

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
RELATED TO DVRPC BOARD ACTION ITEMS

May 22, 2014

Agenda Item:

2a. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Action

PA13-74: PA13-74: Arcola Road Bridge Over Perkiomen Creek (CB# 155), (MPMS #16400) Montgomery County

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: May 12, 2014

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia: We do not support this project unless bike lanes are included on the bridge. The Arcola Rd Bridge is adjacent to the Perkiomen Creek Trail. Arcola Rd has bike lanes going west to provide access to a large business park to the west and the south end of Evansburg State Park is to the east. This bridge is shown as link in the Montgomery County Trails plan between the Perkiomen Creek Trail and the future Evansburg Trail.

Response: Bike lanes are not proposed on the bridge. The bridge will have a five foot shoulder in each direction.

2b. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Action

PA13-75: PA13-75: Approval of Automated Red-Light Enforcement (ARLE) Round 4 (2013 funding) Projects (Various MPMS#s), Various Counties

From: Leonard Fritz

County: Gloucester County

Zip Code: 08094

Date Received: May 13, 2014

Comment/Question: I am glad to see that these improvements are going to take place. They will hopefully improve traffic movement, which would reduce congestion, excessive fuel consumption, and reduce driver frustration.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

From: Bridget Chadwick

County: Montgomery

Zip Code: 19095

Date Received: May 21, 2014

Comment/Question: Please see attached comment.

Response: Thank you for your comment, which was forwarded to the project manager.

3. FY 2015 Work Program Amendment: SHRP2 C20 - Innovative Local Freight Data

From: Patricia Horrocks

County: Chester County

Zip Code: 19330

Date Received: May 12, 2014

Comment/Question: Please consider that freight lines go across state lines as well as county lines. Delaware and Maryland rail routes are important to Chester County. Herr's potatoes are delivered by rail. PAH

Response: This is an excellent point regarding the region's freight network. Indeed, the freight network is truly multi-jurisdictional (this applies to all freight modes) and freight facilities and freight shipments routinely traverse different municipalities, counties, and states.

Directly to the point being made, we work very closely with Delaware DOT and WILMAPCO on freight matters. In fact, their representatives are members of the Executive Committee of the DVRPC freight advisory committee.

Also, for the upcoming freight data project, one of the primary objectives is to create a tool that adjacent MPOs, states, and others may be readily able to replicate and integrate with our work (i.e., across boundaries).

If you are not familiar with the DVRPC freight mapping and data platform (called PhillyFreightFinder), we invite you to peruse it at your leisure at the following link:
<http://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/PhillyFreightFinder/>

Thank you very much for this comment and your interest in the Innovative Local Freight Data project.

4. Authorization to Open a Public Comment Period for the Amendments to the Connections 2040 Long-Range Plan, Draft FY 2015 TIP for Pennsylvania; and the Draft Conformity Finding of the Connections 2040 Long-Range Plan, FY 2014 TIP for New Jersey, and FY 2015 TIP for Pennsylvania

From: Jeff Taylor

County: Gloucester County

Zip Code: 08096

Date Received: May 14, 2014

Comment/Question: The TIP under review for New Jersey should be the FY 2015 TIP.

Response:

Thank you for your comment.

The current and DVRPC Board adopted TIP for the New Jersey portion of the DVRPC Region is the Fiscal Year 2014 TIP for New Jersey, and covers FY14, FY15, FY16, and FY17. The "FY2014 TIP for New Jersey" refers to the full 4-year program, not to an individual fiscal year. This is the program that will be included in the conformity determination conducted by DVRPC. New Jersey DOT updates the TIP for New Jersey on alternate years and the TIP for New Jersey is scheduled to be updated next year. A new conformity determination will then be performed on that program.

From: Brian Pugliese

County: Montgomery

Zip Code: 19426

Date Received: May 18, 2014

Comment/Question: SEPTA, state, regional, and local leaders need to bring the restoration of passenger train service to the forefront of regional planning. Pottstown, West Chester, and Quakertown are long overdue for restoration of rail service. Other regions of the country are adding to their rail networks; we simply need to restore ours. It is tragic that we have fallen so far in this regard.

Response: The Connections 2040 Long-Range Plan amendment includes two new rail extensions in the Pennsylvania side of the region that are being added to the fiscally-constrained financial plan. There are several rail and bus rapid transit lines already included in the New Jersey portion of the region. Due to the overwhelming need to preserve and maintain existing lines and vehicles, the region was not able to fund any extensions previously, but Act 89 allows for the region to start addressing desired system expansion projects.

Comment Re: TIP Action PA13-75 : Approval of Automated Red-Light Enforcement (ARLE) Round 4 (2013 funding) Projects.

Motorists who drive through intersections on red lights increase the odds that they will cause a crash and injure/kill anyone (pedestrians, cyclists and motorists) involved.

