DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

BOARD COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting June 24, 2021

Location:  *This meeting was held via remote webinar*

Membership Present

| New Jersey Department of Community Affairs | Sean Thompson |
| New Jersey Department of Transportation | Mike Russo |
| New Jersey Governor’s Appointee | Rudy Rodas |
| Pennsylvania Department of Transportation | Jim Mosca |
| Pennsylvania Governor’s Appointee | Gina Burritt |
| Pennsylvania Governor’s Policy & Planning Office | Nedia Ralston |
| Bucks County | Evan Stone |
| Chester County | Rich Brahler |
| Bucks County | Brian O’Leary |
| Delaware County | Christine Reuther |
| Delaware County | Thomas Shaffer |
| Montgomery County | Val Arkoosh |
| Montgomery County | Scott France |
| Montgomery County | Matthew Edmond |
| Burlington County | Tom Stanuikynas |
| Camden County | Lou Cappelli |
| Camden County | Andrew Levecchia |
| Gloucester County | Theresa Ziegler |
| Mercer County | Leslie Floyd |
| City of Chester | Peter Rykard |
| City of Philadelphia | Mark Squilla |
| City of Philadelphia | Chris Puchalsky |
| City of Camden | Eleanor Sharpe |
| City of Camden | (not represented) |
| City of Trenton | Jeffrey Wilkerson |

Non-Voting Members

| Federal Highway Administration | Brian Goodson |
| New Jersey Division | Gene Porochniak |
| Pennsylvania Division | |
| U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Region III | (not represented) |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II | (not represented) |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III | (not represented) |
| Federal Transit Administration, Region III | (not represented) |
| Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority | Jody Holton |
| New Jersey Transit Corporation | Lou Millan |

6/24/2021
Call to Order - Chair’s Comments

Board Chair, Mark Squilla, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Chair Squilla asked if there was any press in the meeting and noted that DVRPC would be recording the meeting.

Public Comments on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items

No public comments were stated.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Minutes of Meeting of May 27, 2021.

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Mr. Thompson, seconded by Mr. Russo, to approve the minutes of May 27, 2021.
Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

2. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Actions

Elizabeth Schoonmaker, Associate Director, Transportation Programs, presented the following TIP actions to the Board:

a. PA21-42: ADA Ramps (MPMS #12842 and 12824), Various Counties

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by removing the construction (CON) phases of the ADA Ramps 2020 Bucks and Montgomery Counties project (MPMS #12842) (FY21: $1,978,000 STU/Toll Credit; FY22: $5,978,000 STU/Toll Credit) and the 2019 Philadelphia ADA Ramps project (MPMS #12824) (FY21: $1,000,000 STU/Toll Credit; FY22: $1,426,000 STU/Toll Credit; FY23: $4,000,000 STU/Toll Credit; and FY24: $1,000,000 STU/Toll Credit) from the TIP. The ADA Ramps 2020 Bucks and Montgomery Counties (MPMS #12842) CON phase will go from $7,956,000 STU/Toll Credit to $0 and the 2019 Philadelphia ADA Ramps (MPMS #12824) CON phase will go from $7,426,000 STU/Toll Credit to $0.

Each of these projects were Let for construction, fully funded, and regularly authorized, under the previous FY2019 TIP and the FY2021 TIP programmed funding is no longer needed.

ADA Ramps 2020 Bucks and Montgomery Counties (MPMS #12842)

This project will improve ADA facilities along several main roadways in Bensalem, Bristol, Falls Township, Morrisville, Lower Makefield, Lower Southampton, New Hope, and Northampton in Bucks County, and Abington, Horsham, Upper Dublin, and Upper Moreland in Montgomery County. These roadways include Bristol Pike, Lincoln Highway, Delmorr Avenue, River Road, Moreland Road, Bustleton Pike, Buck Road, State Road, Otter Street, Trenton Avenue, Oxford Valley Road, Swamp Road, and Lincoln Highway. A total of 496 ramps in this project area have been identified as having ADA barriers.

2019 Philadelphia ADA Ramps (MPMS #12824)

This project will improve the ADA facilities along several main roadways in the City of Philadelphia including Henry Avenue, Stenton Avenue, Godfrey Avenue, Clarissa Street, Wayne Avenue, Bethlehem Pike, Mount Airy Avenue, Easton Road, Wadsworth Avenue, Girard Avenue, Cheltenham Avenue, Princeton Avenue, Willits Road, Spring Garden Street, Whitby Avenue, Kingsessing Avenue, Parkside Avenue, Chester Avenue, 52nd Street, 42nd Street, and 65th Street.

Financial constraint will be maintained by adjusting other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed. All projects listed contribute to fiscal constraint.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.
The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Arkoosh that the Board approve TIP action:

PA21-42, PennDOT’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by removing the construction (CON) phases of the ADA Ramps 2020 Bucks and Montgomery Counties project (MPMS #12842) (FY21: $1,978,000 STU/Toll Credit; FY22: $5,978,000 STU/Toll Credit) and the 2019 Philadelphia ADA Ramps project (MPMS #12824) (FY21: $1,000,000 STU/Toll Credit; FY22: $1,426,000 STU/Toll Credit; FY23: $4,000,000 STU/Toll Credit; and FY24: $1,000,000 STU/Toll Credit) from the TIP.

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

b. PA21-43: PA 309 Connector: Allentown Road to Souderton Pike (HT2) (MPMS #77211), Montgomery County

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by increasing the construction (CON) phase by $6,250,000 in the 1st four years of the TIP and then reprogramming $9,662,000 of the CON phase. The total CON estimate is $41,209,000.

