



Centre County Long-Range Transportation Plan 2050

Appendix J

Public Comment on the Draft LRTP

Public Comment Period Summary and Responses

List of Changes in Final Document

Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO)

2020 Centre County Air Quality Conformity Analysis Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2050

Public Comment Period Summary

I. When Was the Draft Air Quality Conformity Report and Draft LRTP 2050 Made Available for Public Comment?

August 13, 2020	The Draft Air Quality Conformity Report and Draft LRTP 2050 documents were posted on the CCMPO's website. The website included the option of submitting an online comment form.
August 14, 2020	The 30-day public comment period was formally initiated. Classified advertisements were placed in The Progress (Clearfield/Philipsburg), The Express (Lock Haven), and The Centre Daily Times (State College) newspapers. Notices included the dates for the start and conclusion of the comment period; the locations at which the Air Quality Conformity Report and LRTP 2050 were available for review; the date, time, and location of the public meeting; and the date, time, and location of the meeting at which the Coordinating Committee would consider approving the Conformity Report, and the LRTP 2050.
August 14, 2020	A notice about the public comment period was advertised on the C-NET public access cable television. A press release was sent to 67 broadcast and print media outlets, including web-based community news publishers serving Centre County. A Facebook post was created and shared; 308 people were reached, with 29 post engagements.
August 14, 2020	A notice was emailed and mailed to nine Native American Tribes and Nations whose ancestors had at one time lived in Centre County. The notice directed tribal representatives to the website, where all documents could be accessed.
August 14, 2020	A notice was emailed to the municipal managers or secretaries for the 35 municipalities in Centre County. The notice included the website address to access the documents, the dates for the start and conclusion of the public comment period and the public meeting.
August 14, 2020	A notice was emailed to 263 persons on the mailing list for CCMPO meetings and reports. The notice included the website address to access the documents and the dates for the public comment period and public meeting. The mailing list includes local officials and citizens, committee members, and staff members for federal and state legislators.
August 14, 2020	A notice was emailed to 89 organizations designated as "interested parties" in the CCMPO's Public Participation Plan (PPP). The interested parties include: affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other entities. The notice included the web address to access the documents and the dates for the public comment period and public meeting.
September 2, 2020	A Public Meeting was held via the Zoom meeting platform from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Staff members from the Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA), the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office (CCPCDO), Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA) and the PennDOT District 2-0 Office were present to respond to questions and receive comments.
September 14, 2020	The 30-day public comment period concluded at 12:00 p.m.

II. Public Comments and Responses

Comments received via written correspondence, online comment form, telephone, or email (copies of written correspondence are attached).

Comments are in **BOLD** and staff responses are in *ITALICS*.

	Agency/ Individual	Summary of Comments and Responses
1	Ralph Stewart Bellefonte Borough Council	<p>On behalf of Bellefonte Borough Council, I am writing to provide comments on the above- referenced Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Please make it a high priority to address transportation issues related to the S.R. 150 corridor in Bellefonte Borough. The issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phoenix Avenue and Mill Street Intersections redesign • The failing structural stone wall support for S.R. 150 near the Big Spring • The redevelopment of the former Cerro complex (in Spring Township) - related traffic on S.R. 144 coming into the Borough • Pedestrian and bicycle access to/from the former Cerro Complex <p>This small section of Bellefonte Borough and Spring Township (vicinity of SR 144 and 150, Phoenix Avenue) has tremendous potential for economic development, multi-municipal cooperation and intermodal connectivity. We must have a well-planned and updated transportation system! Please add this project to the LRTP and consider making it a high priority in your TIP programming. Please do not hesitate to contact the Borough with any questions.</p> <p><i>The MPO staff acknowledged receipt of the comments.</i></p> <p><i>In late 2019, PennDOT completed a Feasibility Study for the Route 150/Phoenix Avenue intersection, which includes the Mill Street corridor, and is presenting the results to local officials. Because of fiscal constraints, funding was not included for the next phase (preliminary engineering) on the 2021-2024 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The preliminary engineering phase may be included on the next 2023-2026 TIP. The project is included in the 2025-2028 period of the LRTP.</i></p> <p><i>Repairs to the stone wall supporting Route 150 along Spring Creek are included as part of PennDOT’s 2020 Bridge Preservation project, which is funded on the 2019-2022 and 2021-2024 TIPs. Repairs should be completed in the next year.</i></p> <p><i>Regarding pedestrian and bicycle access to/from the former Cerro/Titan Energy complex along Route 144, the CCMPO has not historically allocated funding on the TIP for <u>stand-alone</u> pedestrian and bicycle projects. Occasionally such improvements can be included with roadway and/or bridge projects that are on the TIP.</i></p> <p><i>Municipalities or other local sponsors have advanced stand-alone pedestrian and bicycle projects using special grant funding programs from PennDOT’s Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program or one of Pennsylvania’s Multimodal Transportation Fund programs. MTF program funding is available from PennDOT, or the Commonwealth Financing Authority via the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).</i></p> <p><i>The most effective approach for Bellefonte Borough and Spring Township to advance ped/bike access improvements in the Route 144 corridor is to work cooperatively to apply for funding from the TA or MTF programs. MPO staff is available to assist the municipalities in developing a candidate project and preparing an application(s).</i></p>

