

# DVRPC NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

## DVRPC INITIATES YEAR 2025 TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE PLAN

In 1995, DVRPC adopted the *Year 2020 Comprehensive Plan*, the region's fourth long-range plan, culminating a three-year cooperative planning process. The *Plan* presented a policy direction for the region, together with a list of transportation projects and improvements, and a means to link transportation with land use objectives. The DVRPC Board has used the *Year 2020 Plan* to guide its regional and local planning efforts and has worked to implement the recommendations of the *Plan* through detailed corridor studies, greenway and land use planning projects, in collaboration and coordination with state, county and local plans.

Adoption of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998 presents a new imperative to revisit and revise the *Year 2020* work. TEA-21 provides additional funding streams for transportation improvements

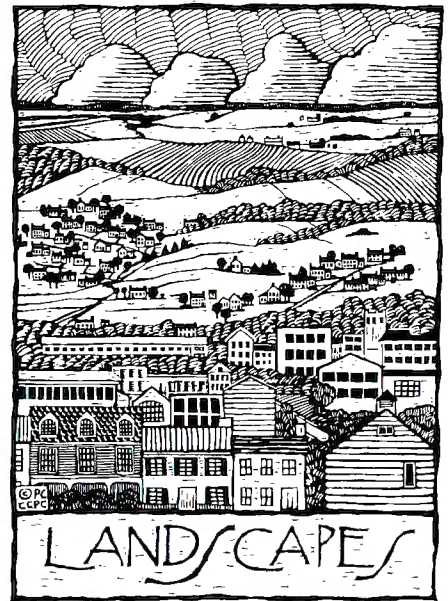
but also significantly revises the planning factors for metropolitan areas, and presents new selection criteria for both highway and transit projects. Both Pennsylvania and New Jersey are now updating their State Transportation Plans. In addition, release of the Governor's 21st Century Environment Commission report in Pennsylvania and the refinement of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan present new policy directions for the region. Finally, with the approach of the year 2000, it is also essential to maintain the required 20-year planning horizon and extend the target date of the regional plan to 2025.

Over the next two years, DVRPC will:

- reassess the issue areas, goals and policies of the *Year 2020 Plan* and develop a revised policy plan;
- prepare forecasts of population and employment change to the year 2025;
- examine conditions and trends within the region relative to the *Year 2020 Plan*, and update and expand the list of regional indicators to best reflect changes in the region; and
- complete a revised land use and transportation plan for the region, including an examination of the roles and responsibilities of partner organizations.

As with the previous plan, the *Year 2025 Plan* will include an extensive public

## Chester County



## MANAGING CHANGE IN CHESTER COUNTY

Preservation of farmland and open space, protection of cultural resources, and enhancement of quality of life — isn't this the ideal description of a livable community? Isn't this a setting in which most of us would choose to live? At this point and in this region, only Chester County, PA can boast that it has implemented such a plan and won awards for it as well.

In 1997, DVRPC adopted Chester County's Comprehensive Plan, *Landscapes: Managing Change in Chester County*, as part of the region's required

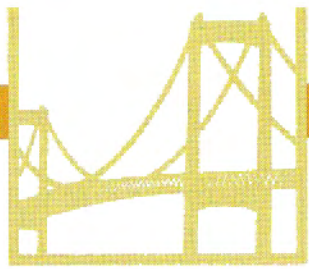
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# HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES

New work requirements and the five year lifetime limit on federal welfare benefit eligibility have created a pressing need for welfare recipients to enter the workforce as quickly as possible. To succeed in this job market, many people making the transition from welfare-to-work will have little choice but to spend more time commuting greater distances. Initiatives to improve access-to-jobs and strengthen inner city connections to the regional labor market will be especially important for those without their own automobiles.