The first part of this action is to increase the CON phase by $6,250,000 by increasing FY21 by $6,200,000 STU/$1,550,000 State 581; FY22: $1,200,000 STU/$300,000 State 581 and then decrease FY26 by $2,400,000 STU/$600,000 State 581). This cost increase is due to increased cost for noise walls based on height and location, increased length of the multi-use path, increased stormwater management facilities, drainage items, amended soils necessary to acquire the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, increased Erosion and Sediment (E&S) mitigation necessary for contaminated groundwater concerns, increased retaining wall and culvert costs based on constructability concerns with underground utilities, additional Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) facilities, increased moment slab and geosynthetic slope costs, and temporary Signals along Detour Route.

The second part of this action is reprogramming $9,662,000 by removing $9,514,000 NHPP/$148,000 State 581 match (FY22: $1,442,000 NHPP; FY23: $4,993,000 NHPP/$127,000 State 581; FY24: $2,993,000 NHPP; and FY25: $86,000 NHPP/$21,000 State 581) and then adding $4,779,000 STP/$4,735,000 STU/$148,000 State 581 (FY22: $1,949,000 STP/$86,000 STU/$148,000 State 581; FY23: $2,830,000 STP/$1,656,000 STU; FY24: $2,993,000 STU). This reprogramming of funding is because NHPP funds were programmed on the project but it has been discovered that this project is not eligible to use NHPP funding, as this project is not on the National Highway System (NHS) and eligible STP/STU funding has to be used instead for the federal source of funding.
The PA 309 Connector Project is intended to create an improved connection between PA 63 (near the Lansdale Interchange of I-476) and PA 309 (near the southern terminus of the Sellersville Bypass) in Bucks County. Phase 1, which created a bypass around Mainland village in Montgomery County and reconstructed and widened Wambold Road from PA 63 (Sumneytown Pike to Allentown Road, was carried under MPMS #16438 and completed in 2012 and is open to traffic. Phase two (2), also known as ‘HT2’ (MPMS #77211), is in final design, with construction anticipated to begin in late summer 2021. Phase three (3), also known as ‘HT3’ (MPMS 105803) is scheduled to be let for construction in December 2026.

HT2 will include the following improvements: Extend Wambold Road past its current end at Allentown Road up to the intersection of Cowpath Road and Township Line Road; Reconstruct and widen Township Line Road from Cowpath Road to Souderton Pike; Realign and signalize the intersection of Penn Street and Township Line Road; Signalize the intersection of Township Line Road and Souderton Pike.

HT3 will reconstruct and widen Township Line Road between Souderton Pike and the Sellersville Bypass, make a physical connection to PA 309, and is listed under MPMS #105803.

Financial constraint will be maintained by adjusting other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed. All projects listed contribute to fiscal constraint.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Ms. Arkoosh, seconded by Mr. Mosca that the Board approve TIP action:

PA21-43, PennDOT’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by increasing the construction (CON) phase by $6,250,000 in the 1st four years of the TIP and then reprogramming $9,662,000 of the CON phase. The first part of this action is to increase the CON phase by $6,250,000 by increasing FY21 by $6,200,000 STU/$1,550,000 State 581; FY22: $1,200,000 STU/$300,000 State 581 and then decrease FY26 by $2,400,000 STU/$600,000 State 581). The second part of this action reprogramming $9,662,000 by removing $9,514,000 NHPP/$148,000 State 581 match (FY22: $1,442,000 NHPP; FY23: $4,993,000 NHPP/$127,000 State 581; FY24: $2,993,000 NHPP; and FY25: $86,000 NHPP/$21,000 State 581) and then adding $4,779,000 STP/$4,735,000 STU/$148,000 State 581 (FY22: $1,949,000 STP/$86,000 STU/$148,000 State 581; $2,830,000 STP/$1,656,000 STU; FY24: $2,993,000 STU).

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

c. PA21-44: Montgomery Avenue Bridge over Amtrak at 30th Street (CB) (MPMS #57276), City of Philadelphia
PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by increasing funding in the 1st four years of the TIP by advancing construction (CON) funding in FY21 and FY22 by $4,900,000 (FY21: $1,098,000 STU/$862,000 BOF/$368,000 State 183/$122,000 Local; FY22: $1,075,000 STU/$885,000 BOF/$368,000 State 183/$122,000 Local) and by adding a previously obligated utility (UTL) phase back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $980,000 ($784,000 BOF/$147,000 State 183/$49,000 Local). The CON phase is also being reduced by $4,900,000 ($3,887,000 STU/ $33,000 BOF/ $735,000 State 183/$245,000 Local) in FY25, which is in the 2nd four years and not part of the federal TIP.

This project’s Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) have come in and the project is scheduled to be let in July 2021. This project is for the complete reconstruction of a five span, concrete encased steel thru girder bridge over Amtrak's Northeast Corridor along with historically sensitive approach paving restoration, utility, and railroad electrification work. The new bridge will be a single span steel girder bridge founded atop new reinforced concrete abutments.

Financial constraint will be maintained by adjusting other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed. All projects listed contribute to fiscal constraint.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Floyd that the Board approve TIP action:

PA21-44, PennDOT’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by increasing funding in the 1st four years of the TIP by advancing construction (CON) funding in FY21 and FY22 by $4,900,000 (FY21: $1,098,000 STU/$862,000 BOF/$368,000 State 183/$122,000 Local; FY22: $1,075,000 STU/$885,000 BOF/$368,000 State 183/$122,000 Local) and by adding a previously obligated utility (UTL) phase back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $980,000 ($784,000 BOF/$147,000 State 183/$49,000 Local). The CON phase is also being reduced by $4,900,000 ($3,887,000 STU/ $33,000 BOF/ $735,000 State 183/$245,000 Local) in FY25.