Janet Swim
via email

First, I am impressed with all the thought and effort that has gone into the document. I would like to have more done with regard to environmental considerations. I consider quality of life and bicycles to be included within this domain. Thus, my comments are mostly along these lines.

The MPO staff acknowledged receipt of the comments.

Goal 7 – Maintain the Environment and Air Quality Conformity

This seems to limit the scope of what should be reviewed and covered.

I've added in recommendations, highlighted in yellow to make this goal capture more information that I think should be covered and reviewed.

a. Maintain or improve air and water quality and noise levels.

- **That is, please add in other environmental indicators. They are noted in various parts of the report but it would be helpful to raise as top level goals.**

The development of the LRTP's Goals and Objectives is guided by transportation planning factors and planning emphasis areas set forth in federal regulations. The Goals and Objectives were originally prepared with extensive input by the CCMPO Committees and revised for the LRTP 2050 based on input from the CCMPO's LRTP Subcommittee, which was comprised of members from both MPO Committees.

Objective A is intended to specifically address air quality because the CCMPO is subject to air quality conformity determinations under federal law and regulations. The MPO does not have direct responsibility for maintaining the quality of other environmental features that are mentioned in the LRTP, as that responsibility typically rests with project sponsors. However, the MPO staff will review the plan to identify other environmental features or indicators that could be added to Objective A in future plan updates.

c. Avoid negative impacts to nonhuman species, especially endangered or threatened species, key natural habitats, agricultural lands, and historic and cultural resources.

- **That is, please expand concern about nonhuman species beyond those that are endangered and threatened.**

Objective C focuses on specific environmental features that were of importance to the MPO Committees when the goals and objectives were originally prepared. Although the current list is not all inclusive, including the avoidance of all non-human species that are not designated as threatened and endangered may expand the scope of impact assessment beyond the responsibility of the MPO and project sponsors.

Assessments of environmental impact

- **Similar to goals for decrease in deaths and serious accidents, I'd like to see COGDOP Include emission reduction goals and projected assessment how changes in transportation decisions effect emissions. For example, how much does expanding the airport and projected increase in traffic increase emissions in our area? It appears that Cogdop is waiting for municipalities to set goals. Can Cogdop take a lead here?**

The CCMPO may consider the establishment of goals for emissions reductions, but more information and coordination with key stakeholders is needed before goals can be established. This is an extensive effort that must be considered in terms of the resources needed to develop specific goals, particularly because mobile source emissions are not limited to residents/generators within Centre County. In the interim, the efforts being undertaken by the Centre Region Council of Governments, individual municipalities in the

Centre Region and Bellefonte Borough, Penn State University and other stakeholders will provide a starting point and foundation for potentially developing goals at a countywide level.

- **How much of the funding is dedicated to energy efficiency and promoting non-fossil fuel powered vehicle use. It seems like the funding is about how to make it easier to use fossil fuel vehicles.**

Very little of the funding for roadway and bridge projects in the plan is associated with energy efficiency and non-fossil fuel-based travel. Most of the roadway and bridge projects are focused on safety and asset management needs. The funding commitment for those needs is not specifically intended to make it easier to use fossil fuel powered vehicles, but to ensure that the public can travel without experiencing safety risks from poor infrastructure conditions.

The LRTP does include planning considerations and future development activities associated with broader use of electric vehicles. The CCMPO intends to expand its planning efforts in this area in future years.

The LRTP also includes a list of priority pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects and estimates of cost for these improvements. However, because of funding constraints and eligibility limitations, most pedestrian/bicycle improvements are advanced by municipalities and other entities, not specifically by the CCMPO and PennDOT.

