

Bethlehem Connect — Long-Term Vision Supplement v1.6

Built to grow: keeping Bethlehem Connect ready for the long term

One philosophy, separate projects

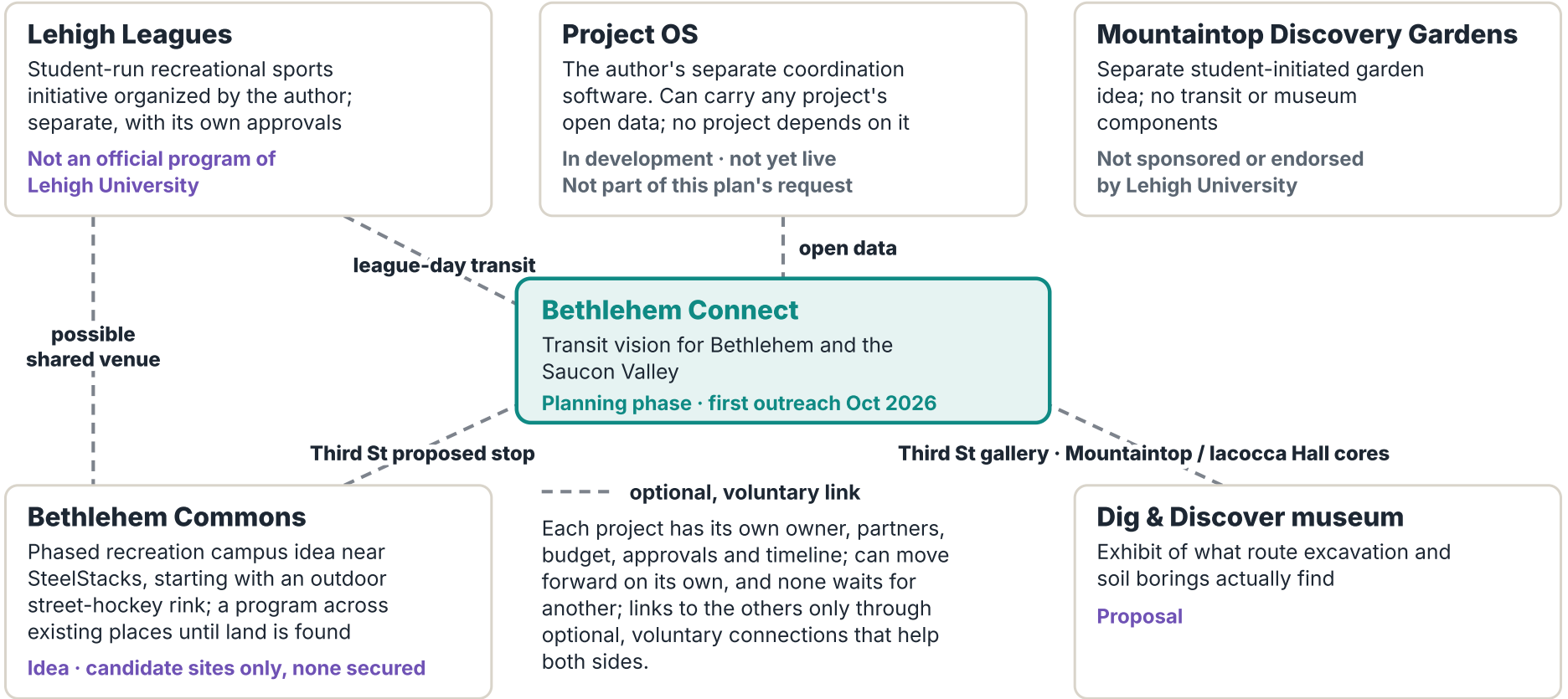
THE PHILOSOPHY, IN ONE SENTENCE

Make essential things simpler, more accessible, less wasteful, and affordable or free wherever practical.

Principle	What it means in practice	Questions to ask any project
Simpler	Fewer steps, clear information, one place to find things, plain language	Can a first-time user understand it in a minute? What step can we remove?
More accessible	Universal design; works for people with disabilities, all ages, all incomes, all languages, and people without a car	Who can't use this today, and why?
Less wasteful	Reuse what exists before building new; use energy, money, land and time carefully; measure and publish results	What already exists that we can build on? What would we stop doing?
Affordable or free wherever practical	Lower cost to users. Make things free when a stable funding source covers them (partners, grants, sponsors, public budgets)	Who pays, and is that payment reliable year after year?

"Where practical" is honest, not a loophole. Something is only free if someone reliably pays for it. Each project names its funding source before promising a free service.

The project family: six separate projects, one shared philosophy



Bethlehem Commons would be coordinated with the City's planned South Side Community Center. "Third St" is a proposed stop of Bethlehem Connect. Rock cores would be shown at the Mountaintop / Iacocca Hall station's geology pavilion, separate from the gardens.

About this supplement

Phase 1 of Bethlehem Connect is an electric BRT "Connect Spine" plus a "River Line" that upgrades LANTA's existing Enhanced Bus Service (EBS) core. This supplement explains how the plan can stay ready for later steps without promising things that don't exist yet. Those steps include express service, more tracks, and links between towns, cities and parks. It also covers how the transit plan could support two of the author's separate projects, **Lehigh Leagues** and **Project OS**. Last, it describes a "**Dig & Discover**" museum idea for whatever construction actually turns up.

Quick answers

Question	Short answer
Are we prepared for the long term?	We can be, by following the 10 rules on page 2. Most are cheap: put corridors on official maps, reserve space, publish open data.
Can we connect town to town, city to city, and park to park?	Yes, as long-term goals. Page 3 separates what runs today from what has only been studied.
Express routes and multiple tracks?	Yes, built up in stages: passing points first, extra full tracks only when ridership justifies them. See page 4.
Can transit help Lehigh Leagues, with Project OS coordinating?	Yes, as proposals. The transit links need partners and agreements that do not exist yet. See page 5.
A museum of what we dig up?	Yes, as an honest "geology and history of the line" museum, starting small. No gems are promised. See page 5.