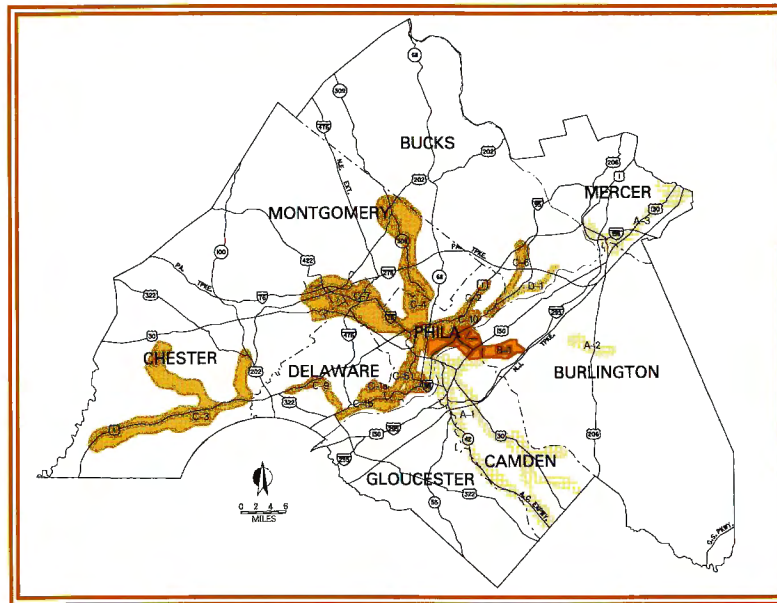
One new initiative is the Job Access and Reverse Commute Competitive Grant Program, included in TEA-21 and administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). With grant funding available (on a 50% matching basis) for fiscal years 1999 to 2003, this program supports transportation initiatives that either help welfare and lower-income people access employment sites, or that promote reverse commute (city to suburb) trips regardless of income level.

As a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), DVRPC was required to evaluate potential applicants and projects for this new program. The DVRPC Board used the following six-point

regional Access to Jobs Strategy (see below) included in DVRPC's draft Job Access and Reverse Commute Transportation Plan to accomplish this task:

- Promote transit affordability
- Promote job retention with transportation-related support services
- Expand transit education to increase ridership
- Improve accessibility with new transportation and ridesharing initiatives
- Promote long-term viability of new transportation services
- Develop strategies to promote more effective access to jobs coordination.

Through DVRPC's efforts, 15 projects were ranked as high priority for FY 1999 funding and included in the respec-



tive southeastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey applications filed by SEPTA and NJ Transit/NJDOT. The FTA is expected to announce the FY 99 grant recipients in mid-May.

Those projects are keyed on the map as follows:

## NEW JERSEY

- A-1** Camden County Improvement Authority – Service from Camden City Empowerment Zone to Southern Camden County Employment Centers

- A-2** Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders – Mt. Holly to Pemberton Shuttle

- A-3** Mercer County Workforce Investment Board – Route 130 Service

## REGIONAL

- B-1** Mayor's Office of Community Services (Philadelphia) – American Street Empowerment Zone Service to Pennsauken and Moorestown Employment Centers

## PENNSYLVANIA

- C-1a** Delaware County TMA and SEPTA – Route 37 and Route 305 Darby and Chester Service to the International Airport

- C-1b** Delaware County TMA and SEPTA – Service from Chester to Route 352 and Route 1 Employment Centers

- C-2** SEPTA – Northeast Philadelphia Route 1 Corridor Service

- C-3** Chester County TMA and Southern Chester County Organization on Transportation – Paratransit Service to Southern Chester County, Coatesville and West Chester Areas

- C-4** Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition – Service to Montgomeryville, King of Prussia and International Airport Area Employment Centers

- C-5** SEPTA – Airport Rail Services Improvements

- C-6** SEPTA – Northeast Philadelphia Route 14 Service Improvements

- C-7** SEPTA – Conshohocken Area Route 95 Service Improvements

- C-8** SEPTA – Multi-Lingual How to Ride Guides (Not Mapped)

- C-9** Delaware County TMA – (See Project C-1)

- C-10** Impact Service – Frankford/Kensington Area Service

## ALTERNATE

- D-1** SEPTA – Bristol Area Bus Service



# SETTING ASIDE DOLLARS TO ENHANCE THE TRANSPORTATION EXPERIENCE

**W**hat do the creation of multi-use trails, historic train station rehabilitations, bicycle safety education programs, and improvements to downtown streetscapes have in common? They all may be funded through the Transportation Enhancements (TE) program.

Transportation Enhancements is a 10 percent set-aside of each state's Surface Transportation Program dollars, mandated by Congress in TEA-21 for the funding of "non-traditional" projects designed to enhance the transportation experience, to mitigate the impacts of transportation facilities on communities



and the environment, and to enhance community character through transportation-related improvements.

The immensely popular TE program was carried over from TEA-21's predecessor, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991

(ISTEA), and its funding increased by 40 percent. Pennsylvania is in the midst of choosing recipients for the first of three rounds of funding totaling approximately \$120 million. Awards will be announced in mid-May; a call for second round applications is set for September. New Jersey just issued a call for applications to compete for approximately \$10.5 million; applications are due at NJDOT headquarters by the close of business on July 2. The Garden State plans to hold annual competitions over the six-year life of TEA-21 to distribute its \$74 million fund, making available on average about \$12 million per year.

