvania is falling behind.

What is PennDOT doing to prioritize this critical transportation need? What policy changes and what funding mechanisms are being considered?

Pedestrian access and safety are important components of the transportation system. No matter how we travel, we start and end the trip by walking into and out of buildings and other facilities. Safe and appropriate pedestrian access has become a key component in all transportation planning and design projects. In December of 2016, the department launched a PennDOT Connects Policy. PennDOT Connects engages community stakeholders, planning organizations, and local governments to help ensure that community needs are understood at each phase of a transportation project's planning process. The program aims to improve communities and mobility by building partnerships, leveraging resources, and delivering projects that improve economic competitiveness, access to work, and overall quality of life.

In December of 2020, PennDOT completed its first [Active Transportation Plan](#). The intent of the plan is to support a safe, high-quality, and connected network of trails, sidewalks, bikeways, and roads for people who walk and bike, regardless of age, skill, ability, race, or ethnicity.

27. Can we just stop building and widening roads and concentrate on bike, ped, public transportation, and rail?

PennDOT is focused on ensuring safe and efficient movement across the Commonwealth. Our transportation system users have many needs and varied abilities and means of travel. Users can travel regularly by bicycle or walking, taking public transit, driving across our roads and bridges, or using a combination of these and other modes. Furthermore, PennDOT is dedicated to supporting the economy by promoting the efficient movement of goods and freight on our highways and bridges, along our railroads, and through our three ports. As a result, nearly half of Pennsylvania's 12-Year Program (TYP) is dedicated to multimodal infrastructure such as public

transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and rail freight needs. Most of the rest of the funding in the TYP is committed to highways and bridges, most of which is budgeted toward safety improvements and resurfacing and reconstructing Pennsylvania's 120,000 miles of state and local roadways and fixing or replacing 32,000 bridges. Less than 4% of TYP funding is dedicated to building new roadways and widening.

28. While undertaking necessary highway/bridge maintenance, how do we transition more quickly and more effectively away from auto dependence and towards public transit/bicycle/e-scooter alternatives?

PennDOT is focused on ensuring safe and efficient movement across the Commonwealth. Our transportation system users have many needs, varied abilities, and means of travel. Users can travel regularly by bicycle or walking, taking public transit, driving across our roads and bridges, or using a combination of these and other modes. Furthermore, PennDOT is dedicated to supporting the economy by promoting the efficient movement of goods and freight on our highways and bridges, along our railroads and through our three ports. As a result, nearly half of Pennsylvania's 12-Year Program (TYP) is dedicated to multimodal infrastructure such as public transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and rail freight needs. Most of the rest of the funding in the TYP is committed to highways and bridges, most of which is budgeted toward safety improvements and resurfacing and reconstructing Pennsylvania's 120,000 miles of state and local roadways, and fixing or replacing 32,000 bridges.

29. I know that the Amtrak ridership doubled from 2005 to 2019 with 1.5 million people taking the train, and I know it has had a hard hit by the Pandemic - but PLEASE WON'T YOU CONSIDER helping the already formed consortium who is exploring RAIL SERVICE TO READING. It is a win-win for everyone. What is your position on the project- rail stopping in Reading, PA - and how can you help it move forward? Thank you.

PennDOT evaluated the potential for re-establishing passenger rail service between Reading and Philadelphia. The report is available at www.planthekeystone.com. Other agencies, such as the Berks County Alliance have conducted their own evaluations as well. Although PennDOT does not intend to pursue reestablishing this service, we provided guidance to the Berks County Alliance for their consideration. Please note there are significant challenges in expanding rail service in terms of ownership, right-of-way, and cost, both in establishing service but in terms of maintaining and operating service.

30. What is PennDOT's vision for supporting intercity passenger rail expansion beyond the Keystone Corridor and the Reading Line? Will the dormant right-of-way from Philadelphia to Allentown be reconsidered for restoration, as a means of connecting the state's largest and third-largest metro areas together?

PennDOT is not pursuing passenger service between Philadelphia and Allentown. Please note there are significant challenges in expanding rail service in terms of ownership, right-of-way, and cost, both in establishing service but in terms of maintaining and operating service.

31. Does PennDOT have any plans to improve rail service between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh?

PennDOT and Amtrak are working with NS (owner of the rail line) to determine if additional service is feasible. An additional daily train between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh is currently being evaluated.

32. When will there be bicycle infrastructure from Downtown Pittsburgh to McKees Rocks?

Thank you for your interest regarding bicycle infrastructure from Downtown Pittsburgh to McKees Rocks. Both municipalities have plans for bicycle improvements. The City of Pittsburgh Bike Network plan information is posted on their website available at the links below. McKees Rocks also has a project to install some bike racks on Chartiers Ave in predesign stage.

https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/10132_2020-06-16_Pittsburgh_Complete_Streets_Proposed_Bicycle_Network.jpeg
[https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/9907_Pittsburgh_Bike+ Plan DRAFT 06 09 2020 .pdf](https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/9907_Pittsburgh_Bike+Plan_DRAFT_06_09_2020.pdf)

Technology

33. Personal Delivery Devices are now regulated as pedestrians. Municipalities may not prohibit, only regulate, the use of these devices on sidewalks and roadways. Can you recommend wording for a resolution that meets the requirements for this kind of regulation?

We understand that Personal Delivery Devices, or PDDs, will be operating within a multimodal transportation system and it is imperative that we ensure that these devices do not operate in a manner that jeopardizes the safety and mobility of existing users. PennDOT does not have standard language for a local resolution, and (by law) may only regulate a PDD via ordinance/resolution after consulting with an authorized entity. However, PennDOT recognizes the potential impact on local municipalities, and has included municipalities as part of the PDD application review process under the Personal Delivery Device Operations Policy, available at this [link](#). This will allow locals the opportunity to identify concerns upfront during the authorization and avoid the need to pass local regulations.

34. Is anything being done to increase the number of electric vehicle chargers for the public?

PennDOT and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection work together to increase the safety and convenience of owning and operating an electric vehicle (EV). In 2019, the PA Department of Environmental Protection's Energy Programs Office published a [Pennsylvania Electric Vehicle Roadmap](#) which listed numerous strategies that would increase

charging installation and EV adoption. Due to a great deal of progress, [DEP updated that Roadmap in 2021](#).

PennDOT has been spearheading other EV charging-related efforts in partnership with DEP. In early 2020, PennDOT kicked off an effort, partially funded by the Federal Highway Administration, to develop a plan to deploy additional electric vehicle charging infrastructure along the I-81/I-78 corridor. This Alternative Fuel Corridor Deployment Plan will soon be published and recommends that three additional DC Fast charging stations be installed in Pennsylvania.

Additionally, PennDOT just kicked off an effort to study electric vehicle charging and adoption throughout the commonwealth. This EV Mobility Plan seeks to chart a path forward for PennDOT related to electrified transportation. We expect the plan will be published in late 2021 or early 2022.

35. A new form of transportation has been developed called skyTran. This would be a good idea for smaller cities like Scranton and Wilkes Barre. Check it out on YouTube.

There will be many new transportation concepts that will be assessed in the next several decades. SkyTran is one of them, and eVTOL is another. The Department will continue to monitor the new technology for years to come to meet the needs of the Pennsylvanians.