How to read the labels

OPERATING	Runs or is open today
FUNDED / IN PROGRESS	Money committed or work under way
STUDIED	Studied by an agency; not decided or funded
PROPOSAL	An idea from this plan
TO CONFIRM	Not verified; needs a primary source
<i>Our judgment</i>	Reasoning, not a sourced fact

Honesty line. This is an independent plan in the planning phase, shared for discussion. It has not been funded or engineered, and it is not an official project of, or endorsed by, any agency or institution named. No agency, railroad, park manager, museum, school or league named here has agreed to anything.

Inside this supplement

- p. 2** Long-term design rules, rail-ready siting, reuse it anywhere, natural energy
- p. 3** Connecting town to town, city to city, park to park
- p. 4** Express and multi-track: how long-term routes get planned
- p. 5** Lehigh Leagues + transit · Project OS (in development) · Dig & Discover museum
- p. 6** Evidence, and what is not yet verified

We can be ready for the long term by following these 10 rules. **Most are cheap: put corridors on official maps, reserve space, publish open data.** Each card gives the rule, then the evidence behind it.

PROTECT THE CORRIDOR

1

Put the corridor on the map now.
Under Pennsylvania's Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) Article IV, a town's official map can show railroad and transit rights-of-way. When an owner applies to develop mapped land, the town gets 1 year to negotiate a purchase or easement. The map is recorded with the county within 60 days. This buys time, not land: the town still has to pay. Statute text itself:
TO CONFIRM

PROTECT THE CORRIDOR

2

Keep old rail corridors whole.
Under federal "railbanking" (16 U.S.C. 1247(d)), an unused rail line can become a trail and still be restored to rail later. Since 2020-02-02, the Surface Transportation Board gives 1 year to negotiate trail use, extendable up to three more times. It only works when a railroad has filed to abandon a line, and only if the railroad agrees.

PROTECT THE CORRIDOR

3

Buy land early only through the proper federal path.
49 U.S.C. 5323(q) lets the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) help buy right-of-way before a project's environmental review is done. Nothing can be built on that land until review is complete, and the purchase is its own federal action with its own reviews.

LEAVE ROOM TO GROW

4

Reserve width for the final number of tracks, but build two first.
State safety rules require at least 15 ft (4.57 m) between main tracks (Oregon; Illinois sets the same between a main and a side track). California high-speed rail design uses 16.5 ft (5.03 m). The railroad that owns a shared line may require more.

LEAVE ROOM TO GROW

5

Build platforms for the longest future train.
Dallas (DART) lengthened platforms at 28 stations to 450 ft for 3-car trains. The total cost was about \$129M, with about \$60.8M federal. Lengthening later is expensive.

LEAVE ROOM TO GROW

6

Get express service from passing points before adding full tracks.
Caltrain built passing tracks at 2 locations and added centralized train control. That let "Baby Bullet" expresses (from 2004) cover San Francisco to San Jose in about 57 min, against about 90 min for locals.

LEAVE ROOM TO GROW

7

Add BRT passing lanes when bus volumes call for them.
A third-party reproduction of the BRT Standard's 2024 scorecard reports full credit without station passing lanes under about 20 buses an hour (to confirm with ITDP). ITDP's BRT Planning Guide notes that staggering a station's two platforms saves about 3.5 m (11.5 ft) of street width.

RUN IT IN THE OPEN

8

Publish open data from day one, with accessibility built in.
GTFS-Realtime best practice is to refresh at least every 30 s, keep vehicle data no older than 90 s, and keep alerts no older than 10 min. GTFS fields record whether each stop and each trip is wheelchair accessible, and a rider needs both.

RUN IT IN THE OPEN

9

Feed the network that exists, and stay flexible on regional rail.
LANTA EBS already runs every 15 min between Allentown and Bethlehem (since June 2023). The Lehigh Valley's Phase II rail study has not picked a route as of 2026-10-18. All 5 corridors studied in 2024 rely on Norfolk Southern freight lines.

RUN IT IN THE OPEN

10

Follow the federal steps and test ridership honestly.
Indiana's Double Track NWI rail project had to leave one FTA program in 2019 after ridership fell. It re-entered under another program (New Starts) in 2020 and won its grant agreement in January 2021.

Easy to reach by train: rail-ready siting

PROPOSAL

PLANNING PHASE

TODAY

Bethlehem has **no passenger trains**. The regional rail study (LVPC 2024 + Phase II) has not chosen a route or stations. All studied corridors use Norfolk Southern freight tracks, so any service needs the railroad's agreement, funding and approvals. **"Rail-ready" only means space is kept free.**

Terrain note. There is no grade survey yet for South Mountain or Mountaintop, and rail grade limits were not verified **TO CONFIRM**. Whether rail could climb to Mountaintop is a hypothesis for a future profile survey; that is one reason the plan proposes a gondola (Goodman, Mountaintop / Iacocca Hall, Asa Packer).

SITING RULE (PROPOSAL)

1. Everything this plan proposes sits at a Connect stop or within ~10 min walk of one.

2. The biggest draws cluster at the 3 proposed stops on the rail-ready valley corridor (I-78 Park & Ride, Third Street/SteelStacks, Farrington Square) and at Wind Creek, an evaluated destination on the Valley Express option.

3. Mountaintop is ~190 m above Farrington Square, too steep for a conventional train (see terrain note), so the Spine links it to a rail-ready stop in ~9 min (the gondola option adds a second way).

