

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
OCTOBER 22ND, 2025



Please note that these minutes are not intended to capture every comment but to identify critical discussion points and highlights of the TAC business meetings.

CALL TO ORDER:

A business meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order on Microsoft Teams at 10:02 a.m. on October 22, 2025.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present on the Phone:

1. Ms. Jody Holton
2. Honorable Akbar Hossain, Orlando Almonte, alternate
3. Honorable Stephen DeFrank, Rodney Bender, alternate
4. Honorable Carrie Rowe, John Kashatus, alternate
5. Honorable Jessica Shirley, Nathan Crawford, alternate
6. Honorable Russel Redding, Lisa Greybeal, alternate
7. Honorable Rick Siger, Melissa Wright, alternate
8. Honorable Wayne Langerholc, Nolan Ritchie, alternate
9. Honorable Timothy Kearney, Sam Arnold, alternate
10. Mr. Richard Barcaskey
11. Mr. John Pocius
12. Mr. Jeff Mercadante
13. Mr. Alan Blahovec
14. Dr. Larry Nulton
15. Mr. Ashley Porter
16. Mr. Mark Murawski
17. Mr. Martin Malone
18. Mr. Ron Wagenmann
19. Ms. Cathy Farrell
20. Ms. Rebecca Oyler
21. Mr. David Heath
22. Mr. Ryan Mulvey
23. Mr. Robert Previdi

Members Not Present

1. Honorable Michael B. Carroll
2. Honorable Kerry Benninghoff
3. Honorable Ed Neilson
4. Mr. Jeffrey Letwin
5. Mr. Michael A. Carroll

CHAIR'S REMARKS:

TAC Chair, Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, acknowledged the passing of TAC member Mr. Elam Herr and led a moment of silence in remembrance. She noted his valuable contributions to TAC and that he was a respected member of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) and in the field of public administration overall.

MINUTES:

ON A MOTION by Mr. Ron Wagenmann, seconded by Mr. John Pocius and unanimously approved, the Minutes of the July 16, 2025, TAC Business Meeting were accepted without changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

SECRETARY'S REMARKS:

Mr. Larry Shifflet, on behalf of Transportation Secretary Michael B. Carroll, said the reason that the meeting was virtual was due to the state budget impasse; however, business continues despite both the state impasse and the federal shutdown. PennDOT is able to use Advance Construction, paying later for current work, to keep business moving until a solution is found.

Mr. Shifflet stated that the Secretary has been attending events around the state on truck parking and noted the recent TAC study on truck parking. Over 1,200 new truck parking spots have been identified. He noted the efforts of Deputy Secretary Norris and Ms. Rebecca Oyler in assisting the effort.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Administration and Budget

Deputy Secretary for Administration Mr. Corey Pellington gave an update.

Effective October 3, 2025, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) issued an Interim Final Rule (IFR) requiring changes to the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Airport Concessions DBE programs. PennDOT is working with the Unified Certification Program and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on next steps.

Small Business Reserve (SBR) Fiscal Year 2024-2025 data is now live on the Department of General Services (DGS) website. There was a 63% increase from the previous year.

The overall vacancy rate is below 3%. A total of 906 temporary winter equipment operators and 122 overall temporary winter positions have been approved. 68 winter operator and 32 temporary winter positions have been filled; the positions are posted online.

Mr. Mark Murawski asked Mr. Shifflet if there were any problems with state matching during the budget impasse. Mr. Shifflet said that advance construction allows for letting of federal aid projects, and that there has been no federal money coming in outside of reimbursements. A point will come where payments will become an issue. A waiver allowing the use of previous balances was granted by the state to enable work to continue; however, those funds are dwindling.

Driver and Vehicle Services

Deputy Secretary for Driver and Vehicle Services (DVS) Ms. Kara Templeton gave an update.

The federal enforcement date of May 7, 2025, for Real ID has passed. Of all cardholders in Pennsylvania, approximately 3.4 million, or 33.5% have a Real ID.