Budget and Funding

36. Where will the emphasis be for raising additional funds for needed transportation projects: re-allocating existing state funding streams or authorizing new methods of transportation-related revenues?

We are more focused on identifying new funding streams for transportation. Through the PennDOT Pathways program, we are evaluating several funding options as part of a [Planning and Environmental Linkages \(PEL\) study](#). Additionally, the [Transportation Revenue Options Commission \(TROC\)](#) was established by Executive Order in March 2021 to develop comprehensive funding recommendations for Pennsylvania's large and aging infrastructure. The commission will submit a report to Governor Wolf by August 1, 2021.

37. How can we improve our relationship with our Local PennDOT Shed for road issues and maintenance issues? Communication and funds do not seem to go hand in hand with current projects.

Feedback from the motoring public is essential as it is often the first time the Department is made aware of a roadway/maintenance issue. The simplest way to contact PennDOT with roadway concerns is through the Customer Care Center (CCC) System Website (<https://customercare.penndot.gov/>). This system allows the customer to upload and attach pictures, utilize a map to document the concern's location, and the customer has the option of providing the location information with specific and detailed roadway information. Customers

can also submit roadway concerns by calling 1-800-FIX-ROAD. Contacting the Department via Fix Road will connect the customer with a Customer Service Representative who will enter the concern into the CCC System for the Department to handle.

The communication and funds not going hand in hand with current projects comment may be related to a perceived disconnect that the PennDOT Maintenance staff does not address all the “issues” when they are performing work on a section of roadway. Maintenance staff focuses on activities to preserve the asset and are also often performed in cycles in areas of the county defined by specific sections. This is done to avoid continuously moving from area to area within a county which is inefficient.

38. The acting PennDOT secretary testified under oath to the PA Senate committee reviewing bridge tolling that PennDOT has engaged stakeholders such as the trucking industry for their feedback and input regarding the tolling program. Prior to that testimony, representatives from the trucking industry testified that PennDOT had not interacted with the industry in any way. What is the standard for ethics and integrity in our government leaders? How are individuals allowed to continue to “serve” when they are incapable of conducting themselves in a fashion accountable to our laws and basic morals?

PennDOT has had continuous engagement with stakeholders since the Public-Private Partnership (P3) board approved that PennDOT could consider user fees to replace major interstate bridges in Pennsylvania. The P3 board’s approval – which allowed PennDOT to *consider* tolling – was the beginning of the engagement process, not the end. The trucking industry, through the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association, has been involved in many conversations about transportation funding, and has representation on the Transportation Revenue Options Commission (TROC), which was established by Executive Order in March 2021 to find sustainable funding solutions across all modes of transportation. A reliable and well-maintained network benefits all motorists, and the consequences of not taking decisive action to address these critical major bridges will have detrimental effects on the industry in the form of weight restrictions and detours.

39. Commercial trucks are the main cause of roadway wear, especially on interstates, and damage orders of magnitude more than cars, but this fact is not seen in road user costs and the needed proportions. Will PennDOT finally recognize this and increase the diesel excise tax, increase International Registration Plan fees, and set bridge tolls that make sense with regard to engineering realities (i.e. based on full truck weight, not load over axles)?

Act 89 of 2013 addressed vehicle registration fees which included a provision to increase fees for trucks 26,001 pounds and above used for interstate travel (apportioned). In addition to this phased-in approach for increased fees, these vehicles are also subject to the biennial fee increase based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), also legislated in Act 89 of 2013. The below reflects price increases that will go into effect this year:

Class	CPI Adjustment July 1, 2021	CPI Adjustment July 1, 2019
Regular Truck Class 9	\$ 677.00	\$ 651.00
Regular Truck Class 10	\$ 813.00	\$ 782.00
Regular Truck Class 11	\$ 890.00	\$ 856.00
Regular Truck Class 12	\$ 942.00	\$ 906.00
Regular Truck Class 13	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 962.00
Regular Truck Class 14	\$ 1,077.00	\$ 1,036.00
Regular Truck Class 15	\$ 1,186.00	\$ 1,141.00
Regular Truck Class 16	\$ 1,264.00	\$ 1,216.00
Regular Truck Class 17	\$ 1,432.00	\$ 1,378.00
Regular Truck Class 18	\$ 1,601.00	\$ 1,541.00
Regular Truck Class 19	\$ 1,670.00	\$ 1,607.00
Regular Truck Class 20	\$ 1,793.00	\$ 1,725.00
Regular Truck Class 21	\$ 2,289.00	\$ 2,203.00
Regular Truck Class 22	\$ 2,340.00	\$ 2,252.00
Regular Truck Class 23	\$ 2,365.00	\$ 2,276.00
Regular Truck Class 24	\$ 2,391.00	\$ 2,301.00
Regular Truck Class 25	\$ 2,417.00	\$ 2,326.00

PennDOT is currently evaluating bridge tolling through the Major Bridge P3 initiative. Toll rates for the program have not yet been determined, but trucks will pay higher fees than passenger vehicles.

40. How do we get this I-79 and I-80 Bridge tolling removed? We already have the highest Fuel Taxes in the country that are being squandered away to the State Police, Mass Transit, and Bike lanes that do not get used!!

All candidate projects under the Major Bridge P3 initiative are just that – candidates. Over the next year, PennDOT will evaluate these candidate bridges through individual environmental documents being prepared or re-evaluated for each bridge. Each project will advance with an evaluation on the impacts of tolling in the community to include:

- Impacts to minority and low-income populations.
- Traffic diversion impacts from drivers avoiding the toll.

While the PA State Police do receive funding from the Motor License Fund (which includes gas tax revenue, as well as motor vehicle/driver licensing fees), public transit does not. Public transit is available in some form in every one of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, and it helps people get to work, to medical appointments, remain in their homes longer, and connect to their community while reducing congestion. On average, 62 percent of the people who use these services say that they have no alternative means of transportation. Additionally, many people do ride bicycles and walk as their primary mode of transportation. While maintaining and improving highways and bridges is an important part of PennDOT's mission, we are responsible for supporting mobility across all modes of transportation.

Shouldn't we be concentrating on fixing our current roads and bridges with the money we have, instead of wasting our money on new roundabouts and studies? The roads are bad - we do not need to study that! Put the Study Money into fixing the roads!

We have an enormous responsibility – one we take very seriously – to provide a reliable and safe transportation system that gets you where you need to go. PennDOT is responsible for maintaining, rehabilitating, and improving nearly 40,000 miles of highway and 25,400 bridges across the state. Pennsylvania has the fifth-largest state-maintained road system and the third-largest state-maintained bridge system in the nation. In addition to our highways and bridges, PennDOT is also responsible for maritime ports, transit, freight, and airports.

We have worked hard to make the most of our available funding and have found some ways to secure additional funding. For example, with the help of Act 44 of 2007 and Act 89 of 2013 we were able to generate revenue from the Pennsylvania Turnpike and state gas taxes, allowing us to complete nearly 4,000 projects worth more than \$10 billion since 2013. We have more than 500 projects underway worth more than \$4.5 billion and roughly 1,700 projects on our four or 12-year plans. While Act 89 was a significant achievement, it did not meet the needs identified at the time and those needs have grown over time. See active and planned construction projects at www.projects.penndot.gov.