4. A future train stop would be added at an existing Connect station, sharing platform area, shelter, bike parking, chargers and signs.

5. Keep the corridor clear and keep rail-trails open.

MEASURED (PROPOSED STATION POINTS)

Walk to the nearest rail-ready stop

- Dig & Discover main gallery: **at** the Third St stop
- National Museum of Industrial History (602 E. 2nd St): ~6 min (0.4 km) to Third St
- SteelStacks Visitor Center: ~9 min (0.7 km)
- Lehigh University Center: ~11 min (0.8 km) to Farrington Sq
- Historic Union Station building: ~11 min (0.9 km) to Farrington (reference only; not proposed as a station)

Connect ride to a rail-ready stop: Downtown ~3 min · St. Luke's ~4 · Hellertown ~5 · Moravian ~7 · Mountaintop / Iacocca Hall ~9 · North Bethlehem ~9 · Goodman ~9 · North expansion to Bethlehem Square (if demand) ~20.
Walks measured on the Overture pedestrian network at 80 m/min to proposed station points; ride times are planning estimates.

Rule 8: the open standards (and how Project OS would use them, p. 5)

Open standard	What it's for · status	Use in Project OS (in development)
GTFS Schedule	Routes, stops, timetables, special-day calendars · industry standard	League-day trips as ordinary scheduled trips with special-day dates
GTFS-Flex	On-demand or zone service shown in trip planners · added 2024-03-19	Only truly on-demand shuttles, not fixed league shuttles
GTFS-Realtime	Live vehicles, predictions, alerts · refresh every 30 s or less, vehicle data ≤90 s old, alerts ≤10 min old	Live league-day information
GTFS-Fares v2 + rider categories	Fares, including youth fares · core adopted 2022-05-17; rider categories Feb 2025	Describe a youth or league fare <i>if</i> LANTA creates one
GTFS accessibility fields	Wheelchair access at each stop and on each trip (a rider needs both) · in the spec	Accessible venue routing
GBFS 3.x	Bike-share and scooter-share availability · v3.0 released 2024-04-11	Last-mile trips to fields
MDS 2.x / CDS	City oversight of permitted operators; curb zones · MDS 2.0 May 2023; CDS 1.0 TO CONFIRM	Only if the City permits mobility operators

Reuse it anywhere

PROPOSAL

Connect's corridor method is a reusable transit kit: existing streets first; stops at least 400 m apart (*our judgment*); a road-class rule that keeps routes on main roads; existing depots and garages before anything new. Another town, campus, region or country could copy the method, the templates and the checklists. Local agencies, owners and engineers would decide.

Beyond Bethlehem: an aim, not a plan or a promise. The same method could repeat in other Pennsylvania towns, across the US (for example the Midwest) and worldwide. Nothing is chosen or funded, and no place outside Bethlehem has been approached.

What stays local, and how a copy starts

Checked in each place: land, owners, permits, laws, climate, language, currency and units.

Place details live in data and settings files: one settings file sets the region for the measurement scripts, and the station points and lines are in named scripts, so a new place writes its own. Templates and checklists carry no contact details or private data, and no people's names except the author's credit. A copy starts at "idea", with every approval "not requested".

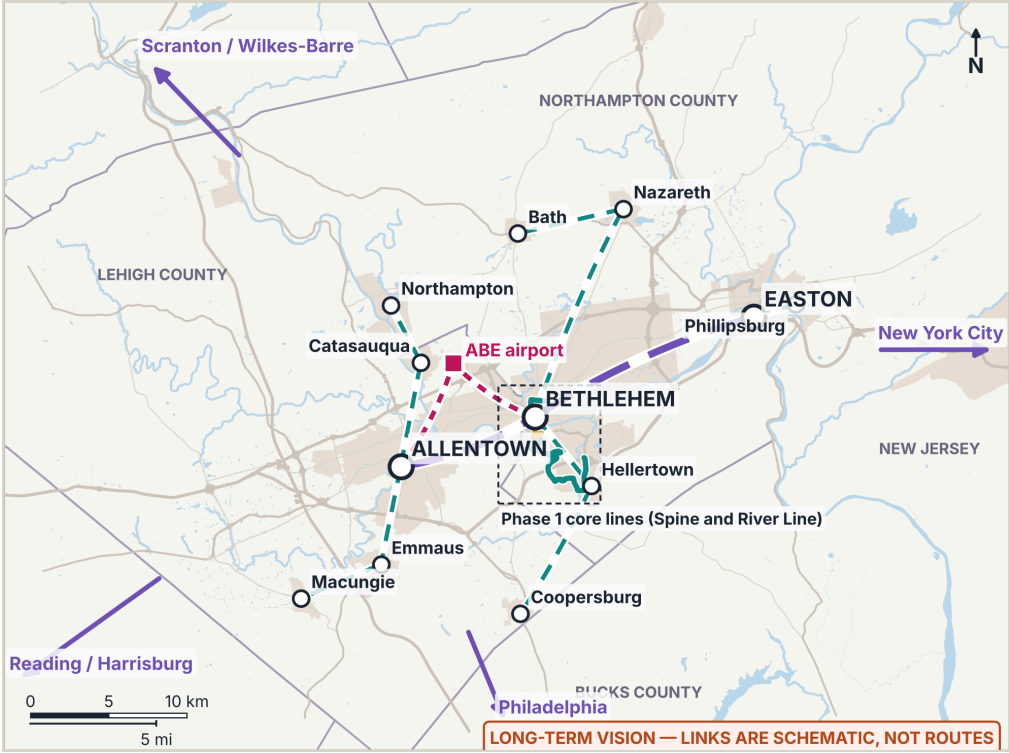
Natural energy only: the author's aim (21 Oct 2026)

Energy would come only from natural sources: **solar**; **wind**; **hydro**, only where permitted, with fish passage and reviews; **geothermal**; **heat recovery**. It would be stored in batteries, thermal storage, or pumped storage where the land allows. Power would cross the grid only under the utility's (PPL's) and Pennsylvania's rules.

