



NEEDS FOR PRESERVATION AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT

As indicated by input collected at both the public meetings and through the digital outreach survey, Cambria County's transportation system requires an ongoing focus on system maintenance and preservation to continue to serve and support its communities and economy moving into the planning horizon. Unsurprisingly, highway and bridge conditions remain the most important priorities for the majority of area residents. However, as was captured during the previous LRTP update, a dedicated commitment should continue to be given towards expanding opportunities for alternative transportation modes, including passenger rail, as well cycling and walking.

Moving further into the 2040 planning horizon, maintenance of highways and bridges—to sustain pavement conditions and to address limiting bridge conditions, highway safety risks and travel delays—should remain a top priority throughout the County. Modernization of highways and operations should also be pursued to update intersection design, signalization, and controls, and to apply technology that improves mobility and safety. Beyond highways and bridges, modernization of passenger rail and public transportation services should be pursued to strengthen opportunities for economic investment. Finally, expansion of the bicycle and pedestrian network should be advanced 1) as an accessible, active, and healthy alternative to motorized travel for all ages, 2) to create safer community conditions for all residents, 3) to close existing gaps in connectivity to land uses of interest, 4) as a recreational feature that allows people to experience the landscape, history and character of Cambria County from the City of Johnstown and its neighborhoods, to towns and villages of our more rural landscapes. Multimodal improvements such as these demonstrate commitment to offer accessible, affordable, and practical travel choices at a range of costs for residents of all abilities. These types of investments are critical for Cambria County to compete with neighboring counties for population growth, community viability, and economic investment.

The matrix below summarizes Cambria County’s system-wide transportation needs & opportunities from the previous major LRTP update (2015-2019), a status update/benchmark on any progress made since that time, and the new and/or revised needs & opportunities moving into the **2040** planning horizon:

| 2016 Needs & Opportunities | Status/Benchmark | 2020 Needs & Opportunities |
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| Resurface highways | Several resurfacing projects throughout the County have been completed, including major highway sections along: PA 56, PA 53, PA 403, US 219, and US 22. | Continue to work with District 9-0 as it prioritizes highway preservation projects; when appropriate, suggest revised priorities based on economic development and business retention needs; identify multimodal needs in the highway corridor in advance of resurfacing activity. |
| Continue to rehabilitate and replace structurally deficient state and local bridges | In 2016, Commissioners adopted Act 89 (Transportation Bill), enacting a \$5 annual vehicle registration renewal fee, in order to fund the repair and/or replacement of county-owned structurally deficient bridges. | Continue to allocate/dedicate funding toward the replacement/ongoing maintenance of all 26 County-owned bridges. |
| Improve highway access to City and community business clusters and other economic development generators | Culvert & viaduct rehabilitations, as well as resurfacing projects have been implemented along PA | Continue to identify and prioritize projects that will enhance the ease of access and travel throughout the PA 56 corridor. Consider additional opportunities for truck traffic, such as |

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| | 56. | rerouting and widening. |
| Improve highway safety , including highway alignment, sight distance, and intersections | Re-alignment, replacement of recessed pavement markers, and the elimination of sight distance hazards have been addressed along key state routes & local roads throughout the County. Signal improvements throughout key intersections in Downtown Johnstown have also been made. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalize the road safety audit for PA 756 (Bedford Street) intersection with Belmont Street to intersection with SR 2001 2. Review annual highway safety data findings with District 9-0 3. Suggest additional corridors for road safety audits and specific locations for District 9-0 field investigation/evaluation and potential safety improvement |
| Reduce recurring congestion | Several congestion reduction projects focused on improving corridor & intersection safety, as well as signalization, have been completed throughout the more urban areas of Johnstown and Ebensburg. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Document locations and conditions of recurring congestion 2. Study alternatives, i.e. more efficient operations, intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and additional connections (i.e., alternative routes). |
| Expand/Enhance bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure | In 2019, the CCPC developed a bicycle & pedestrian plan update, <i>Connecting Cambria</i> . The plan established a prioritization matrix for selecting and implementing future bike/ped projects. | Coordinate with District 9-0, municipalities, CCCRA, and CamTran to continue to prioritize, fund, and implement projects that provide opportunities to improve conditions for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users, as identified in <i>Connecting Cambria</i>. |
| Expand and enhance public transportation services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local and intercounty routes ● Provider coordination for service and transfer ● Fleet efficiency ● Customer service technology, e.g. real-time data ● Fare collection efficiency ● Marketing to prospective transit riders | Continual replacement of old buses with compressed natural gas(CNG) buses, facility improvements including implementation of solar panels at the Woodvale facility, and improvements to the rural transit center in Ebensburg. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extend current transit service into the evenings and weekends, and add additional routes where demand is high 2. Add bus shelters at existing bus stop locations throughout the CamTran system, where feasible 3. Explore viable uses for the former CamTran bus barn facility in Moxham 4. Examine existing bus stops along major roadways that could benefit from the implementation of a bus pull-off |
| Improve the airport for passenger & air freight service | Under new management in February 2020, airport is currently developing plans for economic development, including potential plans for | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support air freight improvements and passenger service enhancements to the airport 2. Ensure that all transportation connectivity |

