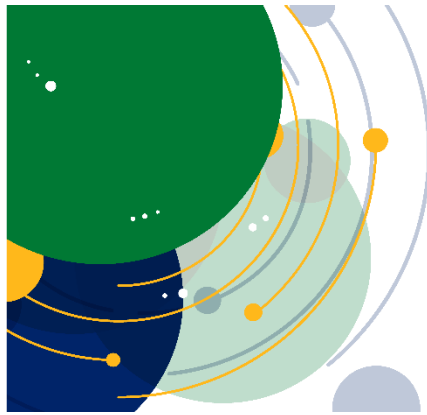




BETTER COLLABORATION

TRANSFORM

BETTER COMMUNITIES



The latest news and information from PennDOT Connects' network of people and places

PennDOT Connects October 2025 Newsletter

DVRPC Success Strengthened by PennDOT Connects

In a region as interconnected as Greater Philadelphia, effective transportation planning requires more than just engineering. It also demands collaboration and a deep understanding of unique community needs. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the area, plays a central role in coordinating transportation investments.

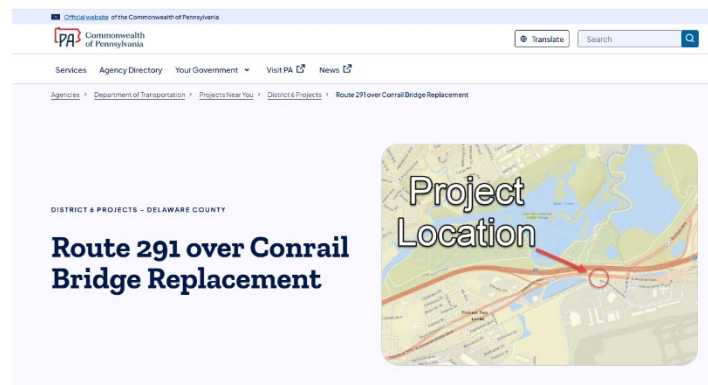
DVRPC's success in recent years has been strengthened significantly by PennDOT Connects, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) initiative that reimagines how state and local governments work together on transportation projects. By including local partners in project planning from the outset, the PennDOT Connects program has aided PennDOT in delivering smarter and more inclusive transportation solutions across the region.

As part of PennDOT Connects, DVRPC conducts planning meetings for projects early on in their design process, giving everyone a seat at the table — including stakeholders such as counties, municipal planners and managers, advocacy groups, transportation management associations, transit agencies, and more. These meetings help project designers understand the local community context, taking a holistic look at potential project elements and community needs. DVRPC, which convenes the group and facilitates the planning meetings, encourages an open discussion that enables project teams to convey important information to meeting attendees while seeking meaningful local feedback to inform the project scope. PennDOT project design teams share critical details, coordinate with stakeholders on logistics (e.g., detours and construction phasing), and discuss constraints, such as timelines and budgets, to properly manage project expectations. In return, stakeholders are asked about their lived experience in the project location, plans and proposed projects, local priorities, and possible conflicts, providing invaluable local knowledge to the project development process. These meetings have promoted relationship-building between municipalities, counties, PennDOT, DVRPC, and other planning partners.

Since its inception in 2016, PennDOT Connects has aided the DVRPC in many recent local projects. For example, DVRPC and PennDOT utilized PennDOT Connects to convene stakeholders around a bridge replacement project for the Governor Printz Boulevard Bridge in Tinicum Township, located southwest of Philadelphia. The structure was experiencing significant deterioration and a loss of material in its superstructure and substructure, and needed to be replaced.

As part of PennDOT Connects, DVRPC led conversations with the PennDOT design team and local stakeholders, including Philadelphia International Airport, Tinicum Township, and Delaware County. These conversations revealed a local desire for safer bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the corridor and plans for a future trail beneath the bridge. As a result, in addition to replacing the bridge, the project will also construct an 8-foot-wide, protected shoulder for a future barrier protected shared-use path accessing the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge and the PA 291 state bike route. This will help to complete a critical section of the East Coast Greenway, a planned walking and biking route running from Florida to Maine. Due to conversations about the proposed trail under the bridge, the structure was also designed to avoid precluding future trail access. Conversations about project schedules ensured that construction phases for nearby projects would not overlap with one another, reducing construction impacts on local travelers. Construction began on February 13, 2025.

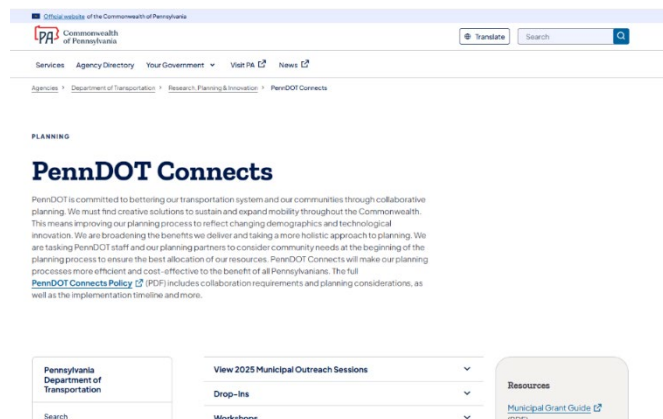
Overall, PennDOT Connects has helped DVRPC and PennDOT improve their project efficiency, planning capabilities, and relationships with stakeholders in the Greater Philadelphia Region. The DVRPC-PennDOT model has proven to work and marks the partnership as a success story for MPOs and the Connects program.