An aim, not something secured: no energy supply, site or utility agreement exists, and nothing is funded. This plan does not call today's grid power renewable. It proposes no natural-gas or diesel-hybrid buses, even as a fallback: if chargers or winter range are not proven in time, the start would wait (*our judgment from that aim*).

Bethlehem Connect is an independent plan by David Fischbarg, in the planning phase. It is not engineered or funded. Facts are as of 18 Oct 2026. Sources are on page 6.

LONG-TERM VISION — NOT A COMMITMENT



--- Allentown–Bethlehem–Easton link (today's EBS bus corridor; schematic)

- - - Town-to-town links (ideas; some overlap Phase 2 options)

..... To ABE (from Bethlehem: Airport Link, a Phase 1 option) ➡ Toward cities beyond the map

— Dashed box: Phase 1 core lines

Schematic, not to scale; links are ideas, not routes. **Line styles show the kind of link, not its status** (see tables). Base: Overture Maps 2026-09-23.1 (© OpenStreetMap contributors).

B(iii). Park to park: "Park Link" PROPOSAL

Transit stops at trailheads, plus seasonal weekend shuttles from Connect or EBS stops. **Each park manager listed would have to agree, and none has.** Entries: manager · what's there (verified) · → idea.

Saucon Rail Trail · Saucon Rail Trail Oversight Commission (Hellertown, Lower Saucon, Upper Saucon, Coopersburg); 30-year SEPTA lease from 2009. About 7.5 mi of crushed stone, Hellertown to Coopersburg (Upper Bucks Rail Trail link TO CONFIRM). → **Spine stop at the Hellertown trailhead**

South Bethlehem Greenway · City of Bethlehem. Paved linear park on a former rail line; about 1.2 mi gap to the Saucon Rail Trail. → **Stops at Lehigh and the South Side; a trail loop once the gap opens**

Saucon Park · City of Bethlehem. On Williams St along Saucon Creek; repaired after Hurricane Ida and reopened 2025-04-10 (\$200K state grant). → **Weekend stop on the Spine**

Monocacy Way · City of Bethlehem. \$441K state grant (Sept 2022) for about 1.48 mi from Schoenersville Rd to the D&L Trail. → **Moravian/Downtown stop**

Sand Island / D&L Trail (Bethlehem) · City of Bethlehem (Sand Island); D&L National Heritage Corridor (trail). Canal-side trail across the river from SteelStacks. → **River Line/Third St proposed stop, near the Bethlehem Commons idea**

D&L Trail (regional) · Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor. About 165 mi when finished (Mountain Top to Bristol); Lehigh Valley Gap about 7 mi. → **Trail-to-transit stops along the River Line**

Hugh Moore Park (Easton) · City of Easton. 520 acres; National Canal Museum; *Josiah White II* mule-drawn canal boat; rentals June–October. → **Seasonal shuttle from the Valley Express or EBS Blue Line**

Lehigh Parkway (Allentown/Salisbury Twp) · City of Allentown. More than 500 acres (sources give 542 or 629) along the Little Lehigh Creek. → **Seasonal shuttle from EBS**

Trexler Nature Preserve · Lehigh County. 1,495 acres; Lehigh Valley Zoo inside; about 18 mi of trails. → **Seasonal weekend shuttle**

Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center · PA Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR). 1,168 acres; Henry's Woods old-growth forest; \$720K creek restoration (2025). → **Seasonal shuttle**

B(i). Town to town, inside the Lehigh Valley

Pair	Today	Long-term idea	Status
Allentown ↔ Bethlehem	LANTA EBS Green and Blue Lines share this stretch, together a bus every 15 min (since June 2023)	River Line: the EBS core upgraded to Third St/SteelStacks, with timed transfers; Phase 2 Allentown corridor option, only if LANTA agrees; later, valley rail	OPERATING bus · PROPOSAL River Line, Phase 2
Bethlehem ↔ Easton	EBS Blue Line runs Easton–Allentown–Bethlehem–Trexlerstown (frequency east of Bethlehem TO CONFIRM)	Phase 2 corridor option, only if LANTA agrees; Park Link to Hugh Moore Park	OPERATING bus · PROPOSAL Phase 2
South Bethlehem ↔ Whitehall	EBS Green Line, numbered Route 100 since 2025 (Wind Creek to Whitehall Central/Walmart)	Timed transfers with the Connect Spine at Downtown/South Side	OPERATING
South Bethlehem ↔ Hellertown	LANTA local bus (route TO CONFIRM). Trail gap of about 1.2 mi between the South Bethlehem Greenway and the Saucon Rail Trail	Connect Spine: Lehigh, Hellertown, I-78 Park & Ride, with a trailhead stop	Bethlehem approved buying 11.8 acres for \$4.3M to close the gap (Oct 2024; one report says \$6.2M). Construction start not confirmed. Spine: PROPOSAL
Hellertown ↔ Coopersburg	Saucon Rail Trail, about 7.5 mi, Hellertown to Coopersburg	Park Link stop at the Hellertown trailhead (Water Street Park)	OPERATING trail (first phase opened 2011)
Third St ↔ Wind Creek ↔ Rt 412 ↔ I-78 P&R	EBS Green/Route 100 serves Wind Creek	Valley Express bus on a "rail-ready" corridor	PROPOSAL (Phase 1 option)
Bethlehem ↔ ABE airport	LANTA serves ABE (current routes TO CONFIRM). Trans-Bridge buses to Newark Airport leave from ABE	First, better information on existing service; then the Airport Link bus (7.99 km, ~13.5 min, model); later, ultra-express	PROPOSAL · Airport Link: Phase 1 option, separate from LANTA and Trans-Bridge
Allentown ↔ Coplay/Catasauqua (north)	D&L Trail has an open gap of about 7 mi (the "Lehigh Valley Gap")	Trail-to-transit stops once the gap closes	FUNDED / IN PROGRESS \$7M in 2022 (\$5M state conservation agency DCNR + \$2M other state funds). Closing projected around 2036

