

DVRPC NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

LANDMARK LEGISLATION FOCUSES ON A BALANCED, SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

In the brief time since President Bill Clinton signed the new Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (already nicknamed TEA 21), two facts are very apparent. First, TEA 21 is the largest transportation legislation ever enacted. And second, TEA 21 will be very good for the country if funding levels are actually provided.

DVRPC, as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Delaware Valley, plays an important role in the overall context of TEA 21. The core requirements of ISTEA (the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991) are still intact, with the emphasis on transportation planning in conjunction

with state and local officials, and transit operators. DVRPC will be responsible for interacting with all groups to ensure the best possible linkage between transportation improvements, land use, and environmental planning. The key change in the new legislation is the consolidation of 16 metropolitan and 23 statewide planning "factors" into seven broad "areas" to be considered in the planning process, both at the metropolitan and statewide level. And once again, public involvement will play a major role in all planning aspects.

The most obvious result of TEA 21 is the money — lots of it! The legislation promises to spend more than \$200 billion on transportation over the next six years

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TEA 21'S SEVEN PLANNING FACTORS

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) requires metropolitan planning organizations throughout the country to consider the following factors in planning for the future transportation needs of the region:

1. **Support** the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency;
2. **Increase** the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. **Increase** the accessibility and mobility options available to people and to freight;
4. **Protect** and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life;
5. **Enhance** the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and for freight;
6. **Promote** efficient system management and operation through the development of a congestion management plan; and
7. **Emphasize** the preservation of the existing transportation system.



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COLIN A. HANNA TAKES THE HELM AS BOARD CHAIR

Utilizing his vast business experience and knowledge of the Commission, Colin A. Hanna has assumed the position of DVRPC Fiscal Year (FY) 1999 Board Chair. The July 23, 1998 Board meeting affirmed the important role that Hanna's leadership will play in shaping the vision of the agency in the year ahead. Addressing such issues as Year 2020 Regional Airport Capital Improvement Program, the Transportation

and a life-long resident of Chester County. He was appointed to the DVRPC Board in 1995 and served as Board Chair in FY 1997; he brings years of experience in advertising, marketing, and management to the position. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, he was commissioned an officer in the U.S. Navy. In 1969, he joined CBS Radio in New York, returning to the Delaware Valley to work with WCAU Radio and TV. In 1976, he

became President of Industrial Advertising, Inc., which at the time was Chester County's largest advertising agency. After selling his ownership in the agency, he continued in the marketing field as management and executive search consultant until 1991, when he sold The Bank Executives Network. He then founded PC Helper, a computer support and maintenance firm specializing in small business networks; he recently sold this firm to fully commit his time to his job as County Commissioner.

Joining Hanna as DVRPC officers for the fiscal year are Vice Chairman Jerrold D. Colton (New Jersey

Governor's Appointee); Secretary Timothy J. Carson (PA Governor's Appointee) and Treasurer Ridgely P. Ware (Burlington County).

July Board Action

As required by a federal mandate, the DVRPC Board voted to adopt the

Annual Self Certification Resolution, which certifies that the urban transportation planning process is being carried out in compliance with all applicable federal requirements. It also certifies that the local process to enhance the participation of the general public, including the transportation disadvantaged, has been followed in developing all plans and programs.

In action that will help to preserve the region's small private use airports, the Board approved the 1999 Regional Airport Capital Improvement Program. This program, in compliance with the Year 2020 Regional Aviation Systems Plan, identifies and recommends funding for small regional airports that exhibit the greatest need for public support to make improvements.

According to Roger Moog, DVRPC's Manager of Aviation Planning, "These small reliever airports are vital to the regional aviation system. Without the support of federal and state funds, the existence of these properties could be threatened."

Noting the need to relieve traffic congestion in one of the area's busiest transportation corridors, the Board acknowledged the inclusion of the Transportation Investment Study for the I-295/76, NJ Route 42 Interchange in DVRPC's FY 1999 Unified Planning Work Program. The area, characterized by extensive and still growing suburban residential development, serves diverse transportation demands.

As the major route for commuter and recreational traffic, these highways often exceed system capacity. As a result, major congestion affects state, county and local roadways. The study, which will include public input, will provide a framework in which to make informed decisions on the major transportation investments needed in this area. %

Investment Study for the proposed I-295/76, NJ Route 42 Interchange, and the Annual Self Certification of the Regional Transportation Planning Process, the Board meeting set the standard for what promises to be an exciting year.