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

d. PA21-45: Mattson Road over the West Branch of the Chester Creek (MPMS #103528), Delaware County

PennDOT is requesting, on behalf of Delaware County, that DVRPC accept into the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania, and its additional funding, a new $2,000,000 sSTP funded bridge project, Mattson Road over the West Branch of the Chester Creek, (MPMS #103528), by programming the following phases: PE ($350,000 sSTP) in FY21; FD ($300,000 sSTP) in FY22; ROW ($20,000 sSTP) in FY22, UTL ($15,000 sSTP) in FY22, and CON ($1,112,000 sSTP in FY22 and $203,000 sSTP in FY23). These are
additional funds to the DVRPC region made available by PennDOT to Pennsylvania counties that implemented the $5 Registration Fee that was a component of the PA Act 89 funding structure (described further below).

This project is for the Bridge rehabilitation or replacement of the Mattson Road bridge spanning over the West Branch of the Chester Creek in Chester Heights Borough, Delaware County.

PennDOT has offered flexibility for this funding mechanism by allowing the local match for the discretionary sSTP funds to be provided via the county funding provided for the County bridge project that is being advanced with the $5 Registration Fee revenues. Delaware County has identified three bridge replacement projects for the 50% match that the $5 registration fee funds will be used on. The three bridges that have been identified are MPMS #103535 – Manchester Road Bridge Replacement (CB# 94), MPMS # 98216 – Michigan Avenue Bridge Replacement (CB #210), and MPMS #103525 – Paper Mill Road Bridge Replacement (CB #221). These three projects are programmed for an 80/20 split with the state on the TIP, where the County will be responsible for 20% of the costs and will be reimbursed by the state for the 80% portion as part of a retro-reimbursement agreement. Michigan Avenue Bridge Replacement and Paper Mill Road Bridge Replacement are part of the County Bridge Line Item program (MPMS #95447), while Manchester Road Bridge is part of the Municipal Bridge Line Item Program (MPMS #102105). The total County contribution for these three bridge replacements is approximately $2,007,000, meeting the fifty percent match requirement.

PA Act 89 established a special fund within the state treasury called the “Local Use Fund.” As of January 1, 2015, a county has been permitted to pass an ordinance to implement a fee of $5 for each vehicle registered to an address located in that county. The $5 county fee is collected by PennDOT at the time a vehicle is initially registered, at time of registration renewal, and at time of transfer of registration plate. These funds will be used by the county for transportation purposes or be allocated by the county in accordance with Section 9010(c) of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code. In the DVRPC region, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties have implemented the $5 fee.

PennDOT had committed to make funding opportunities available to counties who had taken steps to enhance their transportation networks by passing resolutions to collect the $5 Vehicle Registration Fee enabled by Act 89. Initially, PennDOT reserved $2,000,000 for each county that had passed a resolution, with a 50% local match commitment required to secure the program funding. Any remaining funds after an initial offering were then made available to the rest of those same counties again. If any funds remained after that offering, they would be used for other Local Bridge Bundling programs. This opportunity is no longer available due to funds now being spent out on this program. This initiative supports the 6,663 locally owned bridges statewide, 1,755 of which are structurally deficient/in poor condition.

Financial constraint will be maintained as these are additional funds to the region.
Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Ms. Reuther, seconded by Mr. Mosca that the Board approve TIP action:

PA21-45, PennDOT’s request, on behalf of Delaware County, that DVRPC accept into the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania, and its additional funding, a new $2,000,000 sSTP funded bridge project, Mattson Road over the West Branch of the Chester Creek, (MPMS #103528), by programming the following phases: PE ($350,000 sSTP) in FY21; FD ($300,000 sSTP) in FY22; ROW ($20,000 sSTP) in FY22, UTL ($15,000 sSTP) in FY22, and CON ($1,112,000 sSTP in FY22 and $203,000 sSTP in FY23).

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

e. PA21-46: Moredon Road Bridge (CB #44) (Act 13) (MPMS #103381), Montgomery County

Montgomery County has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new $3,870,000 bridge project, Moredon Road Bridge (CB #44) (Act 13), (MPMS #103381), to the TIP using the County’s remaining Act 13 balance from previous years' allocations and also using funds from the County’s $5 vehicle registration fee revenue to fully fund the project and program the project as follows: FY21: $200,000 Act 13 for Preliminary Engineering; FY22: $200,000 Act 13 for Final Design; FY23: $20,000 Act 13 for Right-of-Way; FY24: $50,000 Act 13 for Utility; FY24: $1,030,000 Act 13 for Construction; and FY25: $2,370,000 Local ($5 Fee) for Construction. These are additional funds to the region.

This project will replace Montgomery County’s Bridge #44 Moredon Road Bridge in Abington Township, which is a three span concrete encased steel I-beam bridge. Built in 1932, the 187-foot long bridge has a curb-to-curb width of 24 feet. The bridge is categorized as “Structurally Deficient” due to the superstructure, substructure, and deck being given a “4-Poor” condition rating.

