**Reading MPO**
**Public Comment Period for the**
**FFY 2027-2050 Long Range Transportation Plan**
**FFY 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program,**
**Air Quality Conformity Analysis Report and FFY 2027 Community Demographic Assessment**

**The Public Comment Period began March 22, 2026 and ended April 24, 2026**

**Comments and Response to Comments:**
**Complete copies of all written comments follow this summary.**

**Responses as Approved by Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee May 21, 2026**

**Ross Stowell – Citizen**
**Verbal Comments During April 7, 2026 Public Meeting**

**Comment:** Is there any state funding included for public transit, either by bus or train, specifically for commuting to Philadelphia?

**Response:** Neither the LRTP nor the TIP includes funding related to commuting to Philadelphia at this time. The LRTP does recognize that there are limited opportunities for private bus services (OurBus and FlixBus) that provide service to / from the Philadelphia region but these are not supported with public funding. SCTA (BARTA) does not currently provide connections to surrounding transit systems (LANTA, Pottstown Transit, SEPTA, Red Rose or Lebanon). The SCTA Transit Development Plan does not anticipate the provision of links to these areas at this time due to limited ridership potential, length of trip and limited population density. The proposed Schuylkill River Passenger Rail service will support some level of commuting if implemented but the actual schedule for this remains unclear at this time as they await advancement into the next phase of the Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor Identification and Development Program.

**Comment:** Are the projects identified on Route 61 (in and around Hamburg Borough)(MPMS#'s 10867, 10328, 96373, 97258, 113325, 109894) a result of establishment of warehouses in the area?

**Response:** The development of the current projects along the PA 61 corridor preceded the warehouse development in that region of Berks County. They are the concluding phases of a staged implementation of safety improvements that

have extended northward along the PA 61 corridor from Reading to the Schuylkill County line over time. Additionally, developers are required to go through a Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) process through PennDOT. In some instances, part of the HOP may require the developer to perform roadway improvements if the development will have an impact on the transportation system near the development. That was the case for improvements made in Perry Township just north of Shoemakersville Borough.

**Comment:** Is the completion of the Thun Trail part of RATS plans and programs?

**Response:** The LRTP acknowledges the Schuylkill River Trail (SRT) as the backbone of the off-road trail network in Berks County and its role in both recreational and commuting uses. The Thun Trail represents a section of this important off-road trail network. Specific funding for the "completion" of this trail is not included in the LRTP or TIP. The LRTP and TIP do include funding for improvements to the SRT where it is impacted by the reconstruction of the US 422 West Shore Bypass. Funding for improvements to this trail is also supported during applications made by the Schuylkill River Greenway Association under the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) program and either the PennDOT or DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund.

**Bev Leonti – Cumru Township**
**Verbal Comments During April 7, 2026 Public Meeting**

**Comment:** How long does it take to get a Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) approved?

**Response:** The length of time for an HOP approval depends upon the type of project and the needs in relation to the project.

**Comment:** As part of the improvements along Route 183 near Bernville Borough (MPMS# 120974), will properties have to be taken through the eminent domain process?

**Response:** The final determination for the overall needs of this project are not yet defined. If there is a need to obtain Right-of-Way (ROW) or any properties, PennDOT will work with the landowners to minimize impacts. Property owners will be compensated for any required acquisitions. PennDOT appraises property for its fair market value and attempts to reach an amicable settlement with property owners. If that is not possible, the property can be acquired through the eminent domain process as defined by State and federal legislation. The property owner is still compensated.

**Comment:** Are there any planned improvements, either in the TIP or the LRTP, for Route 724 between Route 10 and I-176?

**Response:** The only planned improvement in this area is MPMS# 110012 on the LRTP. This project calls for the upgrade of the existing concrete barrier and fence system on SR 724 (Philadelphia Avenue) from Valley Stream Road to Kennel Road to better withstand the debris and rocks that fall down the slope in Cumru Township.

**Comment:** Are the bridge projects identified only state-owned bridges?

**Response:** The bridges identified in both the Transportation Improvement Program and Long Range Transportation Plan include state, county, and local bridges.

**Comment:** When is the Route 422 (Penn Avenue) intersection with Route 724 and Mull Avenue (MPMS# 87688) anticipated to be completed?

**Response:** This project is anticipated to go out for bids in mid-2027 and to be completed by September, 2029.

**Comment:** There are rumors that a commercial airline may be moving into the Reading Regional Airport. Is this true?

**Response:** The Reading Regional Airport is not funded through RATS. Their Capital Improvement Plan is included in RATS Long Range Transportation Plan in support of their goals and objectives and to ensure coordination with other transportation modes. The Reading Regional Airport Authority is open to discussions with potential commercial passenger carriers operating out of the Reading Regional Airport but no agreements are in place at this time.

