

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
RELATED TO DVRPC BOARD ACTION ITEMS

March 28, 2013

BOARD
AGENDA ITEM:

2. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Action

e. **NJ12-57: Burlington County Roadway Safety Improvements (DB# D0302), Burlington County**

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: March 18, 2013

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia: We support safety improvements on Burlington County roads. However we want assurance that rumble strips installed on county roads consider the safety of bicyclists who will be using the shoulder. FHWA guidance recommends that Rumble strips should only be installed when an adequate unobstructed width of paved surface remains available for bicycle use (at least 4 feet). The guidance notes that 12 foot gaps placed periodically in the strips allow cyclists to avoid debris and parked vehicles on the shoulder, or safely pass over the rumble strip for any reason. We also recommend the replacement of grooved storm grates with bicycle safe grates.

Response: Thank you for your comment. FHWA guidance on rumble strips will be used as part of this project. In addition, when drainage work is performed all inlet grates will be bicycle safe.”

f. **NJ12-58: Ben Franklin Bridge Walkway Cameras and Call Stations (DB# D1304), DRPA/PATCO**

From: Theresa Atwood

County: Camden

Zip Code: 08102

Date Received: March 19, 2013

Comment/Question: Please approve all that is necessary for the TIP Action NJ12-58 DRPA/PATCO project to put security cameras on the Ben Franklin Bridge. Too many people which includes Law Enforcement Officers have me robbed while walking or exercising on the bridge. The safety of Camden City residents and visitors must be the first priority. Sincerely, Theresa D. Atwood, Camden City Resident.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

From: Maria Tranguch

County: Camden

Zip Code: 08102

Date Received: March 19, 2013

Comment/Question: Being a frequent user of the Bridge Walkway and an advocate of trails, I strongly encourage this safety measure to be adopted. Furthermore, I do not believe that it should replace the bike patrols on the Bridge, as I find them to increase the perception of safety and increase response time to incidents.

Response: Thank you for your comment on this project. The cameras and call stations are not intended to replace the bike patrols on the Bridge, but rather will be in addition to the bike patrols.

From: Sonia Rivera-Perez

County: Camden

Zip Code: 08102

Date Received: March 19, 2013

Comment/Question: I am writing in support of the installation of cameras and call boxes on the Ben Franklin Bridge. I use the walkway at least once a week and there have been instances where I have felt unsafe being on the walkway. Having the ability to alert DRPA police about potentially unsafe conditions will be beneficial for the community.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

From: MaryEllen Moore

County: Camden

Zip Code: 08102

Date Received: March 19, 2013

Comment/Question: As a Rutgers student who resides year round in their dorm on 3rd street, I feel these enhancements in security are important for our neighborhood as many of us use the bridge for business and recreation.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

From: Bryon Yoder

County: Camden

Zip Code: 08102

Date Received: March 19, 2013

Comment/Question: I fully support this amendment to enhance security on the Ben Franklin Bridge. I live a few blocks from the bridge in Camden, and both neighbors and myself use the bridge regularly to bike over to Philly.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: March 18, 2013

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia: We support the installation of security cameras and call boxes on the Ben Franklin Bridge. We believe it will complement the installation of an ADA accessible ramp on the Camden side of the south bridge

walkway and will increase usage. We also think that the security improvements could part of a long term solution to allow 24 hour bicycle and pedestrian travel between Camden and Philadelphia.

Response: Thank you for your comment. The walkway is currently open for bicycle and pedestrian use May 1 – Oct. 1 from 6:00am to 9:00pm and Oct. 2 – April 30 from 6:00am to 8:00pm. Although there are currently no plans to allow 24 hour bicycle access at this time, your comment will be forwarded to the appropriate parties.

From: Stephanie Bittner

County: Camden

Zip Code: 08102

Date Received: March 18, 2013

Comment/Question: As a resident of the Cooper Grant neighborhood, I fully support the BFB Walkway Cameras/Calls Stations. I frequently walk the bridge and welcome these enhancements to improve the safety of being on the bridge. Thank you and again, my strong hope is that this approval is approved.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

From: Dennis Winters

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19103

Date Received: March 18, 2013

Comment/Question: It is hoped that this additional security surveillance will allow extending the hours the walkway is open to bikes and pedestrian. There should be no reason once they're installed to close access to the walkway at all. Personally, extended hours of operation would allow me to use the walkway for Riversharks games. I am a season ticket holder.

Response: Thank you for your comment. While there are no plans to allow 24 hour bicycle access at this time your comments are noted and will be forwarded to the appropriate parties.

