



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



PennDOT Connects March 2024 Newsletter



Through PennDOT Connects, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and its regional planning partners are strengthening their partnerships with communities by involving local government at the very beginning of the planning process so that land use, development, and transportation are better integrated and more effective.

**Enhance Your Community with PennDOT Connects:
Free Resources & Municipal Support!**

Empower your municipality and its voice in local transportation: Join us for an interactive workshop where you can engage with PennDOT, collaborate with peers, and discover valuable resources to enhance your community.

Learn about:

- **PennDOT Connects:** A collaborative planning process that *incorporates your community's needs.*
- **Funding and Support:** *Grant opportunities and expert guidance* available through IIA/BIL and state agencies.
- **Your PennDOT District and Regional Planning Partners:** Share ideas, network, and *develop a vision for your community's transportation future.*

This workshop is intended for:

- Municipal officials, planners, and engineers.
- Community leaders and advocates.
- Anyone interested in improving their local transportation systems.

Don't miss out on this chance to:

- Make your voice heard and shape your community's transportation future.
- Access free resources and expert support to achieve your goals.
- Network with other municipalities and learn from their successes and find areas for collaboration.

Note: This session will focus on the resources available to municipalities through PennDOT Connects and other sources and is not on specific projects on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in PennDOT Districts.

Date	District	Time	Facility, Format, Registration or Recording Link	Address
March 25, 2024	District 2	1-3 p.m.	Recording Link	70 PennDOT Drive Clearfield, PA 16830
March 27, 2024	District 12	1-3 p.m.	Recording Link	825 N. Gallatin Ave. Ext. Uniontown, PA 15401
March 28, 2024	District 11	1-3 p.m.	Recording Link	
April 22, 2024	District 6	1-3 p.m.	All Virtual	
April 24, 2024	District 1	9-11 a.m.	All Virtual	
May 7, 2024	District 4	9-11 a.m.	PennDOT District 4 & Virtual	55 Keystone Industrial Park Dunmore, PA 18512
May 14, 2024	District 8	9-11 a.m.	PennDOT District 8 & Virtual	2140 Herr Street Harrisburg, PA 17103
May 15, 2024	District 9	9-11 a.m.	All Virtual	
May 16, 2024	District 5	1-3 p.m.	PennDOT District 5 & Virtual	1002 Hamilton Street Allentown, PA 18101
May 28, 2024	District 10	1-3 p.m.	PennDOT District 10 & Virtual	2550 Oakland Avenue Indiana, PA 15701
May 29, 2024	District 3	1-3 p.m.	All Virtual	

Attendance options noted for each district:

- In Person at District Office or Virtual (Go-To-Webinar)
- All Virtual (Go-To-Webinar)

Registration: To register, click on the **Facility, Format, and Registration Link** above for the session you want to attend.

Recording: To watch a recording, click on the **Facility, Format, and Recording Link** above for the session you want to watch.

Utility Coordination in Pennsylvania

Utility coordination in Pennsylvania is a crucial process that ensures the efficient and safe management of various infrastructure and utility projects in the public right-of-way across the state. Coordinating the installation, maintenance, and relocation of utilities is essential to minimize disruptions, enhance project timelines, and optimize resource allocation.

Pennsylvania's utility coordination efforts involve collaboration among utility companies, government agencies, engineering firms, and construction teams to facilitate effective planning, communication, and execution of infrastructure projects while adhering to regulatory standards and minimizing environmental impact.



Utility coordination for projects in the public right-of-way involves planning and managing the installation, relocation, or maintenance of utility infrastructure to minimize disruption and optimize project timelines.

The basics of utility coordination for projects in the public right-of-way include the following:

- The public right-of-way is a shared three-dimensional space for the provision of roadway, water, and utility infrastructure.
 - It is shared by various public and private sector entities.
 - Utility facilities include all gas, water, sanitary sewers, electric, cable TV, communications, petroleum products pipelines, and other facilities that provide direct or indirect utility service to the public.
 - Utility facilities may be located underground, aboveground, or at ground level.
 - The municipal role can vary from one location to another. A municipality may be an underground utility owner in a PennDOT right-of-way in one location and a local street right-of-way owner in another location.
- These all require installation, access for maintenance (inspection and repair), improvement, and replacement over time in the interest of efficient, reliable service and compliance with regulations.
 - Projects to address one facility can disturb or disrupt another facility.
 - Projects to address separate facilities can be coordinated to minimize disruption to and replacement of surface infrastructure.Safety and damage prevention are shared responsibilities for those who work in the right-of-way.
- From a roadway perspective, utility coordination involves identification and possible relocation of existing facilities that may conflict with proposed highway and bridge projects.

