

HOP IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2023-07

WHEREAS, eliminating barriers to economic development, professional opportunities, and public health and safety is a priority for my administration; and

WHEREAS, increasing efficiency in the processing and the approval of Commonwealth-issued permits, licenses, and certifications will remove unnecessary barriers for Pennsylvanians seeking to do business in the Commonwealth.

By Direction of:


Josh Shapiro, Governor

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NOW, THEREFORE, I, Josh Shapiro, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and other laws, do hereby order and direct the following:

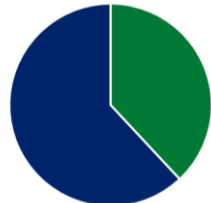
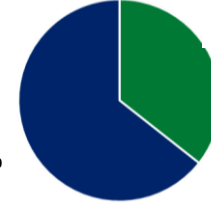
1. Each Commonwealth agency, department, board, commission, office, or council (Executive Agency) under the Governor's jurisdiction that issues permits, licenses, or certifications shall compile a catalog of the types of permits, licenses, or certifications it issues and submit that catalog to the Governor's Office within ninety (90) days of the effective date of this Executive Order. The catalog shall include:
 - a. A description of each type of permit, license, or certification issued by the Executive Agency, the term thereof, and the statutory, regulatory, or other basis therefor;
 - b. The method by which the Executive Agency receives applications for each type of permit, license, or certification (e.g., paper, electronic, or other method) and when that method was last significantly updated;

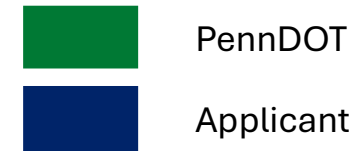
certifications, as appropriate.

3. The Governor's Office will review the existing digital services used to apply for permits, licenses, and certifications and offer recommendations on specific digital services where upgrades and modernization efforts could better serve Pennsylvanians and all other applicants.
4. Any Executive Agency under the Governor's jurisdiction, after having received a completed application, that exceeds the recommended application processing time as established under Section 2, will refund the amount of the application fee to the extent permitted by law. The refund will have no bearing on the disposition of the underlying application. This Executive Order shall apply to applications received on or after the dates the recommended, efficient application processing times are established by the Governor's Office.
5. This Executive Order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law. Nothing in this Executive Order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect the authority granted by law, regulation, or executive order to an Executive Agency, or the head thereof. This Executive Order is not intended to, and does not create, any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the Commonwealth, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.
6. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until amended or rescinded by the Governor.



NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

ROW	TIS	Current Median Days to Issuance*	Time with PennDOT vs Applicant
All Permits		215 days	
×	×	204 days	
×	✓	359 days	
✓	✓	513 days	



**Data includes permits issued from 2019-2023. Outliers were removed.
Permits may be delayed for various factors beyond PennDOT's or the applicant's control.*



HOP IMPROVEMENT EFFORT

Enhance Customer Service

Provide HOP applicants with clear, accessible, and timely communication throughout the permitting process.

Standardize Review Expectations

Help applicants reliably anticipate and accommodate PennDOT's expectations and preferences, regardless of District.

Improve HOP Submission Quality

Empower HOP applicants to reliably submit plans and studies that meet PennDOT's expectations.



Promote Accountability Across All HOP Process Stakeholders

Share responsibility for processing, reviewing, and approving permit applications among all involved PennDOT staff.

Improve Electronic Permitting System (EPS)

Improve the user experience within EPS for both internal and external users.

Foster a Culture of Partnership Between PennDOT and Applicants

Facilitate constructive relationships between PennDOT and applicants that are built on collaboration and shared benefit.



KEY ENHANCEMENTS TO DATE

HOP Collaboration Workshops (SOL 494-24-01)

HIGHWAY OCCUPANCY PERMIT OPERATIONS MANUAL Appendix D5 – HOP COLLABORATION WORKSHOP GUIDELINES

APPENDIX D5 – HOP COLLABORATION WORKSHOP GUIDELINES

Meeting Purpose:

The purpose of the Collaboration Workshop meetings is to give the Applicant team an opportunity to discuss specific questions, concerns, and/or design changes before resubmitting in EPS for another review cycle.

Overall Process:

- Meetings occur at least once per week and are typically held the same day each week.
 - Duration should be consistent but at a length allowing for an appropriate amount of collaboration.
 - Meetings are held virtually via Teams.
- Applicant team will have the opportunity to schedule a meeting after receiving the first round of EPS review comments.
- Applicant teams sign up for a 20-minute time slot to discuss specific questions and/or concerns.
- Time slots are provided on a first come, first served basis.
- District to determine which day of the week and when the applicant should request the meeting.
- Each District should provide at least six (6) 20-minute time slots per week.

