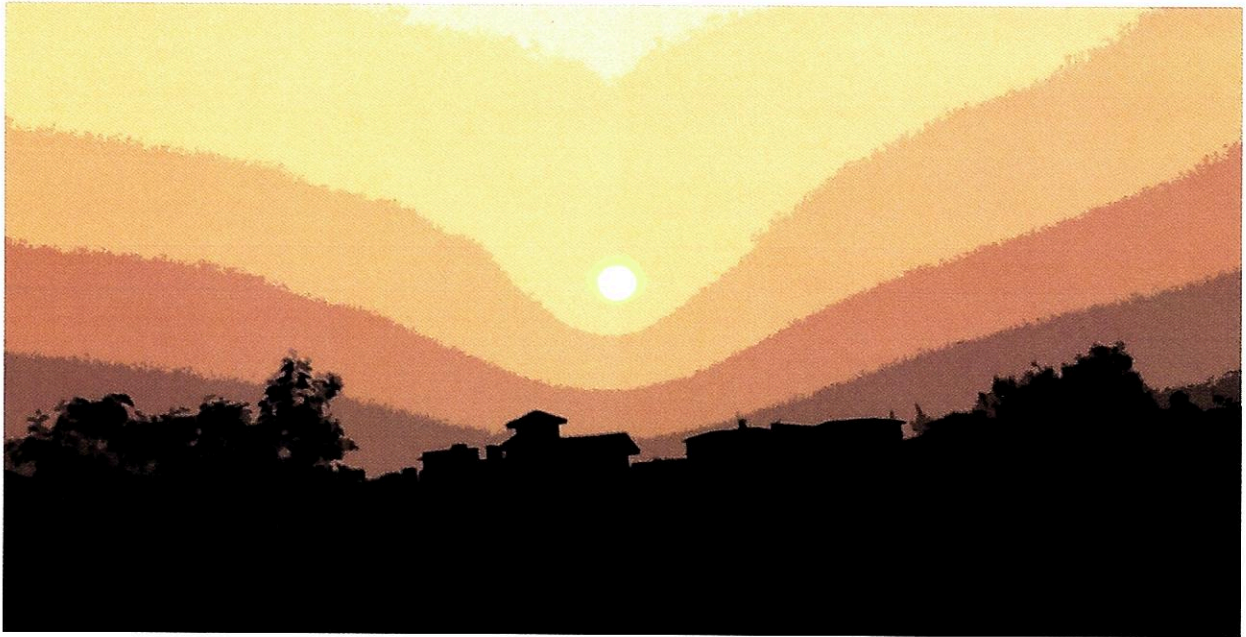


# SWATARA RISING 2025



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## MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Swatara Township Board of Commissioners

DRAFT for Review, October 2019

# SWATARA RISING 2025

## MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

**2019**

### *Township Commissioners*

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Edward Troxell, Vice President

Richard Boudier

Jeff Varner

Christine Zubeck

### **Steering Committee**

Edward Troxell, Chairman

Chad Martin

Karen Bear

Patrick Horner

Timothy Reardon

### **Township Planning Commission**

Charles Bowser, Chairman

David Downey, Vice Chairman

### **Staff**

James Fosselman, Township Manager

Robert Ihlein, Director of Planning and Zoning

### Consultants

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

Dawood Engineering

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the Mission of the Township Board of Commissioners to increase the ability of Swatara Township to be the premier location for people to live and for businesses to thrive in the Harrisburg region.

## **OBJECTIVE**

Focus on significant projects that can be started and/or implemented by 2025.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Swatara Township is at a crossroads, both literally and figuratively, in time and space. This "township", which sits on the eastern side of the capitol City of Harrisburg, was a forested area that at one time was home to the Susquehannock Indians. The name "Swatara" is believed to be derived from an Iroquois word meaning "where we fed on eels". The landscape began to change in 1733 when John Harris, Sr. was granted the right to operate a ferry across the Susquehanna River. For more than half a century "Harris's Ferry" was the funnel through which much of the Scottish, Irish and German migration trickled west. Chambers Hill Road was once part of the Allegheny Path, which in 1794 was called "the main road through the continent." (adapted from the Swatara Township Bicentennial pamphlet edited by Mary Klaus - 1999)

This location in the river valley of southcentral Pennsylvania has been a crossroads for travelling east and west for 286 years now. Early footpaths to the ferry gave way to horse trails, then wagon trails, then farm roads, and then local roads. The state then built roads to connect cities and towns together. Then the federal government connected states to each other with interstate highways. Swatara Township now contains U.S. highways and two interstate highways which come together at a major interchange that is part of the "Capital Beltway". The Pennsylvania Turnpike, which passes within one mile of the southern edge of the Township, also feeds this heavily used transportation network.

Swatara was also at the crossroads of the canal boat days. In the early 1800s the Susquehanna branch of the Pennsylvania Canal was constructed along the river from Columbia to Clarks Ferry. About the same time the Union Canal, which came from Reading along the Schuylkill River in the east, was built through Schuylkill, Lebanon, and Dauphin Counties. This navigation used part of the Swatara Creek to get to Middletown on the Susquehanna River. For almost 60 years this network of waterways was used to move goods and people to what were faraway places such as Philadelphia and New York state.

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The rise of the locomotive and railroads meant the fall of the canal boat industry. Many railroads were built along the banks of the streams and rivers use by the canal boaters. The first rail line into Harrisburg was constructed in 1836. One of the oldest freight and passenger lines connects Harrisburg, Lancaster, and Philadelphia. Another east-west branch was built through a small valley in Swatara Township over 150 years ago. The Rutherford Freight Yards, established by the Reading Railroad, was converted into a multimodal freight facility by Norfolk Southern Railroad about 20 years ago.

The physical networks of roads and railroads, and even some streams, have evolved since the Township was founded in 1799. As this Plan will show, this network will continue to morph and have a continuing impact on the future of the residents and businesses of the Township.

### **PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN**

This document is a style of plan known as a short term "implementable comprehensive plan". Municipal Comprehensive Plans are authorized under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code [Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as reenacted and amended, aka the MPC] Article III of the Act spells out the items or elements that can be contained in municipal comprehensive plans. The last time that a fully documented comprehensive plan was adopted by the Township was 1996.

The MPC states the municipal comprehensive plan shall be reviewed at least every ten years. Twenty-three years have passed since the last update and there have been some significant changes in the Township since then. In terms of the MPC, this document strives to comply with Article III, Section 301(a)(4.2). This is a statement of the short- and long-range implementation strategies, which may include implications for capital improvements programming, new or updated development regulations, and identification of public funds potentially available.

A summary list of the projects listed here will be maintained by the township management team. Some of the local projects have costs identified. Over the next five year the rest of the projects selected will be examined to determine overall project costs. The Board of Commissioners and management team will use this document for the purposes of budgeting and capital improvement planning as part of the annual budget development and approval process.

The Board desires to implement a number of positive changes over the next five years that will **"increase the ability of Swatara Township to be the premier location for people to live and for businesses to thrive in the Harrisburg region"**. Adopting this short-term implementable comprehensive plan will help the Board, the staff and citizens keep on track with that Mission.