Pennsylvania's Underground Utility Line Protection Law, Act 287 of 1974 (the Act), as amended by Act 50 of 2017, addresses the importance of utility coordination through:

- Preventing excavation and demolition work from damaging underground utility lines by:

- Establishing duties of facility owners, designers, and excavators to provide notices and other information to project parties.
- Providing authority for the PA One Call System and its duties.
- Requiring coordination through the PA One Call System.
- Imposing penalties.
- Ensuring the safety of construction workers and the secure transmission of materials moved by pipelines and electricity.

The consequences of not coordinating with utilities include but are not limited to:

- Local law enforcement or emergency management personnel could order an excavator on a work site to stop further excavation if the excavation is being conducted in violation of this act. This could result in:
 - Project delays and increased costs.
 - Administrative penalties of \$2,500 to \$50,000 per violation, depending on the severity of damages.
 - Rework, extra cost, conflict, public inconvenience, or damage to private property or other public infrastructure.

Utility coordination can be a challenge; however, effective communication will reduce time, cost, and frustration and improve public service with a few simple tips.

- Develop and maintain a good working relationship with the utility stakeholders. Consider having one staff person become the go-to for the utility coordination process and requirements.
- Recognize the importance of long-range road/street/bridge project planning with utility project planning. Hold periodic meetings with utility stakeholders, municipal authorities, and political subdivisions to discuss future road/street and utility projects.
- Understand the timeline, as the term "long-range" can vary from one entity to another. For some, a long-range project is at least one year away. For others, a long-range project is at least five years away. Regardless of this variation, sharing updates on future projects provides an opportunity to collaborate.
- Communicate early and often from project planning through design and construction.

In conclusion, utility coordination in Pennsylvania plays a pivotal role in ensuring the efficient and safe management of infrastructure projects within the public right-of-way. By facilitating collaboration among various stakeholders, including utility companies, government agencies, and construction teams, effective coordination minimizes disruptions, enhances safety, optimizes resources, and improves project timelines. Emphasizing the importance of communication and proactive planning, Pennsylvania's utility coordination efforts contribute to the successful execution of infrastructure projects that benefit communities, businesses, and the overall economy of the state.

Resources available:

1. Underground Utility Line Protection Law PA Act 287 of 1974 as amended by Act 50 of 2017 – [https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/li/uconsCheck.cfm?yr=2017&sessInd=0&act=50#:~:text=287\)%2C%20entitled%2C%20%22An,the%20providers%20of%20such%20service%2C](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/li/uconsCheck.cfm?yr=2017&sessInd=0&act=50#:~:text=287)%2C%20entitled%2C%20%22An,the%20providers%20of%20such%20service%2C)
2. Underground Utility Line Protection Law Users Guide – <https://www.pa1call.org/pocs/68a17ede-7779-4ad3-afae-653ace1e1e8a/User-Guide-Text>
3. Coordinate PA (CPA) is a web application developed by Pennsylvania One Call System (POCS) to support public works (governmental) and utility project planning and coordination within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It provides a spatial, map-

based look at underground utility and public works projects. In the application, users can:

- a. View public works and underground utility projects, identifying opportunities for coordination and collaboration when projects overlap in space and time.
 - b. Communicate and provide required notifications to all underground stakeholders on large and/or complex underground projects, from conception through construction, to prevent underground damage throughout the life of the project. Additional details can be found here: Coordinate PA website <https://www.pa1call.org/pocs/7f31d515-d97c-4158-ae3b-eb1eddeb3039/Coordinate-PA> and/or PA One Call Users Guide <https://www.pa1call.org/pocs/68a17ede-7779-4ad3-afae-653ace1e1e8a/User-Guide-Text>
4. Monthly Coordinate PA webinar – see <https://www.pa1call.org/pocs/117b8650-3f40-4caf-bc82-fa4b4067e976/Events> for schedule and link to join
 5. Pennsylvania 811 You Tube Channel – https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=pennsylvania+811
 6. PennDOT’s Utility Relocation Management System User Guide – <https://www.penndot.pa.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/RoadDesignEnvironment/RoadDesign/Right-ofWayandUtilities/UtilityRelocation/Documents/URMS%20Training/URMS%20User%20Guide.pdf>

Applications now open for the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP), a new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law discretionary grant

The Federal Highway Administration's Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) is now open for applications. ATIIP is a new competitive grant program created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to plan, design, and construct infrastructure that will provide substantial additional opportunities for walking, bicycling, and other forms of active transportation.

“The safety of vulnerable road users is of utmost importance,” said **Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt**. “The funding we’re making available today will help improve connectivity and address barriers to safe, accessible and equitable pedestrian and bicycle networks, especially in disadvantaged communities and those where many people rely on public transportation.”

