

UPDATE:

Connections **2050**

DRAFT Plan for Greater Philadelphia
Summary Document for Public Comment

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July 18–August 20, 2025

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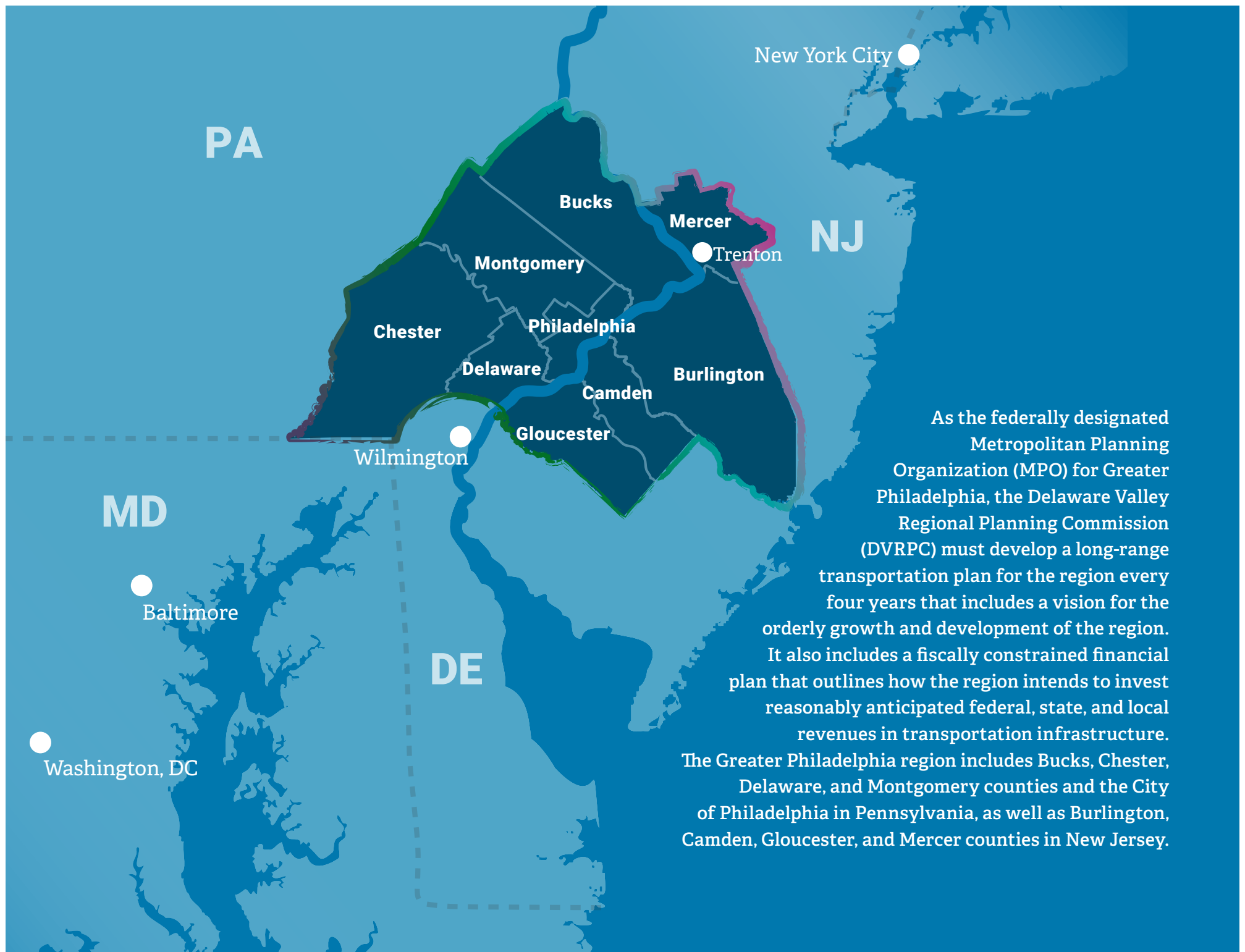
Public Comments

c/o DVRPC Office of Communications and Engagement

190 N Independence Mall West, 8th Fl

Philadelphia, PA 19106-1520





As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Greater Philadelphia, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) must develop a long-range transportation plan for the region every four years that includes a vision for the orderly growth and development of the region. It also includes a fiscally constrained financial plan that outlines how the region intends to invest reasonably anticipated federal, state, and local revenues in transportation infrastructure. The Greater Philadelphia region includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery counties and the City of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, as well as Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer counties in New Jersey.

Explore...

- **What is the Plan?**
- **What's Shaping Our Future?**
- **Where Are We Headed?**
- **What Do We Want the Region to Look Like in 2050?**
- **How Will We Fund the Future?**
- **How Can We Make It Happen?**

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What is the Plan?

Update: Connections 2050 is Greater Philadelphia's Long-Range Plan (Plan), which serves as a blueprint for prioritizing \$78 billion in capital transportation investment in the region through 2050. It considers future population growth, economic trends, environmental concerns, and technological advancements to guide investments in roads, public transit, biking, walking infrastructure, and other transportation modes.

The DVRPC Region

The Greater Philadelphia region is one of the most historic regions in the U.S. It has undergone significant transformation, evolving from an industrial powerhouse to a diverse economic and cultural hub. While the decline of manufacturing in the late 20th century led to economic stagnation and population loss, the region has since rebounded, attracting visitors and new residents with its expanding industries, rich cultural assets, and improving quality of life. Today, the region's economy is driven by healthcare, education, technology, and creative industries. It benefits from world-class



institutions such as the University of Pennsylvania, Temple, Drexel, La Salle, Saint Joseph's, Villanova, Princeton, and Rutgers, which fuel research, workforce development, and economic growth. Its strategic location along the Northeast Corridor provides access to major markets like New York and Washington, DC, supported by a strong transportation network that includes public transit, Amtrak, the Port of Philadelphia, and Philadelphia International Airport. The region's resilience, particularly in the post-pandemic era, has reinforced its attractiveness as a place to live and work, with efforts to expand green spaces, enhance sustainability, and invest in transit-oriented development communities further strengthening its appeal.

Still, the region faces challenges. Housing affordability remains a pressing issue, as rising home prices and rental costs strain many residents. Public transportation faces operating and capital funding shortfalls, while aging infrastructure must be updated to handle extreme weather and future growth. Other big changes, like remote work, new technology, and their impact on the economy, make planning for the future more complicated.

Regional coordination is essential to addressing these challenges and positioning Greater Philadelphia for long-term resilience, growth, and prosperity for all. DVRPC acts as a convener and champion of local and regional priorities. It fosters cooperation across jurisdictions and sectors to align strategies and investments toward a shared vision for 2050. As the U.S. approaches its 250th anniversary in 2026, the region's significance as the birthplace of American democracy is a reminder of the power of collaboration and vision—principles that remain essential today in shaping the future of communities. The Long-Range Plan (Plan) is the primary document guiding our work towards this vision, setting the agenda for our key priorities, and the investment strategies to implement them.

The Long-Range Plan

At its heart, the Plan establishes a vision for the region's future. It describes what residents want Greater Philadelphia to be like in 2050. From this vision, the Plan sets goals, targets, and strategies to make it happen. While it's not a step-by-step action plan, *Update: Connections 2050* explains who has the power to make changes and what resources, like DVRPC support, are available to help. The regional vision for 2050 will guide decisions to create a stronger, fairer, and more connected future. See the Vision for 2050 section for more details.

The Plan also helps decide which transportation projects will receive funding over the next 20+ years. Since transportation, land use, natural resources, jobs, and quality of life are all connected, the Plan addresses all these factors.

Putting Plan into Action

The Plan is updated every four years, but implementing it is an ongoing process that requires everyone in the region to be involved. DVRPC and its member governments help carry out the financial plan by moving projects forward through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)—the region's list of priority transportation projects planned over the next four years—for design and construction.

VISION FOR 2050

A preserved and restored natural **ENVIRONMENT** and healthy ecological systems

Clean, reliable, and affordable **INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITY SERVICES** resilient to the effects of extreme weather

Integrated, healthy, and walkable **COMMUNITIES**

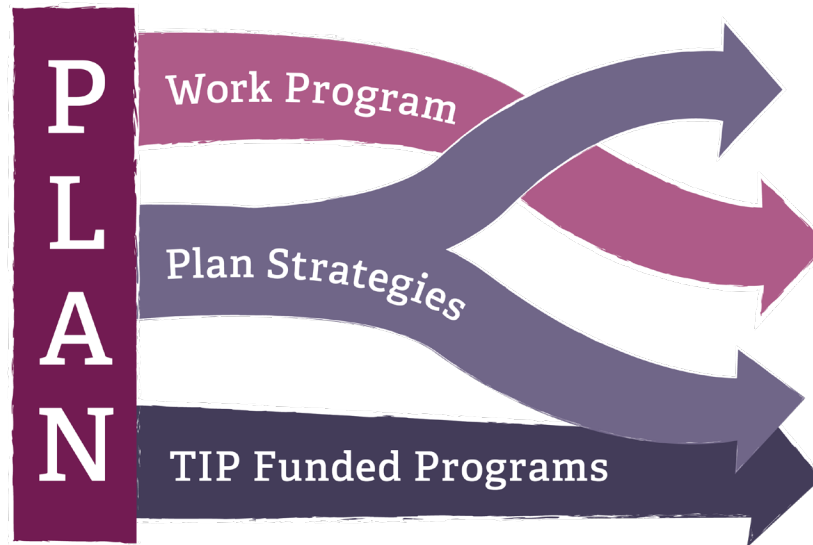
An innovative and connected **ECONOMY** with opportunity and shared prosperity

A safe, modern, multimodal **TRANSPORTATION** network for all

A Greater Philadelphia region that provides:

See the Vision for 2050 section for more details ►

HOW THE LRP IMPLEMENTS THE FINANCIAL PLAN THROUGH THE TIP



Each year, DVRPC also develops an annual Work Program,¹ which includes planning programs and support activities for DVRPC and its member governments. It ensures that funded programs work toward achieving the regional vision and goals across five plan elements: 1) Transportation; 2) Economy, 3) Communities, 4) Environment, And 5) Infrastructure And Utility Services. The strategies for achieving the vision and goals outlined in the Plan

highlight the key stakeholders—from governments to the private sector to individuals—who will help implement the Plan.

The following sections explain trends that are impacting our region and how we collectively plan for these changes and collaborate to position the region for success. ►

For more detail, see *Appendix A—Long-Range Planning Process*.

¹ www.dvrpc.org/workprogram

What's Shaping Our Future?

Each Plan update begins by identifying trends shaping the Greater Philadelphia region. DVRPC studies social, economic, and land use data to understand how things have changed over time, and what's happening now. This research helps DVRPC and its partners see how today's trends might shape the future and create policies to guide the region toward its Vision. To track the region's progress, DVRPC uses different indicators to identify what's working well and what needs more focus in the next plan update.

Happening Now

The previous long-range plan was finalized amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and the world has changed drastically in those few short years. DVRPC has kept apprised of the most significant trends and forces affecting regional planning.

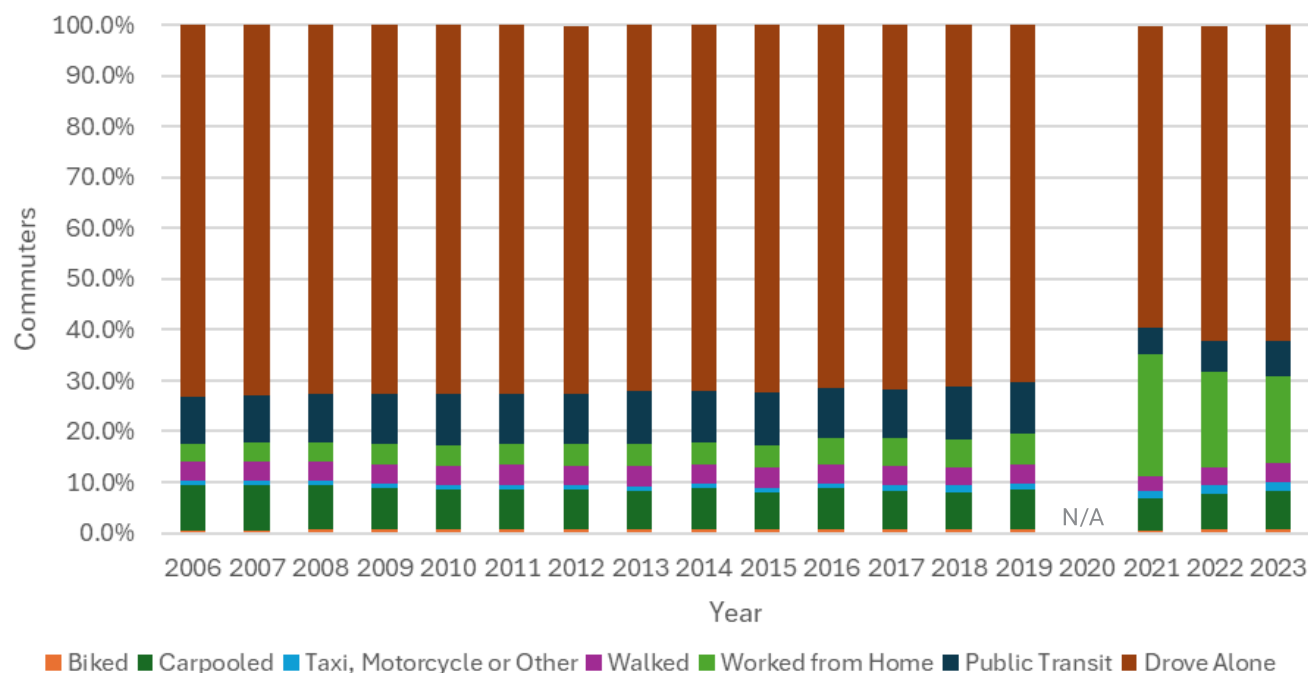


Remote Work and Post-COVID Commute Patterns

The COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide stay-at-home orders brought travel to a near standstill in 2020. Online video-conferencing platforms like Zoom were catapulted into the mainstream, and suburban housing markets heated up as households looked for more space, including extra bedrooms to serve as home offices. By 2021, 24 percent of employees in the Greater Philadelphia region were working from home, reducing both public transit use and solo driving. As a result, the usual rush hour traffic spread more evenly throughout the day and week, with

more trips happening closer to home. In 2022, as offices, schools, and stores reopened, fewer people worked from home full-time (19 percent on most weekdays). New commuting patterns have largely remained, with congestion back at pre-pandemic levels, though spread more throughout the day; transit ridership also remains 30 percent lower. While overall vehicle miles traveled have rebounded, changes in travel patterns have shifted, with less intense peak-hour traffic but sustained congestion throughout the rest of day.

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK BY MODE-SHARE



Source: U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates

*No data available for 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Philadelphia has many remote-friendly jobs, ranking among the top 50 work-from-home cities in 2022.² Its relatively affordable cost of living and location along the Northeast Corridor also attract remote workers from places like New York. While remote work helps ease rush hour traffic, it can also raise housing costs and push out lower-income residents who work in jobs that require them to be in person.

Individuals across the region have been taking their commutes and work-home balance into their own hands as business formations have surged since 2020, especially in the city. Regionally, annual formations since the pandemic are 94 percent higher than they were on average between 2005 and 2019. More than one-third of all the region's business formations have occurred in Philadelphia since 2020, where they have increased by 162 percent compared to the annual average from 2005 to 2019.

More recently, some big employers have been bringing workers back to the office.³ The City of Philadelphia and the federal government now require full-time office work, while SEPTA, Comcast, and Independence Blue Cross have added more in-office days but still allow hybrid schedules.⁴ As regional talent shifts in search of such benefits, the impact on travel, housing, and quality of life is still unfolding.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) has rapidly advanced in recent years, becoming a transformative force across industries. Breakthroughs in machine learning, visual pattern recognition, and natural

language processing have enabled AI to automate complex tasks, enhance decision-making, and optimize large-scale systems.

In transportation and city planning, AI is already being used in cities across the U.S. for things like traffic flow in Pittsburgh, infrastructure maintenance in Boston, and self-driving cars like Waymo in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Austin. Other cities use AI to improve public transit (Los Angeles), reduce traffic jams (Austin), and make streets safer with smart traffic signals and real-time data (New York).

In Greater Philadelphia, AI presents significant opportunities to modernize transportation and urban development. The area has an extensive transit network and older roads in great need of ongoing preservation. AI-powered predictive modeling can help improve service reliability, while smart mobility solutions can reduce traffic on busy roads. It can also help planners make better decisions about housing, zoning, and weather-related risks. While many see opportunities with AI, there are also growing concerns around privacy, bias, transparency, and power consumption.

Ridesharing and Automated Vehicle Programs as Mobility Solutions

In recent years, both the government and the private sector have increased investments in ridesharing and automated vehicle technologies to create more accessible and sustainable transportation options. Many cities are forming partnerships to subsidize ridesharing services, while automakers and tech companies continue developing automated vehicles, aiming to offer safer, more efficient, and inclusive transportation solutions. Greater Philadelphia is taking advantage of these opportunities, embracing transportation technologies that can improve how residents get around. Several subsidized ridesharing and automated vehicle programs have launched in the region, such as GOTrenton!, the automated Navy Yard Shuttle, and Conshohocken Cab. Other

² Philadelphia Remote Work," VISTA Today, accessed June 19, 2025, www.vista.today/2023/09/philadelphia-remote-work.

³ "Remote Work and Productivity," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed June 19, 2025, www.bls.gov/opub/btn/volume-13/remote-work-productivity.htm.

⁴ "Philadelphia's Return-to-Office Policy Puts Pressure on Private Employers," Governing, accessed June 19, 2025, www.governing.com/workforce/philadelphias-return-to-office-policy-puts-pressure-on-privateemployers.

promising projects, like the SEPTA on-demand microtransit, are in development.

In 2023, DVRPC partnered with local transportation officials, transit agencies, and service providers to explore how public subsidies can support shared taxi and shuttle programs that improve mobility in underserved areas, expand job access (especially to growing warehouse districts), enhance paratransit for people with disabilities, and offer other transportation benefits. The research found that cities across the country are experimenting with publicly subsidized on-demand ridesharing, microtransit, and automated shuttles. Transit agency ridesharing services or partnerships commonly support first- and last-mile connections within specific zones, while microtransit is often used in low-density areas where fixed-route transit isn't practical. Both services have high costs and low farebox recovery rates. Automated shuttles are starting to operate in geographies, primarily within their own right-of-way. Some cities, like Los Angeles and Pittsburgh, are going further by integrating transportation options into single mobility apps, with Los Angeles also piloting a Universal Basic Mobility program to assist low-income residents.

