



INTRODUCTION

The SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG) is a multi-faceted, public development organization serving 11 counties in central Pennsylvania to address economic development, community life and public services. The 11 SEDA-COG counties are Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder and Union (**Figure 1**).

The SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the official transportation planning organization for eight of the 11 SEDA-COG counties—Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union (**Figure 1**, shaded counties). The SEDA-COG MPO supports transportation planning for the eight-county MPO area, which covers 3,450 square miles² and has a Census estimated 2015 population of 374,551³.

The SEDA-COG MPO has initiated the development of this Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to:

- Identify the major transportation projects, programs and policies needed for the next twenty-five years; and
- Establish the vision and goals that will guide public decisions affecting transportation facilities, infrastructure and services in the region.

Prior to 2013, the eight-county area operated as a Rural Planning Organization (RPO). The 2010 decennial Census identified a new urbanized area (UZA) encompassing the core communities of Berwick, Bloomsburg, and Danville, thereby prompting the formation of an MPO around the new “Bloomsburg-Berwick UZA”⁴. Rather than split the RPO, local and state parties agreed that the MPO should include the entire eight-county region.

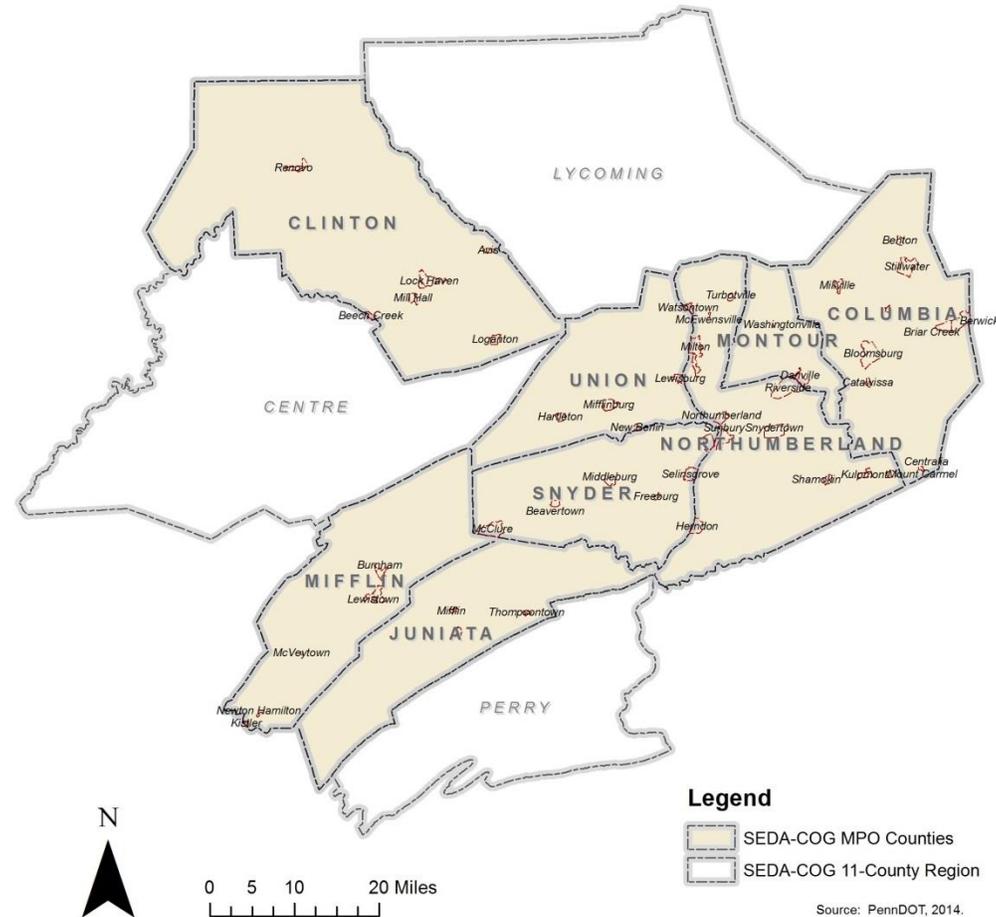
Consistent with its bylaws, the SEDA-COG MPO’s governing body consists of 17 voting members: one representative from each of the eight member counties (typically the county planning director); three representatives from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) (Engineering District 2-0, Engineering District 3-0, and Central Office); one representative from transit; one representative from multi-modal interests; one representative from the SEDA-COG Board; one representative from SEDA-COG’s Transportation Program; one representative from the largest municipality (by population) in the Bloomsburg-Berwick UZA; and one representative from the 2nd largest municipality (by population) in the Bloomsburg-Berwick UZA. In addition to the 17 voting members, the MPO includes non-voting members. Such non-voting members receive MPO reports and agendas and may participate in MPO discussions. Non-voting members include, among others: Lycoming County officials, Centre County officials, Luzerne County officials, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) officials, Federal Transit Administration officials, SEDA-COG staff, Geisinger staff, other state and federal resource agencies and private citizens with an interest in transportation and economic development throughout the region.

