

CONNECTIONS 2045

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

October 2017

Contents

Public Comment Period Overview	1
Comments and Responses	3
Bryan Quigley, General Public	3
DVRPC Response – Bryan Quigley, General Public	7
Randy Waltermeyer, General Public	9
DVRPC Response – Randy Waltermeyer, General Public	11
Joseph Russell, General Public	13
DVRPC Response – Joseph Russell, General Public	15
Edward Fox, Burlington County Bridge Commission	17
DVRPC Response – Edward Fox, Burlington County Bridge Commission	19
Thomas Shaffer, Delaware County Planning Department	21
DVRPC Response – Thomas Shaffer, Delaware County Planning Department	23
John Boyle, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia	25
DVRPC Response – John Boyle, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia	27
Dana Dobson, Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC).....	29
DVRPC Response, Dana Dobson, Tri-State Transportation Campaign	33
Circuit Coalition.....	37
DVRPC Response – Circuit Coalition	41
John Dodds, Philadelphia Unemployment Project.....	43
DVRPC Response – John Dodds, Greater Philadelphia Unemployment Project	47
Brendan Read, General Public	49
DVRPC Response – Brendan Read	51

Public Comment Period Overview

A public comment period for the *Connections 2045 Plan for Greater Philadelphia* was held from September 1, 2017 until October 4, 2017 at 5:00 PM local time. Two public meetings / information sessions were held in conjunction with the public comment period on:

Monday, September 18, 2017
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM
Collingswood Senior Community Center
30 W. Collings Avenue
Collingswood, NJ 08108

and

Tuesday, September 19, 2017
4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
DVRPC Conference Room
190 N. Independence Mall West, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106

The September 19, 2017 meeting was also conducted as a webinar.

A legal notice for the public comment period was sent to DVRPC's public participation email database of over 3,500 active email subscribers around the region, and was published in five local newspapers:

- Philadelphia Inquirer
- Philadelphia Tribune
- Al Dia
- Trenton Times
- Courier Post

The Draft Plan document was available for review on the DVRPC website, at DVRPC's Resource Center, and at 33 libraries and 8 tribal governments throughout the Greater Philadelphia region. The document was also available for review at the information sessions, and could be translated into alternative languages or formats, if requested. Other outreach was conducted via a social media campaign.

Written comments and questions were able to be submitted:

- Online
- Emailed
- Faxed
- Mailed
- In person at the information session

All comments needed to be received by 5 PM on October 4, 2017 and comments were required to be submitted in writing in order to be incorporated into the final public record of comments. A response from DVRPC follows each of the comments received.

Comments and Responses

Bryan Quigley, General Public

From: **Bryan Quigley** <gquigs+dvrpc@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, Sep 15, 2017 at 12:20 PM

Subject: BQ Connections 2045 comments

To: LRP@dvrpc.org

First off, I really liked reading Connections 2045 - great work!

By default with Firefox/Chrome there is no form under Draft Connections 2045 Long-Range Plan Comments. This is due to the form being a non-https site that is linked in from your HTTPS site. It's called Mixed Content Blocking. Happy to help look at fixing.

While I'm talking about website security, I'd also like to recommend SSL Labs server test as your main website could use an upgrade/config change.

On to some Connections 2045 comments:

Page 40 about Greenspace network. Does part of this call for wildlife crossings? They also look nicer than many pedestrian bridges too - and might be nice for trails too. (Vox has a nice youtube video entitled "Wildlife crossings stop roadkill. Why aren't there more?")

Page 46 last bullet under Strategies to Manage Stormwater and Improve Water Quality. Mentioned institute parking maximum standards, but didn't mention removing or reducing parking minimums - although it is covered in a different section on page 68.

Page 52 in chart - Other (N/A for 2015). I thought N/A means not applicable - which indicates an improvement that doesn't exist. I'd suggest changing that to maybe U/A for unavailable or UD for under development.

Page 52 Strategies to Reduce GHG Emissions. The list is mostly incentives for doing more sustainable actions. I think discouraging GHG directly is equally important through items such as a Carbon Tax or otherwise reducing GHG via reducing VMT, etc.

Page 53 Strategies to Prepare Communities for the Impacts of Climate Change. Increase evacuations preparedness - moving more people than ever before, possibly in a shorter time frame. One option might be to expanding Contraflow lane reversal on the AC Expressway to continue all the way into Philadelphia over the Walt Whitman bridge and maybe further as warranted. My guess is that will require long term planning to make that doable.

Page 66 - Voorhees Town Center already exists (as planned in doc) as mixed use residential,

restaurants, the mall, and township and county offices. Roads around the center certainly could be made more walker friendly and some might need rightsizing to how much traffic actually goes over them - is that what blocks it from being considered complete? I'd also love it if PATCO could put a new station there (which seems expensive), but VTC does have several Bus routes.

Page 69 Invest in Parks and Recreation. Both astronomers and teenagers want to use our public spaces "after hours" and are many times forbidden from doing so by "Dusk to Dawn" policies. Night time wildlife walks might be another activity to do in our public parks/trails that require darkness.

Page 79 Carless Households. This seems like it would become less and less of a useful metric. We want to encourage more carless households and cars are generally considered one of Americans poorest investments.

Page 84 Strategies to Give All Children in the Region Access to Good Schools. Original: Use big data to develop connected learning communities and leverage technology as an educational resource.

The use of big data in this context doesn't make sense to me, they can utilize big data of course but it's not integral. From your same reference I'd go with something that emphasizes the 3 main points that I see there: Is production centered. Has a shared purpose. Is openly networked.

Page 94 - typo? providing a choice of three commercial airports - should be 2?

Page 104-106 - General comments on CVs/AVs/Cybersecurity Plan for hacking to disable entire CV/AV systems or worse make them into hazards on the roadways. An ability to verify "empty" driving vehicles, who is in control and responsibility for it. Maybe they should be reported automatically? Tax on "empty" driving vehicles VMT worth congestion based pricing as privacy concerns should be less for direct tracking.

Page 106 Cybersecurity.

This statement doesn't seem specific enough to be valuable. testing of security measures with crowdsourcing - not sure what this would entail
improvement of mobile device protections - basically just says improve security enterprise networks - too vague to be useful
placement of smart devices inside the IoT - IoT is generally considered to be the placement of smart devices
user interface web protections - too vague to be useful
next-generation endpoint security - basically just says improve security
cloud-based data security - basically just says improve security

Some more specific actions that I'd recommend

- * Regular inventory of technology assets (spanning IoT, Cloud, Computers, etc) and vulnerability assessments
- * CVE update plans for every device in inventory, including vendor response times.
- * General update plans for every device including vendor roadmaps
- * Clear EOL dates or clear supported notes for devices
- * Consider anonymizing protocols where possible so that unnecessary collection of data is minimized at initial data collection
- * Every device needs a plan if compromised or if vendor goes out of business (including cloud, many assume it will continue evolving in the patten it is today)
- * Consider the full breadth of services used - for example a cloud data provider might use another cloud provider, so a hack to either could cause data loss

Page 107 - Love seeing these!

Be flexible and avoid tech 'lock-ins' that limit what can be done to respond to changing future conditions

Page 108 - Adopt open data and open-source software policies.

If you know of any organizations creating open-source software policies, I'd love to be more involved in helping with those.

Sorry, that was longer than I originally anticipated. I really appreciate you reviewing these points and all that you do for our area.

