



## Online Public Meeting Questions and Answers

On March 11, 2019 the State Transportation Commission (STC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced the opening of the open 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 20, 2019. All questions are listed in the format received; however, inappropriate language and personal information has been removed.

### Safety

- 1. Many roads would be safer by routinely repainting lines which have been worn out over time. Line painting seems relatively inexpensive as opposed to repaving. Please consider. Driving I- 95 between Woodhaven Rd and Vine St on a regular basis it is very dirty. Would it be possible to sweep the road on a more regular basis? It contributes to people driving through the city of the perception of Filthadelphia! [sic] Thank you.**

PennDOT repaints the highway system between the months of April and November every year. I-95 between Woodhaven Rd and Vine St is on the list to be redone. Due to the high volumes on the expressways mentioned in your email, the pavement markings do get eradicated by traffic quicker, and as such we target the month of May to complete this work - which includes coordinating with multiple active construction projects to do the same within their limits. It is worth noting that the scheduled completion date will depend on the weather conditions.

- 2. Members of my community have given multiple complaints regarding several stretches of roadway that are absolutely dangerous but cannot find an answer. Where can we go, who can we call? Our state representative and senator are no help. We rely on liquid fuels money to pave our city streets, but there's not enough to fix them all. We're in Monongahela, PA, Washington County.**

Safety is PennDOT's number one priority. Both Safety and Maintenance concerns related to a state-maintained roadway, such as potholes can be reported on PennDOT's Customer Care Website: <https://customercare.penndot.gov/> or by calling: 1-800-FIX-ROAD. For municipal roads, please address your concerns to your municipality.

The Municipal Liquid Fuels Program funds a range of projects to support construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repair of public roads or streets. The amount of a municipality's allocation is based on its population and miles of roads on their approved Liquid Fuels Inventory.

For the concerns about more funding, for the local roads, you can urge your legislators to support the [Governor's Restore PA initiative](#).



- 3. The awful rumbles remain on SR 743 which destroys the use of this road for many as the risk is great. A tourist cyclist who stayed at our home brought this up when he overnighted. He is an EX MARINE from Afghanistan action. He hit these rumbles suddenly and found them the WORST incident in his 1000 miles of biking between Baltimore and Boston.**

Safety is PennDOT's number one priority. The use of rumble strips is a proven countermeasure that reduces the likelihood of cross centerline and run-off-the road vehicular crashes. In September 2018, PennDOT updated its guidance on rumble strips, including language regarding the accommodation of all road users. PennDOT, District 8-0 will reassess/reconsider the use of rumble strips on SR 743 when the roadway is scheduled to be resurfaced in the future.

- 4. Two years ago, bicyclists used the STC SURVEY map to pinpoint problems/risks. One of these is SR 72 in Lebanon County at the border with Lancaster County. The shoulder was minimized when a turning lane was added years ago. Bicyclists MUST travel this road and they risk being struck. This section of road is quite worn and maybe this is the time to repave and to restripe and make good shoulders on both sides of this roadway. You are talking about SAFETY first and caring about bicyclists. Roy Gothie, the portfolio Manager of 8-0 are aware of this as is the MPO staff. And the STC map of two years ago and again on the new survey. What good is it to pinpoint the Map if there is no response to the concerns identified? Do I seem grumpy? Yes. I'm 76 tomorrow and after 10 years of this advocacy, I'm worried.**

PennDOT District 8-0 will coordinate with the appropriate Metropolitan Planning Organization, Municipality(ies) and other key stakeholders when this roadway is scheduled to be resurfaced. Any comprehensive plans, bike plans and other planning documents that would necessitate modifications to the existing roadway will be taken into consideration at that time.

- 5. The 30-mph speed limit at the north end of School House Road straightaway is ignored. An automated speed trap could finance South Londonderry Township. DOT won't reduce the speed limit. DOT won't put a 3-way stop at Bradford Drive. USPS won't deliver mail on both sides of the street. Local police have limited time to patrol that area.**

**It is suicide to make a left hand cross-traffic turn at the 322 end of School House Road. It ought to be right turn only. Traffic westbound to Hershey from School House Road should be diverted left at Bradford to the traffic light near McGuire's Ford.**

**If there is to be no action at the intersection of School House and 322, traffic going north or east from School House Road should be directed right to Soprano's Restaurant and the Campbelltown (renamed Turkey Hill) traffic light. I've gotten good at estimating the speed of vehicles by timing transit between the telephone poles. MOST DRIVERS**



**SPEED ON THAT STRAIGHTAWAY which has become intensely residential in the past several years. I'm starting to think about living off the fresh road kill.**

PennDOT is not an enforcement agency however we work with Planning Partners and municipalities to improve safety along Pennsylvania roadways. Municipalities are responsible to enforce speeds on roadways within their jurisdiction. If a municipality requests a reduction in speed on a particular roadway, a speed study can be requested through the appropriate PennDOT Engineering District. Specific projects to improve safety along a corridor or a particular intersection in a municipality may be vetted through a Planning Partner. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission is the responsible Planning Partner for Dauphin, Cumberland and Perry Counties.

- 6. We regularly hear about well-intentioned projects to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians, but these projects are often perceived to come at the expense of drivers through the loss of traffic lanes or changes to traffic signal timing. How do we resolve the apparent conflict, whether perceived or otherwise, of bicycle and pedestrian safety and accommodation with improving traffic mobility and reducing vehicle congestion while providing safety for all?**

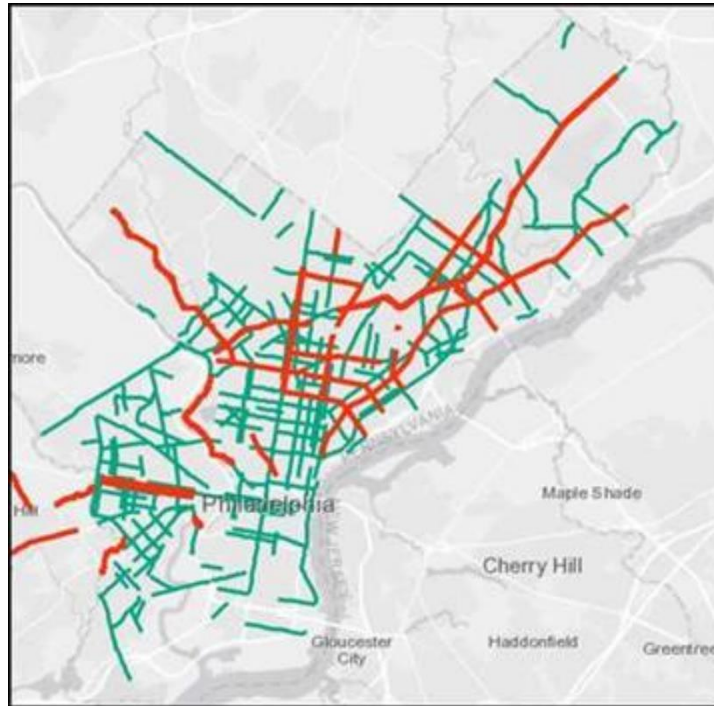
Improving traffic mobility for all users of the transportation system starts with an educational component at the community level. PennDOT partners with our Planning Partners, the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) across the Commonwealth to incorporate all multimodal needs in their region's projects as we update Pennsylvania's Twelve-Year Program every two years. The MPOs and RPOs are the local planning entity that shapes what the projects look like in a community as well as the vision for where transportation solutions are heading within their region.