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, Table GCT-PH1, *Population, Housing Units, Area, and Density: 2010*, via American FactFinder, <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 Population Estimates, Table PEPANNRES, *Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015*, via American FactFinder, <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>.

⁴ The designated UZA for the SEDA-COG MPO area is officially named the “Bloomsburg-Berwick UZA,” even though the UZA also includes Danville and other municipalities in Columbia, Montour, and Northumberland Counties.

Figure 1. The SEDA-COG MPO Planning Area



The SEDA-COG MPO operates via an agreement with PennDOT to approve studies and capital improvements for highways, bridges, transit, railroads, bicycle/pedestrian facilities and other transportation concerns. Four primary documents are developed and approved by the MPO: the region’s LRTP, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Public Participation Plan (PPP) and annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). In executing its work, the MPO strives to provide a balanced transportation system for the maximum benefit of people, businesses, and communities.

The most recent LRTP for the SEDA-COG MPO was adopted December 16, 2011, with an amendment adopted on July 18, 2014. The previous LRTP covered a period from 2011 to 2035. In 2015, the MPO initiated an update to the LRTP that will cover the period from 2016 to 2040 and meet the appropriate 5-year update cycle for an MPO within an air-quality attainment area.



A. L RTP Purpose

The L RTP is used to guide the development, maintenance, and management of an adequate, safe, accessible, environmentally sound, multimodal transportation system. The transportation system is intended to support communities and provide for the efficient movement of people and goods within and through the SEDA-COG MPO Region.

An L RTP is developed as a long-range planning strategy and capital improvement program. The L RTP spans an over 20-year period, through the year 2040, and is SEDA-COG MPO’s strategy for identifying and realistically addressing transportation needs according to the region’s unique set of goals and resources. The plan fulfills federal and state requirements for metropolitan planning while ensuring that future investments align with federal and state priorities.

L RTP Facts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishes a coordinated planning guide• Identifies details of new or upgraded infrastructure• Guides prudent investment of public funds• Covers a minimum 20-year period

The L RTP identifies the location, size, function, and type of new or upgraded transportation infrastructure. The plan takes a multimodal approach to transportation planning that includes projects for highways, streets, sidewalks, trails, rail, airports, and various modes of public transportation.

For the SEDA-COG MPO, the L RTP is required to be updated every five years by federal law. The update process entails a broad inventory of the regional context and current status of the transportation infrastructure. Forward-looking trends and issues are researched, and their implications are discussed. During this process, outreach and feedback are solicited, and public meetings are held to receive community input on transportation needs and priorities. The costs of needed transportation projects are then estimated and compared with revenue forecasts. Finally, the MPO adopts a list of fiscally constrained projects considered the highest priority in the region.

The L RTP recognizes the interconnection between transportation and land use. The SEDA-COG MPO works with local governments in the region on land use planning issues; however, implementation of land use policy is the responsibility of local governments under Pennsylvania law. Additionally, this L RTP does not address issues concerning police enforcement of traffic laws or security issues, as other government agencies are properly assigned to these issues. Finally, the plan is not an advocacy document for special interests. The plan focuses on practical solutions to problems of transportation safety, maintenance, congestion and mobility.

B. L RTP Vision

The vision for the transportation system in the SEDA-COG MPO region was derived in the 2011 L RTP from a review of resources at the statewide, regional, county, and local levels. That vision was maintained and developed through input from the L RTP Steering Committee to place economic development into the vision for the 2016 L RTP, as follows:

“To create and maintain an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient and safe movement of people and goods while maintaining the region’s character, enhancing the quality of life and economic vitality.”



C. LRTP Goals

The LRTP will serve many purposes including setting the stage for the SEDA-COG MPO's TIP. Additionally, it will be used to evaluate infrastructure investments for consistency with local, county and regional land use and development goals. Understanding this as a basis, the LRTP includes numerous goals. Goals were developed to encompass the array of users, conditions, needs and potential solutions exclusive to the overall transportation system within the SEDA-COG MPO region. Goals were specifically based on 23 C.F.R. 450.306 (a), with new planning factors from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and one local MPO goal:

Federal Planning Factors (MAP-21):

- Support the economic vitality of the region, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency.
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight.
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
- Promote efficient transportation system management and operations.
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing system.

