



Online Public Meeting

Questions and Answers

On March 6, 2017 the State Transportation Commission (STC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced the opening of the public comment period as part of the Twelve Year Program (TYP) update process. This compilation includes questions asked during the Online Public Meeting held on March 21, 2017. All questions are listed in the format received; however, inappropriate language and personal information has been removed. PennDOT has made every effort to respond to each question by email. Additional questions received during the comment period will be responded to in the order that they are received.

Safety

1. **Does PA have any plans to use the blue red running lights at the top of intersection lights to alert police of red light running offenses? These lights are used in VA. Also, does PA have plans to add more Traffic Signal Preemption lights to help keep emergency vehicles moving? I think it would be a great addition to help. There are many located near Pittsburgh and on US 22 they seem to work well. In Altoona there is one system near the hospital but with many narrow streets and turn and traffic backups. It would be something nice to incorporate as lights are replaced.**

In Pennsylvania, traffic signals are usually owned and operated by the local municipalities. If a municipality wishes to add a "Red-Signal Enforcement Light" (which is what FHWA refers to them as in FHWA-SA-09-005) it would be their decision not the Department's. Additionally, the Department would have no role in approving or permitting the enforcement light as it is not considered a traffic control device. Likewise, installation of Emergency Vehicle Preemption (EVP) at a signalized intersection is usually driven by the request/need of local emergency responders.

2. **Any plans toward a safety standard similar to a lot of European countries? Many of these countries have well surpassed US safety standards. They go beyond just studying problem intersections. They developed studies that actually plan for develop standards of general vehicle behavior.**

Safety is and always will be the highest priority for both the State Transportation Commission (STC) as well as PennDOT. Highway fatalities in PA are at their second lowest level since the 1920's; however, in 2015 1,200 fatalities occurred on PA highways. PennDOT continues to work aggressively toward a goal of zero deaths. PennDOT has taken on a multifaceted approach to dealing with safety that includes infrastructure improvements, education and outreach on behavioral aspects of safety, data analysis and support of emerging technology. This approach is documented in our 2017 Strategic Highway Safety Plan (<http://www.penndot.gov/TravelInPA/Safety/Pages/Strategic-Highway-Safety-Plan.aspx>) and is focused on supporting the "Toward Zero Deaths" initiative.



3. **With self-driving vehicles and an ever growing advances in technology. What about horse and buggies users? Where do they fit in?**

PA law specifically exempts certain vehicles from registration, including any vehicle moved solely by human or animal power. Accordingly, buggies fall under the vehicle exemption from registration. Just like pedestrians, technology will need to ensure it recognizes horse drawn buggies and take appropriate action to passing in a safe manner. PennDOT has taken a leadership role in developing policies surrounding the testing of automated vehicle technology, with public safety as its main priority. Automated vehicles are designed to detect slow moving objects on the shoulder and signage, such as the slow moving vehicle triangle on the back of a buggy.

4. **There are too many overweight trucks on the PA Turnpike. Can you add weight stations, especially on the Northeast Extension? The hills are steeper and the overweight trucks cannot maintain a safe speed.**

FHWA indicated that there is no restriction in Title 23 CFR to enforcing weights on the PA Turnpike since it is part of the Federal Interstate system. Also, the PA Turnpike Commission does allow trucks to operate at maximum weight up to 100,000 lbs. and maximum single axle weight up to 22,400 lbs. without obtaining a permit. Therefore, most weight limits and penalties currently set forth in Title 75 Chapter 49 are not applicable. A review of this item indicates that the only weight limits that could be enforced are 4943(a) for exceeding the manufacturer's GAWR and 4943(c) for violating the combination weight rating, when applicable. Currently, as Chapter 49 is written, there is no mechanism to write a weight violation for exceeding the 100,000 lbs. weight limit on the PA Turnpike.

5. **Can the PA Turnpike maintenance assist PennDOT Districts within a specified distance from interchanges during winter storm events? PA Turnpike resources are often sitting and waiting because the road is clear during and after a storm while local PennDOT Districts are still clearing state routes.**

In an effort to create efficiencies and reduce costs, Pennsylvania State Agencies such as the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and PennDOT are collaborating more than ever in terms of sharing services and facilities where it is feasible.

6. **Has there been any consideration given statewide to a program called Vision Zero? This program has been implemented in a number of communities and focuses on safe transportation for multimodal entities.**

The Department has supported a similar initiative for years called "Toward Zero Deaths". More information about our effort can be viewed in our 2017 Strategic Highway Safety Plan or on their national website (<http://www.towardzerodeaths.org/>).



7. **With the new VA hospital being built and the additional traffic for shopping and housing are there any plans to expand Rt 422 from Lyndora to Prospect? There is one light with multiple crashes at North Rd and Rt 422, therefore safety is an issue. Turning lanes would be great. Also, there is major congestion when the fairgrounds have events. Traffic can be backed up for about five miles to the Lyndora exit from the fairgrounds. General congestion has increased tremendously over the years since the new shopping area has been built. According to developers more is coming. What can be done to alleviate this congestion?**

Due to significant highway and bridge maintenance needs throughout PA and the high cost of widening projects, the STC and PennDOT must leverage funding in the most efficient way possible to improve traffic flow in PA. Your concern regarding congestion along SR 422 is noted. While no work is scheduled for the immediate future along SR 422, we highly encourage you to continue your efforts to work with your local representatives, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and PennDOT to identify improvements reduce congestion along the corridor.