- 7. PennDOT streets and roads are among the most dangerous within the City/County of Philadelphia. What is being done to correct this?**

PennDOT's mission is to fully support the safe, efficient and reliable movement of people and goods through all modes of travel. Safety is the first and foremost priority on all PennDOT projects. Philadelphia County has averaged 88 fatalities per year between 2013 and 2017. The most effective and comprehensive safety solutions typically involve a focus on "the 3 E's (Engineering, Education and Enforcement)." It is challenging to address aggressive driving behavior solely from an engineering perspective, and PennDOT provides grants to local enforcement agencies to focus on aggressive driving behavior, including speeding. The Department continues to use a data-driven project selection approach in identifying and delivering "Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)" corridor safety projects along with systemic low-cost safety improvements at hundreds of locations throughout the district. Within the City of Philadelphia specifically, the department continues to work closely with the City of Philadelphia on the "Vision Zero" goal, with targeted emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle



safety. The following map below depicts the Vision Zero High Injury Network, with those corridors shown in red highlighting safety projects the department has either completed or is currently working on. Looking forward, PennDOT will continue to work closely with the City of Philadelphia to emphasize a Vision Zero focus on the rest of the (green) corridors.



8. **Does PennDOT recognize the incompatibility of Amish buggies with automobile and truck traffic even of two lane highways? This causes serious safety issues for the Amish passengers and their horses.**

At PennDOT, we believe “Safety” is paramount for all users of our transportation system. The Department provides educational material regarding the interaction of motorized vehicles and Horse and Buggies to all of our customers. Our Publication 632 – Horse and Buggy Driver’s Manual contains information for the operators of Horse and Buggies as well as the vehicular motorists that interact with them. This Publication can be found on the Department Website at: <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20632.pdf> or by contacting the Department at: 717-787-2838.

9. **Three PA cities, Bethlehem, Harrisburg, and Philadelphia have committed to being Vision Zero cities. Will PennDOT commit to supporting and prioritizing Vision Zero planning goals statewide?**



There are three national safety philosophies that are all “zero” based: Vision Zero, Toward Zero Deaths and Road to Zero. Pennsylvania, through its Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), has supported Toward Zero Deaths since 2012. This philosophy is the oldest of three in terms of U.S. adoption and has been around since 2009. Overall, we have utilized these “zero” philosophies when working with our planning partners to establish safety goals. This concept was strengthened with the passing of the Federal FAST Act and the requirement to establish targets for safety performance measures. The basis for these targets is tied back to the SHSP, which in 2017 was updated to align with the strategies from the National Toward Zero Deaths philosophy. Specifically, to the cities you referenced and their Vision Zero efforts, the local PennDOT engineering districts in those regions have been working collaboratively to address safety concerns.

**10. I wish there was a safe way to integrate segways, scooters, electric bicycles, golf carts and other tiny vehicles in local traffic. Why does everyone think they need a Truck or an SUV?!**

At PennDOT, we believe “Safety” is paramount and are always willing to work with local governments, advocates, and the legislature to address safety-related issues.

The incorporation of non-traditional, smaller vehicles with larger motor vehicles on our transportation system generates several challenges. Safety of all users is the primary concern. Mobility, Preservation and the Funding for a transportation system to incorporate all motor vehicles, regardless the size, speed, and makeup are also major concerns. We are concerned with all fatalities and serious injuries, so we continually use data to identify possible areas for improvement.

**11. What can be done about speed limit enforcement and aggressive driving on I-78 E and W through the Lehigh Valley? It's such a high accident stretch. Thank you.**

The PA State Police are responsible for enforcing traffic rules on I-78.

**12. What is in planning to educate pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists to be safer. Also, for MV users to understand safety in relation to the least protected road users. That being pedestrians, bicyclists, wheelchairs and children. In Erie, there are limited ways for bicyclists to get across the city in a safe way. Also, there are many travelers that tend to follow the waterfront along highways like Route 5. This could be an amazing economic plus for the state and NW Pa. I am sure that you are well aware there are major movements to provide safe bicycle pathways across the country.**

The Department has a number of ongoing education and outreach activities related to bicycle safety.

1. The Executive Bike Ride on May 13<sup>th</sup> here in Harrisburg which will highlight the ongoing update to the [Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan](#) as well as the 4' over-taking law.



2. We have done a number of social media posts and a longer post on visibility/ conspicuity - <https://www.penndot.gov/PennDOTWay/Pages/Article.aspx?post=206>
3. We've updated our web pages to include information the newest design and planning guidance.
  - a. <https://www.penndot.gov/TravellnPA/RideaBike/Pages/default.aspx>
  - b. <https://www.penndot.gov/TravellnPA/Pages/Transportation-and-Health.aspx>
  - c. <https://www.penndot.gov/TravellnPA/TakeAWalk/Pages/default.aspx>
4. And we have a number of bicycle safety videos online - <https://www.penndot.gov/TravellnPA/RideaBike/Pages/Bicycle-Safety-Videos.aspx>
5. PennDOT's District 1-0, which includes Erie, is working with the county and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to coordinate resurfacing projects with known needs (such as priority bicycle routes) to widen shoulders or otherwise accommodate cyclists as conditions allow.

## Transportation Projects

- 13. The Lehigh Valley Economic Development Commission reports that transportation and Logistics jobs grew at a rate of 9 1/2 % in 2018. What immediate plans will you put in place to support this economic growth opportunity through much-needed added Highway capacity on I-78 Route 22 along with supporting interstate highways I-81 and I-80?**

The Department is in the process of designing a major widening project for Route 22 between 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Route 378. The intention is to relieve the congestion on this central section of Route 22 which includes the MacArthur Road, Fullerton Avenue, and Airport Road Interchanges. Construction is currently anticipated for 2023 for this major project.

Several other projects that will be under construction sooner are anticipated to alleviate traffic congestion affiliated with the growth of transportation and logistics include:

- The widening of Route 987 (Airport Road) from Route 22 to Race Street which will begin construction in 2019 and finish in 2020. This project is partially funded by a developer.
- The realignment of Route 248 onto Northampton Street between Route 987 and Main Street in Bath Borough. This is in design now and is anticipated to go to construction in 2021.



- The addition of turn lanes to Route 1002 (Tatamy Road) in Palmer and Forks Townships and in Tatamy Borough. This project is anticipated to go to construction in late 2020 and is partially funded by a developer.

In addition to these and other projects to improve bridges, pave roadways, and update traffic signals throughout the Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania's Interstate system remains a Department priority as it carries more than a quarter of the state's vehicle miles travelled. Many segments of interstate are in need of reconstruction to meet modern standards. In fact, one project recently began to reconstruct Interstate 78 in eastern Berks County that includes a truck climbing lane.

As you mention, this is an exciting opportunity, and PennDOT is actively working through the initiatives described before to ensure a safe and reliable transportation system for all users. Although adding highway capacity is an option, it is usually an expensive option. To be most responsible and efficient with taxpayer dollars, PennDOT often uses other tools such as timing traffic lights and providing efficient and accessible mass transit. PennDOT is also planning for future transportation needs through a variety of initiatives:

- The Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Summit, held last June at Lehigh University, brought leaders from the public and private sector together to discuss and plan for freight movement.
- Through the Pennsylvania Autonomous Vehicles Policy Task Force, PennDOT is providing leadership as this technology develops that could revolutionize transportation and improve safety but possibly increase congestion on our roadways. A third Pennsylvania Automated Vehicle Summit will be held this fall in the Poconos to discuss infrastructure planning and workforce development.

