

DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

FISCAL YEAR 2016 PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

CHAPTER SIX

OTHER MAJOR PLANNING PROJECTS IN THE DVRPC REGION

Major transportation planning activities within the region that receive funding from sources other than through DVRPC are identified in this chapter.

Transportation planning studies funded from other sources may include: Corridor, Subarea, and Interchange Studies; Study and Development Program; Feasibility Studies; Transportation Investment Studies; Environmental Impact Statements; and Categorical Exclusion (CE) Projects and Federal Transit Administration New Starts, Small Starts, and Core Capacity Planning Projects.

Additionally, transportation projects of regional significance that have official web pages are linked from the DVRPC web site:

<http://www.dvrpc.org/Transportation/RegionallySignificantProjects/>

Corridor, Subarea, and Interchange Studies: These are projects that may be funded and advanced by other agencies during FY 2016 and may require coordination with DVRPC. Projects in this category may include traffic/transit analyses, access improvements, or operational improvement studies. Additional corridor and area studies are also proposed by DVRPC for supplemental funding.

Study and Development Program (Concept Development - CD and Feasibility Assessment - FA): This represents the first stages in New Jersey DOT's project development process, where data is collected, public input is obtained, and potential conceptual improvements are defined and evaluated. In this phase, policy and strategic direction is established, the problem statement is packaged, and the project scope developed. The study and development (S&D) stage includes the transportation analysis required to identify needs from the state, regional, and local community perspectives. The entire S&D Program is included in the New Jersey TIP document.

Feasibility Study: This type of planning study examines the potential of alternative modal facilities in relation to the characteristics, needs, and goals of the area. The environmental assessment or preengineering work associated with the feasibility study is generally done at the "fatal flaw" level.

Transportation Investment Study (TIS): TIS projects are generally performed by the Pennsylvania and New Jersey departments of transportation. These detailed studies are required for regionally significant transportation projects, and whenever there is a need to develop information about likely impacts and consequences of alternative transportation investment strategies at the corridor or subarea level.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) / Environmental Assessment (EA): An EIS is a document required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) prepared for projects that are expected to use federal funds for implementation and that have been deemed to have the potential for significant environmental impacts. An EIS provides information on the alternatives considered and associated impacts. A draft document (DEIS) is prepared with input from affected local, state, regional, and federal agencies, as well as the general public. The DEIS is circulated to the public and review agencies for comments, which are considered and incorporated into the final document (FEIS). The approval of the FEIS is called a Record of Decision and is required to be published in the Federal Register. A number of EISs will be undertaken or continued in FY 2016 by the appropriate project sponsor. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is a lower level investigation similar to an EIS.

Categorical Exclusion (CE): A categorical exclusion is a designation provided to a project deemed not to have a significant or controversial effect on the human or natural environment and therefore not required to conduct an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. A categorical exclusion evaluation (CEE) is still a rigorous scan for project effects involving preliminary engineering activities to identify these effects and determine measures to avoid, minimize, and, where necessary, mitigate the effects. Agency review and concurrence is necessary throughout, and public meetings may be required.

Preliminary Design (PD): At this planning stage, local project sponsors refine the design of the locally preferred alternative to the extent necessary to complete the NEPA process, taking into consideration all reasonable design options.

Preliminary Engineering (PE): Preliminary engineering results in estimates of project costs, benefits, and impacts for which there is a much higher degree of confidence. The PE effort demonstrates the technical capability of the project sponsor to advance the project, and commitments of local funding sources should be firmed up (if not previously committed).

Federal Transit Administration Capital Investment Program (New Starts, Small Starts, Core Capacity) Planning: FTA has established a series of regulations regarding development of major new capacity projects. Under MAP-21, a separate Alternatives Analysis (AA) study is no longer required, but the alternatives development, evaluation, and screening steps that have typically been completed as part of an AA in prior years are still required to be conducted as part of the NEPA process (during development of an EA or EIS/DEIS). The key outcome is a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), which defines the project's proposed service plan and mode, thereby determining estimated capital costs, operating costs, ridership, and operating revenue. During environmental review and screening, the LPA is evaluated by FTA to determine whether or not the project should advance to the Preliminary Engineering phase. *Not all projects listed in Chapter Six have been endorsed by the DVRPC Board; therefore, inclusion does not guarantee either funding or imply approval of the DVRPC Board.*