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## **PLANNING PROCESS**

Authorization to proceed with the development of a short-term implementable comprehensive plan was given by the Township Board of Commissioners in Spring of 2018. The Board then appointed a five-member Steering Committee to help guide the development of the plan and oversee the process. The Director of Planning and Zoning was tasked with assembling and drafting the plan.

One of the first tasks of the planning process was to conduct a community opinion survey. A paper survey form was included in the Summer 2018 issues of the Township newsletter. Approximately 12,300 newsletters were mailed to residents and businesses. A total of 301 responses were received. Also, with the assistance of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, a similar electronic online survey was initiated. An additional 41 people responded to the survey in this manner. Their collective responses and comments were used to pick some of the projects that are presented in this Plan.

Other projects presented in this Plan were suggested by the Steering Committee, the Board of Commissioners, the Township Planning Commission, and citizens attending their regular public meetings during the first nine months of 2019. Some projects included in this Plan were projects recommended in a number of other special planning studies and reports commissioned by the Township over the past 12 years. While circumstances have changed, the information and recommendations contained in those reports still have value.

A draft of the Plan has been reviewed by the Township Planning Commission and has been circulated to the regional planning agency and surrounding municipalities for their review and comments. The final approval of this Plan document resides with the Township Board of Commissioners.

## **PLAN CONTENTS**

The Township is at a crossroads in time with respect to evolution of the highway network. As the TRANSPORTATION section of this plan will show, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) has three major projects planned that will impact the highway network, township roads, and the land uses that surround them. However, these projects are still in the planning stages, and final design most likely not be finished until 2020 or 2021, with construction starts in 2022. The East Shore Section 2 project of the Eisenhower Interchange may take up to ten years to complete.

PennDOT has shared some of the preliminary designs with the public. The Township Board of Commissioners, seeing the possible impacts to the residents and businesses of the Township, decided to document these changing conditions. That is why there is a great deal of information contained in the TRANSPORTATION section.

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Along with these projects are a number of other improvements that are being designed and funded by the Township to solve some of the other existing problems and raise the Township to a new level. Up until the 1950s the Township had a relatively small population concentrated in a handful of village-style locations. The end of World War II and the construction of the interstate highways brought a great deal of residential and commercial development. The township population is now about 25,000 residents. However, the growth occurred sporadically in different areas and many older neighborhoods do not have good connections to the newer ones or the new shopping districts. Some neighborhoods have declined, and there are few places for pedestrians and bicyclists to travel safely and circulate around the Township. The section titled IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOODS contains a number of initiatives to help correct some of these problems.

The Township has benefitted from the development of a variety of vibrant commercial and industrial establishments. Some of those who located along the interstate highway network will be impacted by the proposed highway expansion projects. In addition, the management of stormwater runoff has become a much more important issue in the past 25 years. The Township is initiating a number of projects to solve some of the problems and address new regulatory requirements. These projects are addressed in the third section of the Plan called ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MUNICIPAL FACILITIES. This section will also address some initiatives to increase public amenities in the township parks and provide more recreation opportunities. Also noted in this section is the need to examine the existing municipal government campus on Eisenhower Boulevard and to prepare to address and enhance the future delivery of local government public safety services.

The implementation of all the projects mentioned in the Plan may not be feasible over the next five years. However, even completing half of the projects will raise the Township to new heights and bring it closer to realizing its Mission.

### **TRACKING PROGRESS**

The last section of this Plan is a spreadsheet that shows a list of all of the recommended projects, the estimated cost of project (if known), outside funding sources (if any), and a suggested breakdown of the possible costs to the Township for the years 2020 through 2024. The intent is to keep this spreadsheet updated and use it as a tool during the annual budgeting process. These annual updates will be posted on the Township website.

In addition, the Township is developing an interactive web tool known as a Geographic Information (GIS) story map. This map will display the location of all of the physical improvements going on in the Township and will provide a short “story” for each of them. This tool should be available on the Township website by the end of 2019.

### **END OF INTRODUCTION**

**SWATARA TOWNSHIP**  
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**IMPLEMENTABLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Summary List

**MISSION:** To increase the ability of Swatara Township to be the premier location for people to live and for businesses to thrive in the Harrisburg region.

**OBJECTIVE:** Focus on significant projects that can be started and/or implemented by 2025.

**A. TRANSPORTATION**

Goals: Increase overall safety, improve traffic movement and mitigate congestion, and provide facilities for bicyclists & pedestrians, including ADA facilities

Physical Improvement Projects:

1. Improve Paxton & Sycamore Streets Intersection (safety and traffic movement) (recommended in the Paxton Street Road Safety Audit - 2018) and include new sidewalk (high priority recommendation in the Sidewalk Connections Plan - 2019)
2. Improve Paxton & 28<sup>th</sup> Streets Intersection (safety, congestion, ADA) (recommended in the Paxton Street Road Safety Audit 2018 and ADA improvements included in the plans for new Magisterial District Court Office)
3. Improve Chambers Hill Road/Harrisburg Street/Orchard Lane Intersection (safety, traffic movement, congestion, pedestrian and ADA) (recommended in engineering study; sidewalk connection recommended as part of land development of corner lot in TecPort)

4. Improve US 322/Chambers Hill Road/82<sup>nd</sup> Street/Grayson Road Intersection (preliminary design under study by PennDOT – safety and traffic movement)
5. Derry Street Improvements (Safety Study 2018 – conducted by PennDOT – pedestrian safety and traffic movement)
  - a. At the Southbound I-83 interchange install new lenses and backplates for signal heads, add Dilemma Zone detection, add pedestrian signage and upgrade lighting
  - b. At the Northbound I-83 interchange install new lenses and backplates for signal heads, add Dilemma Zone detection and upgrade lighting
  - c. At the East Park Drive intersection install new lenses and backplates for signal heads, install pedestrian signal heads with countdown timers, add Type C crosswalks, reconstruct curb ramps to be ADA compliant, provide flashing yellow signal for eastbound left turn traffic
  - d. At the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street intersection provide a physical median prohibiting left turns into and out of the gas station (Speedway)
  - e. Many other short, mid, and long-range improvements recommended for the entire corridor from 14<sup>th</sup> Street to 61<sup>st</sup> Street
6. Township Road Improvement & Paving Plan (8 projects added March 2019)
  - a. North Rupp Hill Road & Grayson Road to railroad crossing (reconstruction paving)
  - b. Grayson Road – railroad crossing to 63<sup>rd</sup> Street (paving)
  - c. Grayson Road – 63<sup>rd</sup> Street to Milroy Road (paving)
  - d. Frances Cadden Parkway – apartment north access driveway to Township line (paving)
  - e. Dewey Street – (guiderail replacement & reconstruction)
  - f. East Park Drive – Derry Street to Spring Creek Road (paving) COMPLETED AUGUST 2019
  - g. Derry Street – 63<sup>rd</sup> Street to Milroy/Old Nyes Road (paving)
  - h. Dawn Mar Street (drainage improvements)
7. Sidewalk Connections Plan - 2019 (Pedestrian Safety & Mobility) (4 projects added June 2019)
  - a. Install 500 feet of sidewalk along the south side of Paxton Street from edge of McDonald's property to Greenbelt Crossing at 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. (Project Reference Number 7) (Also listed in the Pedestrian Greenway Access Study – 2009 as part of Trail “V” and in the Paxton Street Road Safety Audit 2018)
  - b. Upgrade pedestrian accommodations and add countdown signals for the Greenbelt crossing at the Paxton Street & City Park Drive intersection (Project Ref. Number 8)
  - c. Provide updated pedestrian facilities between Lindle Road and Chick-Fil-A and between Sheraton Hotel and Sheetz (Project Reference Number 2)
  - d. Upgrade curb ramps at 63<sup>rd</sup> & Derry Streets install sidewalk on the northeast corner to improve connection across the bridge, and improve the curb ramp at 63<sup>rd</sup> and Grayson road (Project Reference Number 11)
  - e. Install sidewalk along the northern side of Orchard Drive between Princeton Road and