B(ii). City to city, across Pennsylvania and beyond

City	Today	Long-term idea	Status (as of 2026-10-18)
New York City	Trans-Bridge bus to Port Authority Bus Terminal (current Bethlehem stop TO CONFIRM)	Now: timed transfers to intercity buses. Later: connect to whichever rail route Phase II picks	STUDIED The 2024 study found NYC via Hackettstown about 2.5 h, via High Bridge about 2 h 20 min. No route picked, no funding. Amtrak's 2021 vision included Allentown–NY. Norfolk Southern refused passenger trains in 2016 and in 2021 said it did not intend to take part
Newark Airport	Trans-Bridge from ABE since 2025-09-08 (launch fare \$54.45, since raised)	None; existing service only	OPERATING bus
Philadelphia	Intercity buses (Fullington, Klein/OurBus, Martz; Greyhound from Easton); Trans-Bridge to Doylestown with a transfer to SEPTA rail. Schedules date from about 2019 TO CONFIRM	Same rail approach as NYC	STUDIED Via Lansdale about 1 h 46 min; via Norristown about 1 h 52 min. Now in Phase II
Reading	No direct rail	Valley rail could link to Reading's own Philadelphia project	STUDIED Allentown–Reading about 46 min (2024). Reading–Philadelphia: Amtrak agreement signed 2026-07-15; federal planning step 2 is next. No service or funding
Scranton / Wilkes-Barre	No Lehigh Valley rail. The D&L Trail north is not continuous. Intercity bus TO CONFIRM	Trail link north along the D&L	Scranton–NYC rail runs through the Poconos and bypasses the Lehigh Valley; service no sooner than 2028. The D&L segment to Mountain Top is targeted for the end of 2026
Harrisburg	No rail; bus operators TO CONFIRM	None yet	Not among the 5 corridors studied

Regional rail reality

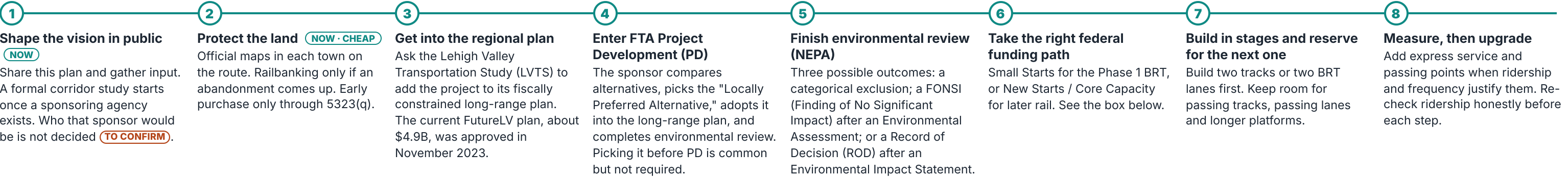
- 2024 study:** 5 corridors, all on Norfolk Southern lines. Estimated capital cost \$450M–\$739M, and 10–12 years to complete. STUDIED
- Phase II study:** \$400K (\$300K state, \$100K Lehigh County), taking 12–16 months. Northampton County declined its \$225K share.
- What this means** (*our judgment*): keep the Valley Express "rail-ready" corridor as a hedge, not a commitment.

Possible regional partners (none has agreed)

Lehigh Valley Greenways: one of 8 DCNR "Conservation Landscapes." The D&L Corridor runs its mini-grants, which gave \$100,000 to 12 projects in 2025. **Walk/RollLV:** the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission's (LVPC) regional walking and biking plan (baseline figures TO CONFIRM).

Park Link precedents, all TO CONFIRM: LA Metro's Transit to Parks plan (2019), King County's Trailhead Direct (2018), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)-documented Mt. Wilson Express shuttle (2025), and the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad's Bike Aboard.

THE PLANNING SEQUENCE, STEP BY STEP

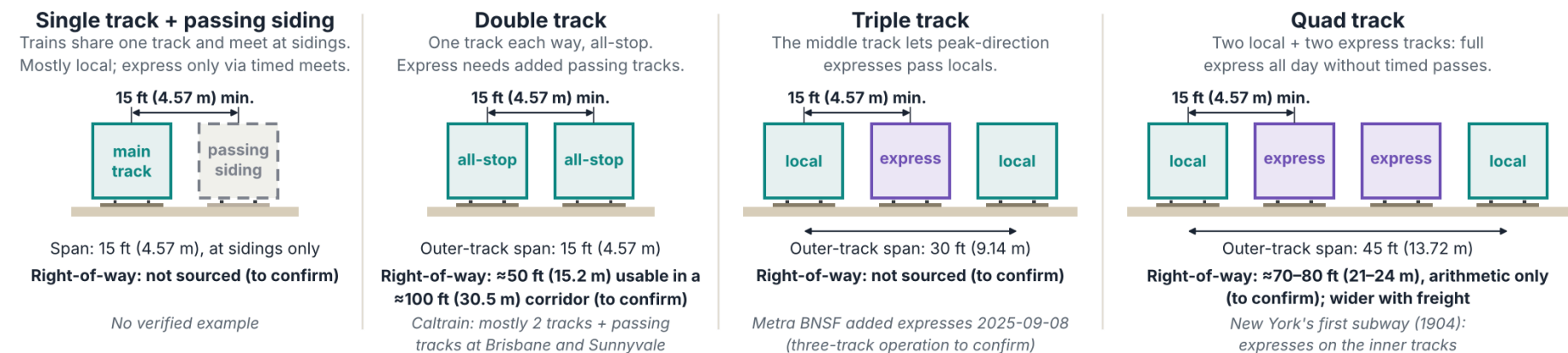


STEP 6 · TWO FEDERAL FUNDING PATHS
Small Starts, a likely fit for the Phase 1 BRT (eligibility **TO CONFIRM**): PD leads straight to a Small Starts Grant Agreement, with no Engineering phase. FTA expects "sufficient progress" within 3 years, including commitments for at least half of the non-federal-program capital.
New Starts or Core Capacity, for later rail: PD must finish within 2 years, then the Engineering phase, then a Full Funding Grant Agreement.