Project Team/Applicant Process:

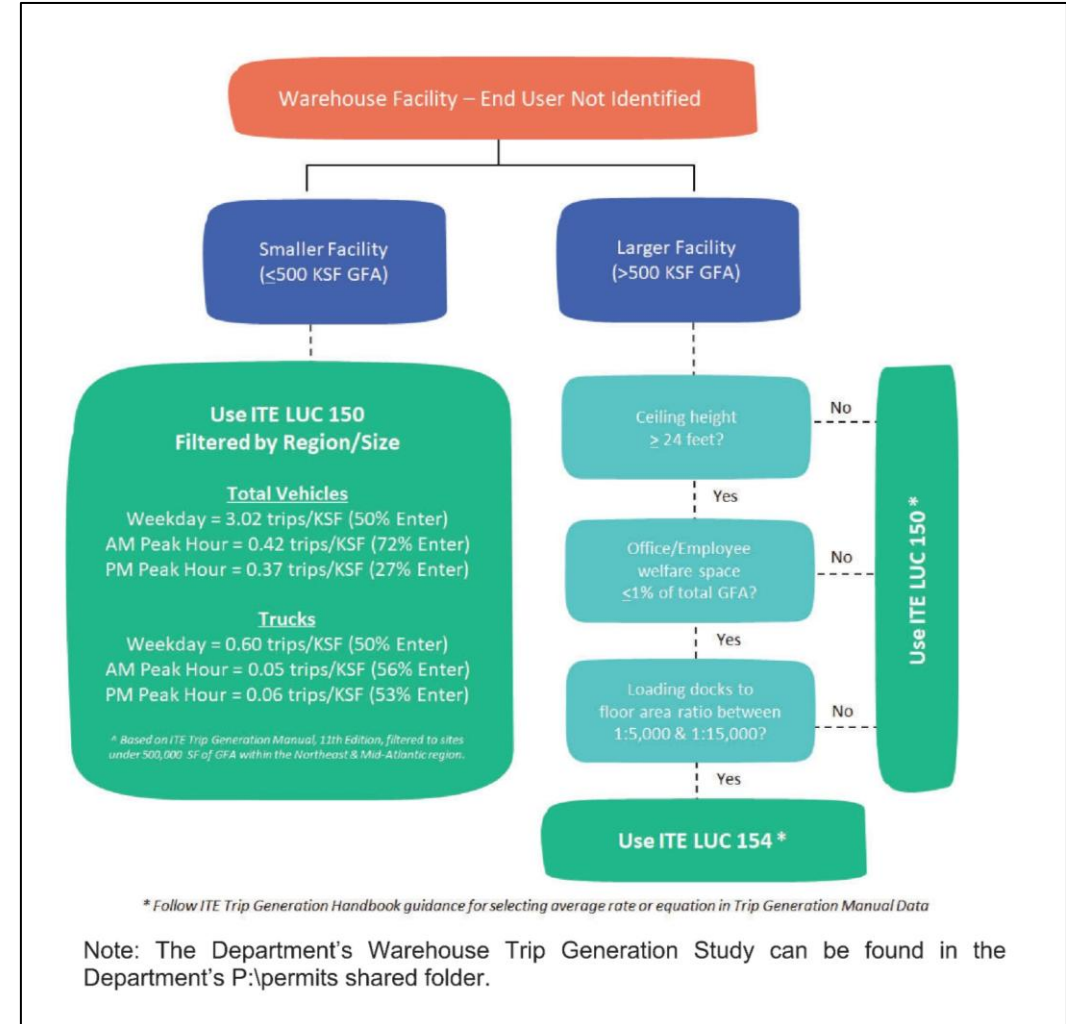
1. The Applicant team must submit a meeting request via email prior to that week's meeting. If request cannot be accommodated, applicant would receive next available time.
 - Meeting request must be submitted to the appropriate contacts on the District's HOP review team. The points of contact for each District can be found in the "Links" section of EPS.
 - Meeting request email must include:
 - EPS application number.
 - County, municipality, address, and brief description of the development.
 - Latest EPS review comments.
 - An agenda including discussion topics and/or questions about specific review comments. The discussion topics must be directly related to the EPS application number under review.
 - If the Applicant team is proposing design changes, marked-up plans indicating the changes must be included in the meeting request email prior to the meeting.
 - List of attendees and associated emails.
 - The applicant/developer is encouraged to attend.
2. PennDOT will assign the Applicant team their 20-minute time slot and send a meeting invite to requested attendees.
 - The project team may not request a specific time slot.
 - If all time slots are full, the meeting will be pushed to the following week's meeting.
 - The Applicant must request the meeting at least two (2) business days prior to the District's weekly meeting time identified in EPS.
 - If a scheduled holiday falls on the District's collaboration workshop day, the District may move the workshop to another day and time that week, or schedule applicants for the following week's workshop meeting.
3. During the meeting the Applicant team will follow the agenda sent to PennDOT in the meeting request email. PennDOT representatives on the call must have the authority to make decisions regarding proposed solution(s) and provide clarity to the comments in question. The expectation is not to approve plan changes or HOP's during the meeting.

PUB 282 (XX-XX)

D5-1

Statewide implementation of meetings providing HOP applicant teams an opportunity to discuss specific review comments to reduce additional review cycles.

