

Reading Area Transportation Study

(610) 478-6300, x6304

Email: mgolembiewski@berkspa.gov

c/o Berks County Planning Commission

Berks County Services Center

633 Court Street, 14th Floor

Reading, PA 19601-4309

To: Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee

From: Michael D. Golembiewski, Transportation Modeler

Re: Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), *MPO Boundaries and Coordination of Transportation Planning and Programming*

Date: July 11, 2024

In May of 2023 staff submitted 'smoothed' Urban Area (UA) boundaries to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for their approval. Due to several issues outside of our purview, we finally received FHWA approval on May 10, 2024.

Every ten (10) years after that approval is received, updated MOU's with all our surrounding planning partners are executed. These MOU's clarify planning and funding responsibilities within each MPO's planning area including portions of UA's that cross MPO boundaries. RATS will be executing updated MOU's with the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVTS), Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), Lebanon County Metropolitan Planning Organization (LEBCO MPO), and the Lancaster County Transportation Coordinating Committee (LCTCC MPO). Between RATS and LVTS, LEBCO, and LCTCC, there will be no exchange of Surface Transportation – Urban (STU) funding since the cross-boundary portions of neighboring UA's are very small.

However, since a significant portion of the Philadelphia UA's population extends into eastern Berks County, the MOU between RATS and DVRPC will include an allocation of STU funding from DVRPC's annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) equal to 0.3564% or approximately \$1.34 million over the four years of the recently adopted FFY 2025-2028 TIP. A similar situation previously existed between RATS and the Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA) Alliance since a portion of the Reading UA extended into Schuylkill County. With the revisions to the UA's after the 2020 Census, that situation no longer exists and there will no longer be an exchange of STU funds from RATS to NEPA.

At the July 11, 2024 Technical Committee meeting, a recommendation to the Coordinating Committee was made to fully execute the MOU's with LEBCO and LCTCC. Staff will be asking for an action to execute the MOU's. DVRPC approved the MOU on July 27th but has not obtained a signature from the Chairman. LVTS will not be acting until their August meeting. Execution of these two MOU's by RATS will occur in September.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

MDG/



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

MPO Boundaries and Coordination of Transportation Planning and Programming Between
the
Lebanon County Metropolitan Planning Organization (LEBCO MPO)
and the
Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS MPO)

Background and Purpose

- A. The Year 2020 Census defined Urban Area (UA) for Lebanon County (Lebanon UA) extends into Berks County and the UA for Berks County (Reading UA) extends into Lebanon County as shown on the attached map. By federal statute, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), or coverage by adjacent MPOs, are required where there is an UA.
- B. By virtue of the UA populations, Berks County is now a Transportation Management Area (TMA) (areas of 250,000 population). With TMA status comes additional planning requirements and Surface Transportation Urban (STU) funding which is based on the UA population.
- C. The Berks and Lebanon County MPO boundaries have been coincident with their common county boundaries.
- D. The purpose of this MOU is to establish the MPO boundaries and transportation planning and programming responsibilities as they relate to the portions of the Berks and Lebanon UAs that extend into the adjoining county.

General

- A. We agree to carry out the transportation planning and programming processes in a cooperative and coordinated fashion, and in compliance with federal planning regulations.
- B. Staff from both MPOs will communicate regularly, share information, and meet as needed to achieve the needed level of cooperation and coordination.

- C. This agreement will be reviewed when either one of the entities identify the need for a review, but no later than December 31, 2033, or when the 2030 Decennial Census UAs are defined.

Specific

- A. The MPO boundary between Berks and Lebanon Counties will remain at the common county boundary line.
- B. Each MPO will assume primary planning and programming responsibility for the portion of the adjoining county's UA in its county, including:
- UPWP development and accomplishment
 - Update of the Long Range Transportation Plan
 - Biennial update of the Transportation Improvement Program
 - Traffic and HPMS data collection
 - Travel demand modeling (RATS has a model; LEBCO MPO uses the services of the Program Center at PennDOT)
 - Air quality conformity modeling
 - Special studies and corridor studies
 - Asset management
 - Congestion Management Processes (CMP) planning and implementation
 - Highway functional classification updates
- C. Long Range Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs will continue to be developed for the respective counties.
- D. There will be no sharing of STU funds by the two MPOs at this time.

Agreed to this _____ day of _____, 2024 by:



Sherry Capello, Chair
LEBCO MPO Policy Board

Chris Kufro, P.E., Chair
RATS Coordinating Committee

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)
MPO Boundaries and Coordination of Transportation Planning and Programming Between
the
Lancaster County Transportation Coordinating Committee (LCTCC MPO)
and the
Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS MPO)

Background and Purpose

- A. The Year 2020 Census defined Urban Area (UA) for Lancaster County (Lancaster-Manheim UA) extends into Berks County and the UA for Berks County (Reading UA) extends into Lancaster County as shown on the attached map. By federal statute, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), or coverage by adjacent MPOs, are required where there is an UA.
- B. By virtue of the UA populations, Lancaster County and Berks County are now Transportation Management Areas (TMA) (areas of 250,000 population). With TMA status comes additional planning requirements and Surface Transportation Urban (STU) funding which is based on the UA population.
- C. The Berks and Lancaster County MPO boundaries have been coincident with their common county boundaries.
- D. The purpose of this MOU is to establish the MPO boundaries and transportation planning and programming responsibilities as they relate to the portions of the Berks and Lancaster UAs that extend into the adjoining county.

General

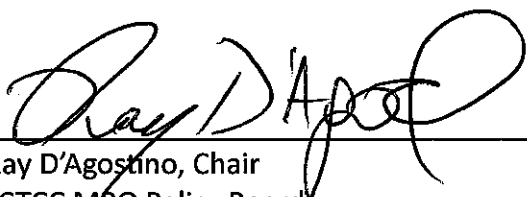
- A. We agree to carry out the transportation planning and programming processes in a cooperative and coordinated fashion, and in compliance with federal planning regulations.
- B. Staff from both MPOs will communicate regularly, share information, and meet as needed to achieve the needed level of cooperation and coordination.
- C. This agreement will be reviewed when either one of the entities identify the need for a review, but no later than December 31, 2033, or when the 2030 Decennial Census UAs are defined.

Specific

- A. The MPO boundary between Berks and Lancaster Counties will remain at the common county boundary line.
- B. Each MPO will assume primary planning and programming responsibility for the portion of the adjoining county's UA in its county, including:
 - UPWP development and accomplishment
 - Update of the Long Range Transportation Plan

- Biennial update of the Transportation Improvement Program
 - Traffic and HPMS data collection
 - Travel demand modeling (RATS has a model; LCTCC MPO uses the services of the Program Center at PennDOT)
 - Air quality conformity modeling
 - Special studies and corridor studies
 - Asset management
 - Congestion Management Processes (CMP) planning and implementation
 - Highway functional classification updates
- C. Long Range Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs will continue to be developed for the respective counties.
- D. There will be no sharing of STU funds by the two MPOs at this time.

Agreed to this 24 day of June, 2024 by:



Ray D'Agostino, Chair
LCTCC MPO Policy Board

Chris Kufro, P.E., Chair
RATS Coordinating Committee