

ADVANCING A COMPLETE STREETS AGENDA

May 25, 2017



Summary of the Workshop Presentations

The Lancaster County Planning Commission (LCPC), Lighten Up Lancaster and the Coalition for Smart Growth (CSG) sponsored a workshop on May 25, 2017 entitled “Advancing a Complete Streets Agenda.” The workshop was directed towards municipalities that have passed a Complete Streets Resolution or expressed a strong interest in moving forward with implementation of complete streets. The workshop provided helpful information, resources and strategies for advancing complete streets in Lancaster County’s municipalities. A panel of speakers from the municipalities shared their experiences in advancing complete streets and another panel of speakers addressed potential sources of funding for complete streets.

Welcoming Remarks and Presentations

Robert Bini, Director for Transportation, LCPC

Mr. Bini welcomed the workshop attendees and provided background on the importance of designing complete streets that are safe for all transportation modes and people of all ages.

Brenda Buescher, Health Promotion Specialist, Lighten Up Lancaster

Brenda Buescher discussed the benefits of “active transportation” to help improve public health and reduce the incidence of heart attacks, obesity and other diseases associated with sedentary lifestyles.

www.Lightenuplancaster.org/In-The-Community/Active-Transportation

Harriet Parcels, Senior Transportation Planner, LCPC

Harriet Parcels discussed the activities LCPC has undertaken to promote complete streets in Lancaster County. Ms. Parcels presented information from the **Complete Streets Guidebook** developed by LCPC, which includes recommended dimensions for complete streets elements based on road

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type and land use context. Ms. Parcels provided language on complete streets that can be included in Comprehensive Plan Updates and SALDOs, information from a North Carolina Department of Transportation study on the costs of implementing complete streets and links to helpful website resources.

www.lancastercountyp Planning.org/177/Complete-Streets-for-Lancaster-County

Municipal Experience with Complete Streets

Chris Brown, *Derck & Edson*

Creating Walkability in Upper Leacock Township

Upper Leacock Township began to look at sidewalk connectivity in the township several years ago. The township had often granted waivers to developers on the requirement to construct sidewalks. The township has decided to stop this practice in order to create an interconnected sidewalk network. The township has mapped the existing sidewalk network and identified gaps and reviewed and updated language in the Subdivision and Land Use Ordinance (SALDO) related to sidewalks. It also has adopted an Official Map. In 2016, with the assistance of Rettew Associates, Upper Leacock Township developed a Sidewalk Master Plan for PA 23, using the results of a walkability audit and other field work. The township has become more consistent in its requirement that developers install sidewalks as part of their development but has been flexible in allowing other types of pathways such as off-road multiuse paths.

Candie Johnson, *Manager, West Earl Township*

The West Earl Township Board of Supervisors created a plan for improving East Main Street, which was subject to flooding that resulted in deterioration of roads, sidewalks and curbs. The township has been engaged in a multi-phase program to correct the stormwater problem and has invested, along with the water authority, nearly \$1,000,000 in improvements: \$545,000 from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, \$224,000 from township funds and \$230,000 from the water authority. Most recently, the township received a grant of about \$1,000,000 for additional sidewalk construction and related improvements. The township plans to add sidewalks along East Main Street from Allen Road to State Road. A private developer is constructing sidewalks along State Road to a park and school and installing a safe crossing for students.

Ralph Hutchison, *East Lampeter Township*

East Lampeter Township has had a program to construct sidewalks in the township that predates the concept of complete streets. The township's interest was motivated by safety for pedestrians when PennDOT widened US 30 to a five-lane road. In May 2015, the township completed a "**Route 30 Streetscape Plan,**" which provides a plan for a range of improvements (bike lanes, sidewalks, stormwater improvements, narrowing of lanes from 12' to 11') to improve safety on U.S. 30. The entire plan totals about \$200 million in improvements, which the township will seek to fund over a number of years from a variety of sources. The township worked with PennDOT to restripe and narrow the lanes on U.S. 30 as part of the routine resurfacing work PennDOT planned to do. This will enable motorists to get accustomed to the narrower lanes before the bike and pedestrian amenities are added to the route.

Benjamin Craddock, Director, Lancaster Civil Engineering Company

There are many small improvements that municipalities can make to their roads and sidewalks to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Specific actions that Mr. Craddock mentioned include:

- Trim overhanging trees and shrubs that block the sidewalk, using public works and code enforcement departments.
- Plant shade trees to improve the walking experience. Volunteers or civic groups are often willing to help the municipality plant trees.
- Remove weeds to make a walk safer and more enjoyable.
- Identify hazards such as uneven sidewalks and require homeowners to repair them.
- Remove leaves and other matter that clog storm drains to reduce the likelihood of pedestrians getting splashed by passing motor vehicles on rainy days.
- Require developers to install improvements that exceed the ordinance requirements (e.g., 4-foot green buffers instead of 2-foot buffers). Developers are often quite willing to make these small changes, when asked.
- Narrow lanes when possible and add curb extensions to calm traffic as part of construction projects.

