

November 2022 Newsletter



Infrastructure Investments Keep Pennsylvania Moving

Governor Tom Wolf and PennDOT shared examples of how the first year of the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) is supporting transportation in Pennsylvania communities. The BIL will bring \$4 billion in new highway and bridge funds to Pennsylvania over the next five years, and nearly \$600 million in the 2022 federal fiscal year alone. These investments are supporting and accelerating projects across Pennsylvania when, without it, cost and supply challenges would have resulted in fewer projects.

To invest in and grow our transportation network and our communities, PennDOT is also expanding outreach and emphasis on **equitable transportation and business opportunities**, while continually **innovating and finding efficiencies**. Sustaining Pennsylvania's statewide transportation is assisted with BIL funds, while the search for long-term funding solutions continues.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Impacts

Roads, Bridges and Communities

Rail, Transit, Ports, and Aviation

Electric Vehicles

"The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is a game changer for Pennsylvania," said Governor Wolf. "This funding is already helping us speed up projects underway in Pennsylvania. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will help us fix our highways and bridges, improve rail transit, invest in broadband infrastructure, and meet our clean energy goals to fight the damage climate change is causing in Pennsylvania communities."

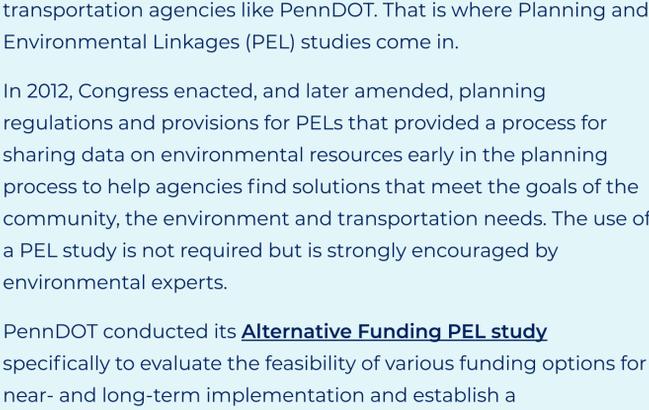
See the [full list of BIL announcements over the past year in the announcement](#). You can also subscribe to PennDOT news [statewide](#) or [news near you](#).

Interactive Educational Tools Available



PennDOT continues to enhance [the funding section of our website](#) with news, funding information and interactive features to educate and inform drivers on a variety of potential transportation funding solutions in our commitment to phase out the gas tax. Try these interactive tools on potential alternative transportation funding solutions and let us know what you think. You can submit comments or questions through the form on the [Contact Us page of the website](#) or email the project team at PennDOTPathways@pa.gov.

Test Your MBUF IQ by [Taking the Mileage-Based User Fee Quiz](#) and get immediate feedback on your knowledge of MBUF and Road-User Fees.



Taking a Closer Look at the Alternative Funding PEL Study

Developing a better link between transportation planning and environmental review has been a long-time goal of many transportation agencies like PennDOT. That is where Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) studies come in.

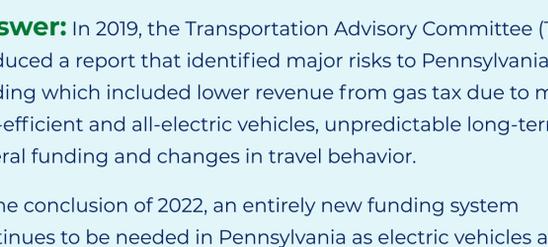
In 2012, Congress enacted, and later amended, planning regulations and provisions for PELs that provided a process for sharing data on environmental resources early in the planning process to help agencies find solutions that meet the goals of the community, the environment and transportation needs. The use of a PEL study is not required but is strongly encouraged by environmental experts.

PennDOT conducted its [Alternative Funding PEL study](#) specifically to evaluate the feasibility of various funding options for near- and long-term implementation and establish a methodology for evaluating associated environmental justice effects.

Early Engagement



April 2021 Engagement



To create a more informed and unified decision-making process, PennDOT provided multiple opportunities for public input on their PEL Study through a website, social media posts, e-newsletters, targeted outreach and coordination with other agencies and metropolitan planning organizations.

PennDOT's PEL Study was shared for public comment in April 2021 and completed and concurred upon by the Federal Highway Administration in September 2021. The PEL study acted as the cornerstone for [PennDOT Pathways](#), a program to identify, evaluate and potentially implement innovative alternative funding solutions.

To recap the background for the continuing efforts over the past year, Brian Shunk, PE, a PennDOT environmental expert recently answered some questions on the Alternative Funding PEL Study:

Question:
How was PennDOT involved in the PEL?

Answer: PennDOT created [the Pathways program](#) to identify, explore and implement alternative transportation funding solutions. The [Alternative Funding PEL study](#) was the first step in that discovery and evaluation process.

Question:
Why is transportation funding an issue?

Answer: In 2019, the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) produced a report that identified major risks to Pennsylvania's funding which included lower revenue from gas tax due to more fuel-efficient and all-electric vehicles, unpredictable long-term federal funding and changes in travel behavior.

At the conclusion of 2022, an entirely new funding system continues to be needed in Pennsylvania as electric vehicles appear increasingly to be the future of transportation and the old method of funding roads and bridges with gas taxes will soon be a relic of the past. Reliable and equitable funding options continue to be explored in Pennsylvania and across the country.

Question:
What is PennDOT Pathways?

Answer: The Pathways Program was developed in response to the unreliable gas tax, which PennDOT depends on for approximately 75% of its funding. Revenue from the gas tax continues to decline rapidly and severely due to market forces and conditions, including the rise in popularity of electric vehicles, reduced buying power due to inflation, and unreliable long-term federal and other future funding. Without adequate funding, we cannot maintain our highways, roads and bridges, providing the transportation infrastructure network Pennsylvanians deserve. Through this program, PennDOT explores new potential sources of funding that could better serve Pennsylvania communities for the next generation. The current phase of the Pathways program is focusing on our highway and bridge funding needs.

Question:
What happened during the PEL study?

Answer: PennDOT, its partners and consultants studied feasibility of various funding options for near- and long-term implementation and established a methodology for evaluating the various potential environmental impacts and effects associated with each option, including the natural and built environments and environmental justice issues and impacts.

Question:
For what will this PEL study be used?

Answer: The PEL study serves as the foundational research that will help guide continued and more in-depth study of these options, and sharing those results with the public, prior to implementation of future transportation funding strategies in Pennsylvania.

Question:
Why is this study important for transportation funding?

Answer: The idea of paying for a transportation network is nearly a century old. A lot of things have changed in that time, and current resources are not sufficient due to the market forces mentioned above where less and less revenue is coming from the gas tax. While no one potential solution will address the challenge, it will take forward thinking ideas, innovation and partnerships, particularly with the public, to implement a more sustainable and equitable funding solution for a safe and reliable transportation system.

Question:
Where can I go to learn more information?

Answer: Learn more about [national PEL processes and guidelines at FHWA's dedicated website](#).

For more information about PennDOT Pathways, visit our website at pennidot.pa.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](#)

PennDOTPathways@pa.gov

Hotline: 717-325-6129

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