Tracking Progress

In addition to monitoring current trends, DVRPC tracks and presents data that can tell us how the region is doing and where it can improve in working toward its Vision. *Tracking Progress*⁵ is an interactive, web-based dashboard for exploring meaningful, reliable, and easy-to-replicate data to track progress toward

achieving the Plan's goals. The platform uses regional indicators to communicate the region's progress, identify successful programs, align DVRPC's planning and implementation activities, and inform regional strategies. The data in *Tracking Progress* is also a valuable resource for other planners, analysts, and anyone interested in the conditions and future of the Greater Philadelphia region.

The region's most positive trends in Tracking Progress relate to bridge conditions, business formations, housing permits, and job growth. More concerning regional trends exist around income disparities, transportation safety, and transit ridership. ►

⁵ www.dvrpc.org/trackingprogress

TRACKING PROGRESS DASHBOARD



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Where Are We Headed?

Population and job forecasts are important for determining how to use land and where we need to improve access to housing and economic opportunities. No one can predict the future exactly, but these forecasts help us make smart choices about where to invest in roads, buses, and trains. Overall, the region is expected to see steady growth in both people and jobs in the coming decades.

Population Forecasts

More people are moving to the DVRPC region. By 2050, about 450,000 new residents are forecast to live here, bringing the total population to over 6.3 million. That's about a seven percent increase from 2020. Most new residents will live in cities, but the fastest growth will happen in the suburbs of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia is expected to get the most new people—about 130,000, or almost one-third of all growth in the region. Montgomery and Chester counties also anticipate significant growth, and together, these three areas will make up almost three-fourths of the total increase.



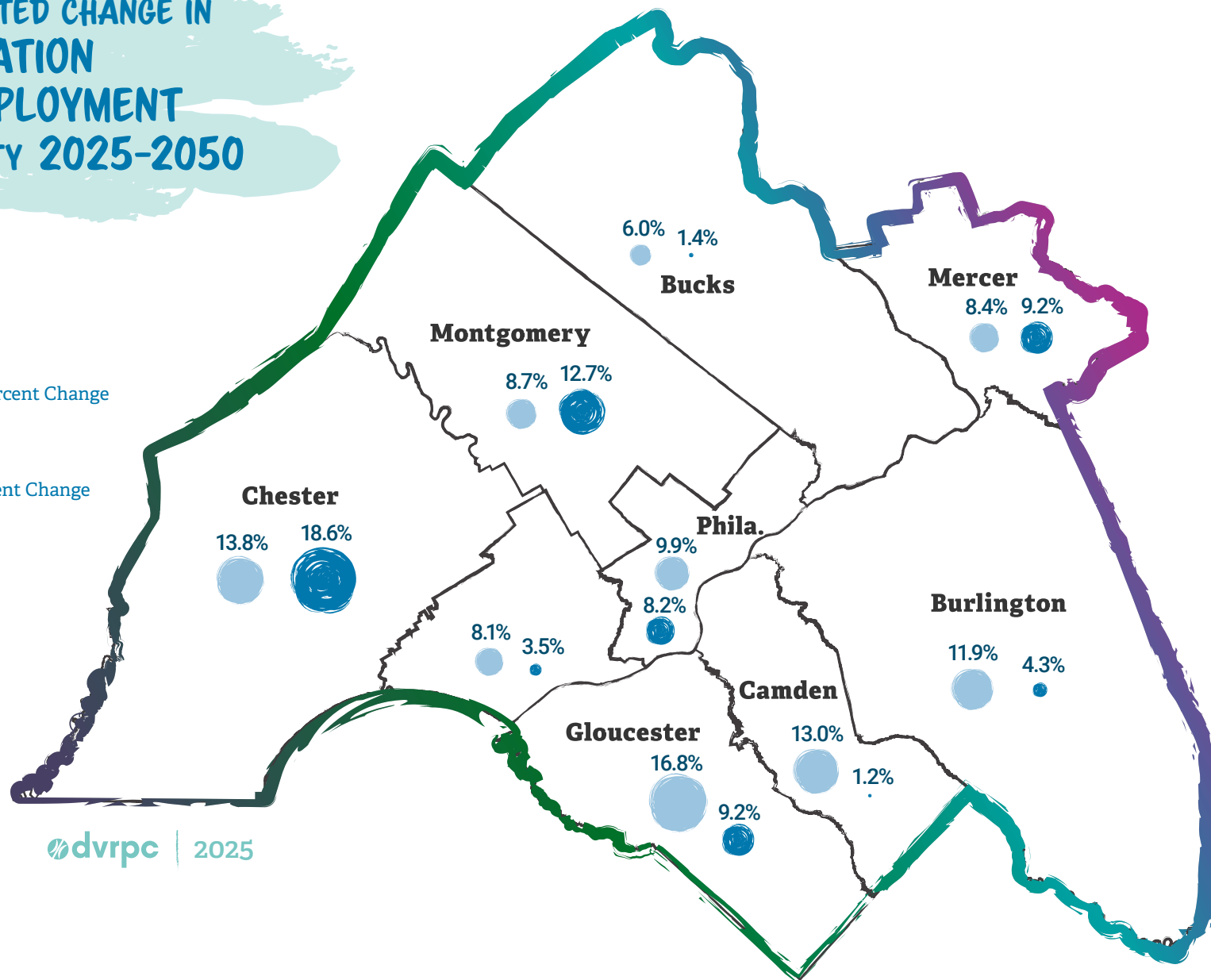
FORECASTED CHANGE IN POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT BY COUNTY 2025-2050



Employment Percent Change



Population Percent Change



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Even though more people are moving in, the region is getting older. Fewer babies are being born, and more people are living longer. The number of young people under 30 will shrink by 2 percent, while the number of people 65 and older will grow by almost 50 percent. This is happening all over the country.

Families and households are changing too. More people are living in apartment buildings and other multifamily homes. Extended families are living together in multigenerational households, and young adults are living with their parents longer due to economic pressures. These changes are expected to affect housing, neighborhoods, and cities across the region in the coming decades.

Employment Forecasts

More jobs are coming to the DVRPC region as well. By 2050, 356,000 new jobs are projected, which is more than a 10 percent increase from 2020. This growth is tied to the region's total working-age population, which is expected to remain relatively stable. Between 2020 and 2025, jobs in hotels, restaurants, and food services are forecast to grow by 67 percent, and jobs in arts, entertainment, and recreation are expected to increase by 41 percent, surpassing pre-pandemic levels. The fastest growing industries are those related to transportation and warehousing, given more online shopping and bigger delivery networks.

The biggest job sector in the region will be healthcare and social services. As the population ages, there will be a higher demand for doctors, nurses, and caregivers. The second-largest job sector, professional and technical services, is not expected to grow by much, reflecting broader national trends of a full job market in those fields. Despite this, total regional employment is forecasted to approach 4 million by 2050, with a diversified economy

supporting various industries.

Most new jobs are projected to be in Philadelphia, making up about 25 percent of the total increase. The suburbs, especially Montgomery and Chester counties, will also grow, with 16 and 13 percent more jobs, respectively. Other counties will see steady job growth too, helping spread opportunities across the region.

These trends suggest that while the workforce expands, the region's economy will continue to evolve, driven by healthcare, logistics, and service jobs. ►

For more detail, see *Appendix B—Demographics & Land Use*.

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● What Do We Want the Region to Look Like in 2050?

Every region needs a game plan for the future—and that's what a long-range plan is all about. At DVRPC, we work with partners across the region to shape a shared vision for how our communities grow and thrive. That vision helps guide big decisions, especially about transportation—like where to make biking and walking safer, improve transit, and make travel on our roadways more reliable.

But it's not just about getting from A to B. Transportation connects to everything: where we live, how the economy grows, and how we care for our environment. That's why our plan looks at the big picture, weaving together all the pieces that make our region a great place to live.





The Regional Vision for 2050 is a Greater Philadelphia that provides:



What does the future of our region look

like? Dense, connected communities are best positioned to grow and thrive. By focusing growth in these places—called Centers in this Plan—the region can maximize the benefits of existing transportation options while minimizing financial and environmental costs.

Two maps help illustrate this vision:

- The Land Use Vision and Rail map shows how the region can grow in smart, balanced ways by aligning future development with our infrastructure. It highlights areas primed for

redevelopment, emerging growth areas, rural landscapes to preserve, and green spaces that connect it all.

- The Plan Centers and Regional Rail map identifies specific Centers where future growth is prioritized and where investments in infrastructure, housing, and jobs can have the greatest impact.

Together, these maps offer a visual guide to how Greater Philadelphia can grow strategically—making the most of existing assets, protecting parks and open space, and supporting walkable, vibrant communities where people can live, work, and play.

For more details on this map, see *Appendix B—Demographics & Land Use*.

LAND USE VISION AND RAIL

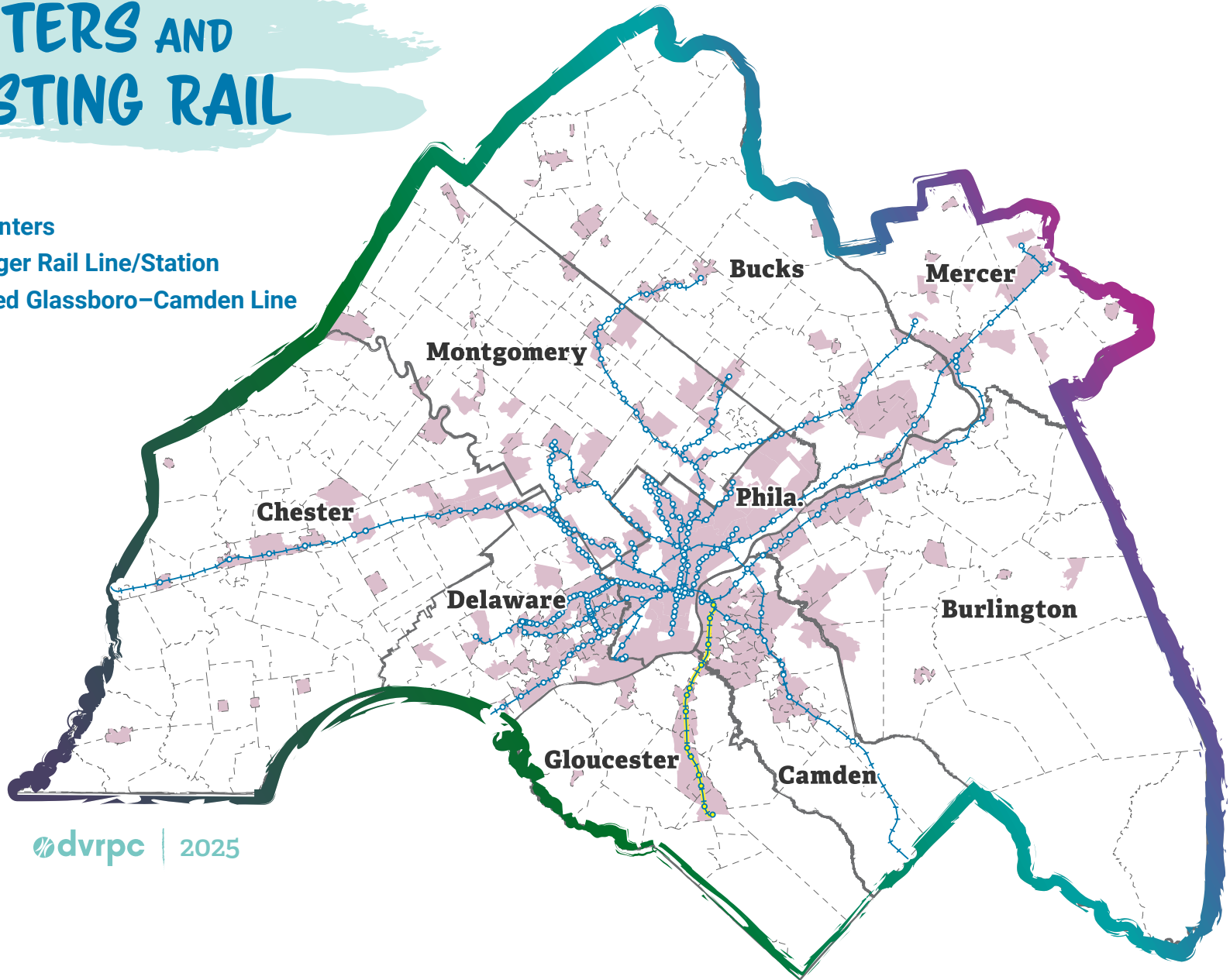
-  Infill and Redevelopment
-  Emerging Growth
-  Greenspace Network
-  Rural Resource Lands
-  NJ Pinelands Boundary
-  Passenger Rail Line/Station
-  Proposed Glassboro–Camden Line



 | 2025

CENTERS AND EXISTING RAIL

- Plan Centers
- Passenger Rail Line/Station
- Proposed Glassboro–Camden Line



WHAT WE HEARD

The regional vision was shaped by the voices of people who live and work right here in our region. We asked for your thoughts through a survey that mixed multiple-choice and open-ended questions. Participants weighed in on what they liked (or didn't) about the vision from our last Plan, and shared ideas for what to add, change, or leave out. We also introduced new content about infrastructure and utility services, and gave participants a chance to weigh in on that too. Over 1,300 people from every county in the region shared their input—and we listened! Here's a snapshot of what we heard:

- Help make choosing alternative transportation easier. Help people want to choose biking or walking.
- Reduce car dependency.
- Encourage on-site electricity generation such as small-scale solar and wind power.
- Emphasize that renewable electricity and fuel resources are the goal for transportation AND buildings.
- Emphasize water quality and safety.
- Make affordable access to the green spaces.
- Put more emphasis on affordable housing.
- Build more transit-oriented development.
- Include local food and goods production.
- Add language that describes the variety of communities and districts to be served, including residential and business, high-density and rural, wealthy and low-resourced, etc.

Building Blocks of the Vision

The *Update: Connections 2050 Plan* is built on five

Plan Elements: 1) Transportation; 2) Economy, 3) Communities, 4) Environment, And 5) Infrastructure and Utility Services.

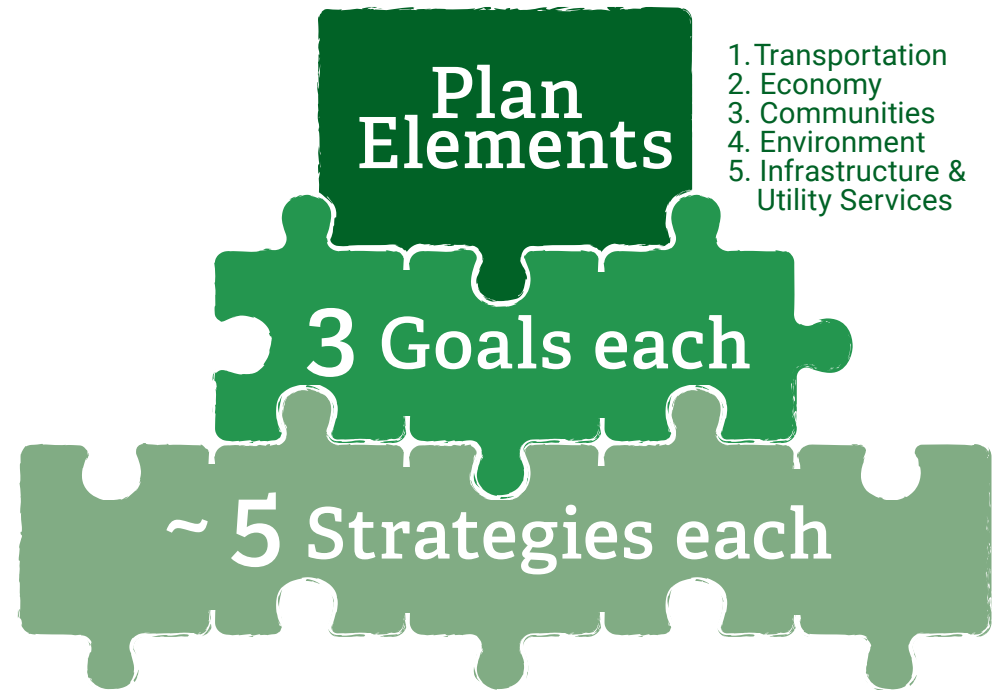
Each element has three **Goals** that work toward achieving our vision.

Each Plan element also describes **Strategies** for achieving the vision and goals, including specific ways to implement them and responsible parties.

Reaching our goals and implementing our strategies won't happen overnight—and it definitely won't happen by sticking to business as usual. It's going to take bold action from all of us, working together. That's why each strategy identifies how different partners across the region can take action. Everyone has a role to play!

Even though each goal and strategy shows up just once, crosscutting themes—like how goods move around the region, how we use land, how easy it is to get where you need to go, and how we use new technology—pop up throughout the plan.