8. **Are there any initiatives on the Twelve Year Program to enhance PA Rt 56 between Johnstown and Bedford, PA, to provide access to the Turnpike and I-99 near Bedford? This road is unsafe and in need of widening to bypass the smaller communities it currently goes through.**

Currently there are two efforts involving State Route 56 between Johnstown and Bedford. First is the application of a high-friction surface treatment at the Peggy Westover Curve; which has a projected start of construction by early summer of 2017. This treatment is a safety improvement designed to improve vehicular traction in the project area. The other effort is a Route 56 safety study that is currently underway. This study is examining safety improvement opportunities along the route between Windber and Pleasantville. The study is expected to conclude by early spring 2018. Recommendations from the study will be reviewed and considered for inclusion in a future Transportation Improvement Program.

9. **Are improvements for pedestrian safety being considered on the Twelve Year Program? For example, when it's necessary to cross roads like Rt 145 and Grape St when bus service isn't available. In addition, there are pedestrian issues at the Lehigh Valley Mall, especially when there is snow. Also, are there any existing pedestrian safety initiatives/partnerships that may exist in regards to public transit? Local residents walking to the LANTA transfer center to take a bus should feel safe.**

LANTA sees the transit-land use connection as a major item within the Lehigh Valley. As the Lehigh Valley has rapidly developed, and continues to develop, LANTA has made attempts to encourage the implementation of sidewalks and crosswalks with new developments taking place across its service territory. LANTA has positive working relationships with many of the municipalities in the service area, as well as the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Lehigh and Northampton Counties) and PennDOT Engineering District 5-0. LANTA frequently reviews and comments on land development proposals with the focus of improving pedestrian connections from the LANTA service to/from the developments. Sidewalks and other pedestrian safety improvements can be identified as part of transportation projects on the Twelve Year Program. In Pennsylvania, land development



is controlled at the local (municipal) level, and LANTA does not have a formal decision in whether or not sidewalks, crosswalks or other pedestrian amenities are installed. LANTA advises strongly for these improvements, public transportation riders are pedestrians before and after they use the transit system. LANTA is in favor of improving the pedestrian network in the service territory and the Lehigh Valley as a whole. LANTA would positively view any potential or future pedestrian safety initiatives/partnerships that may come about.

- 10. All citizens can make a difference in their communities. For example, my son passed away after a hit and run on New Falls Rd in Middletown, Bucks County. Five years prior to my son's death, this roadway had 15 pedestrian reported accidents and five fatalities. I am on a mission to help create a safe walking area on this roadway. On Feb 2016, we received notice that sidewalks will be installed on New Falls Rd.**

Safety is and always will be the highest priority for both the State Transportation Commission as well as PennDOT. Highway fatalities in PA are at their second lowest level since the 1920's; however in 2015 1,200 fatalities occurred on PA highways. PennDOT continues to work aggressively toward a goal of zero deaths. Safe walking routes are equally as important to the STC and PennDOT as our highways and bridges. PennDOT initiated a Walkable Communities program to help improve pedestrian safety by education, enforcement and safety improvements for pedestrian walkability within communities statewide.

- 11. Given the percentage of PA highways needing repair, what is the justification for spending more money on expansion of the system rather than maintenance? Also, what is being done to encourage local municipalities to zone for a maximum return on existing investments before we make additional (new) investments? To use the analogy from the presentation, we should not expand the house before we fix the roof.**

In Pennsylvania, nearly 92% transportation funds are designated for safety enhancements, bridge improvements, highway restoration and reconstruction. A little more than 3% of the funds programmed on the current Statewide Transportation Improvement Program are assigned to projects that will add capacity. PennDOT Connects is designed to increase collaboration with stakeholders and identify the needs of communities earlier in the project planning process. Communicating with our local partners earlier in the process increases the opportunities to improve safety, mobility and access to our communities.

- 12. Can a two way stop sign be put in at a location where a borough owned road meets a private residence road? The intersection referenced is Park Rd./Lark Dr. in Briar Creek Borough, Columbia County. This is a major intersection. There has been six accidents on Park Rd. in less than six months. Lark Dr. is the only way in or out of this private residence. There are up to seven school buses dropping off and picking up two times a day. Park Rd. has over 2,000 cars traveling it daily and it is also the home of a large Community park, several businesses and homes. I have been told that because of a code/code change in the MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) a two-way stop is not permitted at this location. Is this the case?**

A stop sign can be placed on Lark Drive. However, placing additional stop signs on Park Road is



not recommended. Park Road is being utilized as the through route. When placing multiple stop signs on a higher volume through route that intersects a low volume roadway, the driver tendency on the higher volume road is to begin ignoring the stop signs. This could result in a higher rate of crashes. The use of stop signs at private drive intersections with local roads is acceptable based on our statewide policy found in Pub. 212.106 and also in MUTCD, page 50. Warrants for multiway stop conditions are also found in Pub. 212.106 as well as the MUTCD, page 52. Based on the volumes described below, it would not appear that volume warrants would be met for a multiway stop. It is recommended that the municipality hire an engineer to do an official warrant analysis given the potential liability issues. There may be other factors contributing to crashes that would not be addressed by adding additional stop signs. Because these are local roads, the municipality may choose to modify traffic control in a manner they feel is appropriate.

13. What is being done to better control operations and safety on our Philadelphia area expressways and major arterial roadways?