Warehouse Trip Generation Best Practices (SOL 494-24-02)

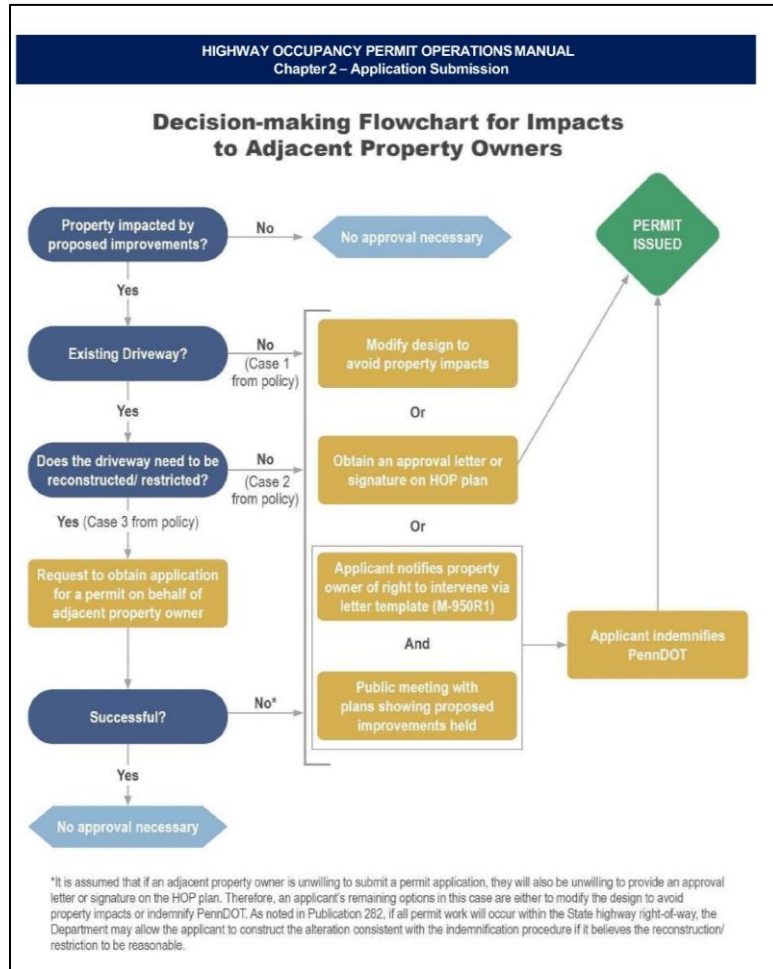


Provides clear guidance for warehouses without identified end-users, reducing the time for the HOP applicant team and PennDOT to come to an agreement on trip generation.



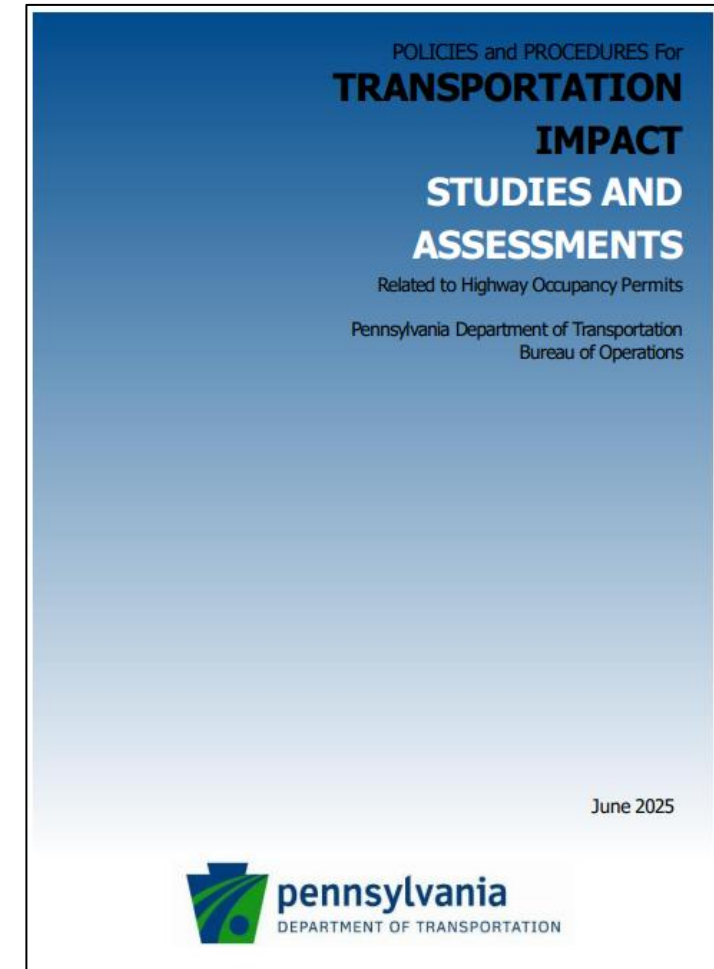
KEY ENHANCEMENTS TO DATE

Adjacent Property Owner Notification Procedures (SOL 494-25-02)



Provides a streamlined path to permit issuance if the applicant is proposing an auxiliary lane in front of another property.