41. Go back to taking cash tolls at toll booths. You are losing a lot of customers and I for one will continue to not use them until you start taking cash again.

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission is a separate entity from PennDOT.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Pennsylvania Turnpike planned to convert to an All-Electronic Tolling (AET) system in the Fall of 2021, however, because of the COVID-19 pandemic this timeline was advanced to address customer and employee safety. In June 2020, the Commission announced that cashless tolling would remain in place permanently across the system.

While cash is no longer accepted in the lanes, customers who desire to pay for their travel via cash can sign-up for an E-ZPass Manual replenishment account. This option requires you to replenish your account balance by sending a check to or pay cash at the PTC E-ZPass Customer Service Center. A customer could also replenish the account by credit card.

Customers without a valid E-ZPass account can still use the PA Turnpike and will receive a TOLL BY PLATE invoice. Tolls may be paid online, by mobile app, by phone, and through the mail using check, money order, or credit card. Cash payments are accepted at the customer service center in Harrisburg.

42. PA needs to maintain control over where the money goes from tolling.

Most of the revenue generated by the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) through tolls and other sources is retained by the PTC, which is a separate entity from PennDOT. These funds are used to construct, operate, and maintain the Turnpike System. Generally, Turnpike revenues do not cover the expenses of any PennDOT highways or bridges. The PTC is also mandated by law to make payments to PennDOT of \$450 million per year through FY 2021-22 and \$50 million per year through 2057, but that revenue generally does not fund PennDOT's highways and bridges. Instead, these funds pay for Pennsylvania mass transit operating expenses, public transit asset improvement, public transit programs of statewide significance, and public transit administration and oversight. It also contributes to the state's Multimodal Fund which provides dedicated funding for aviation, rail freight, passenger rail, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and statewide multimodal programs in Pennsylvania. Some of these funds also pay for multimodal administration and oversight and PennPORTS debt service, and some are transferred to the Commonwealth Financing Authority to fund projects to support economic growth in Pennsylvania.

43. Are there other funding mechanisms for transportation infrastructure being discussed?

Yes. Through the PennDOT Pathways program, we are evaluating several funding options as part of a [Planning and Environmental Linkages \(PEL\) study](#). Additionally, the [Transportation Revenue Options Commission \(TROC\)](#) was established by Executive Order in March 2021 to develop comprehensive funding recommendations for Pennsylvania's large and aging infrastructure. The commission will submit a report to Governor Wolf by August 1, 2021.

Is a fee on a car purchase for an additional income stream being considered?

The [Transportation Revenue Options Commission \(TROC\)](#) is evaluating taxes and fees as part of its work.

How about fees for ads/billboards targeted to the drivers on PA roadways, can that bring in additional income?

There are certainly opportunities to raise revenue through alternative uses of the right-of-way, and PennDOT is evaluating this potential.

Lastly, what is being done to control stormwater runoff from our roadways?

PennDOT works closely with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to manage stormwater. [This fact sheet](#) includes some basic information about stormwater from DEP, and more information can be found on PennDOT's [website](#).

44. Why do I have to pay a ridiculous fuel tax to use the roads, but the Amish with their steel wheels that destroy our roads and those with electric cars who do not pay fuel tax get to use our roads for free?

Fees and taxes are established in the law by the legislature. PennDOT is not able to impose new taxes and fees without legislative approval. Legislation for increased registration fees for electric vehicles has been introduced.

45. Does the technology exist to toll out-of-state licenses and vehicles with more than 4 wheels?

Yes. The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) is a separate entity from PennDOT, but the PTC's E-ZPass program and TOLL BY PLATE program are available to passenger and commercial vehicle customers. Under the PTC's TOLL BY PLATE program, when a driver goes through a tolling point without an E-ZPass Transponder, a picture of the license plate is read via the tolling technology in the lanes or reviewed manually in the customer service center. If the license plate is matched to an E-ZPass account, the toll is posted to the account. If the license plate does not match an E-ZPass account, the image is sent to the state DMV based on the vehicle registration. Upon receiving the registered vehicle owner information, an invoice is created and mailed to the address on record.

The state also has reciprocity agreements. As a member of the E-ZPass Group/IAG, the Commission exchanges data and funds between toll agency back offices to allow customers of one toll agency to utilize toll facilities of the other toll agency using a single account.

Regarding payment enforcement efforts with other states, in 2016 the PA General Assembly passed legislation that allows the Commission to work with toll entities in other states to establish toll enforcement agreements to establish penalties for non-payment for both PA and non-PA residents. The Commission currently has an agreement with Delaware and is in discussions with New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Ohio regarding similar partnerships. In addition, the Commission continues to expand efforts to use all available enforcement tools,

including partnerships with district attorneys' offices in Turnpike counties, to pursue toll scofflaws.

Has the department considered a rush-hour usage fee to promote alternative work hours?

Yes, this is known as congestion pricing and is one of the potential medium-term funding solutions studied in our transportation funding [Planning and Environmental Linkages \(PEL\) study](#).

Congestion pricing is a form of tolling where all users driving in a specific zone or corridor are charged variable fees based on how many cars are on the roadway with higher fees during more congested time periods. Tolls would be on existing lanes, without adding new ones. Drivers are encouraged to carpool, alter the time of their travel, use transit, or use other routes when traffic gets too heavy.

Congestion pricing can lead to less congested urban centers, meaning better air quality and more reliable travel times, and would be considered in urban areas where roadway congestion is a consistent problem. This funding option would require application for and acceptance into the Value Pricing Pilot Program (VPPP), a federal pilot program, for implementation.

46. The Lehigh Valley continues to be underserved by PennDOT Planners and Government Officials. Adequate funding for Lehigh Valley needs to be restored and not shifted for Public Transportation on SEPTA rail and commuter lines.

No funding has been shifted from the Lehigh Valley to SEPTA.

Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations (MPOs/RPOs) all received less funding in the last 12-Year Program update, influenced by three major challenges:

- Reductions in anticipated available state funding.
- Federally mandated performance measures that necessitated a change in philosophy to prioritizing projects based upon life cycle costs.
- The needs and condition of the interstate system and historical lack of sustainable infrastructure funding from the federal government.

As a result of these impacts, MPOs and RPOs collaborated with PennDOT to ensure already limited funding was equitably and fairly distributed throughout Pennsylvania based upon data and needs.

Between the 2019 12-Year Program and the 2021 12-Year Program, investment in the Lehigh Valley increased. Non-interstate funding assigned by the Lehigh Valley MPO did drop from \$1.16 billion in 2019 to \$800 million 2021, but Interstate funding increased from \$11.2 million to nearly \$473 million. Thus, the overall investment in the Lehigh Valley increased by over \$100 million over the life of the current 12-Year Program.