REAL EXAMPLE · DOUBLE TRACK NWI (SOUTH SHORE LINE COMMUTER RAIL, INDIANA)
Plan adopted May 2017 → Environmental Assessment published 2017-09-21 → FONSI 2018-11-01 → **left the Core Capacity program in February 2019 after ridership declined** → re-entered as New Starts in February 2020 → grant agreement signed January 2021.

Track configurations, side by side (schematic cross-sections, not designs)

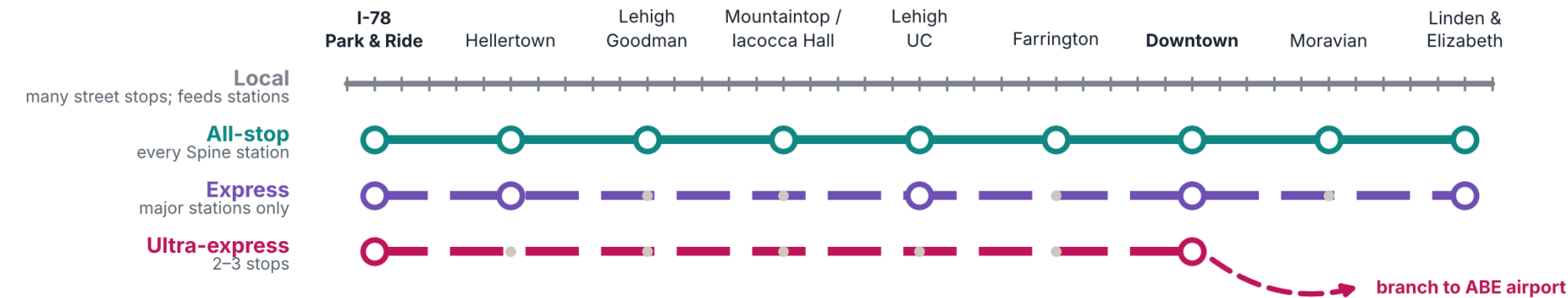
Track centers drawn at 15 ft (4.57 m), a state safety MINIMUM (Oregon; Illinois sets the same between a main and a side track), not a design value. Right-of-way labels are illustrative.



Spacing caveat. These spacings are state safety minimums for railroad workers, not passenger-rail design standards. The railroad that owns a shared line may require more. Curves need extra space: Oregon adds 1.5 in (3.8 cm) per degree of curvature. California high-speed rail uses 16.5 ft (5.03 m), giving outer spans of 33 ft (10.06 m) triple and 49.5 ft (15.09 m) quad. **Light rail** track centers of about 14 ft (4.27 m) are used in LA and Minneapolis studies **TO CONFIRM**. Where passenger trains share a corridor with freight, a 65 ft (19.8 m) separation figure is cited **TO CONFIRM**. *Our judgment:* reserve the right-of-way for the most tracks the corridor might ever need. Build two tracks first, and add passing tracks at a few planned stations before adding any full extra track.

Stopping patterns on the Connect Spine: who stops where

Express trips skip stations and need room to pass all-stop vehicles: passing lanes at BRT stations, or passing tracks on rail.



Lesson from SEPTA: SEPTA dropped "A/B skip-stop" service in 2020 as ridership grew; it had applied to only 8 stations, during two one-hour peak windows. For a growing line, frequent all-stop service plus a separate express is the safer pattern (*our judgment, not a universal rule*).

The BRT version: passing lanes at stations

One lane each way · 3.5 + 3.5 = 7.0 m (23.0 ft) between stations

3.5	3.5
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Center station, no passing · 3.0 + 5.0 + 3.0 = 11.0 m (36.1 ft) · all-stop; enough below ~20 buses/h

stop 3.0	platform 5.0	stop 3.0
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Passing lanes at a center station · 18.0 m (59.1 ft) before separators · expresses pass stopped buses

pass 3.5	stop 3.0	platform 5.0	stop 3.0	pass 3.5
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Staggered (offset) platforms · ≈14.5 m (47.6 ft): about 3.5 m (11.5 ft) narrower, but twice as long · full passing

pass 3.5	stop 3.0	platform 5.0	lane 3.0
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Metres. Illustrative sums of ITDP BRT Planning Guide values **TO CONFIRM**; the 3.5 m saving from staggering is verified.

- Scoring:** the BRT Standard (2024 scorecard) gives up to 3 points for passing lanes at stations. Corridors under about 20 buses an hour get full points without them. Express, limited and local services are scored separately.
- Bogotá's TransMilenio** (design features only): measured at about 43,000 passengers per hour per direction. Researchers credit multiple platforms per station, passing lanes, level boarding, paying before boarding, and a mix of express and local service. Far beyond anything Bethlehem would need.
- Our judgment, with arithmetic:* a bus every 6 min each way is 10 buses an hour, so early Spine service would not need station passing lanes. Reserve the space anyway.