Policies and Procedures for Transportation Impact Studies and Assessments (SOL 494-25-07)

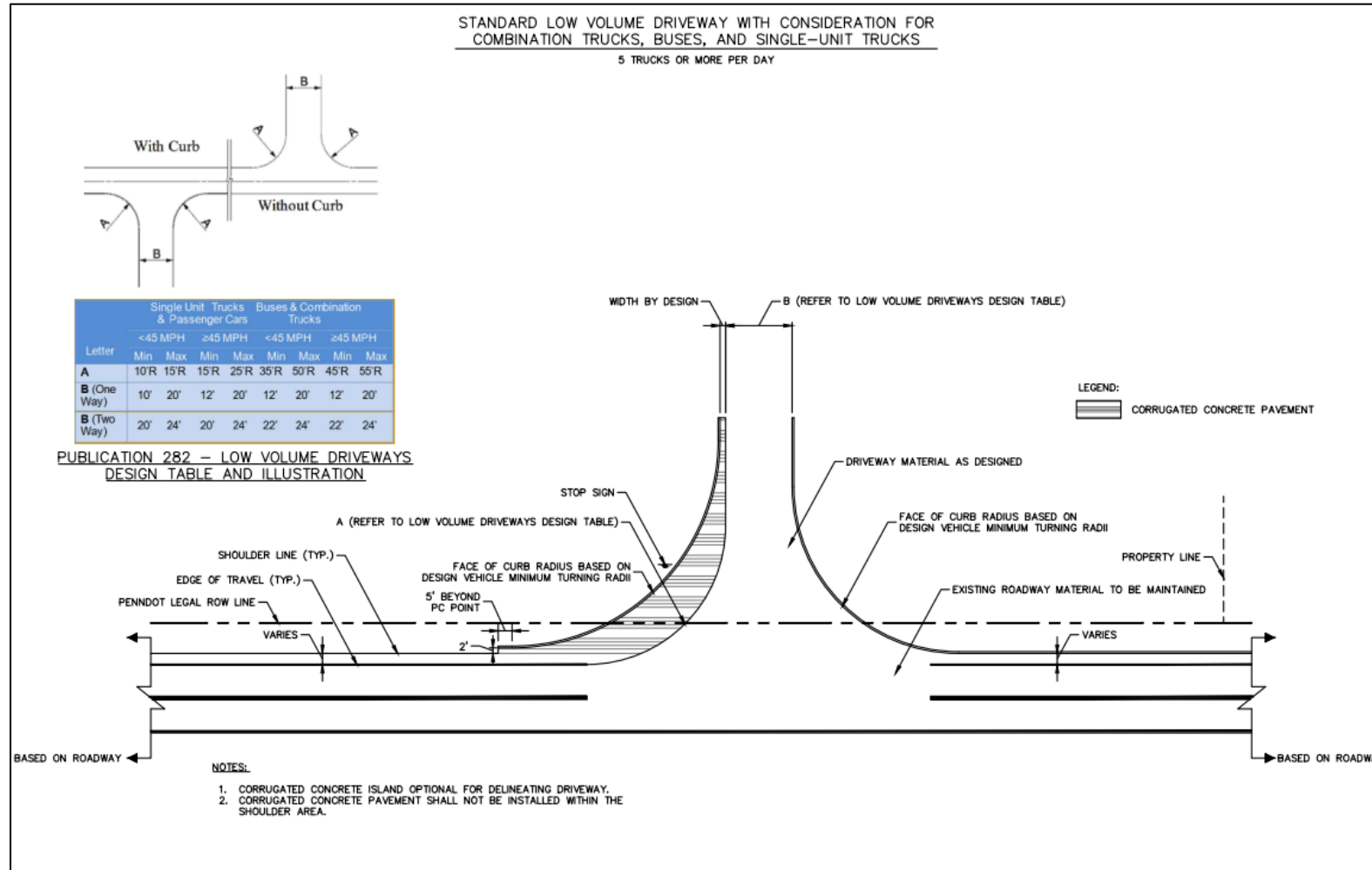


Provides clarification and reduces redundancy in the PennDOT TIS/TIA process to come to an agreement on mitigation sooner and ultimately reduce the HOP timeline.



KEY ENHANCEMENTS TO DATE

Design Alternatives for Low Volume Driveway Highway Occupancy Permits (SOL 494-25-08)