Wayne County will implement the local use fee, effective November 5, 2025.

PennDOT held a Teen Driver Safety event at Northeastern York High School the previous day, with other schools participating virtually. PennDOT partnered with the Pennsylvania State Police, the American Automobile Association (AAA), and the Departments of Education and Insurance for the event.

An IFR was issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and came into effect on September 29, 2025, to halt of issuing Commercial Driver Licenses (CDL) to non-domiciled residents. PennDOT has ceased issuance of CDL products to non-domiciled residents, including transfers, updates, replacements, duplicates, and renewals. PennDOT is reviewing the rule and assessing the effects on operations.

Mr. Jeff Mercadante inquired whether all states were required to cease issuance of CDLs to non-domiciled residents and if current CDLs are valid. Ms. Templeton stated that the FMCSA specified that the rule was not retroactive, and current CDLs remain valid until they expire. This was required by all states, and PennDOT is awaiting further guidance.

Multimodal

Ms. Angela Watson, on behalf of Multimodal Deputy Secretary Ms. Meredith Biggica, gave an update.

Ms. Watson noted that the Rail Freight section would be giving a presentation later in the meeting.

The grant application period for the Rail Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) and the Rail Freight Assistance Program (RFAP) opened in August. Thirty-five applications were received, requesting a total of \$70 million. The program typically funds between \$30 to \$40 million. Awards are normally approved at the December State Transportation Committee (STC) meeting.

Highway Administration

Deputy Secretary of Highway Administration Ms. Christine Norris gave an update.

Winter operations preparation and coordination are underway. Municipalities that are interested in additional winter training are encouraged to use the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP).

Salt prices have risen 4.5% from last fiscal year, to \$88.21 per ton. The estimated budget for the 2025-2026 winter will be higher than last year due to the 5-year rolling average.

PennDOT is partnering with Drivewise to provide safety information to commercial drivers, such as work zones, curves, lane restrictions, and weather condition restrictions.

87 projects were let in the 3rd quarter of 2025. In 2025, PennDOT has let 380 projects for approximately \$2.2 billion, with a letting goal of \$2.9 billion. Bids are coming in near the estimate.

PennDOT was awarded \$172 million over the five years for the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) buildout, and the funds have been obligated. Twenty sites are operational out of the planned 86 sites, making Pennsylvania the state with the most operational sites. Eleven sites have broken ground, and seven have received a notice to proceed, with construction to begin soon.

PennDOT will now begin the community phase, focusing on unmet charging needs in rural and disadvantaged areas. A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released on October 6, named Corridor Connections, and community rounds will continue over the next year, totaling approximately \$100 million.

Ms. Norris said that PennDOT will continue to work on truck parking, and thanked the State Police, the TAC, and industry members for their support. She added weigh stations are being reopened to support the need for truck parking. Interstate on-ramps are also being looked at for potential parking opportunities.

Ms. Holton asked for confirmation that some engineering and design consultants were not being paid due to the budget impasse. Ms. Norris confirmed that most contractors had not been paid for work done past July 1, 2025.

Ms. Holton asked how much the backlog was. Ms. Norris said that it was approximately \$23 million in unpaid consultants fees, and \$29 million in unpaid construction costs.

Planning

Deputy Secretary of Planning, Ms. Kristin Mulkerin gave an update.

The Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025 ended September 30, 2025, and FFY 2026 began October 1, 2025. PennDOT is awaiting an appropriations bill or continuing resolution but are able to move forward using advance construction.

The 2027 program is underway, with draft Transportation Improvement Plans (TIPs) expected by the end of the calendar year.

The Public-Private Partnership (P3) office has opened the window for unsolicited proposals and will remain open from October 1 to October 31.

The window for Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) draft applications has closed, with final applications due at the end of October.

