

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
RELATED TO DVRPC BOARD ACTION ITEMS

December 4, 2024

**2i. Philadelphia Vision Zero Capital Plan Implementation Project (MPMS #81390),
City of Philadelphia**

From: Jerrett Johnson
Zip Code: 19139
Date Received: 11/22/24

Comment/Question: I think there should be speed bumps along the affected sections that have a high injury impact. I also believe there should be cameras on those streets if there is not already.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, DVRPC's Office of Capital Programs, DVRPC's Office of Safe Streets, and the City of Philadelphia.

The City of Philadelphia's Vision Zero program relies on a data-driven approach to identify areas of need that would be made safer through speed management approaches like speed cushions, and automated enforcement. Public support for such interventions is critical for their implementation. Thank you for your support of roadway safety initiatives. You can learn more about Philadelphia's Vision Zero program in their 2025 action plan here: <https://visionzerophl.com/plans-and-reports/action-plan-2025/>.

Thank you for your continued engagement in the region's development.

2m. Federal Preventive Maintenance Program (MPMS #60317), SEPTA

From: John Smith
Zip Code: 19426
Date Received: 11/25/24

Comment/Question: Please approve the measure to allow SEPTA to accept the \$191M in funding proposed by the governor and the county commissioners. SEPTA maintaining is critical to the Delaware Valley's economy, and beyond that, large fare increases or service cuts would be a substantial inconvenience to me.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board.

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An article about this topic will be posted in DVRPC's newsroom shortly:
<https://www.dvrpc.org/news/?page=1>.

Thank you for your engagement in the region's development.

Comments on Non-Agenda Items

From: Shawn Golas

Zip Code: N/A

Date Received: 10/22/24

Comment/Question: My name is Shawn Golas and I am reaching out to you as an amateur urban planner/civil engineer. I have created two ideas that I believe could improve safety, efficiency, and quality of life.

The first design is a leisure destination along the Schuylkill River Trail as it passes underneath of US 422. The inspiration comes from the Rail Park in Philadelphia where they have large wooden and steel swings. Given the location is conveniently located right next to Valley Forge National Park, is a rest stop between Norristown and Oaks, and there are several parking lots nearby, the area is usually bustling with people. In addition, the area is frequently monitored by the National Park Services. The bridge itself is fairly new, therefore, still in good condition and the underside of the bridge already has lights installed. Although the picture I have attached only shows two swings, the idea would be to have swings the entire width of the bridge. I have already presented the design at a West Norriton township meeting and it was well received.

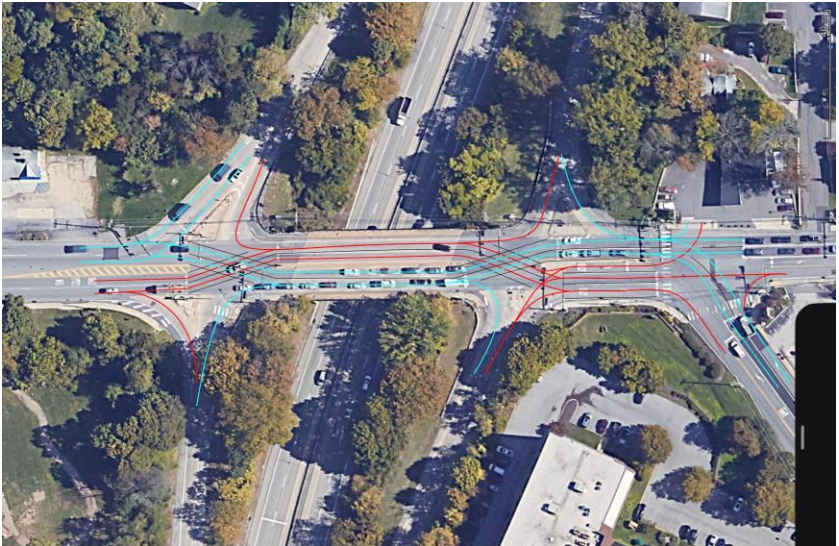
The second design involves transforming the interchange of US 1 and Route 252 (Providence Road) into a diverging diamond interchange. Although this type of interchange is not frequently used, it has the potential to improve the traffic on the Route 252 bridge as well as the backed up traffic that creeps onto US 1 southbound. This design would involve using the existing infrastructure, but just realigning and reorienting the traffic lights which would save money compared to other large scale transformation projects.