The CCMPO will continue to work with PennDOT and CATA to include elements associated with pedestrian and bicycle travel in road, bridge and public transit projects.

- **The report mentions how many people die and mentions threat roads impact various forms of life on the high. How many animals die?**

PennDOT maintains data on "reportable crashes" (vehicles must be towed from the scene, injuries/fatalities occur, property damage occurs) in which deer or other animals may be involved, but the database does not specifically track if animals are killed. Currently there is not a system to collect and record data on the number of animals killed in collisions with vehicles. Implementing such a system is unlikely to occur given the cost and limited resources available to the entities responsible for maintaining transportation systems.

- **There is no assessment of the impact of water quality from changes in land use to accommodate traffic.**

There are potential water quality impacts directly associated with the transportation system, including impacts occurring from stormwater discharge, more frequent flooding events, and deterioration of roadways located on steep slopes adjacent to streams. The CCMPO anticipates working with PennDOT and municipalities more closely in the future to address these issues relative to resiliency of the transportation system and water resources.

Bicycles

- **Chapter 3 pg 33, mentions various bicycle routes. However, just because something is labeled a Bicycle route doesn't mean it is safe for bicycles. For example, Route G along Linden hall road is curvy, has no side place for bicycles, and cars drive quickly along the road.**

The MPO acknowledges that not all roadways offer wide shoulders and lane widths that provide more room for interactions between bicycles and vehicles. However, the PA Vehicle Code classifies bicycles as vehicles, which provides legal standing for bicycles to operate on roadways. Pennsylvania law requires vehicles to provide 4 ft. of clearance when

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passing bicycles. As efforts are made to encouraging bicycling and to provide for safe interactions, the MPO staff will continue to work with PennDOT, local officials, stakeholders and the public to educate cyclists and drivers about the laws and safe operating practices.

BicyclePA Route G is a Pennsylvania bike touring route under the jurisdiction of PennDOT, and the Pennsylvania Pedalcycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PPAC) is responsible for oversight and evaluation of the BicyclePA route designations. The MPO staff recommends referring the comment to PPAC and request that Route G be evaluated in Centre County based on comments provided during the LRTP public comment period.

- **Electric bicycles are not mentioned IN chapter 5. They are in between scooters and nonmotorized bicycles and I think their popularity is increasing.**

The MPO agrees that the popularity of electric bicycles is increasing. References to e-bikes can be included in the plan. The CCMPO Coordinating Committee approved the inclusion of references to e-bikes in the plan.

- **Nice set of considerations for strategic plans with bicycles. How about consideration when expanding roads and highways, prioritize adapting plans to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians, bridges under and over roads and along roads (e.g., new 322, path to get to Tussey and adjoining state park for many people who go there for outdoor activities or to Mountain view or apartments to get to bus stops.)**

Roadway improvement projects are typically fiscally constrained. When resources are available, accommodations can be made. The MPO has a history of advocating for the inclusion of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in projects, in appropriate locations and when project budgets permit. For example, in recent years, roadway improvement projects in the State Route (SR) 3018 (University Drive) corridor and the SR 3010 Warner Blvd./Boalsburg Road corridor in College and Harris Township incorporated pedestrian and bike facilities.

In the past few years, PennDOT has implemented the new "Connects" process for soliciting input about planned roadway improvements from local officials much earlier in the project development process. The CCMPO is a partner in the PennDOT Connects process, and MPO staff places a high priority on identifying potential pedestrian/bike connections that should be accommodated in future road and bridge projects. Municipal plans and official maps, and other regional bike and land use planning documents are important tools that are used to illustrate the need for such accommodations.

Error on Chapter 4, Table 13 and Figure 27?

- **Here it is noted that there is a goal 1% decrease in serious injuries but the number and rate increase from base-line to target. The same is true for nonmotorized injuries. Seems like an explanation as to why a decrease in injuries would increase the number and rate.**

Pennsylvania has established a goal of a 1% reduction in serious injuries as part of the implementation of required federal safety performance measures. The number and rate of change between baseline and specific future targets is based on 5-year rolling averages established statewide and for each MPO area. Because the safety target values vary from year to year, the actual rate of change will depend on the years used to calculate the 5-year rolling average.

The MPO staff will be working with PennDOT in the next year to review crash data in order to identify potential projects and other programmatic improvements that will enable

progress to be made in meeting the individual targets and contribute to reaching the overall 1% reduction goal.