Eligible applicants include local or regional governmental organizations, including metropolitan planning organizations or regional planning organization or councils; multicounty special districts; States; a multistate group of governments; or Indian tribes.

The deadline for [applications](#) is 11:59 p.m. (EDT) Monday, June 17, 2024.

For more information, please visit the [ATIIP website](#), attend one of the upcoming webinars detailed below, or ask questions directly by emailing atiip@dot.gov.

Webinar Dates

Webinar attendees must register in advance to attend one of the following sessions:

- ATIIIP Discretionary Grant NOFO Information Session – Tuesday, April 9, 2024, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: [Register here](#)
- ATIIIP Discretionary Grant NOFO Information Session for Tribes – Wednesday, April 10, 2024, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.: [Register here](#)

Both webinars will be recorded and posted on the ATIIIP website.

Discretionary Grants Spotlight

PennDOT's [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act \(IIJA\) webpage](#) offers the latest news and information on federal grant opportunities available through the IIJA, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Grant opportunities, application guides and other resources on federal grant funding are added as they become available, so please visit often to see if any of these grant funding programs are an opportunity that would benefit your community.

The following is a list of federal grant programs currently accepting applications:

Congestion Relief Program

The [Congestion Relief Program \(CRP\)](#) offers grants for innovative congestion relief solutions in heavily congested urban areas. Its goals include reducing highway congestion and associated economic and environmental costs, optimizing highway capacity, and promoting multimodal transportation. CRP involves improving intermodal integration, encouraging off-peak travel, and implementing pricing strategies for parking, roadway use, and congestion mitigation. Eligible applicants include States, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Cities, and Municipalities in urban areas with over one million residents.

- The deadline for requesting PennDOT support is April 8, 2024.
- The deadline to apply for this program is Monday, April 22, 2024, 11:59 p.m. EST.

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)

The [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) Grant Program](#) funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. Funds for the fiscal year (FY) 2024 SS4A grant program are to be awarded on a competitive basis to support planning, infrastructural, behavioral, and operational initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users, including pedestrians; bicyclists; public transportation, personal conveyance, and micro-mobility users; motorists; and commercial vehicle operators.

The SS4A program provides funding for two types of grants: Planning and Demonstration Grants and Implementation Grants, each having their own deadlines:

- [Implementation Grant](#) applications have a single deadline:
 - May 16, 2024, by 5 PM ET for FY24.

- [Planning and Demonstration Grant](#) applicants have three deadlines for FY24:
 - April 4, 2024, by 5 PM ET;
 - May 16, 2024, by 5 PM ET; and
 - August 29, 2024, by 5 PM ET.

Bridge Investment Program

The goals of the [Bridge Investment Program \(BIP\) - Large Bridge grants](#) are to 1) Improve safety, efficiency and reliability of the movement of people and freight over bridges; 2) Improve the overall condition of bridges in the United States and 3) Provide financial assistance that both leverages and encourages non-federal contributions from sponsors and stakeholders involved in the planning, design and construction of eligible projects that will cost more than \$100 million.

- The deadline for requesting PennDOT support for FY 2025 is July 1, 2024.
- The deadline for applying for FY 2025 funds in this rolling application process* is August 1, 2024, 11:59 p.m. EST.

*Submissions will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis until program funding is expended or the notice of availability is superseded.

Guide for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grant Applications

PennDOT has added a [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\) 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.

Resources

[Guide for Developing BIL Grant Proposals \(PDF\)](#)

[Key Notices of Funding](#)

[Opportunity | US Department of Transportation](#) 

[Federal Transportation Funding:](#)

Grants Resources

USDOT Discretionary Grant Resources

The U.S. Department of Transportation (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 upcoming Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) for key programs within the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), as well as adjacent programs that support BIL and IRA objectives. This list is not comprehensive, and the agency will periodically update it with additional programs and revised dates as appropriate. Both resources can be found on PennDOT's IIJA page at <https://www.penndot.pa.gov/Doing-Business/Pages/IIJA.aspx>.

USDOT Navigator: <https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator>

Federal Transit Administration BIL Website: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/BIL>

Key Notices of Funding Opportunity: <https://www.transportation.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/key-notices-funding-opportunity>

FREE Transportation and Land Use Planning – Assistance and Training

PennDOT Connects offers **free** assistance and training to municipalities to better integrate local land use development and transportation goals into the state transportation planning process.

Any municipal staff member, government official or planning partner is eligible to request **free** planning assistance or personalized training. Simply fill out the PennDOT Connects Training/Assistance request form by [clicking here](#).



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](#).

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. The full [PennDOT Connects Policy \(PDF\)](#) includes collaboration requirements and planning considerations, as well as the implementation timeline and more.

PennDOT Connects Newsletter

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