Colin Hanna is Chairman of the Chester County Board of Commissioners

AIRPORT EXPANSION PROMISES BETTER SERVICE


Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) serves as the center of the region's aviation system, geographically and from an aviation traffic perspective. This growing hub airport, which provides the vast majority of scheduled airline service to and from the four-state Philadelphia metro area, is also the air traffic control center for most of the 23 suburban general aviation and reliever airports operating in the region. (The suburban airports provide the locations for corporate and private aircraft operations which stimulate economic development and divert aircraft from PHL to reduce commercial delays.)

Recognizing PHL's capacity for growth as well as the Philadelphia area's potential as a focus for both foreign and domestic travelers, the City of Philadelphia and US Airways in 1997 committed to additional expansion of passenger terminals at PHL. To increase international

flights and destinations in Europe, Asia and Central America from five to 16, it is necessary to construct a new overseas Terminal with 20 total gates. This increase would establish PHL as US Airways' International Hub. In addition, commuter terminal F will be constructed to better process commuter and feeder flights for domestic and international connections. Terminal 1, which will require construction of additional highway access ramps, will be constructed west of existing terminal A, while Terminal F will be built east of Terminal E. DVRPC is currently working to simulate several alternative roadway configurations for the new ramps and determine necessary capacity, based on projected traffic demand and peak usage behavior of departing passengers.

The DVRPC 2020 Regional Aviation Systems Plan (RASP), adopted in 1995, also saw a need for a new commuter runway (8-26) to reduce traffic on the air-

port's main runways. This is an acknowledgement of the increasing growth of air traffic through PHL. Runway 8-26 is now under construction and completion is anticipated by the end of 1999.

While the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), through its Airport Capital Improvement Program, is providing significant financial support for the construction of runway 8-26, costs for the new terminal must be addressed with local resources. The City has received an advantageous rating in the bond market and City Council has authorized the issuance of bonds to fund the construction, with participation from US Airways. Ramp construction funding, which is an eligible project for FHWA support, must have regional endorsement. Given the nature of the economic benefits that will accrue, and the increased mobility options to travelers, regional support for use of highway funds on this project is anticipated. 



LANDMARK LEGISLATION (continued from page 1)

and guarantees that most of the money will be appropriated. Many states will see huge jumps in spending, among them Pennsylvania, and to a lesser degree, New Jersey. The Pennsylvania share of TEA 21 funding amounts to about \$1.322 billion annually. This represents 5% of the national total and is about \$400 million more than the last year of ISTEA. It should be noted, however, that \$1.322 billion is a six-year average figure, with funding levels at their lowest in 1998 and increasing throughout the authorization period to 2003. In New Jersey, TEA 21 funding amounts to about \$675 million as a six-year annual average, or 2.6% of national funding. This is about \$150 million more per year

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IMPROVING SERVICES FOR THE REGION'S HOMELESS

It is estimated that approximately 7,000 people are homeless on any given day within the nine-county DVRPC region, and approximately 38,000 people are homeless at some point during an average year. What drives individuals and a growing number of families to seek refuge in community shelters and on the streets of our cities? Is it the lack of adequate income? The scarcity of affordable housing? Do they battle with substance abuse problems, or suffer from mental illness?

In a recent study, *Homelessness in the Delaware Valley*, DVRPC examined the magnitude of homelessness in our region and found that in most cases poverty, as well as numerous other social and physical challenges, is the leading cause of homelessness. Poverty results in an inability to maintain a permanent home. The study states that homelessness is a significant and growing problem that is expected to escalate, fueled by poverty and the result-

ing inability of the very poor, whether working or on public assistance, to afford the monthly cost of housing.

The condition of poverty can be long-standing, resulting from an inadequate education or lack of job skills, or it may be caused by a single economic hardship, such as job loss or catastrophic illness. Previous DVRPC housing studies have recommended changes in land use policies and presented alternatives for improving and expanding the region's supply of affordable housing units. Homelessness, however, is not strictly a land use issue. Its primary cause is instead economic instability and hardship brought on and worsened by social challenges, such as a lack of basic skills and job training, limited employment opportunities, substance abuse, mental illness and dysfunctions within the family structure.