#### **14. When will Broadway Ave in Bethlehem and the nearby roads be fix?**

Broadway Avenue from Susquehanna Street (SR 2004) to the Broadway/Delaware Avenue split is anticipated to be paved in 2021. There is currently no project for the remainder of Broadway Avenue other than typical spring time pavement patching/pothole filling.

#### **15. The proposed Rt 80 widening in Stroudsburg moves the bottleneck eastward into the "water gap" which has severe widening restrictions with the mountain and river. A tunnel between Sciota and Columbia would bypass the problem and increase thru traffic both north and south on the western side of Stroudsburg. Why tear up Stroudsburg when the alternative is far more viable?**

PennDOT is committed to the safety of the public and providing an efficient transportation system that will accommodate the future traffic needs in the region, while minimizing the



environmental and property impacts. PennDOT considers each of these factors as well as cost effectiveness of each transportation project.

**16. When will US 219 be completed from its current end in Meyersdale Pa to I-68. The greater Johnstown area has no direct 4 lane access from any significant highway. This has had serious negative effects on the economy of the region. We need at least 6 more miles completed to make this a viable road that will help a 6-county area.**

PennDOT always strives to balance system wide improvements across the Commonwealth with the available funding. As in many sectors of our society, needs far outweigh available financial resources. PennDOT understands the importance of US 219 to Somerset County and the region, nevertheless, construction of this portion of US 219 to a 4-lane limited access highway would cost hundreds of millions of dollars and would be at the expense of highway and bridge repairs.

Other Sections of US 219 in Somerset County were constructed to 4-lanes utilizing funding from a Special Federal Highway Trust Fund Source dedicated to building 4-lane limited access highways. These highways were constructed partly as an economic generator in rural areas of the Appalachians. Recent multi-year federal funding legislation passed by Congress did not renew this funding source. US 219 from Meyersdale to I-68 also qualified for this funding; however, since the funding was not renewed, any improvements, including the construction of this roadway to a 4-lane facility, would have to be provided by regular federal and state highway and bridge funds. These funds pay for all projects on all major and secondary roadways in Pennsylvania.

**17. If traffic on a road is indirectly increased through the construction/expansion of a new nearby interstate-grade highway, would areas along that existing road be eligible for a survey to determine whether a sound wall can be constructed? In other words, could sound walls possibly be built along certain parts of State Route 147 and Interstate 80 in the Milton area in upper Northumberland County due to the pending completion of the Central Susquehanna Valley Thruway?**

Unfortunately, at this time there is not a State funding source nor a state program for highway traffic noise abatement (construction of noise barriers) on an existing highway. The Commonwealth often receives these requests, but due to resource constraints, it is not possible to retrofit existing facilities that do not warrant noise abatement. The Central Susquehanna Valley Thruway project and the surrounding area that will have a potential noise impact has been studied thoroughly, as are all improvement projects. Should the road configuration in this area change, a new study for noise impacts and abatement could be commissioned under certain criteria. But, at this time the areas as you described are not eligible for a sound wall.





**18. The east bound lane of Route 78 as it leaves the Bethlehem area should have a SLOW VEHICLE LANE installed. East bound Truck traffic has great difficulty climbing the east bound grade resulting in many close calls between trucks and 4 wheeled vehicles. The Route 78 west bound lanes west of the Route 33 on ramp lanes is a mess - 18 wheeled vehicles bounce around due to the uneven pavement in the right lane. Newburg Road and Route 191 needs turning lanes in all 4 directions. Presently 3 properties on the south west and east sides of the intersection are for sale - purchase them, expand intersection and alleviate accidents, increase safe traffic flow.**

PennDOT is aware of all three of these situations. Presently, we are patching deteriorated pavement in the section of I-78 Westbound. This is a short-term fix for the next few years. The Department is studying more permanent improvements to I-78 in the area but these are not anticipated for construction anytime soon due to funding constraints.

The intersection of SR 3020 (Newburg Road) and SR 191 is congested but due to the presence of historic properties and right of way limitations and the amount of time it would take to overcome these hurdles, PennDOT is focusing on projects that will provide benefits sooner.

**19. The corridor between Reading and Allentown is mostly a 2-lane highway. These might be the two largest cities in the eastern US not connected by a 4-lane limited access highway. Why is this highway, particularly the Lehigh Valley portion, not even on the long-range plans, particularly since the economy in this area is to a great degree based on warehousing, i.e. truck traffic?**

Several projects to expand Route 222 to a five-lane arterial between Allentown and Reading are in various stages of development or construction. The Trexlertown Bypass has been constructed. In Lehigh County, Route 222 from the Berks County line to approaching Tek Park Drive will be widened from two lanes to five lanes with a roundabout added at a new intersection with Schantz Road (SR 3012) and Farmington Road (SR 3011). This project is anticipated to be under construction in 2020.

In Berks County the following projects along the SR 222 corridor include:

- The section from the Kutztown By-Pass to the Lehigh County Line is expected to begin Preliminary Engineering in 2021.
- The SR 222 and Long Lane Intersection is currently in Final Design and scheduled to go to construction in the fall of 2022.
- The SR 222 and SR 662 intersection construction was recently completed.
- Intersections on SR 222 with SR 73, Tamarack/Genesis Drive and Schaffer Road are currently scheduled to go into construction this fall.



- The section from Business 222 to the Kutztown By-Pass is currently in Preliminary Engineering.

## **20. When are they going to widen interstate 81, Greencastle, Chambersburg pa?**

The current 2019 Twelve Year Program does not have any available funding to widen I-81. PennDOT District 8-0 has recently updated the I-81 widening study from the Maryland Line to I-78 that was completed in 2005. The update includes revised cost estimates which now includes storm water management facilities, reconstruction of the roadway and interchange and structure replacements. The current cost estimate to widen the corridor from the Maryland Line to I-78 is \$3 billion dollars. The Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and the District will identify key focus areas to potentially invest funding and program projects that will improve and relieve congestion on I-81. The decision to move forward with projects lies with the MPOs and the Statewide Interstate Steering Committee.

## **21. Interstate 81 south of Harrisburg is seriously outdated and in a perpetual state of congestion. Please outline your future plans to address this frustrating and dangerous situation.**

PennDOT District 8-0 recently updated the I-81 widening study from the PA/Maryland Line to the I-81/I-78 Interchange (originally completed in 2005). The update includes revised cost estimates which now cover storm water management facilities, reconstruction of the roadway and interchange and structure replacements. The current cost estimate to widen the corridor from the PA/Maryland Line to the I-81/I-78 interchange is \$3 billion dollars. The Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and the District will identify key focus areas to potentially invest funding and program projects that will improve safety and relieve congestion on I-81. The decision to move forward with projects lies with the MPOs and the Statewide Interstate Steering Committee.

## **Surfacing Concerns**

### **22. Wouldn't it be better to fill and tamp potholes before repaving so that the potholes don't re-appear in a month or less? It seems that the paving machines just lay a metered thickness down without compensating for the holes.**

As stated in Publication 23 Chapter 7, prior to the application of hot or warm bituminous plant mix wearing courses, all surface defects must be carefully studied and repaired. There are several ways the repairs are done including:

#### *Mechanized Patching*

Mechanized patching is used to patch limited roadway areas that have extensive potholes, large areas of cracked pavement and depressions. It also improves the smoothness of the road surface.