A note of warning: application for TE funds is highly competitive. In the most recent Pennsylvania round, 400 applicants, making a total funding request of \$280 million, are vying for a piece of the \$40 million pie. The first four years of New Jersey's program saw 123 projects selected for more than \$50 million of funding, out of a pool of 925 applications requesting approximately \$597 million.

Both states have similar processes for screening and selecting applications for funding. Each has a statewide advisory committee, comprised of representatives from environmental, historic preservation, rails-to-trails, and bicycling interests and other stakeholders, charged with selecting and recommending to their respective transportation commissioners a list of projects which can be funded out of the available pool of money. DVRPC and its member counties play a key role in giving voice to regional and county priorities during the selection process. In Pennsylvania, MPOs were requested to submit roughly one-third of the applications from their respective regions to the statewide advisory committee for priority considera-

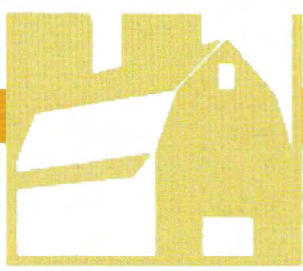
tion; DVRPC selected 37 projects from 106 received from within the region through a process involving input from the counties, DVRPC's Regional Transportation Committee, Regional Citizens Committee and the PennDOT District Office.

Applications for project funding may be made by governments or non-profit corporations. Applicants may "enhance" their chances of receiving funding for their projects by

- showing a clear relationship between the project and transportation;
- presenting a clear, concise project scope. State exactly what is to be constructed or done with the funding. Ample opportunity to explain the importance of the project is provided elsewhere in the application; and
- demonstrating clearly that planning issues have been worked out, that site control exists, and that the project is ready to go to design, or better yet, construction, soon.





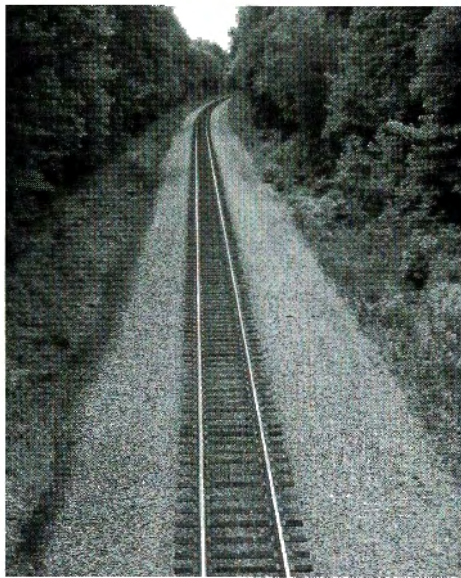


In general, advisory committee members look for projects which promise a strong, beneficial impact on community character; that have credible economic and environmental benefits; and that are an element of a larger plan.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities represent the lion's share of applications under TE, both regionally and nationally. Applicants can greatly improve their chances by showing how their projects fit in to the municipal master plan, the regional bicycle and pedestrian mobility plan, and, most importantly, the statewide bicycle and pedestrian master plan.

Both Pennsylvania and New Jersey have statewide plans, which include design guidelines. Contact the state bicycle and pedestrian coordinator for help.

DVRPC has developed bicycle and pedestrian mobility plans for both the southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey portions of the region,



proposing bicycle-compatible networks of 2,000 and 1,400 miles, respectively. Projects which are part of those networks, and which follow design guidelines, will be highly favored in the selection process. Despite the preponderance of bicycle and pedestrian facility applications, few have been made for such needed facilities as bike racks and lockers in commercial areas, and for bike lanes. Education programs on bicycle and pedestrian safety, for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists, are now eligible for TE funding — representing another great opportunity.

Looking for opportunities for rail-trail development? Look no farther than DVRPC's *Abandoned Railroad Inventory and Policy Plan*. Every abandoned rail line in the region is documented in this encyclopedic work. Both bicycle and pedestrian mobility plans and the *Abandoned Railroad Inventory* are available from DVRPC.

An invaluable resource for TE applicants can be found in the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse (NTEC), which provides technical assistance and expert referral, and serves as the central source for a wealth of enhancements-related information/technical guidance and publications. Check out their web site at <[www.railtrails.org/ntec](http://www.railtrails.org/ntec)>. ☎

## DVRPC'S EXPANDED WEBSITE

**D**VRPC is proud to announce that its website at [www.dvrpc.org](http://www.dvrpc.org) has a new appearance, an expanded scope of information, and an easier format for locating the resources that are important to you. Visitors now have direct links to our Regional Planning and Public Affairs information. The Regional Planning webpage contains information on the Year 2020 Plan and Plan Update, regional indicators, greenways and open space planning, coastal zone management, housing, access-to-jobs and public policy research. The Public Affairs webpage has online editions of DVRPC News, as well as media releases, a glossary of acronyms, and information for citizens on participation in the planning process. Look for the FY 1998 Annual Report, coming soon.