Kind regards,
Bryan Quigley

DVRPC Response – Bryan Quigley, General Public

- *Page 40, Greenspace Network* – We agree on the need for wildlife crossings and will add a strategy to “Remove transportation-related barriers to wildlife crossings and reconnect key habitat corridors” in the preserve open space goal.
- *Page 46, Strategies to Manage Stormwater and Improve Water Quality* – As you noted parking minimums are included in the “Design, Markets, and Technology: Key Tools for Improving Transportation” section. In addition, setting parking maximums by default does away with any parking minimum requirements.
- *Page 52, chart* – We agree this can be misread and revised the description to ‘data unavailable for 2015’ as suggested.
- *Page 53, Strategies to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions* – We agree and have added “Put a price on carbon” as a strategy under this section as well as the following text introducing the strategies to reduce GHG emissions “Effective strategies to reduce GHG emissions provide incentives and disincentives to encourage people to use less energy and choose to use low-carbon fuels or modes of transportation. These can include pricing or taxing policies, zoning measures, permitting, and education about the relative benefits of saving energy and using low-carbon fuels.”
- *Page 53, Preparing Communities for the Impacts of Climate Change* – We have cross-referenced “Coordinate and cooperate with federal, state, local, and other agencies involved in regional resiliency, transportation security planning, emergency response efforts, and recovery efforts.” from the Create a More Secure Transportation Network strategies. Evacuation needs will depend on what the event is, and there are plans for contraflow evacuation in place for all major facilities (highways and bridges) in the region. DVRPC helps to coordinate between the state and federal departments of transportation, toll authorities, first responders, and other relevant agencies on evacuation plans and needs.
- *Page 66, Voorhees Town Center* – You are correct that the language is confusing. Planned Center is intended to refer to a new mixed use traditional type development, not necessarily something that is planned for the future. We will clarify the description of planned town centers by rewriting the first sentence in the ‘Invest in Centers’ goal to “Planned Centers are newly constructed Town-Center-type developments, usually built by a single developer, on greenfield sites within Growing Suburbs or Rural Areas.”
- *Page 69, Invest in Parks and Recreation* – This is a local jurisdictional issue as municipalities have control over park oversight and maintenance.
- *Page 79, Carless Households* – This is a long-standing Environmental Justice measure. At a project level, carless households remain an important consideration, particularly if a project is located in an area that lacks frequent transit service. At a regional level, we agree it makes less sense. We are exploring options for moving away from this measure as an Indicator of Potential Disadvantage.

- *Page 84, Strategies to Give All Children in the Region Access to Good Schools* – We will rewrite your referenced bullet as: “Develop connected learning communities that are production centered, have a shared purpose, and are openly networked to leverage technology as an educational resource.”
- *Page 94, Commercial Airports* – There was some confusion here, Wilmington should be a commercial airport within the 12-county aviation planning region. There are currently two commercial airports in the nine-county Greater Philadelphia Region and three in the larger aviation planning region (including Wilmington).
- *Page 104-106, CAVs/Cybersecurity* – The issue of road pricing is already included in this section of the Plan for precisely this reason, and we will clarify the language around it. We will make a clearer note of the hacking risks of CAVs as well.
- *Page 106, Cybersecurity* – Thanks for these notes, we will work to clarify some of our language and craft a recommendation based on your suggestions to “Regularly take inventory of all technology assets, assess their vulnerability, identify clear end-of-life dates or supported notes for devices, and work with vendors to understand risks and potential responses included in their services.”
- *Page 107/108* – Thank you, and we will further explore open-source software policy development.

Randy Waltermyer, General Public

Name	Email	County	Zip Code	Comment	Date
Randy Waltermyer	rwaltermyer@hotmail.com	Chester County	19320	<p>It is disappointing to not see two projects moving forward in this LRP update: Paoli-Thorndale service to Coatesville and Parkesburg and US 202 Section 100. First, at a mere \$15.5 M (per Table 20) on an existing electrified railroad, extending SEPTA service to Coatesville and Parkesburg is -by far- the most economical of all of the Transit System Expansion projects. Secondly, it is disappointing to see the scope of Route 202 Sec. 100 remain as a six-lane, \$325 M project with grade-separation at PA 926 and US 1. I would encourage all parties (PennDOT, DVRPC, Chester Co., Delaware Co., and the municipalities) to reconvene regularly and use the 2012 "Route 202 ES1 Improvements Report" to break the project into manage-able, fund-able projects. I applaud the recent CMAQ award for installing adaptive signals on this super-critical corridor as well as TIP projects at PA 926 and US 1, but it is concerning and troubling to see no further plans for this corridor over the 2045 horizon.</p>	09/27/2017 10:24:41 AM

DVRPC Response – Randy Waltermeyer, General Public

1. *Extending the Paoli-Thorndale Line* – while the capital cost on this project is low, the line is owned by Amtrak. This means extending the line would increase SEPTA's trackage fees each year, in addition to the additional operating costs it would incur. At this time, the operating budget serves as an additional constraint to the construction of new lines beyond the capital budget, which can be used to fund only about 45 percent of the Pennsylvania portion of the region's identified transit vision (\$19.7 in revenue versus \$43.7 billion in vision/need).
2. *US 202 Section 100* – like the Paoli-Thorndale Line, this project suffers from the capital funding crunch that likewise exists for the region's roads. Only about 43 percent of the Pennsylvania portion of the region's vision/need can be funded with projected revenues (\$24.7 billion out of \$56.6 billion). The long-term vision for this project needs to be rethought, given anticipated forthcoming roadway and vehicle technologies. Given ongoing funding constraint, a consensus needs to be found on right-sizing this project with lower cost solutions, such as Active Traffic Management (ATM).

Joseph Russell, General Public

Given what we know about the follies of land-use development patterns in the 20th century, that they've given us an over-engineered land of inefficient, traffic-producing, and community suffocating suburban sprawl, I would like to see DVRPC spending money on engineering work that mitigates those damages, not encourages them. For instance, projects where you plan to make it easier for people to make left turns onto busy roads because of "delays" makes it obvious that you care more about automobile throughput than the quality of the communities in your jurisdiction. If you build for traffic, you're going to give those communities more traffic. It was a mistake to build so many wide roads through the farmland of South Jersey in the 20th century, and we're going to keep paying for it until we repair the damage it's done by transitioning people out of cars and onto their feet, their bikes, or on to public transit. Our property taxes increase as a result of rampant sprawl. Our towns are slowly losing people because the only thing those built after World War II had going for them was newness, and now that's faded. There is no "there" there for most of the towns whose main development patterns are cul-de-sacs and strip malls.

As a regional planning authority, I know you understand this. You must use what little resources we're going to have in the 21st century to build up the places doing it right. This means the old towns along old train lines, be it currently working lines like PATCO or lines currently using freight. That is where the majority of your work should be, not in improving intersections so it's easier to make left turns. Any project that wastes money making it easier to drive is simply a continuation of the failed suburban land use policies of the 20th century. Level of Service should not dictate what people's everyday lived experience should be in their towns.

Cherry Hill, Gloucester, Voorhees, Marlton, and Mount Laurel townships are perfect examples of those people are beginning to leave behind because of the excessive build up of sprawl during the last century. Not only that, but they are incredibly expensive to maintain, hence NJ's sky-high property tax rates. You need to help us build a sustainable future, not continue building sprawl.

DVRPC Response – Joseph Russell, General Public

As noted, the region's history of sprawling development patterns is one of our largest challenges going forward. While we recognize the point about making it easy to drive supporting sprawling development patterns, we must balance this with the reality of the existing built environment and are actively working to make incremental improvements that benefit quality of life, safety, air quality, and economic competitiveness.

Projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are consistent with the region's Long-Range Plan. Developing Livable Communities is a core plan principle in the Draft *Connections 2045* Long-Range Plan, which continues the key focus on land use and development patterns as being one of the most important factors in creating a more sustainable and efficient multimodal transportation network. The Plan calls for focusing future development within and around more than 120 development centers across the nine-county region with the requisite density and mixed use to support more walking, biking, and transit ridership. In recognition that we cannot build our way out congestion, it caps investment in roadway expansion projects. It also recognizes that denser, mixed use centers provide network effects that benefit the region's entrepreneurialism and economy. The financial portion of the Plan prioritizes rebuilding our existing infrastructure and secondarily investing in technology and design to enhance its operations. For example, investments that make improvements through operational strategies such as restriping existing lanes to better manage traffic are prioritized over widening roads to increase vehicle capacity. The Plan includes many projects to improve the region's walkability and bikeability, from building out the Circuit Trail Network, to creating Complete Streets, to moving toward Vision Zero.

Context sensitive design, used by both Penn DOT and NJ DOT in their project design and development work, means that the surroundings of a transportation facility are an important consideration. In addition, we use a set of project evaluation criteria related to the goals in the Long-Range Plan to prioritize projects for inclusion in both the TIP and Plan. However, the region's history of low-density development means that the focus in some areas will need to balance the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users with those of motorized vehicles. In these areas, the safe and efficient movement of motorized vehicles, along with other modes, is a quality of life consideration. Intersection improvements, such as left turn lanes, provide a good example of that balance in that improving safety and air quality are as important of an outcome of the project as reducing congestion.

Projects in the TIP are developed from a process that includes input from various agencies, including member governments, operating agencies, and state and federal agencies. DVRPC believes that a collaborative process among all levels of government and the public and business communities will ensure that the best transportation program is produced. This type of process is one in which state, county, and local governments and transportation providers become partners in the planning and programming process, and interest groups and community leaders have a voice.

Edward Fox, Burlington County Bridge Commission

Name	Email	County	Zip Code	Comment	Date
Edward Fox AICP, PP	efox@bcbridges.org	Burlington County	08054	1. Great Document 2. Add a glossary for unfamiliar terms and abbreviations 3. Text illegible on Figure 23. Add identification table, like table 6 for Figure 22. 4. For Figure 27, remove Wrightstown as a planned center because the project has fallen through. Thank you.	09/18/2017 3:22:25 PM

DVRPC Response – Edward Fox, Burlington County Bridge Commission

1. *Great document* – Thank you, and thanks for your help in putting it together.
2. *Add a glossary for unfamiliar terms and abbreviation.* – This has been added; see Appendix A of the Administrative Version.
3. *Text illegible on Figure 23* – This figure has been enlarged to make the text more readable.
4. *For Figure 27, remove Wrightstown as a planned center because the project has fallen through* – We have done as requested.

Thomas Shaffer, Delaware County Planning Department



DELAWARE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

COURT HOUSE/GOVERNMENT CENTER
201 W. Front St. Media, PA 19063

COUNCIL

MARIO J. CIVERA, JR.
CHAIRMAN

COLLEEN P. MORRONE
VICE CHAIRMAN

JOHN P. McBLAIN
DAVID J. WHITE
MICHAEL F. CULP

Office Location: Toal Building, 2nd & Orange Sts., Media, PA 19063
Phone: (610) 891-5200 FAX: (610) 891-5203
E-mail: planning_department@co.delaware.pa.us

LINDA F. HILL
DIRECTOR

September 26, 2017

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Attention: *Connections 2045* Plan Comments
190 N. Independence Mall West, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

Dear Sir/Madam:

The Delaware County Planning Department has the following comments on the draft *Connections 2045 Plan*:

1. Table 18, p. 138, 69th Street Transportation Center: In Project Scope column, "Rehabilitate" should be changed to "Construct," since garage has not been built yet.
2. Table 19, p. 142, Improved Transit Service to Philadelphia International Airport: Location should include Delaware County, since majority of Airport property is in Delaware County and many of our communities are very close to the airport, but transit options for trips to/from the airport are limited.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please contact me or Tom Shaffer, Manager of Transportation Planning, with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas P. Shaffer".

Thomas P. Shaffer
Manager, Transportation Planning

Cc: Linda F. Hill

DVRPC Response – Thomas Shaffer, Delaware County Planning Department

1. *Table 18, 69th Street Transportation Center* – Thanks for this correction, it has been made in the final document.
2. *Table 19, Improved Transit Access at Philadelphia International Airport* – We have added Delaware County to the location for this project.

John Boyle, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia

From: **John Boyle** <john@bicyclecoalition.org>
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2017 at 4:53 PM
Subject: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
To: lrp@dvrpc.org

Hi

These are comments for the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia. We are delighted that Circuit Trail network continues to be referenced in the Long Range Plan and is committed to by the DVRPC Board.

The 1.5% to 2% allotment in table 12 for bicycle and pedestrian projects is not enough to make the region bicycle and pedestrian friendly. DVRPC's own surveys suggest that the public would spend about 7% of transportation funding on bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Our targeted spending on Circuit Trails may be a low ball estimate. A significant percentage of the money spent so far on trail projects have been for structures like bridges that can cost far more than \$500,000 a mile. Also as the Circuit expands into an integrated network the transportation demand for the main trails will require the addition of lighting for night travel and other supportive services. Future lighting and security technology along with private investment may help reduce the additional cost of improvements.

Vision Zero should be a goal for the whole region. Currently, both PENNDOT and NJ have Towards Zero Deaths goals reducing traffic deaths by 50% by 2030. New Jersey's crash reduction goal is to reduce serious injuries and fatalities by 2.5 percent annually with the support of all safety partners Which of course doesn't add up to 50%.

It would be helpful during the bike share (p.91) discussion to mention the dockless vs. docked systems, **Some examples of dockless bike stations include Mobike, Jump, LimeBike and Spin.** These companies will likely charge less per ride than Indego and may go to places beyond Indego's service area. A smaller scale system known as Zagster has several installations in the suburbs including Princeton and Montgomery County Parks.

Bike Lanes (Pg. 111) - In addition to tripling the mileage of bike lanes (which seems low given that only Philadelphia has a significant number of bike lane miles) DVRPC's ongoing Low-Stress Network Analysis will likely set the baseline for prioritizing bike lane projects. The goal should be an integrated network of on and off-road bikeways with a level of traffic stress of no higher than 2 (on a scale of 1 to 4) by 2040.

Automated vehicles - If the ideal scenario of subscription or fared based Automated Fleet Vehicles feeding into public transportation comes to fruition it will offer an opportunity of converting excess road space from unneeded car storage into protected bike lanes, widened sidewalks and greenspace along with improved stormwater management.

John Boyle

Research Director
The Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
1500 Walnut St, Ste 1107
Philadelphia, PA 19102

215.BICYCLE (242-9253) X302
FAX: [\(267\) 909-8726](tel:(267)909-8726)

<http://www.bicyclecoalition.org>

DVRPC Response – John Boyle, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia

1. *DVRPC's own surveys suggest the public would like to spend seven percent of funding on bike and pedestrian projects (pg 35)* – Much of the spending that occurs on bike and pedestrian projects occurs from bringing additional funds to the region beyond regular formula funding that is not accounted for in the Plan. As formula funding continues to be stretched thin based on overwhelming needs, DVRPC will continue to seek nontraditional funding to help bring about the vision of a more multimodal transportation network. In addition, many 'roadway reconstruction', 'operational improvement', and 'roadway expansion' projects include bicycle and pedestrian elements that are not accounted for in the 'bicycle and pedestrian' funding category, which counts only those projects that are solely focused on bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
2. *Targeted spending on Circuit Trails may be low* – The *Connections 2045* vision plan for transportation was based on an average cost estimate of \$1 million per mile to build Circuit Trails.
3. *Vision Zero should be the goal for the whole region* – We appreciate your focus on meaningful incorporation of Vision Zero/Toward Zero Deaths into the plan, and we thank you for providing good ideas on how to advance this effort. The following is a response to your inquiry regarding its safety components.