VISION HIERARCHY



Read on for a closer look at each of the five plan elements, along with the goals and strategies that go with them. ►

Transportation



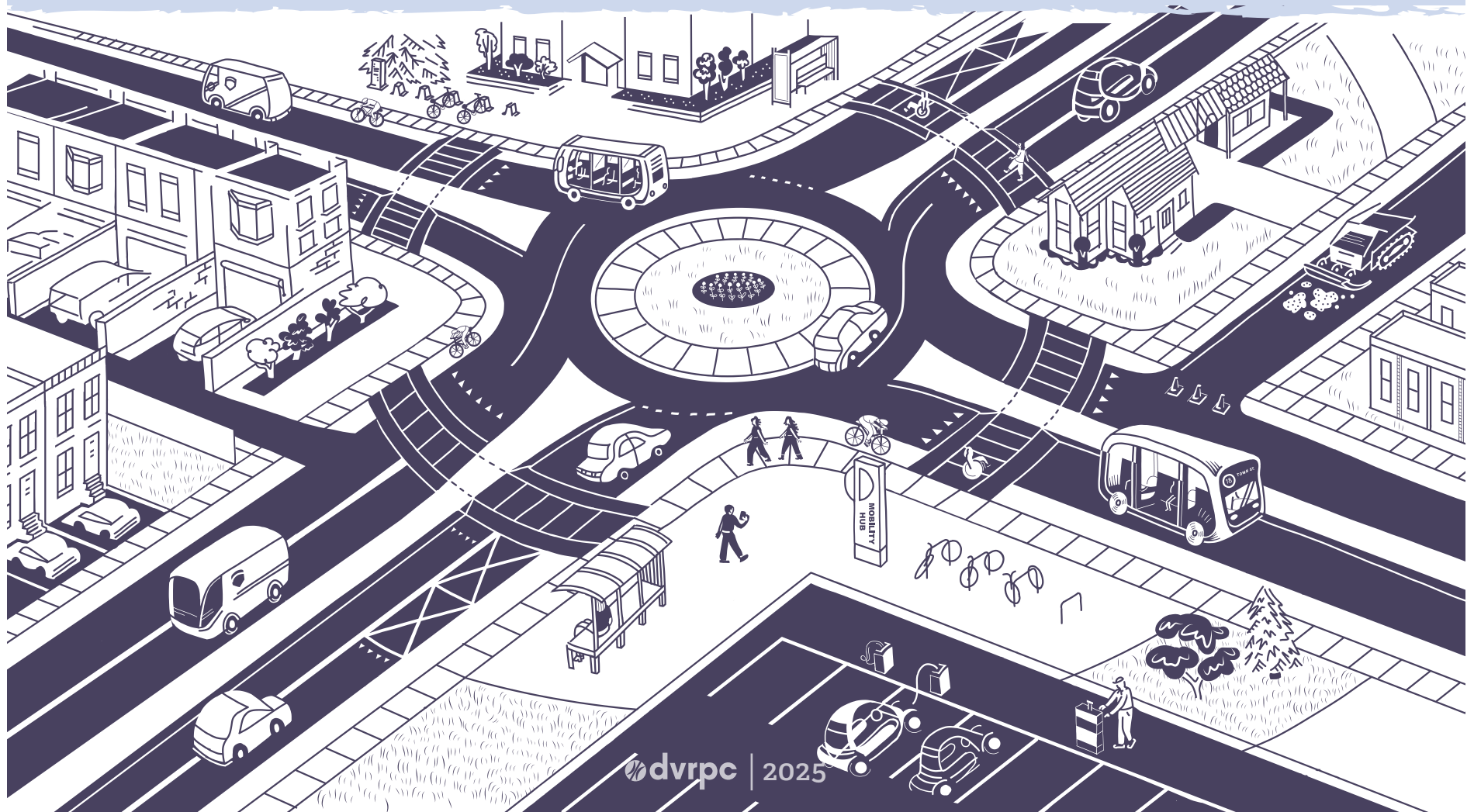
Greater Philadelphia boasts an impressive transportation network with an extensive transit system, robust walking and biking facilities, a well-connected roadway network, a vast freight rail system

with intermodal connections, and an international port and airport system. However, many of these facilities are aging and need to be modernized with the latest safety standards and new technologies to meet present and future needs. Investments in safety, active transportation, and public transit will improve health, air quality, and overall regional accessibility. The Plan upholds the region's existing Vision Zero goal to eliminate fatal and serious crashes by protecting all roadway users through engineering, education, and enforcement, while also promoting alternative modes such as walking, biking, and transit—efforts exemplified by the Circuit Trails network that connects urban, suburban, and rural communities through dedicated, non-vehicular routes.



The TRANSPORTATION Vision for 2050:

A safe, modern, multimodal transportation network for all



dvrpc | 2025

● This looks like...

increased safety and access to affordable transportation, along with the jobs, services, and opportunities that come with it. Infrastructure updates and service changes are planned with communities, minimizing burdens to them.

reliable, predictable trips made possible by sustained investments in transit, roads, and bridges. Fully funded operations and maintenance ensure fewer disruptions and safer conditions. Transparent budgeting and long-term capital planning support confidence in the system—for commuters, freight, and transit riders alike.

reduced single-occupant auto dependence and increased resource-efficient mobility—particularly through walking, biking, and transit—and use of renewable and alternative fuels and clean technologies to reduce air pollutants.

● Goals:

1 A transportation system that is safe and secure for all.

2 Connected and integrated transportation facilities for all modes in a state-of-good repair.

3 Reduced car dependency and per-capita VMT.

Strategies for Achieving Our Transportation Goals:



Implement Vision Zero and Enhance Security for All Users

This strategy advances regional safety by integrating Vision Zero and Safe System principles, which prioritize eliminating traffic fatalities and creating a transportation network that anticipates human error and minimizes harm.

It does this by incorporating proven safety countermeasures—such as traffic calming, road diets, and roundabouts—into transportation planning. Achieving a safer, more walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly region requires investment in supportive infrastructure and engineering solutions, more focused safety enforcement, and educational programs for cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers. Security investments emphasize enhancing lighting, outreach, and support for vulnerable populations to create safer conditions in and around transit. As more infrastructure and vehicles become digitized and interconnected, cybersecurity will become an integral part of transportation security planning. Strengthening transportation security and regional resilience requires interagency coordination, updated cybersecurity measures, and interoperable technologies that support efficient incident management and emergency response—reinforcing safety as the highest priority for regional investments.

Regional Vision Zero and Regional High Injury Network

DVRPC and its planning partners are developing a safety action program to advance the Plan's target to Achieve Regional Vision Zero—no transportation fatalities or serious injuries on the roadway—by 2050. The first year of this project produced a data-driven Regional High Injury Network to inform safety planning, a scan of safety-focused reports from partners, communications to municipal partners, and a partner summit.

Implementation Actions

Conduct analysis, support planning, and coordinate efforts among agencies to implement and prioritize Regional Vision Zero initiatives.

Use government procurement to advance vehicle safety technologies, such as lane keeping and front-end collision avoidance.

Adopt Safe Routes to School programs.

Design projects using Safe Systems principles and implement proven safety countermeasures and ADA upgrades.

Partner with community organizations to conduct culturally competent outreach—such as listening sessions, translated materials, and neighborhood pop-ups—to better serve transit-reliant populations, including seniors, people with disabilities, low-income residents, and immigrants.

Deploy interoperable technologies and use Traffic Incident Management (TIM) to coordinate emergency response, enhance work zone safety, detect incidents to quickly and safely clear them, and reduce secondary and signalized intersection crashes.

Develop and strengthen regional transportation infrastructure resiliency, security planning, and cybersecurity measures.

Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	Transit Agencies	Emergency Responders	Toll Authorities	DVRPC
						✓
✓	✓					
✓	✓	✓				
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
✓			✓			
		✓		✓	✓	
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Checkmarks in all tables indicate general primary responsibility for implementation. However, Roles may vary based on state and local laws, which may limit or prohibit certain actions by specific entities. Additional parties not indicated may also contribute to implementation.

Strategies for Achieving Our Transportation Goals:



Preserve and Maintain Infrastructure Critical to Freight and Regional Mobility

A well-maintained transportation system is vital to moving people and goods around the region.

Reconstructing the region's aging transportation infrastructure is a top priority and presents an opportunity to bring facilities up to modern design standards, implement operational improvements, and enhance connectivity between infrastructure, vehicles, and the internet. This strategy focuses on ensuring a state-of-good repair by prioritizing preservation investments that align with agency asset management plans. It supports maintaining accurate asset management databases, applying performance-based planning and lowest life-cycle cost analysis to anticipate future investment needs, and advancing regional freight planning. Key initiatives include designated truck parking, optimized loading zones, and strategic infrastructure maintenance.

Regional Freight Plan

Planning for freight capitalizes on trends and opportunities while promoting and preserving quality of life, economic, safety, environmental, and land use goals. Broad integration of freight considerations can be seen in the DVRPC Long-Range Plan and TIPs. In fiscal year 2026, DVRPC will begin a two-year *Regional Freight Plan* effort that will document key freight industries, infrastructure, activity, and trends; engage stakeholders to identify key issues and needs; and establish a vision and goals for freight and goods movement in the DVRPC region.

Implementation Actions

Continue to update asset management plans that apply lowest life-cycle cost approaches, prioritize infrastructure preservation in investment decisions, bring infrastructure up to modern design standards when reconstructing facilities, and utilize sustainable construction and maintenance practices.

Preserve rights-of-way and coordinate regional freight plans. Update zoning regulations for truck parking.

Assess the vulnerability of critical transportation and community assets and implement measures to minimize risk.

Incorporate projected extreme weather conditions and risks into infrastructure design and maintenance, and invest in upgrades that improve durability and system reliability over time.

Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	Transit Agencies	State Agencies	Toll Authorities	DVRPC
		✓	✓			
✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Strategies for Achieving Our Transportation Goals:



Expand and Improve Transit Access

The DVRPC region is served by a legacy transit network—including rail, trolley, and bus systems—that forms the backbone of regional mobility, but it must be modernized to meet today’s needs.

Speed up transit service and make it more reliable, attractive, visible, and easier to use, and secure funding to expand and enhance public transit. The strategy facilitates access to transit by implementing opportunities to make fares affordable for all users, accelerating full ADA compliance, and targeting improvements in underserved communities. It can further strengthen regional connectivity through unified fare payment systems, coordinated scheduling, and improved first- and last-mile solutions.

Pottstown Station Concept Plan

DVRPC is supporting the development of a Pottstown Station Concept Plan, preparing for the potential return of passenger rail service between Philadelphia and Reading. Located at the outskirts of the Greater Philadelphia area, Pottstown has significant opportunities for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) that can enhance mobility and economic growth for its lower-income populations. DVRPC is working with Pottstown Borough, community groups, and stakeholders to assess local capacity for TOD policies and programs while emphasizing the need for expanded community engagement to ensure representative and effective planning.

Implementation Actions

Expand rail and bus services and frequency, implement unified fare systems, coordinate scheduling, and enhance first- and last-mile solutions. Offer flexible transit service that can adapt to changing travel demand, including more service between suburban areas and throughout the day. Implement ADA compliance projects at transit stations.

Collaborate with legislators to generate additional and consistent funding at local, state, and federal levels. Provide policy support for transit expansion.

Coordinate and implement transit-first strategies such as transit signal priority, off-board fare payment, and dedicated bus lanes in high-ridership locations.

Coordinate and inform regional efforts to improve transit connectivity and integrate multimodal transportation options.

Establish essential service hubs and expand paratransit services for vulnerable populations.

Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	Transit Agencies	State Governments	DVRPC
			✓		
✓	✓		✓	✓	
✓		✓	✓		
					✓
✓	✓		✓		

Strategies for Achieving Our Transportation Goals:



Expand Active and Multimodal Transportation Options

Active transportation includes walking, biking, and rolling, and when connected with transit stations, it enhances multimodal mobility, expands access to opportunity, and supports more travel choices.

Funding infrastructure for these modes ensures safer, more accessible streets for all users. Expand safe and accessible pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including Complete Streets elements,⁶ multimodal connections of existing and emerging transportation modes, and completion of the Circuit Trails network by 2040. This strategy integrates active transportation with transit through real-time trip planning and payment systems, encourages micromobility options with dedicated infrastructure, and optimizes curb space for safe deliveries and multimodal use. A range of emerging vehicle technologies, including micromobility options—such as electric bicycles and electric scooters—and shared mobility services present new ways to safely and efficiently get around the region. There is an opportunity to integrate these modes into a mobility-as-a-service network, where each trip is made using the best available mode based on real-time travel information.

LINK

DVRPC LINK is a web-based tool that helps users understand the potential connectivity benefit of improving or building new bicycle or pedestrian facilities. Users can draw or upload locations of potential bicycle or pedestrian facility improvements to view the resulting connected areas and the estimated number of connected people, jobs, services, and other amenities.

⁶ Complete Streets are designed to be safe and accessible for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Elements may include dedicated bike lanes, accessible sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings, transit-priority features, traffic calming measures, and adequate space to safely support freight and goods movement activities.

Implementation Actions

Expand pedestrian and bike infrastructure, complete Circuit Trails, and advance multimodal planning. Design facilities for people of all ages and abilities, including public restrooms and places to sit or rest.

Improve multimodal connections, enhance transit access, and develop integrated data platforms for trip planning.

Develop real-time data, trip routing, and payment systems to support multimodal transportation networks.

Support micromobility services like bike share and e-scooters*, and implement curbside management to support multimodal use and efficient deliveries.

Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	Transit Agencies	Private Sector	DVRPC
✓	✓	✓			✓
✓		✓	✓		
✓			✓	✓	
✓				✓	

* Not currently legal in Pennsylvania.

Strategies for Achieving Our Transportation Goals:



Manage Travel Demand and Ensure Safe Transportation Operations

The most impactful way to avoid congestion and improve travel reliability on the region's roadways is through travel demand management, through both a variety of travel options and programs to encourage their use.

Travel options beyond single-occupant vehicles on roadways include transit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure, as well as carpooling, ridesharing, and other ways to travel. These alternatives can be encouraged through commuter benefits, ridesharing programs and employer-based initiatives. The Congestion Management Process (CMP) identifies the most congested roadways in the DVRPC region using a variety of traffic data and recommends cost-effective multimodal strategies to improve the reliable flow of people and goods, enhance safety, and expand travel options on the region's transportation network. CMP regulations require that single-occupant vehicle capacity additions to the road network be only as a last resort to address congestion. Through implementation of Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO), the region can further improve travel time reliability for people and goods, provide real-time traveler information, and effectively deploy traffic incident management, resulting in enhanced multimodal safety and security.

Emerging technologies, such as connected and automated vehicles, may present further opportunities for safer and more efficient travel in the mid- to longer-term future.

Emergency Responder Digital Alert Program

As of 2024, first responders in Greater Philadelphia have a new tool to notify drivers of emergency vehicles, even before they are visible. Digital alerting, or Responder-to-Vehicle technology, alerts motorists of responders' positions directly to their vehicle navigation system, increasing awareness of roadside hazards and encouraging compliance with Move Over, Slow Down laws. DVRPC plans to bring the digital alerting system to over 100 agencies and equip 450+ emergency response vehicles across Greater Philadelphia.

Implementation Actions

Lead the CMP and regional travel demand management programs.

Promote employer-based strategies that prioritize public transit use, with telework options supported where transit is limited. Expand ridesharing and vanpool programs, including partnerships for seniors without smartphones, and improve service to underserved communities.

License and regulate private mobility services to operate only if they serve everyone, share data, integrate with transit and other transportation providers, follow curb regulations, and meet safety standards. Periodically renew licenses if these requirements are being met.

Limit roadway new capacity to appropriate areas, as identified by the CMP, and focus construction of new capacity on missing links, priority bottlenecks, and economic development.

Partner with employers, institutions, and transit agencies to implement commuter benefits, such as SEPTA's Key Advantage and Key Commuter programs, promote ridesharing, and deploy localized mobility solutions.

Implement advanced integrated traffic signal and transit management systems, and apply integrated corridor management techniques to proactively manage and operate traffic across modes and jurisdictions.

	Municipalities	Transportation Management Associations	DOTs	Transit Agencies	State Agencies	Private Sector	DVRPC
Lead the CMP and regional travel demand management programs.							✓
Promote employer-based strategies that prioritize public transit use, with telework options supported where transit is limited. Expand ridesharing and vanpool programs, including partnerships for seniors without smartphones, and improve service to underserved communities.		✓		✓		✓	✓
License and regulate private mobility services to operate only if they serve everyone, share data, integrate with transit and other transportation providers, follow curb regulations, and meet safety standards. Periodically renew licenses if these requirements are being met.	✓				✓		
Limit roadway new capacity to appropriate areas, as identified by the CMP, and focus construction of new capacity on missing links, priority bottlenecks, and economic development.			✓				✓
Partner with employers, institutions, and transit agencies to implement commuter benefits, such as SEPTA's Key Advantage and Key Commuter programs, promote ridesharing, and deploy localized mobility solutions.		✓		✓			
Implement advanced integrated traffic signal and transit management systems, and apply integrated corridor management techniques to proactively manage and operate traffic across modes and jurisdictions.	✓		✓	✓			

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Economy

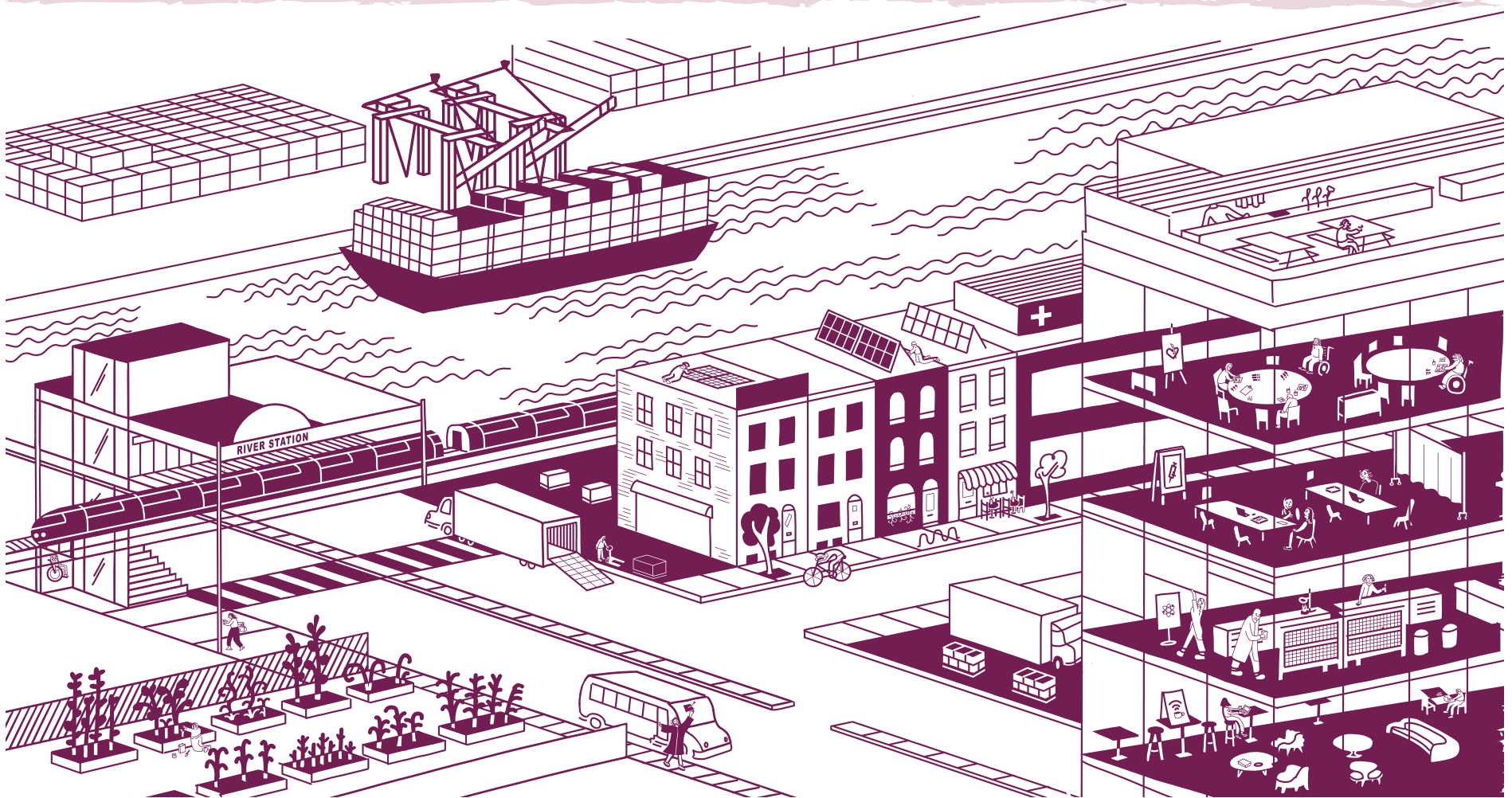


Greater Philadelphia has many assets that support its economic strengths: it is well-positioned along the Northeast Corridor, is made up of a diverse industry mix, and is home to major educational and healthcare institutions. To meet its full economic potential for all, Greater Philadelphia must be an attractive place for workers to live and for businesses to operate and grow. By improving access to economic opportunities through workforce development, innovation, diversification, and entrepreneurialism, the region can support financial mobility for families, attract and grow more businesses, and strengthen its position as a thriving, broad-based economy that leads in a changing global landscape.