Due to the growing needs of the transportation system and unsustainable and insufficient revenues, funding is a priority topic for discussion in Pennsylvania and at the national level. In Pennsylvania, PennDOT Pathways is focused on analyzing new sources of revenue to ensure that Pennsylvania's transportation needs are met into the future. In addition, the Transportation Revenue Options Commission is developing recommendations to phase out Pennsylvania's gas tax and replace it with a more sustainable, stable revenue option. At the federal level, discussion around multiple infrastructure proposals is occurring. In addition to a plan to implement an enhanced level of investment targeted to create jobs and improve the nation's infrastructure, a multi-year re-authorization of regular federal funding is due at the end of September.

Turnpike tolls should be used for the expansion needs of the Pennsylvania Turnpike! When will these needs be met? Please discuss with a realistic timeline of these needs.

Most of the revenue generated by the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) through tolls and other sources is retained by the PTC, which is a separate entity from PennDOT. These funds are used to construct, operate, and maintain the Turnpike System. Generally, Turnpike revenues do not cover the expenses of any PennDOT highways or bridges. The PTC is mandated by law to make payments to PennDOT of \$450 million per year through FY 2021-22 and \$50 million per year through 2057, but that revenue generally does not fund PennDOT's highways and bridges. Instead, these funds pay for Pennsylvania mass transit operating expenses, public transit asset improvement, public transit programs of statewide significance, and public transit administration and oversight. It also contributes to the state's Multimodal Fund which provides dedicated funding for aviation, rail freight, passenger rail, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and statewide multimodal programs in Pennsylvania. Some of these funds also pay for multimodal administration and oversight and PennPORTS debt service, and some are transferred to the Commonwealth Financing Authority to fund projects to support economic growth in Pennsylvania.

Any additional comments or questions on the PA Turnpike can be directed to that agency by phone at 877-736-7627 or online here: <https://www.paturndpike.com/contact.aspx>.

47. After listening to the presenters during the Online Public Forum on March 23, 2021, and reading materials on the web, I have a question. PA currently has an \$8 billion shortfall in bridge and highway funding and is currently looking at having to find new funding options to make up for losses in the current system. With being unable to maintain the current bridges, why would you build a new .75 mile bridge (when opened, the longest in the Commonwealth) on the Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation project? That seems to be fiscally irresponsible.

The ongoing Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation (CSVT) Project is more than just a bridge project. It addresses a missing link in the primary north-south highway corridor in central Pennsylvania and one of the key north-south corridors in the state. This corridor serves not only intrastate but also interstate and international traffic, as part of the most direct route between

Baltimore, Washington, and Harrisburg to the south and Rochester, Buffalo, and Canada to the north.

The CSVT Project area includes three major north-south routes (US 11, US 15, and PA 147) that bind together various communities, including Selinsgrove, Shamokin Dam, Winfield, Lewisburg, Milton, Northumberland, and Sunbury. These existing highways carry daily total traffic volumes ranging from approximately 15,000 to 50,000 and daily truck volumes ranging from approximately 1,000 to 4,000. However, unlike most of the greater north-south corridor that consists of a limited-access highway, US 11, US 15, and PA 147 are free-access highways within the project area. These major highways are intersected (at grade) by many other existing roads and by an even greater number of driveways that provide access to adjacent areas of dense commercial and residential development.

This existing condition results in not only high levels of congestion in the project area but also safety problems associated with conflicts between slower-moving local traffic and the high percentage of vehicles, especially trucks, that are simply passing through the area and therefore expect faster, unrestricted traffic flow. As documented in the CSVT Project's July 2003 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), six miles of the existing major highways in the project area exceed the statewide average crash rate, and eight miles exceed the statewide average fatal crash rate. The purpose of the project is therefore to improve safety through better accommodation of all traffic (with particular attention to trucks and through traffic), as well as to reduce current congestion and ensure sufficient capacity for anticipated growth.

Additional information related to the purpose and need for the CSVT Project and the various alternatives considered can be found in the project's FEIS, which is accessible on the Resources page of the project website, www.csvt.com. The northern section is nearly complete, fully funded, and anticipated to be opened in 2022. The first (of three) contract for the southern section is planned for this fall. It is fully funded with federal Appalachia funding which is special funding that can only be used on certain highway corridors in 13 states.

48. Has PennDOT considered placing single-direction EZ Pass Toll Gantries on interstate highways where they cross the state border as a method to collect funding?

Currently, PennDOT is exploring various funding solutions under the recently formed Pathways program. These are included in the draft Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study ([PennDOT Pathways PEL VPM](#)). These potential solutions include several options that include tolls. The option suggested above is not a viable option to the Commonwealth at this time, but bridge tolling, managed lanes, congestion pricing, and even corridor tolling are possible options in the future, provided the necessary approvals/acceptance are completed.

Are there plans in the work to toll certain Interstate highways in Pennsylvania?

Currently, PennDOT is exploring various funding solutions under the recently formed Pathways program. These are included in the draft Planning and Environmental linkages (PEL) Study ([PennDOT Pathways PEL VPM](#)). These potential solutions include several options that include tolls and could be implemented on the Interstate system. Bridge tolling, managed lanes, congestion pricing, and even corridor tolling are possible options in the future, provided the necessary approvals/acceptance are completed.

49. Why did PennDOT wait for so long to release the bridges that would be tolled? How can the first public comment period really count if citizens of the commonwealth did not know they were going to be tolled on their daily commutes?

The list of candidate bridges was being refined up until just weeks prior to the February announcement. These bridges also remain candidate projects for the Major Bridge P3 Initiative subject to the environmental review process and additional study. The nature of the process is complex, including preliminary feasibility studies, determining need and readiness, developing revenue and other models, analyzing traffic impacts and environmental justice concerns, and more. We are engaging stakeholders and communities for feedback on each candidate bridge project with public meetings and comment periods for each.

50. (1) I would like to know why this project went from originally \$200 million to now \$864 million? (2) Why out of the 2 final designs the one picked was \$12 million more? (3) Also, the one picked resulted in moving a brand new UGI 20-inch gas line. Properties were previously acquired, razed, and now are not used with the current alignment. (4) Why with 20 years of time were the ash dams NOT tested for viability? (5) Why is Dot 3 just now doing a wind study on the newly built bridge? So why doesn't PennDOT have any money? What a fiasco. If this went on in industry someone would have lost their job. The Southern half of this project should be immediately stopped and drop the 61 connector.

- (1) The estimated cost of the recommended preferred alternative presented in the CSVT Project's July 2003 Final Environmental Impact Statement was \$276 million (including \$124 million for the DA Modified Avoidance Alternative in the Southern Section and \$152 million for the River Crossing 5 Alternative in the Northern Section). That 2003 cost estimate accounted for the costs anticipated at that time for construction, utility relocations, right-of-way acquisitions, mitigation, and archaeology studies, however, it did not account for the following items that are reflected in the project's current total estimated cost of \$865 million:
- 20 years of inflation (from 2003 to the approximate average year of expenditure), which at a rate of 3% per year equates to \$222 million.
 - Preliminary engineering, final design, and environmental studies and monitoring, which are estimated to cost a total of \$99 million.
 - The additional earthwork, drainage, pavement, bridge area, utility relocations, and right-of-way acquisitions associated with the modified alignment in the Ash Basin Focus Area

(i.e., the Eastern Alternative) compared to the original alignment for the Southern Section (i.e., the DA Modified Avoidance Alternative), which are estimated to cost a total of \$83 million.