Mechanized patching involves six specific steps — marking the area that needs patched, cleaning the area using a street cleaning broom, filling any large holes or low areas with patching material, compacting the material, applying a layer of asphalt over the marked area and compacting the area with a roller.

### *Manual Patching*

Manual patching is most commonly known as pothole patching. Most permanent pothole patching is completed in the spring when temperatures stay consistently above freezing. Weather permitting, crews patch potholes during the winter using a cold patch. Cold patch is asphalt mixed with soap, water and fine stones. The soap and water allow the material to remain flexible so crews can work with it. The cold patch material is simply placed into the pothole with a shovel and then compacted. After the soap and water evaporate, the material will become hard. Although this is designed to be a temporary repair, cold patch jobs can last two or more years.

Hot mix is a permanent patch for a pothole which requires a mixture of pure asphalt and fine stone heated to about 300 degrees Fahrenheit. The pothole is cut square, cleaned and then treated with a tack-coat of asphalt that acts as a glue. After the tack-coat application, the hot mix is placed into the pothole and compacted using a roller or other device. If potholes were not repaired, the road surface would break up and require more expensive corrective measures.

- 23. This road is a town road used as a short-cut to get around the Cambridge Springs section of Rte. 99, and it is in terrible shape. My theory is that the Township calls it the County's responsibility, and the County calls it the Township's responsibility, so nobody maintains it. It is so bad, that it will probably need grinding and resurfacing. This road goes from Rte. 99 at Irish Road to Venango, PA. When will it be addressed?**

PennDOT District 1-0 indicates there are two State Routes which intersect at Irish Road. They are SR 1019 and SR 1015. Both of these State Routes are scheduled to be seal coated in the summer of 2020.

- 24. All contractors should have to use shredded used tires when they pave the road like New Jersey does. The shredded tires would make the road last longer and it would dispose of the used tires.**

PennDOT has constructed and is currently evaluating several experimental sections of roadway built using ground tire rubber in asphalt pavements. Over the past four years these sections have performed very well. There are two main issues preventing routine use of ground tire rubber in asphalt pavements.



- The infrastructure for the large-scale production of rubberized asphalt products is not in place and it will take some time for private industry to respond once projects are let with ground tire rubber asphalt.
- The cost of using these materials is roughly 1.3 times the current cost of standard asphalt paving products and budget constraints limit the use of these products on all pavements.

When the final experimental report and final specifications are approved in the next couple of years, PennDOT will make the effort to specify this material on high value projects and hopefully drive the cost of these products down by creating an incentive for private industry to invest in ground tire rubber asphalt production.

**25. I almost wiped out one day making a turn and hitting a submerged manhole cover. It was almost one and a half inches below the grade of the top of the road.**

**This is unacceptable and fatal for motorcyclist. I see no consistency in the depth specifications of manhole covers.**

**I feel they should be level to within 1/4" of the road surface after repaving. A prime example is located in State College, heading East on Beaver Avenue at the right turn into the parking structure at Frasier. The entire length of the newly repaved Beaver Avenue Highway 26 has numerous deep manhole covers and deep utility access covers. Nobody is inspecting the final product to see if they are level with the road surface.**

**In my travels, it is epidemic throughout the state. What say you?**

PennDOT is responsible for bringing all manhole covers, drains and other surface devices up to the grade level or other appropriate level when the state highway is being reconstructed, repaired or resurfaced. Our design standards indicate that the top of an appurtenance be 1/8" below the top of the roadway surface.

East Beaver Avenue (SR 26) was part the 2017 Centre County paving project where 2" of material was removed and replaced, therefore no net adjustment to surface devices was required based upon the prescribed paving operations.

After reviewing your comment, our PennDOT District 2-0 Office did a field view of the manhole covers on Beaver Ave at the Frasier Street Garage as well as a few other manhole covers and water valves in Beaver Ave. Our folks found the manholes ranged approximately 3/8" – 1/2" below the road surface. The District 2-0 Office is working with the Borough and the Borough Authority concerning adjustments to these facilities.

## Multimodal



**26. The PennDOT program in Erie for the Bayfront Parkway was well supported and questions well answered. However, this roadway is named "Parkway". It feels like a highway. It seems PennDOT's plan for this Parkway is to make it more into a highway. Also, this roadway slices across and separates the main part of Erie's downtown from our beautiful Bayfront. There needs to be serious changes to encourage walking and bicyclists to travel in this whole area. I believe overall design should slow MV traffic and be able to view the natural beauty of our water front.**

PennDOT is currently evaluating the alternatives that were presented at the December 2018 Public Plans Display to better accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic along with prioritizing the improvement needs with the available funding. PennDOT is working towards refining the alternatives so that another Public Plans Display may occur later this year.

**27. What is the plan for increasing the number of parking protected bike lanes on PennDOT streets/roads in Philadelphia?**

At PennDOT, we believe "Safety" is paramount and are always willing to work with local governments, advocates, and the legislature to address safety-related issues. For example, in the last legislative session, PennDOT actively worked to develop and support bills that would have allowed the installation of protected bike lanes. Although PennDOT is supportive of the concept of parking protected bike lanes, legislation is required to formally modify language in the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code to allow their use in practice on roadways in Pennsylvania. Once this occurs, PennDOT can work closely with the City of Philadelphia in support of their goal.

**28. The Multi Modal Fund requires applications to provide a 30% local match with a minimal threshold of \$100,000. This is in Act 89. Will you support reducing the local match to 20% and remove the threshold? Some projects do not need to spend \$100,000 of the MMF and the local match would consequently be more possibly raised by a municipality or other applicants.**

Act 89 requires that financial assistance through the Multimodal Transportation Fund program be matched by local funding in an amount not less than 30% of the non-Federal share of the project costs, which is calculated as 30% of the grant award. Lowering the required match would require a change in legislation, and PennDOT would not be able to award as many projects as we do currently. Per policy, grant awards cannot exceed \$3 million, and total project costs should be at least \$100,000.

## Public Transit and Rail

**29. What is the Department doing to support the Lackawanna Cut-off Restoration Project and will that be in the 12 year plan?**



PennDOT has provided matching funds to our Planning Partner, the Lackawanna Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant to study the line. And following the results of the study, recommendations will be made for the future of the Lackawanna Cut-Off Restoration Project.

**30. How will PennDOT help fund the restoration of the Lackawanna Cut-off?**

PennDOT has provided matching funds to the Lackawanna Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant to study the line. And following the results of the study, recommendations will be made for the future of the Lackawanna Cut-Off Restoration Project.

**31. When can we get another daily train between Pittsburgh and Harrisburg, at least, if not the whole way between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia?**

PennDOT is working with Amtrak and Norfolk Southern to evaluate potential service changes to the Harrisburg to Pittsburgh line. The outreach to Norfolk Southern Railroad, which owns the corridor between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh, and Amtrak, which currently operates the cross-state Pennsylvanian, a once daily train in each direction between New York, Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh, is part of a study to evaluate the feasibility of adding service between Altoona and Pittsburgh.