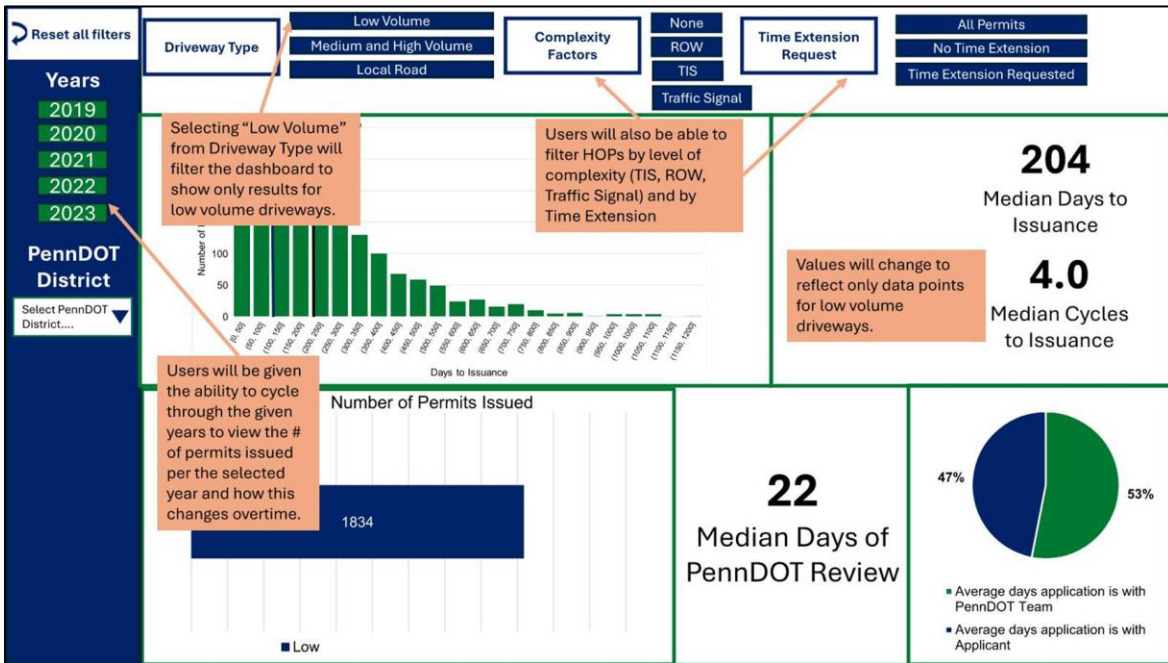


Provides alternate designs for low volume driveways to accommodate larger design vehicles with flush corrugated concrete aprons.



KEY ENHANCEMENTS TO DATE

Dashboard Development



Provides key performance indicators/metrics to track statewide HOP permits.

EPS Updates

The EPS Updates interface includes a header for 'Additional Email A' and a section titled 'Request 60 Days'. Below this, there is a list of checkboxes for reasons causing delay in resubmitting:

- ☐ Highway right-of-way/easement acquisition
- ☐ Seeking impacted property owner approvals per 441.8(j)(5)
- ☐ Addressing HOP Application review comments
- ☐ Subdivision and Land Development Plan Approval issues
- ☐ Zoning Approval issues

At the bottom right, there are 'REQUEST' and 'CANCEL' buttons.

Supports other initiatives by tracking review timelines and time extensions. Requires applicant to input a reason for EPS time extensions for tracking purposes.



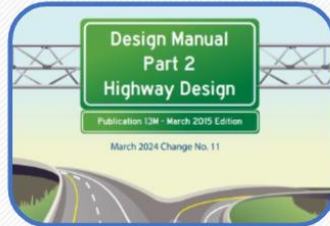
KEY ENHANCEMENTS TO DATE

ADA Training Modules

HOP – ADA MODULE REVIEW



Module 1: HOP - ADA Introduction



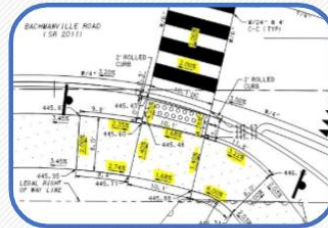
Module 2: HOP - ADA Resources



Module 3: HOP - ADA Curb Ramp Design



Module 4: HOP - ADA Forms



Module 5: HOP - ADA Sample Plans

Trains unfamiliar applicants on what is required for ADA-compliant curb ramp design.

Utility Permits Fact Sheet

Utility Permits in Pennsylvania



Why are Utility Permits required in Pennsylvania?

The regulation governing the location and construction of utility facilities and other structures within the State highway Right-of-Way is critical to ensure the following:

- Structural Integrity of the Highway
- Economy of Maintenance
- Preservation of Proper Drainage
- Safe and Convenient Passage of Traffic



Right-of-Way

The Right-of-Way is the area which has been acquired by PennDOT for highway purposes. The Right-of-Way allows the public the "right of passage" along state owned roadways. The Right-of-Way can vary in width and generally extends beyond the edge of paved roads and shoulders. Permitted utility poles are generally located at the edge of the right-of-way.

Utility Permits

PennDOT has developed a checklist to assist utility companies, developers, or engineers in submitting applications for Highway Occupancy Permits (HOPs). To view the checklist, visit:

[Applicant Checklist for Utility Highway Occupancy Permit.](#)

For more information on permitting requirements and regulations, visit:

[PennDOT Pub. 282: Highway Occupancy Permit Operations Manual](#) and [Title 67, Chapter 459.](#)

HOW DO I KNOW...If sidewalk or curb is along a state-owned roadway?

State-owned roadways are identified in the [Road Segment Inventory \(RMSSEG\)](#) which is a part of PennDOT's Roadway Management System (RMS).