The ECONOMY Vision for 2050:

An innovative and connected economy with opportunity and shared prosperity



This looks like...

expanded economic mobility through access to good schools in all districts, jobs that meet and exceed the cost of living in the region, and capital for new and growing businesses. Additional focus placed on expanding opportunity to populations who have been denied access to jobs with livable wages.

impacts of global market forces, economic shocks, and extreme weather risks anticipated and mitigated through sectoral balance and connectivity. Quick recovery for businesses and workers, especially for those who have been historically disenfranchised.

goods production and growth at rates that meet current needs without negative environmental or social impacts in the present or future.

Goals:

1

A well-trained and adaptable regional workforce.

2

Variety of regional economic sectors.

3

Reliable physical and digital access to regional, national, and global resources and markets.

Strategies for Achieving Our Economy Goals:



Build a Future-Ready Workforce

As technology rapidly advances, it is as critical as ever to support our region's workforce and to ensure their skills match employers' evolving needs.

Partnerships between industry and schools, along with efforts to connect small employers to workforce training programs and higher education institutional resources with students in low-income neighborhoods, can raise educational attainment, better prepare workers for future industries, create career pathways, and enable economic mobility. Expanding digital literacy, strengthening workforce training, and investing in emerging technology-job programs will ensure residents can thrive in evolving industries and weather economic disruptions.

Comparing Regional Economies Workforce Automation and Telework

Recent world events have expedited the advancement of digital technologies, altering where and how we work (telework), as well as how we produce and distribute goods and services (automation). Digitally enabled telework and automation have significant implications for the future of the workforce and the region's economy. Since telework capacity and automation risk differ from one industry to the next, it is important to understand the composition of Greater Philadelphia's industry mix to anticipate the future impacts of these forces. DVRPC analyzed the automation risk and telework capacity for jobs in Greater Philadelphia and compared our economic position to peer regions.

Implementation Actions

Provide digital skills training across all age groups, with a focus on school-age children.

Partner across sectors to maintain and promote workforce development programs that align with changing industry needs.

Offer reskilling and upskilling opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals to re-enter the workforce.

Develop and expand workforce training programs in clean technologies, public transit services, building efficiency, construction trades, and other job sectors with high demand for skilled labor to develop a pipeline of skilled tradespeople.

	Municipalities	Counties	State Agencies	Nonprofits	Private Sector	School Districts	Academia	Professional Organizations	Labor	Public-Private Partnership
Provide digital skills training across all age groups, with a focus on school-age children.				✓		✓	✓			
Partner across sectors to maintain and promote workforce development programs that align with changing industry needs.										✓
Offer reskilling and upskilling opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals to re-enter the workforce.			✓	✓	✓					
Develop and expand workforce training programs in clean technologies, public transit services, building efficiency, construction trades, and other job sectors with high demand for skilled labor to develop a pipeline of skilled tradespeople.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	

Strategies for Achieving Our Economy Goals:



Foster Entrepreneurship and Business Growth

Philadelphia's recent rise in Startup Genome's 2025 Global Startup Ecosystem Report—jumping 12 spots to rank #13 globally—underscores the region's growing status as a world-class innovation hub. A thriving regional economy depends on the ability of businesses—large and small, new and established—to adapt, innovate, and grow.

This strategy focuses on building a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports business formation, expansion, and resilience. It emphasizes removing structural barriers, increasing access to capital, and creating the conditions that allow innovative ideas to flourish and scale. Whether through streamlined permitting, updated land use policies, or more inclusive access to financing and procurement opportunities, this strategy aims to cultivate diverse, sustainable economic activity across all communities in the region. Supporting entrepreneurship is not just about launching new startups—it's about strengthening the entire economic landscape, from local makers and service providers to next-generation manufacturers and tech-based enterprises.

Impacts of E-Commerce

The growth of e-commerce has transformed consumer spending habits and disrupted traditional supply chains, with online retail making up 14.6 percent of U.S. retail spending in 2022—a trend accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This shift has significant implications for industrial warehousing, land use, and transportation networks, with projections indicating continued growth in online sales. DVRPC's *Impacts of E-Commerce* report explores these changes, detailing supply chain dynamics, site selection factors, municipal considerations, and strategies to manage development impacts.

Implementation Actions

Offer hands-on support and streamlined guidance to help entrepreneurs navigate business formation processes, including licensing, permitting, and accessing early-stage resources.

Update zoning codes and land use policies to enable flexible, small-scale production spaces and live-work opportunities that support a range of industries—from light manufacturing and biomanufacturing to circular economy and other innovative business models.

Create training programs and policy supports that improve access to local and regional procurement opportunities, especially for underrepresented or early-stage businesses.

Identify and promote appropriate sites for business development across the full life-cycle of emerging and maturing industries, ensuring they can scale, grow jobs, and attract a skilled workforce.

Strengthen small business networks and cooperative models that foster industry connections and bolster long-term economic resilience.

Provide accessible capital and technical support for innovative, high-impact industries and entrepreneurs creating newer, cleaner, smarter models for manufacturing.

	Municipalities	Counties	Federal Agencies	State Agencies	Nonprofits	Private Sector	Economic Development Organizations	Professional Organizations	Mission-Driven Lending Institutions
Offer hands-on support and streamlined guidance to help entrepreneurs navigate business formation processes, including licensing, permitting, and accessing early-stage resources.	✓			✓	✓				
Update zoning codes and land use policies to enable flexible, small-scale production spaces and live-work opportunities that support a range of industries—from light manufacturing and biomanufacturing to circular economy and other innovative business models.	✓								
Create training programs and policy supports that improve access to local and regional procurement opportunities, especially for underrepresented or early-stage businesses.	✓					✓			
Identify and promote appropriate sites for business development across the full life-cycle of emerging and maturing industries, ensuring they can scale, grow jobs, and attract a skilled workforce.		✓	✓	✓			✓		
Strengthen small business networks and cooperative models that foster industry connections and bolster long-term economic resilience.					✓			✓	
Provide accessible capital and technical support for innovative, high-impact industries and entrepreneurs creating newer, cleaner, smarter models for manufacturing.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓

Strategies for Achieving Our Economy Goals:



Strengthen Regional and Global Economic Connections

Economically successful regions have strong connections to global supply chains, requiring investments in ports, multimodal infrastructure, and broadband access.

The region can facilitate economic growth by modernizing freight networks, expanding broadband access, and improving access to international trade gateways. Expanding broadband and improving physical infrastructure will enhance regional connectivity to the global economy, provide employment opportunities, and support key economic sectors. Tourism is an increasingly important sector for the region given its historical significance and variety of recreational and cultural opportunities. Other key sectors include specialty and precision manufacturing, business process tech, and biomedical expansion. Additionally, investments in arts, culture, affordable housing, and transportation infrastructure will attract businesses, talent, and visitors, boosting the region's global appeal.

Lower Bucks Freight Access Study

At the request of Bucks County, DVRPC examined freight generation and patterns to provide recommendations and strategies that support the area's industrial growth centered around the Keystone Trade Center development, while ensuring the safe and efficient movement of both people and goods. This 2024 study documents existing land use and employment patterns; provides an analysis of activity and identified trends; and lays out recommendations for designating and implementing a truck route network, traffic calming considerations, workforce access, and increased clarity of directional and truck restriction signage.

Implementation Actions

Expand broadband access through affordability programs and development of partnerships to reduce costs for low-income households.

Modernize freight infrastructure to enhance supply chain efficiency and connectivity.

Enhance access to critical international gateways via landside improvements at maritime ports and airports.

Identify and preserve key industrial areas, especially those with multimodal transportation access.

Update zoning and permitting to support agritourism in rural areas and urban indoor farming in developed communities.

	Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	Federal Agencies	State Agencies	Nonprofits	Private Sector	DVRPC
Expand broadband access through affordability programs and development of partnerships to reduce costs for low-income households.	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Modernize freight infrastructure to enhance supply chain efficiency and connectivity.			✓					✓
Enhance access to critical international gateways via landside improvements at maritime ports and airports.	✓	✓	✓					✓
Identify and preserve key industrial areas, especially those with multimodal transportation access.	✓	✓						
Update zoning and permitting to support agritourism in rural areas and urban indoor farming in developed communities.	✓	✓		✓	✓			

Strategies for Achieving Our Economy Goals:



Advance Innovation

Innovation is a powerful driver of long-term economic competitiveness and regional resilience.

Innovation is a powerful driver of long-term economic competitiveness and regional resilience. This strategy aims to foster a culture of experimentation, entrepreneurship, and collaboration across sectors to position Greater Philadelphia as a hub for emerging industries and technologies. By investing in research, infrastructure, and inclusive innovation ecosystems, the region can attract and retain talent, accelerate the commercialization of new ideas, and ensure that the benefits of innovation are widely shared. Supportive policies and public-private partnerships will be key to enabling growth in fields like clean tech, biotechnology, and advanced manufacturing, while also promoting resource efficiency and equitable access to innovation.

The Navy Yard Autonomous Shuttle

Pennsylvania's first autonomous shuttle began operations in Philadelphia in February 2024. The project is the result of planning, testing, and coordination between public and private organizations—PIDC, AECOM, Drexel University, PennDOT, Perrone Robotics, and DVRPC, which awarded funding for the shuttle through the commission's Travel Options Program (TOP). TOP funds innovative projects that encourage the use of alternatives to driving alone. This exciting project will enhance accessibility to jobs and amenities in the Navy Yard, while reducing the dependence on single occupancy vehicles.

Implementation Actions

Partner with anchor institutions and private-sector stakeholders to establish, grow, and maintain innovation districts—especially in transit-accessible, mixed-use areas. These districts require supportive zoning, infrastructure investments, and public amenities to attract talent and foster collaboration.

Invest in applied research, commercialization pathways, and incubator programs that bring new products and ideas to market, particularly in high-impact fields like clean tech, biotech, and advanced manufacturing.

Facilitate innovation in traditionally underserved communities through maker spaces, broadband infrastructure, and STEM education programs that connect local residents with future-facing job opportunities.

Promote circular economy principles by supporting business-to-business collaboration, resource-sharing platforms, and practices that reduce waste and improve system efficiency.

	Municipalities	Counties	Federal Agencies	State Agencies	Nonprofits	Private Sector	DVRPC	Economic Development Organizations	Academia
Partner with anchor institutions and private-sector stakeholders to establish, grow, and maintain innovation districts—especially in transit-accessible, mixed-use areas. These districts require supportive zoning, infrastructure investments, and public amenities to attract talent and foster collaboration.	✓	✓				✓			✓
Invest in applied research, commercialization pathways, and incubator programs that bring new products and ideas to market, particularly in high-impact fields like clean tech, biotech, and advanced manufacturing.			✓	✓				✓	✓
Facilitate innovation in traditionally underserved communities through maker spaces, broadband infrastructure, and STEM education programs that connect local residents with future-facing job opportunities.	✓				✓				
Promote circular economy principles by supporting business-to-business collaboration, resource-sharing platforms, and practices that reduce waste and improve system efficiency.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Strategies for Achieving Our Economy Goals:



Promote Economic Opportunity and Financial Security

A strong regional economy must work for everyone.

This strategy focuses on expanding access to the financial tools, services, and opportunities that individuals and small businesses need to thrive. By improving access to capital, financial literacy, mentorship, and career pathways—especially for underrepresented and historically underserved communities—the region can foster inclusive growth and help more people achieve long-term economic stability. Strategic public and private investments in neighborhoods, services, and infrastructure can also help connect residents to economic opportunity and support upward mobility for future generations.

The Great Consolidation: Community Banking Decline in Greater Philadelphia

In 2024, DVRPC conducted a detailed regional analysis of the ongoing trend of bank mergers, acquisitions, and closures. The work was documented along with 11 local strategies that can be employed to offset the negative effects of the decline of community banks and national shift in the banking sector known as the “Great Consolidation.” These strategies range from physical realm interventions, such as zoning changes and adaptive reuse policies, to municipal lending programs and bank formation, which aim to increase access to capital.

Implementation Actions

Expand financial services and technical assistance to entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Offer credit-building, financial literacy services, and digital translation tools in multiple languages to serve immigrant communities and those with limited English proficiency.

Administer mentorship programs, facilitate employer connections, and provide housing assistance for low-income workers.

Facilitate industry connections among small-business owners and the development of cooperatives to build economic resilience, including in food systems.

Implement zoning reforms that increase density around transit hubs to connect residents to employment opportunities and to facilitate the spillover benefits associated with the physical clustering of industries and employers.

	Municipalities	Nonprofits	Professional Organizations	Mission-Driven Lending Institutions	Public-Private Partnership	Academia
Expand financial services and technical assistance to entrepreneurs and small businesses.		✓		✓	✓	✓
Offer credit-building, financial literacy services, and digital translation tools in multiple languages to serve immigrant communities and those with limited English proficiency.	✓			✓		
Administer mentorship programs, facilitate employer connections, and provide housing assistance for low-income workers.	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Facilitate industry connections among small-business owners and the development of cooperatives to build economic resilience, including in food systems.		✓	✓	✓		✓
Implement zoning reforms that increase density around transit hubs to connect residents to employment opportunities and to facilitate the spillover benefits associated with the physical clustering of industries and employers.	✓					

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Communities



Livable communities prioritize land use and development decisions that make the most of existing infrastructure, enabling more efficient delivery of water, sewer, and transportation services. They feature a diverse mix of building types and uses, a range of affordable housing options, multimodal transportation, well-maintained public spaces, and robust civic infrastructure. Safe and inviting pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities support physical activity and healthier lifestyles. Together, these elements create communities that are more efficient, vibrant, and resilient.



Integrated, healthy, and walkable communities



● This looks like...

affordable and socioeconomically integrated communities that are safe, accessible, and built for all ages. Growth is accommodated without the displacement of the existing population, which allows all residents to benefit.

strong civic infrastructure and social cohesion that help residents withstand, adapt to, and recover from adverse situations, such as extreme weather events or social disruptions.

growth focused in mixed-use, walkable Centers that make efficient use of infrastructure; provide access to essential services; and consume less land and other resources.

● Goals:

1

Accessible and affordable housing options and cost of living that accommodate all ages and incomes.

2

Infill development that creates and protects the unique qualities and sense of place in the region's Centers, communities, and neighborhoods.

3

Socioeconomically integrated neighborhoods with quality education that is accessible to all.

Strategies for Achieving Our Communities Goals:



Increase Affordable and Diverse Housing Supply

Affordable housing is a critical issue across the region, with low-income families disproportionately burdened by housing costs and displacement risks.

The region must ensure that all households, including seniors and people with disabilities, can access safe, affordable homes. The most critical affordable strategy is to update zoning regulations to permit a broader range of housing options, including missing middle housing options--such as duplexes and triplexes--and incentives for new affordable housing construction. It also entails the streamlining of permitting processes, enacting home maintenance programs to protect against displacement, taking inventory of available land for housing (including brownfields and greyfields), and encouraging innovative construction techniques.

Regional Housing Initiative

DVRPC's Regional Housing Initiative is a multi-year planning effort launched in 2022 to help address housing affordability challenges across Greater Philadelphia. Through research, data analysis, and stakeholder engagement, the Initiative supports local governments in promoting diverse, affordable housing options while advancing broader regional goals—such as increasing access to opportunity and building resilience to extreme weather. As part of this effort, DVRPC developed *Greater Philadelphia Housing Submarkets*, an interactive tool that helps users explore housing conditions in municipalities, counties, and Philadelphia Planning Districts. By offering detailed, localized insights, the tool fosters a shared understanding of complex housing issues and encourages municipalities to tailor strategies based on their unique circumstances and identify peer communities facing similar challenges. Together, these resources form a regional framework that supports more informed, collaborative, and equitable housing planning across the region.

Implementation Actions

Update land use and zoning regulations to allow for a broader range of housing options (e.g., missing middle housing, ADUs, co-housing, shared housing, and cooperatives).

Revise zoning and tax policies to allow for densification that preserves existing affordable housing.

Establish incentives or requirements for constructing dedicated affordable housing, with targeted efforts in resource-rich areas.

Streamline land development permitting and expand by-right development.

Engage local developers, real estate professionals, and community members to identify housing needs.

Enact home maintenance programs to help households access and sustain quality housing.

Integrate housing supply strategies into comprehensive downtown and suburban revitalization plans through data-driven planning and regulatory reforms.

Conduct detailed inventories of land available for housing development, including brownfields and public agency controlled land.

