



# SEPTA Elwyn-Wawa Regional Rail Extension Policy Statement

August 23, 2011

MPMS#60636

PA-TEC supports the initiative to extend passenger rail service west of Elwyn, but are greatly concerned with the escalating costs to extend the line 3 miles on active tracks. We note that other transit agencies in the U.S. have made similar extensions at a lower cost per mile. The Wawa project is budgeted at \$90 million or \$30 million per mile. Similar projects are:

- New Jersey Transit's 7 mile extension on the Lackawanna Cutoff for \$35 million (\$5 mil/mile)
- MBTA (Massachusetts) Haverhill extension of 4 miles for \$29.4 million (\$7.35 mil/mile)
- MBTA Fitchburg line extension of 4.5 miles for \$55 million (\$12.2 mil/mile)

The Wawa extension (currently deferred) must be rescaled to a fundable level that increases the likelihood of near term project completion. PA-TEC sets forth the following recommendations:

1. **Remove the 600 spot parking garage component** until growth and funding dictates its need and SEPTA's ability to build out the station. SEPTA is currently projecting 100 riders at Wawa. The more desirable course of action in line with national policy is additional service extensions to walkable communities.
2. **Reopen the Glen Riddle rail station** on PA-452 to provide walkable access to transit for residents at the Glenn Riddle Station Apartment complex. Abandoning this station commits *all* ridership in this area to automobile use to reach mass transit.
3. **Remove from the proposal the rail yard at Lenni and the closing of the Media rail yard from the project.** The Wawa project is the second extension of transit service west of Media since 1986. Continued growth along the corridor suggests future extensions will be required. Adding railcar storage yards to each extension make such projects cost prohibitive.
4. **Scale the Wawa train station to a fundable level.** As the proposed terminus of commuter rail service, high level platforms are not required for speed-of-service, or ADA regulations. Mini high level platforms are acceptable, and have been installed at other stations recently. Examples include Fox Chase, Langhorne and Somerton.

Implementation of these recommendations will produce several positive outcomes:

- More immediate implementation of service
- Decrease in automobile traffic on local roads, such as Glenn Riddle Road and PA-452
- Create new walkable access to transit at Glen Riddle Station
- Minimize operating expenses in maintaining station facilities
- Create future incentives and opportunities for future service restoration towards West Chester

Constrained government budgets dictate the need for responsible use of funding, while our economy, energy supplies and environment demand restoration of rail service on corridors owned by SEPTA as quickly as possible. In lieu of these changes, we cannot support SEPTA's proposal for the Wawa project.

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