Financial constraint will be maintained as these are additional funds to the region.

f. PA21-47: Regional Rail RRX Safety Enhancements Program (MPMS #116233), Various Counties

SEPTA has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new $5,000,000 Regional Rail Grade Crossing Safety Enhancements Program (MPMS #116233) using $3,335,000 from FHWA’s Commuter Authority Rail Safety Improvement (Carsi) grant and $1,611,000 State 1514/$54,000 Local funds from MPMS #107011, SEPTA’s Safety and Security Improvements Program from the Transit element of the TIP, as the match. The CarSi funds are additional funds to the region.

8

6/24/2021
This project includes dynamic envelope marking improvements at 20 grade crossings and the installation of four-quadrant gates at three (3) of those locations. FHWA’s MUTCD defines dynamic envelope marking as an area extending on both sides of the track for an un-dimensional distance. However, the distance between the rail and the dynamic envelope pavement marking should be equal to 6 feet unless otherwise advised by the operating railroad or light rail transit agency. Per FHWA’s request, the funds will be added to the Highway Program and awarded to PennDOT, which will subaward the funds to SEPTA.

The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2020, appropriated $50,000,000 ($40,000,000 in grants awarded January 2021) in Commuter Authority Rail Safety Improvement (CARSI) Grants Program funding to be awarded by FHWA for highway-railway crossing-related projects, including those that separate or protect grades at crossings; rebuild existing railroad grade crossing structures; relocate highways to eliminate grade crossings; and eliminate hazards posed by blocked grade crossings due to idling trains. By statute, an eligible commuter authority must have experienced at least one accident investigated by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) between January 1, 2008, and December 31, 2018, and for which the NTSB issued an accident report. From 2010 to 2019, there was an increase in the number of incidents and fatalities at highway-railway crossing across the country. Over this 10-year period, the overall number of incidents and fatalities increased by 6.3 percent and 10.1 percent respectively, while the overall number of injuries declined by 10.5 percent.

Financial constraint will be maintained as the FHWA funds are additional funds to the region and the matching funds are already programmed in MPMS #107011, SEPTA’s Safety and Security Improvements Program.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Ms. Arkoosh, seconded by Ms. Reuther that the Board approve TIP actions:

PA21-46, Montgomery County’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new $3,870,000 bridge project, Moredon Road Bridge (CB #44) (Act 13), (MPMS #103381), to the TIP and program the project as follows: FY21: $200,000 Act 13 for Preliminary Engineering; FY22: $200,000 Act 13 for Final Design; FY23: $20,000 Act 13 for Right-of-Way; FY24: $50,000 Act 13 for Utility; FY24: $1,030,000 Act 13 for Construction; and FY25: $2,370,000 Local ($5 Fee) for Construction. These are additional funds to the region.

PA21-47, SEPTA’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new $5,000,000 Regional Rail Grade Crossing Safety Enhancements Program (MPMS #116233) using $3,335,000 from FHWA’s Commuter Authority Rail Safety Improvement (CARSI) grant and $1,611,000 State 1514/$54,000 Local funds from
Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

g. PA21-48: Vehicle Overhaul Program (MPMS #60638), SEPTA

SEPTA has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by reducing the Capital Asset Construction (CAP) phase of the Vehicle Overhaul Program (MPMS #60638) in FY21 by $21,777,000 ($10,793,000 Section 5307/$6,629,000 Section 5337/$4,215,000 State 1514/$140,000 Local). The FY21 CAP phase is being reduced from $104,453,000 ($42,080,000 Section 5337/$23,632,000 Section 5307/$13,950,000 CARES/$23,992,000 State 1514/$799,000 Local) to $82,676,000 ($35,451,000 Section 5337/$12,839,000 Section 5307/$13,950,000 CARES/$19,777,000 State 1514/$659,000 Local).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SEPTA has realized decreased Vehicle Overhaul program costs in FY20 and FY21. Subsequently, less FY21 funding is needed to support the program.

SEPTA’s Vehicle Overhaul Program (VOH) provides for the systematic replacement or upgrade of systems on SEPTA’s rolling stock. Vehicles are scheduled for overhauls during their service lives based on vehicle type. A vehicle must receive periodic overhauls if it is to optimize performance throughout its useful service life. Prudent fleet management requires a program of preventive maintenance for optimal fleet reliability, service quality, efficient performance, and passenger comfort. Advanced scheduling of vehicle preventive maintenance allows SEPTA to purchase material and produce rebuilt components in an efficient and effective manner. In addition to vehicle overhauls, this program also provides for vehicle campaigns. Campaigns address both critical items and vehicle equipment upgrades and modifications, which are accomplished on a fleet-wide basis. The Vehicle Overhaul Program will allow SEPTA to continue its overhaul of rolling stock, thus ensuring continued safe and reliable service.

Additionally, this program includes $6,000,000 (FY21-FY22) to support the installation of Automatic Passenger Counters (APCs) on the bus, trolley, and Norristown High Speed Line fleets. APCs will provide SEPTA with accurate, reliable, and consistent data for stop level ridership, passenger loads, running time, on time performance, and speed.

Financial constraint will be maintained by adjusting other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed. All projects listed contribute to fiscal constraint.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:
MOTION by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Arkoosh that the Board approve TIP action:

PA21-48, SEPTA’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by reducing the Capital Asset Construction (CAP) phase of the Vehicle Overhaul Program (MPMS #60638) in FY21 by $21,777,000 ($10,793,000 Section 5307/$6,629,000 Section 5337/$4,215,000 State 1514/$140,000 Local). The FY21 CAP phase is being reduced from $104,453,000 ($42,080,000 Section 5337/$23,632,000 Section 5307/$13,950,000 CARES/$23,992,000 State 1514/$799,000 Local) to $82,676,000 ($35,451,000 Section 5337/$12,839,000 Section 5307/$13,950,000 CARES/$19,777,000 State 1514/$659,000 Local).