Harrisburg Street (Project Reference Number 31) and provide an off-road connection to the west of Yale Street towards Chambers Knoll

8. School Zone Flashers at Swatara Middle School (Pedestrian Safety)  
[This project was completed in September 2019]
9. Improve Eisenhower Boulevard and Highland Street Intersection (Pedestrian Safety Study – Lindle Road to Highland Avenue started by PennDOT February 2019)
10. Revise Lane Use Designations at the Lindle Road Intersection with Eisenhower Boulevard and I-283 (Congestion Mitigation, Safety)
11. I-83 East Shore Section 2 (Congestion Mitigation, Safety)  
This project includes the widening of I-83 to up to 3 travel lanes in each direction from approximately the boundary with Lower Paxton Township to 29<sup>th</sup> Street. The project includes reconfiguring the entire Eisenhower Interchange, and adds a new bridge to connect the ends of 40<sup>th</sup> Street and a new connection between Old Paxton Street and Derry Street. The “Recommended Preferred Alternative” was released to the public in October of 2018. Environmental Assessment Studies are currently being conducted.
12. I-83 East Shore Section 3 (Congestion Mitigation, Safety)  
This project includes the widening of I-83 to up to 3 travel lanes in each direction from 29<sup>th</sup> Street to the South Bridge at the Susquehanna River. The project also includes reconfiguring traffic patterns on the streets in the City of Harrisburg leading to the bridge. The “Recommended Preferred Alternative” was released to the public in October of 2018. Environmental Assessment Studies are currently being conducted.

Possible Additional Planning Projects:

13. Chambers Hill Road Safety Study (Penhar Road to U.S. Route 322)
14. Eisenhower Boulevard Safety Study (Lindle Road to Paxton Street)
15. Local Road Safety Plan (Township collector roads)
16. Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Plan
17. Transportation Improvement Plan (Act 219) and Impact Fee Ordinance



## B. IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOODS

Goals: Increase social connectivity and interactions between residents; protect and enhance existing urban areas, patterns, and structures; improve existing parks and recreation sites; add other amenities to increase walkability and livability; connect and preserve environmental assets.

1. Establish a Greenway along the east branch of Spring Creek along Frances Cadden Parkway and through the Lenker Manor area. (see concept in “Pedestrian Greenway Access Study – 2009 – Trail “B”)
2. Make better connections to the Capital Area Greenbelt (see concept in “Pedestrian Greenway Access Study – 2009 – Trail “AA” along Harrisburg Street from Chambers Hill Road down to the trail crossing at Spring Creek)
3. Construct a trail connection between McNaughton Park and Chambers Hill Park (Clown Park)
4. Adopt development and design compatibility standards into the Zoning Ordinance
5. Modernize and streamline the property maintenance code enforcement process
6. Establish a Township Shade Tree Commission and then have them do a plan (see Township Code of Ordinances, Chapters 72 and 266)
7. Evaluate recreation facilities and prioritize improvements (see “Comprehensive Recreation, Park & Open Space Plan – 2007 – update the Plan)
8. Set up a Blighted Property Fund or Neighborhood Improvement District to help clean up neighborhoods
9. File an application with PA DCED to become a “Keystone Community” (opens the door to a number of State programs and grants)
10. Construct and/or reconstruct pedestrian accommodations that meet current Americans with Disability Act standards at key street intersections in neighborhoods with low to moderate income households
11. Establish a walking path/trail along Highland Street from Frances Street in Enhaut all the way to Eisenhower Boulevard (added to list by Board of Commissioners on 9/11/2019)

## C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

Goals: Retain existing business and attract new ones; make existing commercial & retail districts more attractive; provide for essential municipal facilities; and meet the requirements of the MS4 Permit and the Pollution Reduction Plan.

1. Help businesses displaced by the I-83 Project to relocate in the Township
2. Evaluate the creation of one or more Keystone Community Enterprise Zones
3. Evaluate the condition of municipal facilities on Eisenhower Boulevard and examine options for improvement and/or relocation
4. Establish a dog park in McNaughton Park
5. Begin a phased approach to making improvements in the stormwater management infrastructure (new program begun with Tom Wilson, P.E. working with the Stream Preservation Fund and the Public Works Department)
6. Construct identified stream preservation project on Spring Creek that will help meet the required pollution reduction goals (working with Living Water Community Church)
7. Assess various sites and begin implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) to help meet required pollution reduction goals
8. Develop a simplified stormwater permit application for residential improvement projects
9. Improve drainage facilities on Grayson Road to reduce incidents of flooding
10. Improve drainage facilities on Garden Drive to improve drainage, winter driving conditions and help preserve the road structure
11. Build a new pavilion in Plesic Park on Monroe Street behind the fire house
12. In the Year 2024 create a new Township Official Map based on the highway expansion and improvement projects and update the Township Comprehensive Plan with a long-range land use plan.

END

## A. TRANSPORTATION

*Goals: Increase overall safety, improve traffic movement and mitigate congestion, and provide facilities for bicyclists & pedestrians, including ADA facilities*

### PROJECT A.1: Paxton & Sycamore Streets Intersection

#### **Problem Description**

Paxton Street is one of the historical routes (SR 3010) that connects the Township to the City of Harrisburg. In the 1950s this stretch of road between the city limits and Eisenhower Boulevard became one of the roads that became home to suburban strip development with a large number of automobile dealerships, various offices, restaurants and retail venues. In the 1960s the Harrisburg East Mall, a major regional shopping center, was constructed. Today, this three-mile piece of the Paxton Street corridor is heavily travelled by commuters, local employees retail shoppers, delivery trucks, and tractor trailers. The regional UPS shipping hub is located near here, as well as another major freight carrier. Sycamore Street also serves as an alternative connector to the neighborhoods of South Harrisburg and western Swatara.

In May 2018 the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) released the "SR 3010 Road Safety Audit". Both the City of Harrisburg and Swatara Township participated in the process. Of the many problems and deficiencies noted in the report, the Paxton & Sycamore Streets Intersection was highlighted as a very high priority problem spot with 11 crashes reported between 2012 & 2016 and 1 fatal pedestrian crash at the nearby intersection with 19<sup>th</sup> Street. The main problem with this intersection is that both legs of Sycamore Street intersect the eastbound side of Paxton Street at a sharp skew. This results in heavy turning movements at a spot where there is poor sight angles and no traffic controls.





