



PATHWAYS PROGRAM UPDATE

PEL Study Finalization Anticipated in September

Since November 2020, the PennDOT Pathways program has been studying and evaluating potential alternative funding options to address the \$8.1 billion annual funding gap for Pennsylvania's highways and bridges. The evaluation of these funding options was documented in a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study with recommendations on potential near- and long-term funding solutions.



The draft PEL Study was made available for public review and comment from April 29 to June 1. Comments received during the comment period and through the telephone town hall have been reviewed and addressed in the final PEL Study which is undergoing final reviews before concurrence by PennDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The final PEL Study will be posted on the Pathways program website.

ALTERNATIVE FUNDING IN THE NEWS

The **Transportation Revenue Options Commission's (TROC) final report** was submitted to Governor Tom Wolf and the General Assembly on Friday, July 30, 2021. The TROC report presents an overview of transportation funding in Pennsylvania and outlines the

commission's review and recommendations of several potential revenue sources to ultimately replace the gas tax. These sources include some of the alternative funding options that were also identified in PennDOT's PEL Study, such as:

Mileage-Based User Fees

Mileage-Based User Fees (MBUFs) are a way of charging roadway users a small fee for each mile they drive. Usually this is done based on odometer readings or other distance-based technologies.



Corridor Tolling

This involves tolling interstates and expressways based on the distance traveled along that road. All lanes in the corridor are tolled. The existing Pennsylvania Turnpike is an example of corridor tolling.



Managed Lanes

Managed lanes are lanes added to a highway where traffic is regulated by charging a toll to use the new lanes, or by encouraging carpooling as high occupancy vehicles (HOVs) typically can use the new lanes free of charge. This option offers a choice to drivers — to pay a fee to use the new managed lanes, carpool and use the new lanes for free, or use the existing regular free lanes.



Taxes & Fees

This option could include increasing vehicle licensing fees, registration fees, or the sales tax.



It is noted in the TROC report that many of these solutions are mid-to-long term and could not be implemented right away. With the

Pathways program recommendations through the PEL Study, bridge tolling could serve as a near-term option as the mid- to long-term options are further evaluated for implementation. PennDOT received approval from the Public Private Transportation Partnership board in November 2020 to pursue bridge tolling, and nine candidate bridges are currently being evaluated.

A LOOK AHEAD

Throughout the rest of 2021 and early 2022, the nine candidate bridge projects for tolling will be hosting public meetings to share the project purpose and need, design, mitigation, environmental analysis, and insight gathered at ongoing stakeholder workshops. The public is encouraged to participate in these public meetings and provide their comments. Community outreach and engagement specific to these public meetings will occur for each of the bridges to share meeting dates and the many ways that the public can participate. Check back at penndot.gov/funding for more information as it becomes available.

TRANSPORTATION TRIVIA!

What percentage of Pennsylvania's current bridge and highway funding comes from the gas tax?

- A** 60%
- B** 68%
- C** 74%
- D** 80%

Despite rising traffic and freight travel in our state, the funds available to maintain our transportation system have not kept pace with need, largely due to eroding gas tax revenue. Fuel efficiency is great for the environment, but this means we are collecting less gas-tax revenue to fund the maintenance and construction of our highways and bridges. That is why PennDOT launched the Pathways program to identify alternative funding options for our transportation system.

SEE THE ANSWER

For more information about PennDOT Pathways, visit our website at penndot.gov/funding.

Want to share information on your social or digital platforms? Find image,

video and other resources in the ***Funding Media Center***.

CONTACT US

Website Comment Form: [Click Here](#)



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