DIGITAL DELIVERY

Mr. Allen Melley, P.E., Digital Delivery Chief from PennDOT, gave a report on the Digital Delivery Program.

Mr. Melley said that the vision statement of the Digital Delivery Program was “By 2025, construction projects will have the ability to be bid using 3D technology and will no longer be in a traditional construction plan format.” There will still be 2D components in the 3D models, such as views and excel tables.

The program began in 2020, where initial pilots had contractors use 3D models instead of cross sections in Existing Ground Confidence Level, Bridge, and Drainage and Utilities projects. Model as Legal Deliverable (MALD) projects have no plan sheets, with all plans derived from the 3D model.

A goal of the department is to be as data-agnostic as possible, meaning that data should be able to work with any given software, and thus uses Industry Foundation Classes (IFC) files. PennDOT was the first state in the nation to deliver a project with IFC files as a contractual document. The pilot program will expand the number of Digital Delivery Projects advertised each year through 2030. The pilot program allows for testing methodology and workflows, standardizing procedures, training department contractor staff, and developing guidance documents.

Mr. Melley spoke about the quality management processes and opportunities for additional reviews, as well as model version control. He noted the potential for collaboration, giving an example of contractors reporting locations of utility lines, which are then added to the models.

Mr. Melley said that a common question is how smaller companies can compete with digital delivery. He responded by saying every pilot delivered thus far had been won by a smaller contractor. He listed some of the projects, and lessons learned from each.

Beginning in 2029, all integral abutment bridge projects under 90 feet in length, starting preliminary design, will be required to be digital delivery projects. In 2030, New construction/reconstruction projects will be similarly required.

PennDOT ran contractor summits in January 2025 to provide hands-on training and information for contractors. Additional summits are planned for 2026. Additionally, webinar sessions are conducted quarterly and are available for to anyone interested.

Mr. Melley stated that PennDOT is collaborating with seventeen universities across the state to incorporate digital delivery concepts into their curriculum. PennDOT also speaks at schools and provides them with a database of let projects for educational purposes.

The initiative has won awards, such as the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC/PA) Diamond Award in the Small Project category, Best Use of Technology, and Innovation at the 2025 America's Transportation Northeast Association of State Transportation Officials (NASTO) Award and was a finalist in the Professional Research category of the buildingSMART International OpenBIM Award.

Mr. Murawski asked if the pilots were limited to State-owned projects. Mr. Melley said that there are no local projects, but they would support a local project, noting the organic growth of the idea.

Ms. Cathy Ferrell said that many agencies still require hard-copy deliverables and asked how that would be handled. Mr. Melley said that 2D sheets are still valuable tools and can still be produced from the model, and those produced sheets include QR codes that verify if the sheet is still valid.

Ms. Holton asked if there was any information on cost savings. Mr. Melley said that they were starting to track that information but said it would take time to see those savings due to inexperience with the new systems and change management. There is unlikely to be a large return on investment in any one area, but cumulative return over time. He also noted the ability to find and compare information more easily.

Ms. Farrell asked if there was any coordination with utility companies to track lines in PennDOT right of way. Mr. Melley said that they were working with the Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) area to build that database.

STATE RAIL PLAN – UPDATE

Angela Watson, AICP, Director of Rail Freight, Ports, and Waterways, and Harrison Warren, Transportation Planning Specialist from PennDOT, gave a presentation on the Draft 2025 State Rail Plan Update.

Ms. Watson stated that the draft plan encompasses Freight Rail, Commuter Rail, and Intercity Passenger Rail, in accordance with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) requirements. The plan summarizes the current state of rail, identifies current system issues and ways to address them, and outlines system goals and the needs to achieve them.

Ms. Watson noted that the Rail Plan is not a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), but a policy plan that identifies investments. The plan is updated every 4 to 5 years. Projects are not required to be on the plan to receive federal funds, but it is encouraged.