Encourage the use of lower-cost construction materials and techniques to reduce housing costs, including through updates to building codes

	Municipalities	Counties	State Agencies	Nonprofits	Private Sector
Update land use and zoning regulations to allow for a broader range of housing options (e.g., missing middle housing, ADUs, co-housing, shared housing, and cooperatives).	✓				
Revise zoning and tax policies to allow for densification that preserves existing affordable housing.	✓				
Establish incentives or requirements for constructing dedicated affordable housing, with targeted efforts in resource-rich areas.	✓				
Streamline land development permitting and expand by-right development.	✓				
Engage local developers, real estate professionals, and community members to identify housing needs.	✓				
Enact home maintenance programs to help households access and sustain quality housing.	✓			✓	
Integrate housing supply strategies into comprehensive downtown and suburban revitalization plans through data-driven planning and regulatory reforms.	✓	✓		✓	
Conduct detailed inventories of land available for housing development, including brownfields and public agency controlled land.		✓	✓		
Encourage the use of lower-cost construction materials and techniques to reduce housing costs, including through updates to building codes	✓			✓	✓

Strategies for Achieving Our Communities Goals:



Revitalize Regional Centers Through Infill, Mixed-Use Development, and Adaptive Reuse

Well-designed regional centers promote health, well-being, and community resilience by mixing residential and commercial uses, orienting buildings toward streets, and integrating public facilities.

Support for infill, transit-oriented, and mixed-use development that preserves unique community character is integral to the modernization and rejuvenation of regional centers. This strategy includes updates to zoning and land development standards to allow for higher-density, walkable communities near transit and employment centers, promotes adaptive reuse of underutilized structures to reduce waste, and employs local tools to combat blight and decay. It also involves the integration of housing supply strategies into downtown and suburban revitalization plans, and the inclusion of community benefit agreements to ensure local priorities are met. This approach enhances neighborhood character, reduces sprawl, and creates opportunities for walking, biking, and better access to services.

Morton Train Station and TOD Study

The Morton SEPTA Regional Rail Station is one of the most heavily used stations along the Media/Wawa Line and a critical neighborhood asset that anchors the central business district of Morton Borough. Previous DVRPC studies have identified train-related traffic congestion and the lack of safe and convenient pedestrian facilities as key issues in the station area. At the same time, several underutilized properties near the station represent opportunities for transit-supportive development that can promote economic development in the borough. In 2026, DVRPC will build on prior efforts by facilitating discussions with local stakeholders about the transportation, land use, design, and implementation strategies that can be used to support the community's vision for a walkable, vibrant, mixed-use district. DVRPC is helping SEPTA to facilitate additional TOD opportunities through SEPTA Transit Oriented Communities Parking and Ridership Modeling Tool.

Implementation Actions

Update zoning regulations, incentives, and land development standards to support mixed-use infill and transit-oriented development.

Use incentives and flexible standards to encourage adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of underutilized commercial and industrial structures in a way that preserves neighborhood character and supports increased density.

Leverage local land banks, code enforcement, and other tools to address blight, decay, and abandonment, creating opportunities for redevelopment and housing in former commercial and industrial areas.

Align projects and community needs through collaboration to develop community benefit agreements during the development process to align projects with community needs.

Inventory and formally protect environmentally sensitive lands, cultural resources, and historic sites, and support redevelopment frameworks that align with community needs and contribute to neighborhood identity.

Prioritize infrastructure and other investments in the region's Centers (See *Appendix B—Demographics & Land Use*).

Revise building codes to enhance structural resilience against extreme weather events.

	Municipalities	Counties	Federal Agencies	State Agencies	Nonprofits	DVRPC
Update zoning regulations, incentives, and land development standards to support mixed-use infill and transit-oriented development.	✓					
Use incentives and flexible standards to encourage adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of underutilized commercial and industrial structures in a way that preserves neighborhood character and supports increased density.	✓					
Leverage local land banks, code enforcement, and other tools to address blight, decay, and abandonment, creating opportunities for redevelopment and housing in former commercial and industrial areas.	✓					
Align projects and community needs through collaboration to develop community benefit agreements during the development process to align projects with community needs.	✓				✓	
Inventory and formally protect environmentally sensitive lands, cultural resources, and historic sites, and support redevelopment frameworks that align with community needs and contribute to neighborhood identity.	✓	✓			✓	
Prioritize infrastructure and other investments in the region's Centers (See <i>Appendix B—Demographics & Land Use</i>).		✓				✓
Revise building codes to enhance structural resilience against extreme weather events.	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Strategies for Achieving Our Communities Goals:



Improve Infrastructure for Walkability and Livability

Walkable, connected communities are healthier, more resilient, and more appealing places to live for residents of all ages and abilities.

This strategy focuses on redesigning streets and public spaces to prioritize people over cars—through Complete Streets, pedestrian safety improvements, universal design, and transit access. Updating infrastructure to meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities, while integrating strategies for community resilience and public health, will make neighborhoods more vibrant, inclusive, and better equipped to handle future challenges. Together, these investments help create places where residents can safely walk, bike, take transit, and enjoy public spaces in comfort and dignity.

Downtown Access in Burlington County

DVRPC supported Maple Shade, Mansfield, and Evesham in enhancing safe, connected routes to their respective downtown areas. Developed in partnership with local stakeholders, the downtown access plan identifies barriers to walking and biking, prioritizes key connections, and provides tailored recommendations—including neighborhood greenways and multi-use trails—to improve access and safety for all road users. By aligning projects with appropriate funding sources and local implementation capacity, DVRPC is helping communities create a more walkable, bike-friendly environment that supports vibrant and accessible downtowns.

Implementation Actions

Develop Complete Streets that prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users.

Develop and implement parking standards that reduce minimum requirements and better manage existing parking resources.

Launch targeted assistance programs, deploy warning systems, and establish cooling centers to support communities during extreme heat.

Update local infrastructure with universal design “8 to 80” initiatives, including sidewalks, bus shelters, benches, and public restrooms. Make communities more age-friendly by improving ease of access and transit options for seniors

Seek opportunities to reconnect neighborhoods separated by transportation infrastructure through targeted access improvements that expand connectivity to the broader community.

	Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	Transit Agencies	Transportation Management Associations	Toll Authorities	DVRPC
Develop Complete Streets that prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users.	✓	✓	✓				
Develop and implement parking standards that reduce minimum requirements and better manage existing parking resources.	✓						
Launch targeted assistance programs, deploy warning systems, and establish cooling centers to support communities during extreme heat.	✓	✓					
Update local infrastructure with universal design “8 to 80” initiatives, including sidewalks, bus shelters, benches, and public restrooms. Make communities more age-friendly by improving ease of access and transit options for seniors	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Seek opportunities to reconnect neighborhoods separated by transportation infrastructure through targeted access improvements that expand connectivity to the broader community.	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Strategies for Achieving Our Communities Goals:



Transform Public Spaces and Community Hubs to Enhance Connectivity and Identity

Public spaces are the heart of community life.

This strategy aims to transform parks, plazas, streets, libraries, schools, and business districts into vibrant, welcoming hubs that bring people together and celebrate local culture. Through streetscaping, public art, and cultural programming, communities can create inviting places that reflect their unique identity and improve social cohesion. Strengthening the role of neighborhood institutions—like schools and libraries—as centers of support and connection is also key to building resilient, inclusive communities. These investments not only enhance quality of life but also foster pride and belonging across diverse neighborhoods.

Spirit of Place: Promoting Cultural Vitality in Philadelphia

DVRPC researched the strategies, policies, and tools that cities use to protect the historical, social, and economic value of culturally significant communities and assets. This work was undertaken to assist the City of Philadelphia as it launches Treasure Philly, a multi-year effort designed to celebrate and protect Philadelphia's rich and varied cultural resources and histories. DVRPC reports on this work in three primary categories: cultural landmarks and districts, business support programs, and storytelling and placemaking.

Implementation Actions

Utilize streetscaping, public art, and placemaking strategies to animate public spaces.

Strengthen the role of neighborhood schools and libraries as community and social centers by partnering with government agencies, healthcare providers, and nonprofits to provide support services—such as health clinics, employment support, food pantries, English language learning opportunities, and/or financial literacy programs—tailored to community needs.

Partner with community organizations to develop programming and events that intentionally showcase the tapestry of cultures within a community.

	Municipalities	School Districts	Nonprofits
Utilize streetscaping, public art, and placemaking strategies to animate public spaces.	✓		
Strengthen the role of neighborhood schools and libraries as community and social centers by partnering with government agencies, healthcare providers, and nonprofits to provide support services—such as health clinics, employment support, food pantries, English language learning opportunities, and/or financial literacy programs—tailored to community needs.	✓	✓	✓
Partner with community organizations to develop programming and events that intentionally showcase the tapestry of cultures within a community.	✓		✓

Strategies for Achieving Our Communities Goals:



Strengthen Civic Infrastructure

Civic infrastructure refers to the spaces, systems, and relationships that support community participation in public life and decision-making.

This strategy seeks to advance community well-being by expanding civic education, facilitating broad public participation, and supporting the formation of neighborhood organizations that can guide decision-making and policy development. Strong civic infrastructure allows neighborhoods to grow and densify without displacing existing residents, while simultaneously empowering all community members to participate in decision-making.

Supporting Communities

DVRPC's Supporting Communities program aims to align the transportation infrastructure needs of under-resourced communities with available planning and implementation funding. It involves listening to community residents and leaders to identify transportation priorities, developing projects based on these insights and relevant data, and assisting in securing funding for project implementation. This tiered approach fosters a pipeline of community-driven transportation projects and integrates lessons learned to enhance DVRPC's overall work.

Implementation Actions

Share with the public information on how government works and how to get more involved in it, including in K–12 civic education curriculum.

Lead community engagement initiatives that include interpretation and translation services at public meetings.

Support efforts to make it easier to vote, so that all citizens can participate in our democracy.

Empower neighborhood groups and residents to form community organizations that guide decision-making and policy development for their communities.

Work with state and local governments to determine data needs, and build local government data management and processing capacity.

Municipalities	Counties	School Districts	Nonprofits	DVRPC
✓		✓		
✓		✓		
✓	✓			
✓			✓	
				✓

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Environment



From the Pinelands in New Jersey, and the rolling hills of Brandywine Valley in Pennsylvania, to neighborhood squares and riverside trails, residents and visitors to Greater Philadelphia can find a variety of green spaces. More can be done to protect and restore natural areas, such as forests and wetlands, and increase natural features, such as tree canopy, parks, and green stormwater infrastructure, in our suburban and urban neighborhoods and business districts. Such actions actively clean our air and water, create wildlife habitat for healthy and diverse ecosystems, provide cooling, and enhance health and well-being for residents. These efforts have also been linked to lower rates of crime and chronic diseases like obesity, heart disease, and asthma, and improved worker productivity and student performance.



The ENVIRONMENT Vision for 2050:

A preserved and restored natural environment and healthy ecological systems



This looks like...

prioritized and expanded use of nature-based solutions for adapting to intense precipitation and high heat events in communities.

larger nodes of protected, preserved, restored, and connected forests, wetlands, and other natural areas to strengthen ecosystems, mitigate flooding, and protect water quality.

clean water and air, productive soil, and healthy ecosystems, as well as access to parks, open space, natural areas, and outdoor recreation for current and future generations.

Goals:

1 A regional-scale network of protected open space and green urban infrastructure.

2 Healthy air and water for people and wildlife.

3 Access to high-quality parks, natural areas, and passive recreational opportunities for all.

Strategies for Achieving Our Environment Goals:



Protect and Preserve Natural Lands and Open Spaces

Safeguarding our region's natural environment relies on collaborative efforts among government agencies, nonprofit land trusts, and community stakeholders.

To achieve the goal to preserve one million acres of undeveloped lands by 2040 will require targeted acquisitions, conservation easements, and preservation-focused land development techniques. Protecting and, where needed, restoring large tracts of woodlands, stream corridors, wetlands, meadows, vacant lands, and agricultural areas—and linking them with existing parks—will create an interconnected network that supports ecosystems and enhances resilience. Local and state funding mechanisms, including referendums and dedicated property tax levies (such as the New Jersey Open Space and Recreation Trust Fund), help finance these initiatives and ensure their long-term viability.

Open Space Inventory

DVRPC maintains an inventory of protected public and private open space in Greater Philadelphia. The inventory tracks all publicly-owned open space, preserved farmland, and nonprofit protected open space. State, county, and municipal programs preserve farms by purchasing development rights with public funds. Nonprofits (land trusts and conservancies) protect privately-owned open space lands by purchasing easements or by acquiring land outright with a combination of public and private funds. For more detail and current mapping, see *Appendix B—Demographics & Land Use*.

Implementation Actions

Establish and manage local open space funding programs including dedicated funding mechanisms to secure and maintain these lands and expand access to parks in developed communities.

Implement land acquisitions, conservation easements, and preservation-focused land development techniques using a combination of public and private funding.

Design and implement wildlife crossings to reduce habitat fragmentation, prevent vehicle collisions, and support safe migration routes for wildlife.

Provide data, tools, coordination and technical assistance to refine and help implement preservation frameworks such as the DVRPC Greenspace Network.

Document and develop opportunities for transportation project mitigations.

Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	State Agencies	Nonprofits	DVRPC
✓	✓		✓		
✓	✓		✓	✓	
✓	✓	✓	✓		
					✓
	✓	✓			✓

Strategies for Achieving Our Environment Goals:



Enhance Urban Green Infrastructure

Urban Green infrastructure is the incorporation of natural features such as trees, rain gardens, stormwater planters, green roofs, permeable surfaces, landscaping and other nature-based solutions into the built environment.

Expanding and maintaining green infrastructure is a cost-effective and multifunctional approach to manage stormwater, mitigate the urban heat island effect, improve air and water quality, increase biodiversity, support mental and physical health, enhance neighborhood aesthetics and livability, and build community resilience.

Sidewalk and Street Tree Screening Tool

DVRPC's *Sidewalk and Street Tree Screening Tool* utilizes data on extreme heat vulnerability, community analytics, tree canopy coverage, and sidewalk density. This web map identifies locations in the DVRPC region where sidewalk repair and street tree planting would have the greatest impact based on temperature, tree canopy density, and sidewalk density.

Implementation Actions

Integrate vegetation, trees, and ecological landscaping in parks, public rights-of-way, commercial properties, and residential developments; encourage or incentivize green roofs and walls on new or retrofitted buildings, especially in high-density areas; develop incentives for property owners and developers to incorporate green infrastructure into site design.

Implement extreme heat mitigation measures by increasing street tree plantings, expanding overall urban tree canopy, and installing shade structures at transit stops, schools, parks, and other high-use public spaces. Update zoning codes and development standards to prioritize green infrastructure in site planning and design reviews. Develop urban forestry plans that increase tree canopy and distribute it equitably across neighborhoods.

Transform asphalt-heavy schoolyards into green schoolyards that offer shade, play space, and stormwater benefits. Lead community greening initiatives and public education campaigns on the benefits of urban nature. Partner with local governments to secure funding and technical assistance for green infrastructure projects.

Municipalities	Counties	School Districts	Nonprofits	Private Sector	Individuals	Transit Agency
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓					✓
		✓	✓			

Strategies for Achieving Our Environment Goals:



Work with Industries to Reduce Air Pollution

Implementing targeted measures that reduce air pollutants from industrial, transportation, and freight operations will improve regional air quality.

The region's primary air quality concerns are ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). Cars, trucks, buses, and other mobile transportation sources emit up to 50 percent of regional NOx outputs, which contribute to both ozone and PM_{2.5} pollution. More electric vehicles (EVs), transit options, and walking and biking can help reduce this pollution. Additionally, commercial and residential electricity generation and heating account for an additional 25 percent of NOx outputs. Retrofitting buildings to be more efficient not only reduces pollution but also improves comfort and creates local jobs. This strategy is further strengthened by other measures, including increasing development density, promoting active transportation modes, reducing reliance on automobiles, and improving efficiency in residential and commercial buildings (see strategies under Transportation and Communities). It focuses on enforcing stricter air pollution controls and working with key industry stakeholders—such as refineries, port facilities, pipeline operators, and freight railroads—to adopt “freight-as-a-good neighbor” practices. Collaborative efforts will also prioritize reducing pollution exposure for vulnerable communities through coordinated regional action.

Air Quality Partnership

DVRPC administers the Air Quality Partnership (AQP)—a coalition of private companies, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations dedicated to raising awareness of air quality in the Delaware Valley and promoting actions that people and organizations can take to reduce air pollution and protect public health. Amongst other activities, the AQP provides daily air quality forecasts to the public, and encourages voluntary actions to reduce pollutant generation, particularly on days when pollution is forecast to violate air quality standards.

Implementation Actions

Identify air pollution hotspots, and collaboratively implement targeted air quality improvement measures.

Set and enforce pollution standards; regulate industrial operations; and promote innovation, research, funding, and incentives for clean technologies and pollution-reduction strategies.

Partner with industrial stakeholders to adopt clean technology and support “freight-as-a-good neighbor” initiatives that increase safety, reduce overall air pollution, and improve health and quality of life for workers and neighbors.

Collaborate to identify and remove regulatory and permitting barriers, streamline approval processes, and develop policies and incentives that accelerate the deployment of new technologies that reduce air pollution and improve air quality.

Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	Federal Agencies	State Agencies	Freight Operators	Ports	Nonprofits	Private Sector	DVRPC
✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓
			✓	✓					
✓	✓			✓				✓	
✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	

Strategies for Achieving Our Environment Goals:



Restore Natural Hydrological Systems

Improving stormwater management and restoring natural waterways will improve water quality for people and wildlife.

In urban, suburban and agricultural communities, water flows off impervious surfaces, lawns, and farm fields, washing pollution into rivers and streams. This increases volume and velocity of runoff, which leads to erosion and sedimentation, and further degrades water quality. Key approaches for managing stormwater runoff include the protection of larger-scale natural areas, limiting impervious surfaces and the deployment of nature-based solutions. In natural areas, such as forests, most rainfall soaks into the ground, eliminating stormwater runoff at its source. In urban, suburban and agricultural settings, where stormwater runoff cannot be avoided, nature-based solutions such as naturalized retention basins, vegetated riparian buffers, canopy trees, and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) systems—including rain gardens, green roofs, tree trenches, stormwater planters, and vegetated bioswales—can capture and soak stormwater directly into the ground. This strategy involves enacting local ordinances to implement these techniques, as well as investing in the restoration and protection of stream channels, floodplains, and riparian buffers. Such measures will reduce pollutant loads, enhance natural water filtration, and create resilient ecosystems capable of withstanding extreme weather events.