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### **Implementable Solution**

The entire Safety Audit report was reviewed and discussed by Township officials and staff during the summer of 2018. The report outlined four possible alternatives to correct the situation. The selected alternative is to physically separate the two streets with a concrete barrier and keeping Sycamore Street as a separate two-way street. A new sidewalk would be constructed along the front of the Paxton Ministries property.



### **Project Costs**

The total estimated cost of the project is \$445,000, which includes repaving sections of Sycamore Street and some other related improvements. In order for this solution to work effectively it should be coordinated with traffic signal improvements at 19<sup>th</sup> & Paxton in Harrisburg.

### **Actions Taken**

On October 10, 2018 the Township Board of Commissioners passed a motion to notify the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission that they are requesting to move this project on to the regional Transportation Improvement Plan for final design and construction funding in the next five years. The Township has expended some funds for a very preliminary design in the Sidewalk Connections Study in 2019.



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**PROJECT A.2: Paxton & 28<sup>th</sup> Streets Intersection Improvements**

**Problem Description**

This is another very busy intersection along the Paxton Street corridor. This T-intersection is identified as a priority in the 2018 Paxton Street Road Safety Audit due to aging traffic signal hardware and with signal heads on overhanging wires. The intersection also lacks ADA compliant pedestrian facilities, and there are stormwater drainage issues.



**Implementable Solution**

The Safety Audit recommended replacing the span wires with mast arms, installing a new controller cabinet and electronic controls, new signal heads and above ground vehicle detection equipment. For pedestrian safety new and improved ADA compliant pedestrian ramps will be installed at three locations. Also, the existing stormwater inlets will be replaced to improve roadway drainage.



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### **Project Costs**

The estimated cost of replacing the signal equipment is \$248,500. The Township submitted this project for funding by the PennDOT "Green-Light-Go" Program and was notified in 2018 that a grant would be awarded for the project. There will be additional design, permitting, and construction management costs of about 25,000.

### **Actions Taken and Status**

The Township must apply to PennDOT to amend the Signal Permit any time a change or improvement is proposed. The Township Engineer's office is working on final design and obtaining the necessary permit. The Dauphin County Board of Commissioners has agreed to fund the pedestrian ADA improvements and new stormwater inlets as part of constructing a new Magisterial District Court building on the southeast corner. The County broke ground on the project in August of 2019 and anticipates completion by mid-2020. The rest of the improvements should also be completed in 2020.



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**PROJECT A.3: Chambers Hill Road/Harrisburg Street/Orchard Lane Intersection**

**Problem Description**

This is a heavily used intersection where Chambers Hill Road (SR 3006) crosses Harrisburg Street (SR 0441) and becomes Orchard Road on opposite side. This intersection is located near the rear of the Harrisburg Mall, and there has been a great deal of residential development in the area in the past 20 years (Ivy Ridge, Chestnut Pointe, Chambers Knoll developments). The intersection has left turn lanes on Harrisburg Street, but no left turn signals. There are no left turn lanes or turn signals on Chambers Hill Road or Orchard Road. This causes safety and traffic congestion issues, especially at peak travel time. In addition, there are no pedestrian crossing facilities on any of the four corners, making it dangerous for residents who live nearby to walk to the Mall or Tec Port Business Center.





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### **Implementable Solution**

As a result of some traffic accidents and numerous complaints from residents and vehicle operators, in 2018 the Township Board of Commissioners authorized the Township Engineer to perform preliminary studies to resolve the issues. The study did recommend a number of improvements, including new traffic signals with left turn indicators and ADA compliant pedestrian crosswalks. In addition, the developer of the lot in Tec Port on the northeast corner has agreed to install a connecting sidewalk to allow people to enter their property and connect with the internal walkway system.



### **Project Costs**

Estimates prepared by the Township Engineer's office indicate that total project costs for all improvements to be \$263,000.

### **Actions Taken and Status**

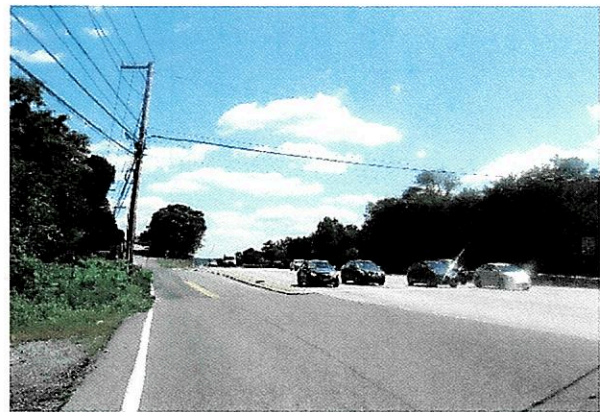
In January of 2019 the Township Board of Commissioners authorized the submittal of an application to the PennDOT "Green Light – Go" grant program. In October 2019 the Commonwealth announced it would award a grant of \$210,400 for this project. This would fund 80% and the Township would match with 20% or approximately \$52,600. The project can now move into final design and permitting. This project should be completed in 2021.

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**PROJECT A.4: Route 322/Chambers Hill Road/82<sup>nd</sup> Street/Grayson Road Intersection**

**Problem Description**

For residents in the Chambers Hill area, or for travelers on the "Hershey Highway", or commuters using Milroy or Grayson Roads, this intersection is hazardous. There are actually four state roads and two local streets coming together at one intersection at the top of hill where sight distances are restricted. The intersection of Milroy Road and Grayson Road are also part of this problem. This is a particularly problematic location because of the traffic volume, number of roads coming together, geometry, sloping terrain, and outdated signals. This intersection is the site of frequent dangerous turning movements and numerous accidents.



**Implementable Solution**

This intersection has been the site of so many problems for so long that PennDOT initiated a study of the conditions in 2018. The engineering solution to this problem is in the hands of the Department. They are also considering the two local roads that feed this intersection – 82<sup>nd</sup> Street and Hilton Street. The Township has an aerial photo map of the proposed re-configuration available for viewing in the Codes Department office.



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**Actions Taken and Status**

The Department released a concept plan in April 2019 that shows a complete redesign and reconstruction of the entire intersection. The concept shows no turning movements directly off of the main highway. A new jug handle turn would be placed at Witmer Drive and 322 as the place where vehicles will have to turn to get to Grayson Road or Milroy Road. A roundabout where Milroy Road and Grayson Road meet to help keep traffic circulating in all directions. The Township will work with local residents and DOT to determine a good outcome for those who use this intersection every day. The project will be funded by PennDOT and is shown on the Regional Transportation Plan (TIP) as being in the preliminary design phase. Total project costs have not been determined at this time.