- A more substantial pavement structure than originally planned for the new highway, which has increased the project's estimated initial construction cost by \$50 million but is expected to extend the pavement's life and therefore reduce future maintenance needs.
- Various other necessary components of the project that have been identified and/or refined throughout final design and construction, such as:
 - Modified interchange configurations required to accommodate updated projections of future traffic volumes.
 - Treatments for excavation in anticipated areas of acid-producing rock.
 - Measures to address unforeseen field conditions encountered during construction.
 - Dynamic message signs and other intelligent transportation system devices.

(2) The estimated costs of the three ash basin avoidance alternatives presented in the May 2018 Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) are listed below. Note that these estimated costs reflected only the roughly 2-mile-long portion of the project within the Ash Basin Focus Area, were based on preliminary engineering (which was consistent for each alternative and the best information available at the time), and were intended only to provide a comparison between the alternatives (not for programming purposes).

- Western Alternative – \$118 million
- Central Alternative – \$139 million
- Eastern Alternative – \$131 million

The Eastern Alternative was ultimately selected for the Ash Basin Focus Area because it:

- better meets the traffic needs of the project through increased usage of the PA Route 61 Connector and the associated removal of more traffic from the existing road network.
- has the least impact to residences.
- has the least impact to farmlands.
- has the least impact to wetlands; and
- has noise impacts that are less than the Western Alternative and similar to the Central Alternative.

(3) As noted in the Supplemental EA, relocation of a portion of UGI's recently constructed Sunbury Pipeline would have been required for each of the three ash basin avoidance alternatives. For the Western and Central Alternatives, the PA Route 61 Connector would have crossed the natural gas line south of the Northern Ash Basin and required approximately 350 feet of the pipeline to be lowered. For the selected Eastern Alternative, UGI completed the required relocation of approximately 4,800' of the pipeline in late 2020.

(4) Preliminary engineering studies in the late 1990s/early 2000s indicated that construction on the two inactive fly ash waste basins was feasible. At that time, the basins had been closed recently, and it was expected that the water level in the basins would fall, allowing

construction to be performed on top of mostly dry ash. Further, more detailed studies were planned to be completed during final design, which was ultimately delayed by lack of funding. Following the eventual start of final design, geotechnical studies in 2016 identified the unexpected conditions that ultimately led to the determination that the project alignment must be modified within the Ash Basin Focus Area to avoid construction on the basins.

- (5) The study currently underway for the CSVT River Bridge is intended to assess the potential impact of wind on traffic on the bridge. A major component of the study is the collection of data on actual wind speeds that occur just above the driving surface of the bridge, which would have been much less practical prior to the construction of the bridge. The actual wind speed data will be compared to critical wind speeds that would cause concern for traffic, as determined through wind tunnel testing on a partial scale model of the bridge. That comparison will be used to establish the need for any traffic advisories and/or restrictions during periods of high wind, such as the potential need to advise empty trucks to move to the inside lane of the bridge.

51. Because of the construction of the Petro-chemical Plant in Beaver County and the \$1 billion expansion of the Pittsburgh Airport including new warehousing and an Amazon warehouse, do you feel it is important to redirect funding for better logistics in the Airport Corridor which is located in the southern part of Beaver Country and Western Alleghany County? Improvements such as potential commuter rail from the Airport to the City widening 376 between the petrochemical plant and the Airport. Better infrastructure brings more water and sewage to that area etc.

At this time, with current funding and revenue shortages, there are not any immediate plans to widen I-376 in this area. This comment will be further discussed at the regional TIP meetings as part of a workgroup. Commuter rail, water, and sewage upgrades are infrastructure improvements that would require input from those municipal services and transit.

52. Despite being the third-largest metro area in Pennsylvania and one of the fastest-growing freight corridors in the country, the Lehigh Valley was disproportionately impacted by the 2019 transportation funding cut that prioritized interstate mileage. What is being done to ensure an equitable distribution of transportation funding throughout the state's MPO's?

Three major challenges influenced the most recent 12-Year Program update:

- Reductions in anticipated available state funding.
- Federally mandated performance measures that necessitated a change in philosophy to prioritizing projects based upon life cycle costs.
- The needs and condition of the interstate system and historical lack of sustainable infrastructure funding from the federal government.

As a result of these three impacts, MPOs and RPOs collaborated with PennDOT to ensure already limited funding was equitably and fairly distributed throughout Pennsylvania based upon data and needs.

That being said, between the 2019 12-Year Program and 2021 12-Year Program, investment in the Lehigh Valley actually increased. Non-interstate funding assigned by the Lehigh Valley MPO did drop from \$1.16 billion in 2019 to \$800 million in 2021, but Interstate funding increased from \$11.2 million to nearly \$473 million. Thus, the overall investment in the Lehigh Valley increased by over \$100 million over the life of the current 12-Year Program.

Due to the growing needs of the transportation system and unsustainable and insufficient revenues, funding is a priority topic for discussion in Pennsylvania and at the National level. In Pennsylvania, PennDOT Pathways is focused on analyzing new sources of revenue to ensure that Pennsylvania's transportation needs are met into the future. In addition, the Transportation Revenue Options Commission is developing recommendations to phase out Pennsylvania's gas tax and replace it with a more sustainable, stable revenue option. At the federal level, discussion around multiple infrastructure proposals is occurring. In addition to a plan to implement an enhanced level of investment targeted to create jobs and improve the nation's infrastructure, a multi-year re-authorization of regular federal funding is due at the end of September.

Other

53. Please do NOT support municipal police radar. The bill does not require 85th percentile speed limits and seeks to weaken calibration requirements for devices used.

PennDOT is not an enforcement agency and takes no position on the proposed legislation.

54. What is your opinion of merging the Turnpike Commission with PennDOT?

The Joint State Government Commission released an extensive [report](#) last year on this topic. PennDOT and the PA Turnpike Commission work closely together and continuously strive to be more efficient.

55. When can we expect to see the results? All of the numbers please not just a summary for the sake of transparency and accountability.

The STC and PennDOT release results to the public at the June 9, 2021, STC business meeting.

We also provide a response to all of the questions we received during the Public Comment Period and the Online Public Forum. Both the questions and responses are posted on the [Talk PA Transportation website](#) for public review as soon as the responses are compiled. Individuals who have signed up to receive notifications and updates on the STC website will receive a notice regarding the availability of this information.

56. Minnesota DOT has set a goal to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 20% by 2050. Will PennDOT commit to the same or stronger goal to do their part in preventing catastrophic environmental collapse? If not, why not?

PennDOT is involved in several initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint.

In April 2019, PennDOT and DEP partnered to secure grants for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and the designation of 500 more miles of highway as "Alternative Fuel Corridors," with compressed natural gas (CNG) or EV charging stations readily accessible.

PennDOT and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) have also commissioned multiple studies to explore intercity passenger/commuter rail and mass transit projects to reduce vehicle miles travel.