Effectively reducing homelessness will require that the region's leaders address much larger issues, including economic

disinvestment and job loss (particularly in the region's urban areas) and an underlying lack of affordable housing opportunities close to employment. The report also notes that before any other problem can be successfully resolved, the immediate need for shelter, food, clothing and other necessities must be met.

Finally, the report provides recommendations for improving services for the region's homeless to assist them as they transition to self-sufficiency, including supporting at-risk households; improving access to available benefits; expanding opportunities for short term shelter; expanding and integrating case management; increasing the capacity of long term placement facilities; improving available support services; and increasing the supply of permanent, affordable housing.

Homelessness in the Delaware Valley is available by contacting DVRPC's Regional Information Services Center. ☎



Diplomatic Relations

The Honorable Manuel Lombera, Consul General of Mexico, responds to a gesture of friendship between his country and the United States as he receives a gift from DVRPC Executive Director John Coscia. Mr. Lombera addressed a recent meeting of the Delaware Valley Goods Movement Task Force; his discussion with the committee encompassed Mexican-U.S. trade relations, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and Mexican ties with the Delaware Valley. Mr. Lombera's appearance underscored the task force's commitment to fostering global perspectives and maintaining a high profile for freight in the transportation planning process.

MOVING DOWN THE LINE

The region has not seen a new rail start since passenger service was restored to Atlantic City in April, 1989. Now, thanks to an improved financial climate and increased demand for transportation, several rail starts are under consideration and moving through the planning process with several likely to be up and running within a decade.

One of the projects well along the planning pipeline is the Schuylkill Valley Metro, proposed to run 62 miles between Center City Philadelphia and Wyomissing, just west of Reading. Currently envisioned as a light rail line with some street running in Philadelphia, the line could also be operated as regional rail. Rapid growth along the corridor is providing a strong impetus to move forward on this project, as is a TEA 21 funding earmark. No passenger rail service has operated west of Norristown since 1981. A feasibility study is nearing completion, and SEPTA is planning to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Major Investment Study (MIS) to start this fall.

Another project under consideration is the Cross County Corridor. Running along Conrail's Dale Secondary and Morrisville Branch between Glenloch in Chester County and Morrisville in Bucks, this 48-mile circumferential route would connect activity centers, such as King of Prussia, Fort Washington, and Willow Grove, with existing radial rail lines. Five rail alternatives, including both regional and light rail, have been studied, in addition to a busway and a Transportation System Management (TSM) improvement, as well as three alignment variations in the vicinity of Norristown and



King of Prussia. A Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) should be submitted to SEPTA this fall.

The Route 100 Extension to King of Prussia is potentially the most productive rail start under consideration. It is relatively short, about 2.5 miles, but would provide direct rail access to King of Prussia from the 69th Street Terminal in Upper Darby and from Norristown, and would offer an alternative to overloaded buses and congested highways. This would be built as a spur to the existing Route 100 in the vicinity of Hughes Park and would be powered from a third rail. It will be considered as an adjunct to the Schuylkill Valley MIS.

The City of Philadelphia would like to extend rail transit service along the Roosevelt Boulevard Corridor to Northeast Philadelphia and is planning to proceed with an MIS. The line would be built as an extension of either the Market Frankford Line or the Broad Street Subway, and would be compatible with the connecting line. In either case, the line would run in the median of Roosevelt Boulevard (US 1),

but whether to build it as an elevated line or a subway has not been determined.

Delaware and Chester counties have expressed interest in extending the existing R3 Elwyn Line to Wawa on US 1, and perhaps to West Chester. Also under consideration is an extension from Wawa to Painters Crossroads (intersection of US 1 & US 202), using an abandoned segment of the Octoraro Line. A consultant will be hired to conduct a feasibility study.

Bucks County would like to see regional rail service restored on the Quakertown and Stony Creek Branches. The Quakertown Branch is the former Reading mainline to Bethlehem running north from a junction with the R5 Doylestown Line at Lansdale. The proposed service would run to the park-and-ride lot on PA 309 at Shelly, just north of Quakertown.

On the New Jersey side of the Delaware River, NJ TRANSIT is moving toward implementing rail service on the Camden - Trenton Line, using the right-of-way of Conrail's Bordentown Secondary. This will likely be built as a light rail line and may include street running in Camden to access the waterfront and in Trenton to reach the capitol area. NJ TRANSIT is considering hiring a contractor to design, build, operate, and maintain (DBOM) the line.