Federal Planning Factors added by FAST Act:

- Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate storm water impacts of surface transportation.
- Enhance travel and tourism.

SEDA-COG MPO Local Goal:

- Foster compatibility between land use and transportation facilities to yield orderly growth and development.

D. LRTP Themes – Transition and Adaptation

This update to the SEDA-COG MPO LRTP builds on the LRTP adopted in December 2011. Like the 2011 LRTP, this document explores trends in funding, maintenance costs, travel demand, regional characteristics, travel patterns, safety and other areas. In comparison to the 2011 update, one of the clearest trends is change. The MPO region has seen changes in demographics, legislation, programming philosophies and economic conditions. A few examples are highlighted below:

Demographics: Four new urbanized areas were identified in Census data for Pennsylvania released in 2012, including the Bloomsburg-Berwick UZA. This led to the designation of the SEDA-COG MPO in 2013. The MPO covers the same planning area as the former SEDA-COG RPO, but the MPO includes additional voting members for officials from municipalities located within the urbanized area.



Legislation: Since the 2011 LRTP was adopted, authorizing transportation legislation has been renewed twice at the federal level. New legislation has moved the focus to performance based planning, introduced new planning factors and federal priorities, and changed the balance and administration of federal programs through which funding is available. Legislation at the state level has also changed, with the passage of Act 89 of 2013 bringing significant new resources to bear, and the passage of Act 13 of 2012 making dedicated funding available for locally-owned, at-risk bridges at the county level.

Performance Based Planning: Introduced as part of the federal MAP-21 legislation, performance based planning encourages agencies to set goals across a wide variety of programming areas, measure progress towards those goals, and employ a continuing process to program projects that improve the conditions measured. In anticipation of the performance measures required, the SEDA-COG RPO developed an annual performance-reporting program, and four years of performance data are available to support the current update. These data will provide a foundation as final rules for applying performance measures are released.

Programming Philosophies: The 2011 LRTP discussed the overall shortfall of funding required to maintain the transportation network. With funding available under Act 89, and the shift to performance based planning, a limited number of new projects have been programmed, including the highest priority project considered in the 2011 LRTP—the Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation Project (CSVT). While the funding needed to maintain the current system is still significant, the programming philosophy has shifted from an exclusive focus on asset management to a carefully considered suite of repair, maintenance, and capacity projects that PennDOT has developed under the label “Decade of Investment”. The projects and programs included in the Decade of Investment were conceived to deliver the best impact possible given the new funding available.

Programming philosophies have also continued to emphasize new approaches. Bridge programming efforts increasingly employ preservation techniques to extend the life of bridges between replacement or rehabilitation projects. In addition, recent efforts have considered removal of closed bridges (as opposed to replacements) and bundling of local bridge projects for cost savings.

Economic Conditions: The 2011 LRTP noted significant transportation impacts from activities to extract natural gas from the Marcellus Shale formation, and quoted a Public Utility Commission presentation that estimated a steady state rate approaching 2,500 wells drilled per year for the SEDA-COG region. Since 2011, changes in global demand and continued oversupply have led to a significant decrease in commodity prices for gas and oil, and drilling efforts have dropped off, with only 1,070 wells drilled statewide in 2015. This downturn in drilling has also resulted in a downturn in the traffic related to Marcellus Shale gas extraction, as well as immediate economic impacts on the communities where the activity occurred. While the urgency and pace of extraction activities has decreased for the time being, they would likely pick back up when/if the prices for oil and gas recover in the future.

Changing Tools: The 2011 LRTP coincided with the introduction of PennDOT’s Linking Planning and NEPA system and MPMS IQ visualization tool. The quality and quantity of data available through each system has continued to improve since 2011. PennDOT and the State Transportation Commission have also changed the approach used to collect data and project information used in the Twelve Year Plan updates, developing web-based survey tools to solicit input, and making the results available to Planning Partners and PennDOT Districts. At the MPO level, SEDA-COG has continued to develop tools to build on this process, including tools to support context determination using local GIS data, and to help provide



regional prioritization of bridge projects based on local land use, employment and zoning data. Implementation steps from the 2011 LRTP included the development of regional layers for park and ride lots and intermodal facilities, and these efforts were supplemented by data for major employers and freight generators. These factors are part of a general progression from a traditional planning process based on consultation and needs identification to one that is more data driven and performance based.