57. I have heard there is a carcass removal program in PA. Where might those programs be located? There are two dead deer, one prior to the Sabula Lake area on route 255 just right of the southbound lane and one just right of the southbound lane after the Sabula Lake area. They have been there for most of the winter and do not add to the beautiful wilds in which we live. Many times, deer in that area are there for months before being removed. Not to mention there are NO deer crossing signs in those areas and many deer are hit there each year. I have also seen this in other areas. I am not saying people pay attention to signs as most don't STOP at STOP signs. Route 255 South of St. Marys to DuBois can have a lot of traffic. Some days not so much. There are areas where another lane could be added to reduce traffic congestion. I do understand there are areas where there is no room for improvement. Pennsylvania roadways are not desirable for driving on. Even through towns like Port Allegany, East Allegheny Avenue in Emporium, and Bruxelles Street in St. Marys, it is a rough ride and these are PennDOT areas. Some of these streets probably have bricks or concrete under the asphalt and of course winter causes heaving and road disintegration. Clearing out the old and putting down a good surface prior to re-surfacing may help the roadways to hold up much longer. I am sure you know most of what I am mentioning. And I know you cannot make everyone happy. Have a wonderful spring and summer!

We do work with the Game Commission to remove dead deer when we are notified.

Deer crossing signs are installed when there are a certain number of reported accidents related to deer hits. If there are no signs installed in a specific area, a municipality can request that we look at the reported accidents and see if the signs are warranted.

The routes mentioned are in our Transportation Improvement Plan. State Route 6 in Port Allegheny will be paved this summer. We are aware of the condition of Brussels Street in St. Marys and are working on to get it programmed. We are also working to get SR 120 in Emporium programmed. These are difficult projects because they are in downtown areas and have brick bases.

58. The new bridge overlay does not work. The treatment is rough and develops ruts. It is hazardous. Please go back to the solvent-based line paint in the rural area. Your paint washes away in several months. The old edge lines with the glass beads worked very well. Look at SR 879. The edge lines are gone.

PennDOT has not used solvent-based line paint in over 25 years due mainly to the harmful environmental impacts from the solvent-based paint. In addition, waterborne paint is safer for line painting crews in that it is not flammable, and it is easier to clean equipment by only needing water and soap.

The waterborne paint and beads we use on our roadways are tested on a test deck to ensure we are using the best paint and beads possible in terms of durability and retro-reflectivity. Waterborne paint has a typical service life of 1-1.5 years. Last year, the department painted approximately 87,000 line miles statewide at \$0.03 per foot for a total cost of \$17 million. There are some durable pavement marking products that have a 2–3-year service life, but the cost is significantly higher, anywhere from \$0.40 to \$2.00 per foot. We do use some of these products on interstates and higher volume roadways, but it is not practical or cost-effective to do it on all roadways.

The conditions experienced by paint lines are extremely harsh and it can be difficult for any material to last a significant length of time. Snowplows and anti-skid material increase the wear on paint lines during the winter season. This affects the brightness of the lines and is a major reason why lines have a limited life span. Because of this, all roads in the department's paint program are typically repainted annually.

Also, the EPA no longer allow us to use an oil or solvent-based line paint. Due to environmental regulations, we must use a water-borne paint.

59. Truckers' GPS seems to trump all signage everywhere in the State of PA. This needs to change.

PennDOT offers traveler information through 511PA which can be accessed online at 511PA.com, through a mobile app, or by dialing 511. We also make incident and other types of information available for use by 3rd parties, however, PennDOT has no control over how the various private GPS mapping services program their logic or identify routes. It is important to note that many of the services like Google and Waze are focused on passenger vehicles, while there are GPS products available that are designed specifically for truckers.

60. Wouldn't it be better to just place thru-truck onto trains instead of widening highways? Are there any plans to start moving trucks to trains?

It does intuitively seem like thru-truck movement would be a better cost/benefit business strategy than just building highways for trucks. The rail industry would be the ones to talk and explain why or why not that is happening at a faster rate. Container loads are continuing to see increases, versus the whole truck itself being moved. Those are business decisions made by the railroads that influence profits to both modes.

PennDOT is NOT responding through laws or policy to require trucks to be moved onto trains, however, container movement through double stacking railroads and intermodal management systems seems to be on the increase. In fact, intermodal loads carried by U.S. railroads the week ending April 24, 2021, had the highest volume since the week of December 12, 2020, according to the Association of American Railroads. This is a good sign that railroads are still in play to move freight.

From PennDOT's view, highway truck movements, due to a variety of reasons, will continue to carry the bulk amount of freight and the largest proportion of loads to supply consumer demand. Truck volumes on Interstates and key highway routes will nearly double by 2040.

61. Would someone be able to explain to me as a Tax Paying citizen, why the highways are filthy? The on/off ramps at Hwy 191 at Hwy 22 have not been cleaned in years. Highway 78 from NJ state line to well past Allentown both East and West are disgusting. It is a complete embarrassment to your Department's ability to keep Pennsylvania beautiful.

This is in response to your concern regarding roadside litter along Interstate 78, and State Route 22 in Lehigh and Northampton Counties.

Litter in the Commonwealth continues to be a major problem and all suggestions are welcomed and valued, in the ongoing effort to clear Pennsylvania's roadways. This problem casts Pennsylvania in a poor light to residents, visitors, and businesses.

Annually PennDOT spends upwards of \$14 million for Department personnel to clean up litter from the 40,000+ miles of state-maintained highways. PennDOT's response to littering is multi-faceted and ongoing:

- Each year PennDOT joins with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to draw attention to the littering problem, sponsoring advertising, and promoting upcoming cleaning events, as well as how to participate.
- PennDOT partners with Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful in multiple events each year. Pick Up PA (formerly known as The Great American Cleanup of PA), PA Pick-It-Up Days, and Earth Day remove hundreds of thousands of pounds of trash from PA roadways.
- PennDOT also partners with the public through several Beautification programs, Adopt-A-Highway (AAH), Adopt and Beautify, Sponsor-A-Highway, and Adult Litter Brigades. Collectively these programs save the Commonwealth more than \$10 million dollars per year, while helping clean Pennsylvania's 40,000 miles of roadway. Additional information on these programs is available on [PennDOT's webpage](#).

Additionally, in June 2018 legislation designed to strengthen littering laws was passed. [Senate Bill 431](#) requires that for a first offense of scattering rubbish, a person is required to pick up litter or illegally dumped trash for not less than five nor more than 30 hours within six months, in addition to the existing fine of \$50 to \$300. For a second or subsequent offense, the offender may also be required to pick up litter or illegally dumped trash for not less than 30 nor more than 100 hours over one year, in addition to the existing fine of \$300 to \$1,000. Existing fines are

doubled when committed in a litter enforcement corridor and tripled for litter that originated from a commercial business with a litter enforcement corridor. **Act 2018-62** grants the Department authority to designate state routes and local municipalities the authority to designate local routes as litter enforcement corridors. The Act also deems the scenic highways designated by 74 PA.C.S. Chapter 83 as litter enforcement corridors. Enforcement of the littering laws is left to local law enforcement as PennDOT itself has no enforcement power.

Certainly, funding and manpower play a major role. Realistically, education may eventually be the answer to the litter problem. PennDOT has partnered with the PA Department of Environmental Protection and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful in a multi-year Litter Study which is currently at the 'Next Steps' stage, and educational outreach is one of the key initiatives going forward. PennDOT currently provides the Department's Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) County Coordinators with educational tools to use when making elementary and secondary school presentations on litter. Educating future generations is the best investment in the fight against litter.