The LRP safety goal has been updated to be consistent with our state and federal partners who have adopted Toward Zero Deaths, "Goal: Move Toward Zero Transportation Deaths". Also, in the spring of 2017 DVRPC's Regional Safety Task Force (RSTF) adopted Vision Zero and has since updated the RSTF goal to reflect this change: "To reduce roadway crashes and eliminate serious injuries and fatalities from crashes in the Delaware Valley." Since DVRPC is in a unique position, we feel that our chosen language of "Move Toward Zero Deaths" is an appropriate compliment to the commitments of our partners.

FAST Act safety performance measures require MPO's and state's to set targets for (1) Number of Fatalities, (2) Rate of Fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), (3) Number of Serious Injuries, (4) Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million VMT, and (5) Number of Non-motorized Fatalities and Non-motorized Serious Injuries. DVRPC has collaborated with state and federal partners on target-setting and will be adopting both Pennsylvania and New Jersey's targets.

Our goal of moving toward zero deaths is incorporated into many facets of DVRPC's work, namely the TIP evaluation criteria where safety is the second most heavily weighted criteria. This process strives to inform our investment decisions with data. Crash analyses using available crash data from our state partners is an integral component in most of our intersection, corridor, and area studies. DVRPC's Safety Programs staff are engaged with partners at all levels through the RSTF, and in current work like the crash and environmental justice project designed to measure crash exposure using our updated Environmental Justice indicators of potential disadvantage.

DVRPC has collaborated with the City of Philadelphia on their Vision Zero effort and specifically contributed to the methodology used to identify their recently revealed High Injury Network. The LRP has identified \$50 million for Philadelphia Vision Zero safety improvements over the life of the plan. Other funding priorities include the Highway Safety Improvement Program, a federal funding source which relies on data-driven analysis to implement safety projects with a positive benefit/cost ratio.

Both PA and NJ have current Strategic Highway Safety Plans, and are continually seeking to maximize available federal funds from the federal Highway Safety Improvement Program. DVRPC supports these efforts by facilitating coordination between county and municipal partners and state DOT's to bring data-driven safety improvements to local roads. Also, because both states are FHWA Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Focus States we have made a concerted effort to expand our safety work regarding walking and biking to move the safety needle through implementation of HSIP-approved safety projects. Helping our partners identify eligible projects and secure these funds is a regional priority.

4. *Mention dockless vs. docked bikeshare systems (pg. 91)* – We have added language around dockless systems. Related to this thought, we will also note in the strategies to incorporate new technologies and services within the Integrated, Multimodal Transportation Section a strategy that says: "Continue to monitor new technologies to gain knowledge and understanding as to how they can be applied to improve the safety and efficiency of our transportation network."
5. *The goal for bike lanes should be an integrated network of on and off-road bikeways with a level of traffic stress no higher than 2 (on a scale of 1 to 4) by 2040 (pg. 111)* – This is a good suggestion, and once this work is done it will be very useful for informing the next LRP (2050) update.
6. *The ideal AV scenario will offer an opportunity to convert on-road parking into protected bike lanes, widened sidewalks, and greenspace with improved stormwater management* – This is a good point, and we've added this sentence to the HAV discussion: "A shared HAV transportation network could offer the opportunity to repurpose on-street parking to new uses, such as pick-up and drop-off zones, transfer stations between modes, EV charging stations, wider sidewalks, green infrastructure, protected bike lanes, street furniture, and/or bus only lanes."

Dana Dobson, Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC)



October 4, 2017

Re: Connections 2045 Plan for Greater Philadelphia comments from Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Dear DVRPC:

Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC), a nonprofit organization working for a more balanced, equitable and environmentally sustainable transportation network, supports the Connections 2045 Plan, especially the projects and programs focusing on multi-modal access and overall transportation safety in New Jersey. This letter includes our comments on the plan separate from our Circuit Trails specific comments submitted on the joint Circuit partners letter.

TSTC would like to thank DVRPC for recognizing the importance of a regional, integrated, multi-modal, sustainable and equitable transportation system. The projects and goals of the plan reflect the long range commitment to building a network that considers the needs of all users across all modes of transportation. We also appreciate the additional integration of Complete Streets into the plan, as well as the inclusion of Vision Zero for the first time. We also commend the decision to include: "Limit arterial, collector, and local road lane widths to 10 feet in order to calm traffic and increase safety" as well as discussing public transportation improvements such as transit signal priority, off-board fare payment, and dedicated bus lanes. The equity goal is also much more detailed than in Connections 2040 and we endorse this decision to bring this to the forefront of long range planning.

Although overall a very strong and thoughtful document, below are our specific comments on some specific items in the Plan in document page order:

- "Last mile" benefits from connecting to other modes of transportation such as at transit stations for TNC should be added. In addition to reducing car ownership, it reduces the amount of VMTs and the need to drive less, even if a person does own a vehicle. (p.35)
- Could the GSI section mention that Complete Streets can be integrated with GSI in order to combine the benefits? The line "Finally GSI systems can enhance...." sentence could be replaced with a discussion how elements of the urban landscape with use of Complete Streets can be enhanced with these features, many that are compatible with Complete Streets. (p.47)
- "Adopt better design standards for parking and manage existing parking resources" – could this be stronger and suggest that parking minimums be "Encouraged or required" as used for transit oriented design? (p.68)
- Could encouraging the use of alternative forms of transportation be added to the list in order to make a more energy efficient economy – alternate fuel vehicles are better, but reducing VMT takes it another step further. (p.77)

- In the discussion of Complete Streets on p. 89/90, could there be an acknowledgement that Complete Streets increase choices and mobility, but also have the benefits of environmental (Green streets), safety (reduced traffic collisions), health (reduced obesity and increased physical activity, as mentioned that open space does in its section), economic development (Complete Streets and walkable environments increase economic return in a business district) and equity (this is mentioned later, but it should also be called out in this description).
- Vision Zero is only funded in Philadelphia for roadway operational improvements. Could this be funded as a regional goal, or at least put commitment to Towards Zero Deaths that is committed to by both PennDOT and NJDOT in places without Vision Zero? (p.128)
 - Vision Zero Action Plan for Philadelphia was just recently released and should be added to the description of Vision Zero on (p.171)
 - In the statement “Recognizing how technology is reshaping transportation, Connections 2045 envisions a well-maintained, integrated multimodal transportation network that provides accessibility and equity for all citizens and visitors throughout the region, reduces congestion and auto-dependence, enhances goods movement, and moves the region toward zero roadway deaths” If Vision Zero is discussed in the document as the ultimate goal, could we use that language instead of the “Toward zero roadway deaths”?
- In the goal “Integrate existing and new modes into a multimodal network” section, technology regarding bike sharing, ridesharing and carsharing is discussed (p.91), but this is also a place that should discuss the apps and on-demand technologies that are associated with public transportation (These are mentioned later in the document, but if the automobile technologies are mentioned here briefly, so should the non-automobile mode apps). Transit countdown clocks at stops and station as well as real-time smartphone information and the availability of service alerts through social media improve the quality of transit ridership.
- It would be helpful during the bike share (p.91) discussion to mention the dockless vs. docked systems, since dockless bike share is an emerging concern and function differently from one another.
- In the goal, “Create a Safer Transportation System“ (p.96) there should be an acknowledgement that in addition to create better driver behavior, there needs to be safety changes in the physical environment as well. This section should acknowledge Complete Streets and Vision Zero that is highlighted in other parts of the document. Additionally, in this section the designation is now for a “pedestrian and bicycle focus state, rather than just for pedestrian focus state.
- In the section “Design Strategies to Make Transportation More Efficient, Multimodal, Environmentally Friendly, and Safe” (p.97) there should be a specific bullet to call out to bicycle parking facilities to distinguish from roadway improvements. These should also be included in the description of multi-modal transportation hubs alongside bike share, car share and ride share.
- The “Goal: Rebuild and Maintain the Region’s Transportation Infrastructure” (p.99) only discusses Pennsylvania infrastructure and should include a portion about New Jersey infrastructure.
- The list of travel demand strategies (p.100), as well as the subsequent discussion of Congestion Management should include bicycling, walking and transit. Currently this section reads like it is single occupancy vehicles versus other vehicle options (Mentioned are carpool and vanpool programs, telecommuting, variable work hours, parking cash out, and other policies that provide alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle.)
- The goal “Build Partnerships” (p.101) is unclear. It seems that this goal only discusses building partnerships with TNCs rather than partnerships more generally to accomplish the goals of the plan.