- **I think there is a type here target should be labeled be 2016 to 2020 (perhaps a typo).**

The error is confirmed, and the table will be corrected.

Quality of life

- **Chapter 3, Pg. 67 mentions inbound, outbound, and through for air freight. How much truck freight is inbound, outbound, and through? It seems like large percent is through Centre county and we suffer the environmental consequences (not just air, but water and noise) and safety consequences.**

The CCMPO does not have data documenting the amounts of inbound, outbound and through freight. However, based on traffic volumes and travel pattern data from past studies, and because Centre County does not have a large number of manufacturing and other freight-generating businesses, MPO staff believes the majority of freight is "through" traffic moving by truck, particularly on Interstate 80.

Freight flow data is available on the federal level, and PennDOT is currently completing a new state Freight Plan that may provide more detailed information about freight flows. Data collected for the State College Area Connector (SCAC) Planning and Environment Linkages Study may also provide more detailed information about freight flows.

- **I'd like to see the additions in yellow added to page 121.**
 1. **"Real and perceived conflicts frequently occur between trucks and trains, passenger vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, and the public's quality of life in communities through which freight is moving"**

The suggested revisions will be made. The CCMPO Coordinating Committee approved the inclusion of the additional language.

- **Can there be rules about Break retard systems on highways?**

Engine braking systems for trucks, commonly often referred to as "Jake brakes", create loud noise. Because noise is regulated on a municipal level, Jake brake ordinances can be adopted by municipal governing bodies.

- **Page 122 I would anticipate that with increased air transportation, there will also be increased concern about quality of life for those living near airport and along flight paths as they approach the airport. This would include concerns about noise and safety from the plans as well as public and freight transportation to and from the airport.**

Although the CCMPO does not have a direct regulatory responsibility or formal role in the planning, funding and operations of airports, the MPO is cognizant of community impacts from air operations, particularly at the University Park Airport, which is the largest airport in the county. The MPO is aware that advancements in aircraft engine technology and flight path parameters at University Park Airport have been instrumental in limiting noise impacts along the runway approach and departure corridors.

Public issues

- **My primary concern is noise along 322 (not a dot to be placed on the map but all along 322) I would classify as a community conflict zone. This**

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<p>Janet Swim continued</p>	<p>includes concerns about noise pollution with increases we have experienced in traffic, and projected increases when upgrades will occur.</p> <p><i>The CCMPO is aware that noise impacts from potential improvements in the SCAC study area is a major concern of the public. PennDOT and the SCAC consultant team will address potential noise impacts associated with improvements that may be proposed in the Route 322 corridor, and other corridors within the SCAC study area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are some of us who also bicycle (and I've even seen a wheel chair and pedestrians) who travel along 322. So there are safety issues as well. <p><i>The MPO staff concurs and has conveyed to PennDOT and the SCAC consultant team that pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is a major topic that must be addressed in the SCAC PEL Study and subsequent project development phases for any improvements in the study area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I appreciate the efforts to make the area friendly to bicyclists and I encourage more of this. <p><i>The MPO staff acknowledged receipt of the comment.</i></p>
<p>3</p> <p>George Harrigan via CCMPO Technical Committee meeting on 09/09/2020</p>	<p>There are safety issues on certain roadways associated with the mix of bicycle and vehicular traffic that should be addressed in more detail in the policy element of the LRTP.</p> <p><i>The MPO staff recommends the addition of the following bullets to Bicycle Policies on page 117 contained in Chapter 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i><u>Evaluate and enhance safety on roads with bicycle traffic</u> - Study roads with motor vehicle and bicycle conflicts and identify potential improvements to increase safety for all users.</i> ▪ <i><u>Complete a Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) Analysis</u> – LTS aims to describe the comfort level along and across the existing roadway network and trails for bicyclists and ranges from LTS 1 (lowest stress facilities) to LTS 4 (highest stress facilities). The LTS analysis will help identify improvements to reduce stress levels in the network and remove barriers to bicycling.</i> <p><i>The CCMPO Coordinating Committee approved the addition of the language in the bullets to the plan.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can BicyclePA Route G be evaluated because of safety concerns? <p><i>BicyclePA Route G is under the jurisdiction of PennDOT, and the Pennsylvania Pedalcycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PPAC) is responsible for oversight and evaluation of the BicyclePA route designations. The MPO staff recommends referring the comment to PPAC and request that Route G be evaluated in Centre County based on comments provided during the LRTP public comment period.</i></p>
<p>4</p> <p>David Pribulka Ferguson Township Board of Supervisors</p>	<p>The Board would like to request that the MPO consider separating the realignment project at the base of Pine Grove Mountain at the intersection of SR26 (Water Street) and SR45 (Pine Grove Road) from the signalization of the intersection. If that is possible, the Board would like to request that the signalization project be elevated to an earlier year in the LRTP to align with the proposal of the Township to conduct a signal warrant study when conditions permit. The Board believes this will make the project more economically</p>