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

3. Request to Open Public Comment Period for the Draft DVRPC Connections 2050 Long-Range Plan (LRP), Draft DVRPC FY2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for New Jersey and the Draft Statewide TIP (STIP) for NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT, and the Draft DVRPC Conformity Determination of the Draft Connections 2050 LRP, Draft FY2022 TIP for New Jersey, and the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania

Kwan Hui, DVRPC Manager, NJ Capital Programs, explained that staff is requesting to open a public comment period for the purpose of gathering public and agency comments on the Draft DVRPC Connections 2050 Long-Range Plan for Greater Philadelphia (LRP), Draft DVRPC FY2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for New Jersey and the Draft Statewide TIP (STIP) for NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT, and the Draft DVRPC Conformity Determination of the Draft Connections 2050 LRP, Draft FY2022 TIP for New Jersey, and the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania, with proper public notification, as well as to publish the draft documents, to post them on the Internet, to make copies available at certain public libraries (as appropriate), and to hold public meetings, which will likely be held online.

Federal law and planning regulations require the development of a Long-Range Plan (LRP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which conform to air quality standards in order for the metropolitan region to be eligible to receive and spend federal transportation funds. The MPO creates the LRP and TIP in cooperation with state and transit operators, and must provide the public opportunity for input and comment. A minimum 30-day public comment period must be conducted prior to a formal Board action to adopt the LRP and TIP. The final conformity rule promulgated by US EPA (40 CFR 51 and 93) requires that the LRP or TIP must not cause new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of federal standards; that Transportation Plans and Programs demonstrate conformity to the applicable State Implementation Plans (SIP) for air quality.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

6/24/2021
MOTION by Mr. Cappelli, seconded by Mr. Stanuikynas that the Board authorize:

Staff to open a public comment period for the purpose of gathering public and agency comments on the Draft DVRPC Connections 2050 Long-Range Plan (LRP), Draft DVRPC FY2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for New Jersey and the Draft Statewide TIP (STIP) for NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT, and the Draft DVRPC Conformity Determination of the Draft Connections 2050 LRP, Draft FY2022 TIP for New Jersey, and the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania, with proper public notification, as well as to publish the draft documents, to post them on the Internet, to make copies available at certain public libraries (as appropriate), and to hold public meetings, which will likely be held online.

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

4. 2050 Population and Employment Forecasts

Ben Gruswitz, DVRPC Manager, Socioeconomic and Land Use Analytics, explained that DVRPC worked with the newly formed Socioeconomic and Land Use Analytics committee (SLUAC), comprised of county planning partner staff, and a new land use model, UrbanSim, to forecast regional population and employment growth between 2015 and 2050:

- population is expected to increase by 8.8 percent in that period.
- employment is expected to grow by 15.4 percent. The forecast estimates a 15.4% increase in employment from 2015 to 2050. While this appears to be out of sync with the population growth rate of 8.8% over the same period, the divergence of the observed data from the 2015 to 2019 is the chief reason for this anomaly. From 2019 to 2050, the population growth rate is forecasted to be 7.6%, while employment is forecasted to be 6.9%.

See below for more details about the SLUAC, UrbanSim, and the process to develop these population and employment forecasts.

As a part of our long-range planning activities, DVRPC is required to maintain forecasts with at least a 20-year horizon, or to the horizon year of the long-range plan. The 2050 population and employment forecasts are a key component of the forthcoming Connections 2050 Plan (due to be brought to the DVRPC Board for adoption in September 2021). These forecasts will be used in the 2050 Plan and 2022 NJ TIP, 2021 PA TIP, and Connections 2050 Long-Range Plan, Air Quality Conformity Analysis, which will begin its analysis period on June 24, 2021.

Improvements to Process and Methods

This forecast effort commenced a number of updates to both the processes and methodologies for DVRPC’s forecast. A key part of the process was the formation of the SLUAC, a group of county staff around the region tasked with demographic and economic analysis in their roles at their respective agencies who convened to discuss, review, and advise on a number of DVRPC initiatives. This team’s first project was a
collaboration to aid in the assembly and review of forecast input data, as well as providing feedback on the results of a new land use model for forecasting and other agency analysis, called UrbanSim.

The UrbanSim model offers predictive capabilities based on factors such as household demographics, rental and ownership costs, agglomerating relationships between employment sectors, and location choices for workers and businesses based on changes in highway and transit travel time in our travel model. Growth is constrained in areas that are built out or not seen to have redevelopment opportunities.

Within the UrbanSim platform, SLUAC members can access, review, and comment on data used in the model as well as model results. Counties can view where the model is allocating growth at the municipal/planning district, census block, and travel model zonal levels.

By simultaneously simulating residential and non-residential models, with some interplay between the two, UrbanSim enables integration and efficiency in the forecasting process. For example, employment gains in a municipality will make proximity to that employment more attractive to more households than if that growth didn’t occur.

While the Board-adopted forecast stays high-level, with simple totals for population and employment at county, municipal, and district geographies, the travel model breaks the region into small zones about the size of block groups. It also requires information on households, size, income, vehicle availability, worker counts, etc on the residential end. On the employment side, it needs information about jobs in 14 different economic sectors. Because UrbanSim allocates to census blocks and has multiple socioeconomic variables as outputs, it can simultaneously aggregate all the attributes the travel model needs at the zonal level while summing totals to the municipal, county, and regional level for the adopted forecast.