Safety is and always will be the highest priority for both the State Transportation Commission (STC) as well as PennDOT. Highway fatalities in PA are at their second lowest level since the 1920's; however, in 2015 1,200 fatalities occurred on PA highways. PennDOT continues to work aggressively toward a goal of zero deaths. In PA, we do not build our way out of congestion. STC and PennDOT are considering other technological solutions, such as the timing of traffic lights, and promoting the use of alternative forms of transportation for both people and goods. PennDOT District 6-0's Regional Traffic Management Center uses the latest technology to actively and safely manage the Philadelphia area corridors through coordination and partnership with our municipalities, public transit and other regional agencies. PennDOT District 6-0 is also focusing efforts on the following operation initiatives for the Philadelphia region:

- 1) Work Zone Management
- 2) Special Event Management
- 3) Traffic Signal Synchronization
- 4) Ramp Meter Operations
- 5) Traffic Incident Management
- 6) Variable Speed Limits/queue detection warning systems/hard shoulder running and adaptive ramp metering for selected corridors such as I-76 in the future
- 7) Trail gap construction/additional real time information regarding parking at Park and Rides and other facilities



Transportation Projects

14. **There is a lot of attention on the roads, creating roundabouts and operating a safe transit system. Has consideration been given to testing the skills of the people operating them. Specifically, PA's older and beginner drivers can still cause congestion/safety concerns/etc. Smooth streets, upgraded bridges or a new road mapping app may not be all that is necessary for a confused elder or distracted young driver. Has consideration been given to retest drivers at a certain age?**

Each month, drivers over the age of 45 are chosen at random 7 months before their license renewal date and are required to undergo vision and physical examinations by healthcare providers of their choice. In the event the results of those exams suggest a need, the driver will also be required to complete a driver's skills examination. It is important to also mention that our young drivers are restricted when they are first learning to drive with items such as passenger restrictions, limited nighttime driving, and mandatory practice time as part of the learners permit requirement. PennDOT also encourages parents of young drivers to be involved and has partnered with Safe Roads Alliance to provide the Parent's Supervised Driving Program. This guide provides guidance on unique driving situations such as roundabouts, bicycles, motorcycles, etc.

15. **Skippack and Perkiomen residents have struggled for years with the intersection of Routes 113/29. There are two historic properties in this location. One is abandoned and only maintained for safety, but prevents the expansion of this intersection which is vital to the communities. The historic preservation of this particular property comes at the cost of heavy congestion for thousands of residents and limits access to our schools and businesses in the Perkiomen Valley. What specifically can be done regarding these properties to make it a viable location for state and federal funding?**

Given other immediate priorities and limited funding, there is currently nothing planned for the improvement of the intersection of PA 113 and PA 29, located within the Village of Rahns. Your concern is noted and we highly encourage you to continue your efforts to work with your local representatives, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and PennDOT to identify improvements. Should a project be programmed to improve traffic operations within the Village of Rahns, we would anticipate verifying the integrity of historic district (and/or any individually eligible properties) and developing an improvement project that reduces congestion while minimizing impacts (if any) to environmental resources (such as historic properties).

16. **With all the warehouses being built alongside I-78 and I-81 from New Jersey to Maryland, why hasn't PA expanded these interstates to three lanes. We keep adding more trucks to the roadways, but do not expand the roads. There no longer is room on our roads for cars. They are becoming more dangerous. PA has the highest gasoline taxes in the country, but no results on our roadways. Can something be done to improve the road surface on Rt 78 in Lehigh and Northampton County?**



We understand your concerns with increased development and traffic along the I-78 Corridor in Lehigh and Northampton Counties, and the potential need for additional lanes. However, Pennsylvania's Interstate needs far exceed the available funding resources. Reconstruction and widening projects are very expensive.

Currently, three projects are planned for I-78 in Lehigh County:

- The I-78 ramps at the Fogelsville exit (SR 100) will be extended east to merge with the I-78 auxiliary lanes. This will add capacity and reduce congestion. Construction is expected to begin this summer and be completed by summer of 2018.
- The driving lane of I-78 eastbound and westbound will be rehabilitated from the Adams Road overpass to the Berks county line. Construction will begin in August of this year and be completed by the summer of 2018.
- Design is underway for the resurfacing and slab stabilization of I-78 from State Route 3015 (Adams Road) overpass to Exit 57 (Lehigh Street). This project is expected to start construction in early 2020.

The Lehigh Valley Transportation Study and PennDOT will continue to coordinate and re-evaluate to see if additional lanes on I-78 are necessary, how it would prioritize against other Interstate needs statewide and if funding resources would be available.

17. Why is the perceived solution to traffic typically more or wider roads? The solution should include developing a truly modal transportation system, as well as collaborating with planners to help progress away from "sprawl" development.

In PA, we do not build our way out of congestion. STC and PennDOT are considering other technological solutions, such as the timing of traffic lights, and promoting the use of alternative forms of transportation for both people and goods. PA is also a leader in exploring Highly Automated Vehicles as an avenue to improve congestion and further break the cycle of induced demand. PennDOT Connects is designed to increase collaboration with stakeholders and identify the needs of communities earlier in the project planning process. Communicating with our local partners earlier in the process increases the opportunities to improve safety, mobility and access to our communities.



18. **PA 2006 is in need of repair, but is not scheduled for maintenance until 2023. The edges of the roadway have disintegrated in places leaving the road at less than minimum legal width, there are multiple areas where the road surface has peeled, there are potholes that often don't get fixed for months and in a few places the inadequate substrate has allowed the road to sink. PA 2006 is categorized as a secondary road, however the immediate maintenance issues, which also include lack of winter care (i.e. lack of adequate plowing), have now created a safety hazard and it is dangerous to drive on. I have attended the Pike County monthly PennDOT meeting. What else can be done to elevate this project on the Twelve Year Program?**

SR 2006, Log Tavern Road is scheduled for patching and sealcoating in 2017.

