



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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**At Lehigh Valley Hospital, Governor Shapiro and Secretary Carroll
Highlight Critical Need for Investing in Mass Transit Agencies like
LANTA to Grow Pennsylvania's Economy and Support
Pennsylvanians in All 67 Counties**

Governor Shapiro's [2025-26 budget proposal](#) includes \$292 million in new funding to support 52 transit systems that serve nearly one million riders each day in rural, urban, and suburban communities across the Commonwealth.

As LANTA faces significant service cuts — including to the bus route that serves Lehigh Valley Hospital–Hecktown Oaks — Governor Shapiro's budget proposal would help protect service, enabling patients and hospital staff to reach their destination reliably and affordably.

The Governor's proposal would create jobs, connect communities, and grow Pennsylvania's economy — helping Pennsylvanians who ride mass transit commute to work, go to school, access health care, and travel where they need to go safely and reliably.



Lower Nazareth Township, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** and **PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll** joined transit leaders, local officials, and **Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA)** bus operators and riders at **Lehigh Valley Hospital–Hecktown Oaks in Northampton County** to highlight the critical role of mass transit to connect communities across the Commonwealth, create jobs, and grow Pennsylvania’s economy.

The visit comes as the Governor continues to advocate for his [2025–26 budget proposal](#), which includes **\$292 million** in new mass transit funding next year — generating over **\$1.5 billion** in the next five years. This is the first significant increase in state support for mass transit in more than a decade, benefiting 52 transit systems that serve nearly one million riders each day in rural, urban, and suburban communities across the Commonwealth.

“Just like we repair and maintain the bridges in rural and suburban communities, we owe it to the Pennsylvanians who take mass transit to be there for them and their families too,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “Mass transit drives \$5.4 billion in economic activity every year in Pennsylvania, and it enables businesses to affordably get their employees to offices and job site — it’s well worth the investment in our budget. For two years in a row, I’ve proposed the first major new investment in mass transit in more than a decade — the House has passed that proposal three times and it’s now up to the Senate to act.”

Strengthening Pennsylvania's Entire Transportation Network

Since taking office, **Governor Shapiro** has already delivered more than **\$380 million in new funding for roads and bridges**, [leading the nation](#) in repairing more poor condition bridges than any other state in the country and improving **over 12,000 miles of roads** — more than any other time in the last decade. The Governor's proposed budget builds on that success by addressing a long-standing gap: dedicated, sustainable funding for public transit.

The Governor's proposal would not raise taxes. Instead, it would increase the portion of the Sales and Use Tax dedicated to public transit — from 7.68 percent to 9.43 percent — generating **\$292 million** in new annual funding next year and more than **\$330 million** annually by 2029–30.

This investment will [support](#) transit systems across the Commonwealth, including:

- **Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA)**, which provides nearly a **quarter billion rides annually**;
- **Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT)**, which has invested **\$2 billion across Pennsylvania** in the past five years; and
- **Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA)**, which under Governor Shapiro's 2025–26 proposed budget would receive **\$32.8 million in state operating funds — a \$6.6 million increase over this year**.

Governor Shapiro is also helping the Commonwealth maximize federal investments and accelerate critical construction and maintenance projects statewide by continuing to reduce the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP)'s reliance on the Motor License Fund. Reducing PennDOT's transfers from the Motor License Fund to PSP by \$50 million each year will free up \$750 million in additional funds over five years for PennDOT to invest in roads and bridges without raising taxes, until these transfers are fully phased out by 2029–30.

"Pennsylvania's economic growth relies on our ability to build out a transportation network that puts our tradespeople to work, strengthens our businesses, and improves Pennsylvanians' lives. Governor Shapiro has already delivered over \$380 million for roads and bridges — but we've got to meet everyone's transportation needs to grow our economy and our communities," said **Secretary Carroll**. "Transit is critical. Sixty-five percent of fixed-route riders say they have no other option. That's why the Governor's budget makes an unprecedented investment in mass transit — \$292 million for systems across the Commonwealth, from our cities to our rural counties. We've been here before. The House acted — three times — but the Senate didn't. Now we're at the deadline again, and it's time to fund transit. Shared ride powers our economy, supports seniors' quality of life, and connects Pennsylvanians to opportunity, no matter where they live."

Lehigh Valley's LANTA: Transit is a Lifeline

The Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) provides more than 5.6 million riders annually across Lehigh, Northampton, and Carbon counties. Over 11,000 people rely on LANTA's fixed-route buses daily — three-quarters of those riders reporting they have no other transportation option — and LANTA is a vital link to jobs, schools, grocery stores, and health care across the Lehigh Valley.