Four tiers, one corridor **PROPOSAL**

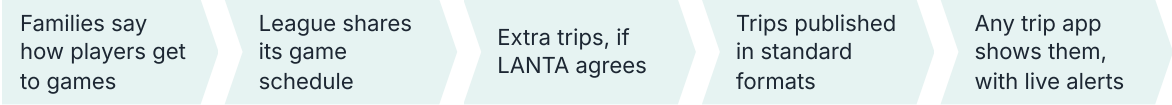
Tier	Where it stops · who it's for · how it passes	Real example
Local	Many closely spaced street stops; feeds Spine stations · short neighborhood trips · doesn't need to pass	LANTA local routes
All-stop	Every Spine or River Line station · the everyday backbone · doesn't need to pass	SEPTA's Market-Frankford Line went all-stop in 2020; peak trains at former skip-stop stations went from every 8 to every 4 min
Express	Major stations only · longer trips across Bethlehem · passing lanes (BRT) or passing tracks (rail)	Caltrain Baby Bullet: 7 stops, about 57 min against about 90 min for locals
Ultra-express	2–3 stops, e.g. I-78 Park & Ride, Downtown, ABE · commuters and airport trips · passing points, or runs when locals aren't in the way	Metra BNSF: inbound morning expresses stop Lisle to Downers Grove, then run nonstop to Chicago (2025)

D · LEHIGH LEAGUES AND TRANSIT PROPOSAL

Lehigh Leagues is a student-run recreational sports initiative organized by the author: a separate project with its own approvals, not an official Lehigh University program. **Project OS** is the author's separate coordination software: in development, not yet live, and not part of this plan's request. No transit agreement exists with LANTA, the City or any park.

Idea	How it would work	Real precedent or context	What it needs
League-day shuttles	Extra trips between stations and venues on tournament days	2026 Little League World Series, Williamsport PA: a free "Little League Express" ran Aug 19–30, courtesy of Little League International; return buses every 15 min; garage parking free with validation. An international televised event: it proves the model works but tells us nothing about demand or cost here	A sponsor to pay and an operator agreement
Game ticket or roster card as fare	Show league ID or a game ticket to ride	LA Metro's Dodger Stadium Express is free with a game ticket (season to confirm)	A LANTA board decision and someone to pay TO CONFIRM
Youth passes	Free or reduced fares for registered players	LANTA ID-based free-ride deals with Lehigh University and Allentown School District TO CONFIRM . GTFS fare data can describe a youth fare (rider categories, 2025) but cannot create one	A LANTA board decision; probably a federal fare-equity review (Title VI) TO CONFIRM
Venue links	Stops near the venues the leagues use	The leagues use mainly Lehigh campus venues (e.g., Goodman Campus fields, by the proposed Goodman stop), plus a planned Southside 3v3 at Yosko Park	Agreements with venue owners
Ask families first	A registration question: "How will your player get to games?"	No national figure for how kids get to sports was found	A question on the league sign-up form

A LEAGUE DAY, IF EVERY PIECE EXISTED



Project OS: what it would do, once live

A **back-end coordination layer, not a new rider app**. It would read league schedules, help plan extra trips, publish them in standard formats so any trip-planning app shows them, and pass along alerts. The open standards it would use, and their status, are in the table on page 2 (rule 8).

"Partner, don't build an app" is the trend elsewhere. Southeast Michigan's regional transit authority (Nov 2025) put five agencies in the Transit app, with \$800K from the state DOT for 3 years of free premium access. Intercity Transit in Washington State did something similar in August 2026. Denver's RTD ended its free premium access in 2025, so these sponsorships cost money and can end.

Local starting point. LANTA's GTFS Schedule feed is listed in the public Mobility Database (ID ntd-30010). LANTA directs riders to the Transit app for real-time arrivals, but no public open real-time feed address was found: next step, ask LANTA for open access. No statewide PennDOT transit feed was found TO CONFIRM.

Privacy rules PROPOSAL (1) Collect the minimum; no location histories of players. (2) Never publish anyone's individual trips; publish only totals. (3) Treat minors' data as extra-sensitive: get parent consent, and check the federal children's privacy law (COPPA, under 13) before collecting anything TO CONFIRM. (4) Set retention limits; delete raw data on schedule. (5) Limit access and log who views data. (6) No selling data, no ad targeting. (7) Follow the NIST Privacy Framework (v1.1 was a draft in April 2025; whether it is final is not confirmed) and the NUMO/NABSA/OMF Privacy Principles for Mobility Data TO CONFIRM. (8) Sign data-sharing agreements before any data flows. None exist yet.

E · DIG & DISCOVER: A MUSEUM OF WHAT WE FIND (IF WE FIND IT) PROPOSAL

"The geology and history of the line, shared freely."

Phase 1 is mostly surface work (paving, curbs, shelters, utilities) and will turn up little. Deep digging would come only with long-term rail or subway work and gondola tower foundations, which are also only proposals. So the museum starts small and grows only if real finds happen. **We do not promise minerals, gems or jewels**; no source suggests gem-quality deposits along the corridor. Nothing has been dug up and nothing has been discovered.

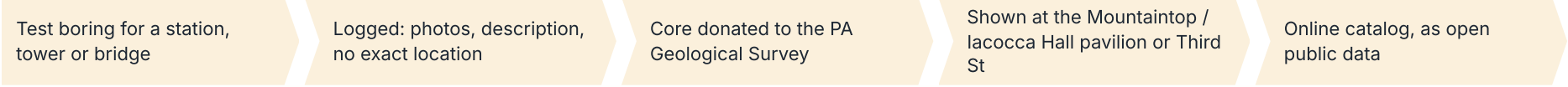
WHERE IT WOULD GO · DECIDED BY THE PROJECT AUTHOR

Main gallery: Third Street / SteelStacks proposed stop
At **street level**, not underground: the stop is flood-exposed (source: p. 6). The National Museum of Industrial History (602 E. 2nd St), ~6 min walk (p. 2), is a potential partner; none has agreed.