- The Schuylkill River Swing Bridge is part of the Circuit in PA despite having its own item in Table 15 (p.131). Could the project scope state that this is also part of Circuit Pennsylvania, while keeping it a separate item?
- In “Major Regional Transit System Expansion Projects” (p.143/144), the South Jersey BRT was taken out of the TIP- is this project still expected to go forward? With this project being taken out of the NJ TIP and few updates in the past couple of years, it does not seem to be a regional commitment.
- In the “Actions to Sustain the Environment”’s “What you can do” section there should be an item to encourage multimodal transportation. The only call out is to reduce driving on days with poor air quality, however, it should be an option that is made considered regardless of air quality days. (p.168)
- In the “Actions to Create an Integrated, Multimodal Transportation Network”’s “What you can do”, could there be language that states “Support policies, organizations, and programs that voice action and support Complete Streets and Vision Zero that make roadways physically safer for all users”, similar to the language used in the equity section? (p.171)

Additionally, below are minor graphical and spelling corrections:

- Arrows in Figure 17 “Trend” graphic scale (p.30) a bit difficult to read. This graphic would be better with just the color in the box.
- Also Figure 17: “Vehicle fatalities” graphic. Does this imply driver/passenger fatalities, or does it mean “roadway” fatalities that include pedestrians/bicyclists that are struck by vehicles?
- discussionS, “S” (p.37)
- Figure 23 Cannot read white labels of conservation focus areas (p.44)
- This graphic would probably be more effective if ranked visually (higher % at top) in addition to the size of the clouds. (p.51)
- Inset map for “center” map? Inner Camden/Philadelphia/Burlington area very hard to read. (p.63)

TSTC looks forward to the implementation of the Connections 2045 Plan, as well as its upcoming approval at the DVRPC Board later this month.

Dana Dobson
 South Jersey Coordinator
 Tri-State Transportation Campaign

DVRPC Response, Dana Dobson, Tri-State Transportation Campaign

1. *Last mile benefits of TNCs (pg 35)* – We have added a note to the second to last sentence of that paragraph “TNCs are creating new options for how to get around while providing last mile to transit solutions, and reducing the need for car ownership and parking.”
2. *Use of complete streets and GSI to transform urban landscapes (pg 47)* – We will add “The combination of complete streets with GSI can transform urban environments” to the transportation design strategies section.
3. *Suggest parking minimums be encourage or required (pg. 68)* – We have removed this bullet as it was overly repetitive with other strategies in the section and potentially confusing with the parking minimum strategy in particular.
4. *Encourage alternative forms of transportation to make a more energy efficient economy (pg. 77)* – We will change the first bullet to say “Provide services with less energy by encouraging the use of more efficient vehicles, buildings, and equipment, and by expanding multimodal transportation options.”
5. *Complete streets benefit the environment, safety, health, economic development, and equity (pgs. 89-90)* – These benefits are stated in other places in the Plan already.
6. *Commitment to Vision Zero (in line with Philadelphia) or Toward Zero Deaths (in Line with NJ DOT and PennDOT)* – We appreciate your focus on meaningful incorporation of Vision Zero/Toward Zero Deaths into the plan, and we thank you for providing good ideas on how to advance this effort. The following is a response to your inquiries regarding its safety components.

The LRP safety goal has been updated to be consistent with our state and federal partners who have adopted Toward Zero Deaths, “Goal: Move Toward Zero Transportation Deaths”. Also, in the spring of 2017 DVRPC’s Regional Safety Task Force (RSTF) adopted Vision Zero and has since updated the RSTF goal to reflect this change: “To reduce roadway crashes and eliminate serious injuries and fatalities from crashes in the Delaware Valley.” Since DVRPC is in a unique position, we feel that our chosen language of “Move Toward Zero Deaths” is an appropriate compliment to the commitments of our partners.

FAST Act safety performance measures require MPO’s and state’s to set targets for (1) Number of Fatalities, (2) Rate of Fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), (3) Number of Serious Injuries, (4) Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million VMT, and (5) Number of Non-motorized Fatalities and Non-motorized Serious Injuries. DVRPC has collaborated with state and federal partners on target-setting and will be adopting both Pennsylvania and New Jersey’s targets.

Our goal of moving toward zero deaths is incorporated into many facets of DVRPC’s work, namely the TIP evaluation criteria where safety is the second most heavily weighted criteria. This process strives to inform our investment decisions with data. Crash analyses using available crash data from our state partners is an integral component in most of our intersection, corridor, and area studies. DVRPC’s Safety Programs staff are engaged with

partners at all levels through the RSTF, and in current work, like the crash and Environmental Justice project designed to measure crash exposure using our updated Environmental Justice indicators of potential disadvantage.

DVRPC has collaborated with the City of Philadelphia on their Vision Zero effort and specifically contributed to the methodology used to identify their recently revealed High Injury Network. The LRP has identified \$50 million for Philadelphia Vision Zero safety improvements over the life of the plan. Other funding priorities include the Highway Safety Improvement Program, a federal funding source which relies on data-driven analysis to implement safety projects with a positive benefit/cost ratio.

Both PA and NJ have current Strategic Highway Safety Plans, and are continually seeking to maximize available federal funds from the federal Highway Safety Improvement Program. DVRPC supports these efforts by facilitating coordination between county and municipal partners and state DOT's to bring data-driven safety improvements to local roads. Also, because both states are FHWA Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Focus States we have made a concerted effort to expand our safety work regarding walking and biking to move the safety needle through implementation of HSIP-approved safety projects. Helping our partners identify eligible projects and secure these funds is a regional priority.

7. *Combine discussion around vehicle technologies and real-time transit information and on demand transit technologies (pg. 91)* – Good suggestion, this has been done by moving both into the Networking Transportation section in Chapter 2: Trends, Forecasts, and Forces.
8. *Mention dockless vs. docked bikesharing systems (pg. 91)* – We have added language around dockless systems. Related to this thought, we will also note in the strategies to incorporate new technologies and services within the Integrated, Multimodal Transportation Section a strategy that says: "Continue to monitor new technologies to gain knowledge and understanding as to how they can be applied to improve the safety and efficiency of our transportation network."
9. *Increasing safety requires changes to the physical environment, such as Complete Streets and Vision Zero, also change pedestrian focus state to pedestrian and bicycle focus state (pg. 96)* – The region is also an intersection focus area. We will revise language around this goal as appropriate. See also our response to point 6. Vision Zero / Toward Zero Deaths.
10. *Discuss New Jersey infrastructure reconstruction needs (pg. 99)* – Good catch, we will add "Pavement distress continues to be a larger problem in New Jersey than in many other states and the U.S. as a whole."
11. *Travel demand and Congestion Management should include bicycling, walking, and transit strategies (pg. 100)* – Good point, we will revise the first sentence in the third paragraph of that section to say "In addition to promoting transit, walking, and bicycling, the transportation system can be made more reliable by reducing demand through travel demand management strategies."