“In a recent survey, 75 percent of our riders said they rely on LANTA to get to work, and more than 20 percent use it to get to school. Without transit, those trips stop,” said **Owen O'Neill, Executive Director of LANTA**. “While we serve urban centers and dense suburbs, LANTA also provides critical service to rural areas in northern Northampton, Lehigh, and Carbon counties. Many don't realize we operate in Carbon County — but in places like Jim Thorpe, public transit is just as essential. Our service connects people to medical care, groceries, farmers markets, and social opportunities — lifelines for seniors, people with disabilities, and those who face isolation. We're especially grateful to Governor Shapiro for his leadership. For the third year in a row, he's proposed a solution to increase public transit funding across Pennsylvania — and that investment would make a real difference for the people we serve.”

In May, LANTA released its draft 2025–26 budget, proposing its most severe reduction in decades. The plan includes a 20 percent cut in fixed-route service, a 25 percent fare increase, and projected deficits of \$8 million for the bus system and \$3 million for senior paratransit services. Without new funding, these cuts could take effect as early as January 2026 — eliminating entire routes, drastically reducing evening and weekend service, and curtailing paratransit options for seniors.

These cuts are already beginning to affect health care access. In 2021, Lehigh Valley Health Network opened Lehigh Valley Hospital–Hecktown Oaks, its first newly built hospital in nearly 50 years. Located in Northampton County, the hospital campus includes a 201,000-square-foot hospital, 35,000-square-foot Cancer Institute, 60,000-square-foot health center, and an emergency room serving both adults and children. The facility employs nearly 400 people and provides critical inpatient, cancer, and emergency care.

LANTA's Route 106 and two LANTAFlex routes currently serve the hospital — connecting patients to care and staff to jobs. But Route 106 is scheduled for elimination on June 30, part of a broader reduction that includes five LANTAFlex routes and another fixed-route bus line. In total, 28 routes will be affected due to budget constraints, route performance, and the closure of a major transit hub.

“Public transit is something thousands of our providers, patients, and community members rely on every day to access high-quality health care in the Lehigh Valley Health Network, which is now part of Jefferson. Reliable transportation reduces barriers for individuals and families seeking life-saving treatment and supports our colleagues' ability to get to work,” said **Dr. Joseph G. Cacchione, CEO of Jefferson Health**. “Stand outside one of our hospitals and you'll likely see someone stepping off a LANTA bus — a clinician who prefers not to drive, a cancer patient too weak to get behind the wheel, or a neighbor who can't afford a ride-share to see a specialist. Transportation is

a key social determinant of health, and it should never be a barrier to health care. At Jefferson, we're striving to be the most accessible health system in the country, and public transit is an essential part of that vision. We can only achieve it by ensuring our colleagues and patients have easy, affordable ways to reach our care sites."

"I remember when LANTA was moving people just a few blocks — and now, it's moving people miles. That growth reflects the incredible expansion happening here in the Lehigh Valley," said **Tony Iannelli, President and CEO of the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce**. "There are so many people who want to work, who want to support their families, who want to build something lasting — and Governor, your commitment is making it possible for opportunity to meet need. This investment will help people find jobs, get to work, and create legacies for their families."

"I'm here today to speak on behalf of both job seekers and employers across our region who are struggling to find skilled, available talent. Reliable public transportation isn't just about mobility — it's about economic connections. It connects workers to jobs, students to training, parents to childcare — and just as importantly, it connects businesses to the workforce they need to grow," said **Nancy Dischinat, Executive Director of Workforce Board Lehigh Valley**. "Governor Shapiro gets that. He understands the connection between transit and opportunity, and he's prioritized it — rebuilding the infrastructure that keeps Pennsylvania moving and proposing the largest investment in public transportation in more than a decade."

Under **Governor Shapiro's 2025–26 proposed budget**, **LANTA would receive \$32.8 million in state operating funds** — a **\$6.6 million** increase over this year — which could help avoid devastating service cuts and preserve critical connections across the Lehigh Valley. In February, the **Shapiro Administration** also awarded LANTA a **\$350,000 Multimodal Transportation Fund grant** to support renovations at the Allentown Transportation Center, the region's primary transit hub.