**32. For over thirty years I have heard about light rail being restored to Pottstown. Now that 422 is jammed every day. When are we going to see this happen? The track has been in place for years. The population of western Montgomery county is growing dramatically. The time is now. Stop the studies and get it done.**

The State Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) recently completed a report entitled “Keystone Connected: Intercity Passenger Rail Success Factors”. One of the corridors analyzed including the Reading – Pottstown – Philadelphia corridor. While the TAC identified the corridor as needing mobility options and having a strong trip-making potential, available funding to establish, operate, and maintain the line remains elusive. This report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.talkpatransportation.com/perch/resources/tac-2019-intercity-passenger-rail-report.pdf>

**33. Freight rail companies who own the rails and passenger rail operators who use the lines are often at odds over capacity. Would you ever consider paying freight rail companies subsidies directly in order to run passenger service themselves? Do you think they would be cooperative?**

There are no current plans for the freight railroads to run passenger rail service.



**34. I truly wish we would have some sort of rail transportation in the Allentown area that would link NY and Philadelphia. We had a Trolley system that went over our road many years ago and we still reference that part of the street as 'where the trolley' was. Not sure if all future planning or current - but we have horrible exit ramps with extremely short sections entering on the highway or the cross each other with one trying to get on in a lane and folks have to try and get off for a ramp in the same lane-Hamilton boulevard at I-78 and you want to stay on to continue north on Rt 309. Rt 209 - Saylorsburg etc.**

There are currently no plans for passenger rail service in the Lehigh Valley. There are significant challenges in expanding rail service in terms of ownership, right-of-way and cost. In fact, significant costs are incurred in establishing rail service and funds are limited and highly competitive. Ongoing subsidies are required to maintain and operate the line. According to the Lehigh Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the region remains decentralized and largely suburban and, as such, bus transit is viewed as a more flexible and adaptable option to meeting the growing changes in the Lehigh Valley. In addition, the State Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) recently completed a report entitled "Keystone Connected: Intercity Passenger Rail Success Factors" which analyzed several potential rail corridors throughout the state, including between the Lehigh Valley to New York City. This report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.talkpatransportation.com/perch/resources/tac-2019-intercity-passenger-rail-report.pdf>

Entrance and exit ramps to highways are being improved where possible as different projects are constructed over time. For instance, the anticipated widening of Route 22 from 15<sup>th</sup> Street to Route 378 will include improved ramps at the 15<sup>th</sup> Street, MacArthur Road, and Airport Road interchanges. The currently under construction project on Route 22 is improving the ramps at the Fullerton Avenue interchange.

**35. I live at Amity Gardens apartments with my 2 adult sons and they are on the autism spectrum and cannot drive. There are NO public busses that come to our area at all!! The public bus goes to Birdsboro and turns around it does not come down to Douglassville, PA. With this being a fairly good-sized apartment complex how can there not be any busses??? This needs to be addressed.**

During the STC Online Public Meeting, you raised concerns about the transit services operated by Berks Area Regional Transportation Authority (BARTA). Transit agencies are responsible for their own service design, so any concerns about routes and services should be directed to that agency. If you would like to contact BARTA about your concerns, please call (610) 921-0601 or visit <http://www.bartabus.com/>.



**36. My son is spending 2,3 to 4 hours on the bus after being picked up at the end of his work day before the bus can bring him home. This is horrible. He is being transported by Easton Coach. How can you fix this? He works 15 minutes away from home in Allentown, Pa.**

During the STC Online Public Meeting, you raised concerns about the services provided by Easton Coach. The services that organization provides in your area are operated under contract with the Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANta). If you would like to have your concerns about Easton Coach addressed, please contact LANta at **(610) 776-7433** or visit <https://www.lantabus.com/>.

**37. I was unable to participate in the Online Public Meeting last night, because I was at the Lehigh Valley Labor Council's monthly meeting. During the meeting, I mouthed off about my transportation concern - there is no passenger train service available from the Lehigh Valley to New York City, Philadelphia or Harrisburg. Many workers commute to or from jobs in those areas, which adds a great deal to the traffic on our highways. The highways are also crowded and damaged by the proliferation of large trucks to and from the increasing presence of huge warehouses in the Lehigh Valley area. Passenger trains would relieve at least some of this congestion and reduce the number of accident injuries and deaths. Please note that this has been on the list of area needs for many years. Some action is required - "your thoughts and prayers" are not enough!!**

There are currently no plans for passenger rail service in the Lehigh Valley. There are significant challenges in expanding rail service in terms of ownership, right-of-way and cost. In fact, significant costs are incurred in establishing rail service and funds are limited and highly competitive. Ongoing subsidies are required to maintain and operate the line. According to the Lehigh Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the region remains decentralized and largely suburban and, as such, bus transit is viewed as a more flexible and adaptable option to meeting the growing changes in the Lehigh Valley. In addition, the State Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) recently completed a report entitled "Keystone Connected: Intercity Passenger Rail Success Factors" which analyzed several potential rail corridors throughout the state, including between the Lehigh Valley to New York City. This report can be downloaded at:

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## Budget and Funding

**38. Can you speak to the issue of gas tax money being siphoned to the PA State Police?  
Thank you.**





The transfer of Motor License Funds to the PA State Police has an impact on PennDOT's ability to improve our transportation network. Governor Tom Wolf has proposed a per capita sliding scale fee for municipalities that would help address the state police funding issue, and it's important to note that the budget now caps and decreases this transfer each year. Despite these challenges, PennDOT is committed to its mission of keeping Pennsylvania moving forward, and we invite the public to see how we are spending taxpayer dollars on our project website, [www.projects.penndot.gov](http://www.projects.penndot.gov).

**39. Pennsylvania took a major step forward in funding transportation needs with the adoption of Act 89. The benefits of that additional funding have had a positive impact in my county. We thank you for addressing our long-standing, high-priority needs. But hundreds of millions of transportation dollars are being diverted to pay for State Police operations. How can PennDOT convince the legislature to require that all transportation dollars be directed to road, bridge, transit, bike and pedestrians projects?**

The transfer of Motor License Funds to the PA State Police has an impact on PennDOT's ability to improve our transportation network. Governor Tom Wolf has proposed a per capita sliding scale fee for municipalities that would help address the state police funding issue, and it's important to note that the budget now caps and decreases this transfer each year. Despite these challenges, PennDOT is committed to its mission of keeping Pennsylvania moving forward, and we invite the public to see how we are spending taxpayer dollars on our project website, [www.projects.penndot.gov](http://www.projects.penndot.gov).

**40. Pennsylvania implemented the highest gas tax in the country as taxpayers' contribution to our infrastructure funding challenges. What has PennDOT done to reduce its operating costs by eliminating inefficiencies, redundant programs, red tape and bureaucratic wastefulness by 5% or more as its contribution to good government for Pa citizens?**

PennDOT takes pride in being a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars. It's important to note that revenue from the gas tax is distributed to PA State Police as well as local municipalities to help address issues on local roads. The long-term effort to cut costs is reflected in the size of PennDOT's complement, which is now under 12,000, compared to more than 20,000 in the 1970s. It is also important to remember that more than 70 percent of the taxpayer resources collected for road and bridge work goes back to the private sector. Construction companies compete for this work through a lowest responsible bidder process.

PennDOT is realizing more efficiencies through improved information systems, shared services, enhanced maintenance operations and planning, and improved strategic investment planning. Additionally, the [Pennsylvania State Innovation Council \(STIC\)](#) facilitates the rapid implementation of proven, well-researched and documented state, regional, national and international technologies, tactics, techniques and any other innovations that are new to



Pennsylvania. The STIC also supports the implementation of the Federal Highway Administration's Every Day Counts (EDC) Initiatives.