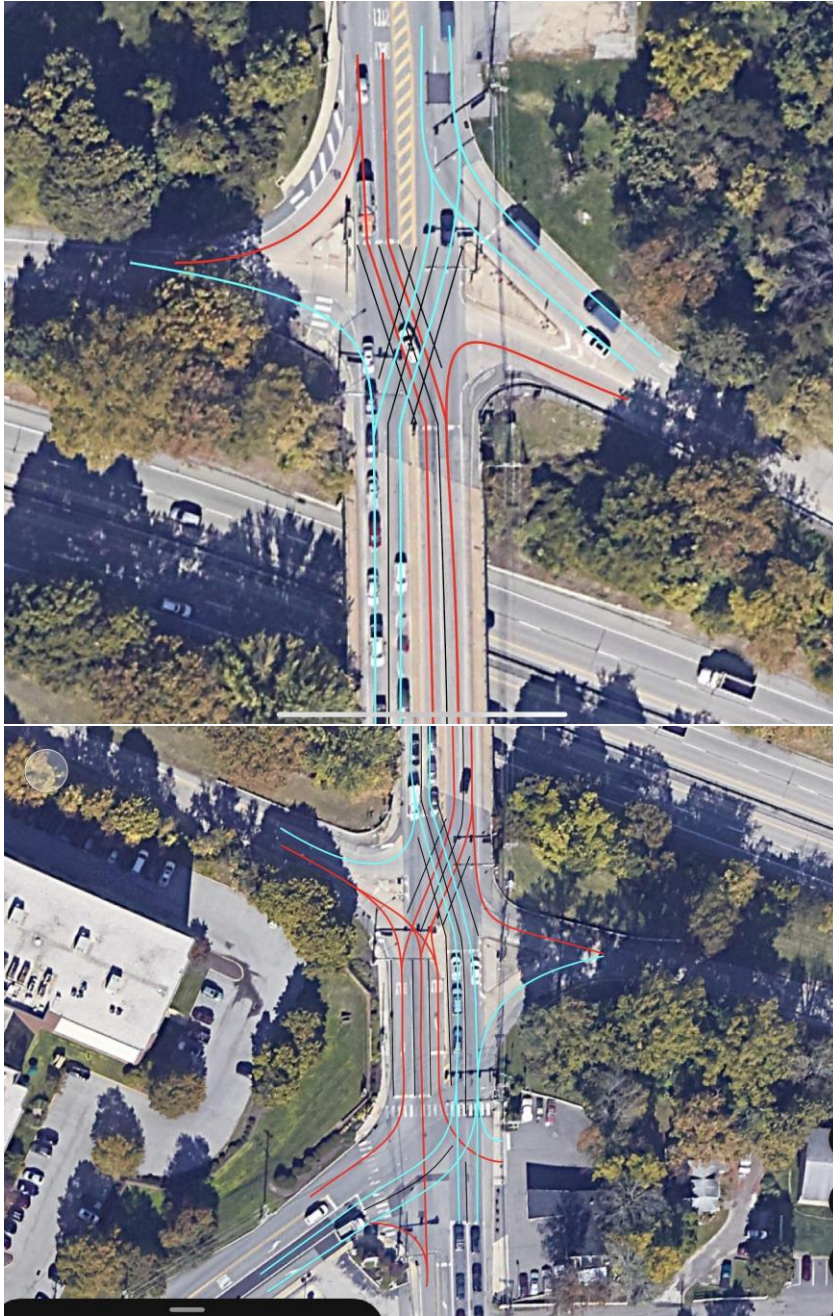
I emailed Jonathan Korus last week, PennDOT District 6 representative, but have not heard back from him.

Please let me know if you need any other information or any ways that I can assist in making these ideas into a reality.

Thanks,
Shawn

Pictures mentioned:





Response: Thank you for your comment. Your comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board.