**Comment:** If a request was made to include crosswalks near the bike/trail path along Museum Road, extending across Lancaster Avenue near Wawa and Sheetz, in Cumru Township, who would need to request the improvement and how would the improvement be funded?

**Response:** Generally, requests of this nature are deferred to the municipality. Unless the crosswalk would be included in a separate highway improvement project (none planned at this location), there is limited funding available for these types of projects. The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program would be

the best funding opportunity for these types of improvements. Other options could include either the PennDOT or PADCED Multimodal Transportation Fund programs.

**Paul Prutzman – Lower Heidelberg Supervisor**
**Verbal Comments During April 14, 2026 Public Meeting**

**Comment:** Is funding for transportation improvements decreasing over the years?

**Response:** At the time of writing the documents, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which is the current federal transportation funding legislation, has not been reauthorized nor has new federal transportation funding legislation been established. As a result, funding amounts are assumed 'flat' at the last year of the authorized legislation which would be FFY 2026. Additionally, the Reading MPO received SPIKE funding for the US 422 West Shore Bypass Widening project (MPMS#114439) beginning in FFY 2027 through FFY 2038. A portion of those SPIKE funds were permitted to be used to complete the US 222 Widening project (MPMS# 61972) in FFY 2027. The SPIKE funding was included in the funding summaries. Since the SPIKE funding only extends to FFY 2038, the funding amounts in the later years appear to decrease as a result.

**Comment:** Do the funding amounts include local funding sources?

**Response:** Yes. Local funding is included where it is a required match for State or federal funds. Funding for local projects in the TIP is very limited. Counties are currently promoting legislation that would allocate more money to local bridges and roadways.

**Comment:** Do the bridge projects identified include local bridges?

**Response:** Yes. There are 8 local bridge projects included in the TIP – 3 County-owned bridges and 5 municipal bridges. There is also a Municipal Bridge Line Item (MPMS# 120995) with limited funding in the TIP that will allow RATS to work with local municipalities to identify and program local bridge improvement projects throughout Berks County.

**Comment:** When will the Route 61 and I-78 projects (MPMS#'s 10867, 10328, 96373, 97258, 113325, 109894) near Hamburg Borough be completed?

**Response:** There are numerous projects both underway and proposed in this area, each with their own schedule. The last project in this group (MPMS# 10867) is the proposed restoration of PA 61 and installation of median barriers in Perry and Windsor Townships and Hamburg Borough. This also includes a revised design for the intersection of PA 61 with Fourth Street. It is anticipated to go out for bids in mid-2027 and be completed by November, 2030.

**Comment:** There doesn't seem to be any planned improvements along Route 422 in western Berks, but this area has been identified by the Berks County Planning Commission as an area that is still available for development. How will improvements be made if development along this corridor occurs?

**Response:** Other than the congestion addressed by the intersection of US 422 and 724 (See below), the US 422 corridor west of Sinking Spring has only one area of moderate congestion (east end of Wernersville Borough) and no identified high crash locations. There is a bridge replacement planned over the Cacoosing Creek at the Sinking Spring / Lower Heidelberg / South Heidelberg line. As new developments are proposed throughout this corridor, they will need to go through PennDOT's Highway Occupancy Permit process if accessing state highways. Traffic studies will be required and specific improvements may be required based on site generated traffic. It is important that the Berks County Planning Commission and RATS track these developments and be aware of their cumulative impacts to the highway system and be prepared to identify projects to address those impacts.

**Comment:** When is the Route 422 (Penn Avenue) intersection with Route 724 and Mull Avenue (MPMS# 87688) anticipated to be completed?

**Response:** This project is anticipated to go out for bids in mid-2027 and to be completed by September, 2029.

**DR Degler – Citizen**
**Verbal Comments During April 14, 2026 Public Meeting**

**Comment:** Does the money allocated in the TIP apply to the efforts of reestablishing passenger rail by the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority (SRPRA)?

**Response:** At this time, no funding for the SRPRA is included in either the TIP or the LRTP. Funding for Step 1 of the Corridor Identification and Development Program was provided by the Federal Railroad Administration. The SRPRA is awaiting approval to enter Step 2 of the program and will use these same funds. Future updates of the LRTP or TIP may require federal funding for this project as it progresses through the process, but these would not impact base highway, bridge or public transit allocations. Currently Flix bus and OurBus provides service to Philadelphia on a daily basis.

**Comment:** Has funding for various transportation projects and programs been impacted by the Governor of Pennsylvania adjusting state funding allocations to address transit issues in major urban areas?

**Response:** The most recent changes only affect transit funding. Certain transit systems were allowed to shift some capital funding to support operations. This will ultimately impact their ability to maintain those systems if no replacement funding is generated. At this time BARTA has sufficient funding to continue service, however SCTA (BARTA) continues to reach out to the Governor for additional funding needs.

