

# City of Pittsburgh

Report to City Council



Commission on Infrastructure Asset  
Reporting and Investment

June 5, 2024

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The Honorable President and Members of Council  
City-County Building, Fifth Floor  
414 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear President and Members of Council:

Attached is the first report issued by the City of Pittsburgh's Commission on Infrastructure Asset Reporting and Investment. This report is submitted in accordance with Ordinance 7 of 2022, which tasks the Committee to "report and present its findings, guidance, and recommendations to City Council" at least twice a year.

The Commission has held three formal meetings. There is still a great deal of work ahead to ensure the proper upkeep of the City's infrastructure, but we believe that we are moving in the right direction. We are proud of what has been discussed thus far.

We look forward to discussing this report with you.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Patrick Cornell and Darrin Kelly in blue ink.

Patrick Cornell & Darrin Kelly  
Co-Chairs

## Introduction

On February 1, 2022, Mayor Ed Gainey and Councilman Corey O'Connor announced legislation to establish the Commission on Infrastructure Asset Reporting and Investment. This Commission was established when City Council passed [Ordinance 7 of 2022](#), which created [Chapter 179H](#) of the Pittsburgh Code.

As set in Code, the purpose and duties of the Commission are:

1. To provide recommendations to the Mayor and City Council and advise the same on best practices for both short- and long-term investment in the upkeep and improvement of major City-maintained infrastructure assets, such as tunnels, major roadways, infrastructure affected by or at risk of being affected by landslides, etc., including, but not limited to, recommendations for City Code, procurement, future budgets, budgetary obligations and priorities, and departmental policies;
2. To identify and report the full scope of investment needed to achieve and maintain a state of good repair of City assets;
3. To provide recommendations and review to the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure as it meets the requirements of the Pittsburgh Code at Title One: Administrative, Article III: Organization, Chapter 118: Department of Mobility and Infrastructure, [Section 118.03: Infrastructure Asset Reporting](#);
4. To help to assemble existing asset conditions needed to enable the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure to fulfill reporting obligations under the Pittsburgh Code at Title One: Administrative, Article III: Organization, Chapter 118: Department of Mobility and Infrastructure, [Section 118.03: Infrastructure Asset Reporting](#);
5. To identify related matters which may impact the mission of the Commission, including, but not limited to, the Transportation Improvement Program, infrastructure funding, labor market conditions, and supply chain conditions; and
6. To produce work and recommendations guided and informed by Pittsburgh's Ten Commitments of Racial Equity, as enumerated and codified in City Council Resolution No. 326 of 2020.

The Commission is required to submit its agenda and minutes to City Council, the Controller, and the Mayor of the City of Pittsburgh. Twice a year, the Commission must report and present its findings, guidance and recommendations to City Council. This document is the first such report.

## Membership

The composition of the Commission is set in City Code. The 21 named representatives are appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. Members serve for four-year terms.

Current membership is as follows:

- One (1) representative of City Council, to be recommended by the City Council President and communicated to the Mayor: **Erika Strassburger**
- One (1) representative of the Mayor: **Lisa Frank**
- One (1) representative of the City Controller: *Not yet filled*
- One (1) representative of the Office of Management and Budget: **Patrick Cornell**

- Two (2) representatives of the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure:
  - **Eric Setzler**
  - **Zachary Workman**
- One (1) representative of the Department of Public Works: **Chris Hornstein**
- One (1) representative of the Department of Public Safety: **Darryl Jones**
- One (1) representative of the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections: **Joshua Evans (pending)**
- Two (2) representatives of organized labor:
  - **Darrin Kelley**
  - *Not yet filled*
- Two (2) representatives of the construction industry:
  - **Greg Bernarding**
  - **Tom Melisko**
- One (1) representative of the National Society of Black Engineers: *Not yet filled*
- One (1) representative of A. Philip Randolph Institute: **DeWitt Walton (pending)**
- One (1) representative of Southwestern Pennsylvania Engineering Outreach: *Not yet filled*
- One (1) representative of the African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania: **Doris Carson Williams**
- Four (4) at-large representatives, as determined by the Mayor:
  - **Michele Miller Beener**
  - **Sam Miclot**
  - **Andy Waple**
  - **Tyler Watts**

In addition, the Commission invited **Lou Ruzzi**, an engineer from WSP USA to serve on an ad hoc basis “to address relevant issues.”

## Meetings

The Commission has had one informal meeting and three formal meetings:

- **Introductory Meeting [non-formal gathering]** | October 18, 2023: [Minutes](#)
- **Q4 2023** | December 5, 2023: [Agenda](#), [Minutes](#)
- **Q1 2024** | March 19, 2024: [Agenda](#), [Minutes](#)
- **Q2 2024** | May 8, 2024: [Agenda](#), [Draft Minutes](#)

The next meeting is currently scheduled for August 13, 2024, at 3:30pm on the Sixth Floor of the City-County Building.

## Defining “Infrastructure Asset”

Section 118.03(a)(1) of City Code requires the Commission to consult with the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (“DOMI”) to define “major City-Maintained Infrastructure Assets” so that the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure can issue its own report. The definition of what constitutes an

infrastructure asset for the purposes of the Commission is not perfectly clear. Code notes that the definition is to include, but is not limited to, “bridges, tunnels, major roadways, infrastructure affected by or at risk of being affected by landslides, etc.”. The first part of Section 118.03 refers to “poles” as relevant infrastructure.

During the May meeting, the Commission reviewed how other local, state, and federal governmental entities define infrastructure. Public definitions analyzed include: Cleveland, OH; Philadelphia, PA; Milwaukee, WI; St. Paul, MN; New York, NY; Los Angeles, CA; Maryland; New Jersey; North Carolina; Arizona; the White House; the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency; and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”). The review also included information from the American Society of Civil Engineers and the National Academy of Engineers. Taking these external definitions into account, the Commission will continue to formulate its own set of definitions to guide its work. A vote is expected in August.