Furthermore, we encourage you to check out *2019 Transportation Performance Report* at [www.talkpatransportation.com/2019TPR/](http://www.talkpatransportation.com/2019TPR/). The accountability section provides details on the efficiencies realized and money saved through initiatives such as resource sharing with the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, improving winter operations through automated snowplow tracking and the use of recycled millings in roadway resurfacing projects, among others. PennDOT Connects is another major initiative that requires coordination and collaboration with municipalities and other transportation stakeholders at the beginning of project planning to ensure resources are utilized in the most efficient manner to avoid unintended consequences and additional costs while producing the best possible results. More information in PennDOT Connects can be found at:

<https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Planning/Pages/PennDOT-Connects.aspx>

**41. Why are we spending money on good guardrails? They are just rusty, not damage! I think PDOT does a very POOR road in eastern Pa. I know we have more cars on our roads. I have spent a lot of money my automobiles in the last few years. I have called many times to report bad roads, nothing done, and no return calls.**

PennDOT typically only replaces guide rails if needed to meet acceptable roadside safety standards and crash criteria (which is updated periodically to reflect the current vehicle fleet), or if it is damaged. For example, if there is a project that will place 6 inches of additional pavement over an existing pavement surface, causing the existing guide rail to be at a very low height afterwards, the guide rail will likely be replaced as part of the project to help ensure that it functions as intended if hit.

To report an issue on a PennDOT-maintained road, you can call 1-800-FIX-ROAD, or you can also submit a concern through our [online customer care center](#).

**42. When are you going to pay the turnpike back from the money they were[sic] mandated to fix other roads other than the turnpike?**

Act 44 of 2007 required the PA Turnpike Commission to provide PennDOT with \$450 million annually for highways, bridges, and public transit, with Act 89 of 2013 modifying the payments to dedicate the full amount to public transit. This arrangement sparked a legal challenge, which was dismissed this spring, but was subsequently appealed. We cannot speculate on next steps regarding payments, however disruption of this funding plan holds profound consequences for transit agencies across the state.

**43. As it's clear PA has more transportation infrastructure than it can afford to maintain, does PennDOT ever consider decommissioning some infrastructure purposely, instead of letting it degrade through attrition?**



PennDOT does not regularly decommission roadways; however, the Department has looked at redundant bridges to see if there are opportunities for removal without impact to the safety and welfare of the public. PennDOT also used the Highway Transfer “Turnback” Program, which allows the transfer of state-owned roads, serving a local traffic purpose, from state government to local government ownership. Roads that are candidates for transfer are those that have low average daily traffic or would benefit the municipality both socially and economically.

**44. I understand that transit funding is at risk due to Act 44. Who can help solve the problem? What can I do to help? Without transit, my father won't be able to get to the grocery store or doctor's office. Thank you.**

The revenues from transit funding come from a variety of sources. Recently, a lawsuit against the PA Turnpike Commission (PTC) that was filed by the trucking industry has forced the PTC to withhold \$450 million in funds from PennDOT which directly impacts both capital and operating costs for transit agencies across the Commonwealth, most particularly fixed route service. Services such as shared ride (demand response, curb to curb service) are funded with both Lottery funds (for riders over aged 65) and other sources including Turnpike funding. The PA General Assembly passes legislation such as Act 44 and Act 89 that authorizes funding for transportation, so you may want to consider contacting your State Senator or Representative regarding your support for public transportation.

The Pennsylvania State Transportation Advisory Committee recently published a report detailing the risks to transportation funding in Pennsylvania. Please feel free to download this report at:

<http://www.talkpatransportation.com/perch/resources/tac-2019-transportation-funding-risks-report.pdf>

**45. Pennsylvania has more than 100 small towns in which the Main Street is a PennDOT highway. But it seems to me the agency is geared to better serve major highways. I think PennDOT and the small towns would fare better if there would be a small percentage of PennDOT's budget set aside for those pieces of highway and a separate staff of "small town transportation experts". In my personal experience PennDOT's administrative procedures are cumbersome and add costs for small towns to manage when they try to improve their main streets.**

PennDOT provides aid to Pennsylvania municipalities seeking local funds for their transportation improvement projects in a variety of methods:

*The Liquid Fuels Program*

The Municipal Liquid Fuels Program funds a range of projects to support construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repair of public roads or streets. The amount of a



municipality's allocation is based on its population and miles of roads on their approved Liquid Fuels Inventory.

#### *Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)*

The Transportation Alternatives Program provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation, trails that serve a transportation purpose, and safe routes to school projects.

#### *Fee for Local Use Fund*

Also known as the \$5 Fee for Local Use, was established by Act 89 of 2013 and allows a county to pass an ordinance to implement an annual fee of \$5 for each vehicle registered to an address located in that county. The Fee is collected by PennDOT based on the number of years a customer registers their vehicle. The funds will be used by the county for transportation purposes.

For more information about all these programs, please visit PennDOT's Local Government Resources webpage at:

<https://www.penndot.gov/Doing-Business/LocalGovernment/Pages/default.aspx>

## **PennDOT Connects**

### **46. Without explicitly linking land use and transportation investments, how can PA stop the cycle of greenfield & sprawling development causing increased congestion and environmental degradation? Has PA considered anything similar to Florida's concurrency statute, where new developments must pay for their share of concurrent transportation investment?**

PennDOT is attempting to better coordinate the land use/transportation linkage with its *PennDOT Connects* initiative. A description of the Program and a message about the Program from Secretary Richards can be found at:

<https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Planning/Pages/PennDOT-Connects.aspx>.

Briefly, PennDOT Connects seeks better outcomes in transportation decisions through collaboration with municipalities at the front end of transportation project development. It is important to note that, under Pennsylvania law, land use location and intensity is governed at the municipal level. With 2,500 municipal governments in place across the Commonwealth, land use decisions can sometimes be disjointed from a regional perspective. Pennsylvania



requires developers to mitigate the impacts of new development (provided it exceeds a minimum threshold of impact) during the request for a highway occupancy permit, which allows access to a State road. Mitigation is typically required where peak hour delay in the “after development” case exceeds the “before development” case by 10 seconds or more. Traffic impact studies are submitted by the developer and reviewed by PennDOT to ensure the proposed improvements are adequate to mitigate the impact. PennDOT will not issue a highway occupancy permit for the development until it is reasonably assured that the impacts will be mitigated. This process is only in place for access to State-owned roads. Municipalities are responsible for impacts to roads they own. Act 209 under the Municipalities Planning Code enables municipalities to assess impact fees after a series of studies are completed and the governing body enacts it in a public setting.

**47. My problem is PennDOT asks local municipalities what "THEY" want when a state route is rebuild thru their area, hence when a route 94 "Wertzville Road" has any work done on it - one municipality may put in bicycle infrastructure - yet the next municipality over will state "nobody rides bikes here" and makes the lanes curb to curb at intersections with no transition for bikes from the shoulder and no or minimal shoulders elsewhere. Hence riding a bike there is only for the brave or the desperate (those that have to bike to work) and it seems like you are traveling thru border crossings of different nations. I believe PennDOT should mandate a standard because I am a Pennsylvania Bicycle Driver - not just a local Enolian Bicycle Driver. I use Rt 944 - because a lot of developments only have one exit and that is there only way to rest of Pennsylvania.**

PennDOT has placed a renewed emphasis on planning and collaboration under a new policy implemented in December 2016, termed “PennDOT Connects.” PennDOT Connects began as a policy issued by PennDOT Secretary Leslie Richards to strengthen the commitment of PennDOT to collaborate with Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations and local governments during the transportation planning process. As part of the implementation of PennDOT Connects, PennDOT has conducted extensive outreach and training over the past two years, conducting 33 workshops, involving 601 municipal officials, representing 443 municipalities across Pennsylvania. One focus of those training sessions was to reinforce the benefits of multi-municipal comprehensive planning. Another element of the training was on the benefits of addressing all users of the roadway, including bicyclists and pedestrians. Additional resources related to sound land use and transportation planning are available to municipal officials and the public at: [www.paconnects.org](http://www.paconnects.org).