WHEN...A permit IS needed?

- Placing of utility facilities or other structures, or opening of the surface within the state highway right-of-way.
- Any work performed on or across a limited access highway.

WHEN...A permit IS NOT needed?

- Modifying parts of existing permitted facilities (Ex. cable within a conduit, transformers on poles).
- Emergency utility repairs WITH an Emergency Permit Certificate or Card. [Title 67, Chapter 459.6.](#)
- Stringing of overhead utility lines on non-limited access highways.
- Accessing existing utility facilities through manholes in non-limited access.



Provides information for specific audiences to assist in the HOP process.



PennDOT ClearPath PILOT PROGRAM



Pennsylvania
Department of Transportation

PennDOT HOP ClearPath Pilot Program

Streamlining Highway Occupancy Permits
for a Stronger Pennsylvania



What is the PennDOT HOP ClearPath Pilot Program?

The PennDOT HOP ClearPath Pilot Program is a new initiative developed by PennDOT in partnership with the Governor's Office of Transformation and Opportunity (OTO). Designed to streamline the Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) process, this pilot aims to reduce review timelines and clarify expectations for applicants.

The program supports the Governor's Executive Order 2023-07, which seeks to eliminate regulatory barriers and promote economic development throughout the Commonwealth. The PennDOT HOP ClearPath Pilot Program introduces structured timelines, accountability, and enhanced communication opportunities to the HOP process.

How it Works: A Streamlined Review Process

The PennDOT HOP ClearPath Pilot Program includes several enhancements to ensure faster, more predictable HOP application reviews and decisions:

- **Three-Cycle Limit:** Each phase—TIA/TIS Mitigation Scope and HOP Plan Review—will be limited to a maximum of three cycles.
- **Completeness Check:** PennDOT will check each submission for completeness prior to moving into the technical review. Applicants will receive checklists outlining requirements for each cycle to ensure submissions are complete.
- **Cycle 2 Resolution Focus:** Cycle 2 is designed to resolve any technical concerns between the applicant and PennDOT before moving to a final decision in each phase.
- **Traffic Signal Applications:** All signal applications must be submitted through the Traffic Signal Portal (TSP) in the e-Permitting System (EPS).



See inside for process details • See back page for more information on how to be involved in the program

Key Enhancements to the HOP Process

1	Completeness Check Before the technical review begins, each submission will be screened for completeness to ensure required information is included.	• Why? This helps prevent unnecessary delays by ensuring only complete applications proceed. • Review Outcomes: • Complete submissions move forward to technical review. • Incomplete submissions are returned without review. • Timeline: Reviews will be completed within five business days.
2	Mitigation/Design Meetings When Cycle 2 reviews identify unresolved issues, a Mitigation/Design Meeting is offered to applicants for consensus before proceeding.	• Purpose: These meetings provide a structured forum for resolving significant technical issues. • Outcome Scenarios: • Agreement: The project advances. • Disagreement: Without resolution, the HOP application will be denied.

Pilot Program Participation

PennDOT Districts 2-0, 4-0, and 8-0

- Applicants may choose to opt into the pilot after being notified by the District via a Scoping Application response comment.

PennDOT District 6-0

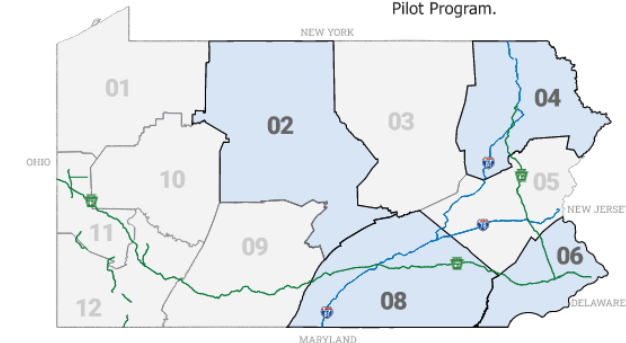
- All Low-Volume Driveway applications will be included.

Pilot Monitoring

- Districts will monitor performance, track outcomes, and evaluate enhancements.
- The pilot does not change any steps within the ePermitting System (EPS).
- Applicants are encouraged to provide feedback on the pilot.

Pilot Program Schedule

- The Pilot Program will be implemented August 18, 2025. Only applications submitted after this date will be included in the program. Current applications within EPS will not be part of the Pilot Program.