19. **Congestion is a sign of increased demand on highways for passengers and freight. It points to the need for alternatives to highways for both. The solution is not more or wider roads, but more transportation alternatives!**

Same answer as #8. In PA, we do not build our way out of congestion. STC and PennDOT are considering other technological solutions, such as the timing of traffic lights, and promoting the use of alternative forms of transportation for both people and goods. PA is also a leader in exploring Highly Automated Vehicles as an avenue to improve congestion and further break the cycle of induced demand. PennDOT Connects is designed to increase collaboration with stakeholders and identify the needs of communities earlier in the project planning process. Communicating with our local partners earlier in the process increases the opportunities to improve safety, mobility and access to our communities.

20. **Can the right lane on the TriBoro Expressway going west be made into a turning lane at the traffic light near Electric Ave in East Pittsburgh? The majority of cars turn right at this intersection. If one car goes straight ahead, remaining cars have to wait for the cycle of lights to run the course, which causes cars to back up on the hill. This intersection improvement could make traffic run smoother.**

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. No work is currently planned in this area, but it will be reviewed.

21. **What is being done to improve mobility in the District 6-0 metropolitan area?**

The PennDOT District 6-0 metropolitan area falls under Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) metropolitan planning organization (MPO). MPO's are required to integrate the congestion management process into the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Federal Act (FAST). The Congestion Management Process (CMP) is a systematic process that performs analyses of the regional transportation network, identifies congested corridors and multimodal strategies to mitigate the congestion, and evaluates the effectiveness of implemented strategies. Where more single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) road capacity is appropriate, the CMP includes potential supplemental strategies to reduce travel demand, improve operations, transit improvements and get the most long-term value from the investment. The CMP also identifies emerging/regionally significant corridors where proactive steps are especially important to prevent congestion from



developing, and inexpensive strategies that are appropriate everywhere. Over the next four years, significant funding will be invested to improve mobility:

- \$612 million for road capacity improvements highlighted by State Route 322 in Delaware county from I-95 to Route 1, State Route 1 from Old Lincoln Highway to PA Route 213 in Bucks County, US 202 from Norristown to Montgomeryville in Montgomery County and I-95 reconstruction through Philadelphia County.
- \$896 million for Intersection/Bottleneck improvements and new interchange connections: including the new interchange connection for the PA Turnpike and I-95, US 1 and PA 352 interchange improvements, Oxford Valley and Old Lincoln Highway intersection improvements, Bristol Rd improvements, I-476 and McDade Blvd interchange improvements.
- \$108 million will be invested in Traffic Signal and Intelligent Transportation System improvements.
- \$2.883 billion is targeted toward public transit improvements.

22. How is PennDOT working to make better production on improvements to eliminate delays in implementing of improvements? Also, how are you addressing personnel needs? Agency seems top heavy and lacking manpower.

PennDOT's Highway Administration, Project Delivery Section tracks Project Delivery Performance quarterly by calendar year. During Quarter 1 in 2017, PennDOT bid 182 highway and bridge projects. The On-Time Project Delivery Performance for the 2017 Quarter 1 was 94%. Roughly 10,000 of PennDOT's complement of nearly 12,000 employees are engaged in the maintenance, restoration, and expansion of the state highway system. They work in central headquarters in Harrisburg and 11 engineering districts, with facilities in all 67 counties. PennDOT also administers the state's more than 11 million vehicle registrations and 8.8 million driver's licenses, and oversees safety and emission inspection programs.

23. Freight movement in the Lehigh Valley has significantly increased due to the opening of the Panama Canal and expansion of logistics warehouses. Freight traffic (heavy trucks) has now moved onto our local (often residential) roadway networks. This is largely in part to drivers ignoring truck routes and relying entirely on GPS. This is both a quality of life and major safety issue. How is the state working to update truck GPS programs to keep drivers on appropriate truck routes? Reference the following newspaper article:

<http://www.mcall.com/news/local/eastpenn/mc-alburtis-lower-macungie-freight-fiasco-20170320-story.html>

PennDOT has tried to proactively collaborate with some of the navigation GPS companies regarding PA specific concerns/issues with incorrect road names. The Department has offered to submit the edit through the company's standard crowd sourcing method. The Department has also made a great deal of data available publicly for download or access through web services. However, the routing algorithms being used by navigation GPS is proprietary and designed for automobiles where weight and height are not factors. Data and information availability has no sway on the routing logic. PennDOT will continue to educate drivers in our state with signage.



24. When will the Rt 322 Expressway in Centre County be finished? PA has the highest gas tax in the country.

The "Mount Nittany Expressway" project is currently programmed on the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) 2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The current estimated start of construction phase is projected for late summer of 2018 and its completion is estimated for the fall of 2019.

25. A roundabout was installed on the south side of Waterford, Erie County at the intersection of US Rt 19/PA Rt 97. It works great and it appeared another was going to be built north of Waterford. PennDOT held several meetings and as a result, changed this project to a series of stop lights. This is very disappointing because it seems that a few businesses at that intersection have undue influence on the decision. Is there a chance this project decision could be reconsidered?

This project north of Waterford (SR 0019-S03) in Erie County has been the focus of multiple public and stakeholder meetings, as well as discussions with both municipal officials and elected representatives. Two project alternatives were initially presented: a roundabout and a traffic signal. Both alternatives satisfied the project purpose and need. Due to the existing roadway geometry and area topography the roundabout alternative would have required more right-of-way acquisition; an enormous amount of embankment material to be hauled in and would have created more traffic disruption during construction. Also, through the public meetings it was apparent the community including the surrounding businesses favored the traffic signal alternative.

Key factors that influenced the selection of the traffic signal as the preferred alternative were constructability, right-of-way impacts and public input. This intersection improvement project will consist of a single, signalized intersection coupled with a STOP-signed controlled intersection. It will not be a series of stop lights.