12. *Build partnerships section is unclear (pg. 101)* – We will add a note that new technologies and services allow traditional governmental and nonprofit transportation partnerships to improve and refocus their efforts.
13. *Add the Circuit the project scope for the Swing Bridge (pg. 131)* – Good suggestion, we will make the notation.
14. *South Jersey BRT is still going forward even though it was removed from the TIP? (pgs. 143-144)* – Yes this project remains a priority for New Jersey Transit.
15. *Add encourage multimodal transportation to the what you can do actions to sustain the environment (pg. 168)* – This is already included in the transportation ‘what you can do’ actions.
16. *Actions to create an integrated, multimodal transportation network what you can do add ‘support policies, organizations, and programs that voice action and support complete streets and vision Zero that make roadways physically safer for all users’ similar to equity section.* – This is too specific to just two of many actions that could be suggested here but is covered in a more general tone.
17. *Arrows in Figure 17 are hard to read (pg. 30)* – This graphic has been redesigned and now uses background colors in each separate column to better highlight where the indicator is.
18. *Does the Figure 17 graphic for vehicle fatalities include pedestrians and bicyclists that are struck by vehicles? If so, suggest renaming to roadway fatalities (pg. 30)* – Yes, this graphic includes pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities. We will rename the indicator ‘roadway crash fatalities.’
19. *Typo ‘discussionS’ (pg. 37)* – Corrected, thanks for catching it.
20. *Figure 23 conservation focus area labels are hard to read (pg. 44)* – This graphic has been enlarged to improve legibility.
21. *Figure 25 GHG emissions by sector would be improved by placing the sectors with the highest emissions at the top (pg. 51)* – Good idea, we will revise this graphic as you suggest.
22. *It is hard to read the Camden/Burlington/Philadelphia portion of the Centers map, could you do an inset map? (pg. 63)* – This has been reformatted.

Circuit Coalition



October 4, 2017

Re: Connections 2045 Plan for Greater Philadelphia Circuit Trails comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Dear DVRPC:

As members of the New Jersey Circuit Coalition's steering committee, we are submitting the following comments on the Connections 2045 Plan for Greater Philadelphia. The New Jersey Circuit steering committee members contributing to this document include John Boyle (Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia), Dana Dobson (Tri-State Transportation Campaign), and Olivia Glenn (New Jersey Conservation Foundation). Below are our joint comments.

We appreciate that the Circuit Coalition and the Circuit Trail network is referenced in the Long Range Plan and is committed to by the DVRPC Board. Within this text (p.130 and p.90-91) we have a few minor comments:

- The first sentence of the first paragraph (The Circuit Coalition is a ...) and the sentence that begins "Utilizing a unique partnership..." essentially are the same concept. Could these be condensed, but also add that there are over 65 organizations involved throughout the region?
- Could Circuit Trails "multi-use" be clarified to state walking and biking to clarify that these are not bicycle lanes nor are they sidewalks? "Multi-use walking and biking trails" would be preferred. Although this is stated earlier in this section if someone was to jump to this specific headline it would be missed. The "biking and walking" language was also used in the 2040 plan.
- Could this text include that Circuit Trails are connected to a larger system of more localized trails, so that there is acknowledgement that these are not *all* trails in the region
- The sentence that begins with "When fully constructed..." implies that benefits are not already being realized by existing Circuit Trails.
- This plan says that 65 miles are intended to be constructed within the next five years- Could there be acknowledgement that the Circuit Coalition's goal is to accomplish 500 total miles by 2025? This number is more ambitious than the 65 miles, and are not committed projects, that we would appreciate if there was recognition of the Coalition's current goal.

Another concern we noticed was that in Table 15 the numbers are substantially different

between unfunded and funded trail projects in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. We would like some additional explanation of these particular numbers, especially if there were any errors are funding that was either added or withdrawn. The “funded” for New Jersey is particularly of concern, as it drops 77 million dollars of funding, despite around an equal number of trails still planned to be built.

	2040 miles	Funded	Unfunded	2045 miles	Funded	Unfunded
PA	272	128.3	47.2	243	108	172
NJ	140	99.7	19.7	142	22	120

We also had concern with the text that states: “We must also plan for the future and preserve vital rights-of-way so that the system can expand. Utilizing abandoned rail lines as trails in the interim is one way in which key corridors can be preserved for future use (p.99). “ in the Rebuild and maintain the region’s transportation infrastructure” section. This section implies that trails should be used as holding for abandoned rail corridors. At the present moment, there are no trails that this would currently apply to. Additionally, it weakens the importance of the Circuit Trails as permanent infrastructure, many of which are on abandoned rail corridors and do not have a possibility of restoring service. The text in this section is also SEPTA-specific and should clarify the different between SEPTA holding a lease on a property, as well as discussing NJT and freight rail corridors.

In addition to the Circuit Trails pages, trails could be better incorporated into the goals of the long range plan. Examples include:

- Adding parks and trails as a strategy to reduce GHG emissions in addition to forest space (p.52)
- Encourage awareness of historic and cultural landscapes through additional access via parks and trails. (p.57)
- The benefits for parks and recreation also specifically mention trails (p.69)

The Regional Trails Network title in the graphic on page nine as well as its explanation on page 169 should specifically be called the “The Circuit Trails” or “The Circuit Regional Multi-use Trails Network” as in Figure 31. Additionally, we would like clarification on what the non-Circuit Trails that are listed in “The Circuit regional trail network, along with some other multiuse trails that are not a part of The Circuit.” are.

Thank you for integration of the Circuit Trails in Connections 2045 and we look forward to working with DVRPC and other partners on implementing the Circuit Trails system through the region.

John Boyle
Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia

Dana Dobson
Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Olivia Glenn
New Jersey Conservation Foundation

DVRPC Response – Circuit Coalition

1. *Within the Circuit Text on pg. 90-91 and 130:*
 - a) *Note that there are over 65 organizations involved throughout the region – We will add language recognizing the size of the Circuit Coalition.*
 - b) *Clarify multiuse that these are not bicycle lanes or sidewalks – The term multiuse trail does define this already. The suggestion to change to 'multiuse walking and biking trails' could also be seen as confusing by suggesting that there are two trails in each segment: one for walking and one for biking.*
 - c) *Include text that the Circuit Trails are connected to a much larger system of more localized trails – We added language to clarify this point.*
 - d) *Could the Plan acknowledge the Circuit Coalition's goal to complete 500 miles by 2025? – We will add language recognizing this target.*

2. *Funded vs. unfunded segment miles in the Circuit – The Connections 2045 funding estimate is based on the \$1.4 million in Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds available in the NJ subregion annually (DB #X107), with an estimate of 50 percent of available funds going to Circuit Trails projects. In addition, there is a statewide TAP funding source of approximately \$11 million per year. The region can generally anticipate about 20 percent of these funds over the long-term with yearly fluctuations based on projects ready to advance. We will double the estimated revenue associated to \$44 million with The Circuit Trails in New Jersey assuming a fair portion of the statewide TAP funds. This remains a conservative estimate compared to the 2040 Plan in recognition that some of the counties have funding and staffing barriers associated with moving these projects forward. The region can expect additional funding beyond federal and state transportation formula funds. We have not accounted for those in the Plan, while some of the estimated revenue in the 2040 Plan was highly optimistic in our ability to attract external funds. Lastly, the higher cost estimate per mile (\$1 million per mile in 2045 versus \$500,000 in 2040) will reduce how many miles we can expect to construct with available revenue. Regardless, DVRPC will continue to be proactive in seeking additional funds to help build out The Circuit Trail Network.*

3. *Concern with statement on page 99 "We must also plan for the future and preserve vital rights-of-way in which key corridors can be preserved for future use" – We agree that the question of rights-of-way preservation for potential future transit use is nuanced, and we certainly do not mean to imply that projects to connect the Circuit would ever be temporary. We will delete that sentence from the final document. In response to your comment about SEPTA, we will also add a new sentence as follows: "NJ TRANSIT, Amtrak, and freight operators also have older infrastructure that requires modernization".*