OTHER MAJOR PROJECTS: PROJECTS FUNDED FROM OTHER SOURCES

The following transportation planning projects may be advanced by agencies other than DVRPC during FY 2016:

PROJECT NAME	MPMS / DB #	SPONSOR	LOCATION	CURRENT PHASE
BI-STATE				
I-95 Scudder Falls Bridge / road widening / interchange reconstruction	n/a	DRJTBC	Bucks and Mercer Counties	Final Design
NEW JERSEY				
Glassboro-Camden Line	n/a	DRPA / NJ TRANSIT	City of Philadelphia, Gloucester County, Camden County	EIS Under Way
Route 55/42/676 Bus Rapid Transit	n/a	NJ TRANSIT	City of Philadelphia, Camden County, Gloucester County	EA underway
US Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study	n/a	NJ TRANSIT	Mercer and Middlesex Counties	FA completed, elements of project advancing
Route 29 Trenton Boulevard Study	n/a	Trenton City & CCDC	Trenton City, Mercer County	FA complete; turned over to Trenton City
Route 38 Smart Growth Initiative	n/a	Local lead Burlington County	Burlington County	N/A
NJ 102" Wide Large Truck Network	n/a	NJDOT	New Jersey	Readoption pending with minor edits
Development of Freight Performance Measures and Freight Management System	n/a	NJDOT	New Jersey	Underway

PROJECT NAME	MPMS / DB #	SPONSOR	LOCATION	CURRENT PHASE
PENNSYLVANIA				
PA Turnpike Northeast Extension: Mid-County (A20) to Lansdale (A31) widening	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Montgomery County	A20-A26 has been completed; A26-A31 is under construction
PA Turnpike Northeast Extension: Lansdale (A31) to Quakertown (A44) widening	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Bucks and Montgomery Counties	A31-A38 is under design and slated for construction first. A38-A44 is under design and slated for construction second
PA Turnpike (East-West), PA 29 (319) to Valley Forge (326) widening	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Chester and Montgomery Counties	Design complete, scheduled to start construction 2016
PA Turnpike (East-West), Downingtown (312) to PA 29 (319) widening	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Chester County	Design underway in 2015
PA Turnpike (East-West), Morgantown (298) to Downingtown (312) widening	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Berks and Chester Counties	Design underway in 2015
PA Turnpike Mid-County (333) to Bensalem (351)	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Bucks and Montgomery Counties	Transportation Improvement Study
PA Turnpike (East-West) Reading (286) to Willow Grove (343) – ITS Deployment	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Lancaster, Berks, Chester, Montgomery, and Bucks Counties	Design underway in 2015 for Preentry DMS; Construction starts Winter 2015
PA Turnpike (East-West) Reading (286) to Willow Grove (343) – ITS Deployment	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Lancaster, Berks, Chester, Montgomery, and Bucks Counties	Construction underway in 2015 for Mainline DMS installation prior to Interchanges

PROJECT NAME	MPMS / DB #	SPONSOR	LOCATION	CURRENT PHASE
PA Turnpike Northeast Extension: Mid-County (A20) to Lansdale (A31) – ITS Deployment	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Montgomery County	Design underway in 2015; adding 4 CCTVs between Mid-County and Lansdale
PA Turnpike (East-West) Bensalem (350) to Delaware River Bridge (359) – Stage 1 ITS Deployment for I-276/I-95	n/a	PA Turnpike Commission	Bucks County	Construction to start 2015
US Route 202 Section 100	15385	PENNDOT	Chester and Delaware Counties	Working with FHWA to formalize the EIS. Information derived from developing the planning document resulted in two projects advancing to PE: US 1/202 Loop Road completion in Delaware County (MPMS# 95429), and improvements at the intersection of US 202 and SR 926 in Chester County (MPMS# 95430).
NHSL Extension to King of Prussia	n/a	SEPTA	Delaware and Montgomery Counties	Updated AA & DEIS underway
US 422 River Crossing Complex	Multiple inc. 66952, 64796, 70197, 16703	PENNDOT/ VFNHP/ Montgomery County	In and around Valley Forge National Historical Park (PA 23 at US 422, US 422 from US 202 to PA 363, PA 363 at US 422, and North Gulph Rd. at park gateway)	66952: FD 64796: CON 70197: ROW 16703: CON