Link to project information on PennDOT website.
[Route 291 of Conrail Bridge Replacement](#)

PennDOT Connects Resources

Go to the [PennDOT Connects webpage](#) to access tech sheets, recorded trainings, and other resources.

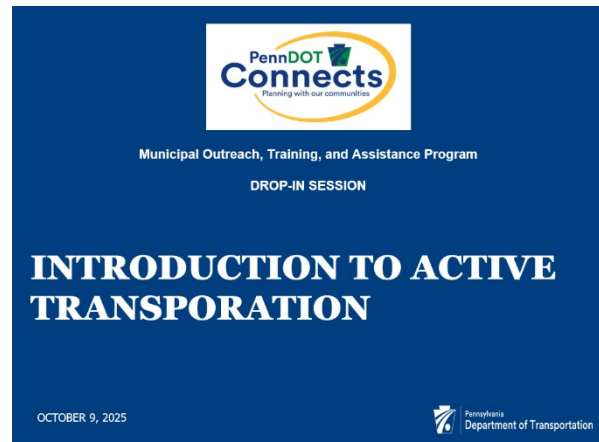


PennDOT Connects Municipal Outreach Educational Opportunities

Go to the [PennDOT Connects webpage](#) to learn about upcoming educational opportunities. Click the down arrows next to the Drop-Ins and Workshops tabs to view the current offerings and past sessions.

Introduction to Active Transportation

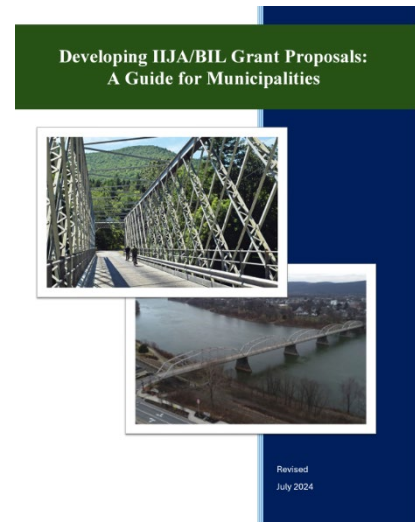
This drop-in introduces you to the important concepts for active transportation. To have success with active transportation planning, we need to first understand what it is and which nonmotorized transportation modes should we plan for. The drop-in also emphasized the various benefits of active transportation such as health, equity, and safety as well as the vulnerable users that could benefit the most from active transportation.



[Recording Link](#)

Guide for Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Grant Applications

PennDOT has added a [guide for grant applications](#) to the website dedicated to the IIJA, and specifically the federal discretionary programs. Also, included are Grant Alerts that provide background on these opportunities including eligibility, application deadlines, and federal and Department of Transportation (USDOT) resources and guides to assist in applying for the specific programs.



Grants Resources

USDOT Discretionary Grant Resources

The USDOT has developed a discretionary grant preparation checklist for federal fiscal year 2024 to help applicants prepare and chart a strategic pathway to apply for infrastructure investments. More than \$32 billion is available to the USDOT this fiscal year to provide competitive grant funding to local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, transit agencies, Tribal governments, U.S. Territories and state departments of transportation. The USDOT has published a list of anticipated dates for the upcoming Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) for key programs within the IIJA and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), as well as adjacent programs that support IIJA and IRA



- Consistency with current community comprehensive or other plans
- Consistency with current and/or proposed zoning
- Other proposed transportation improvements
- Impacts on the natural, cultural, or social environment
- Right-of-way considerations
- Anticipated public opinion
- Community or cultural events in the candidate project area
- Maintenance Agreement requirements

Do You Know Your MPO or RPO?

PennDOT and its Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Rural Planning Organization (RPO) partners have a long-standing relationship jointly preparing transportation studies, plans, and programs to make the best transportation project investments possible with available resources. This strategic alliance is now of even greater importance for PennDOT Connects implementation. Together, the MPO/RPO planning partners and PennDOT can effectively collaborate and communicate with municipalities — and other community stakeholders (e.g., transit operators, economic development agencies, etc.) — to improve transportation system performance and achieve more livable communities. The collaborative effort of municipalities, MPO/RPO planning partners, and PennDOT is key to ensuring that opportunities to improve transportation and communities are realized.

MPO/RPO contacts can be found [here](#). Use the “Sort & Filter” button to find your contact(s).

PennDOT Connects

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation is committed to bettering our transportation system and our communities through collaborative planning. We must find creative solutions to sustain and expand mobility throughout the commonwealth. This means improving our planning process to reflect changing demographics and technological innovation. We are broadening the benefits we deliver and taking a more holistic approach to planning. We are tasking PennDOT staff and our planning partners to consider community needs at the beginning of the planning process to ensure the best allocation of our resources. This approach, PennDOT Connects, will make our planning processes more efficient and cost-effective to the benefit of all Pennsylvanians.

PennDOT Connects Newsletter

Was this newsletter forwarded to you? If yes, [click here](#) to subscribe to receive a copy directly to your inbox.



Pennsylvania Department of Transportation PennDOT Connects Municipal Resources

www.pa.gov/agencies/penndot/research-planning-and-innovation/penndot-connects.html

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Pennsylvania
Department of Transportation