Advancing Collaborative Stormwater Efforts

DVRPC's work has helped improve water quality, reduce flooding, and support stormwater management in individual communities and across the region. In partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, DVRPC administers the annual Coastal Zone Management grant program, distributing funds to projects that enhance water quality, improve public access, and address stormwater runoff and nonpoint source pollution in the Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone. This zone includes three counties and 29 municipalities along the Delaware River, from Morrisville in Bucks County to Marcus Hook in Delaware County.

In 2026, DVRPC will partner with the Center for Watershed Protection to advance regional stormwater management by convening Delaware County municipalities to explore shared approaches and develop educational materials to support permit compliance. DVRPC also supports community resilience through projects like the *Coastal Municipal Vulnerability Snapshot*—a website that helps municipalities assess the social, infrastructural, and environmental factors influencing their flood readiness.

Implementation Actions

Enact and enforce local ordinances and zoning codes to control stormwater runoff, manage impervious surfaces, maintain naturally functioning floodplains and protect water quality.

Collaborate on restoration projects for streams and floodplains, including the installation of riparian buffers and stream channel restorations to maintain naturally functioning water systems.

Collaborate on policy development, secure funding for green initiatives, and enforce updated environmental regulations.

Develop and manage GSI projects in the development and redevelopment of streets and parcels and establish stormwater utilities to fund and maintain these systems.

Create and maintain shared asset management systems—covering stormwater infrastructure, green infrastructure, and natural features such as wetlands and riparian buffers—to support coordinated planning, track maintenance needs, guide future public investments, and evaluate the effectiveness of environmental restoration and water quality improvements.

	Municipalities	Counties	Federal Agencies	State Agencies	Nonprofits	Private Sector	Utilities
Enact and enforce local ordinances and zoning codes to control stormwater runoff, manage impervious surfaces, maintain naturally functioning floodplains and protect water quality.	✓						
Collaborate on restoration projects for streams and floodplains, including the installation of riparian buffers and stream channel restorations to maintain naturally functioning water systems.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Collaborate on policy development, secure funding for green initiatives, and enforce updated environmental regulations.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Develop and manage GSI projects in the development and redevelopment of streets and parcels and establish stormwater utilities to fund and maintain these systems.	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Create and maintain shared asset management systems—covering stormwater infrastructure, green infrastructure, and natural features such as wetlands and riparian buffers—to support coordinated planning, track maintenance needs, guide future public investments, and evaluate the effectiveness of environmental restoration and water quality improvements.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Strategies for Achieving Our Environment Goals:



Expand Access to Parks and Recreational Opportunities

Access to parks, trails, and natural areas is essential to community health, well-being, and resilience.

Yet, many communities—particularly in urban and historically underinvested areas—lack high-quality green spaces within walking or biking distance. Parks provide space for recreation, improve air and water quality, help manage stormwater, reduce heat, and offer critical mental health benefits.

This strategy focuses on integrating parkland into the fabric of communities, especially those currently underserved by open space. It emphasizes improving physical and visual connections to nature through trail networks and wayfinding, while also prioritizing strategic planning and maintenance to ensure that parks remain vibrant, safe, and accessible for everyone.

Pennsylvania Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TASA)

DVRPC administers TASA for southeastern Pennsylvania. This program funds community-based “non-traditional” projects designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the nation’s intermodal transportation system. Several recent awards expand access to parks and recreational opportunities. For example, *Norris Street Complete Streets* will increase safe walking and biking access to the waterfront in the City of Chester. The waterfront includes a riverside trail, Barry Bridge Park, and various semi-public facilities on the Philadelphia Union’s campus. *Cobbs B2* will provide an off-road connection from southwest Philadelphia neighborhoods to the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge. *Frankford Creek Trail Phase III* will extend the existing Frankford Creek Trail into the Philadelphia neighborhoods north of Torresdale Avenue.

Implementation Actions

Invest in new parkland acquisitions and conversion of vacant properties into neighborhood parks.

Create and implement long-term strategic plans to develop more parks in areas with limited open spaces and prioritize capital investments and maintenance in existing parks.

Build multi-use trails that provide non-motorized access to parks and natural areas.

Improve signage and wayfinding in communities and along trails to facilitate better access to parks.

Municipalities	Counties	State Agencies	Nonprofits	DVRPC
✓	✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓		✓	✓
✓	✓		✓	✓
✓	✓		✓	

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Infrastructure and Utility Services

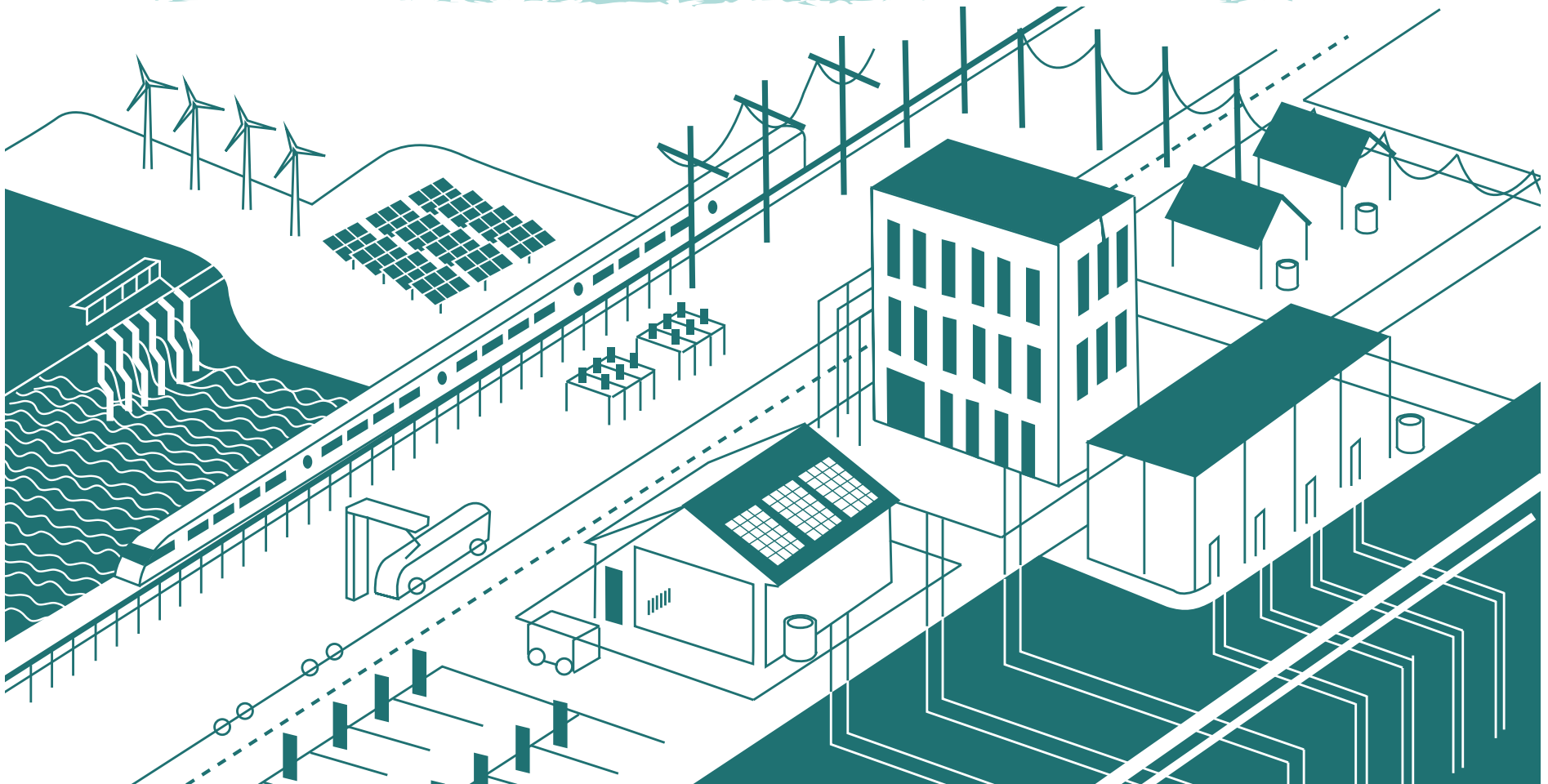


Achieving regional goals for power and other infrastructure systems—across multiple scales—will help deliver improved air quality benefits such as improvements to public health. Ensuring the reliability and affordability of power, heating, and cooling services will increase comfort and quality of life, reduce utility cost burdens, and improve the performance of the buildings, vehicles, infrastructure systems, and businesses on which we all depend.



The INFRASTRUCTURE and UTILITY SERVICES Vision for 2050:

Clean, reliable, and affordable infrastructure and utility services resilient to the effects of extreme weather



This looks like...

reliable and affordable utility services (including electricity, natural gas, water, and wastewater).

reliable access to heating, cooling, and power for households and businesses. Systems are prepared for extreme weather events and related impacts.

reduced local air pollution through efficient land use, transportation, and building systems, as well as generating power with cleaner fuels.

Goals:

1

Access to clean and affordable heating, cooling, and power services for every household, business, and institution in the region.

2

Infrastructure that is reliable and resilient to extreme-weather disruptions.

3

Regionwide implementation of innovative technologies around heating, cooling, power, mobility, and goods movement that supports community health, reduces air pollution, and provides economic opportunities.

Strategies for Achieving Our Infrastructure and Utility Services Goals:



Utilize Land Use, Technological and Financial Tools to Minimize Air Pollution from Infrastructure Systems

Strategic land use planning is essential for reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by promoting compact, mixed-use development and creating walkable, bikeable communities with easy access to transit.

This approach supports the shift toward efficient, clean, and affordable transportation options. By concentrating growth in designated Plan Centers and reducing the need for long car trips, land use planning complements efforts to electrify the transportation sector and reduce air pollutants. This strategy prioritizes investments in transit, walking, and biking infrastructure, providing sustainable alternatives to driving and easing congestion. It also accelerates the adoption of no- and low-carbon vehicles, including EVs, by supporting the electrification of municipal, transit, and commercial fleets, and deploying EV charging infrastructure with a focus on access for more communities. Additionally, the strategy includes policies such as anti-idling regulations, pricing mechanisms, and incentives to further reduce VMT, contributing to a less polluting, more sustainable transportation system.

Mapping Electric Vehicles in the Delaware Valley

To begin planning for EVs a community must know where the owners of EVs live, work, and charge. In addition to considering where vehicles are, effectively planning for EVs requires knowledge of the demographic and economic context of the area. To support our planning partners, DVRPC has compiled vehicle registration, demographic, and employment data into an interactive web map. Municipalities and counties can use this data to inform decisions on permitting processes that may help future EV owners install charging infrastructure in their homes more easily.

Implementation Actions

Adopt and implement land use policies that reduce VMT and support multimodal transportation.

Reduce VMT through projects or policies that decrease the number of trips or shorten trip lengths, implement pricing strategies; and expand transit.

Support cleaner fuels, and implement more stringent vehicle pollutant standards; provide incentives for no and low-carbon vehicles and related infrastructure; electrify fleets; deploy charging facilities; enforce anti-idling policies

Expand EV charging and other no- and low-carbon fueling infrastructure, programs, and develop community-based EV access initiatives.

Establish cooperative purchasing.

Coordinate regionally, allocate funding, plan infrastructure, and develop policies to support transportation electrification and multimodal investments.

	Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	Transit Agencies	State Agencies	Federal Agencies	Private Sector	Utilities	Nonprofits	DVRPC
Adopt and implement land use policies that reduce VMT and support multimodal transportation.	✓	✓					✓		✓	
Reduce VMT through projects or policies that decrease the number of trips or shorten trip lengths, implement pricing strategies; and expand transit.			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Support cleaner fuels, and implement more stringent vehicle pollutant standards; provide incentives for no and low-carbon vehicles and related infrastructure; electrify fleets; deploy charging facilities; enforce anti-idling policies			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
Expand EV charging and other no- and low-carbon fueling infrastructure, programs, and develop community-based EV access initiatives.	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
Establish cooperative purchasing.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinate regionally, allocate funding, plan infrastructure, and develop policies to support transportation electrification and multimodal investments.		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓

Strategies for Achieving Our Infrastructure and Utility Services Goals:



Improve the Performance of Buildings

Households and businesses alike spend a lot of money on the heating, cooling, and powering of their homes and buildings, especially when these buildings have out-dated, inefficient systems and leaky exteriors that waste resources and increase pollution.

These costly issues can be addressed through building retrofits. Retrofits might include basic systems repair, weatherization, and high-performance building envelopes; installation of efficient Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems, lighting, and appliances; and the electrification of HVAC and other equipment that use delivered fuels such as natural gas or propane. Additionally, they might integrate distributed power resources to offset buildings' electricity, natural gas, and fuel oil use, reducing demand for conventional grid electricity. These strategies promote better indoor air quality by supporting the removal of on-site combustion of fossil fuels in the heating, cooling, cooking, and water heating systems across institutional, residential, and commercial sectors. It also supports wealth preservation and long-term cost savings by making enhancing occupant health, comfort, and safety.

E2C In-Depth Partnership Grant

In September 2023, DVRPC was selected for the U.S. DOE's E2C Program. Over three years, DVRPC will collaborate with DOE and regional partners to develop strategies to reduce the costs of electricity, heating, cooling, and hot water for households, while improving housing quality and affordability. The initiative aims to scale affordable, residential building programs, establish a regional entity to coordinate clean and reliable electricity efforts, and engage partners to support job growth and enhance resilience to extreme weather.

Implementation Actions

Continue to manage programs that fund weatherization, efficiency, and electrification in buildings. Support workforce development through training and certifications to build the skilled labor necessary to implement these upgrades; and lead by example by building and maintaining efficient, high performing federal and state buildings.

Lead by example to benchmark, electrify and make government facilities more efficient. Implement and enforce building and electric codes. Adopt policies and regulations that encourage or require building owners to transition towards more efficient, less polluting building stock, such as building performance standards. Support workforce development and planning for the buildings sector.

Provide affordable and reliable electricity to support building electrification. Provide clear data and information about grid reliability and grid services in support of distributed generation and demand response. Support customer upgrades to electrify and improve the efficiency of hot water, heating, and cooling systems.

Evaluate and implement opportunities for more efficient, cleaner, and innovative building portfolios.

Seek opportunities to enhance efficiency and building performance. Consider integrating renewable power, distributed resources, and storage into owned buildings directly and/or through power purchase agreements or other contracting methods.

Upgrade to efficient appliances, electrify home systems, and adopt power-saving practices in the home.

	Municipalities	Counties	State Agencies	Federal Agencies	Private Sector	Utilities	Nonprofits	Individuals
			✓	✓				
✓	✓							
					✓			
				✓				
				✓		✓		
								✓

Strategies for Achieving Our Infrastructure and Utility Services Goals:



Create Clean, Affordable, and Reliable On-Site, Community-Scale and Grid-Scale Electrical Systems

Increasing the share of clean electricity through grid-scale investments such as smart grid technologies and power storage, and the deployment of distributed power resources, such as rooftop solar, microgrids, battery storage, and demand management strategies, can enhance community resilience, provide access to low-cost electricity, and improve air quality.

Promoting access to technical assistance and financial resources for households and businesses, supporting community-scale renewable electricity projects that local governments can lead or support, and educating communities on the regulatory context that supports grid development and utility ratemaking will allow this to occur economically and fairly.

Partnership of Southeastern Pennsylvania

Since September 2020, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery counties have been collaboratively exploring pathways for purchasing renewable power for county operations. With support from DVRPC, the four counties formalized this collaboration in October 2023 by adopting a memorandum of understanding to establish a board that will oversee the partnership. The board oversees efforts to meet clean power goals through access to large-scale power projects, reducing costs and budget risk, expanding membership, and creating a long-term framework for coordinated procurement, all while ensuring county resources are not overextended.

Implementation Actions

Accelerate the modernization of the grid through technical assistance, removal of barriers, provision of incentives, and regulatory changes. Enact policies that require or encourage utilities to provide clean, affordable electricity.

Conduct long-term planning and investment to ensure reliable and affordable electric supply, integrate intermittent generation resources (like wind and solar), facilitate demand response, and meet the increased demand for electricity due to widespread electrification. Provide predictable and reliable interconnection data and processes to support the development of grid-scale renewable and battery storage projects. Ensure that rate design and ratemaking practices support integration of grid-scale and aggregated renewables and demand response, while maintaining affordability.

Establish local policies and update zoning to support investments in renewables. Procure renewable power for government facilities through power purchase agreements or other means. Explore opportunities to integrate microgrids into both existing and planned developments. Engage in federal and state-level regulatory and ratemaking processes to ensure that local perspectives and priorities are considered.

Launch community-led power programs, establish cooperative power purchasing, and create workforce development partnerships.

Choose clean power sources for homes and business.

Conduct research, promote, educate, and advocate for an efficient electricity transition for all.

	Municipalities	Counties	State Agencies	Federal Agencies	Private Sector	Utilities	Nonprofits	Individuals	Regional Transmission Organizations	Academia
		✓	✓							
					✓			✓		
	✓	✓								
				✓		✓				
							✓			
									✓	

Strategies for Achieving Our Infrastructure and Utility Services Goals:



Build and Maintain Resilient Transportation and Utility Infrastructure

Building and maintaining resilient infrastructure is essential to ensuring communities can withstand and recover from the increasing impacts of extreme weather events.

It is therefore critical to incorporate resilience into infrastructure planning, construction, and maintenance to ensure the ability to prepare for, maintain operations during, and quickly recover from extreme weather disruptions. This strategy requires using future weather projections when designing and maintaining transportation, electric, water and wastewater systems. Additionally, it strengthens operations and recovery through coordinated planning for extreme weather events and emergency response strategies.

Regional Resilience Landscape Assessment

DVRPC is implementing a regional resilience research and engagement project supported by a grant from the William Penn Foundation. In partnership with Buro Happold and Interface Studio, the commission is conducting interviews with key stakeholders to better understand the region's natural hazards, vulnerabilities, and resilience needs. This work will inform a forthcoming "Needs Assessment" that outlines strategies, tools, and resources to support regional action, strengthen partnerships, and build capacity—particularly in the transportation sector. Initial findings highlight critical issues such as flooding, extreme heat, infrastructure vulnerability, funding and capacity gaps, as well as opportunities for DVRPC to support collaborative planning and investment.

Implementation Actions

Develop transportation infrastructure vulnerability assessments and resiliency plans. Continue to evaluate critical assets that are vulnerable to extreme weather, and take steps to minimize risks.

Use building materials, with low life-cycle costs, high durability, and limited impact on the environment.