**48. My last question escaped. How will you educate municipal leaders and planners about including all modes of transportation - motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, transit when working with PennDOT on a TIP project or a project being done by County Maintenance in their municipality?**



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**49. How is PennDOT taking in to account the environmental impact of transportation projects and operations in a way it hasn't in the past?**

The PennDOT Connects approach to collaborative planning involves reaching out to local governments in the project planning process. The approach involves having a conversation with local government staff to understand their concerns related to transportation and land use issues, both existing and planned. These issues could certainly involve environmental issues, such as stormwater management or historic preservation concerns. The PennDOT Connects process also includes the use of a GIS database to identify known environmental features within a planned project area. Having the discussion with the local government staff provides the opportunity to identify additional environmental features that our current databases do not identify. Identifying these features earlier in the planning process provides a better opportunity to consider potential options for avoidance, minimization or mitigation earlier.

**50. I took the survey and saw that a repaving project is planned for a road near my home. I think this road should have widened shoulders to be safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. How can I get my township and PennDOT to work together to accomplish this addition to the project?**

PennDOT has placed a renewed emphasis on planning and collaboration under a new policy implemented in December 2016, termed “PennDOT Connects.” PennDOT Connects began as a policy issued by PennDOT Secretary Leslie Richards to strengthen the commitment of PennDOT to collaborate with Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations and local governments during the transportation planning process. You are encouraged to contact your local municipal office to express your concerns regarding pedestrians and bicyclists on the subject roadway. If the roadway is State-owned, your municipality has been, or will be, given the opportunity to discuss local concerns related to the project with PennDOT staff, in accordance with PennDOT Connects. There may be a possibility that the additional accommodations you have identified may be incorporated into the project in question. Please



note, however, that there are many factors that must be considered in the determination of which features can be included in a project. The earlier the features are identified, the greater the opportunity that they may be included in a future paving project.

### **51. How can municipalities be convinced to work together, both on new development and transportation projects?**

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## **Other**

### **52. Please... we need more DMV Centers. We can all see the big problems with the lack of enough DMV Centers.**

PennDOT continues to review changing state demographics to ensure our driver license centers are located and sized properly to ensure a positive customer experience. In the last year we have opened 5 new locations including:

- King of Prussia
- Whitehall (Allentown Area)
- Summerdale (Harrisburg Area)
- Lancaster East (Lancaster)
- Bridgeville (Pittsburgh Area)

In addition, we remodeled and expanded services at 7 other existing sites:

- Wilkes-Barre
- Altoona
- Norristown
- South 70<sup>th</sup> Street (Philadelphia)
- Erie
- Williamsport
- Rockview (State College area)



**53. At this time, I travel from Reading to Pittsburgh monthly. The cost of the turnpike is becoming prohibitive to me. I use US 22 from Lewistown to Altoona but find that route to be needing some upgrades to make it a more viable route. US 22 from Pittsburgh to Altoona is now a first-class highway. An upgrade on the Lewistown to Altoona segment would be helpful. Of course, this requires funds and may drain users from the PA Turnpike, but even in the current state it is preferable to the turnpike when considering costs if time is not important.**

PennDOT always strives to balance system wide improvements across the Commonwealth with the available funding. As in many sectors of our society, needs far outweigh available financial resources. PennDOT understands the importance of the US 22 Corridor, yet reconstruction of this portion of US 22 to a 4-lane limited access highway would cost hundreds of millions of dollars and would be at the expense of highway and bridge repairs.

Many of the 4-lane sections you mentioned on US 22, located between Altoona and Pittsburgh, were constructed to 4-lanes utilizing funding from a Special Federal Highway Trust Fund Source dedicated to building 4-lane limited access highways. These highways were constructed partly as an economic generator in rural areas of the Appalachians. Recent multi-year federal funding legislation passed by Congress did not renew this funding source. US 22 between Lewistown and Altoona also qualified for this funding; however, since the funding was not renewed, any improvements, including the reconstruction of this roadway to a 4-lane facility, would be provided by regular federal and state highway and bridge funds. These funds pay for all projects on all major and secondary roadways in Pennsylvania.

**54. I live in a very historic town, we have one industrial business that has to drive thru our main square. Years ago, we designated a truck route for the semi-trucks to follow. After continues damage to our monument areas and private homes, the town government is EXTREMELY tired of hearing the truckers say, “they’re just following their GPS” OR they are truck drivers that do not speak English or read English, so they don’t follow the signs we have in place! How do they get driver’s license much less one that drives a tractor-trailer? Please help us understand or give suggestions on what to do!**

Traveler Information GPS-based services like Google and Waze are designed for passenger vehicles. Although commercial vehicle-specific products are available, truckers often use the passenger vehicle services. This can result in issues such as vehicles hitting low clearance bridges or not being able to make turns through downtowns and neighborhoods. PennDOT has contacted service providers in the past with requests such as controlling the routes provided to truck-only destinations like a warehouse. The challenge for the companies is making “one-off” changes for a particular state, and to date they have not been interested in pursuing such changes.





**55. I have a few ideas for consideration regarding travel on our roads. 1: Tractor trailers should not be on roads with traffic lights from 6:00am-6:00pm weekdays. 2: During the weekday between 6:00am-6:00pm, people driving under the speed limit should be cited the same as if they were speeding and the subsequent fine multiplied by the number of people they are preventing from driving the speed limit. By this I mean the cars behind them that are trying to get to work or be productive during work or trying to get home after work. 3: Government offices and schools should work weekdays from 10:00am-6:00pm. I notice that when government is shut down for one of the frequent holidays we the people provide for them, traffic is much lighter. 4: Remove all speed limits from major highways that have merge-on, merge-off lanes, no cross-traffic, no traffic signals. Automobiles have vastly improved in safety in 60 years, yet our speed limits remain the same. 5: People that use Amtrak and other public transportation get off way to cheap. When I consider what I spend to get to and from work and then have to subsidize these others is disturbing. My general overview is that we seem to have plenty of roads for now, it just seems that we all use them at the same time of day. If we can change that, it may help congestion. (See #3). Thank you for asking my opinion.**

Travel restrictions for non-state highways based on time of day may be made through a local municipal ordinance but take many factors into account and there is no one-size fits all solution. For example, restricting commercial vehicles from 6am to 6pm could prevent the delivery of goods and services to businesses during their hours of operation.

During peak travel periods, the speed of motorists is often reduced due to traffic volumes and congested conditions. In some cases, this may lead to stop and go traffic or vehicles traveling far below the posted speed. Traffic incidents in a travel lane or even vehicles stopped along a shoulder can lead to additional congestion issues. For these and other reasons, the idea of citing people for traveling below the posted speed limit during rush hour is not feasible.