DVRPC's role in the region's transportation investment decision making is to facilitate public participation, present objective data, identify planning needs, and coordinate federal funding with regionally identified priorities. The Commission, itself, is not responsible for implementing projects so DVRPC staff cannot directly respond in regards to the feasibility of the ideas outlined in your comment. However, DVRPC can provide information about the regional transportation planning process and share your

suggestions with DVRPC's Board members, many of whom own transportation facilities and are implementers.

The types of projects you are proposing would need to be reviewed and identified as a priority by the relevant county's planning office and DVRPC Board member for inclusion in either the DVRPC [Unified Planning Work Program \(UPWP\)](#) as a planning project, the [Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#) as a capital project, or a non-DVRPC process. The UPWP outlines all of the federally-funded planning projects and required federal processes slated for the nine-county region in order to coordinate a comprehensive, cooperative and continuing transportation planning program. The TIP is the regionally agreed-upon list of priority transportation projects for federal funding.

Mike Holva, PennDOT Project Manager for the Schuylkill River Trail/US 422 project area, directly responded to Mr. Golas with the following: "Thank you for your inquiry regarding the possibility of attaching swings to the US 422 bridge over the Schuylkill River Trail (SRT). I understand your reasoning for suggesting this and appreciate your desire to improve the SRT. However, there are a couple issues that would make this idea not feasible at this location as proposed.

The US 422 bridges over the SRT are owned and maintained by PennDOT. There are actually two bridges at this location side by side (one for US 422 WB and one for US 422 EB). These bridges are located in the most highly traveled portion of the US 422 corridor which crosses the Schuylkill River between PA 23 and PA 363 with traffic volumes exceeding 100,000 vehicles per day. Attaching to the prestressed concrete beams carrying US 422 over the SRT would not be allowable by the PennDOT Bridge Unit.

In addition, the SRT is owned and maintained by Montgomery County. Therefore, any amenities associated with the trail would be the responsibility of the County and not PennDOT. For example the existing lighting system underneath the bridge is owned and maintained by Montgomery County. An initial check with the County Parks Administrator has indicated that the County would have concerns with liability and maintenance of swings attached to the bridge."

Thanks again for reaching out to DVRPC and sharing your ideas.

From: Ethan Frank
Zip Code: 19066
Date Received: 11/7/24

Comment/Question:

Hello,

I'd like to request the DVRPC work to "flex" highway funding towards transit. Everyone will benefit more from preventing a transit death spiral than funding additional highway expansions.

Sincerely,
Ethan Frank
Merion Station, PA 19066

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board.

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Thank you for your engagement in the region's development.

From: Richard Whiteford
Zip Code: 19382
Date Received: 11/25/24

Comment/Question: The recent announcement by SEPTA that their funding shortfall could result in a "death spiral" and the fact that some politicians in Harrisburg were willing to let it happen just for political one-upmanship should hopefully wake people up to how vital SEPTA's system is, not only to Philadelphia commuters, but to the entire region.

Philadelphia's commuters provide a vast number of economical services that support the tri-state region and beyond. If allowed to shut down, it would have a negative economic impact throughout the economy and on many commuters who rely on SEPTA to travel in or out of Philadelphia to work.

It's sad enough that SEPTA has been inadequately funded for so long that it has fallen far behind most other transportation systems like Japan, China, and most European cities.

More importantly, with the failure of the COP-29 climate summit and the election of Donald Trump who vows to, once again, pull us out of the Paris Climate Agreement and open the floodgates on the fossil industry, scientists fear that we are headed to somewhere between 5- and 7-degrees Fahrenheit as an average global temperature increase over the pre-industrial average by century's end. They urge us to realize that it may be difficult for humans to survive in that climate.

Getting to zero carbon emissions is imperative, therefore future planning and financial support should focus on greatly increasing public transportation, converting their buses to all electric vehicles, and upgrading the rail system to attract new ridership. The goal should be getting single occupant gas-powered vehicles off the road as soon as possible. This would also reduce the needed budget for expanding highways, onramps, and bridges. It would also significantly reduce the Philadelphia region's carbon footprint.

This is why I believe that future planning should consider putting more energy into our public transport system than in expanding highways that will only increase automobile traffic and pollution.

Richard Whiteford
West Chester, PA 19382

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board.

