

Fall

2010



LACKAWANNA / LUZERNE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

CONNECTIONS

Streetscape Project Unveiled

Wilkes-Barre City Mayor Thomas M. Leighton held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Wednesday, October 27, 2010 to celebrate the completion of Phase IV of the \$1.3 million Transportation Enhancement Streetscape project. Funded by the Federal Highway Administration, the project included the installation of modern sidewalks which replaced pavers that had been installed following the Agnes Flood in 1972. Outdated benches were removed and replaced with new ones, and bike racks are now available at several locations. The 11 trees that formerly lined the project area of Public Square and S. Main Street from West Market Street to E. Northampton Street, were removed and replaced with 30 Chanticleer pear trees.

“We’re delighted to celebrate the completion of Phase IV of the Streetscape Enhancement Project”, the mayor noted at the ceremony. “These renovations have given the downtown a fresh look and made significant improvements to the safety and beautification of the City. I hope the residents, businesses, and visitors

to Wilkes-Barre will enjoy these enhancements for years to come.”

Congressman Paul Kanjorski was instrumental in securing \$5.2 million for the project. “I applaud Mayor Leighton for working to make the streetscaping in Wilkes-Barre a priority from which we all can benefit”, he noted. “I am thrilled to have helped secure much of the funding for this important initiative that has helped to beautify areas around Public Square and make them more available to residents.”

Nancy Snee, Vice Chair of the MPO Technical Committee, commented on the project. “These improvements exemplify the types of actions cities across the country are taking to encourage people to use the downtown both during the day and evening. Beautification and available parking play an important role in making downtowns more inviting places. The new on-street parking spaces on S. Main Street and Public Square, plus the Intermodal Center, now provide great access to the downtown stores and restaurants.”



Congressman Paul Kanjorski, Mayor Leighton and other community leaders cut the ribbon on one of the new pedestrian crossings on S. Main St., Wilkes-Barre.

PENNDOT Prepares for Winter Weather

PENNDOT District 4-0 is adding a new weapon to its winter weather-fighting arsenal in an effort to maintain safe travel throughout the winter season. The new weapon is a \$100,000 plow, known as a tow plow, which is able to plow the entire road with one pass, in contrast to standard plows which plow one lane at a time.

The new tow plow will be used exclusively on the Governor Casey Highway (US 6) in Lackawanna County when it arrives in January. The purchase of the tow plow was made possible and paid for

through a state pilot program. District 4-0 was one of three districts in the state to take part in the trial program.

In anticipation of the arrival of winter, District 4-0 recently held its annual Winter Readiness Summit at the Lackawanna County Public Safety Building in Jessup. The summit gives the District the opportunity to discuss safety and emergency response procedures with law enforcement and emergency response agencies.

“The discussion represents the commitment of hundreds

of dedicated state employees who have made concerted strides in winter preparations”, said District 4-0 Executive George Roberts, P.E. “We are confident that we will put forth our very best efforts to maintain safe travel in the upcoming months.” District 4-0 services Lackawanna, Luzerne, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming Counties.

Situational Awareness

The mission again this year will be to maintain awareness of roadway conditions within

(continued on page 2)

Upcoming Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Courses

The following LTAP courses have been scheduled by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA):

1. Engineering & Traffic Studies - Monroe County

Date: December 9, 2010

Time: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Location: Monroe County Public Safety Center

100 Gypsum Rd., Stroudsburg, PA 18360

Telephone: 570-992-4113

2. Risk Management/Tort Liability - Luzerne County

Date: January 13, 2011

Time: 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Location: NEPA Offices

1151 Oak St., Pittston, PA 18640

Telephone: 570-655-5581

3. Bridge Maintenance - Luzerne County

Date: February 1, 2011

Time: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Location: NEPA Offices

1151 Oak St., Pittston, PA 18640

Telephone: 570-655-5581

4. Stormwater Management - Lackawanna County

Date: March 8, 2011

Time: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Location: Lackawanna County Center for Public Safety

30 Valley View Business Park

Jessup, PA 18434

Telephone: 579-961-6700

5. Posting & Bonding of Local Roads - Schuylkill County

Date: March 18, 2011

Time: 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Location: Schuylkill Community Education Council

1-7 Centre St., PO Box 255

Mahanoy City, PA 17948

Telephone: 570-773-1270

6. Traffic Calming - Carbon County

Date: April 5, 2011

Time: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Location: Carbon County Emergency Services Building