E. Recent SEDA-COG MPO Planning Activities

1. Strategic Plan (2015)

In 2015, the SEDA-COG MPO adopted a new Strategic Plan to help shape future work programs and the direction of transportation planning efforts. The strategic planning process provided MPO members an opportunity to assess the current planning program and identify issues demanding attention, as well as corresponding short-term priorities and recommended actions.

Source: <http://www.seda-cog.org/transportation/Pages/MetropolitanPlanningOrganization.aspx>

2. Public Participation Plan (2014)

The SEDA-COG MPO communicates with and engages all interested parties in the transportation planning process to ensure that it is representative of and responsive to the needs of the entire SEDA-COG MPO region. For this reason, the MPO encourages the public to participate in the development of transportation plans, programs, and project.

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) documents the MPO's approach for conducting public involvement activities so that they are effective and comply with the applicable regulations and guidelines. The PPP includes regional overview information and a framework of goals, objectives, and techniques for obtaining effective public participation as part of SEDA-COG MPO's transportation planning efforts. The PPP identifies current outreach techniques and outlines steps for future improvement in order to increase and enhance public participation.

An update of the PPP was adopted by the MPO in December 2014. Concurrence from PennDOT's Bureau of Equal Opportunity and FHWA was received in 2016.

Source: <http://www.seda-cog.org/transportation/Pages/PublicParticipationPlan.aspx>

3. Limited English Proficiency Plan (2014)

During the course of public involvement activities, persons with a limited English Proficiency (LEP) may engage with the planning process. An LEP person is any individual for whom English is not his or her primary language and has a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English. It is the duty of the MPO, as a recipient of federal funds, to provide meaningful access for LEP persons to the programs and activities normally provided in English.

In coordination with the PPP update, a LEP Plan was created to comply with federal requirements for identifying the LEP populations in the MPO service area and developing a cost-effective and meaningful plan for providing appropriate language assistance services. The plan was reviewed by the MPO along



with the PPP in December 2014 and finalized in August 2015. Concurrence from PennDOT's Bureau of Equal Opportunity and FHWA was received in 2016.

Source: <http://www.seda-cog.org/transportation/Pages/PublicParticipationPlan.aspx>

4. Title VI Policy Update (2015)

Title VI is a reference to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program receiving federal financial assistance ..."

To this end, the SEDA-COG MPO (as a recipient of federal funds) is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in its business practices and has adopted a written Title VI Policy to document goals, objectives, and activities that will be sustained in this effort. The policy also includes a formalized complaint procedure, in compliance with specific federal requirements.

The Title VI Policy was reviewed, updated in 2014, and finalized in March 2015. Concurrence from PennDOT's Bureau of Equal Opportunity and Federal Highway Administration was received in 2016.

Source: <http://www.seda-cog.org/transportation/Pages/PublicParticipationPlan.aspx>

5. Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (2014)

The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan was generated through the efforts of a Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Coordinating Committee. The Committee included representatives from local municipalities, human service agencies, nursing homes, area agencies on aging, senior living facilities, taxi companies, and transit operators. The updated plan, prepared jointly for the SEDA-COG MPO and Williamsport MPO, was adopted by the SEDA-COG MPO in 2014. The plan primarily assesses and establishes implementation priorities for meeting the transportation needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income residents. The plan also considers the needs of the general population and proposes innovative solutions for improved public transportation.

Source: <http://www.seda-cog.org/transportation/Pages/Transit%20Planning.aspx>

F. Pennsylvania's Statewide LRTP & Comprehensive Freight Movement Plan

November 2012 marked the start of an update for the Pennsylvania state-wide LRTP, *PA On Track*, which incorporated the state's first ever Comprehensive Freight Movement Plan (CFMP). Together these performance-based plans provide a strategic vision that will guide, direct and integrate multimodal system investments through 2040. The CFMP, in particular, will allow PennDOT to tap into new freight-specific funding designated through the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. As of April 2016, adoption of the *PA On Track* Final Report was pending.

Source: <http://www.pاونtrack.com/about-the-2040-plan.html>



G. Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act

The Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was signed into law in December 2015, authorizing \$305 billion during 2016 through 2020 for highway, bridge, roadway and vehicle safety, public transportation, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, railroad, and research, technology, and statistics programs. FAST sustained many provisions of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act of 2012, including the performance-based planning emphasis. A prominent new feature of FAST is the National Highway Freight Program, which carries a new funding stream and grant program for freight projects.