Rock-core display: Mountaintop / Iacocca Hall station
At the station's geology pavilion (the author's proposal), separate from the Mountaintop Discovery Gardens, which has no transit or museum components.

Optional below-grade gallery: Downtown
Only if the Bethlehem Hub's below-grade passage is ever built for transit reasons. **No digging just for a museum.**

FROM BORING TO EXHIBIT



Who owns finds, and the legal process

Situation	Who owns it / what applies
Land the Commonwealth owns or controls	The Commonwealth. Specimens stay state property "for scientific and public education" (37 Pa.C.S. §506). The state historical commission (PHMC) is in charge; digging without a permit is an offense (§511)
State agency, town or authority projects, or with state help	Must cooperate with PHMC and notify it first. PHMC decides within 15 days whether a survey is needed; the survey must finish within 60 days (§507). PHMC cannot survey private land without the owner's consent
Private land	Generally the landowner, unless law or an agreement says otherwise (Pennsylvania guidance TO CONFIRM). Donation is by deed of gift; PHMC provides sample gift agreements
Minerals	Mineral rights can be separated from the surface, so ownership depends on each parcel's deeds. The law is unsettled: a 2025 state Supreme Court ruling (Proctor) was undone by 2026 legislation that faces court challenges. That case concerned oil and gas, not dug-up rock
Federally funded projects (e.g. FTA)	Federal historic review (NHPA Section 106) with PA's SHPO, under 36 CFR 800. Finds made after review follow 36 CFR 800.13 and the project's agreement. Curation should meet 36 CFR Part 79 where the agreement requires it (that rule binds federally owned collections). The State Museum of PA publishes curation guidelines (2006)
Human remains and burial objects	Separate rules. Not displayed. Tribal consultation under Section 106 (specifics TO CONFIRM)
Engineering cores	Belong to the project owner or contractor, and are often thrown away (<i>our judgment</i>). Write donation to the PA Geological Survey into contracts

Note: Pennsylvania keeps archaeological site maps confidential (§506(c)). A public catalog must not show exact find locations.

What digging could realistically turn up

What	Likelihood (<i>our judgment</i>) and notes
Rock cores from engineering test borings	Likely whenever stations, towers or bridges are designed. Mapped local rock includes the Leithsville Formation (gray dolomite with sandy and cherty layers, on Hardyston quartzite, under Allentown dolomite); Reading Prong crystalline rock near Hellertown TO CONFIRM . Check against the actual route
Soil and rock from excavation	Some in Phase 1; much more only with long-term rail or tunnels. Sinkhole-prone limestone ("karst") needs careful testing (local karst data TO CONFIRM)
Industrial-era objects and fill	Possible near the former Bethlehem Steel site
Colonial-era and earlier archaeology	Possible near the Moravian World Heritage district and Monocacy Creek. Needs early review by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and attention to the World Heritage listing
Human remains	Possible near historic burial grounds. Never displayed. Avoid God's Acre cemetery
Gems or jewels	Not expected. No source suggests any

"Give back" principles PROPOSAL

(1) **Free to see**, if a host or funder covers display and catalog costs (none identified yet). (2) **Public finds stay public**; never sold. (3) **Every find logged as open public data**, with care: photos and descriptions, no exact locations. (4) **Donate the cores** to the PA Geological Survey library. (5) **Respect the dead**: no display; reburial with descendant and Tribal input. (6) **Budget curation from day one**; it is a project cost (*our judgment*). (7) **Local first**: rotating displays with Bethlehem partners, plus **school programs**. (8) **No promises we can't keep**: a permanent museum only after real finds and partner agreements.

Potential partners (none has agreed): National Museum of Industrial History (602 E. 2nd St; Smithsonian Affiliate); Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites and the Moravian Museum (UNESCO World Heritage site since 2024-07-26); Lehigh University; ArtsQuest/SteelStacks; the State Museum of Pennsylvania, as repository; the PA Geological Survey core library (about 100,000 ft of core; Middletown).

First steps that need no digging: a "Geology of the Line" web page; a pop-up "Cores & Stories" display at one station; a conversation with Lehigh about the President engine house. **Closest model:** the NY Transit Museum's Second Avenue Subway exhibit (2017), which showed a tunnel-boring-machine cutting disk and a rock core sample.

A and C · Planning, corridors, tracks, BRT

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• Right-of-way widths for any configuration

• Rail grade limits and Mountaintop grades

• Platform-length standards for commuter rail

• The exact statute text of MPC Article IV

• Whether the Phase 1 BRT qualifies for Small Starts

• LANTA's current routes to Hellertown and ABE

• LANTA's youth and ID fare deals

• Trail-shuttle precedents

• Aspen Institute youth-sports transportation figures

• Local karst inventory details

• National Register status of the President engine site
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MORE EVIDENCE FOR PAGE 5 (MUSEUM), MOVED HERE FOR SPACE

Real local mineral heritage (no digging needed). **Sauconite**, a zinc clay mineral, is named for the Saucon Valley; its "type locality" (where it was first described) is the Ueberroth mine near Friedensville. It was named in 1875 and restudied in 1946. The mine's **"President" pumping engine** started in 1872; it was billed as the largest of its type in North America and reportedly pumped 12,000–17,000 gallons a minute. It stopped around 1891 and was scrapped in 1900. **The engine house still stands on Lehigh University property**. It was not open to the public as of 2018; a state historical marker was approved by 2023, and Lehigh was studying stabilization and access. National Register listing reported by Upper Saucon Township as approved 2025-10-07 **(TO CONFIRM)**.

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Project files

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