By integrating the allocation process on all levels, county partners had the opportunity to ensure these factors were considered and determine the results of the municipal and sub-municipal growth. This will lead to better travel model results and growth assumptions in small areas ahead of corridor and station area studies planned in years to come that will be based on the results of this 2050 forecast.

Perhaps the biggest step forward on the data collection end of this endeavor was the creation of a region-wide real estate development pipeline using recently built and proposed buildings from DVRPC’s CoStar commercial real estate development subscription, parcel and permitting data from various counties, articles on proposed development in local publications, and insights and records our county staff members provided on the scale and time of development project planned throughout the region. UrbanSim first allocates known growth supplied to it from the real estate development pipeline data in each simulation year, before employing location choice models to allocate the remaining growth to the most attractive areas with capacity for development. More than half the population growth and a significant share of the employment growth is from known growth from recent projects, those going
development review in our municipalities, or interpretations of significant masterplans around the region.

Assumptions on Recent Trends, Pandemic Changes, and Future Outlook

Starting from a 2015 base year, the 2015-2019 years of the land use model simulations were less a forecast, and more a reflection of observed data from statistical agencies such as the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Bureau of Economic Analysis. One of the key areas of discussion with counties as we started our forecasting efforts was around pre-pandemic trends for population and employment. Population growth in the latter half of the previous decade didn’t match up to the fast pace predicted in our previous forecast. This slower growth is due to an aging population, slower birth rates, and significant declines in international migration, which did less to counteract the net negative impact of domestic migration.

Sadly, the pandemic has exacerbated the trends for deaths and births so much so that deaths may exceed births in the region a few years earlier than they would have if pre-pandemic trends had continued with their trajectory. Immigration, already down from the policies of the previous administration, slowed to a near halt as the virus spread. These population factors will undoubtedly see some rebound in the near-term as vaccinations increase and cases wane, but post-pandemic behaviors will need to change course significantly to see growth like the region has previously experienced. Fortunately, there were signs of domestic migration within the region becoming less negative prior to the pandemic and some believe the region stands to gain from some of the flight from more expensive markets and those experiencing more acute effects of climate change.

The forecast estimates an 8.8% increase in population from 2015 to 2050, down from the prior forecast of 11.5% growth from 2015 to 2045.

Employment in the latter half of the last decade had a counter-narrative to the population story. By 2019 the region had achieved about 67% of the employment growth predicted by 2045 in the previous forecast. Despite the slowing pace of working age population growth, the unemployment rate declined to historic lows as employment growth out of the Great Recession extended at a healthy rate for longer than many predicted it would.

But then the pandemic recession came, and job declines broke records for depth and steepness. BLS data used in our model parameters showed regional total employment declined more than 6.5%, returning the region to an employment level only 0.7% higher in 2020 than it was in 2015. However, due to the speed of vaccine distribution, various stimulus measures, and high levels of household savings, many experts are now moving their predictions for an employment rebound to occur sooner than previous recessions. While not all employment sectors will exceed pre-pandemic levels, the employment forecast assumes total employment will reach 2019 levels by 2023 or 2024 and then see a smoother, slower trendline moving to 2050.

The forecast estimates a 15.4% increase in employment from 2015 to 2050. While this appears to be out of sync with the population growth rate of 8.8% over the same period, the divergence of the observed data from the 2015 to 2019 is the chief reason for this
anomaly. From 2019 to 2050, the population growth rate is forecasted to be 7.6%, while employment is forecasted to be 6.9%.

DVRPC Executive Director Barry Seymour noted that this is one of the more important products that DVRPC has put together. It gets used by a wide range of stakeholders, from developers to school districts. Mr. Seymour thanked DVRPC’s partners for their assistance with putting this together.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Mr. Stanukynas, seconded by Ms. Ziegler that the Board approve:

The 2050 Population and Employment Forecasts.

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

5. DVRPC Self-Certification of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming Process

Patty Elkis, DVRPC’s Deputy Executive Director, explained that federal regulations for metropolitan planning (23 CFR 450 and 49 CRF 613) require the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to certify to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) concurrent with the submittal of the proposed TIP to the FHWA and FTA, that its transportation planning and programming process is being conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements.

The regulations list specific requirements, which must be addressed. DVRPC’s compliance with these requirements is outlined below:

1. Improvements to the transportation system in the region have been the result of a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive performance-based multimodal transportation planning process.
2. The transportation planning process, including the adoption of the TIP and Long-Range Plan, is consistent with the Clean Air Act and is in conformance with the applicable State Implementation Plans.
3. Private citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, other affected employee representatives, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties were provided with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the TIP, Long-Range Plan, and planning process.
4. The TIP is financially constrained and includes a financial plan that demonstrates how the TIP can be implemented, indicates resources from both public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be available, and is supportive of innovative financing techniques.
5. The Congestion Management Process requirements for non-attainment Transportation Management Areas have been met.
6. A performance-based planning approach to transportation decision making is being integrated into the development of the LRP, TIP, CMP, and other appropriate regional planning documents through coordination with state and federal partners for the development of performance measures and targets.

7. A Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan has been jointly developed by DVRPC and its state, county, and transit agency partners who periodically convene to maintain and update the plan.

8. DVRPC is working with its partners to include two additional planning factors from the FAST Act of 2015 that MPOs are now required to consider in the scope of the planning process; they are: improving resiliency and reliability of the transportation system by reducing stormwater impacts of surface transportation and enhancing travel and tourism for the region.