When our various County Maintenance Offices have their crews working along an Interstate or an Interstate-look-a-like, they typically have a few crew members pick litter while the work zone traffic control is set up. In addition, all counties pick litter and sweep the roadway in the spring after the snow has melted and the roadway shoulder is stable enough to park equipment.

I am pleased to inform you that Northampton County Maintenance picked litter along Interstate 78 the week of March 22, 2021, and State Route 22 has been picked almost every week throughout March and April of 2021. Specifically, the State Route 22/191 Interchange was picked on April 28, 2021, and litter along Interstate 78 in Lehigh County was picked throughout March and April of 2021.

Both Lehigh and Northampton County Maintenance typically try to pick litter along Interstate 78 the week before any major holiday such as Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

In addition, Interstate 78 and State Route 22 in Northampton County were swept during the week of March 29, 2021 and Interstate 78 in Lehigh County was swept throughout the month of April 2021.

If there is interest amongst the community, members can pick roadside litter by applying to the Adopt-a-Highway Program through the Lehigh County Maintenance Office at 610-798-4280 or the Northampton County Maintenance Office at 610-250-1840. More information on this program can be obtained at <https://www.penndot.gov/about-us/RoadsideBeautification/Pages/default.aspx>

Questions Answered During the Online Public Forum

62. Is there anyone that goes out and visually inspects work zones to ensure they are safe for travel by the motoring public or are the standards set and enforced strictly by the companies performing the work?

Maintenance and Protection of Traffic (M&P) checks are performed twice a day by project inspection staff as well as the contractor.

Additionally, our central office Construction Quality Assurance Section performs independent M&P reviews on a limited number of construction projects each season.

Publication 46 (Traffic Engineering Manual) contains language related to minimum expectations to complete Quality Assurance evaluations in work zones.

We have additional central office staff called the Operations and Performance Office (OPO) that perform at a minimum of three work zone quality assurance evaluations per county per year as part of their normal maintenance assembly evaluation program for Department Forces. Districts are also required to complete at a minimum one additional work zone quality assurance evaluations per county per year on Department Forces.

Contractors are required to review the traffic control setup as well. PennDOT's construction and maintenance projects have a quality assurance program to routinely evaluate field performance, and PennDOT's Central Office goes through a statewide review of its program every two years through FHWA.

PennDOT permit staff routinely reviews the work zones to ensure conformance. In all cases, if any work zone is not to the provision identified within the publication of PennDOT 213 or the project's specific plans, those are addressed immediately to ensure the safety of both road users and the workers.

63. How does PennDOT plan to systematically address bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the future?

PennDOT will continue to rely on the [PennDOT Connects](#) process to collaborate with local partners as projects are planned and developed. This allows the department to identify local community needs for infrastructure that supports walking and biking while ensuring the best allocation of our resources.

PennDOT completed the Active Transportation Plan back in 2019 that outlines a vision and framework for improving conditions for walking and bicycling across the state. The Active Transportation plan also identifies and helps prioritize strategies intended to increase the number of people walking and biking, while supporting safety and multimodal connectivity throughout the state. This plan serves as a resource for MPOs, RPOs, and municipalities throughout the state, providing guidance to local governments as they develop and implement regional and local bicycle and pedestrian plans.

64. What suggestions or plans are being discussed to capture revenue from the growing number of electric vehicles that are utilizing our transportation infrastructure?

PennDOT supports the increased adoption of electric vehicles, but it does amplify the need for new revenue solutions to support transportation, as fuel-efficient vehicles and the rise of electric cars continue impacting our revenue. This trend shows no sign of slowing as evidenced by automakers' planned transition to electric vehicles. For example, General Motors announced earlier this year that it would produce only electric-powered vehicles by 2035 to meet the market demand. In addition to passenger cars, even heavier, more damaging vehicles are moving towards electronic technologies. This includes the light trucks and van segments of the trucking industry. On March 3, 2021, FedEx announced that by 2040 the entire FedEx parcel pickup and delivery fleet will be zero-emission electric vehicles. And by 2025, 50 % of FedEx Express Global vehicle purchases will be electrical, rising to 100% of all purchases by 2030.

Currently, Pennsylvania has an Alternative Vehicle Fuel Tax that is levied on the electricity used to charge an EV as an alternative fuel. Our policy office is very engaged in various initiatives related to planning for the increased availability and adoption of electric vehicles. In addition to working with the Department of Revenue on increased compliance with current Alternative Fuel Vehicle Tax, we are also working with the Legislature on a proposal for a fee that electric vehicle owners would pay at registration and renewal.

65. What is the algorithm that is used by PennDOT to determine which state roads are repaired and when? Having a better understanding of the methodology of the repair decisions and timing can be a big help in responding to residents.

Rather than an algorithm, it is a project selection evaluation and prioritization criteria that are established at the local level, meaning at our Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations. Every two years we are required to lead an effort with our planning organizations, as well as our federal partners, Federal Highway and Federal Transit, to update our 12-Year Transportation Program. As part of that, we also have what is known as the State Transportation Improvement Program, or the STIP, that is the first four years of our 12-Year Program. This process starts with the release of the Transportation Performance Report.

From that report, we look at how we have done over the last two years. Then the process really starts with input from the Online Public Forum and the public comments that we have been receive throughout the open Public Comment Period. That information is shared back with our regional Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations to help prioritize projects. Again, the public input is part of our overall outreach effort. Then, as part of that, we do release some critical guidance, two pieces of guidance which are important to the overall process. One is general and procedural guidance, which we work very closely with all of those partners to develop. That lays out the expectations of prioritization, programming of projects, and the ability to maneuver, change, and adjust based on the cost of projects throughout the two-year period.

The other one is financial guidance, which lays out the formulas for distribution of funds to each of our Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations, and then as part of that they utilize the

input again from the Online Public Forum, as well as the comments we received online, to develop their project selection, evaluation, and prioritization, and move that forward.

66. Is PennDOT addressing ways to improve planning and data for better decision-making?

Those three items are very connected when we come right down to it: decision making, data, and planning. PennDOT certainly has a lot of data. We know road conditions, accident rates, failures, congestion; everything related to the roads and bridges. They know what ridership is on transit. So that data is there. The trick is to get it in the right place and to be able to use it. The Department is in the process of developing a repository that they have been working on for more than a year now to pull all of that data into a single place where it can be accessed readily and utilized for decision making. It is really improved when you have the right data. If that is true, then the planning should come out pretty well.

There is a lot of other data that they don't have in that repository that comes from the actual site of a project that's being planned. We are not sure what is happening alongside it. So, more data needs to be gathered; and they've developed this system called PennDOT Connects that they are implementing to pull all of the data related to a project into the decision for how to improve it in its process. There is nothing worse than repaving a piece of road for a mile or two, and two weeks later somebody comes in to dig it up and put in a utility or something of that nature. We don't need to see that happen anywhere. It is a loss of money, time, and effort.