4. *Mention dockless vs. docked bikeshare systems (pg. 91) – We have added language around dockless systems. Related to this thought, we will also note in the strategies to incorporate new technologies and services within the Integrated, Multimodal Transportation Section a strategy that says: "Continue to monitor new technologies to gain knowledge and understanding as to how they can be applied to improve the safety and efficiency of our transportation network."*

5. *Better incorporate the Circuit Trails into the LRP goals such as adding parks and trails as a strategy to reduce GHG emissions (pg. 52); encourage awareness of historic and cultural landscapes through additional access via parks and trails (pg. 57); and specifically mention trails in the benefits for parks and recreation (pg. 69) – Reduce GHG strategies already has preserve open space as a goal and parks and trails are tied to this; increase access to historic and cultural landscapes through parks and trails is too specific for a long-range plan strategy; and we will add trails to the first sentence under the Goal - Invest in Parks and Recreation: "Parks, trails, and recreational facilities benefit..."*

6. *Rename the Regional Trails Network as the Circuit Trails or The Circuit Multituse Trails Network and clarify what non-Circuit Trails are listed [in the 'Assessing Future Needs' section] – We have added the Circuit Trails to the Regional Trails program in the Taking Action section. We have no specific non-Circuit Trail Network trails in the plan, and the language is only intended to indicate that not every trail that receives funding must be a part of The Circuit.*

Connections 2045 Long-Range Plan Comments

by John Dodds, Director, Philadelphia Unemployment Project

Effective reverse commute options are critical in providing employment opportunities to inner city workers.

Poor reverse commuting options in the Philadelphia region deprive inner city residents of access to jobs that are more plentiful and better paying in the Philadelphia suburbs.

Philadelphia suffers from significantly higher unemployment than the rest of Pennsylvania and the nation. In September 2016 Philadelphia County's official unemployment rate was 7.1%, far above the state and national averages. In many minority neighborhoods unemployment is much higher. Black unemployment in the state is 10.9% compared to white unemployment at 4.5%.

Employment opportunities are far greater in the suburbs where unemployment was 4.0% in Chester County, 4.6% in Bucks County, 4.2% in Montgomery County and 4.9% in Delaware County.

A March 2007 report released by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission on reverse commuting in the Philadelphia area found **that reaching major employers outside of the City of Philadelphia through public transit is often difficult, if not impossible.** For example, only 58% of major employers in Bucks County are accessible using public transit; 67% in Montgomery County; 71% in Chester County and 86% in Delaware County. All major employers in Philadelphia are accessible by public transit.

A 2009 Brookings study, *Missed Opportunity: Transit and Jobs in Metropolitan America* found that **only 24 % of jobs in the Philadelphia region are accessible in less than 90 minutes on public transportation.** In a 2013 study Brookings found that the **Philadelphia metropolitan area was fourth worst in the nation for the percentage of jobs found more than ten miles outside of its center city.** They found that nearly 64 percent of jobs in Greater Philadelphia are located more than 10 miles from downtown, making our region one of the most decentralized large metros in the US from an employment perspective. And the spatial mismatch between people and jobs has been getting worse: between 2000 and 2012, the number of jobs near the average Greater Philadelphia resident fell by 10 percent.

In Philadelphia, a Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission study found, 36% of households are transit dependent (do not have access to a private vehicle). Minorities have the longest commutes and least access to private vehicles. For example, the average commute in North Philadelphia's 19132 ZIP code, which includes parts of the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood, is nearly 38 minutes – 33 percent longer than the regional average. And in West Philadelphia's 19139 ZIP code, which straddles SEPTA's Market-Frankford line, the average commute time is nearly 37 minutes. **In these neighborhoods fully half the residents do not have private vehicles.**

Regionally, this adds up to a marked disparity in average commute times by race: on average, **African Americans in the region spend 20 percent more time getting to work than white workers do.** In fact, black workers in all of the ten largest US metros have longer average commutes than white workers, though Greater Philadelphia's spread of 20 percent is among the largest in the group. It should come as no surprise that **there is a link between how much a person makes and the mode of transportation he or she relies on to get to work.** In Greater Philadelphia as in the United States as whole, the lower a person's income, the more likely he or she is to commute on foot or by transit.

The Urban Institute, in a 2016 briefing paper, *What if Cities Combined Car Based Solutions with Transit to Improve Access to Opportunity*, wrote, "Transportation policy for low-income households, therefore, needs to overcome the "cars versus transit" mentality that dominates discourse and move toward complementary and integrated solutions that take a pragmatic approach to cars while reducing the costs of cars on low-income people, the environment, and society."

A continuing Harvard study has found that commuting time has emerged as the single strongest factor in the odds of escaping poverty."In a large, continuing study of upward mobility based at Harvard, commuting time has emerged as the single strongest factor in the odds of escaping poverty. The longer an average commute in a given county, the worse the chances of low-income families there moving up the ladder."Transportation Emerges as Crucial to Escaping Poverty, New York Times May 7, 2015

A recent Philadelphia Daily News editorial stated, "While the region has a robust transit infrastructure, the Economy League points out that **many low-income communities have the longest commute times in the region. One thing that indicates is that our transit network doesn't necessarily match where the jobs are.**" Philadelphia Daily News Editorial- July 28, 2015

Additionally, according to a 2012 study by the Center City District & Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, **193,000 employees, nearly 42% of Philadelphia workers, commute to jobs in the suburbs.**

The city of Philadelphia's poverty rate of 25.7% is the highest of the ten largest US cities. Philadelphia also has the dubious distinction of being at the head of the pack, with the highest share of people in deep poverty (defined as 50 percent of the federal poverty level).

In Greater Philadelphia, large scale prior investments have endowed us with extensive transportation infrastructure assets. However, **many of the region's roads, transit routes, and rail lines – designed and built during a different era – are ill-equipped for today's commuting volumes and patterns.**

"Along with massive shifts in population from the city to the suburbs, the local workforce has undergone a dramatic change of venue as formerly bedroom communities have become employment hubs. **In 1970, about half of all of the region's jobs were based in Philadelphia. By 2013, only about one quarter were, due to job losses in the city, and explosive growth in the suburbs.**" The Long Ride, Philadelphia Inquirer July 12, 2015

We take inspiration about the situation in Seattle, Washington, where the King County Metro system provides over 1,600 vans for commuters to use to van pool to work and help break the cycle of poverty for many inner city workers.

A massive expansion of fixed route transportation options in the suburbs seems very unlikely to provide access to good employment opportunities. There is a need for flexible, employment centered transportation options to be utilized to get lower income inner city workers to good paying jobs in the suburbs. The Commuter Options program has been designed by the Philadelphia Unemployment Project to meet this need, by providing vehicles to allow inner city workers to car pool to suburban jobs, which can work irrespective of shift times or location of employers. It is time to resolve the mismatch between inner city workers and the expanded suburban employment options by opening up good jobs to city residents.

Commuter Options

An Innovative Program Serving a Critical Need

Commuter Options is an effort to deal with these realities by providing transportation assistance to inner city workers who live in the city, but have or want jobs in suburban locations. Workers in the program usually earn higher wages and enjoy better benefit packages than they could receive in the city. They earn an average wage of \$14.00 per hour and usually receive competitive fringe benefits including health care coverage. PUPCO currently operates 13 pools transporting approximately 40 workers daily, traveling an average of 1,400 miles per day.

Commuter Options provides workers who live in the same neighborhoods in the city with vehicles to pool together to drive to their suburban jobs. There are typically 3-5 workers per vehicle. The program not only provides critical transportation but also acts as an informal mentoring group to improve job retention. The workers themselves are responsible for the cars and each rider must be on time everyday at the designated pick-up location so that all the workers get to work on time. Users of the vehicles pay \$6 per day to help cover the operating cost of the program. Employers also are asked to provide a subsidy for the program. The vehicles are driven by a member of the pool who works at the same company as the other riders. Coordination of workers, recruitment of employers to participate in the program, along with the day to day management of the program is managed by PUP/UIC staff.