NJ TRANSIT is also looking at restoring regional rail service on the West Trenton Line between West Trenton and Newark. The line last saw passenger service in 1981 and currently serves as Conrail's high clearance freight route between northern New Jersey and points west. LS Transit Systems has been selected to conduct an Environmental Assessment. ♻️

WELFARE AND BI-STATE COMMUTING

While “reverse commute” initiatives have long been of interest to transportation planners and economic development specialists, they are now generating considerable attention among job developers and human services professionals as a result of welfare reform. New work requirements and the five-year lifetime limit on federal welfare benefit eligibility contained in the “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996” have created a pressing need for welfare recipients to enter the workforce as quickly as possible. Although helping welfare recipients move off the public assistance roles and into the workforce has always been a goal of welfare reform, time limits and other work

requirements have greatly raised the stakes of failure to achieve that goal.

To succeed in this job market, many persons making the transition from welfare-to-work will have little choice but to spend more time commuting greater distances. Initiatives to improve access-to-jobs and strengthen inner city connections to the regional labor market will be especially important for persons without private automobiles.

In *Access-To-Jobs: Addressing Barriers to Bi-State Commuting*, DVRPC examines some of the transportation challenges faced by tens of thousands of welfare-to-work employees when looking across state lines for potential job opportunities. The report, funded by the Federal Transit Administration, focuses on the welfare

population in the region’s core cities of Camden, Philadelphia and Trenton. It identifies transportation barriers that limit bi-state work trips from portions of southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey and develops recommendations for overcoming these impediments. Such barriers include a lack of knowledge of out-of-state jobs, cost and administrative burdens, and psychological obstacles that deter those living in urban areas from looking for work in suburban areas. The report also identifies interstate commutes and corridors that those seeking work can access via public transit services.

Access-to-Jobs: Addressing Barriers to Bi-State Commuting is available by contacting DVRPC’s Regional Information Services Center. ☎



DVRPC PROVIDES REGIONAL ON-LINE MAPPING FOR INTERNET USERS

Visitors to DVRPC's website (www.dvrpc.org) are in for a unique on-line experience. In addition to viewing area transportation statistical data, internet users can access a cutting edge interactive on-line mapping program using the Geographical Information System (GIS).

Anyone utilizing an internet browser can now gather and view specific regional maps and information. DVRPC's Regional Information Network allows the viewer to select a Delaware Valley map and overlay specific data about the surrounding area. Information currently accessible through the site ranges from major roads, municipal boundaries, business parks, shopping centers and commuter rails to population, income and employment data.

GIS is a data management system that links computers, people and data in order to display graphically what used to be seen in table form. With GIS, geography can be analyzed individually or in relationship to other data sources.

DVRPC developed its on-line mapping site in response to requests for regional information from the public. "We view our website as an increasingly important window to the world, where we can provide information directly to the residents of the Delaware Valley and allow them to access our resources, such as our on-line GIS program," said Barry Seymour, Assistant Executive Director for Regional Planning at DVRPC.

DVRPC is continuing to develop and expand its website to provide additional services including a calendar of meetings, a link to a regional database of municipal information, and a feature that allows a search of the site by topic or keyboard. Additional data layers will continue to be added to the on-line mapping program, as well.

Bookmark DVRPC at www.dvrpc.org and visit us soon in cyberspace.



Summer Days — Summer in the Delaware Valley means hot, hazy conditions that are significant because of the danger of ground-level ozone. Marking the kick-off of this year's ozone season was an event held at 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, where trains carrying officials from New Jersey and Delaware emphasized the role of transit in alleviating ozone conditions. Shown above is the New Jersey contingent, who then enjoyed a luncheon with such dignitaries as PA State Representative Carole Rubley; Judith Katz, Director of the Air Protection Division of the US Environmental Protection Agency; Mary McKenzie, Deputy Secretary of the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control; and Robert Tudor, Assistant Commissioner for Policy and Planning, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

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than under ISTEA.

TEA 21 preserves ISTEA's emphasis on a more balanced transportation system and on the environmental and social consequences of these investments. Additional funding is earmarked for public transit, bicycle and pedestrian accessibility, and environmental planning. The goals of the legislation address increasing safety, ensuring a cleaner environment, rebuilding America, and providing a balanced approach to infrastructure investments. According to Rodney E. Slater, Secretary of the US Department of Transportation, "The bill embodies President Clinton's vision of an integrated transportation system, helping to ensure Americans' prosperity and quality of life into the new century."