9. The provision of 49 CFR part 20 regarding restrictions on certain influencing activities has been met.

10. DVRPC’s planning process is administered in accordance with FTA Circular 4702.1, Title VI, and DVRPC employment practices comply with FTA Circular 4704, Equal Employment Opportunity Guidelines for Grant Recipients.

11. Environmental justice analysis for low income and minority populations is being included in the regional transportation planning process.

12. DVRPC’s programs are conducted consistent with regulations regarding disadvantaged business enterprise programs.

13. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and US DOT regulations entitled Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 have been met.

14. DVRPC’s 4-year Federal Certification Review was conducted by FTA and FHWA in October 2018 and resulted in several Commendations, several Recommendations, and one Corrective Action which was related to the need to update the Title VI Assurances that are contained in all contracts that DVRPC lets. DVRPC updated the necessary Assurances effective January 14, 2019 which was prior to the completion of the Certification Review Final Report, dated February 20, 2019, and the report indicates that the Federal Review Team considers this Corrective Action addressed.

15. Regarding transit agency representation on MPO policy boards, DVRPC elects to continue to use the exception provision specified in 23 CFR Part 450.310 (d)(4) by reaffirming Board Resolution B-FY-15-004, while continuing to include SEPTA, NJ Transit and DRPA/PATCO as participating, non-voting members of the Board and as voting members of the RTC and continue to provide an explicit opportunity for transit agency comment during Board meetings for every agenda Action Item.

16. DVRPC certifies that it qualifies for this exception by meeting the particular specifications which states: the MPO operates pursuant to a state law that was in effect on or before December 18, 1991.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Ms. Floyd, seconded by Mr. O’Leary that the Board certify:
That the DVRPC Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming Process is in conformance with federal regulations implementing the FAST Act, MAP-21, the Clean Air Act Amendments, and other federal legislation and Executive Orders as per resolution number B-FY21-005.

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

6. Election of Fiscal Year 2022 Board Officers

Barry Seymour, DVRPC Executive Director, first thanked the FY2021 Board Officers for their service, and especially Board Chair Councilman Mark Squilla.

Mr. Seymour presented the nominating committee recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022 (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022) DVRPC Board Officers. Mr. Seymour asked if there were any nominations from the floor. Hearing no nominations from the floor, the Board considered the recommended slate of candidates from the nominating committee.

The recommended candidates are as follows:

Chair – Lou Cappelli, Camden County  
Vice Chair – Gina Burritt, PA Governor’s Appointee  
Secretary – Christine Reuther, Delaware County  
Treasurer – Leslie Floyd, Mercer County

Lou Cappelli from Camden County, with Andrew Levecchia as alternate, was selected to represent the New Jersey counties on the Executive Committee. Christine Reuther from Delaware County, with Thomas Shaffer as alternate, was recommended to serve as the Pennsylvania counties representative on the Executive Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Arkoosh that the Board approve:

The slate of nominees for FY2022 DVRPC Board Officers as recommended by the Nomination Committee.

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

PRESENTATION ITEM

7. Municipal Management of Extreme Heat

Adam Beam, DVRPC Senior Research Analyst, Office of Energy and Climate Change Initiatives, explained that warming temperatures combined with increased urban development have resulted in unbearable heat for many of the region’s residents.
Vulnerable populations—including persons with disabilities, the elderly, racial and ethnic minorities, and the poor—bear the brunt of the ill effects. This brochure summarizes the causes of current and future extreme heat, the impacts of extreme heat on vulnerable populations and infrastructure, and how municipalities can mitigate, prepare for, and respond to extreme heat events.

DVRPC Executive Director Barry Seymour noted that this is Adam Beam’s last meeting at DVRPC and wished him well.

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

8. **One Minute Reports**

Mike Russo, NJDOT, reported that there are grant opportunities available in New Jersey. The Safe Routes to School Program grants are available and the application deadline closes October 14. These grants are available for infrastructure improvements that encourage students in grades K through eight to walk and bike to school safely. The application period has been extended this year in consideration of the many challenges that schools have been facing as a result of COVID. The plan is to overlap the current school year with the upcoming school year to give individuals sufficient time to get their applications together. Similarly, the deadline for applications for DOT state aid programs is July 1 and this includes applications for our municipal aid, transit village, bikeways, and safe streets programs. Combined, these programs provide over $164 million annually in TTF funded grants to communities throughout New Jersey. As of this past Monday, June 21, the DOT has returned its employees to their work sites at 50 percent capacity. Mr. Russo wished Elizabeth Schoonmaker well on her upcoming retirement.

Lou Cappelli, Camden County, thanked Eliz Schoonmaker for her work and wished her best wishes on her retirement. Mr. Cappelli reported that Camden County’s employees will start returning to the office on July 6. Mr. Cappelli noted that Camden County’s summer concert series is starting in the county’s parks.

Evan Stone, Bucks County, reported that on June 15 the county launched a new website and has now gone from a dot com to a dot gov. The county also began its update to the Comprehensive Plan.