1264 Emergency Lane

Nesquehoning, PA 18240

Telephone: 570-325-3097

7. Roadside Safety Improvements Program - Schuylkill County

Date: April 6, 2011

Time: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Location: Schuylkill Community Education Council

1-7 W. Centre St., PO Box 255

Mahanoy City, PA 17948

Telephone: 570-773-1270

8. Traffic Signs - Pike County

Date: April 12, 2011

Time: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Location: Milford Borough Building

111 W. Catherine St., Milford, PA 18337

Telephone: 570-296-7140

9. Unpaved & Gravel Roads Maintenance - Wayne County

Date: May 3, 2011

Time: 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Location: PPL Wallenpaupack Environmental Learning Center

126 PPL Drive (off US Route 6)

Hawley, PA 18428

Telephone: 570-253-7076

10. Work Zone Traffic Control - Monroe County

Date: May 5, 2011

Time: 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Location: Monroe County Public Safety Center

100 Gypsum Rd.

Stroudsburg, PA 18360

Telephone: 570-992-4113

11. Traffic Signals - Lackawanna County

Date: May 11, 2011

Time: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Location: PENNDOT District 4-0 Office

55 Keystone Industrial Park, Room 233

Dunmore, PA 18512

Telephone: 570-963-4061

For additional information on the programs, contact Brian Langan, Transportation Program Manager, NEPA, at 655-5581 or via e-mail at blangan@nepa-alliance.org.

PENNDOT Prepares for Winter Weather (continued from Page 1)

the district and provide drivers with the most up-to-date information as possible. The Traffic Center Incident Command Center (ICC) has state-of-the-art equipment that shares accurate, real-time information about interstate roadway and traffic conditions with the traveling public. It features a 20' by 5' multiple-image smart screen that is integrated with the computer console and allows operators to monitor closed-circuit cameras along the interstates, and project multiple computer screens simultaneously.

From the ICC, PENNDOT personnel operate the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) equipment which includes 52 portable Variable Message Signs, 22 roadway cameras, 9 overhead Dynamic Message Signs, 9 Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) systems, and 22 HAR flashing beacons. With this equipment network, PENNDOT is able to both monitor and respond to critical traffic and weather developments on key arteries as well as help motorists make timely travel decisions.

Interstate closed-circuit cameras are monitored during off hours with the help of the regional Traffic Management Center in Philadelphia or Harrisburg. This provides 24-hour monitoring of the interstate system 7 days per week. District 4-0 resumes control to manage large-scale events, emergencies and winter weather-related events from the ICC.

District 4-0 maintains over 3,600 miles of state roadways, including 2,504 bridges, in its 6-county area. That translates into

On-Going Construction Projects Update

Work continues on several highway/bridge projects throughout the region. Below is a brief description of some of them.

Luzerne County

Coal Street: Coal Street serves as one of the primary roadways into the City of Wilkes-Barre from PA 6309 and I-81 via Highland Park Boulevard. Roadway rehabilitation work is underway near the Business Route 6309 intersection, resulting in new traffic patterns, but 2 lanes remain open (the right-turn lane onto PA 6309 from Coal St. is blocked off).

The project includes the widening of Coal to five lanes, and realignment of the road at Grant Street. When completed, Coal Street will have two points at which it connects with Wilkes-Barre Boulevard - at Union Street, and at its current location, which will be known as Walter's Way. Only right turns will be allowed at this intersection and the traffic signal will be removed. A new signal will be placed at the point where Coal Street intersects Wilkes-Barre Boulevard in alignment with Union Street.

As part of this project, the following work will be done: demolition, excavation, paving, milling, concrete pavement, drainage, guide rail, concrete barrier, fencing, concrete curb, concrete sidewalk, landscaping, rock placement, pavement markings, signs, permanent traffic signal replacement, miscellaneous concrete work, granite curb, temporary traffic signals, lighting and other miscellaneous construction work.

The winning bid on the project was made by Pennsy Supply at \$11.7 million. The project is expected to be completed by the summer of 2012.

River Road (SR 2004), Wilkes-Barre City and Plains Township: This \$6.6 million project entails the construction of a pre-stressed box beam bridge, removal of a steel girder bridge, rehabilitation of a masonry arch structure, and closure and rehabilitation of a mine opening. A temporary bridge and road will be installed while the new bridge is being built. Traffic will be controlled during construction with a traffic signal. Every effort will be made to keep traffic moving during construction, but drivers should be aware that traffic may be temporarily reduced to a single lane during this project. Construction of the temporary roadway has begun and will be in use next spring. The anticipated completion date is



Work continues on the River Road project in Luzerne County.