From: Jonathan Latko

County: Camden

Zip Code: 08102

Date Received: March 20, 2013

Comment/Question: I live in Cooper-Grant: www.coopergrant.org. We are vibrant and diverse historic neighborhood located just south of the BFB. Security on the bridge walk is imperative. Access to the Bridge walk is an important recreation and business option to resident who work or play in Philadelphia or on the bridge itself. The walk is an asset. The connections to bike networks or both sides of the bridge and the planned ramp on the Camden side will enhance the asset and undoubtedly increase the number of people who utilize the asset. By having it more secure with Cameras and Call Buttons is important as people young and old, with children and people using it by themselves for recreation, folks that are men, woman, boys, girls, black, white, brown, Hispanic, gay, straight, tourist, resident, visitor... you name it exercise, walk, run, bike etc. We are grateful for the bike officer who is there during the day hours and know that comes at a cost. We wish there was a fulltime time presence, but we hope the cameras and safety buttons are added as a force multiplier and not as a replacement for the daily bike officer hours spent on the bridge. People are important, critical mass is important, and if folks who are up to no good know someone is watching, we tend to see less issues, which increases safety perceived and real, which makes that place safer. Please do this! If we can cut the risk of

someone getting their camera, bike, cell phone, being stolen, or people being harassed, all of I know have happened in the past 5 years, it benefits everyone.

Response: Thank you for your support of this project. The cameras and call stations are not intended to replace the bike patrols on the Bridge, but rather will be in addition to the current bike patrols.

3a. DVRPC FY 2013 and FY 2014 Planning Work Program Project: Glassboro - Camden Transit Line Ridership Forecast

From: David Clowney

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19119

Date Received: March 19, 2013

Comment/Question: Glad to see this potential project moving forward, only wish progress were faster! There will be lots of travel between these two locations in the relatively near future. This line would have large environmental benefits.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: March 18, 2013

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia: We request that connections to The Circuit regional trail network be factored into the bike and walk access numbers to potential stations. One proposed route in The Circuit network shares at least part of the LRT right of way in Camden and Gloucester counties. The right of way also intersects with the proposed West Jersey and Seashore Rail Trail in Camden County the soon to be constructed extension of the Harrison Shaw (Monroe Township) bike path in Gloucester County.

Response: Thank you for your comment. DVRPC staff will examine non-motorized access sheds for station area ridership with the most likely and recent planning assumptions.

From: David Karasek

County: Burlington

Zip Code: 08052

Date Received: March 25, 2013

Comment/Question: No planning items for South Jersey also mention the need to extend mass transit options along the Route 38 and 73 corridors, including a real express bus to Philly that does not take a tour of Camden and waste everyone's time since Camden is already saturated with transit options at the expense of everywhere else in South Jersey. If for example it now takes me 15 minutes to cross the Ben Franklin Bridge from Maple Shade, it makes little sense to use a bus instead that takes 2 to 3 times the amount of time, and has real and not imaginary safety concerns given the degraded police presence in Camden. Use of the PATCO speed line is also time prohibitive given the time required to get to the train stations since none of these are easily accessible from Route 38 due to a lack of smart traffic signals compounding transit woes in the area. In addition PATCO provides no direct access to SEPTA regional rail in Philadelphia, requiring time consuming and expensive transfers to subways, adding yet more time and cost to an already inefficient and unreasonably expensive mass transit interface between the two systems. The upshot is that if I'm traveling to Center City the benefit is

marginal though reasonable enough to use PATCO. However since I'm working in Conshohocken, using the current system makes no economic or time sense whatsoever, as even with nasty traffic it still takes half to two thirds the time as rail plus driving anyway to get/from to PATCO rail. On a separate note, the River Line is not a time effective means either of getting to points north, particularly New York City. For this I am still required, again by time constraints, to either drive to Hamilton, Jersey City or Secaucus, or directly into NYC. In summary, it seems obvious to conclude that this unfathomably slow, costly, inefficient status quo is a Sandy-inducing disaster for a global warming-challenged twenty first century, where 50% of New Jersey's carbon footprint is transportation.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

4. FHWA Adjusted Urbanized Area

From: Dennis Winters

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19103

Date Received: March 18, 2013

Comment/Question: What effect on open space will urban classification of rural roads have and how likely is new development to follow reclassification? Our concern is that this might be one way smarter growth patterns can be subverted. Any development in these newly designated 'urban' areas should be infill only.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Adjustments to Urbanized Area boundaries had significant funding implications when the Federal-Aid highway program included separate apportionments for Federal-Aid Urban and Federal-Aid Rural systems. These funding classifications were eliminated in 1992. Now, FHWA's urban versus rural classifications are limited to mostly to highway statistical reporting and highway functional classification. As such, they will have a very limited impact on future development patterns.

FHWA's Highway Performance Monitoring System requests States to report annual highway statistics by highway functional classification, including urban versus rural. The highway functional classification system distinguishes both by type of roadway facility and whether the facility is located in an urban or rural area. A specific type of facility may have different design criteria depending on whether it is in a rural or urban area. For example, urban facilities may have lower design speeds, narrower lane and shoulders widths, and more pronounced curvature than rural facilities. These criteria would only apply to new or reconstructed roadways.

The urban versus rural designation by itself would not affect whether a new road was built, whether an existing road was reconstructed, or if the reconstruction was eligible for federal Surface Transportation Program funding. There is one exception, however. A roadway currently designated as a "rural minor collector" would become eligible for federal funding if the adjusted urbanized area boundary was expanded to include it. Nevertheless, such an expansion would not require any changes to local zoning, land use, or development regulations, including those that support smarter growth patterns. As you know, DVRPC has long been an advocate for infill development in urban areas.