<p>David Pribulka continued</p>	<p>feasible than including it with the realignment and will serve to address pedestrian and vehicular safety concerns at the intersection.</p> <p><i>The MPO staff acknowledged receipt of the comment.</i></p> <p><i>The MPO staff does not recommend separating the project elements in the LRTP project list at this time. The MPO staff does recommend completion of a traffic signal warrant analysis. If a signal is currently warranted or will be in the near future, a cost estimate can be provided for the signal improvement as a standalone project. The project elements can then be separated in the next update of the LRTP, anticipated to occur within 2-3 years.</i></p> <p><i>MPO staff also notes that if the location meets warrants, a standalone signal project could be considered for inclusion on the 2023-2026 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) when it is developed in 2021 and 2022. Staff concurs that separating the elements of the full project would make a standalone signal improvement more economically feasible, and programming of a signal improvement on the TIP would still be consistent with the LRTP because the full project is in the fiscally constrained project list.</i></p> <p><i>The CCMPO Coordinating Committee approved the inclusion of the following footnote for Project #23 - SR 26/SR 45 Pine Grove Mills Intersection, in Chapter 8, Table 21: Highway Project List:</i></p> <p><i>"The CCMPO will consider dividing the SR26/SR45 Pine Grove Mills Intersection project into two projects if a signal warrant study anticipated in the next 2 years shows a signal is warranted. At that time consideration will be given to adjusting/amending the LRTP by dividing this project into two projects. A separate project for the warranted signal will be considered for an earlier time period."</i></p>
<p>5</p> <p>James Graef via email</p>	<p><u>Systematic Measures of Street Success</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I could only find one systematic measure of all important streets in the county: level of service. I think we should have a comprehensive view showing all aspects of street performance: potential for road diet, quality of sidewalks, protection of cyclists, prioritization of transit, etc. These could be shown in addition to level of service to provide a broad understanding of the county's street network. Level of service is inadequate because it accounts for only the throughput of cars, without consideration of pedestrians, bikes, or the fact that transit vehicles are carrying ten times the number of people as a car. So to have a comprehensive view, other systematic measures of streets are necessary. • Level of service is also not benign. Level of service argues a street will have more congestion in the future even if it's not expanded, as if a street with an F level of service will have cars detouring on adjacent sidewalks or farm fields to swerve around traffic if the road isn't widened—which would never happen. Of course when a street is widened, more cars use it because it's no longer congested and level of service is 'vindicated' because the projections came true <i>just</i> after the widening was complete. We really shouldn't consider level of service as a factor in street design because it manifests, rather than predicts. • If eliminating level of service as a consideration is too far of a leap, why not add more measures so you can see level of service as one of many systematic analyses completed to obtain a full overview of transportation in the region?

James Graef
continued

The MPO agrees that vehicular Level of Service (LOS) is one of the few transportation system performance measures mentioned in the LRTP. The LOS analysis is utilized to identify areas where vehicular traffic congestion may result in travel delays and safety concerns. Other federally-required performance measures for safety, pavement and bridge condition, and travel time reliability are being implemented in Pennsylvania. Because the data and analysis systems needed to support these performance measures have not yet been fully developed and deployed, MPO staff anticipates updating the LRTP in the next 2-3 years to more fully integrate these performance measures into the planning process. As with LOS, these measures will help guide decision making about future improvements and street design.

The MPO agrees that LOS should not be the only measure considered during street design, and that other measures should be utilized. The LRTP includes several policy statements in Chapter 6 - Strategic Directions about integrating and accommodating pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users into street design.