Design, maintain, and adapt infrastructure, housing, commercial and industrial buildings, and drainage structures based on projected weather patterns, not historical precedents.

Explore opportunities to co-locate power, communications, and other infrastructure within transportation corridors.

	Municipalities	Counties	DOTs	Transit Agencies	State Agencies	Private Sector	Utilities	Toll Authorities	DVRPC
Develop transportation infrastructure vulnerability assessments and resiliency plans. Continue to evaluate critical assets that are vulnerable to extreme weather, and take steps to minimize risks.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use building materials, with low life-cycle costs, high durability, and limited impact on the environment.			✓			✓			
Design, maintain, and adapt infrastructure, housing, commercial and industrial buildings, and drainage structures based on projected weather patterns, not historical precedents.	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Explore opportunities to co-locate power, communications, and other infrastructure within transportation corridors.	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓

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● How Will We Fund the Future?

Update: Connections 2050 includes a Financial Plan that outlines how we'll invest in transportation infrastructure over the coming decades to support the Plan's long-term vision. Our top priority is safety. After that, we focus on maintaining and preserving the existing system, making it easier and safer to walk and bike, and improving how the system operates. As a region, we only consider expanding the system in a few critical areas—where strategies like improving operations, managing travel demand, and offering more transportation options aren't enough to meet current or future needs.



Funding Projects in the Region

DVRPC conducts a detailed needs assessment to understand what it would take to develop a a safe, modern, multimodal transportation network for all. This helps estimate the total cost of meeting the transportation vision and goals. We group these costs by the type of improvement.

Roadway needs:

- Pavement Preservation & Modernization
- Bridge Preservation
- Substantive Safety
- Mobility Operational Improvements
- Roadway Expansion
- Green Transportation

Substantive Safety funds projects that go beyond existing design standards to fix areas with a high number of crashes.

Green Transportation includes bike, pedestrian, and trail infrastructure, along with environmental mitigation, regional programs, and efforts to reconnect communities divided by infrastructure like highway capping.

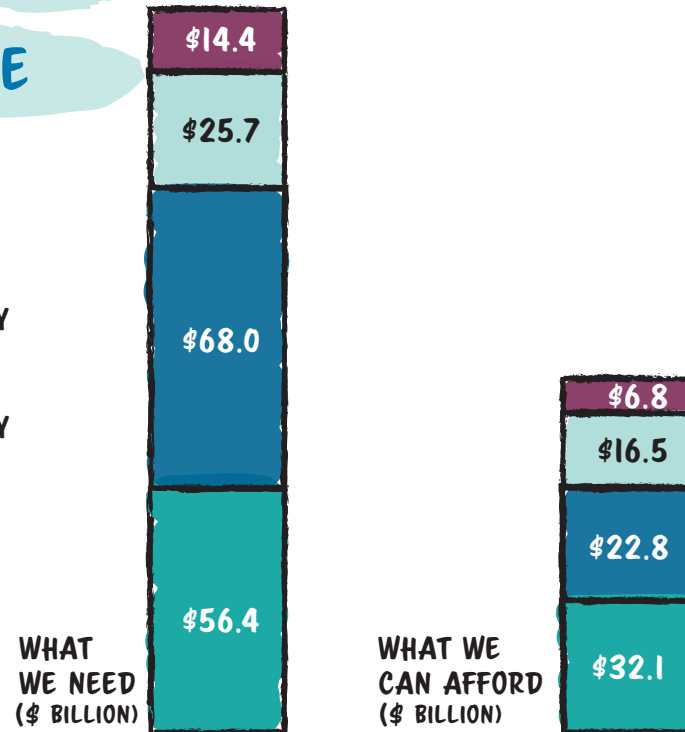
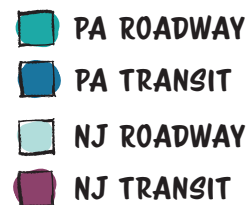
Transit needs:

- Preservation & Modernization
- Operational Improvements
- System Expansion
- Other

Other covers costs like lease agreements, remediation, debt service, and other required items.

In total, the estimated investment need through the life of the Plan is \$163.2 billion. This figure doesn't yet include the full cost of reaching Vision Zero, reducing air quality impacts of the transportation sector, or of preparing infrastructure for extreme weather. **Meanwhile, the region is projected to receive only \$78.7 billion** in funding from federal, state, and local sources in that same time period—less than half of what's needed.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION NEED COMPARED WITH ANTICIPATED REVENUE



dvrpc | 2024

A portion of total roadway and transit funding for the Pennsylvania and New Jersey subregions is allocated to different project categories based on the Plan's vision, goals, policies, and demonstrated needs. Roadway and transit funds come from separate sources, with limited flexibility to move money between them. The Plan dedicates 63 percent of funding to preserving and modernizing existing roadway, bridge, and transit infrastructure. Another 25 percent support multimodal transportation investments, such as expanding and modernizing bicycle and

pedestrian networks, resurfacing off-road trails, and reconnecting communities divided by past transportation decisions, such as creating community open space by capping over highways. An additional three percent is set aside for projects and programs that reduce serious crashes through targeted safety improvements, helping the region achieve its Vision Zero goal. The figure above shows how funding is distributed by state and mode in the Plan.

TRANSPORTATION NEED, TARGET ALLOCATION, AND FUNDING WITH ANTICIPATED REVENUE

		Pennsylvania			New Jersey		
		Need	Allocation %	Allocation \$	Need	Allocation %	Allocation \$
Roadway	Pavement Preservation & Modernization	\$ 14.3	26%	\$ 8.2	\$ 8.4	35%	\$ 5.8
	Bridge Preservation	\$ 18.8	45%	\$ 14.3	\$ 4.7	19%	\$ 3.1
	Substantive Safety	\$ 2.0	6%	\$ 1.9	\$ 0.4	2%	\$ 0.3
	Mobility Operational Improvements	\$ 7.5	10%	\$ 3.2	\$ 4.8	14%	\$ 2.3
	Roadway System Expansion	\$ 2.0	4%	\$ 1.3	\$ 1.1	4%	\$ 0.7
	Green Transportation	\$ 11.8	10%	\$ 3.21	\$ 6.3	26%	\$ 4.3
Total		\$ 56.4	100%	\$ 32.1	\$ 25.7	100%	\$ 16.5
Transit	Transit Preservation & Modernization	\$ 37.7	56%	\$ 12.8	\$ 5.1	81%	\$ 5.5
	Transit Operational Improvements	\$ 7.4	3%	\$ 0.68	\$ 0.4	5%	\$ 0.3
	Transit System Expansion	\$ 15.0	4%	\$ 0.9	\$ 8.6	9%	\$ 0.6
	Transit Other	\$ 7.8	37%	\$ 8.4	\$ 0.3	5%	\$ 0.3
Total		\$ 68.0	100%	\$ 22.8	\$ 14.4	100%	\$ 6.8
Regional Total		\$ 124.4		\$ 54.9	\$ 40.1		\$ 23.3

Major Regional Projects

Once budgets are set for each project category, a call for projects is made to DVRPC counties, in coordination with DOTs and Transit agencies. Candidates for funding are submitted, and individual transportation projects are evaluated and selected for funding. All projects included in the TIP are also reflected in the Plan. A portion of the budget also reserved for smaller projects that will be added in future TIP updates over the life of the Plan. The remaining funds are used to identify and support Major Regional Projects (MRPs)—large-scale transportation investments that cost more than \$40 million and/or significantly impact travel across the region.

Transit MRPs are classified based on their main goal (for example, preserving the existing system or expanding it, but not both). Roadway MRPs, however, often address several goals at once. For example, the PA 291 / Second Street / Industrial Highway project (see number 46 on page 95) includes improvements for pavement conditions, safety, operations, and green transportation, with funding evenly distributed across those areas.

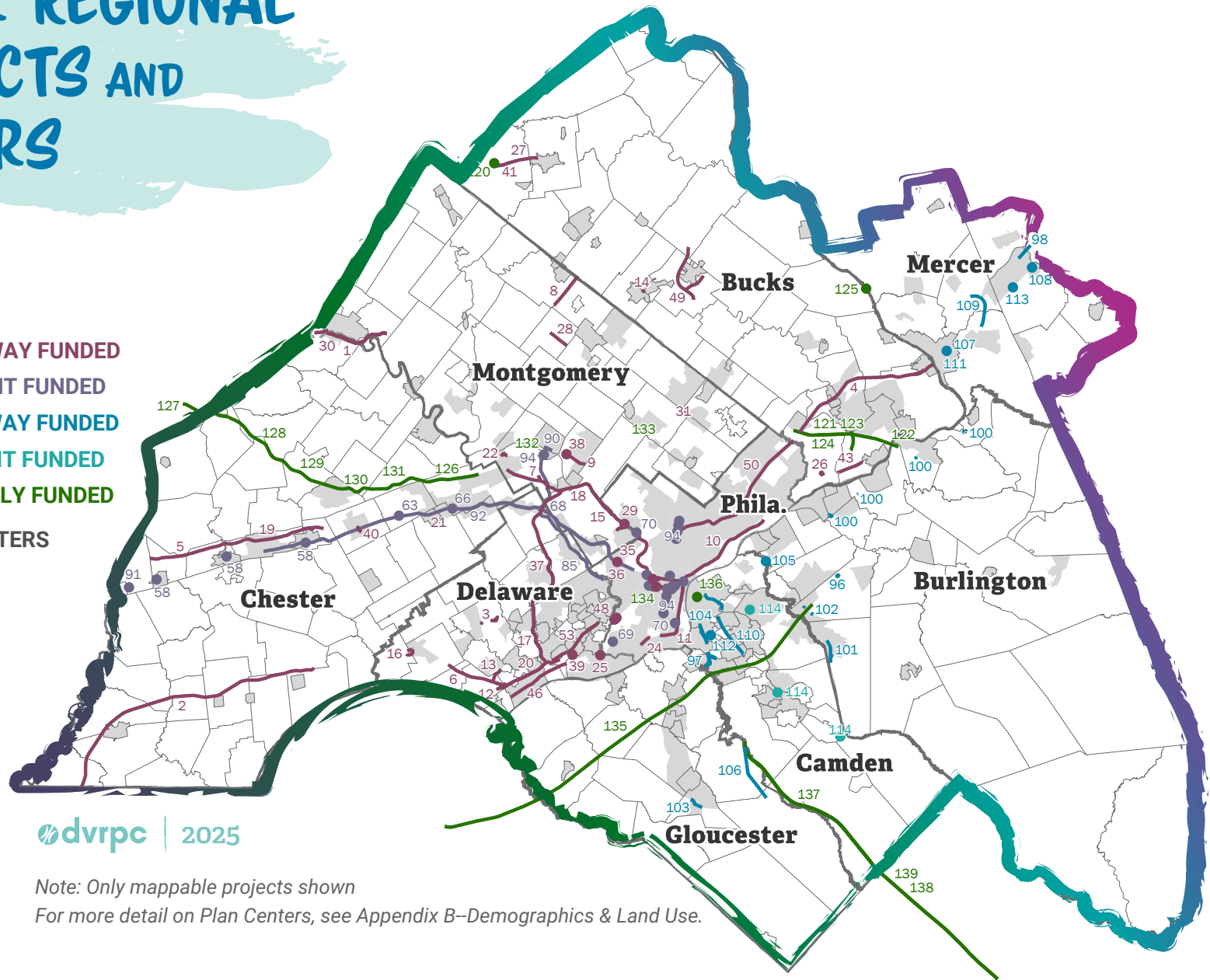
The following pages map and list MRPs that are funded using available revenues from one or more project categories. Also shown are projects funded by external transportation authorities. While externally funded projects don't use federal transportation funds, they are still included in the Plan's air quality analysis.

For more information on each project including the budgets from project categories they're funded with—and to view a list of unfunded, long-term vision projects—see *Appendix F—Financial Plan* and explore the interactive [Major Regional Projects](#) web map.

In addition to the TIP, the financial plan is closely tied to the region's CMP. The CMP identifies the most congested corridors in the region and recommends design and technology solutions to reduce traffic and improve mobility. CMP strategies at congested locations support Plan goals and aim to increase mobility and reliability, integrate modes and improve transit access, modernize and maintain the transportation network, achieve Vision Zero, provide for goods movement, enhance transportation security and emergency preparedness, and invest in Plan Centers. Federal regulations require that any project adding lanes or other capacity for single-occupancy vehicles must align with the CMP. These projects must include supplemental strategies that ensure the expanded facility doesn't just quickly fill back up with traffic and the region receives the best long-term value from the project—like improved transit, better bike and pedestrian access, or tools that help manage demand. The CMP also monitors how well the transportation system is performing and highlights cost-effective strategies that can reduce congestion and improve movement for both people and goods across the region.

MAJOR REGIONAL PROJECTS AND CENTERS

- PA ROADWAY FUNDED
- PA TRANSIT FUNDED
- NJ ROADWAY FUNDED
- NJ TRANSIT FUNDED
- EXTERNALLY FUNDED
- PLAN CENTERS



dvrpc | 2025

Note: Only mappable projects shown
For more detail on Plan Centers, see Appendix B—Demographics & Land Use.

List of Major Regional Projects*

PA ROADWAY FUNDED

1. US 422 Reconstruction
2. US 1 from Schoolhouse Road Reconstruction
3. US 1 at PA 352 and 452 Interchange
4. US 1 from PA Turnpike Reconstruction
5. US 30 / Coatesville-Downingtown Bypass (Western)
6. US 322 Reconstruction and Widening
7. Henderson Road and South Gulph Road Widening
8. PA 309 Connector Road
9. Ridge Pike Reconstruction and Widening
10. I-95 Philadelphia North (Sector A) Reconstruction
11. I-95 South Philadelphia Reconstruction
12. I-95 / US 322 / Highland Avenue Interchange
13. Concord Road Intersections
14. Bristol Road Extension
15. Belmont Avenue at I-76 Interchange
16. US 202 at US 1 Loop Road Completion
17. I-476 Active Traffic Management
18. I-76 Integrated Corridor Management
19. US 30 / Coatesville-Downingtown Bypass (Eastern)
20. I-95 Active Traffic Management
21. North Valley Road Bridge over Amtrak
22. PA 23 Trout Creek Bridge Replacement
23. Penn's Landing Highway Cap

24. I-95 Girard Point River Crossing (Phases 1 and 2)
25. I-95 over Bartram Avenue / Conrail
26. I-95 at Street Road Bridge
27. PA 663 / John Fries Hwy. Reconstruction & Widening
28. Sumneytown Pike Corridor and Intersection
29. Belmont Avenue over Schuylkill
30. Keystone Blvd Extension
31. PA 63 / Welsh Road Bridges
32. Eakins Oval Reconfiguration
33. Reconnecting our Chinatown (Chinatown Stitch) (Phase 1)
34. 30th Street Station Vehicle Circulation
35. I-76 Pavement Preservation
36. 59th Street Bridge over Amtrak
37. I-476 (Blue Route) Pavement Preservation
38. Ridge Pike over Norfolk Southern and PA Turnpike
39. Wanamaker Avenue Bridge over Darby Creek
40. PA 100 Northbound at Exton Station
41. PA 663 from Portzer to Hickory Multimodal Expansion
42. Market Street over Schuylkill and CSX
43. State Road Reconstruction
44. Philadelphia High-Quality Bike Network: Programmed* **
45. Spring Garden Connector
46. PA 291 / Second Street / Industrial Highway Bike / Ped Complete Streets
47. Spring Garden Bridges over Amtrak
48. 70th, 71st, and 72nd Street Bridges over Amtrak

* project not mappable

**partially funded

- 49. US 202 / PA 611 (Doylestown Bypass) Preventive Maintenance
- 50. Roosevelt Boulevard Operational Improvements (Phase 1)
- 51. Vision Zero Safety Improvements*
- 52. The Circuit (PA)*
- 53. Chester Pike Safety Improvements
- 54. Market East Complete Streets
- 55. JFK Boulevard & Market Street Bikeway
- 56. City Traffic Signal Modernization*

PA TRANSIT FUNDED

- 57. City Hall and 15th Street Stations
- 58. Amtrak Keystone Corridor Stations
- 59. SEPTA Key Program*
- 60. Regional Rail Catenaries 30th Street Station Westbound
- 61. Regional Rail Vehicles*
- 62. Center City Concourse Improvements
- 63. Frazer Shop and Yard Upgrades
- 64. Market Frankford Line (MFL) Vehicles*
- 65. SEPTA Transit Substation*
- 66. Paoli Intermodal Transportation Center
- 67. Zoo Interlocking Preservation
- 68. Harrisburg Line Improvements
- 69. Eastwick Intermodal Station (Phase 2)
- 70. Bus Revolution
- 71. Trolley Modernization: Infrastructure*

- 72. Trolley Modernization: Vehicles*
- 73. Trolley Modernization: Facilities*
- 74. Trolley Modernization: Operations*
- 75. Trolley Modernization: Expansion*
- 76. Intercity Bus Station*
- 77. Mainline-Schuylkill Bridges, Interlockings, and Duct Bank*
- 78. Regional Rail Station Improvements (Near Term)*
- 79. Escalator / Elevator Improvement Program*
- 80. 1234 Market Street Headquarters Improvements
- 81. Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Fleet Transition Facility Upgrades*
- 82. Railroad Interlocking Improvement Program (Phase 3–12)*
- 83. Regional Rail VHF Radio Upgrade*
- 84. Regional Railroad Signal Improvement Program*
- 85. NHSL Signal System Renewal
- 86. Video Systems Refreshment Program*
- 87. Critical Bridge Program*
- 88. NHSL Vehicle Replacement & Infrastructure*
- 89. NHSL Station Accessibility Projects*
- 90. Norristown Station Freight Bypass
- 91. Coatesville Turnback: Interlocking, and Pocket Track
- 92. Paoli / Thorndale Line Station Upgrades (Phase 1 to Villanova)
- 93. Broad Street Line (BSL) Vehicle Replacement & Infrastructure*
- 94. Metro Station Enhancements
- 95. Bus Purchase Program*