26. US Rt 219 is the main road servicing the Johnstown area. There is funding to improve Rt 219 from Johnstown to Meyersdale. This is about eight miles short of where it needs to go to make Rt 219 a viable economic enhancing transportation option for this area. This area has very poor access and no real access to an interstate highway. What can be done to consider this remaining eight mile stretch of Rt 219 on the Twelve Year Program?

There are 8.1 miles of existing two-lane roadway on US 219 in southern Somerset County. This is south of the US 219 Garrett section (Somerset to the Meyersdale Bypass) which is currently being constructed. PennDOT used Federal Appalachian Highway Development Funds which previously could only be dedicated to certain highway corridors in the State (US 219 in Somerset County was one of these corridors) to construct the four lane facility. Currently, Congress no longer specifically requires the Appalachia Highway Development Funds be dedicated to certain highway corridors. Because this funding source has been exhausted by other projects in PA, construction from the Meyersdale Bypass to I-68 in Maryland (estimated at over \$250 million) would have to be provided by regular highway and bridge funds at the exclusion of other system wide improvements including bridge and maintenance projects. Based on the current funding levels, the Department does not have the necessary funding to maintain the Commonwealth's



Transportation system and construct new capacity improvements of this scale at this time.

27. When will all of the construction work on I-95 be fully completed?

The I-95 construction work is expected to be fully completed in 2029.

28. When will the construction be completed on the PA Turnpike as well as on I-95?

Construction on I-95 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike in Southeastern Pennsylvania will be completed in 2025, at the earliest.

29. Is PA going to soon construct roundabouts statewide or are they just in a trial stage?

Roundabouts are being constructed throughout the state and have been since 2005. In national studies roundabouts have proven to be significantly safer and typically more efficient than traditional signalized intersections. They perform so well that the FHWA has been encouraging all states to implement them where practical. Since they perform so well and have been built throughout the United States since the early 1990's, PennDOT determined that there was no substantial reason to conduct a trial stage. As of January 2017, there were 29 roundabouts open to traffic on State Routes in Pennsylvania with another 18 under construction.

30. What is being done to avoid the cyclical phenomenon of "induced congestion"? How do we break the cycle of needing endless expansions?

In PA, we do not build our way out of congestion. STC and PennDOT are considering other technological solutions, such as the timing of traffic lights, and promoting the use of alternative forms of transportation for both people and goods. PA is also a leader in exploring Highly Automated Vehicles as an avenue to improve congestion and further break the cycle of induced demand.

Surfacing Concerns

31. I travel I-81 and I-380 weekly. I have several concerns: the concrete is falling off of most of all of the overpasses that was patched last year and it seems that the roads are being over stressed from truck and loads. Are these jobs guaranteed? I discussed this issue with PennDOT Districts 5-0 and 11-0, who indicated that ten are inspected. Is this correct?

All contracted construction projects on the state highway system are inspected by PennDOT. If defects in the work are discovered within one year, they are repaired by the contractor at no expense to the Department. Please contact us at 1-800-FIX-ROAD or at our website www.penndot.gov with additional location details (mile marker/nearby exits/etc.) so we can investigate and remedy the situation. Thank you for bringing this to our attention.

32. Is there any research being done to develop new material or methods of surfacing roads that will last longer than the existing method? Putting down another layer of asphalt seems to be outdated.

PennDOT is continuously researching new cost-effective pavement materials, and methods to



make the materials we currently use better. Listed below are initiatives that are being implemented or researched for possible implementation:

- For Asphalt Pavements: Percent Within Tolerance (PWT), Warm Mix Asphalt (WMA), Requiring Anti-Stripping Additives in Asphalt Pavements, Increased Usage of Stone Matrix Asphalt (SMA) pavements on High Volume roadways, Use of Crumb Rubber in Asphalt, Implementation of Thin Asphalt Paving Material (6.3mm Nominal Max. Aggregate Size), Long Life Asphalt Pavement (LLAP) specification, Increased use of Full Depth Reclamation (FDR), Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement (RAP) uses and higher mixes and Flexible Micro-surfacing.
- For Concrete Pavements: Bonded and Unbonded Thin Concrete Overlay specifications and a Long Life Concrete Pavement (LLCP) specification.
- Research includes: Use of post-consumer Recycled Asphalt Shingles (RAS) in asphalt pavements, use of Aramid (Kevlar) fibers in asphalt pavements, use of Hot-In-Place Recycling (HIPR), increased use of Cold-In-Place Recycling, use of Intelligent Compaction (IC), use of Infrared Thermal Scanners on paving machines and use of Fiberglass Grids beneath the wearing course.

33. Will there be a more aggressive repaving program for Westfall Township, Pike County?

US 6 is scheduled to be paved between I-84 and Tenth Street in Westfall Township in 2017. SR 1017, Delaware Drive is scheduled for slope repair between Berger Road and River Road in 2017. SR 1013 and Cummins Hill Road is scheduled for slope repair north of Pine Hill Farm Road in 2017.

34. Is sealing of new roadways required? Can it also be standardized as a preventative maintenance measure? I have noticed inconsistent sealing of new roads or no sealing at all. As a result, potholes are forming at seams between lanes and then growing larger from there.