Examples include:

- Improve Connectivity of Modes – Roadways provide the infrastructure that supports both motorized and non-motorized modes of travel. The CCMPO should encourage the integration of "Complete Streets" principles and elements in projects on the state-owned and locally owned roadway systems. These elements will help provide safe access for pedestrians, bicyclists, persons using mobility devices, and users of other non-motorized modes, and help make the first-mile/last-mile connection to the public transportation system. Physical elements may include traffic calming for motorized vehicle travel, improved crosswalks and ramps to sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and traffic signal operations.*
- Prepare and Adopt a Countywide Bicycle Master Plan*
- Expand and Upgrade the Existing Network of Shared-Use Paths*
- Implement Road Diets in Appropriate Locations*
- Expand and Upgrade the Existing Network of Shared-Use Paths*
- Expand and Upgrade the Existing Network of On-Road Bicycle Facilities*
- Apply for Walk-Friendly Community Status*
- Consider Municipal Complete Streets Policies and amend necessary policies, plans, and ordinances*

One additional policy statement is being recommended:

- Complete a Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) Analysis – LTS aims to describe the comfort level along and across the existing roadway network and trails for bicyclists and ranges from LTS 1 (lowest stress facilities) to LTS 4 (highest stress facilities). The LTS analysis will help identify improvements to reduce stress levels in the network and remove barriers to bicycling.*

The CCMPO encourages the integration of "Complete Streets" principles and elements in projects on the state-owned and locally owned roadway systems. These elements will help provide safe access for pedestrians, bicyclists, persons using mobility devices, and users of other non-motorized modes, and help make the first-mile/last-mile connection to the public transportation system. Physical elements may include traffic calming for motorized vehicle travel, improved crosswalks and ramps to sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and traffic signal operations.

College Ave/University Dr Interchange and College Ave Uniform Design Standards

James Graef
continued

- **The scope of this interchange project should be broadened to examine whether we need an interchange here at all. The interchange was created before the expressway and Park Ave were built, and because those roads took so much of the traffic this interchange used to handle, the intersection doesn't even justify the number of lanes on either road. Instead of widening the bridge, we should consider removing it and constructing a four-way controlled intersection. While we're at it, we can complete road diets on College Ave—from five lanes to three, appropriate for its 20,000 daily vehicles— and University Dr—from three lanes to two, appropriate for its less than 9,000 daily vehicles.**
- **A four-way intersection would be safer for pedestrians and bicycles, and would no longer make those users feel as though they are unwanted. The land which is currently used for the interchange ramps could be sold, potentially paying for the entire project, and State College and Penn State could create a new northeastern anchor of downtown and campus.**
- **Plan for potential development of this area after the removal of the interchange: <http://jamesgraef.com/projects/downtown-east>**

The Route 26 (College Ave.)/State Route (SR) 3022 (University Dr.) interchange is not currently included in the fiscally constrained list of projects to be advanced, but is included in the LRTP as a "Highway Project for Future Consideration".

Because College Avenue and University Drive through the interchange area are state-owned facilities, the planning and design of potential improvements would follow PennDOT's project development process, which evaluates community and transportation needs, documents the purpose of potential improvements, and assesses the impacts of alternative improvements on the natural and built environment. The initial step in the project development process is the PennDOT "Connects" collaboration step, which provides local officials with the opportunity to identify important community and environmental features that may be impacted by a future project, and allows PennDOT to consider officials' input when developing the scope for the preliminary engineering and design of potential improvements. The scope of improvements to the interchange would be developed through the Connects process, along with consideration for the funding available at the time of project development.

The LRTP does not mention a potential road diet for College Avenue or University Drive. This concept can make roadways more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. However, the corridors would need detailed analysis of traffic operations to determine the feasibility of implementing a road diet(s). Given limited funding and increased emphasis on performance measures, improvements in these corridors are not included in the LRTP's fiscally constrained project list. One alternative is for State College Borough and College Township to partner and seek alternative funding such as Pennsylvania's Multimodal Transportation Program to advance a feasibility study, consistent with municipal planning documents such as the Downtown State College Master Plan and the College Township Pedestrian Facilities Master Plan.

Shared-Use Path Connections: Milesburg to the Brick Town Trail and State College to the Lower Trail

- **These connections are crucial links in a potential larger network of rail trails and shared-use paths connecting all of Pennsylvania—with Centre County as an important intersection. The Lower Trail, a 16 mile rail trail, is acquiring right-of-way to extend to Hollidaysburg. Blair County has plans to continue**

James Graef
continued

it to its western edge, where in the future it can connect to the Ghost Town Trail, eventually extending to Pittsburgh. The Bellefonte Central Rail Trail will connect to the Bellefonte-Milesburg Trail, which could eventually extend to the Brick Town Trail, the Bald Eagle Valley Trail, and the Pine Creek Rail Trail. A future Penns Valley Rail Trail could connect to the Buffalo Valley Rail Trail and eventually the D&L Trail in Wilkes-Barre.