Specifically, health and safety will be addressed through programs to increase seat belt use, reduce crashes at highway-rail crossings, and fight drunk driving through incentives for states to adopt

tough blood alcohol concentration standards. The legislation strengthens proven strategies to safeguard public health and the environment through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program and Transportation Enhancements. Expanded opportunities will be available for all Americans through new access-to-job programs, as well as through an effective Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program. Record transportation investment is prescribed in a balanced approach through a guaranteed commitment to highways and bridges, public transit, intermodal projects, and advanced technologies, such as Intelligent Transportation Systems.

While Tea 21 provides the framework for a balanced, sustainable future, DVRPC will work to carry out the ideals embodied in the intent of the law — that is to make sound decisions regarding the dollars that are entrusted to us for the betterment of this region. ●

PPA CONFERENCE OFFERS "FOUNDATIONS FOR SUCCESS"

Make your plans now to attend the 1998 Pennsylvania Planning Association (PPA) Annual Conference at Center City's Doubletree Hotel, October 4-6, 1998.

The PPA Conference is organized around the theme of *Foundations for Success*. Sessions and speakers have been selected to provide practical information that planners, allied professionals, local officials, and activists can take back to

their communities or organizations. Highlights include:

- 48 concurrent sessions and over 100 speakers
- Six distinct tracks for all interests
 - Planning and Zoning Fundamentals
 - Growth and Change
 - Community Revitalization
 - Planning and Design
 - Transportation and Infrastructure
 - Practice and Management
- Mobile workshops featuring: King of Prussia's *Edge City*; the Blue Route, Conshohocken; Manayunk; Neighborhood Revitalization in North and West Philadelphia; Market East and the Convention Center; Old City and Independence Park; Fairmount Park; and Defense Conversion Activities in south Philadelphia.

■ A special luncheon presentation by Philadelphia Police Commissioner John Timoney on public safety as a foundation for successful planning on Monday, October 5th.

■ Evening receptions at the Doubletree Hotel, October 4th, after the Avenue of the Arts Festival; and at City Hall, October 5th.

The 1998 PPA Conference should be the best ever. Together with the Foundation for Architecture's *21st Century Neighborhoods Conference*, October 7-8, the PPA Conference can help you discover ways to shape the future of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth.

Registration materials for the full conference are available from PPA at (717) 236-2039.

Mark your calendar and register now. ☎

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DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
THE BOURSE BUILDING
111 SOUTH INDEPENDENCE MALL EAST
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106-2515

PHONE: 215-592-1800
FAX: 215-592-9125
WEBSITE: www.dvrpc.org

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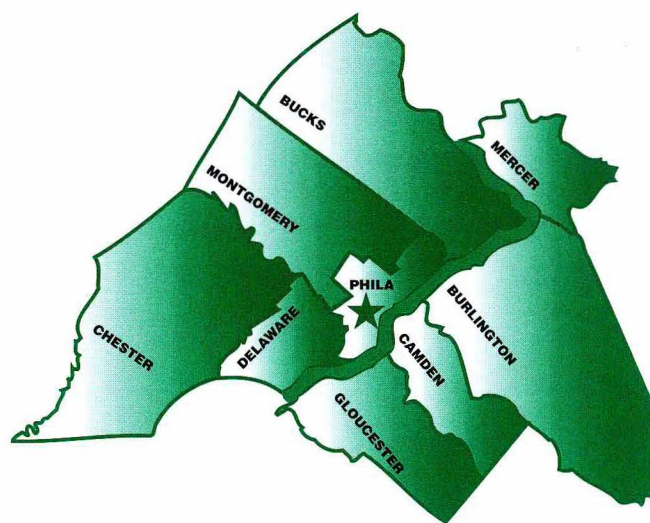
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Candace B. Snyder, Editor

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Since its establishment in 1965, DVRPC has been instrumental in ensuring the orderly growth of the bi-state region. As the federally-funded metropolitan planning organization, DVRPC also provides data and consulting services to public and private sector organizations, and fosters cooperation among all levels of government. Shown above is the nine-county Delaware Valley region.