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| | an aerospace incubator, as well as facility and flight expansions. | and capacity issues are addressed such to include both road infrastructure and transit service to the site to support future business and workforce |
| Increase frequency of passenger rail service | Multimodal grant secured to stabilize Johnstown train station building envelope and develop a feasibility study for future expanded uses of the station | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocate and lobby for expanded passenger rail service between Pittsburgh and Johnstown 2. Continue to make improvements to Johnstown train station to bolster economic activity and increase interest/ridership |
| Increase utilization of the rail freight system | Key improvements over the 4 year period include upgrades to the plant tracks (replacing rail and ties) at Gautier Steel location. | Encourage coordinated land use and economic development planning along rail lines to increase rail freight efficiency. |
| Improve navigational signage to multimodal transportation hubs e.g. airport, transit services (including transit service for special events) | CCPC & CCCRA have been working with District 9-0 to purchase and install navigational signage to more effectively direct trail users from major highways to trail assets. | Continue to acquire and install navigational signage along key highways and routes to direct active transportation users to trailheads and trail assets throughout the County. |

DISTINCT OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY, ENERGIZE ECONOMY, AND ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE

While this plan ultimately addresses numerous transportation projects across Cambria County, a few key project opportunity areas have been identified and highlighted below, based on 1.) Prioritization from previous and ongoing county planning initiatives and 2.) Their unique position to create transformative change to the county’s existing transportation systems. Each of these opportunity areas addresses challenges that the County continues to face when modernizing infrastructure and adapting our communities to become more competitive in the 21st century.

Passenger Rail & Train Station Expansion

Expanded passenger rail opportunities for the Southern Alleghenies region of Pennsylvania have long been supported by local multimodal agencies, economic development stakeholders, and elected officials alike. In 2016, a resurgence of this support was given, specifically to the addition of a second passenger car along the Pennsylvanian route from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg. Though the Western Pennsylvanians for Passenger Rail (WPRR) took the lead on this initiative, lobbying efforts and letters of support were provided by stakeholders from each county along this route. Although this effort did not secure an additional passenger car, it did

solidify the need to ensure that the existing passenger car remains in operation. Nonetheless, local support to increase opportunities for additional rail trips, particularly to and from Pittsburgh and Johnstown/Cambria County, remains high. While this opportunity continues to be pursued, similar and complementary attention has recently been given to the Johnstown train station, beginning with a successful multimodal grant to stabilize and secure the building envelope, as well as develop a feasibility study to assess the potentially new and expanded uses of this space. Alongside these efforts, Amtrak recently added a baggage car to the Pennsylvanian to allow for checked baggage and the capacity for six standard-sized bicycles to also be stored for multimodal travelers. Local officials consider this to be a great success in the way of enhancing multimodal infrastructure and accessibility, as well as continuing to promote recreation-based tourism into Cambria County. Moving into 2020, local rail stakeholders and advocates will be focused on the pending approval of a subsequent multimodal grant to complete a comprehensive engineering analysis for the shovel readiness of the train station. Additional 2020 projects include addressing the existing platform and retrofitting it to be ADA compliant for passengers who require accessible boarding/de-boarding. Amtrak also plans to renovate and expand the existing enclosed waiting area and improve the tunnel that connects the station's ticket office to the platform area.

Transportation opportunity areas should take into consideration all aspects of travel, regardless of mode.