**Wynton Butler – Reading**
**Verbal Comments During April 14, 2026 Public Meeting**

**Comment:** Who initially suggested roundabouts as intersection improvements?

**Response:** The inclusion of roundabouts into the various highway improvement projects were developed through a collaborative process involving the Federal Highway Administration, PennDOT, consultants, and local representatives. Studies were conducted based on several factors including but not limited to traffic volumes, existing roadway design, etc. that determine the best type of improvement to meet the needs of the transportation system. Additionally, roundabouts are a proven safety countermeasure that reduces fatality and serious injury crashes.

**Kent Himelright – Schuylkill River Greenways**
**Verbal Comments During April 21, 2026 Virtual Public Meeting**

**Comment:** There has been a lot of serious vehicular incidents lately in Berks County. Is that part of this assessment?

**Response:** Data relating to crashes, as identified in the RATS Annual Traffic Safety Report, is incorporated into the Long Range Transportation Plan in the Safety section. Recommendations incorporate high incident areas into our plans and programs. Crashes that have occurred within the past year are not factored into current project recommendations but will be evaluated again in the next TIP update.

**Andrew Kline – Oley Valley School Board Member**
**Verbal Comments During April 21, 2026 Virtual Public Meeting**

**Comment:** Can you elaborate on how collaboration is conducted with the school districts regarding how student transportation may be impacted by any of these projects?

**Response:** School districts have multiple opportunities to participate in project development and implementation. A starting point is by attendance at MPO meetings or by contacting planning staff directly.

Meeting Schedule

E-mail: Planning@berkspa.gov or Phone: (610) 478-6300

Ideas can be offered for any suggested new projects or comments can be made on the potential impacts of existing projects. A second step could be school district input into what are referred to as PennDOT Connects meetings with the impacted municipalities prior to the beginning of design for a particular project. Issues identified at that time can potentially be avoided up front rather than requiring design changes. The final stage is by attendance at a public meeting conducted by PennDOT during the design of a project but prior to finalization of the plans. School districts are also generally involved during construction by receiving notices of proposed changes in traffic patterns as the project progresses.

**Comment:** Mr. Kline expressed support for the projects planned in Oley Township.

**Response:** Mr. Piper thanked him for his support.

**Daniel Mateo – Developer**
**Emailed Comments Received on April 23, 2026**

**Comment:** Mr. Mateo requested infrastructure improvements along the Franklin Street Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Corridor in the City of Reading related to a mixed-use development proposal between 7th and 8th Street.

**Response:** We have forwarded Mr. Mateo's comments to the City of Reading's Planning and Public Works Departments for their input. Here are their responses followed by ours.

**City of Reading - Planning Department:**

It is encouraging to see development interests align with the City's Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and zoning policies. While a formal land development application for this project has not yet been submitted, the City has established a regulatory framework thorough the TOD overlay District that is intended to support high density, mixed-use development of this nature.

From the infrastructure standpoint, the City is well positioned to accommodate anticipated growth in this area. Recent improvements, including the 19th Ward pump station in coordination with Berks County significantly enhanced sewer system capacity. In addition, the Reading Area Water Authority has capacity to support such developments within this corridor.

Streetscape and multimodal improvements are also being evaluated through the City's implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan, which focuses on creating safer and more accessible streets for all users.

We have made significant progress on the TOD Ordinances and are now looking forward to an approval in the near future.

We look forward to receiving this project and encourage continued coordination with City staff regarding site specific infrastructure and development considerations.

**City of Reading - Public Works Department:**

In response to the public comment, we request that you add the priority improvements from Vision Zero to the long-range plan. It includes the Franklin (Street) area plus others. The excerpt below was taken from Vision Zero.

## Priority Improvements Plan

The Priority Improvements Plan was developed as a way to group improvements along corridors. These corridors are a logical geographical grouping of improvements that can be accomplishedwith low cost proven counter-measures that will help to create multimodal improvements in the Downtown.

These six (6) recommended corridors have the following characteristics that they share in common:

- These roads are not state or PennDOT routes, thus not needing review by that agency.
- They are relatively the lower volume / lower speed routes in the Downtown.
- These routes are generally disbursed through the Downtown, create a good distribution of proposed cycling routes through the Downtown in a manner that reaches many destinations in the Downtown and beyond.

Since each priority corridor has a definable 'achievement', they represent a more desirable funding application for the funding opportunities described later in this chapter. The design and construction summary cost estimates for these corridors are estimated below:

- 2nd / Canal Street $ 310,046.00
- Court Street $ 280,478.00
- Penn Street $ 99,814.00
- Cherry Street $ 288,132.00
- 7th Street $ 684,510.00
- Spruce Street $ 236,686.00
- Total: $1,899,666.00
- Design and Engineering (10%): $189,967.00
- **Total Cost: $2,089,633**

**RATS Follow- up Response:**

The existing street system in Reading can absorb the traffic to be generated by the development proposal. Based on the City's comments above, we will modify the text of our **Long Range Transportation Plan** to more fully address the City's Vision Zero Action Plan in the Non-Motorized Transportation section in Chapter 3. We currently state that we will work with the City of Reading to achieve their safety goals as expressed in the Vision Zero Plan in the Issues and Needs section of Chapter 4. We will also include a specific line item in the Unfunded Highway, Bridge and Transit Projects for **Implementation of the Reading Vision Zero Plan** with the cost data provided above.