October of 2012. The contractor is Susquehanna Supply Company.

PA Route 93, Broad, City of Hazleton:

This 3.5 mile project involves betterment and streetscape work which will consist of the coordination of 17 traffic signals, roadway widening, milling and paving, crosswalks, building demolition, and curbing. Utility preliminary work will be on-going until late 2011. The construction phase of the project is slated to begin in March of 2011 and last until late 2013.

SR 1021, 8th Street Bridge, Jenkins Township:

Although the completion of the project is scheduled for the spring of 2011, the new bridge could open in December.

Lackawanna County

Route 1027, Layton Road, S. Abington Township:

The anticipated completion date of this bridge replacement project is the spring of 2011. The estimated cost is \$2.7 million.

Cemetery Bridges: These bridges are located on I-81, NB and SB, between Exits 182 (Davis Street) and Exit 184 (River St.). The anticipated completion date of this \$16.2 million bridge replacement project is August 2012. Nyleve Construction is the contractor for the job.

For more information on highway/bridge projects, go to the District 4-0 web site - www.neparoads.com.

PENNDOT Prepares for Winter Weather (continued from page 2)

8,550 snow-lane miles, more than any other PENNDOT district in the state.

Plowing Assignments

Snow removal and anti-icing operations on roadways are assigned on a priority basis and are determined by traffic volume on each route. Consequently, Interstates 80, 81, 84, and 380 receive the highest level of service during storms. District 4-0 strives to keep these roads and ramps clear enough to accommodate two lanes of traffic at all times.

Roads that provide ingress and egress from

the interstate system, and serve as detours and alternate routes during storms, are the next highest priority areas. Snow clearing is concentrated during the heavily-traveled times between 6 AM and 6 PM on these major arteries. Examples of these types of roads include the North Crossvalley Expressway in Luzerne County, and the Casey Highway and North Scranton Expressway in Lackawanna County.

Other numbered traffic routes with lower traffic volumes are plowed and treated next. Rural and local roads are treated after the numbered routes on a 4-6 hour cycle.



PENNDOT workers perform a dry run as part of their preparations for winter weather conditions.



**LACKAWANNA/LUZERNE METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

*Published By: Luzerne County Planning
Commission
Contact: Nancy Snee*

Telephone: 825-1564
E-Mail: Nancy.Snee@luzernecounty.org

*MPO Web Page: [http://
www.luzernecounty.org/county/
departments_agencies/
planning_commission/lackawannaluzerne-
metropolitan-planning-organization](http://www.luzernecounty.org/county/departments_agencies/planning_commission/lackawannaluzerne-metropolitan-planning-organization)*



PennDOT District 4-0
www.neparoads.com

MPO Makes Recommendations on PCTI Applications

The Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO received fifteen applications for funding through the Pennsylvania Transportation Community Initiatives Program (PCTI) - five from Lackawanna County and ten from Luzerne County.

The purpose of the PCTI program is to fund planning and construction projects that demonstrate creative and efficient ways of addressing transportation problems. Keeping community goals in mind and developing strong partnerships with local municipalities are also hallmarks of this program.

The total amount of funding requested by the fifteen applicants was over \$10 million. The amount of funding available statewide is \$24 million.

Planning Commission staffs, PENNDOT District 4-0 staff and some members of the MPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) reviewed and evaluated the applications by assigning a value of High, Medium, or Low to each one of the 18 evaluation criteria. Three points were

awarded if the High column was checked, two points if the Medium column was checked, and one point if the Low column was checked. Based on this system, project scores could range from 18 to 54.

Technical Committee Chairman, Steve Pitoniak, presented the results of the evaluation and ranking process at the October 27th Technical Committee meeting. The Committee discussed whether it would be best to recommend all fifteen applications for funding or, given the low

amount of funding available statewide, whether it would be better to recommend only the higher-ranked projects. Following some discussion on the matter, the Committee made a motion to recommend to the Coordinating Committee that the MPO select the following three highest-ranked construction projects, and the highest-ranked planning study project for submittal to PENNDOT Central Office:

Construction:

Archbald Trail & Sidewalk Improvements; total requested funds: \$460,000;

West Wyoming Eighth Street North Sidewalk; total requested funds: \$295,400;

Back Mountain Trail Miles 1 & 2; total requested funds: \$300,000.

Planning Study:

Conyngham Borough Smart Transportation Study; total funds requested: \$40,000.

For a full listing of the project rankings, please visit the MPO web page. (See web site address above).



Section of Back Mountain Trail needing rehabilitation