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Additionally, DVRPC's current Long-Range Plan, Connections 2050, prioritizes reducing car dependency and vehicle miles traveled through strategies such as maintaining a 4% cap on roadway expansion spending and investing over 70% of expected transit revenue in modernizing and preserving public transportation infrastructure. Initiatives such as SEPTA's Zero-Emission Bus Program and DVRPC's work on sustainable energy demonstrate the region's commitment to achieving its Net Zero Emissions by 2050 goal. Obtaining net-zero emissions by 2050 will require a commitment across government, economic sectors, and the general public to transition to low- to no-carbon energy sources, supported by technological advances that produce and use energy. Investments in safety, active transportation, smart growth land use planning, and public transit will have positive results for health, air quality, automobile congestion, and overall regional access to all the places people live, work, and play. You can read more about Connections 2050 at <https://www.dvrpc.org/plan/>.

Thank you for your engagement in the region's development.

Verbal comments made during the Board meeting public comment period:

From: Jerrett Johnson

Zip Code: 19139

Date Received: 12/4/24

Comment: Good Morning DVRPC board members, my name is Jerrett Johnson, a transit advocate for 5th Square and a member of DVRPC Public Participation Task Force. I am a Philadelphia, PA resident 19139 and I am here to testify in strong support of the agenda item 2M Federal Preventive Maintenance Program #60317, for SEPTA authorizing flex of Federal highway dollars to support SEPTA.

The state of Pennsylvania only flexes 3% of highway dollars which is the lowest for federal flexibility of highway dollars in the United States. For over a year, me and other transit advocates from 5th Square and Transit Forward Philly went to Harrisburg several times to meet with state lawmakers to get the funds needed for SEPTA. The State House passed the bill in July but unfortunately the State Senate failed to pass the necessary transit funds needed with no solution because Republicans in the State Senate wanted to play games and disrupt the lives of commuters. Although I own a vehicle, I have continued to use public transit in areas such as center city, sporting events, malls and museums. We commend Governor Shapiro's decision to allocate \$153 million dollars to SEPTA from the highway fund and would like for DVRPC to support the action. By supporting this agenda, it will give SEPTA the opportunity to stabilize operating funding to move forward with Trolley Modernization, Reimagining Regional Rail, The Roosevelt Blvd Subway and hopefully the bus revolution.

In October, SEPTA set a new record for daily ridership in passenger trips across all modes of transportation in the region. This includes
71% increase in the BSL, MFL and Norristown Lines
17% increase in Regional Rail
8% increase in Trolley Ridership
90% increase in bus Ridership

The agency has gone too far to let this opportunity slip away.

We hope this action will have the board think about the impact of the commuters and the future of the city of Philadelphia as it will save SEPTA from a disaster as it gets prepared for commuters for heavy use in 2026 for events such as the FIFA World Cup, the 250th anniversary of the United States and the All Star Game. You and all of us will have the power to make this city ready for 2026.

Thank you for your support on this legislation.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board.

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Thank you for your engagement in the region's development.

From: Connor Descheemaker

Zip Code: N/A

Date Received: 12/4/24

Comment: - My name is Connor Descheemaker, Coalition Manager for Transit Forward Philadelphia. We're a group of about 35 community-based organizations advocating for reliable, accessible, and sustainable public transportation in southeastern Pennsylvania.

- I'm a resident of 19145 in Philadelphia

- I am here today speaking in support of Agenda Item 2m. Federal Preventive Maintenance Program (MPMS #60317), SEPTA, authorizing flex of federal highway dollars to support SEPTA during its time of crisis

- We commend the governor for this action and DVRPC's support

- I personally live without a car, and speak daily with the 800k daily riders of SEPTA, who cannot bear the fare increases and service cuts that come without decisive action

- We hope this action spurs DVRPC to look ahead and think more proactively about highway flex as a tool to support public transportation.

- PA currently only flexes 3% of federal highway dollars, while our neighbors in New Jersey flex 15%

- Opportunity to stabilize operating funding for our transit system, and produce capital projects like Trolley Modernization and Reimagining Regional Rail, or more aspirational works like the Roosevelt Boulevard Subway

- Thanks for the opportunity to speak, and I appreciate your work on this issue.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board.

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