PROJECT NAME	MPMS / DB #	SPONSOR	LOCATION	CURRENT PHASE
Quakertown Rail Restoration	n/a	TMA Bucks	Bucks County, Montgomery County	Phase I study complete; phase II of AA currently underway
PROJECT NAME				
Route 23 Relocation	48172	Upper Merion Twp.	US 202 to US 422, Montgomery County	PE
Southeastern Pennsylvania Emergency Transportation Plan	n/a	PEMA	Southeastern Pennsylvania	CD
Pennsylvania 2015 State Rail Plan	n/a	PennDOT	Pennsylvania	Underway

The region's transit operators also regularly undertake a series of ongoing programmatic planning efforts to support their systems and services. Listed below are several planning program areas currently undertaken by NJ Transit:

Community Services Planning and Support - This program focuses on planning, analysis, and support relating to human services transportation programs. Among NJT's responsibilities is administering the distribution and use of federal funding intended for providing vehicles and operating assistance for community centered paratransit and other related services. Planning efforts include support for the development of local human services transportation plans, analysis of the performance, effectiveness, coordination with and demand for human services transportation programs/efforts, analysis of funding sources and mechanisms, program oversight, and other planning and analyses relating to community transportation services.

Corridor Planning and Analysis - NJ TRANSIT maintains this program area to determine the suitability of transit in a variety of local or regional "corridors". It provides for development and analysis of preliminary implementation concepts for transit capital improvements, transit alternatives, operating schemes, and assessment of conceptual level environmental impacts. At times within this program, NJT has teamed with MPOs, counties and other agencies in joint planning efforts. NJ TRANSIT has historically engaged in such assessments for commuter rail, light rail, and bus/BRT.

Qualitative & Quantitative Research - Through this program, NJ TRANSIT regularly updates our knowledge of customer needs and preferences for use in our travel demand forecasting process, to address FTA requirements and ensure travel demand forecasting computer models are current in the background information they use.

Surveys of our customers' needs and assessments of our transit services are undertaken and published/made public. Market research initiatives are also undertaken to address specific issues.

Rail Operations and Infrastructure Planning - This program area provides for planning support for rail-related initiatives and associated infrastructure needs and issues. This work primarily defines the infrastructure needs based on proposed operating plans which address projected ridership on rail transit services and/or to address safety, storm and related forms of resiliency and reliability concerns.

Ridership Forecasting - This program area involves development of ridership and revenue forecasts, as well as development and updating of forecasting models, in support of major capital projects, transit service planning, major service initiatives, and various other efforts. Much of the work undertaken is to comply with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements and guidelines regarding preparation of travel demand forecasts for use in seeking FTA funding. In addition, this program provides support for MPO travel and air quality model development and training, Census, demographic and other travel data preparation and analyses, and other forecasting work.

Stations, Access & Site Planning - This program focuses on planning for transit facility needs and prioritization for future capital investment, including specialized facility design, bike/pedestrian/ shuttle access, and potential ADA station improvement phasing. It includes analysis of existing conditions relating to physical conditions of stations and facilities, access to transit facilities, and parking issues including parking lot inventories, parking management and accommodating projected growth.

Transit-Friendly Planning, Land Use & Development - Through this program, NJ TRANSIT provides technical planning assistance to interested municipalities to create and implement sensitive, community-based "vision" plans to guide local growth in a comprehensive manner, especially in areas where transit could stimulate new development opportunities and create strong community centers for people to live, work and socialize. A critical component of this work is community outreach, engagement, consensus building and partnerships.

Light Rail Planning - Consistent with a multimodal approach, work is focused on accommodating future demand for light rail services.

Bus Rapid Transit Planning - Work in this program area supports NJT's efforts to plan for future BRT projects, and to otherwise improve existing bus services so they operate faster, more reliably and address changing customer needs.