District 2-0

Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Juniata, McKean, Mifflin, Potter

District 4-0

Lackawanna, Luzerne, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming

District 6-0

Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia

District 8-0

Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York

For more information, visit our webpage: [PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permit](https://www.penn.gov/transportation/hop)

Questions? Contact:

- District 2-0: Ryan Coudriet, rycoudriet@pa.gov
- District 4-0: Tyler Bekanich, tbekanich@pa.gov
- District 6-0: Mirlene SaintVal, msaintval@pa.gov
- District 8-0: Eric Kinard, ekinard@pa.gov

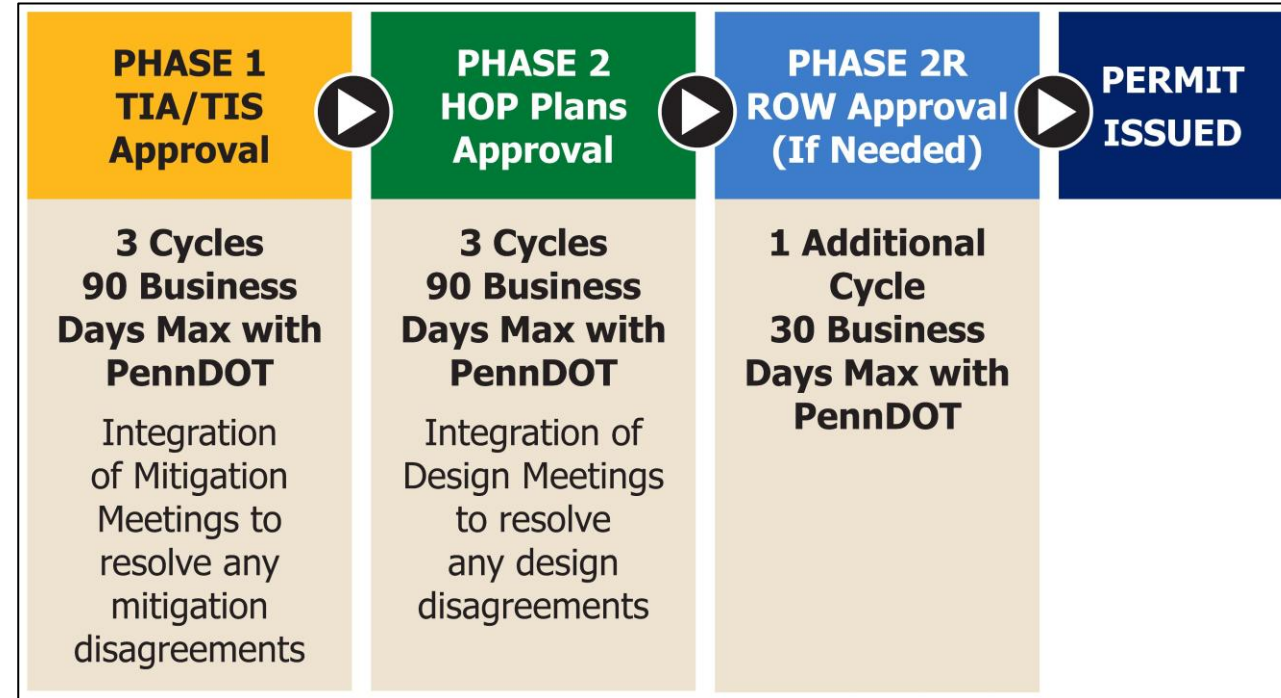
SCAN
ME!



PennDOT ClearPath PILOT PROGRAM

PennDOT ClearPath Consistency OTO Proposal briefing 04/2025

- Continue collaboration meetings to provide developers and their engineers with opportunities to discuss concerns or questions related to their HOP application.
- Development of a draft HOP workflow that establishes a three (3) cycle max for both the TIA/TIS Mitigation Scope and HOP Plans Phases.
- Development of checklists to guide applicants on the requirements for each cycle.
- Creation of a process in Cycle 2 designed to resolve any disagreements between PennDOT and the HOP applicant.
- Applicant checklists and a brochure are available on the HOP website and EPS homepage.



PennDOT ClearPath PILOT PROGRAM

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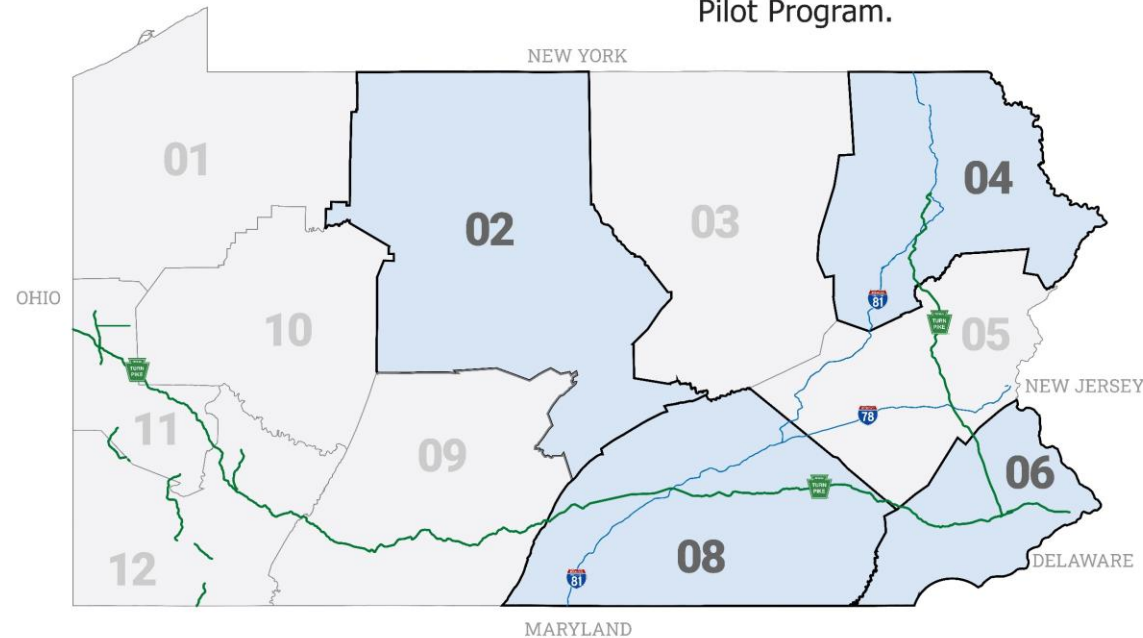
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District 6-0