We will then work with our State and Federal partners to try to identify a funding source to allow this effort to proceed to implementation.

**Ronnique Bishop - Federal Highway Administration**

**Emailed Comments Received on April 24, 2026**

**Comment: LRTP Project Listing**

For the highway, bridge, and transit projects listed in the Goals and Strategic Performance Measures chapter, there should be sufficient detail of design concepts and design scope descriptions of all existing and proposed transportation facilities to develop cost estimates. [(23 CFR 450.324(f)(9)]

**Response:** Text will be added to the Long Range Transportation Plan in this section referring the reader to the Appendix document where we will include the FFY 2027-2038 TYP Public Narratives for Highway and Bridge and Interstate Projects. Transit information is derived directly from the SCTA/BARTA Capital Improvement Program.

**Comment: TIP System Performance Report**

It's great that the MPO includes the relevant TIP projects that improve the system performance measures. In addition, the system performance report should also include any regional actual data points in comparison to the baseline data and performance recorded in previous reports. [(23 CFR 450.324(f)(4)]

**Response:** Text will be added to the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement program including a link to both the *Reading Area Transportation Study Traffic Safety Report 2020-2024* and the *Reading Area Transportation Study Annual Pavement and Bridge Condition Report 2020 - 2024* which contain the requested information.

**Comment: LRTP Amendment Procedures**

We appreciate the MPO sharing the LRTP amendment procedures with FHWA in advance. Our comments provided from that previous coordination are addressed in the draft LRTP and we do not have any further comments.

**Response:** Thank you.

**No On-Line Comment forms were received.**

**Additional Comments / Responses**

During the early public outreach efforts related to the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program, certain areas were identified for either study or improvements that could not be incorporated into a funded project at this time. As such, we have added the following items to the Unfunded Highway, Bridge and Transit Projects listing in the **Long Range Transportation Plan** as candidates for future funding considerations:

**Womelsdorf Area Traffic Study** – evaluation of truck movements along PA 419 through the Borough of Womelsdorf travelling to or from points in Lebanon County to / from either US 422 to the north of the Borough or continuing on PA 419 to I-78 in northern Berks County.

**PA 724 Congestion / Safety Study** – evaluation of PA 724 from US 222-B (Lancaster Avenue) in Cumru Township, through Spring Township and the US 222 interchange area to US 422 (Penn Avenue) in the Borough of Sinking Spring. This corridor is identified as a concern on both the RATS Congestion Management Process as well as the RATS Annual Safety Report.

**Douglass Township SR 2022 (Ben Franklin Highway) Road Diet –** The Ben Franklin Highway (SR 2022) in Douglass Township was at one time the main highway between Reading and Pottstown and the Philadelphia urban area. It has a wide four-lane cross section, only a low mountable median barrier, and primarily unsignalized intersections with no separate turn lanes. With the construction of the US 422 expressway around Pottstown in the 1960's, most regional traffic was diverted away from this roadway. Douglass Township has expressed a desire to create a more pedestrian friendly commercial corridor here and would like consideration of completing a "road diet" to narrow the existing highway to a single lane in each direction, provide safe turning lanes as necessary and promote safe bicycle and pedestrian movements along both sides of the highway including connections to the parallel Schuylkill River Trail.

Three other corridors were also identified during these meetings but are already included on the unfunded list:

**PA 183 Safety Improvements (SR 4016 to I-78) in Jefferson and Upper Tulpehocken Township**

**SR 737 Safety Improvements (US 222 to I-78) in Kutztown, Maxatawny and Greenwich Townships.**

**SR 3222 Lancaster Avenue (SR 422 / 10 interchange) to Kenhorst Boulevard.**

Each of these had studies funded under prior LRTP/TIP's that have either been completed or are wrapping up but implementation phases could not be included in the current plans due to lack of funding.

## Piper, Alan

**From:** DANIEL Mateo <towerheights610@gmail.com>
**Sent:** Thursday, April 23, 2026 3:23 PM
**To:** Planning Department; Piper, Alan
**Subject:** Fwd: Public Comment: FFY 2027–2050 LRTP and 2027–2030 TIP – Franklin Street TOD Project
**Attachments:** 700 Development plan pptx(1).pdf; Franklin_Tower_Investor_Ready_2Page_v2.pdf; Franklin_7th_Prospectus_Clean.pdf

**County of Berks Warning:** This is an external email. Please exercise caution.

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **DANIEL Mateo** <towerheights610@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Apr 23, 2026, 3:03 PM
Subject: Public Comment: FFY 2027–2050 LRTP and 2027–2030 TIP – Franklin Street TOD Project
To: Daniel Mateo <danielmateo1118@gmail.com>

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to submit a public comment regarding the Franklin Street Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) corridor in Reading, PA.