PennDOT's Construction Specifications, Publication 408, require that a uniform coating of bituminous material be applied to the entire area of a pavement joint before placing abutting lanes. This applies to all Superpave pavements. Additionally, as part of PennDOT's efforts to improve longitudinal joint density, Section 405 of Publication 408 titled "EVALUATION OF BITUMINOUS PAVEMENT LONGITUDINAL JOINT DENSITY AND PAYMENT OF INCENTIVE/DISINCENTIVE" was first included in Change No. 5 of the 2011 Edition and became effective October 4, 2013. This specification applies to all Restricted Performance Pavements (RPS) and most pavements on the National Highway System (NHS). In July 2012, a performance metric was put in place specifically to track contractor performance with respect to longitudinal joint density. Through the combined use of this specification and the performance metric, PennDOT has seen improved density of these joints. In cases where density requirements are not met, the required corrective action is to seal the length of the longitudinal joint with asphalt cement in a 4-inch-wide band. This could result in some new roads not appearing to have the longitudinal joint sealed, even though the face of the joint is sealed. Due to the success of the longitudinal joint specification, its use was expanded in 2015 to allow it to be applied to other pavements.



Public Transit

35. Will passenger rail be added in the Lehigh Valley sometime in the near future?

PennDOT does not have a plan in place to add passenger rail in the Lehigh Valley in the near future. Starting a new rail service can be very expensive and requires commitments from all levels of government in terms of building and then operating the infrastructure.

36. The Lehigh Valley area is becoming a warehousing hub. The roads cannot handle the truck traffic. What is your planned solution to get trucks off the secondary roads? Can you assist in requiring rail access to these distribution centers to keep the roads efficient?

Local/regional planning organizations are encouraged to participate in PennDOT planning initiatives which examine the need for rail access to industrial areas. Understanding the business needs in the Lehigh Valley via planning partners is instrumental in determining viable rail freight service. The integration of rail infrastructure into communities encompasses local municipal land use regulations and various business decisions made by stakeholders external to the Department. For this reason, PennDOT must work in concert with the planning partners and industrial development entities. Financial assistance is available to shippers/railroads via the Department's rail grant program(s).

37. Over 90% of the projects in the Twelve Year Program are for highway (and bridges), with the rest covering all other transportation modes. Given the need for a more diversified, sustainable transportation system in the Commonwealth, why is there not more investment in systems like high-speed intercity rail?

Much of the funding for highway and bridges comes from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and State funding constitutionally mandated to support the interstate highway and bridge system. PennDOT continues to invest in passenger rail utilizing Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and State transit funding. While Act 89 of 2013 has vastly improved state funding for non-highway eligible projects, there is still a gap in the federal funding for these types of projects. More diverse infrastructure projects will be programmed if additional federal funding support becomes available.

38. Are there plans to extend hours for LANTA (Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority)? Specifically interested in Sunday hours for people who use public transportation to get to and from work? Some routes, particularly the Whirlybird, does not run enough hours at night on weeknights, or early enough on Sundays to accommodate work schedule. Are there any other Public Transportation options besides bus or Uber?

The Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) continually reviews all of its existing bus routes in order to best accommodate the needs of the passengers. LANTA must ensure that the service that is provided is able to be met with existing vehicles and manpower and within budget. In June 2015, LANTA extended weekday and Saturday service hours on the Route 602 (Whirlybird) in order to better accommodate patrons and employees at the Lehigh Valley Mall.



Many of LANTA's core routes operate late into the evening on Weekdays and Saturdays. LANTA does not have any specific plans to extend hours of service system-wide. LANTA does review requests from businesses and customers with service hour extensions and accommodate them as best as possible within the budget, vehicle availability and manpower at the Authority. If there are specific requests for extension of service hours beyond Route 602 (Whirlybird) LANTA would be interested in reviewing the suggestions. LANTA is the only public transportation provider in Lehigh and Northampton Counties.

- 39. Is it possible to get a community transportation system in the Lehigh Valley? Recent visit to a suburb of Chicago, IL provided example of small bus that could be called for pickup and drop off from home to destination with return trip by appointment. Cost is minimal (\$2/ride). The area also has set bus routes and regional passenger rail.**

LANTA currently operates four (4) bus routes called LANTaFlex services. They are reservation based services which provide curb-to-curb or curb-to-bus stop pick up and drop off within a designated geographic boundary within LANTA's service territory. LANTA began implementing these services in areas of the Lehigh Valley where there is a need for public transportation, and having fixed-route bus service is not cost effective. LANTaFlex has the same base fare as the fixed-route LANTaBus service. It allows for connections onto existing LANTaBus routes to allow for access to the rest of the LANTA system.

- 40. What is PennDOT doing to improve shared ride programs for people with disabilities so that they can cross county lines and participate in community life on evenings, weekends and holidays? Addressing this issue will help with the Governor's Employment First Initiative for people with disabilities since lack of transportation is a barrier to employment.**

PennDOT has several ongoing initiatives geared toward improving shared-ride service. The statewide deployment of the Ecolane paratransit scheduling software system is nearing completion. Deploying Ecolane statewide will improve shared-ride service through improved data collection, lowering the barriers to coordinating service across county lines, and improving service efficiency. The FindMyRidePA application and the statewide deployment of an interactive voice response (IVR) system allows people to view and schedule transit options through their smartphone or home computer. The application also allows shared-ride riders to see the ETA for their scheduled trip the day of the appointment and cancel it if need be. IVR improves customer service by automatically calling riders the day before and of their trip to provide arrival times. Riders have the option to cancel their trip during the IVR call saving the need to call the transit provider directly to cancel.

Biking

- 41. How is PennDOT educating new/young drivers about the "4ft to pass" Law? How is it educating current adult drivers as well?**

PennDOT has included the 4 foot overtaking law into several social media / press release campaigns designed to reach drivers of all ages. Work is also currently underway to update



PennDOT's publications, such as the Bicycle Driver's Manual, with the latest relevant laws and policy.