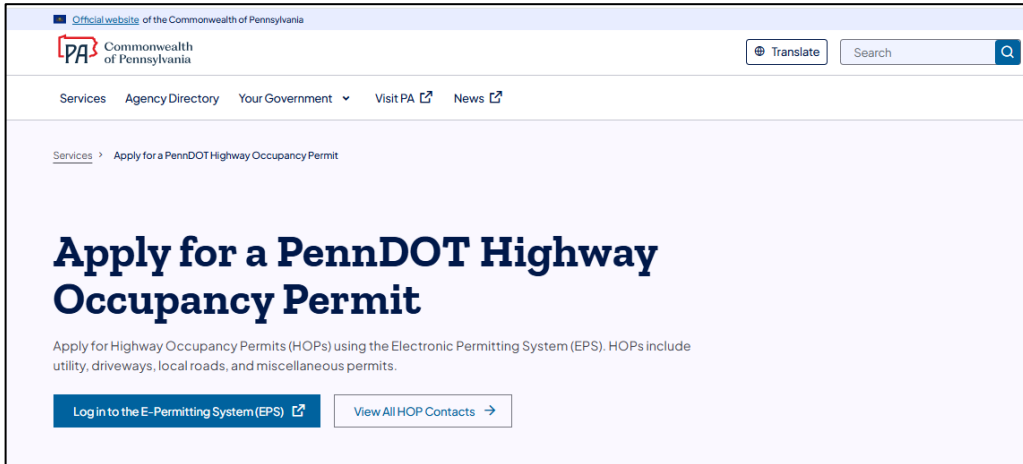
Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia

District 8-0

Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York



HOP WEBSITE UPDATES



Additional Resources

- [PennDOT Approved Core Bore Process](#) (PDF)
- [Model Municipal/Land Owner Subsurface Storm Water Facilities Agreement](#) (PDF)
- [Municipal Driveway Permit Issuance Ordinance](#) (PDF)
- [Municipal Driveway Permit Issuance Agreement](#) (PDF)
- [Warehouse Trip Generation Memo](#) (PDF)
- [Minimum Use Driveway Fact Sheet](#) (PDF)
- [Sidewalk and Curb Fact Sheet](#) (PDF)
- [Permits General Resources & Info](#)
- [Utilities Fact Sheet](#) (PDF)
- [ADA Resources Document](#) (PDF)

Training

- ADA Introduction: [Purpose and Learning Objectives](#)
- ADA Resources - [Module 2](#)
- ADA Curb Ramp Design - [Module 3](#)
- ADA Forms - [Module 4](#)
- ADA Sample Plans - [Module 5](#)

HOP ClearPath Pilot Program

[HOP ClearPath Brochure](#) +

[Applicant checklists](#) ▼

Guidelines

The following links offer regulatory and technical knowledge, policy, process, and procedure for use when applying for a Highway Occupancy Permit.

Publication 282 is an inclusive guide to PennDOT's HOP program.

- [Strike-Off Letter 494-25-08: Design Alternatives for Low Volume Driveway Highway Occupancy Permits](#) (PDF)
- [Strike-Off Letter 494-25-7: Policies and Procedures for Transportation Impact Studies and Assessments](#)
- [Strike-Off Letter 494-25-02: Adjacent Property Owner Notification Procedures](#)
- [Strike-Off Letter 494-24-02: Warehouse Trip Generation Best Practices](#) (PDF)
- [Strike-Off Letter 494-24-01: HOP Collaboration Workshop](#) (PDF)
- [Strike-Off Letter 494-22-09: License Plate Readers](#) (PDF)
- [Publication 282 - Highway Occupancy Permit Operations Manual](#) (PDF)

<https://www.pa.gov/services/penndot/apply-for-a-penn-dot-highway-occupancy-permit>



FUTURE UPDATES

Initiative	Description
EPS Updates	Update to EPS to align with the ClearPath Pilot Program phases and cycles.
Partnership Program	Development of a training program for applicant's engineers to become recognized partners of PennDOT.
Right-of-Way Policy	Updates to the Right-of-Way process for HOP submissions outlined in Publication 282.
Chapter 441 Regulation Updates	Updates to 67 Pa. Code Chapter 441 and resulting updates to PennDOT publications.



Open Discussion / Questions