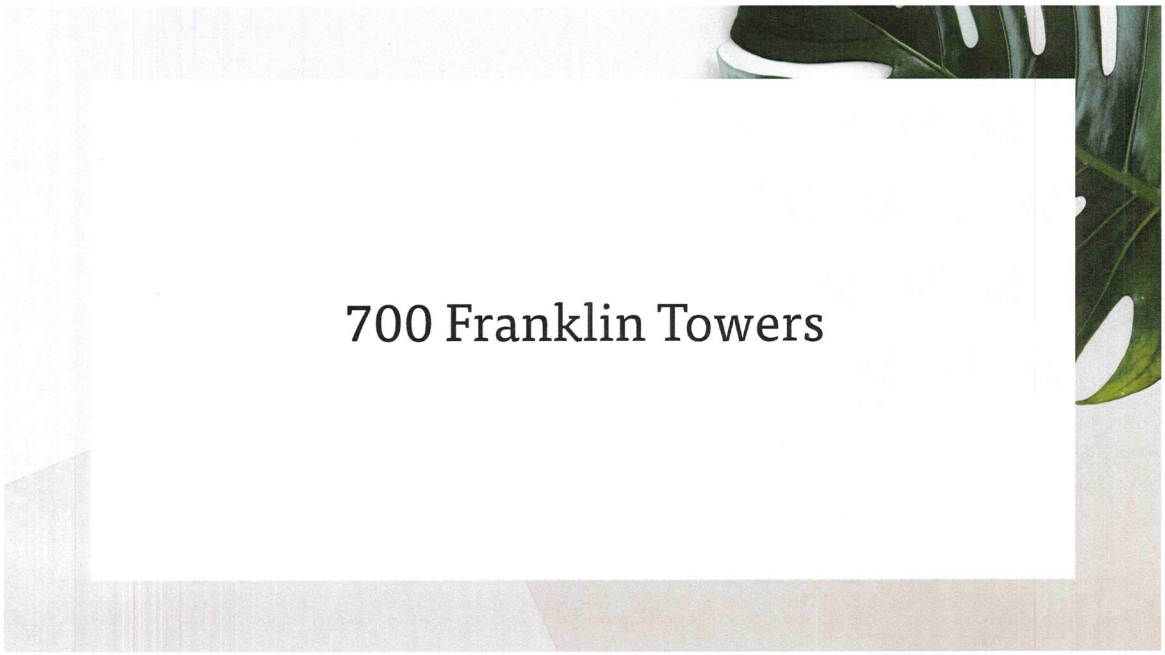
I am an owner and active developer within the 702–724 Franklin Street cluster. My intent is to develop a high-density, mixed-use, transit-oriented residential project under the current TOD overlay and "By-Right" zoning provisions.

Given the scale and timing of this development, I strongly request that infrastructure improvements on this block—including water, sewer, and streetscape upgrades—be prioritized within the upcoming TIP and LRTP planning cycles.

This project aligns directly with the City and County's long-term transit and housing goals, and early infrastructure support will ensure successful execution and long-term economic impact in the corridor.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Daniel Mateo
917-504-5541




## Overview

Executive Summary

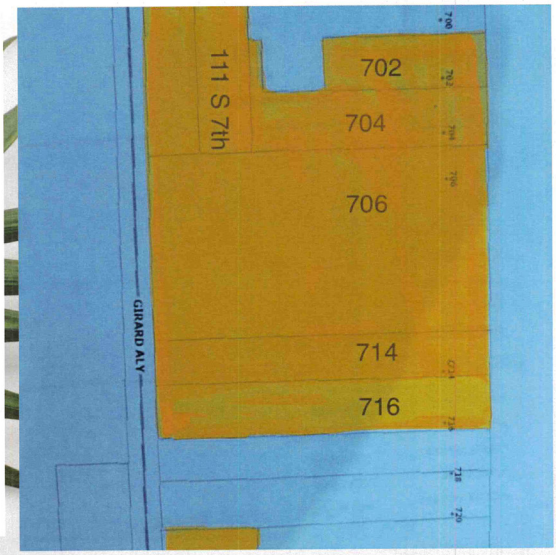
- Development of a mixed-use building located at 702, 704, 706 Franklin Street, Reading, PA.
- The building will house 70 residential units and 7 commercial spaces.
- Focus on creating a semi-luxury living experience, with high tenant retention through modern amenities and convenient access to transportation.
- Investment in both residential and commercial units, contributing to community revitalization.

Property Overview

Location: 702, 704, 706 Franklin Street, Reading, PA.