42. What is the timeline for implementation of the new bicycle buffers throughout PA? Bicycle riders desperately need them.

PennDOT continues to work with local governments and bicycle advocate groups to identify needed facilities as projects are developed. In Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, PennDOT staff have worked to accommodate contra-flow bike lanes, parking protected bike lanes, and other innovative facilities.

43. How can local communities be educated about the location of the closest bike trail and how to access it? It is possible the trails could be getting more use if more/better information was provided to our local communities.

PennDOT offers an interactive map of our BicyclePA Routes that also includes a layer with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' trail network. You can also find much more detailed information at DCNR's site (<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/recreation/trails/>).

44. What is PennDOT doing to make bicycling better on all roads? Bicycles require smooth pavement to operate safely and efficiently. It seems that the center of the road gets more attention than the right hand edge and the shoulder. The pavement on the edges is often poorly repaired or left with holes. This makes bicycling less safe. In particular, utility work patching is rarely done to the same quality of the main roadway. This presents a hazard to bicycles. Is there a way to address this issue specifically?

PennDOT continues to actively work to improve bicycling on state roads across the state. This includes a rewrite of the existing design manual addressing new guidance from FHWA and other sources. Sometimes the road surface must be disturbed to address emergencies, make service connections or perform other utility work. All utility work performed on a state road is authorized through our Highway Occupancy Permit program. As required by regulation, all of the roadway restoration work performed by utility companies must be compliant with our own construction specifications and is subject to, at a minimum, a final closeout inspection by PennDOT representatives. If the work is not performed to our satisfaction or degrades to an unacceptable quality within a specified warranty period, the permittee is held accountable for needed repairs.

Signage

45. Why are the blue amenity signs (gas, food, hotel, etc.) mainly found on the interstates and other state routes only posted in one direction such as in Altoona on I-99 at the 17th St exit southbound but no similar signs for the same exit northbound?

These signs are part of the logo program that is administered by the PA Tourism Signing Trust (PTST) for PennDOT, and are only installed on interstates and other limited access roads. Businesses that want to participate in the logo program submit an application to the PTST for review and, if approved, the PTST contracts to have the signs installed. The participant pays an



initial fee as well as an annual fee for every year they wish to remain in the program. Although most participants desire logo signs in both directions at an interchange, there could be several reasons why the participant would only be signed in one direction. Some of the reasons are as follows:

1. The participant only applied to be signed in one direction.
2. There is insufficient space for a sign in one direction. These signs need to be installed a minimum of 800' apart between each other as well as other major guide signs. There can only be a maximum of 6 participant panels on one logo sign and the number of logo signs that can be installed at any interchange depends on the geometry of the interchange as well as the spacing of the existing major guide signs.
3. The number of turns to the participant's business exceeds the maximum allowed in the logo policy in one direction or an illegal movement is required. For example, for a gas station, you can only have a maximum of 2 turns from the end of the ramp up to but not including turning into the driveway of a business. For food and lodging it is 3 turns. All of this is detailed in the logo policy in Publication 46 as well as on the PTST's website (www.palogo.org). The PTST reviews all of this during the application process.
4. There are other businesses in the same category that are closer to the interchange. If a logo sign is full with 6 participant panels and an additional logo sign cannot be installed, the priority is given to the businesses that are closest to the interchange. Therefore one participant can "bump" another participant from the sign. Each direction of the interchange is looked at independently so while a business could be closer than another in one direction, that might not be true in the other direction.
5. Logo signs are not authorized either at an entire interchange or in one direction. PennDOT can make the decision not to authorize logo signs at a location for reasons such as limited right-of-way or safety concerns.

The specific reason for the 17th St. exit (Exit 33) in Altoona not having signs in the northbound direction is because there is insufficient space due to the close proximity of Exit 32 (Frankstown Road). Therefore, no logo signs are authorized in the northbound direction for Exit 33.



Other

46. **Twitter: Why is PA 1 of 6 states that doesn't let married women keep maiden name as a middle name without \$400 court order? I can't get a new license with the name on my social security card. The DMV says I have to show proof of the name change with the voter reg card, banking card or passport but I can't get those without my new name on my driver's license.**
PennDOT does allow a married person to use their maiden name in lieu of their middle name, without a court order, but with the submission of proper documentation. For additional information, please feel free to contact us at 1-800-932-4600.
47. **Why is funding a problem for roadways in PA? The gasoline tax just drastically increased.**
Pennsylvania has a vast and aging transportation system that is larger than the New York, New Jersey and all of the New England States combined. In fact, 59% of Pennsylvania Interstate routes are older than 40 years and require significant investment. While the number of structurally deficient bridges are at their lowest level in nearly 20 years, there are still over 3,000 state-owned bridges in Pennsylvania that require attention. While recent increases in revenues are allowing us to tackle these priorities, our needs continue to exceed available resources.
48. **Is there a way to report missing signs through the PA511 app? Is PennDOT developing a new app for missing roadway signs and potholes? It would be useful to snap a picture of the area or maybe provide a list of missing signs.**
Customers can report concerns on state-maintained roads through our online Customer Care Center at www.customercare.penndot.gov or by calling 1-800-FIX-ROAD. We're evaluating improvements for the online care center and while details are not yet finalized we expect to include options for customers to more easily report concern locations to us, whether through mapping, photo uploads or other means.
49. **The interactive map on the Twelve Year Program Update Survey is great. It is a great way to pinpoint a problem. Would PennDOT consider using an interactive map such as this on other Department pages/websites such as the District 6-0 'concern' website?**
PennDOT is evaluating ways to improve customer concern reporting, including an anticipated revamp of its Customer Care Center (www.customercare.penndot.gov). While details are not yet finalized we expect to include options for customers to more easily report concern locations to us, whether through mapping or other means.
50. **Are there any New PennDOT apps (applications) in development that might soon be released to the public? Specifically those dedicated to safety, bicycle riders (bicycle buffers/bike lanes), parking and street fit cars.**
We are not currently working on any public facing apps at this time. We are instead focused on developing mobile apps for internal users (PennDOT and PennDOT contracted staff) as they have been proven to improve operational efficiencies resulting in quicker delivery of our services to the traveling public. For example, our construction inspection mobile app saves over



\$17 million/annually on operational savings.