*TransitChek's* webpage has been expanded to include information on the use of *TransitChek*, testimonials from actual users, an online edition of *TransitChek News* and an updated brochure and order form.

Our Online Mapping service, which allows visitors to create custom maps, has also been expanded and now includes 1995 land use and local streets.

We have also established a new site with information about the US 202 (Section 300) project in Chester County. Over the next year, DVRPC, in partnership with Chester County, PennDOT and the Federal Highway Administration, will provide current information about this important project.

Other recent enhancements include:

- An expanded Publication Guide;
- Additional Data Bulletins and downloadable data files;
- A Board Member and Staff List;
- Expanded Job Vacancy descriptions; and
- Links to Member Government;

Visit us at [www.dvrpc.org](http://www.dvrpc.org) — we think you'll like our new look and easy-to-use format!

For more info...

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## PORT ACCESS STUDY LAUNCHED

*(Left) Furthering its commitment to the Delaware Valley's vital maritime industry, DVRPC has undertaken a study of landside transportation access to the Petty's Island port complex in Pennsauken (Camden County), New Jersey. Working with Delaware Valley Goods Movement Task Force members and local officials, the study will assess the adequacy of highway and rail connections that serve the island's three intermodal facilities. The analysis will form the basis of a capital improvement program to provide seamless transportation access and enhance the port's competitiveness and cargo handling capabilities. (Photo: Ron Roggenburk)*

## ON THE WATERFRONT

*(Below and Below Left) Members of the Delaware Valley Goods Movement Task Force's Economics Subcommittee met recently at the Packer Avenue Marine Terminal in South Philadelphia. The meeting was hosted by Holt Cargo Systems, and afforded a close-up look at the region's vital maritime industry. The Economics Subcommittee, chaired by Gary Shields of Bethlehem Steel Corporation and staffed by DVRPC, brings public and private sector transportation officials together at manufacturing and freight facilities to discuss logistics trends and capital improvement programs. The subcommittee's outreach meetings represent an important element of DVRPC's concerted effort to address goods movement issues in the Delaware Valley. (Photos: Ron Roggenburk)*





## YEAR 2025 PLAN (continued from page 1)

participation process, including presentations to groups and organizations, newsletters, surveys, displays at public venues, and website information and feedback. In addition, DVRPC is considering programs in area schools, and within selected corridors of the region to listen to community concerns and ideas for the future.

Look for information on the *Year 2025 Plan* in upcoming newsletters, mailings and on our website at [www.dvrpc.org](http://www.dvrpc.org).

## CHESTER COUNTY (continued from page 1)

land use plan. The plan goes so far as to promote the creation of livable landscapes as an alternative to sprawl. Growth boundaries are suggested as a means of protecting and enhancing the character of each landscape, and of encouraging development in urban and suburban landscapes. To implement the plan immediately, the county created a Vision

Partnership with its municipalities, providing financial and technical assistance to avoid sprawl. *Landscapes* will be used as a guide to review land development, zoning changes, and public infrastructure projects. The county will then issue an annual "State of the County" report to summarize progress toward implementing the plan's recommendations.

*Landscapes* contains a set of actions that will be undertaken by Chester County to improve quality of life in ten major areas — land use, resource protection, economic development, transportation, housing, utilities, community facilities, human services, public health, and planning and coordination.

The County Planning Commission conducted an extensive public participation process prior to the adoption of this plan. Included were a series of public meetings, regional meetings for municipal officials and presentations to organizations.

The draft plan was available for public review at nearly 100 locations throughout the county. *Landscapes* was developed by the County Planning Commission with the assistance of a 25-member policy plan committee of residents and representatives from local government, utilities, environmental organizations, building construction and human services.

**LANDSCAPES WINS APA AWARD...** *Chester County's Landscapes, Vision Partnership and Planning Toolbox, has been awarded the 1999 American Planning Association's National Award for Outstanding Planning and the 1999 Pennsylvania Planning Association Award for Planning Excellence. Congratulations!*

**HATS OFF...** *Congratulations to Bill Fulton, Executive Director, Chester County Planning Commission, for being the 1998 Larry A. Boling Excellence in Government Award recipient. The award symbolizes extraordinary achievement by a public official. Well done!*



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