Current State:
Currently held by your company.
A redevelopment project involving demolition and rebuild.

Current Zoning/Use: Mixed-use zoning suitable for residential and commercial development

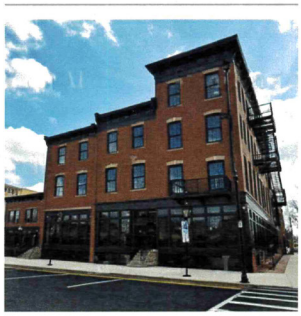


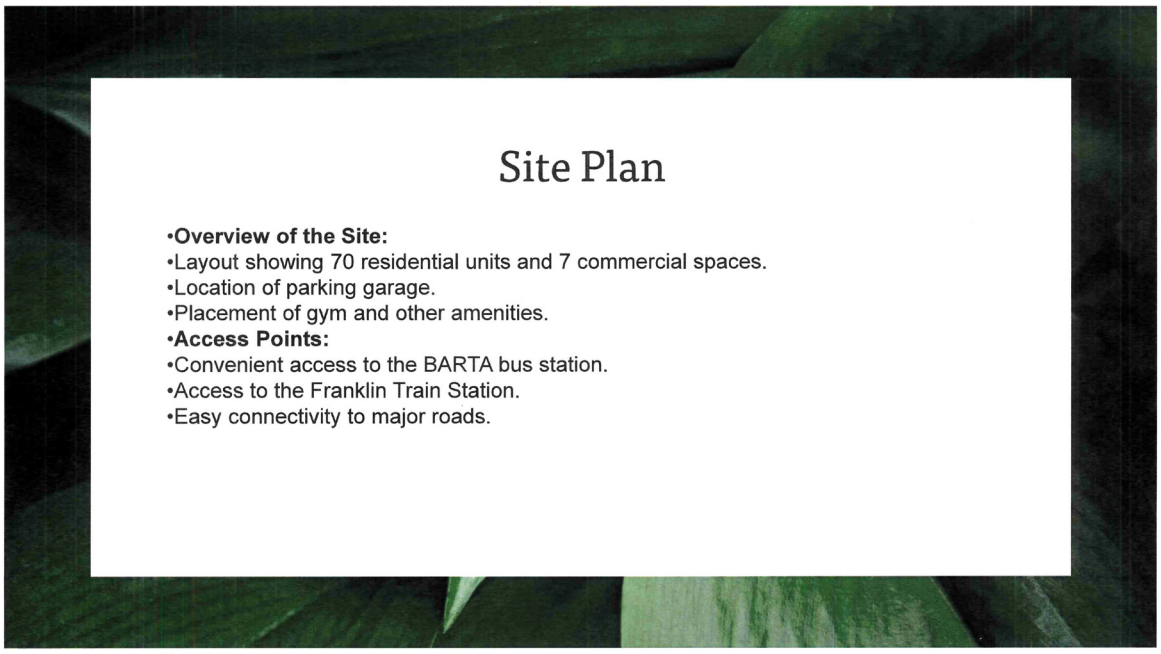

## Project Vision & Objectives

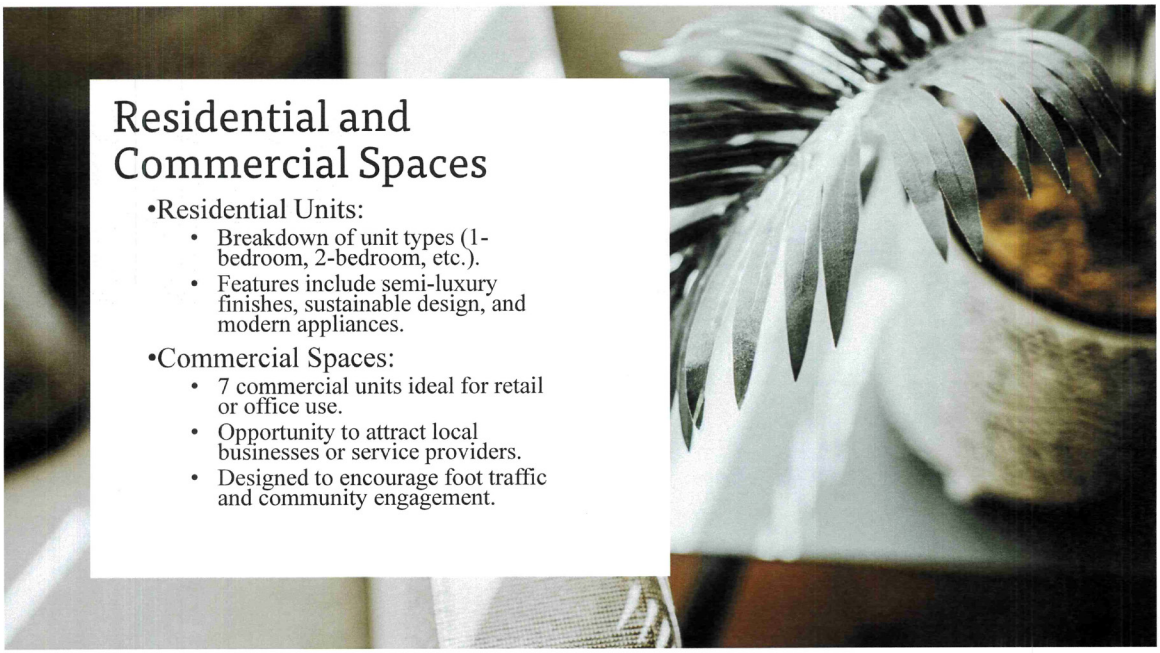
•**Project Vision:** Transforming an underutilized property into a sustainable and vibrant mixed-use development that integrates residential and commercial spaces to serve the community.