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**PROJECT A.5: Derry Street Corridor**

**Problem Description**

Derry Street is major east-west collector road that connects the northern half of the Township from Nyes Road on the east to the Borough of Paxtang and the City of Harrisburg. It is a state road (SR 3012) from the City up to 61<sup>st</sup> Street, where it reverts to a local township road. I-83 flows over the top of Derry Street, and a ramp system collects and feeds traffic to it as part of the Eisenhower Interchange. Derry Street can become quite congested along its intersections, especially during peak travel times. This congestion is projected to increase when PennDOT begins construction of I-83 East Shore Section 2, which includes the rebuilding of the Interchange. (see PROJECT A.10)

In anticipation of additional traffic volume on heavily used corridor with limited capacity and some older traffic control devices, the Department conducted a Safety Study in 2018 to see what problems exist. The report contains a long list of short, mid, and long-range improvements for the entire corridor from 14<sup>th</sup> in the City to 61<sup>st</sup> Street in the Township. Listed below is a summary of the improvements recommended for Swatara.

**Implementable Solutions**

- a. At the Southbound I-83 interchange install new lenses and backplates for signal heads, add Dilemma Zone detection, add pedestrian signage and upgrade lighting
- b. At the Northbound I-83 interchange install new lenses and backplates for signal heads, add Dilemma Zone detection and upgrade lighting
- c. At the East Park Drive intersection install new lenses and backplates for signal heads, install pedestrian signal heads with countdown timers, add Type C crosswalks, reconstruct curb ramps to be ADA compliant, provide flashing yellow signal for eastbound left turn traffic
- d. At the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street intersection provide a physical median prohibiting left turns into and out of the gas station (Speedway)
- e. Many other short, mid, and long-range improvements recommended for the entire corridor from 14<sup>th</sup> Street to 61<sup>st</sup> Street (time frames were not specified)

**Actions Taken and Status**

PennDOT may implement some or all of the recommended improvements, many within the next five years, in anticipation of more motorists selecting to use Derry Street as an alternate route during the construction phases of the I-83 East Shore Sections 2 and 3 projects. There is no expense anticipated by the Township at this time.

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**PROJECT A.6: Township Road Improvement & Paving Plan**

**Problem Description**

The Township Board of Commissioners have laid out a local road improvement plan that extends over the next five years. The Township Engineer and Director of the Public Works Department maintain a list of all township roads and visually evaluate them every year. The list is adjusted and ranked according to their relative condition. A good mill and overlay job on a low-volume local road should last up to 30 years if cracks are sealed every few years. Public Works does try to keep up with the annual road maintenance schedule and every road is part of this cycle. Those projects that are selected to advance to implementation are based on overall condition, traffic volume, and if there are other problems such as drainage. North Rupp Hill Road is most likely in the poorest condition due to the heavy truck traffic, sloping road, and tight corners. The following list was adopted in 2018. One project, the paving of East Park Drive, was completed in August of 2019.

**Implementable Solutions**

- a. North Rupp Hill Road & Grayson Road to railroad crossing (reconstruction & paving)

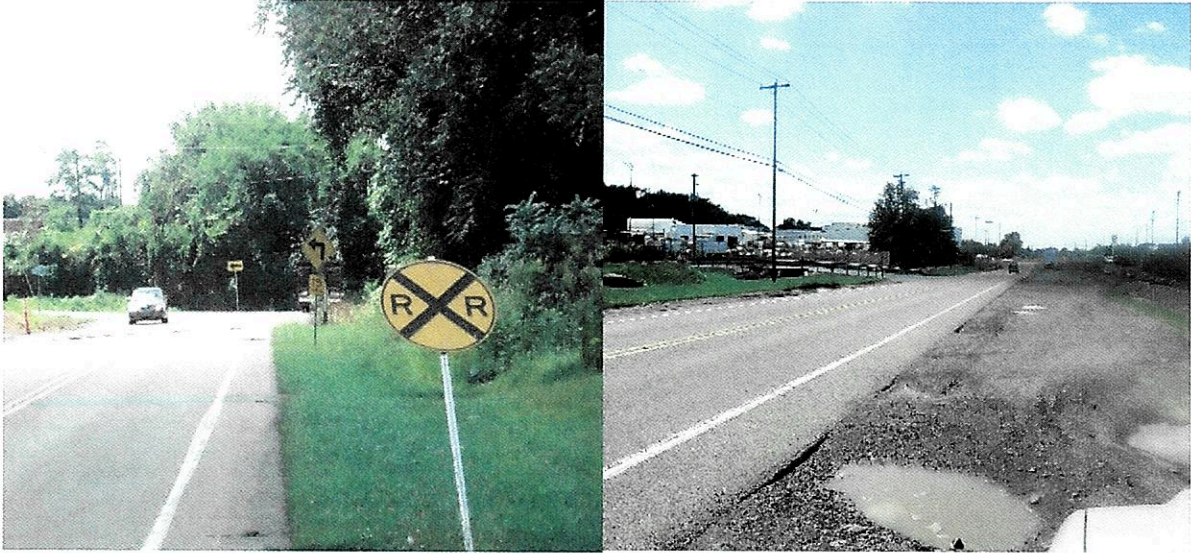


A budget of \$64,650 has been approved for surveying, engineering, and pre-construction costs to widen the curve at the top of the hill where it meets Paxton St. for safer truck turns.



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b. Grayson Road – railroad crossing to 63<sup>rd</sup> Street (paving)



c. Grayson Road – 63<sup>rd</sup> Street to Milroy Road (paving)





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d. Frances Cadden Parkway – apartment north access driveway to Township line (paving)



e. Dewey Street – (guiderail replacement & road reconstruction)

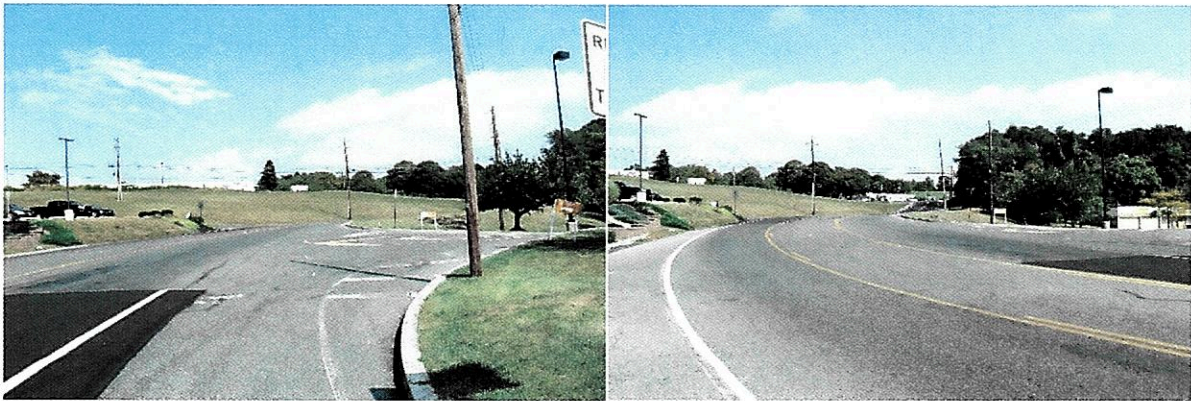
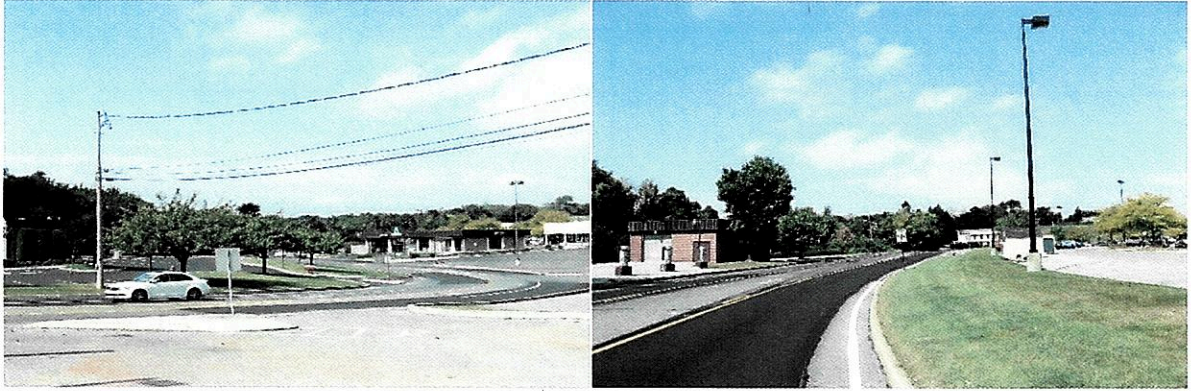