Not only that, but the whole repository as well as PennDOT Connects becomes available to the various MPOs and Planning Departments that are throughout the state. We have 24 of them in Pennsylvania that actually filter all of the planning that they need in their areas with priorities up to the Department to get into the 12-Year Program. So, that whole process is getting better and better. With a concerted effort to involve not just the project details but project areas and locations, users, and the plans that are in the region where projects are.

67. How are the Freight Movement Plan and the Long Range Transportation Plan being addressed and implemented in the TYP update? And what resources are needed for these Freight Plans?

Pennsylvania's freight industry is the cornerstone to the Commonwealth's economy. And I would say during this past year, in the pandemic mode, the importance of our freight network and moving essential goods and supplies has never been clearer. In addition to the Long Range Transportation Plan, we are also updating our Statewide Freight Plan. This will result in the development of a Freight Investment Plan and better position Pennsylvania to be eligible for Federal Freight Funding that's available, again, as part of the Federal Highway Administration's Freight Program. The updated Freight Plan will be addressing pressing issues like truck parking, which always has been and continues to be an issue, and other freight-related issues that will only grow more significant as our reliance on goods and services and moving them more efficiently and more quickly grow.

Emerging issues such as autonomous, explosion growth of e-commerce as well, that we have seen not just during the pandemic period but leading up to the pandemic, and the ever-changing supply chain patterns, are still huge factors and play a big part and affect our overall planning process. And of course, all of our decision making will need to be informed by the need to reduce the impact of this to our transportation network as well as on our changing climate and to ensure that we are meeting the overall need of our customers, our communities, and the citizens in an equitable and justly manner.

On the resources part of that question, obviously, that is a very important question. Resources are always important. Plans do not get implemented without resources of all kinds. Not just money, but you also need the people and the partner organization. We are at a point where resources for transportation system improvements are inadequate. And revenue sources, mainly the Liquid Fuels Tax, is not sustainable with the advent of electric vehicles. There is a whole lot of other things that are involved with that as well. That is one of the key components right now. The bottom line, obviously, with the resource implications is that we have to now start finding new ways of raising transportation revenue just like the other states are looking at it. Our PennDOT Pathways initiative is one initiative that we have out there taking a look at transportation funding. As we know, transportation funding is not a static issue. It is dynamic and we must change and adapt just like other businesses and other business models must change and adapt.

So, we are looking to accomplish much through our partnerships and the strategies and strategic alliances that we have recognizing that plans, goals are achievable as we work together. Again, I think we have a very collaborative approach as we develop our 12-Year Program. And we carry that same approach through with our Long Range Transportation Plan as well as our Freight Plan.

68. What are the important trends affecting the 12-Year Program?

There are a lot of trends going on. One is aging. Our interstates were initiated in the late '50s and most of them built in the late '60s. That makes most of the highways in the state 60, going on 70 years old. And time is tough, especially when it is utilized heavily. The vehicles in those early years were not as heavy as the trucks we are allowing on the highways now. It just combines with the rest of it.

Driver distraction is another one, it is separate from wear and tear, and the distractions are more monumental than they used to be. Electronics are amazing in vehicles. Vehicles start to talk to each other in this day and age. One can come across an accident and put it up on the sign and a message goes out; somebody six cars back has the message that there is a problem there. What is interesting about this stuff is our Transportation Improvement Plan, our four-year plan, is financially constrained. We cannot plan anything or put anything in it unless we have dollars for it. If we cannot predict the dollars, it is very hard to put a plan that you can complete.

It used to be a mailman came once a day, and now there is a delivery truck going 10 times a day to different houses up and down the street, whether it's delivering food, or Amazon delivering something that people don't have to go out and shop for anymore. And while we think that cuts

traffic back, there's more of those delivery trucks out there and now drones are in the picture. It's very extensive.

The pandemic is another piece of all of this. It is going to alleviate at some point. Will it go back to what it was? Probably not. I could see a change that we must anticipate somehow of how someone decides to go in to work an hour later rather than wait for an hour in traffic and make their commute 15 minutes instead of an hour. There is going to be a flattening perhaps of traffic congestion at rush hour, maybe it disappears. Maybe there will be less traffic.

Automated vehicles beyond that are another part. All of these things temper the decisions. It gets complex when you do not know what is happening out there, but you can bet it's going to be different. And we have a lot of people that really noodle on this stuff to make sure what we are doing is consistent with what might happen as we move to the future. A good time in one way, interesting and fun, but complex as well.

69. Commercial trucks are the main cause of roadway wear and damage. Would it be more logical to bring roads up to present-day needs instead of just putting up weight limit signs?

One of the most recent Transportation Advisory Committee studies was on truck weight exemptions. As part of that study, there was an indication in there that a 100,000-pound truck operating on a low-volume rural road, for example, has a greater impact on bridges and pavement deterioration than the same truck that operates on a high-volume interstate highway, simply because the cost of the repairs and maintenance are shared among fewer users. Additionally, we are losing significant buying power due to more fuel-efficient vehicles.

The influx of electric vehicles, which is resulting in less revenue, combines with the overall cost of inflation as well. We currently just do not have a sustainable form of funding to maintain the current network. Traffic routes and primary highways generally are not posted. If they are posted, obviously, they do become a priority project for us and the MPOs and the RPOs to look at as part of that prioritization process and making sure we find a way to get the resources, even if that means pushing another project back to try to eliminate or avoid a weight posting on that. Now, on the secondary routes, obviously, for the most part they weren't designed or built to carry overweight vehicles. So, a little bit harder to not have weight restrictions or postings on some of those secondary routes because of that.

70. Will local government be represented on the new Transportation Revenue Options Commission to recommend new funding streams?

Yes, and there are a couple of definitions of local government. Obviously, we have a few different associations. You have PSATs, you have CCAP, you have the Transportation Supervisors, the County Commissioners, and you have the PSABs which is the boroughs.

The Executive Order that was issued did limit the membership. Therefore, we weren't able to include each of those groups like we did last round when we had the Transportation Funding Advisory Committee. We do have PSATs, and I'm confident that they will share all information with all of the other local groups as well. We do have quarterly meetings with what is called a

Municipal Advisory Committee, where each of those local municipal groups are represented, and we plan to share information through that resource as well with those that were not able to be included. So again, limited membership means we cannot include each of those groups, but we did include PSATs. Dave Sanko, who is the Executive Director, has promised me that he will share back through his channels to each of those other organizations the information that is shared at each of the Transportation Revenue Options Committee Meetings.

71. Does PennDOT have any goals or plans to reduce the department's carbon footprint?

Yes, PennDOT is in the process of electrifying more of its fleets in response to Governor Wolf's 2019 Executive Order. Our goal is to replace 25% of our passenger vehicle fleet with hybrid electric or battery electric vehicles by 2025. Currently, we only have four hybrid electric vehicles in our fleet. Additionally, we are also installing charging stations at some of our facilities. We have three charging stations at the fleet management division expanding to six by the end of this year. Two charging stations are at Greene County Maintenance Facility; five are planned for the new District 6 which is Philadelphia's Regional Office.

Also, we work closely with the GreenGov Council, which works with the state agencies on meeting energy efficiency and sustainability goals. And as we build and upgrade new department facilities, we are constantly installing energy-saving features like LED lighting and water-saving plumbing fixtures.