Public Transit Supports Every Corner of Pennsylvania

Across the Commonwealth, more than one million people rely on public transit every day — including nearly 3 million annual rides for seniors. Rural shared-ride services alone provide 2.6 million trips per year. But transit agencies are facing a fiscal cliff — without long-term funding, they may be forced to cut service, lay off workers, or eliminate critical routes. This year's budget offers a long-term, sustainable solution.

"Investing in public transit pays dividends tomorrow. These investments are no different than any other infrastructure investment like roads and bridges," said **Senator Lisa Boscola**. "The reality is public transit moves people to their jobs, schooling, and other everyday activities. Having an efficient public transit system helps keep our community afloat, helping employers retain a reliable workforce, ensuring access to opportunity, and reduces our reliance on cars, reduces congestion, and improves our environment."

"We're back in the Lehigh Valley — the fastest-growing region in the Commonwealth — and preparing for that growth takes strategy and foresight. That's exactly what this

budget proposal represents: a thoughtful plan that recognizes the needs of all the people who rely on transit every day, whether it's to get to work, dialysis, or other critical health care," said **Senator Nick Miller**. "This is about being smart and strategic statewide. I want to thank Governor Shapiro and his team for their leadership — and we'll keep fighting to get this budget across the finish line."

"You cannot overstate how important public mass transit is to the people of the Lehigh Valley — and across Pennsylvania. People rely on it every day to get to work, school, medical appointments, and even to buy groceries. Many riders live in urban areas that are food deserts, and their only access to fresh food might be a farmers market or a bus ride to a suburban supermarket," said **Representative Robert Freeman**. "Transit also delivers broader benefits: it cuts pollution, reduces traffic congestion, and strengthens our entire region. But right now, transit agencies across the state are facing a funding crisis. This isn't just a big city issue. That's why I'm proud to co-sponsor House Bill 1364, which would provide \$292 million in funding without raising taxes. We must act to ensure public transit remains accessible, reliable, and fully funded for the people who depend on it every day."

"As the Governor said, economic development depends on both employees and businesses — and they're deeply interconnected. Mass transit is part of every single conversation we have about growing our economy," said **Representative Steve Samuelson**. "When you think about it, it's the employees getting to work, and the employers relying on the Lehigh Valley's incredible workforce. Everyone depends on transit."

"Mass transit is about more than just a ride — it's the engine that powers the entire Lehigh Valley community," said **Representative Mike Schlossberg**. "Three times, my colleagues and I in the House of Representatives have voted to pass the mass transit funding package the Governor supports — and three times, the Senate has said no. That's no fault of Senators Boscola or Miller, who have been strong advocates. But if we truly care about growing our economy, we need to invest in it. If we truly care about keeping people working and off the taxpayer rolls, then we must ensure they can get from point A to point B. We must pass this transportation package and keep Pennsylvania — and the Lehigh Valley — moving forward."

"This isn't just a story about economic development or business — this is a story about people. It's about making sure folks have what they need to live a good and decent life, the kind of life we'd want for anyone," said **Representative Peter Schweyer**. "The entire transportation system — whether someone is driving over a newly repaired bridge thanks to the Shapiro Administration, arriving in a shared van, or commuting to work on a bus — accomplishes the same goal: keeping our economy flowing, our businesses operating, and our communities growing. I stand with my colleagues in supporting this legislation and call on the Senate to act."

Governor Shapiro has proposed a path forward, and his proposal has passed the state House of Representatives three times — but the Senate has yet to act. The Governor is urging both parties to come together and pass a comprehensive, bipartisan

transportation funding plan that meets the moment and secures the future of public transit in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvanians can learn about public transit options and apply for transportation assistance programs through the Commonwealth's [Find My Ride](#) (FMR) tool. FMR includes [FMR Apply](#), an online tool which was developed collaboratively with transit agencies and streamlines the application process for transportation assistance programs in the state, including the [Senior Shared Ride program](#), the [Medical Assistance Transportation Program \(MATP\)](#), ADA complementary paratransit, the Persons with Disabilities program; the Free Transit Program; and fixed route half/reduced fare for persons with disabilities.

For more on public transit, ridesharing, biking, walking, and PennDOT's infrastructure projects, visit [penndot.pa.gov](https://www.penndot.pa.gov). Information about the state's infrastructure and results PennDOT is delivering for Pennsylvanians can be found at [penndot.pa.gov/results](https://www.penndot.pa.gov/results).

For more information on **Governor Shapiro's** 2025-26 budget proposal, visit shapirobudget.pa.gov.

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