A budget of \$68,100 has been approved for surveying, engineering, & pre-construction costs.



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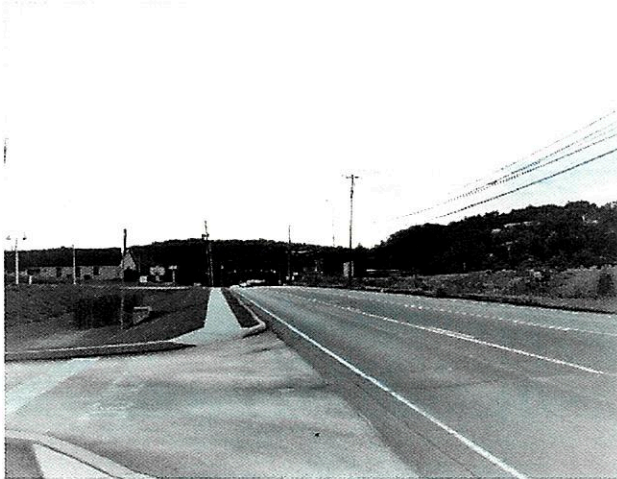
f. East Park Drive – Derry Street to Spring Creek Road (paving) COMPLETED AUGUST 2019





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g. Derry Street – 63<sup>rd</sup> Street to Milroy/Old Nyes Road (paving approximately 1.6 miles)



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h. Dawn Mar Street (drainage improvements – stop the erosion at outfall to Spring Creek at rear of this property from water flowing to this stormwater inlet)



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PROJECT A7: Sidewalk Connections Plan - 2019 (Pedestrian Safety & Mobility - 5 projects selected for implementation)

**Problem Description**

There are many people who prefer to live in a neighborhood that has sidewalks because they feel safer walking to a nearby store or enjoying an evening stroll. Other people prefer not to buy a house with sidewalks because of the maintenance that can be involved. Sidewalks maintained in good condition can help connect residents with each other. Sidewalks can also help connect business establishments with each other when they are located commercial corridor or shopping center. The problem in Swatara has been that sidewalks were constructed in some neighborhoods, but not all, built in some commercial corridors, but not all. This has left gaps between neighborhoods and commercial districts, making it difficult to walk from one neighborhood to another or walk to a local commercial district. In addition, many state road intersections have inadequate or no accommodations for pedestrians. Today, all new intersections, or improvements to an existing intersection, must be designed with facilities that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission has made it a part of their mission to support building connections within neighborhoods and throughout the region for pedestrians and bicyclists. They provided grant funding to the Township in 2018 to study the issues and solutions to create better connections. Following are top five projects identified with the highest need and have been prioritized by the Township Board of Commissioners. A sixth project at Sycamore and Paxton Streets is identified as part of PROJECT A.1.

**Implementable Solutions**

Project A7.a: Paxton Street, 3100 block - install 550 feet of sidewalk along the south side of the road from edge of McDonald's property to Greenbelt Crossing at 32<sup>nd</sup> Street  
(Project Reference Number 7; Also listed in the Pedestrian Greenway Access Study – 2009 as part of Trail "V" and in the Paxton Street Road Safety Audit 2018)





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This is a very busy section of Paxton Street, for both motorists and pedestrians approaching the Harrisburg East Mall from the west. The property is owned by Dauphin County as part of the prison complex, and the Capital Area Greenbelt cuts across it at an angle. The sidewalk ends at the edge of the McDonald's restaurant property. Because the ground along the edge of the street is very uneven and overgrown with vegetation pedestrians must walk along the shoulder of the road to continue eastward towards the Harrisburg East Mall. This project received the highest ranking in the Connections Study because of the number of pedestrians that use this area and the dangerous conditions.



The estimated project cost is \$225,000. Because of its high-priority status the Township Board of Commissioners is applying to Dauphin County for a grant under the Local Share Gaming Municipal Program to fund the construction.





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Project A7.b: Paxton Street & City Park Drive intersection - upgrade pedestrian accommodations and add countdown signals for the Greenbelt crossing  
(Study Project Reference Number 8)



This project received a high priority ranking due to the number of pedestrians that use this intersection and the location of a nearby apartment complex, the Dauphin County Prison, the Harrisburg East Mall and its proximity to the Capital Area Greenbelt. This intersection needs ADA curb ramps, pedestal stub poles and marked crosswalks. The estimated cost of construction of this project is \$35,000. Funds could be provided from the Township Capital Reserve Fund and/or Liquid Fuels Fund.



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Project A7.c: Lindle Road & High Pointe Boulevard - provide updated pedestrian facilities across Lindle Road from the Sheraton Hotel to Sheetz/Chick-Fil-A and along Lindle Road between Sheetz and Red Lion Inn (Study Project Reference Number 2)