- These connections are the only two sections of trail in Centre County not yet studied which are necessary for this potential network. The connection to the Brick Town Trail could travel on Old Curtin Road until its terminus at the active Nittany and Bald Eagle Railroad, which it could follow to Curtin Village.
- The connection to the Lower Trail could use the Lewisburg and Tyrone Railroad from the Penn State Blue Course or from a future bike path on Old Gatesburg Rd to Pennsylvania Furnace, where it would leave Centre County. In Huntingdon County, it could continue along Spruce Creek (preferably) or PA 45 (likely because of right-of-way) to the town of Spruce Creek. From there it could travel with PA 45 over the Juniata and under the PA mainline railroad and follow the tracks, or use Farm Rd and a new bike/pedestrian bridge across the Juniata to the disused Spruce Creek Tunnel, then through Barre and Alexandria to the Lower Trail.

Map with existing and proposed rail trails in PA—links discussed above on Necessary Links layer in blue:

https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1R9SD_103wEd6AAU6wwfEYLxiTZTvRxxk&usp=sharing

More information about a full PA Cycleway Network:

<http://jamesgraef.com/projects/pa-cycleways>

A connection between the Borough of Bellefonte in Centre County and the City of Lock Haven in Clinton County has been studied previously, and additional information can be found in the Clinton County Greenway and Open Space Plan available on the Centre County Website at <https://centrecountypa.gov/557/Clinton-County-Greenway-Open-Space-Plan>. The Plan evaluates the Bald Eagle/Spring Creek Canal corridor and studies the placement of a trail to connect Bellefonte with Lock Haven.

A connection from the existing Blue and White Trail (former Bellefonte Central Railroad Right of Way) in Centre County to the Huntingdon County line and continuing to the Lower Trail would be located in Ferguson Township, traversing areas with active farm operations. Based on experience with other trail studies completed in Centre County where former railroad right of way has reverted to private property owners, considerable effort and resources would be required to obtain the necessary right of way. Municipal support would be required to commence work on a feasibility study that would determine ownership and assess potential routes. This comment will be referred to Ferguson Township for consideration.

CATA Bus Rapid Transit

- **The most necessary bus lane in State College is the northeast direction of Curtin Rd from Burrowes Rd to Allen Rd. It hosts 54 buses in the peak hour, more than most dedicated bus lanes do in New York City. After this is done, extensions along Curtin Rd and bus lanes on College/Beaver and Atherton could establish transit as a first-class, rapid transit-like mode of transportation, rather than something only ridden by students. The section of my report on potential CATA bus lanes is attached.**

- **A first step toward BRT on N Atherton St could be bus stops near White Course Dr and Curtin Rd, allowing CATA buses to run exclusively on Atherton St and still serve North Campus, and allowing riders to catch buses from downtown as they head outbound on North Atherton. A queue jump at the currently-under construction right-turn lane at White Course Dr could allow buses to stop southbound, and would only require a bus stop sign and a fourth traffic signal bulb. This would be justified if only for the RC bus serving West Campus, but could be the start of a vastly improved bus corridor along Atherton St.**

James Graef
continued

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and related improvements are covered in Chapter 5 - Emerging Service & Technology Enhancements. This section briefly documents the state of the practice, applications in Centre County, potential actions and planning implications, and projected future developments.

The LRTP also includes two projects that work to address the concerns. The "CATA Service Area Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study" will examine the state of the practice in implementing BRT elements, the effectiveness of these elements, and the opportunities to utilize such elements to improve operating efficiency and passenger throughput along a number of high-density corridors within the CATA fixed route service area. The "College - Beaver Avenue Transit Signal Priority (TSP) and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)" project will implement transit signal priority and related ITS technologies along the College and Beaver Avenue corridors in State College Borough. The project area will include intersections at Atherton Street, Burrowes Street / Road, Fraser Street, Allen Street, Pugh Street, Garner Street / Shortlidge Road, and the University Drive ramps, but could potentially be expanded depending on the amount of funding available and PennDOT, municipal, and Penn State University support. Both of these projects are in the 2025-2028 time period of the LRTP.