51. Because PA is paying the highest gas tax in the country, will contractors now raise their prices knowing PennDOT has more money to spend?

PennDOT takes the bidding of our projects very seriously and we have numerous checks and balances in place to ensure that there is a competitive bidding market. Our bidding process ensures that contractors must compete against one another to win projects. Last year PennDOT let 2.5 billion dollars in construction projects. There are controls in place to detect any bid collusion between contractors. PennDOT analyzes all bids to ensure that the cost is reasonable for the type of project. A healthy bidding environment is encouraged with an average of 4 bidders on each project. In addition, PennDOT tracks various core pay items such as excavation, aggregate, concrete and rebar material and we have discovered, over the last two years, prices have remained stable. As a result of these combined efforts, contract prices have remained stable over the last two years.

52. I travel the I-78 Corridor daily in the Lehigh Valley. The snow removal and other maintenance is just wonderful. The roadside trash removal on the other hand is not so good. What is the schedule for trash removal and is the Adopt a Highway Program still active in this stretch of I-78?

The I-78 corridor in the Lehigh Valley region does not currently have an Adopt-a-Highway sponsor. The PennDOT maintenance forces in Lehigh and Northampton Counties do perform routine (typically monthly) litter removal. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to keep up with and a week after we've cleaned the corridor it looks as though it was never touched. To apply for the Adopt-a-Highway Program, please visit the PennDOT website at:

<http://www.penndot.gov/about-us/RoadsideBeautification/Pages/default.aspx>.

53. Are the STC commissioners surprised by anything in the most recent assessment of the transportation system? Also, will any recent developments inform the new 2019 TYP?

The STC is encouraged by the 2017 Transportation Performance Report. While transportation safety will always continue to be a priority for PA, attention is drawn to the area of preservation, particularly in terms of locally owned bridges, where significant work remains for all transportation stakeholders. The STC, PennDOT and their Partners applaud the PA public for taking the time to participate in Transportation Planning Process, particularly through the Public Input Phase every two years. This invaluable public input is incorporated into PA's official Twelve Year Transportation Program as well as several other long range and short range planning tools. For more information regarding transportation planning in PA, please visit the STC website at:

www.TalkPATransportation.com.

54. Would PA consider funding transportation improvements using vehicle registration fees indexed to market value of the vehicle as some other states do and reduce the states dependence on liquid fuels tax?

This was suggested as part of the Transportation Funding Advisory Commission and was included in the revenue scenarios when developing the legislation that became Act 89. Because



the Pennsylvania Constitution designates Motor License Fund revenue as a user fee, the General Assembly has a history of setting relatively low license and registration fees for “access to the system” while relying more heavily on fuels revenue which is more sensitive to motorist use of the system. In the future, as fuel efficiencies continue to grow, moving away from the liquid fuels tax will need to be discussed by lawmakers.

- 55. Is the PA State Transportation Performance Report available in an alternate format? My concern is that it is not accessible to individuals who may have visual impairments and require screen readers. Unfortunately, several individuals who use PA Public transportation would like to review this report but are not able to do so.**

PennDOT is dedicated to increasing the accessibility of all our online resources and we thank you for bringing this issue to our attention. The PA State Transportation Performance report was released in March 2017 as an interactive, animated book format in order to take advantage of engaging web features such as video. However, it is also available in PDF format. A direct link to this PDF version has been added to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) page at <http://talkpatransportation.com/tac.html>. In order to accommodate all web users, we have also included our contact information at the bottom of the page to indicate how to request a different format. We can be contacted at RA-PennDOTSTC@pa.gov or 717-783-2262 for further assistance.

- 56. Along with infrastructure projects as outlined, is PennDOT planning any continuing education requirements for motor vehicle drivers as in compulsory for other state licenses? Specifically, this could improve awareness of vehicle code relevant to cyclists and pedestrians. Education for cyclists of all ages is also important.**

PennDOT does not require a driver to complete any continuing education requirements; however there are programs available for drivers who wish to seek out such a training opportunity through a local driving school or if age 55 or over, through one of the approved Mature Driver Improvement Programs (AAA, AARP, Seniors for Safe Driving or Safe to Drive).

- 57. In your online public survey, how does the STC ensure that inputs are not provided by external interests (e.g., out-of-state corporations), or by the same responder multiple times?**

Our online survey’s focal point was to maximize its reach and response rate in pursuit of quantity and genuine input by providing an easy-to-use, unrestricted public input method that grants respondents anonymity. While this could open the survey to the possibility of receiving data from the groups/individuals you mentioned, our survey analysis has safeguards in place to remove repeat content or erroneous data, and indicate outliers and instances of a group or individual attempting to skew results. This is accomplished by asking respondents a number of demographic questions, including the stakeholder group they primarily represent; questions of this nature help identify if responses are representative of Pennsylvania’s population. Although these safeguards cannot guarantee a 100 percent success rate, the impact/risk of such is significantly outweighed by the benefits of providing the public an input method with the least amount of barriers possible.