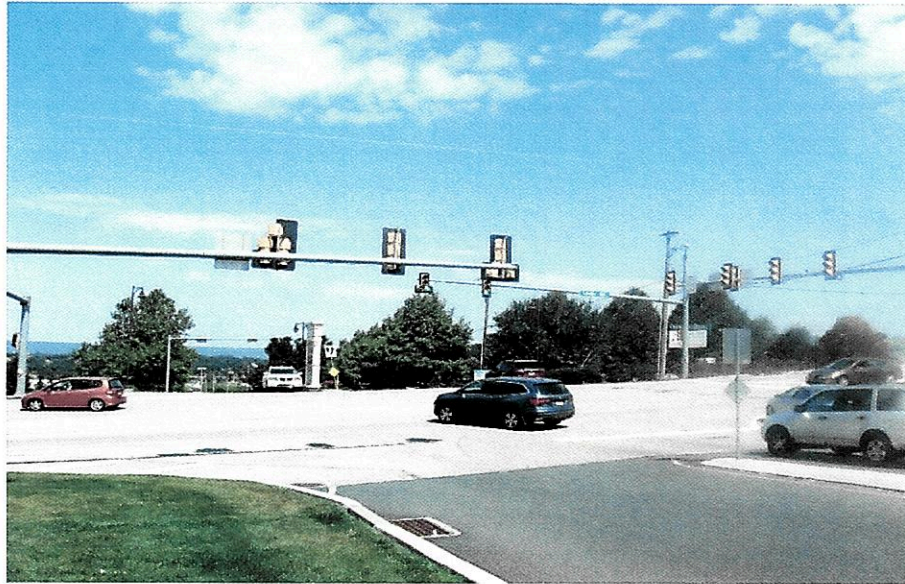


This project was in the top five high-priority projects because of the large number of pedestrians who walk from nearby hotels to the restaurants on Lindle Road and/or cross the road to the shopping center at High Pointe Commons. This intersection needs ADA curb ramps, pedestrian signal heads, pedestal stub poles and marked crosswalks. The estimated cost of this project is \$40,000. Funds could be provided from the Township Capital Reserve Fund and/or Liquid Fuels Fund.

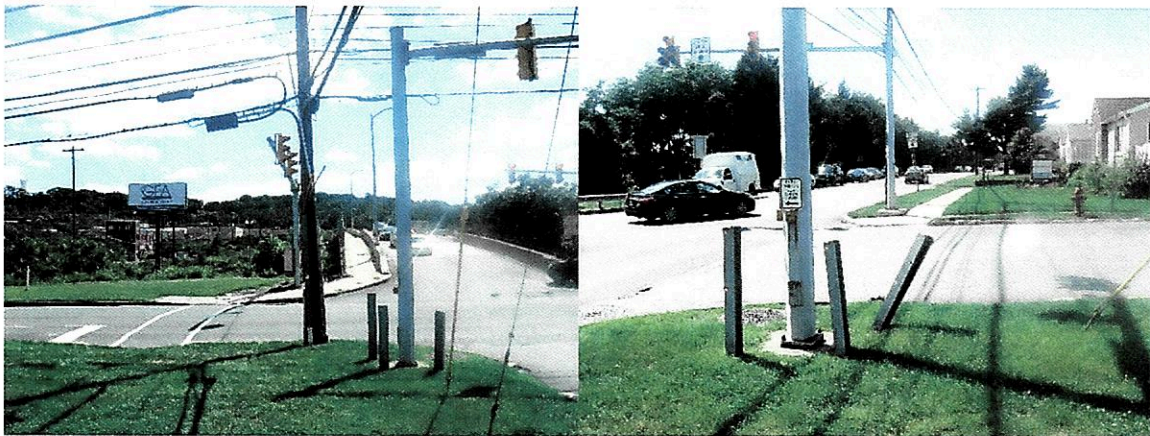




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Project A7.d(1): Derry Street & 63<sup>rd</sup> Streets - upgrade curb ramps at install sidewalk on the northeast corner to improve connection across the bridge  
(Study Project Reference Number 11)



This is very busy intersection in the Rutherford area of the Township because it is where the Rudy Dinnini Bridge crosses over the Norfolk Southern multimodal railroad facility. This bridge connects this growing residential area with the Wal Mart and shopping center on Grayson Road. Pedestrians also use this area regularly. The intersection at 63<sup>rd</sup> and Derry Streets needs ADA curb ramps and a section of sidewalk on the property of the Turkey Hill store.



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Project A7.d(2): Grayson Road & 63<sup>rd</sup> Street - the Grayson Road side of 63<sup>rd</sup> Street needs a new ADA ramp coming off the bridge

However, it is not very safe for pedestrians to cross over to enter the Swatara Square shopping center. There is a wall and no sidewalk for a pedestrian to transition to. The Township will work with this property owner to identify low cost solutions such as signage and striping to protect pedestrians as they cross Grayson Road. The estimated cost of the basic improvements is \$45,000. Funds could be provided from the Township Capital Reserve Fund.



Project A7.e: Install Sidewalk on Northern Side of Orchard Drive between Princeton Road and Harrisburg Street and Connect Sidewalk to West of Yale Street  
(Study Project Reference Number 31)

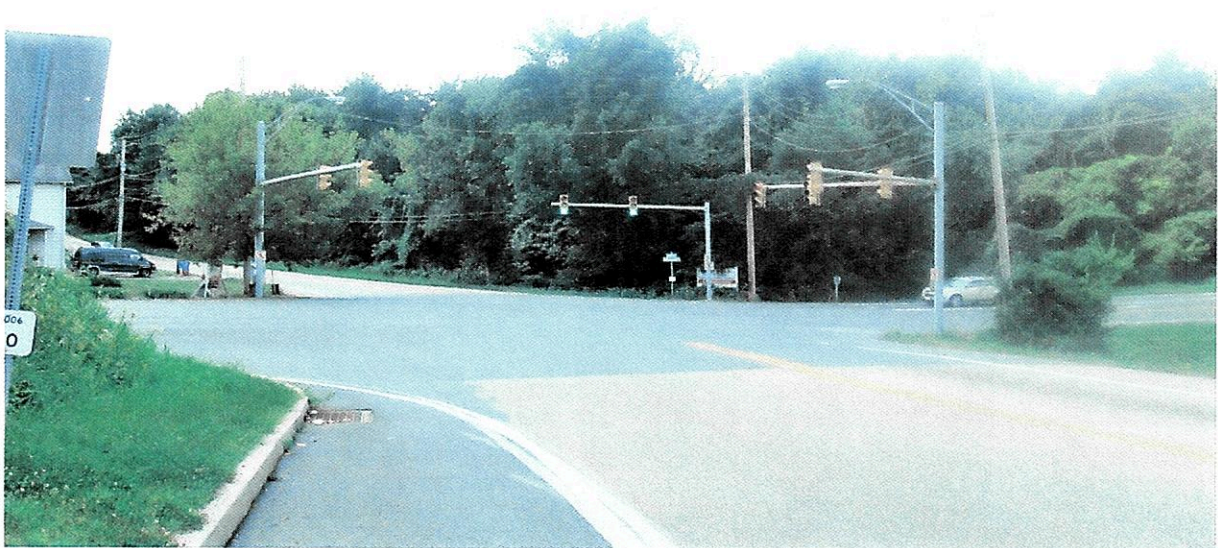
The Chambers Knoll and Ivy Ridge developments were constructed over the past 20 years and contain a mix of apartments, townhouses and single-family homes. For residents in Chambers Knoll, it is about a half-mile walk to Tec Port Business Center, and perhaps another ½ mile to get to the Harrisburg Mall. It is even less of a walk for residents of Ivy Ridge, and there are a number of residents who do this.





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Pedestrians who want to walk from their developments to Tec Port or the Mall can face two obstacles. The sidewalk abutting the edge of the Chambers Knoll development takes people out into the street right before the edge of the Ivy Ridge property. Then, at the edge of the Ivy Ridge property the sidewalk terminates, and pedestrians must walk about a quarter of a mile along the edge of the road to reach Harrisburg Street. No estimated cost of construction at this time.