NJ ROADWAY FUNDED

- 96. I-295 at NJ 38 Missing Moves
- 97. I-295 Direct Connect through I-76 / NJ 42
- 98. US 1 Alexander Road to Mapleton Road Widening
- 99. The Circuit (NJ)*
- 100. US 130 Realignment
- 101. NJ 73 Intersection Improvements
- 102. NJ 73 and Church Road Interchanges
- 103. 322 Bypass near Rowan University
- 104. Route 76 / 676 Bridges and Pavement
- 105. NJ 73 and Ramp G Bridge over US 130
- 106. NJ 42 Reconstruction
- 107. Lincoln Avenue / Chambers Street (CR 626) Bridge
- 108. NJ 64 Bridge over Amtrak
- 109. I-295 Capacity and Operations
- 110. NJ 30 Resurfacing
- 111. Amtrak Bridge Replacements, Trenton
- 112. US 130 Bridge Replacement
- 113. Clarksville Road (CR 638) Bridge over Amtrak

NJ TRANSIT FUNDED

- 114. Atlantic City Line Stations
- 115. PATCO Heavy Rail Vehicles*
- 116. River Line Light Rail Vehicles*
- 117. Northeast Corridor Rail Vehicles*

- 118. PATCO Interlocking and Track Rehabilitation (Phase II)*
- 119. PATCO Station Platform Rehabilitation*

EXTERNALLY FUNDED

- 120. Quakertown Interchange Reconfiguration
- 121. I-95 at PA Turnpike (Stage 2 Widening & Reconstruction)
- 122. I-95 at PA Turnpike (Stage 3 Bridge Replacement)
- 123. PA Turnpike (I-276) Reconstruction & Widening (Section A)
- 124. PA Turnpike (I-276) Reconstruction & Widening (Section C)
- 125. Washington Crossing Bridge Replacement
- 126. PA Turnpike (I-76) Reconstruction & Widening (Section F)
- 127. PA Turnpike (I-76) Reconstruction & Widening (Section A)
- 128. PA Turnpike (I-76) Reconstruction & Widening (Section B)
- 129. PA Turnpike (I-76) Reconstruction & Widening (Section C)
- 130. PA Turnpike (I-76) Reconstruction & Widening (Section D)
- 131. PA Turnpike (I-76) Reconstruction & Widening (Section E)
- 132. I-276 / Lafayette Street Interchange
- 133. I-276 at PA 309 Fort Washington Interchange
- 134. Philadelphia 30th Street District Plan
- 135. NJ Turnpike Interchanges 1–4 Capacity Enhancements
- 136. Walter Rand Transportation Center
- 137. Atlantic City Expressway Third Lane Widening
- 138. Atlantic City Expressway Bridges
- 139. Atlantic City Expressway Resurfacing
- 140. South Jersey Transit Authority (SJTA) Facilities*

Filling the Funding Gap

To make our shared regional vision a reality, we need more funding, both from existing federal, state, and local sources as well as new ones. We need more funding to maintain our existing transportation infrastructure, greater investment to support emerging technologies, and additional resources to give people more transportation access across the region. In a survey of individuals who earn less than the basic cost of living conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, 16 percent of participants identified transportation as a major barrier to improving their economic situation. This highlights the critical role of affordable, reliable transportation in supporting opportunity and upward mobility. Recognizing this, the City of Philadelphia, in partnership with SEPTA and several community-based organizations, launched a two-year Zero Fare⁷ pilot program, providing free SEPTA transit for 25,000 or more Philadelphians living at or near the poverty line. Programs like Zero Fare are vital, but their long-term success—and the region's broader transportation goals—depend on stable, sustainable funding.

There's a lot of uncertainty about the future of transportation funding in our region. At the federal level, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the most recent federal transportation legislation, is set to expire in 2026, and reauthorization discussions are underway. Meanwhile, public transit agencies across the country are facing serious challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a severe decline in transit ridership nationwide. While ridership has started to rebound, transit agencies are still facing a significant decrease in farebox revenue, creating an ongoing operating budget crisis. The State of New Jersey has provided additional transit funding for New Jersey Transit

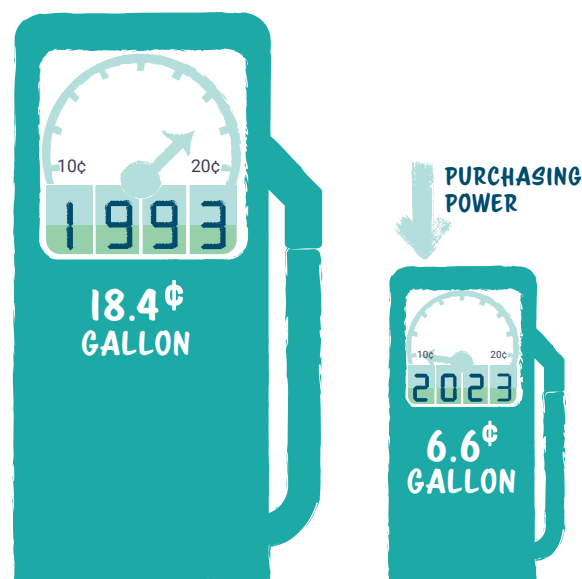
⁷www.phila.gov/programs/zero-fare/

in the form of a corporate transit fee, but transit service in the Pennsylvania part of the region is at risk without new funding. SEPTA, in particular, may be forced to deeply cut service and raise fares.

Most of our current transportation funding comes from taxes on gasoline and other petroleum products. But those revenues are shrinking. Increasingly, people are driving more fuel-efficient or electric vehicles, and inflation has reduced the value of the gas tax over time. Since the last federal gas tax increase in 1993, inflation has erased about 64 percent of its purchasing power.

To keep the Highway and Transit Trust Funds afloat, Congress has had to shift \$275.2 billion from the general fund since 2008. That

DIMINISHING GAS TAX



Source: Producer Price Index, Construction Materials Index, 1993-2023

includes \$118 billion to highways and \$28 billion to transit as part of the IIJA.

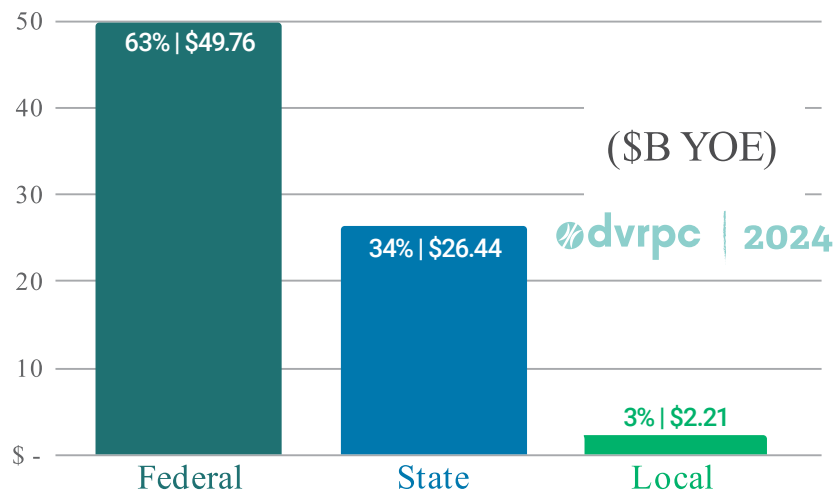
With fuel efficiency rising, travel growing slowly, and more electric vehicles on the road, the gas tax simply isn't enough to keep up with transportation needs. Without changes, the gap between what's needed and what's available will continue to grow.

Only 2 percent of the region's projected transportation funding comes from local sources—and that small share is mostly used to match federal and state dollars. In contrast, many regions across the country contribute much more in local funding to support regional transportation projects. Local funding is especially important because it's flexible. It can be used for a wide range

of projects, including upgrades that support biking, walking, and transit. For example, the City of Columbus, OH worked with regional partners to raise new local funding, including through a voter-approved sales tax measure, to support the expansion of its transit system through the LinkUS initiative.² This collaborative effort is helping bring bus rapid transit and other improvements to communities across Central Ohio.

Both Pennsylvania and New Jersey have state laws that limit how local governments can raise money for transportation. This has made it harder for our region to keep up with basic maintenance needs and to invest in future improvements. As a result, we contribute far less local funding to transit capital and operations than most peer regions nationwide. Our region also doesn't currently have a clear plan for how to raise the local dollars needed to compete for federal grants. A prime example of this is the FTA New Starts program. This program helps fund new rail lines but requires a large local match that our region does not have a source to fund. If federal funding decreases in the future—as many expect with the next federal transportation bill—regions with dedicated local funding sources will be in a much stronger position to maintain their systems and support long-term economic growth.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING BY SOURCE



⁸ www.linkuscolumbus.com

Funding Options

Right now, our funding model isn't keeping up. It needs to be rethought and updated to meet today's needs and generate new revenue for the future. Communities have also been hesitant to build new walking and biking facilities because they come with long-term maintenance costs, but no dedicated funding to cover them. Fixing that policy gap is essential if we want to create and maintain the kind of active transportation network our region deserves.

DVRPC will continue to facilitate dialogue and conduct analysis around changes and augmentations to federal and state gas taxes that are consistent with the Plan's vision and goals. From mileage-based user fees to congestion pricing, as New York has recently implemented, there are many options for replacing the gas tax with something more lasting.

In the near term, we can stretch limited transportation dollars further by focusing on efficient, affordable, context-sensitive solutions—projects that solve real problems without overbuilding or overspending. This means looking for ways to improve safety, mobility, and reliability with smaller, smarter investments rather than defaulting to major construction projects. For example, TSMO strategies—like signal timing upgrades, ramp metering, real-time travel info, and better incident management—can help ease congestion and improve travel times without adding new lanes or roads. These types of improvements are often faster to implement, more cost-effective, and less disruptive to communities and the environment. In some cases, reduced-scale alternatives can deliver most of the benefits of a major project at a fraction of the cost. The region can also make the most of existing funding by focusing on repairs that support multiple travel options, like fixing bridges important to transit and maintaining well-used trails. These

steps help keep the region moving while new funding sources are explored.

DOTs and transit agencies can also use funding more efficiently by taking a “corridor-based” approach—planning and implementing multiple improvements along the same roadway or transit corridor at the same time. Instead of repaving a road one year, adding bike lanes a few years later, and fixing bus stops even later, agencies can coordinate all of these upgrades into a single, comprehensive project. This reduces duplication of effort, saves money on construction and mobilization costs, and minimizes disruptions for the public. It also makes it easier to think holistically about the needs of all users—drivers, transit riders, cyclists, and pedestrians—and to build a safer, more connected, and more resilient transportation system. ►

For more details on existing funding sources and new options, see *Appendix E—Funding Sources and Future Outlook*.

FUNDING OPTIONS



Mileage-based User Fees

Charges drivers by the mile for travel on a defined roadway network. **Potential benefits:** Stabilizes revenue compared with the gas tax, as they are less affected by changes in vehicle fuel efficiency.



Commercial Property VMT Fee

Administers a location-based fee to commercial real estate based on the annual vehicle miles they generate. **Potential benefits:** Promotes more efficient business location decisions.



Toll Existing Highways

Exerts a user fee on designated limited-access roads and bridges. **Potential benefits:** Can help to manage demand for finite highway space.



Electricity Surtax for Home or Public Charging

Adds a flat fee or surcharge for units of electricity used to power electric vehicles. **Potential benefits:** Replicates the gas tax for EVs.



Tradeable Driving Credits

Allocates a quota of mileage driving rights each year. **Potential benefits:** Provides an incentive to use other modes by allowing those who drive less to sell their credits to those who drive more.



Safety/Infrastructure Investment Fees

Scales vehicle registration fees based on vehicle weight and size. **Potential benefits:** Charges vehicle owners for societal costs of increased emissions, road damages, and safety risks that all rise with heavier vehicle weights.



Parking Pricing

Applies variable charges to on-street parking based on demand, while reducing the cost of off-street spaces. **Potential benefits:** Decreases traffic in central business districts from drivers looking for parking spaces and better accounts for the value of land used for vehicle parking.



Congestion Pricing

Employs variable tolls to manage demand on a facility or within a specific zone. **Potential benefits:** Reduces congestion and encourages more efficient use of transportation infrastructure, while generating revenue to provide more transportation options.

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● How Can We Make It Happen?

Realizing our shared vision for a stronger, fairer, and more connected region will require more than just good planning—it will take commitment, collaboration, and courage. The future we want won't build itself. It will take coordinated action across all levels of government, the private sector, and our communities to drive the kind of lasting change we need. From bold policy decisions to thoughtful local implementation, everyone has a role to play. Together, we can rise to the moment—and make our vision a reality.



The Challenge Ahead

The Greater Philadelphia region stands at a crossroads. We face a range of complex, interconnected challenges: preparing students and workers for an evolving global economy, modernizing our aging infrastructure, designing communities where everyone can thrive, and responding to the escalating impacts of extreme weather. Rapid advances in technology offer powerful tools—but they’re not silver bullets. New technology must support, not dictate, how we shape our region. We need structural changes, policy shifts, and smarter design choices that prioritize people. If we want to build a region that meets our communities’ needs and is connected to the global economy, we must embrace the hard work of thoughtful planning and shared responsibility.

It’s a pivotal time. Progress demands long-term effort, a broader perspective, innovative approaches, and robust regional partnerships. Together we can:

- Prioritize critical investments in education, jobs, and transportation.
- Guide growth and design developments to best utilize our existing regional assets and protect communities and environmental resources.
- Shift policies and address structural impediments to make our regional vision a reality, recognizing that smarter technology alone can’t do it.
- Commit to sustained, coordinated action over time.

Big Moves, Big Support

Ambitious ideas can’t move forward without the proper support. Too many critical projects are delayed or underfunded, even as costs rise and communities wait. To deliver the infrastructure, housing, and economic opportunity our region needs, we must streamline decision-making and secure the resources to match the scale of our goals. That means big-picture thinking and bold action. Dependable investments and diversified revenue streams will help us break through bureaucratic barriers and get projects moving.

What we’re asking for:

- Reliable, long-term federal and state funding to maintain and improve infrastructure and support ongoing transit operations
- Stronger formula-based federal funding, complemented by competitive programs that promote innovation
- Greater financial support for metropolitan planning, to reflect the importance of regional thinking for regional-scale issues
- Enabling legislation from the state that allows local governments to raise funds to help meet their local transportation goals
- Flexibility to invest in local and regional priorities, like projects that connect people to jobs and opportunity through safe, multimodal travel, that lower the cost of living, and that improve quality of life
- Reformed NEPA processes that reduce the time and cost of federal permitting requirements, particularly for smaller and less complicated projects or those that would improve environmental outcomes, making more efficient use of existing resources

Now is the time to modernize the way we invest in places and people.

DVRPC Connecting the Region

DVRPC brings together people and ideas to solve the region's toughest challenges. As the MPO for Greater Philadelphia, we act as a regional convener—connecting local governments, transportation agencies, business leaders, and community voices to plan for a better future. In a rapidly changing world, we ground decisions in high-quality data, technical expertise, and a commitment to opportunity and innovation. In a region as large and diverse as ours, strong, trusted leadership is essential—and DVRPC will continue to step up.

Our commitment:

- Delivering data that partners can trust
- Supporting local and regional projects that reflect long-term priorities
- Strengthening civic leadership and filling gaps to align action across boundaries
- Partnering with municipalities, agencies, community organizations, nonprofits, and the private sector to implement real solutions
- Listening to communities, connecting community priorities to our work, and elevating voices that have historically been underrepresented
- Implementing the Plan through DVRPC's annual work program and through our planning partners' work programs

As a planning agency, DVRPC's work serves as a foundation for action—but lasting change will also depend on new initiatives, partnerships, and organizations that can step in to fill additional gaps and carry the work forward across the region.

What You Can Do

Our region's future isn't up to planners and policymakers. Every resident has a stake—and a say—in shaping what comes next. By staying informed, sharing your voice, and participating in regional conversations, you can help ensure our shared vision reflects the needs and hopes of all who call this region home. No action is too small when it contributes to something bigger.

Get involved:

- Join a [DVRPC Committee](#) to lend your expertise or perspective
- Attend public meetings and make your voice heard
- Explore our plans and programs online and share your feedback
- Follow [DVRPC communications](#) to stay informed and connected
- Encourage others to get involved—regional change needs local champions

Acronyms

ADU:	Accessory Dwelling Unit
AI:	Artificial intelligence
AQP:	Air Quality Partnership
CMP:	Congestion Management Process
DOT:	Department of Transportation
DVRPC:	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
EVs:	Electric Vehicles
GSI:	Green Stormwater Infrastructure
HVAC:	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
IIJA:	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
MPO:	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MRP:	Major Regional Project

PennDOT:	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
PIDC:	Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation Plan
PM_{2.5}:	Fine particulate matter pollution with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller
TASA:	Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program
TIM:	Traffic Incident Management
TIP:	Transportation Improvement Program
TOD:	Transit-Oriented Development
TOP:	Travel Options Program
TSMO:	Transportation Systems Management and Operations
VMT:	Vehicle Miles Traveled

DRAFT Update: Connections 2050

Plan for Greater Philadelphia *Summary Document for Public Comment*

Publication Number: 25137A

Date Published: July 2025

Geographic Area Covered: The nine-county DVRPC region, which covers the counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer counties in New Jersey.

Abstract: The *Update: Connections 2050* Plan documents the vision, principles, goals, policies and strategies, and contains a summary of the financial plan for the Greater Philadelphia region covering federal fiscal years 2026 to 2050. It is supplemented by *Update: Connections 2050 Plan for Greater Philadelphia Appendices*, which contains supporting information related to the planning process, along with the detailed financial plan.

Key Words: 2050, Affordable Housing, Air Quality, Artificial Intelligence, Building Performance, Centers, Circuit Trails, Civic, Communities, Commute Patterns, Development, Ecological Systems, Economy, Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship, Environment, Extreme Weather, Forecasts, Freight, Funding Gap, Funding Options, Global Connections, Goals, Goods Movement, Green Infrastructure, Green Transportation, Healthy, Housing, Infill Development, Infrastructure, Innovation, Land Use, Land Use Vision, Livability, Long-Range Plan, Major Regional Projects, Mixed-Use, Mobility, Mode Share, Multimodal, Open Space, Operations, Opportunity, Outreach, Plan, Plan Elements, Population,

Preservation, Region, Remote Work, Resilience, Safety, Security, Services, Strategies, Survey, Technology, Tracking Progress, Transit, Transportation, Funding, Investments, Travel Demand, Utility, Vision, Vision Zero, Walkable, Water Quality, Workforce Skills

Staff Contact:

Jackie Davis, Manager, Office of Long-Range Planning



190 N Independence Mall West
8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1520
215-592-1800
www.dvrpc.org



190 N Independence Mall West
8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1520
215-592-1800
www.dvrpc.org

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