With the author's permission, the MPO staff will retain the materials provided with the comments and use them to assist in informing the scope of work and methodology for both projects. Given funding constraints, implementation will again depend on the level of funding available and PennDOT, municipal, and University support.

Other important transit-related improvements the region complete include the following:

- **Upzone near transit corridors, especially along Atherton St, to allow mid-rise development without parking requirements**
- **Replace parking requirements with transit requirements (funding for increased transit service) and parking *maximums* first in downtown State College and eventually in CATA's entire service area**
- **Allow CATA to view land development plans at their earliest stages, and empower them to advocate for straight, direct, highly-connected streets with nearby dense existing and future development along existing and potential transit corridors**

CATA and MPO staff have enjoyed a collaborative and productive relationship with municipal staff, planning commissioners, governing bodies, engineers, and local developers in terms of review of subdivision/land development plans and zoning amendments, and implementation of transit improvements associated with development activities. Land use decisions in Pennsylvania are the responsibility of counties and municipalities, and those decisions have the potential to greatly expand the effectiveness of transit services within Centre County. Accordingly, CATA and MPO staff will continue to strengthen these working

relationships to advocate for and pursue the actions noted in the comments, consistent with the policy statements in Chapter 6 - Strategic Directions.

James Graef
continued

I'm currently talking to Penn State and CATA about a potential bus lane on Curtin Rd and a queue jump at White Course Dr. All proposals discussed here are included in my CATA Operations Improvement Report, available at: <http://jamesgraef.com/projects/cata-operations>

Access to the author's report is acknowledged. CATA and MPO staff appreciate the enthusiasm for transit and technical input to the long range transportation planning process.

S Atherton St Improvement Study

Atherton St between Allen St and Science St does not justify widening to add a turning lane. Instead, its 13,000 daily vehicles justify a road *diet* from four lanes to three, which can still support 20,000 daily vehicles. Parallel parking could be added in the space no longer used by through traffic, allowing for walkable, mid-rise, mixed use development with longer-term parking in the back, rather than the front.

Facilities should also include:

- **Center island at Pizza Hut to stop cars from passing stopped buses and not being able to see pedestrians at the crosswalk**
- **Midblock crossing at Calder, because pedestrians should be able and do cross at the intersection. A (potentially raised) striped crosswalk with yellow flashing beacons would be the best possible solution for pedestrians**
- **Multiple new crosswalks where none exist currently, between Allen St and University Dr, a distance of .59 miles**
- **A light or center island at Fairmount (like Foster) because of bad sight distances for pedestrians and because restricted left turns are constantly flouted by drivers**

The LRTP includes the South Atherton Street Improvement Study within the fiscally constrained project list. South Atherton Street is a state-owned facility, and proposed improvements will follow the PennDOT project development process. The project will take many years to be initiated given limited funding resources, and the scope will likely change as more performance-based data becomes available and the PennDOT Connects step is completed. MPO staff will consider the list of suggested facilities and other options, considering the engineering and design practices in place when project development is initiated.

Pine Grove Mills Intersection Realignment

- **If Water St is realigned, I think this could be a win for vehicles and neutral for Pine Grove Mills. However, if Nixon Rd is realigned (which I fear is more likely because of the stream alignment), this would mean the destruction of existing buildings and the creation of an empty lot in downtown Pine Grove Mills. It seems hard to keep businesses in existing buildings in downtown Pine Grove Mills, let alone build a new building.**

The MPO acknowledges the concern about potential impacts of the Route 26/45 Intersection project to community and environmental features in the Village of Pine Grove Mills. Because Water Street and Pine Grove Road are state-owned, the planning and design of potential improvements would follow the PennDOT project development process. The PennDOT Connects step will provide local officials with the opportunity to identify

	James Graef continued	<p><i>important community and environmental features that may be impacted by a future project.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All traffic counts are via PennDOT's open data portal: https://data-pennshare.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/rmstraffic-traffic-volumes?geometry=-77.869%2C40.780%2C-77.814%2C40.791&selectedAttribute=CUR_AADT <p><i>The MPO staff acknowledges the author's sharing of various data sources and other resources.</i></p>
6	Fritz Smith via LRTP online comment form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe that the recommendations about expanding access to airports (particularly University Park) and encouraging tourism are vital to our economic future in Centre County. <p><i>The MPO staff acknowledges receipt of the comment.</i></p>