When the plan is finalized, an executive summary will be created, which will be available on the website and available to stakeholders. In preparing the State Rail Plan, PennDOT held a public meeting, an online public survey, three stakeholder workshops, and twelve meetings with industry groups.

Mr. Warren identified passenger rail needs, including infrastructure projects across the Keystone Corridor, Northeast Corridor, and Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA). These upgrades also support the second *Pennsylvanian* train, which is scheduled to begin in late 2026.

Several new passenger rail lines were identified in the Corridor ID program. Chicago to Pittsburgh, Scranton to New York City, and Reading to Philadelphia. Applications for these lines have been submitted, and the Scranton to NYC is one of five that has moved to phase two of the process.

Key projects on the Keystone East segment are Zoo Interlocking Improvements north of Philadelphia, a new Downingtown Passenger Rail Station, and Lancaster Station Improvements.

In the stakeholder outreach process, 374 potential freight projects were identified. Half of the potential project costs were for State of Good Repair projects, and the remainder were for capacity upgrades, customer access, multimodal connections, rolling stock, and grade crossing upgrades.

PennDOT administers two programs for rail improvements across the state, the Rail Freight Assistance Program (RFAP) and the Rail Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP). These programs fund 25-30 projects, investing \$25-40 million. In 2025, there were 35 applicants requesting \$70 million. Some projects from these funds from 2019 to 2023 include the rehabilitation of 300 miles of track, the addition of 5.5 miles of new track, the rehabilitation of 32 bridges, and the installation of 37 turnouts.

Ms. Watson said the Plan is available on [AdvancingPARail.com](https://advancingparail.com), with finalization and the executive summary expected in mid-November.

Mr. Murawski inquired whether a vulnerability assessment had been conducted regarding potential hazmat accidents, and if that could be a potential TAC study. Ms. Watson said that PennDOT would have to work closely with private railroads, as private railroads own the infrastructure and proprietary information. As the plan is finalized, she will look for potential TAC study topics. To safety, she noted RailPulse, a GPS-like system on railcars that can identify potential issues and provide live updates to customers.

Ms. Farrell asked if the plan considered inner-city rail and other transit rail. Ms. Watson said no, the Rail Plan is strictly about rail that the FRA has oversight over. Only SEPTA's regional rail is included in the plan.

Ms. Holton added that the report has project sheets for each of the major projects and recommended a SEPTA fleet replacement page, as it is a multi-billion-dollar investment. Ms. Watson thanked her for the comment and said they would reach out to her staff.

TAC STUDY SUBMISSION PORTAL

Mr. Brian Sharkey from PennDOT gave a presentation on the updates to the TalkPATransportation.com website for TAC members.

Mr. Sharkey walked through the new method by which STC and TAC Members can RSVP for meetings, submit potential study topics, and comment on potential study topics via the website.

Mr. Dan Keane said that for TAC study submissions, a brief description would suffice and did not need a full scope of work for consideration.

Study Implementation Updates

Ms. Holton mentioned the truck parking update previously in the meeting and noted the efforts of the Digital Delivery team for their collaboration with colleges across the state as part of the workforce development outreach.

MEMBER UPDATES:

Mr. Wagenmann noted an issue at the Route 29 interchange on the Turnpike, where trucks are using a lane marked for no trucks, causing the guide rails to be replaced often. Mr. Shifflet said that he would inform the Turnpike staff.

Ms. Holton said that she had submitted a study topic on funding, as no long-term solution for public transit had been reached and other modes also struggle with funding. Mr. Robert Previdi agreed, noting the struggles with funding across the board.

OTHER BUSINESS:

None.

Adjournment

ON A MOTION by Mr. Wagenmann, seconded by Mr. Pocius, and unanimously approved, the TAC meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

FOLLOW-UP

A meeting between PennDOT and the Turnpike Commission was held regarding Mr. Wagenmann's comment. The Turnpike Commission is looking into additional signage and techniques to point trucks to the appropriate main ramp area.