“The Automated Red Light Enforcement (ARLE) program targets high crash intersections within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with the implementation of an automated system that records violations by drivers who run red lights and are fined for their violation. “

ARLE program “teaches” motorists that they will be punished for going through red lights and is therefore a deterrent to scofflaws.

“The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation distributes the funds via a grant program specifically designated for transportation safety improvements. Municipalities may apply for these grant moneys to pay for eligible roadway-enhancement, safety, and congestion projects.”

Unfortunately of the three eligible activities:

- (1) roadway enhancement¹
- (2) safety²
- (3) congestion

congestion is the most problematic (see footnotes about roadway enhancements and safety projects) because it is fixing the “symptoms” not the upstream cause of congestion inadequate transit/pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure (see analysis below).

Of the 17 projects (#13 and #14, copied below) only two will directly benefit pedestrians and cyclists.

13) Traffic Calming Program (MPMS #102279), City of Philadelphia - \$1,000,000 (\$400,000 for Final Design/ \$600,000 for Construction)

Funds will be used for the design and construction of traffic calming measures at approximately 15 to 25 locations throughout the City of Philadelphia.

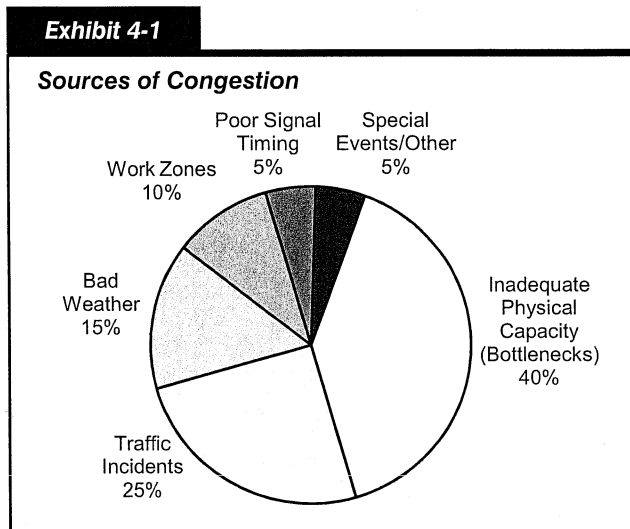
14) Broad Street Pedestrian Crossing Improvements (MPMS #102280), City of Philadelphia - \$1,200,000 (\$400,000 Final Design/ \$800,000 Construction)

Funds will be used for the design and construction of brick crosswalk replacement at two signalized intersections and pavement marking upgrades at crosswalks on South Broad Street in Philadelphia.

¹ “enhancement” funding often is awarded to pedestrian/bicycle/transit facilities and infrastructure; “enhancement” implies that the infrastructure is an “extra” that will further improve the quality of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. It clouds the fact that pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure along many roads in the DVRPC region are poor (sometimes abysmal)

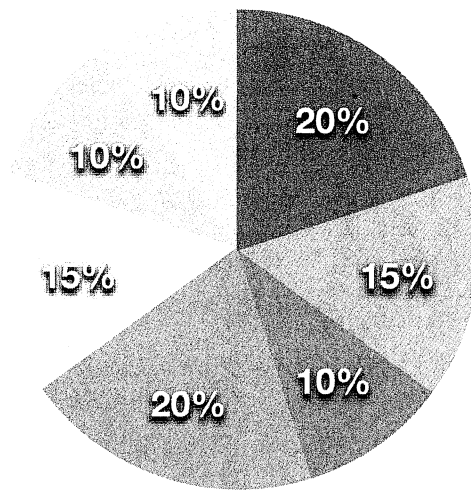
² Some safety projects are for the benefit of motorists only.

Unfortunately, congestion is often analyzed in an over simplistic way as is done in FHWA's piechart of congestion sources [2010 Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges, and Transit: Conditions & Performance Report to Congress]. This piechart suggests that congestion is caused primarily by: inadequate physical capacity, 40% of the time, and events that "limit the availability of this capacity" such as traffic incidents, bad weather, and construction, 55% of the time. Poor signal timing is blamed for 5% of congestion.



Source: Federal Highway Administration.

This analysis does not consider the impact of missing and/or inadequate transit service, transit travel information and facilities, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and the impact of events e.g. bad weather, on transit/biking/walking travel decisions. I have created a piechart, below, with some reasons why people choose to drive instead of using transit, walking or biking. (Percentages are used for illustrative purposes only and not based on information from a specific transportation study). Congestion will occur downstream of travel decision points when too many people choose to drive instead of using transit, walking or biking, and are traveling in the same general direction at the same time.



- inadequate transit service 20%.
- missing/deficient transit travel information en route 15%.
- low quality transit stop/station facilities 10%.
- missing/substandard sidewalks 20%.
- missing/substandard crosswalks 15%.
- missing/substandard bicycle lanes or shoulders 10%.
- missing/inconvenient transit connections 10%.