Since its inception Commuter Options has enabled hundreds of workers to get and keep good jobs with many transitioning out of the program and securing their own transportation. It has had a marked impact on retention rates for its participants. The average Commuter Options commuter has been on the job for over 5 years.

The program is a win-win for employers as well as employees. Dorothy Morris, Human Resource Generalist at Quest Diagnostics Billing Center in Norristown says: "Our employees and the Philadelphia Unemployment Project office have made the Commuter Options Project a great success here at Quest Diagnostics. They have worked closely together to create smoothly functioning pools and have required very little assistance from us, as the employer. The flexibility of the program enables our employees to

maximize its benefits. It has significantly lightened the challenges our employees were facing with their commute from Philadelphia to Norristown and has assisted us in achieving our retention goals. This is a win-win-win program for employers, employees and our community.”

Mike Sticklin, HR Business Partner of Synthes America in West Chester PA says: “PUPCO van pools result in less turnover, enhances morale and helps workers get to the job on time.” Mike goes on to say that “the \$2,000 company subsidy for each van is money well spent.

Philadelphia Unemployment Project 112 N. Broad St., 11th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19102 215-557-0822
www.Philaup.org

DVRPC Response – John Dodds, Greater Philadelphia Unemployment Project

The concerns raised on equitable transportation, job access, and poverty are significant problems that *Connections 2045* looks to address. The Plan adds equity (Advance Equity and Foster Diversity) as a fifth core principle, elevating its importance in the document. We've added Build Inclusive Communities to the Develop Without Displacement goal in the Advance Equity section. Inclusive Communities provide affordable housing for all income groups, and help individuals live closer to where jobs are. Equitable Access to Transportation is another new, relevant goal in the Plan. The plan recommends strategies that can be implemented to help achieve this vision and goals. In addition, DVRPC has conducted a multiyear work program around identifying gaps in transportation needs for low-income and other vulnerable populations, called Equity Through Access (<https://www.dvrpc.org/ETA/>).

Implementing the Plan will take the coordinated work of public and private actors throughout the region. We applaud your efforts to improve job access to low income residents in the region and we look forward to working together to advance this Plan for the entire Greater Philadelphia region.

Brendan Read, General Public

Brendan Read
30 East Union Street,
Bordentown, NJ 0850
Tel: 732-681-2563
[readbrendanb@gmail](mailto:readbrendanb@gmail.com)
September 26, 2017

Barry Seymour
Executive Director
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
190 N. Independence Mall West, 8th Floor,
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1520

Dear Mr. Seymour:

My wife and I travel often between our home and Bucks County and Center City. We prefer to use public transportation but it is often not convenient. I am also a longtime transportation advocate. I would like to offer several suggestions aimed at improving public transit in the region:

1. Move to have SEPTA, PATCO, and NJ Transit offer convenient, time-saving, flexible, and customer-attracting single transaction purchases. This practice would permit through ticketing such as between Center City and New York Penn Station; Atlantic City and Center City via NJ Transit bus or rail, or NJ Transit rail and PATCO; and from Bordentown to Center City via either Trenton on NJ Transit and SEPTA, or via Camden on NJ Transit and PATCO.
2. I understand that there have been calls to re-extend service to some of the communities that lost service in the late 1970s and early 1980s. I would like to offer several imaginative and cost-effective suggestions aimed at that goal, based on new developments and other improvements:
 - (a) Use of dual-powered locomotives for new direct one-seat rides e.g. Reading-Pottstown-Center City. We used to live in Belmar, N.J. that saw the introduction of dual-powered trains to/from New York Penn Station to avoid the transfer hassle at Long Branch and rode them.
 - (b) More imaginatively, how about looking at buying dual-powered M.U.s (or "electro-diesels") or retrofitting the existing electric M.U.s? Here are several articles from Railway Gazette International about this <http://www.railwaygazette.com/news/traction-rolling-stock/single-view/view/electro-diesel-flirt-unveiled.html>

(Note: the FLIRT design has been approved for the U.S. and a diesel-only version will be entering service in Texas; Stadler also built the NJ Transit RiverLINE diesel M.U.s)
<http://www.railwaygazette.com/news/news/n-america/single-view/view/stadler-completes-first-us-assembled-flirt.html>

British train operators are planning to retrofit older electric M.U.s into dual-powered M.U.s
[http://www.railwaygazette.com/news/traction-rolling-stock/single-view/view/porterbrook-and-northern-to-develop-electro-diesel-mu.html?sword_list\[\]=dual-mode&sword_list\[\]=electric&sword_list\[\]=multiple&sword_list\[\]=units&no_cache=1](http://www.railwaygazette.com/news/traction-rolling-stock/single-view/view/porterbrook-and-northern-to-develop-electro-diesel-mu.html?sword_list[]=dual-mode&sword_list[]=electric&sword_list[]=multiple&sword_list[]=units&no_cache=1)

My community of Bordentown is served by the RiverLINE. The engines for the diesel M.U.s are located inside power modules that sit between both halves; there is a passageway between them. Could your engineers design a larger self-contained power module that could be coupled between your Silverliner M.U.s? That design could avoid extensive retrofitting to them.

3. Consider integrated rails with trails in restoring service to Quakertown and Bethlehem, and Fox Chase-Newtown. The rail service could use the dual-powered trains suggested above. The old Reading RR was double track through Hellertown, which leaves room for a single-track rail line with passing sidings. It may not be impossible to accommodate both to Newtown. New (and single track/passing sidings) commuter rail systems such as the Denton County (Texas) A-Train and the Sonoma-Marín (California) SMART have rails and trails built in.
4. Examine and support having the New Hope & Ivyland RR extended to connect at Warminster on weekends/holidays, and longer-term through run-dual-powered trains. There is the market and the transportation need with the congestion and parking in the popular and growing New Hope/Lambertville area. In the meantime, study and, if merited, institute a shuttle link from Doylestown to New Hope and Lambertville.
5. Look at adding intercommunity shuttle links, in partnership with NJ Transit, such as:
 - (a) New Hope-Lambertville-West Trenton-State House-Trenton.
 - (b) Woodbourne-Oxford Valley-Bristol-Burlington Town Centre (RiverLINE).

These routes would provide new services to commuters, giving them options in case there are delays on Regional Rail routes and connect employment sites in both states. They would also appeal to visitors, particularly (a).

Thank you very much for your time and I wish you the best of success.



Brendan Read

DVRPC Response – Brendan Read

We are committed to balancing regional needs and priorities with changing funding realities. Through the new long-range plan, we encourage communities to develop in a way that will give residents and workers as many transportation options as possible, including public transit.

We are currently underway with a multi-year effort to support our member governments with a Regional Transit Priority Setting project. This project will help us evaluate where there are significant gaps in our region's transit network. We anticipate opportunities for public input on draft deliverables at some point so be sure to check our website for more information. In the meantime, you can read more about this project here:

<https://www.dvrpc.org/asp/WorkProgram18/print.aspx?prject=18-52-070>. Our Regional Transit Planning Program, part of our yearly Work Program, uses a data-driven approach to making investment decisions related to proposed new services or facilities and enhancements to existing service. Included in some of those studies are power alternatives, like the ones you've described.

Links between our communities and transit agencies would afford greater connectivity within our region. Our Seamless Regional Transit Access study (Publication 08069) evaluated the feasibility of six different potential services that might better connect service between New Jersey and Pennsylvania, including shuttle connections similar to the ones you proposed. New routes are challenging to establish in the present funding climate, when operating agencies like New Jersey Transit are challenged to maintain the service they offer today.