Traffic volumes play a key role in rush hour travel conditions. When offices are closed for holidays or other activities, this can lead to lower volumes and a decrease in traffic congestion during peak periods. Increased use of transit and other non-single-occupant forms of travel can also help reduce volumes. Reducing congestion and improving the reliability of travel are priorities for PennDOT. However, requiring businesses and organizations to travel during designated time periods is not a feasible solution and beyond PennDOT's authority.

Maximum speeds limits are established by the legislature and have increased over the years, with 70mph being the current maximum in Pennsylvania. Speed limits are established through an engineering analysis and based on a number of factors such as curvature of the roadway and lengths of exit ramps. We will continue to adjust speed limits as conditions warrant, while ensuring safe conditions for motorists in Pennsylvania.



**56. Can PennDOT take any steps to address and/or reduce the spread of specific invasive plants such as Tree of Heaven and Mile-a-Minute weeds along interstate corridors throughout central Pennsylvania?**

PennDOT has an Herbicide Program designed to remove dangerous vegetation within our Right of Way (ROW) on two lane roads, our ROW is very narrow and most of the vegetation is outside of our ROW. In areas where the Spotted Lantern Fly is a problem we have taken a more aggressive approach to eradicating the Tree of Heaven on our ROW.

**57. District 4 / Wyoming County, needs to have the Resources and funding to correct the highways that exist in this county. Previous leaderships have not done anything in this county to maintain / preserve the roadways. For YEARS / YEARS. Now the current leadership is SO FAR BEHIND that they will never catch up without increased funding and the proper equipment and TRAINED resources to complete the needed repairs. Projects have not been done correctly and have to continually be redone 2-3-4 times / all at undue cost to the tax payers and thus not allowing the funding to be available for other needed maintenance projects. There has been NO Roadway maintenance, to include but not limited to ditch cleaning, tar chip, crack sealing, proper pot hole patching and repairing, Berm maintenance.... There also needs to be more DOT inspections, I continue to alert PennDOT officials of the illegal traffic on our roadways that are damaging our roadways.**

Wyoming County is late in several areas of roadway preservation. The new management team has a six-year plan in place to get the roads on schedule for sealcoating (tar and chip), shoulder cutting (berm), and crack sealing. The 2018 flooding events caused Wyoming County to fall behind on some of those activities. Ditching and side dozing are also activities that are being worked on; this will be a continuous process.

In regard to training, the management team has enrolled the appropriate employees in PennDOT's Maintenance Activity Training. The management team is also setting up metrics to better track the productivity of each crew.

In the area of illegal truck traffic, we appreciate your efforts in keeping PennDOT notified when you see these vehicles. Our Posted and Bonded Roads Coordinator has a team that is utilized to review roads and monitor truck traffic and subsequent damage. This team is not large enough to be on every road every day, therefore reports such as yours do help. Please remember that some trucks travelling on posted roads have permission to utilize those roads in certain circumstances if they have bonded that particular road they are travelling or meet the requirements to be considered local traffic. When we are notified of the potential for illegal truck traffic, the enforcement agency is notified.

**58. Why can't our local highway litter get picked up by prison inmates? I see that everywhere I travel, except in PA. I would really appreciate an explanation.**



Since 2003, PennDOT and the Department of Corrections (DOC) have partnered in litter pickup. This partnership developed because of a DOC Community Work Program involving inmates with outside clearance who are near completion of their sentence into the community to perform voluntary, unskilled labor for governmental and non-profit public service agencies. The goals of this program are to enhance community relations and for the inmates to accomplish useful work, to contribute to society, and to develop a strong work ethic and a feeling of self-worth.

In 2003, 26 State Correctional Institutions (SCI) participated and adopted a section(s) of highway, typically surrounding the SCI(s). In return, PennDOT installed/maintained recognition signs, supplied materials (trash bags, gloves, and disposable safety vests) and disposal of trash bags/debris collected.

Although the DOC Community Work Program is still ongoing; participation of litter pickup on state highways has since declined. Of the initial 26 SCI's participating, only 10 SCI's remain, adopting 30 miles under the Adopt a Highway program. This decline can be attributed to other governmental and non-profit public service agencies bidding for inmate labor through the DOC Community Work Program.

### **59. Why do we need the Turnpike commission?**

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission was established in 1937 to construct, finance and maintain the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Since that time, the Turnpike has expanded to include the Northeast Extension and several facilities connecting communities in western and southwestern Pennsylvania. Tolls collected on the Turnpike help to maintain and improve the roads, bridges and tunnels under its jurisdiction as well as public transit throughout the state.

## **Questions Answered During the Meeting**

### **60. How will fully automated cars effect transportation safety within small towns like Butler?**

Automated and connected vehicle technology is helping us reach advancements in terms of safety, efficiency and mobility. There are many ways this technology can be implemented. For example, automated technology in construction zones can help to keep PennDOT workers safe. Additionally, automated technology in crash vehicles, if appropriate, would decrease risks to human safety.

Automated and connected vehicle technology will also provide mobility options for those in urban, suburban and rural areas. Current rideshare technology isn't the most adaptable to rural areas, but advancements in automated technology would allow rideshare programs to become more accessible to rural residents.



We are at the forefront in testing for this technology. Right now, automated technology is at a level three automated vehicle, and at a level five is when completely automated vehicles will be safe and available to consumers. PennDOT is working with the Turnpike, Penn State and the Federal Highway to create a testing facility in the State College area that would be able to test and ensure the safety of automated vehicles in Pennsylvania.

**61. Why is funding in jeopardy if transportation plays such a vital part of moving Pennsylvanians and goods forward? As a person who uses public transportation like the CATAbus system, what can I do as a private citizen to encourage higher funding from local governments or agencies to increase funding for the system is matched by state and federal sources?**

Everyone is in agreement that transportation is important, unfortunately, not everyone is in agreement of how to fund it. With the passage of the State Transportation Bill (Act 89 in 2013), PennDOT was grateful that they were able to get an additional \$2.5 billion a year, however, studies showed that to keep up with all of our current transportation needs, the state would need an additional \$7.2 billion a year by 2020. Additionally, this money needs to be dispersed to all modes of transportation, including ports, aviation, passenger rail and freight rail.

PennDOT recognizes that they need to invest in transit in order to make transportation function in the best way possible, but they have to make priorities because they don't have enough funding to meet all of the state's needs. Individuals can make their needs known by reaching out to their legislators. Legislators love to hear personal stories of how transportation is important to you and how a greater investment in transit would increase your options.

**62. What is the best way for people to get involved in transportation planning? How can we find out about planning activities underway in the region where we live? As a private citizen, what can I do to encourage more funding from local and state governments so that more public transportation options can be increased?**

PennDOT works very closely with their Planning Partners which are the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPO) throughout the state. Anyone who is interested in transportation issues should contact their local MPO or RPO because that is arguably the easiest and quickest way to get input directly to the department.

**63. Why is PennDOT planning to spend tens of millions of dollars expanding highway capacity (in Centre County and elsewhere) when our systems need maintenance first, our transit systems are facing a capital funding crisis, and expanding highway capacity counters stated environmental goals, particularly addressing climate change.**



Environmental and safety concerns are at the forefront of PennDOT's decision making process. PennDOT has seen a major increase in environmental planning in the last few years. Additionally, the impact of extreme weather has been at the forefront of concerns lately. Over the last year, there were over \$125 million in damages due to severe weather events. This has changed the way PennDOT assesses and engineers their infrastructure, and they are taking the steps needed to ensure that the investments in Pennsylvania infrastructure are long-lasting.