Source: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/>

H. Interrelation of Goals, Factors, Principles, and Themes

Throughout the various levels and jurisdictions of transportation planning—federal, state, county, municipality, region, district, partnership, etc.—various systems of planning goals, factors, principles, and themes have been developed to guide the planning process. Resemblances exist among these different systems with common themes running through them, even though their organization, format and expression have variations. **Table 1** pulls together planning goals, factors, principles, and themes from several of the plans listed above and other guidance documents that will influence this long range planning effort.

Table 1. Interrelation of Planning Goals, Factors, Principles and Themes

L RTP Goals (SEDA-COG MPO)	Federal Planning Factors (US DOT) Source: 23 CFR 450.306.	PA On Track LRTP Strategies (PennDOT) Source: DRAFT PA On Track LRTP, October 1, 2014.	Keystone Principles (PA Economic Development Cabinet) Source: PA Historical & Museum Commission, http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bhp/pkp.pdf .	Smart Transportation Themes (PennDOT/NJDOT) Source: Smart Transportation Guidebook, NJDOT/PennDOT, March 2008.	Smart Transportation Principles (PennDOT) Source: Smart Transportation Guidebook, NJDOT/PennDOT, March 2008.	Federal Livability Principles (Partners for Sustainable Communities) Source: Partnership for Sustainable Communities https://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/ .
1. Support the economic vitality of the region, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency	Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency	Personal and Freight Mobility	Provide efficient infrastructure	Leverage and preserve existing investments	Plan all projects in collaboration with the community	Promote equitable, affordable housing
			Expand housing opportunities	Understand the context; plan and design within the context		Enhance economic competitiveness
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users	Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users	Safety	Be fair	Safety always and maybe safety only	Use sound professional judgment	
				Accommodate all modes of travel	Plan for alternative transport modes	
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users	Increase security for transportation system users	Stewardship	Be fair	Accommodate all modes of travel	Plan for alternative transport modes	
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight	Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight	Personal and Freight Mobility	Expand housing opportunities	Look beyond level-of-service	Plan for alternative transport modes	Promote equitable, affordable housing
				Build towns not sprawl		
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns	Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns Reduce or mitigate storm water impacts of surface transportation Enhance Travel and Tourism	Stewardship	Concentrate development (i.e., redevelopment, infill)	Choose projects with high value/price ratio	Tailor solutions to the context	Provide more transportation choices
			Redevelop first	Look beyond level-of-service	Tailor the approach	Support existing communities
			Foster sustainable businesses	Enhance local network	Plan all projects in collaboration with the community	Coordinate policies and leverage investment
			Plan regionally; implement locally	Build towns not sprawl		
			Restore and enhance the environment	Understand the context; plan and design within the context	Use sound professional judgment	Value communities and neighborhoods
Enhance recreational and heritage resources						
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight	Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight	Personal and Freight Mobility	Plan regionally, implement locally	Look beyond level-of-service	Tailor the approach	Provide more transportation choices
			Be fair	Accommodate all modes of travel	Plan for alternative transport modes	
7. Promote efficient transportation system management and operations	Promote efficient system management and operation	Personal and Freight Mobility	Provide efficient infrastructure	Money Counts	Tailor the approach	Provide more transportation choices
				Leverage and preserve existing investments	Plan for alternative transport modes	
				Choose projects with high value/price ratio	Scale the solution to the size of the problem	
				Enhance local network		
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing system	Emphasize preservation of the existing transportation system	System Preservation	Redevelop first	Money Counts	Scale the solution to the size of the problem	Value communities and neighborhoods
	Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system	Stewardship		Enhance local network		
				Leverage and preserve existing investments		
9. Foster compatibility between land use and transportation facilities to yield orderly growth and development		Stewardship	Redevelop first	Leverage and preserve existing investments	Tailor solutions to the context	Provide more transportation choices
			Concentrate development (i.e., redevelopment, infill)		Tailor the approach	Support existing communities
			Foster sustainable businesses	Enhance local network	Plan all projects in collaboration with the community	Promote equitable, affordable housing
			Restore and enhance the environment	Build towns not sprawl		
			Enhance recreational and heritage resources	Understand the context; plan and design within the context	Use sound professional judgment	Coordinate policies and leverage investment
			Expand housing opportunities			
			Plan regionally, implement locally	Develop local governments as strong land use partners	Scale the solution to the size of the problem	Value communities and neighborhoods
Be fair						