Charlotte Katzenmoyer, Director of Public Works, City of Lancaster

The Pennsylvania municipal stormwater and sewer runoff program (MS4), to implement the federal Clean Water Act, is an important factor in the City of Lancaster’s work to reduce stormwater runoff. Over 50% of the city is impervious surface (roads, driveways, etc.) that contributes to stormwater runoff. The city’s 2010 Infrastructure Plan is a pavement management plan for all streets in the city. To identify green infrastructure opportunities (rain gardens, planted strips, pervious pavement, etc.), the city considers pavement condition, street slope, proximity to the Conestoga River and opportunities for other improvements. The city passed a Complete Streets policy in 2014 and is looking to update its design specifications for sidewalks and curbs. Ms. Katzenmoyer mentioned that Jeff Speck of MIT had conducted a walk audit in the city and recommended that the city convert some of its one-way to two-way streets. Mulberry Street was the first city street that was changed to two-way traffic with a bicycle lane, attractive permeable pavers in the parking lane, and green infrastructure included as part of the project. Charlotte Street is in the design phase of also being converted. Ms. Katzenmoyer recommended Mr. Speck’s books (e.g. “**The Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America One Step At a Time**”) for those who want to learn more about the way in which the built environment impacts walkability.

Questions and Discussion

Workshop attendees discussed problems they have experienced in their municipalities with implementing complete streets and sought advice from the presenters.

1. Public opposition to narrowing road lanes.

Response from the panel: Demonstrate that the narrower lanes adhere to accepted street design guidelines and recommendations; encourage people to understand the benefits of narrower lanes that slow motor vehicles and make the roads safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.

2. Resistance by residents to paying for sidewalk maintenance.

Response from the panel: Remind the residents that homeowner's insurance companies are becoming stricter about sidewalk hazards that may result in an injury to a pedestrian and requiring homeowners to undertake needed repairs.

3. Developers who seek waivers or deferrals of sidewalk installation.

Response from the panel: Municipalities should be consistent in requiring developers to construct sidewalks as a condition of approval of the development.

Sources of Funding for Complete Streets

Harriet Parcells, LCPC

Lancaster County's Smart Growth Transportation Program

The Lancaster County Smart Growth Transportation Program (SGT) funds a range of transportation projects, including bicycle and pedestrian projects, traffic calming projects and others, that support livability and economic development in the county's Designated Growth Areas. The county sets aside \$1.5 million annually of its federal transportation funds for the program. Applications are accepted every two years from municipalities and other eligible applicants and are reviewed and evaluated by a Smart Growth Transportation Task Force. Recommendations are made to the Lancaster County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which makes the final decision on project awards. LCPC has just accepted Notices of Intent for projects for its fourth cycle of funding (FY 2019–2020). Examples of projects that have been funded include: Mulberry Street Conversion to Two-Way Traffic; Elizabethtown Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway; Lancaster County Northwest River Trail Signage Project; Doe Run Pedestrian Safety Project; Bridgeport Area Transportation Study; Comprehensive Bicycle Plan for the City of Lancaster; Non-Motorized Transportation Plan for the Lancaster Inter-municipal Committee region; North and South Duke Street Connection Project and others. Information about the program is available on LCPC's website.

www.lancastercountypanning.org/

Brian Hare, Division Chief, PennDOT

PennDOT Connects

PennDOT Connects is a new initiative of Pennsylvania Secretary of Transportation Leslie Richards, for PennDOT to work more closely with MPOs, municipalities and community leaders to obtain their input on transportation projects early in the planning phase to ensure that transportation projects are designed to address local concerns. All projects that are on an MPO's Draft Transportation Improvement Program are intended to be part of the PennDOT Connects program and will be included in meetings with local leaders. PennDOT has been conducting training workshops with the MPOs in the state to explain the new program and how community outreach will take place. The PennDOT Connects initiative supports and complements complete streets by providing municipalities and MPOs with an opportunity to identify where sidewalks,

bicycle paths and other desired amenities could/should be included in a project to improve safety and livability. PennDOT will have planning funds available to assist MPOs and municipalities with this new effort.

Katie Walsh, Lancaster County Housing and Redevelopment Authority

CDBG Funds

The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) is a federal program that funds a range of projects, including sidewalks, landscaping and other street and community enhancements that result in safer, more complete streets. A community must meet certain income, local funding match and other requirements to qualify for CDBG funds. Applications are typically due in February and decisions on projects are made in June. For further information, contact: Kwalsh@lchra.com.

Questions and Discussion

A number of questions were asked about the PennDOT Connects program and other funding opportunities:

1. Will PennDOT have funding available to assist municipalities with the PennDOT Connects initiative?

Response: Yes. PennDOT will have some discretionary planning funds available.

2. Will PennDOT have a liaison to work with local communities as it is sometimes difficult for a municipality to reach the correct person within the agency?

Response: Yes. PennDOT is currently doing training on the new program and will be getting the names of municipal liaisons to the MPOs soon.

The presentations by several of the speakers are linked to this workshop summary.

[AECOM and East Lampeter Township, Lincoln Highway Streetscape Plan, Phase 2. Adopted May 11, 2015.](#)

[City of Lancaster Pennsylvania, Integrated Complete Streets to Revitalize Our Communities. 2017.](#)

[Lancaster County Planning Commission, Advancing a Complete Streets Agenda. May 25, 2017.](#)

[PennDOT, Complete Streets Workshop. May 25, 2017.](#)

[Upper Leacock Township, Lancaster County, Route 23 Sidewalk Master Plan. September 14, 2016.](#)

[Upper Leacock Township, Lancaster County, Upper Leacock Township Official Map. 2014.](#)



Advancing A Complete Streets Agenda

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