Bienvenidos.
Si prefiere esta reunión en español, acceda a este enlace de Zoom. Encuentre el enlace en el 'Chat'
We’re excited to talk with you about Regional Rail!

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Planning Analyst, Strategic Planning
Welcome!

Introduction

SEPTA Forward

System Overview

Existing Conditions
- History
- Infrastructure and Operations
- Connectivity
- Demand

Process

Q&A
Welcome!

Two methods for interacting:

Live polling

Open for questions in the Q & A box
To start off, we would like to hear from you!

Question: Have you already taken the survey?

RegionalRailPlan.com
SEPTA Forward Strategic Plan

Three overarching programs will help us build towards our vision:

- **Rail Transit Unification**: Unifying the rail transit network with standard wayfinding, communications, services, and experiences. Advance Trolley Modernization and King of Prussia Rail to support a growing region.
- **Bus Network Redesign**: Creating an interconnected network that provides frequent services with easy-to-understand routes that meet the changing needs of our region.
- **Regional Rail Master Plan**: Identifying a long-term vision for the future of Regional Rail based on extensive engagement with riders and stakeholders from across the region to seamlessly integrate with the Rail Transit and Bus systems.

ONE LIFESTYLE TRANSIT NETWORK
We’ve been working with a team of experts on this project.

Christof Spieler
Huitz-Zollars

Theresa Carr
Nelson\Nygaard

Suzie Birdsell
Nelson\Nygaard

Madeleine Pelzel
Huitz-Zollars
We’ve been working with a team of experts on this project.

Mandi Chapa
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Meritxell Font
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David Copeland Loredo
Huitt-Zollars
A century ago, two different railroad companies built electric commuter rail lines across the Philadelphia region.
In 1984, SEPTA used a new downtown tunnel to connect them into one network.
And in 1985 the Airport Line opened, creating a critical connection for the region.
As a result, we have the best Regional Rail infrastructure in North America.
Before COVID, 132,000 people rode Regional Rail every day.
Regional Rail makes their lives better.
A commuter coming in from Paoli to work in Center City, for example, saves 20 minutes every day and does not have to sit in traffic...
...and a college student at Delaware Valley University takes the train to a concert at the Kimmel Center and doesn’t have to own a car.
But Regional Rail also leaves people behind.
An office worker who lives in Tacony takes the #56 bus to Center City instead of taking Regional Rail because of the cost.
Because there is not a good path from the train to their office, a Philadelphia resident cannot take the rail out to their job in Exton and has to own a car.
A student at Penn Medicine takes the trolley even though Regional Rail would be a shorter walk because the trolley comes more often throughout the day.
A Mount Airy resident takes the bus because they cannot get their wheelchair on the train.
Can Regional Rail work for them as well?
The SEPTA Forward plan is the basis for Reimagining Regional Rail.

It proposes that Regional Rail can be part of the SEPTA “lifestyle network.”

“...one unified, equitable network serving all kinds of trips, no matter where you are or what mode you choose.”
The Reimagining Regional Rail project will create a vision for doing that.
We have a Hypothesis:

If Regional Rail...
- Operates more frequently, both ways, all day
- Is better connected to local transit
- Has integrated fares with local transit
- Is more accessible and legible
We have a Hypothesis:

...then
- It will be useful to more riders
- It will make existing transit riders’ trips better
- It will increase access
- It will create a more equitable transit network
- It will benefit the entire region
To Test This Hypothesis, We Need to Know:

- Is the demand there?
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- Is the demand there?
To Test This Hypothesis, We Need to Know:

- Can we provide the service?
We’re starting this process by asking you how Regional Rail could be more useful.
We’ve also been exploring the system ourselves and we have learned many things that will frame the way we move forward.

We’ve developed 4 categories that our conclusions fall into:

1. History
2. Infrastructure and Operations
3. Connectivity
4. Demand
Philadelphia’s Regional Rail network was created through a century of infrastructure investment and mergers.

“People have been taking the train to Philly from this neighborhood for 150 years.”
Regional Rail has been designed to facilitate 9-to-5 suburban commuters even though Regional Rail also runs through low-income communities of color in the urban core.

"We have a station here, but nobody I know takes the train."
The Regional Rail network often has parallel bus and trolley routes, but different frequencies and fare structures cause Regional Rail to be isolated from the rest of the SEPTA network.