Christine Reuther, Delaware County, reported that Delaware County is adopting an ordinance to take over 213 acres of sustainable area in the center part of the county which will become the county's largest park. There is a lot of older growth forest and it serves a lot of the important functions such as stormwater mitigation, and will mitigate some traffic congestion along PA Route 320. Delaware County is opening the second round of its Greenways Grant program and there will be $5 million that is available for our municipalities and nonprofits. It will be going to projects that either enhance greenspace or trails or to acquire properties that solve a variety of problems, including stormwater and transit issues. The county has eliminated the match for that in hopes of encouraging some of our low and moderate income municipalities to apply.
Valerie Arkoosh, Montgomery County, congratulated and thanked Elizabeth Schoonmaker on her upcoming retirement. Ms. Arkoosh reported that she and Commissioner Lawrence led a ceremonial groundbreaking for Montgomery County’s justice center project. This will tie three projects into one, including the justice center, county courthouse, and Hancock Square Park. Our county courthouse will be breaking ground officially in the next two weeks or so and our new justice center will be starting construction soon. This is a substantial infrastructure project, it is going to be a little over $300 million to build and will just about double the size of our existing courthouse and will be a game changer in Norristown for the functioning of our courts and a number of other court related offices in the county. That construction project will last about two and a half to three years, but we are extremely excited to get that underway. The county is hoping for LEED certification upon completion. Montgomery County is holding a Planning Smarter Meeting via Zoom on June 30 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Mark Squilla, City of Philadelphia, thanked the OTIS staff for helping him through the year and thanked DVRPC for their assistance as well, while serving as Board chair.

Jody Holton, SEPTA, reported that SEPTA’s ridership has been going up. It is around 20 percent of normal on the regional rail system. Transit ridership is at 45 percent of normal. SEPTA is continuing to run robust transit service and is running at 93 percent of normal service. Although seating restrictions have been lifted SEPTA is not seeing pre-COVID crowding issues. The current schedules will stay intact through the summer and around September 1 they will change.

Lou Millan, NJ Transit, reported that NJ Transit is seeing growth in ridership. NJ Transit has lifted its mask requirements at outdoor stations. NJ Transit has a new app called Map My Ride so you can see where your bus or train is. Mr. Millan congratulated Ms. Schoonmaker on her upcoming retirement.

Tonyelle Cook-Artis, DRPA, congratulated Elizabeth Schoonmaker on her upcoming retirement. Ms. Cook-Artis reported that DRPA is close to getting starting bids on Franklin Square Station. DRPA gave the Chinatown district an update on the station recently. PATCO ridership is up to 30-35 percent. DRPA will start returning to the office on July 12 and will be returning in phases, starting one day a week and gradually going up to 4 days a week in December.

Donna Rendeiro, NJ Department of Planning Advocacy, reported that with the health emergency being lifted our extension for center expiration now has a date of January 11. We need to get 74 towns as far along through the process as possible in six months, which is going to be a difficult task. We don't think we're going to get everybody through, but we think we're going to be able to make good progress with developing a plan now. We will be starting to go back into the office on July 7 twice a week and it is likely by September we will be back in the office full time.

9. Executive Director’s Report
   a. Federal Infrastructure Proposal
Mr. Seymour reported that the House T & I committee approved their bill called INVEST and the house could vote by the end of next week. The bill includes $540 billion over five years with some progressive steps forward including responsibilities around metropolitan planning in the area of resilience and equity, safety for vulnerable populations, recognition of Vision Zero, and probably more required planning around carbon and climate. There is more sub-allocation for regional decision-making as part of that house bill with about 1,500 earmark projects. Within our nine counties, there are 37 specific earmarks included in that house bill totaling over $128 million, including $87 million in Pennsylvania and $42 million in New Jersey. There are projects in at least nine different Congressional districts across our region, with most in the $2 to $4 million range. The largest single project is in Burlington County in Congressman Kim's district. That project would get $17 million for Route 130 Florence-Columbus Road. On the Senate side, the Environment and Public Works Committee did approve their bill but there are three different committees that have different responsibilities around the transportation bill so that is just the first committee that deals with roads and is separate from what the others handle. The President and Congressional leaders are still in negotiations over a separate infrastructure funding proposal so we will see if those two eventually will all get merged.

b. Breaking Ground Conference

Mr. Seymour called the Board’s attention to the fact that the Breaking Ground Conferences have been completed. Mr. Seymour thanked Karen Cilurso and other DVRPC staff for helping to put those together. Mr. Seymour also thanked Commissioners Cappelli, Arkoosh, Moskowitz, Sean Thompson, and Mike Carroll who helped moderate the sessions. The sessions were well attended, with over 1,000 registrants participating.

c. Staff Reorganization

Mr. Seymour reported that the Executive Committee voted to approve Patty Elkis as the new Deputy Executive Director, but also last month the Executive Committee approved three new directors. Karin Morris is now Director of Community Planning, Mike Boyer is Director of Regional Planning and Greg Krykewycz is Director of Transportation Planning. Between the three of them they have 65 years of experience at DVRPC.

The following committee reports were provided for the Board’s review:

(1) Regional Technical Committee
(2) Information Resources Exchange Group

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was stated.

NEW BUSINESS
No new business was stated.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m. on a

MOTION by Mr. Rykard, seconded by Mr. O'Leary.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, and related nondiscrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. DVRPC's website, www.dvrpc.org, may be translated into multiple languages. Publications and other public documents can be made available in alternative languages and formats, if requested. DVRPC public meetings are always held in ADA-accessible facilities and in transit-accessible locations when possible. Auxiliary services can be provided to individuals who submit a request at least seven days prior to a meeting. Requests made within seven days will be accommodated to the greatest extent possible. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by DVRPC under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint. Any such complaint may be in writing and filed with DVRPC's Title VI Compliance Manager and/or the appropriate state or federal agency within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information on DVRPC's Title VI program, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, please call (215) 592-1800 or email public_affairs@dvrpc.org.

I certify that this is a true and correct copy.

_____________________________________

Renee Wise, Recording Secretary