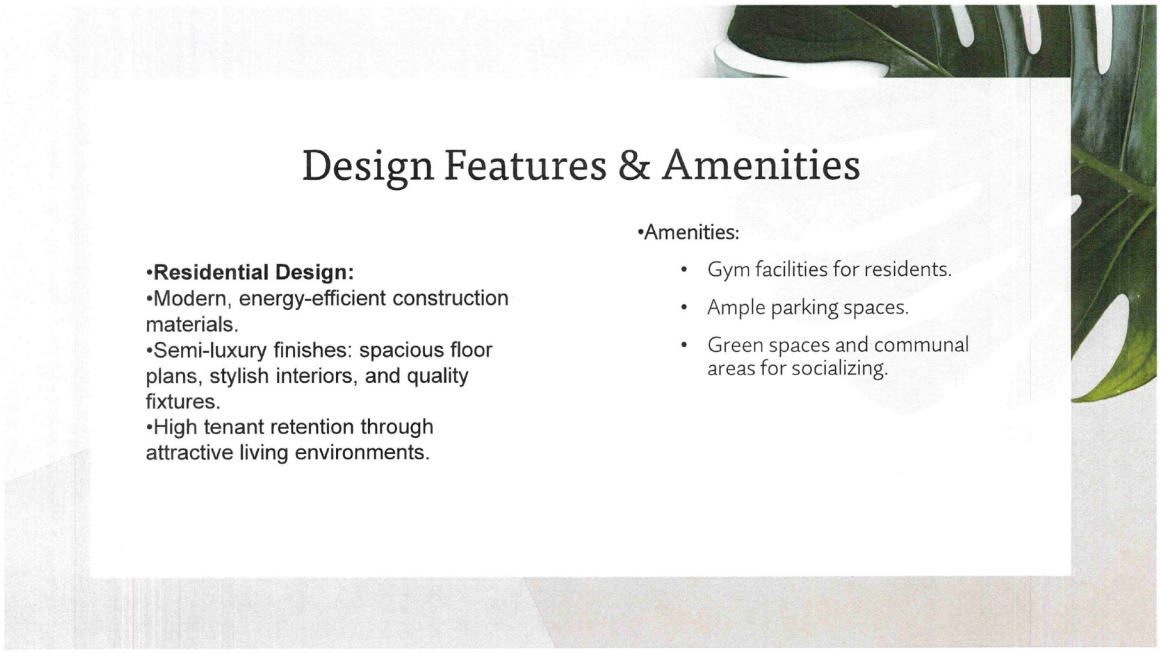
•Key Objectives:

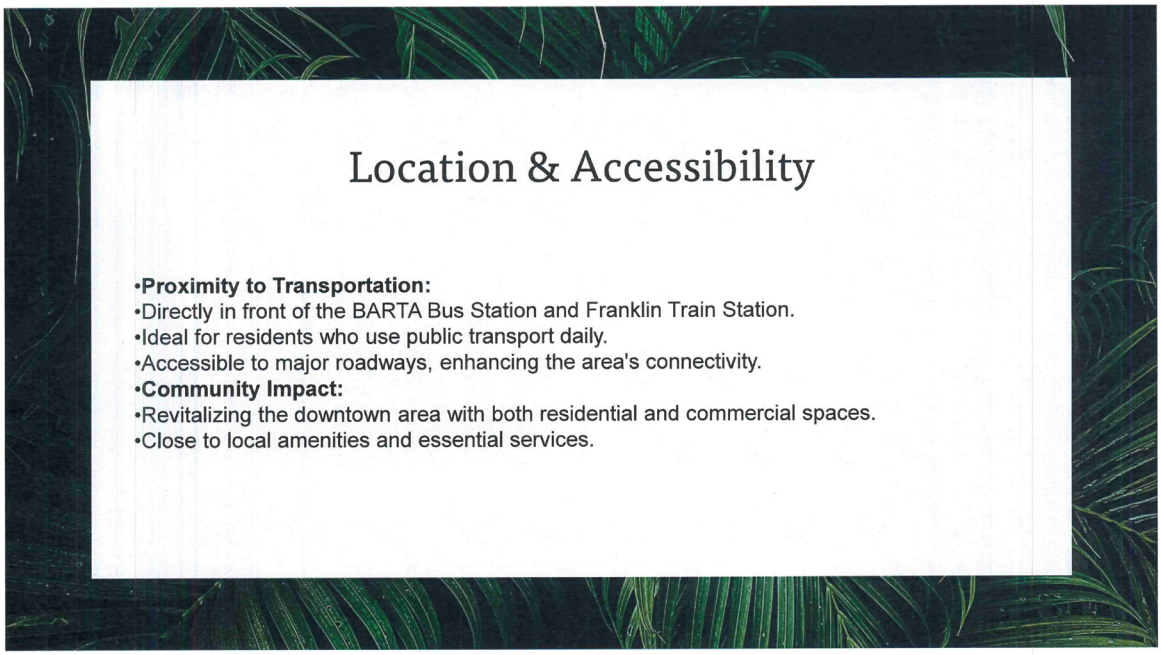
- **70 Residential Units:** A mix of modern apartments targeting a semi-luxury market.
- **7 Commercial Spaces:** Attracting retail or office tenants to foster local economic growth.
- **Amenities:** On-site gym, parking for tenants, and sustainable design.
- **Accessibility:** Proximity to public transportation hubs like the BARTA bus station and Franklin Train Station.




Site Plan
•Overview of the Site:
•Layout showing 70 residential units and 7 commercial spaces.
•Location of parking garage.
•Placement of gym and other amenities.
•Access Points:
•Convenient access to the BARTA bus station.
•Access to the Franklin Train Station.
•Easy connectivity to major roads.


Residential and Commercial Spaces
•Residential Units:
• Breakdown of unit types (1-bedroom, 2-bedroom, etc.).
• Features include semi-luxury finishes, sustainable design, and modern appliances.
•Commercial Spaces:
• 7 commercial units ideal for retail or office use.
• Opportunity to attract local businesses or service providers.
• Designed to encourage foot traffic and community engagement.


Design Features & Amenities
•Residential Design:
•Modern, energy-efficient construction materials.
•Semi-luxury finishes: spacious floor plans, stylish interiors, and quality fixtures.
•High tenant retention through attractive living environments.
•Amenities:
• Gym facilities for residents.
• Ample parking spaces.
• Green spaces and communal areas for socializing.


Location & Accessibility
•Proximity to Transportation:
•Directly in front of the BARTA Bus Station and Franklin Train Station.
•Ideal for residents who use public transport daily.
•Accessible to major roadways, enhancing the area's connectivity.
•Community Impact:
•Revitalizing the downtown area with both residential and commercial spaces.
•Close to local amenities and essential services.


Market Demand &
Potential
•Local Market Analysis:
•Rising demand for mixed-use developments in Reading, PA.
•The need for both residential units and commercial spaces in the area.
•Target demographic: Young professionals, commuters, small business owners.
•Expected Return on Investment:
•Projected rental income from residential units and commercial spaces.
•Capital appreciation potential due to location and planned upgrades.
•Long-term sustainability through mixed-use development.


Thank you

**Piper, Alan**

**From:** Bishop, Ronnique <ronnique.bishop@dot.gov>
**Sent:** Friday, April 24, 2026 1:04 PM
**To:** Piper, Alan; Timochenko, Amanda
**Cc:** Nonnemaker, Nyomi; Raio, Nick; Lidiak, Timothy (FTA)
**Subject:** FHWA Comments on RATS 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan
**Attachments:** FHWA Comments - RATS 2050 LRTP Draft_4.24.26.docx

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**County of Berks Warning:** This is an external email. Please exercise caution.

Good afternoon, all.

Great work on the 2050 LRTP! FHWA offers a few comments. Please see the attachment.

Thank you,

Ronnique Bishop, AICP
Community Planner
PA Division Office/FHWA
U.S. Department of Transportation
(717) 221-2276
Ronnique.Bishop@dot.gov

Project Listing

- For the highway, bridge, and transit projects listed in the Goals and Strategic Performance Measures chapter, there should be sufficient detail of design concepts and design scope descriptions of all existing and proposed transportation facilities to develop cost estimates. [(23 CFR 450.324(f)(9)]

System Performance Report

- It's great that the MPO includes the relevant TIP projects that improves the system performance measures. In addition, the system performance report should also include any regional actual data points in comparison to the baseline data and performance recorded in previous reports. [(23 CFR 450.324(f)(4)]

LRTP Amendment Procedures

- We appreciate the MPO sharing the LRTP amendment procedures with FHWA in advance. Our comments provided from that previous coordination are addressed in the draft LRTP and we do not have any further comments.