- Action item 1: Formally define the infrastructure assets that the Commission and Department of Mobility and Infrastructure will study

### **Inventory and Investment Needs**

Once the scope is defined, work can begin in earnest to inventory the City’s infrastructure assets. A lot of the data already exists in City databases. Following the completion of the inventory, the Commission will review investment needs.

- Action item 2: Create or curate an inventory of the City’s infrastructure assets
- Action item 3: Research the conditions and investment needs of the City’s infrastructure inventory

### **Bridges**

After the collapse of the Fern Hollow bridge in January 2022, Mayor Gainey “assembled a team of experts and charged them with producing a comprehensive understanding of the state of our bridges, a list of immediate actions needed to address the most serious deficiencies, and a plan for ensuring every bridge is in a state of good repair.” With support from federal American Rescue Plan funding, the City engaged WSP and a team of five engineering firms to inventory the bridges, review reports, complete inspections, and make key recommendations. Several of these recommendations, like the request for additional funding to hire a dedicated bridge maintenance crew, were implemented for the 2024 fiscal year. Documents related to the Bridge Asset Management Program are available [online](#).

This Commission was also created as a reaction to the collapse of the Fern Hollow bridge. Given this high-profile event, discussion naturally focused on the City’s bridge program for the first several meetings. The primary goal was to improve understanding of the asset class. To accomplish this Lou Ruzzi, in his professional capacity and before he was asked to join as an ad hoc commissioner, spent nearly an entire meeting summarizing each of the major issued reports for the group. In addition, the two Commissioners representing DOMI have provided regular updates on continuing work, which is summarized below.

The City is making steady progress in completing its scheduled maintenance items, although bandwidth and funding issues continue to limit what can be done in 2024. As of the Commission's May meeting, the employees of the new DOMI bridge maintenance crew were hired, are working out of a repurposed Public Works facility, and have secured grant funds for key vehicles and pieces of equipment. The team's imminent activation should greatly accelerate the pace of maintenance going forward.

The consultant reports from the Bridge Asset Management Program cautioned the City against deferring maintenance items on the City's Transportation Improvement Program ("TIP") schedule. While Deference can save the City money in the short-term and help accommodate a busy maintenance schedule, it can expose the City to greater risk. In 2024, DOMI has taken responsibility to address fifteen maintenance items that the department planned to defer in 2023. According to the Chief Engineer, the pace of responding to maintenance needs far exceeds the pace at which bridge issues are being added to the existing list.

It is important to understand that simply completing maintenance items found during routine inspections is only the start of the path towards a state of good repair. More work is required to definitively keep bridges safe and useful throughout their maximum life cycle. Additional funding streams, either through the normal budget cycle or through external grant sources, must be identified before this is possible.

- Action item 4: Submit additional bridge budget recommendations to Mayor Gainey and City Council in advance of the release of the preliminary budget in September

## **Outreach**

Commissioners have had robust conversation about how to keep government officials, residents, and visitors informed on progress that the City is making with respect to its infrastructure. As part of this initiative, the Commission worked with DOMI to publish an interactive [dashboard](#) of bridge information.

Commissioners have been asked to familiarize themselves with major infrastructure projects by reviewing the budget, legislative record, and contracts and by attending public meetings and budget engagements. On-site visits to active projects may be arranged to further this understanding to equip Commissioners with the information needed to successfully engage the public.

- Action item 5: Increase the Commission's presence in the community and online

## **Conclusion**

The Commission on Infrastructure Asset Reporting and Investment is still in the early stages of meeting the objectives laid out for it in City Code. That being said, it is clear that after three meetings a strong foundation has been set for future work. The group functions well as a unit and reflects a diverse range of lived and professional experiences. This pooled knowledge will ensure that the City's infrastructure assets receive the attention that they deserve.

## **Acknowledgements**

The Commission would like to thank David Maynard, a Management Analyst in the Office of Management and Budget, for diligently working through the logistics needed for meetings. The Commission is also grateful to Alina Milan, an intern in the Office of Councilperson Erika Strassburger, for completing the comparative research to help define infrastructure.

## **Summary of Action Items**

1. Formally define the infrastructure assets that the Commission and Department of Mobility and Infrastructure will study
2. Create or curate an inventory of the City's infrastructure assets
3. Research the conditions and investment needs of the City's infrastructure inventory
4. Submit additional bridge budget recommendations to Mayor Gainey and City Council in advance of the release of the preliminary budget in September
5. Increase the Commission's presence in the community and online

**Appendix A: Key Bridge Metrics, 2023 and 2024**

City of Pittsburgh Bridge Asset Management 2023 Status – DOMI					Percentage of Items Complete: 36%	
0 = Must complete in 7 days 1 = Must complete in 6 months 2 = Must complete in 2 years		Completed	Already Scheduled in Work Order	Requested FY 23 Budget / 2nd Round Work Order	Deferred to TIP	Not Yet Completed
Priority 0s	27	27	0	0	0	0
Priority 1s	70	22	23	13	12	0
Priority 2s	60	7	1	0	13	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>39</b>

City of Pittsburgh Bridge Asset Management 2024 Status – DOMI					Percentage of Items Complete: 45%	
0 = Must complete in 7 days 1 = Must complete in 6 months 2 = Must complete in 2 years		Completed	Scheduled	In Progress	Deferred	Not Yet Completed
Priority 0s	27	27	0	0	0	0
Priority 1s	70	37	11	2	3	17
Priority 2s	60	7	6	2	7	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>55</b>