“The train would be a nice fast ride from Norristown. But it costs too much, so I take the High Speed Line.”
Would you ride Regional Rail more if.....

...fares were the same as bus and rail transit?
The current infrastructure has the capacity for significantly more service, especially off-peak, but a few bottlenecks cap the capacity of the entire network.

“We just sat there for 10 minutes — the conductor said we were waiting for an Amtrak train to clear.”
The amenities and accessibility of stations varies widely.

"I tried taking the train the other day but it was just so hard with the kids and a stroller."
Would you ride Regional Rail more if.....

...stations were accessible?
The Regional Rail fleet is old; its replacement is an opportunity to improve the passenger experience and operating efficiency.

“We’re maintaining trains that are older than me. We can’t even get parts anymore.”
A dedicated staff keeps Regional Rail operating but staffing capacity is also a limitation to growth.

“We have to do the doors and the traps at all the low platform stations — it’s a lot of work.”
The Regional Rail network starts early and runs late, 7 days a week, but frequency is low outside of peak hours.

“I barely missed the train the other day and I ended up being 45 minutes late to work”
Would you ride Regional Rail more if.....

...service was more frequent?
There are limited connection points between Regional Rail and other modes, and those connections that exist are often awkward.

“I see the Regional Rail train from the windows of the MFL but I can’t use it — there’s no way to connect.”
Would you ride Regional Rail more if.....

...connections and transfers were better?
Regional Rail is tuned to the needs of frequent riders, but the resulting complex operating patterns confuse new or occasional riders.

“Before COVID, I took the 7:18 from Paoli every day – the express saved me 15 minutes!”
Would you ride Regional Rail more if.....

...the service was easier to understand?
Regional Rail is the fastest and highest quality form of SEPTA transit, but it’s also very expensive to operate.

“I love that feeling of just gliding into Center City.”
Many Regional Rail stations are located in dense, walkable places.

"It’s so nice to have a station just down the street."
While Regional Rail has traditionally focused on getting people to Center City at rush hour, there are other destinations like universities, hospitals, retail, and other employment centers across the network, many of which have all-day demand.

“I’d really love to be able to take the train to my appointments at the hospital.”
There have been many proposals for significant changes to the Regional Rail network such as expansions, infill stations, and additional service.

"We had the train out here once. They should bring it back."
This exciting work will take us about 18 months to ensure that we hear from everyone and consider all the possibilities.

Phase 1 Outreach Setting Goals

Fall 2021

SEPTA will use the input to develop scenarios that meet these goals
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- SEPTA will use the input to develop scenarios that meet these goals

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- Winter/Spring 2022

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  - Fall 2021
  - SEPTA will use the input to develop scenarios that meet these goals

- **Phase 2 Outreach Evaluating Choices**
  - Winter/Spring 2022
  - After getting public input, a scenario will be selected and developed

- **Phase 3 Outreach Setting the Vision**
  - Summer/Fall 2022
  - SEPTA will take action and adopt the scenario after public input
What Aspects of Regional Rail Could be Changed?

- Frequency and span of service
- Types of service (local express, etc.)
- Relationship to Amtrak / NJT
- Local transit connections
- Infrastructure upgrades
- Station Improvements
- Equipment
- Fare policy
- Operations and staffing
- Extensions and new stations
- Business model
We are looking around the world for ideas.

Munich: integration with local transit

London: legible service and clear wayfinding

Denver: all day 15 minute frequency
What Time Frame are We Looking At?

**Near Term** (less than 5 years)
- Schedule changes within the constraints of existing infrastructure, equipment, and workforce
- Fare policy

**Mid Term** (5-10 years)
- New equipment
- Some station and infrastructure upgrades
- Ability to have some increase in overall service levels

**Longer Term** (10+ years)
- A vision for the entire network
Why did you last ride Regional Rail?

Which of the following do you agree with the most?

Across the SEPTA transit system, what type of projects do you think need the most attention?
While you’re taking the poll, we are happy to answer any questions you’ve typed in the box.
Q&A

Ryan Judge
Manager, Strategic Planning
Let’s Reimagine Regional Rail Together!
Reimagining Regional Rail
Creating a new plan for Regional Rail, together

Take our survey! Tell your friends!

RegionalRailPlan.com
@SEPTAPhilly

Call or text us your thoughts:
(888) 281-1999
#ReimaginingRegionalRail

We'll see you for the next round of outreach in the Spring!