Route 56 & Other Highway Corridor Improvements

Major highway restoration and modernization improvements have been made to Cambria County's central East-West corridors (Route 22) and North-South corridor Route 219, as well as Route 56 to Route 22. Each of these corridors serves to connect and provide access to Cambria County's major employment centers and minor business clusters in Johnstown, Ebensburg, and Northern Cambria. Although access into Cambria County from the southeast—to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and all direct points along the Washington D.C. and Philadelphia corridors—remains challenged, planners and transportation engineers acknowledge the issues that persist, and continue to implement safety and speed condition projects that enhance and ease the overall travel experience. Culvert and viaduct rehabilitations continue along this route through Johnstown, with resurfacing and signalization upgrades on the horizon for 2020. Projects that continue to address the issues facing the County's economic viability via highway corridor access will continue to remain a top priority moving into the planning horizon.

Alternative & Accessible Options

As indicated in the County's most recent bicycle and pedestrian plan, *Connecting Cambria*, more than ever before, multimodal transportation is being recognized as a top priority by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. For planners and

transportation engineers on-the-ground, this means adopting & implementing a more holistic approach to planning for transportation, and making more inclusive infrastructure decisions when it comes to expanding and enhancing mode options throughout the County. **Connecting Cambria** sought to achieve this by creating a decision-making framework from which to weigh all bicycle & pedestrian (as well as transit) infrastructure and programmatic projects moving forward. Any new investment made within the County should have a particular focus on the following core concepts: safety, accessibility, connectivity, sustainability & healthy living, and recreation. Prioritizing projects that achieve these concepts create more equitable and accessible communities that enable safe and efficient means of travel, regardless of mode. Because Cambria remains a mostly rural County, new investments also need to consider the interconnection and interconnectedness between accessible & alternative modes of transportation to allow trips to be fluid and minimize disruptions for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.

Trails, Tourism & the Great Outdoors

Cambria County continues to be a regional leader when it comes to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, particularly the development and conservation of trails, greenways, and off-road routes. Such a position would not be possible without the Cambria County Recreation and Conservation Authority (CCCRA); one of the only designated public authorities in the Southern Alleghenies region directly charged with maintaining and building rail trails. Beyond maintenance and expansion of these assets, the CCCRA has also developed a series of events on its trails to bolster the area's recreational culture while providing safe and accessible corridors from which to travel and to recreate. The CCCRA continues to work toward these missions through planning initiatives like the **Johnstown Urban Connectivity Plan**; a strategic plan which focuses on connecting existing multimodal assets and transportation hubs within Greater Johnstown to enhance tourism and active transportation opportunities. Adapting the County's communities to achieve a higher degree of walkability and connectivity by expanding its network of trails and greenways will continue to create more efficient and complete multimodal transportation systems throughout Cambria.

Cambria County's proximity to both the Laurel Highlands and Southern Alleghenies tourism regions continues to help grow its reputation as a high value outdoor recreation and destination location. While its sheer proximity to other attractions once made Cambria its own area of interest, burgeoning outdoor assets such as the Ghost Town Trail, the Inclined Plane Downhill Mountain Biking and Hiking trails, and the Stonycreek & Little Conemaugh rivers now serve as their own destinations for regional, outdoor adventure tourists.

Relatedly, the City of Johnstown continues to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop a plan to beautify and rehabilitate the floodwalls in the City of Johnstown through brownfield site assessment and flood mitigation planning. A

portion of these planning endeavors require stakeholders to approach the river as a true corridor, and recognize this asset for both its recreation and transportation potential. Extending and connecting riverside cycling and hiking trails such as the Jim Mayer Riverswalk will be an integral part to planning for the future transition of the river walls and their adjacent, street-level channels. Local stakeholders are currently working with the Corps to produce a “Riverlife” project that will integrate flood protection system improvements, shoreline restoration, ecosystem restoration, park/recreational/trail improvements, and blighted property acquisition. The ***Flood Inundation Maps to Create Acquisition Plans of Johnstown*** study, recently funded under the Army Corps of Engineers Silver Jackets Program, will be focused on examining: 1.) hydrologic and hydraulic flows, 2.) frequency of flood events, and 3.) parcels at risk, to inform simultaneous acquisition and blight planning activities. This work will pave the way for additional multimodal planning and redesign of this very important corridor.