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**PROJECT A.8: School Zone Flashers at Swatara Middle School**

**Problem Description**

Residents who live in the Oberlin area of the Township often pass by the Middle School on Hanshue Street. Many neighbors, teachers and students have complained that vehicles often travel over the posted speed limit, even when school is in session. This poses a danger to pedestrians, as well as vehicles and school buses entering and leaving the school property.

**BEFORE**



**Implementable Solution**

While the Township Police Department does patrol the area, it is difficult for them to enforce the speed limit on this stretch of the road with current technology. The Department recommended the installation of warning signs and flashers to alert motorists they are entering a school zone and that they should slow down. A total of three signals were proposed and approved – one on Hanshue near Harrisburg Street facing south, on Hanshue Street near Highland Street facing north, and one on Highland Street facing west on the approach to Hanshue.

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**Actions Taken and Status**

In 2018 the Township Board of Commissioners requested the Township Engineer to perform the necessary studies to warrant the installation of school zone warning flashers on Hanshue Street and Highland Avenue. They also authorized the purchase of the necessary equipment. Permits have been approved by PennDOT. A total of four signals were installed in early September 2019 just as the new school year started.



**Project Costs**

The equipment was purchased in 2018 for \$16,400. In July of 2019 the Board of Commissioners awarded a contract in the amount of \$10,600 for the installation. The project is now complete.

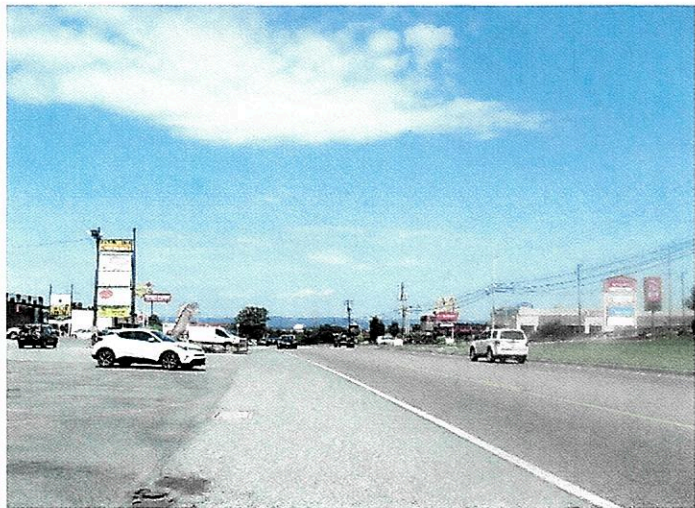


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**PROJECT A.9: Improve Eisenhower Boulevard and the Highland Street Intersection**

**Problem Description**

This is another corridor and intersection that has seen a tremendous increase in vehicle traffic and pedestrian traffic in the past 10 to 15 years. There are some older restaurant and entertainment establishments at the intersection, and then are some newly constructed hotels and restaurants nearby. While there are pedestrian accommodations at the intersection, pedestrians tend not to walk to the intersection and instead cross mid-block. There has been one fatal incident involving a vehicle striking a pedestrian in the middle of Eisenhower Boulevard. There are many factors at play here, one of which is night visibility.



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### **Implementable Solution**

This incident and related problems in this corridor has caught the attention of the Township Commissioners and PennDOT.

### **Actions Taken, Project Costs and Status**

In February of 2019 PennDOT initiated a Pedestrian Safety Study for the section of Eisenhower Boulevard from Lindle Road to Highland Street. An initial meeting was held with state and local officials, and PennDOT hired a consulting firm to conduct the study. The estimated cost of the project is \$600,000. The Township will be filing a grant application in the fall of 2019 for 70% of the cost. This leaves \$180,000 to be paid by the Township. The project could be completed by the end of 2022.



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**PROJECT A.10: Revise Lane Use Designations at the Lindle Road Intersection with Eisenhower Boulevard and I-283**

**Problem Description**

Lindle Road is a township and state collector road that starts at Eisenhower Boulevard and runs east, then south, into Lower Swatara Township. It is mainly a 2-lane road, but the section between Cordial Lane and Eisenhower Boulevard is four lanes to accommodate traffic coming on and off of I-283. The traffic volume around this intersection has been growing as the result of the construction of several hotels, a number of restaurants, and the High Pointe Commons shopping center. One of the issues is the alignment of the westbound lanes and a private driveway at the intersection with Eisenhower Boulevard. The other issue is that the intersection gets very congested during peak travel times, with too many vehicles queuing up in the turning lanes.

**Implementable Solution**

Early in 2019 the firm of Dawood Engineers was contracted by the Township to conduct a transportation impact study to revise the lane use designations. That report contains a number of recommendations to improve safety and reduce congestion by re-aligning the lanes and upgrading the pavement markings and changing some of the traffic signals.



**Project Costs**

The cost to make the changes has been estimated to be \$6,500, plus permit and engineering fees. The project could be funded from the Liquid Fuels Fund or a capital reserve fund.

**Actions Taken and Status**

With approval from the Township Board of Commissioners, the next step would be to apply to the PA Department of Transportation for a permit to modify the traffic signals and pavement markings.

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**PROJECT A.11: I-83 East Shore Section 2**

**Problem Description**

This section of I-83, part the Capital Beltway, includes the infamous “Eisenhower Interchange” that connects I-81 to the north, the Pennsylvania Turnpike to the south, and US 322 to Hershey. This is a very high-volume network of roads and bridges that experiences traffic jams on a regular basis. It is also not very safe due to short acceleration and deceleration ramps that join the main trunk from different sides.

**Implementable Solutions**

Due to the continually increasing traffic volume and the dangerous conditions, PennDOT has started to undertake a massive redesign and reconstruction of this highway and bridge network. This project includes the widening of I-83 main trunk to up to 3 travel lanes in each direction from approximately the boundary with Lower Paxton Township to 29<sup>th</sup> Street. The project includes reconfiguring the entire Eisenhower Interchange, and adds a new bridge to connect the ends of 40<sup>th</sup> Street and a new connection between Old Paxton Street and Derry Street.

**Actions Taken and Status**

The “Recommended Preferred Alternative” was released to the public in October of 2018. Environmental Assessment Studies are currently being conducted. The project will be done in four phases, and the first one is estimated to start in 2020. It may take up to ten years to complete all phases of the project

**Project Costs**

PennDOT has not released a final cost estimate at this time. The Township Board of Commissioners will support funding of projects in this corridor through the regional Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). For more information and to track progress, DOT has created the website [www.I-83beltway.com](http://www.I-83beltway.com).



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**PROJECT A.12: I-83 East Shore Section 3 (Congestion Mitigation, Safety)**

**Problem Description**

Many of the same problems affect this section of the Capital Beltway – traffic congestion and short acceleration and deceleration lanes. The problems are intensified as the highway passes through the City of Harrisburg. If there is something causing backups on the local roads in the City during peak periods the traffic will back up on the ramps and on to the highway.

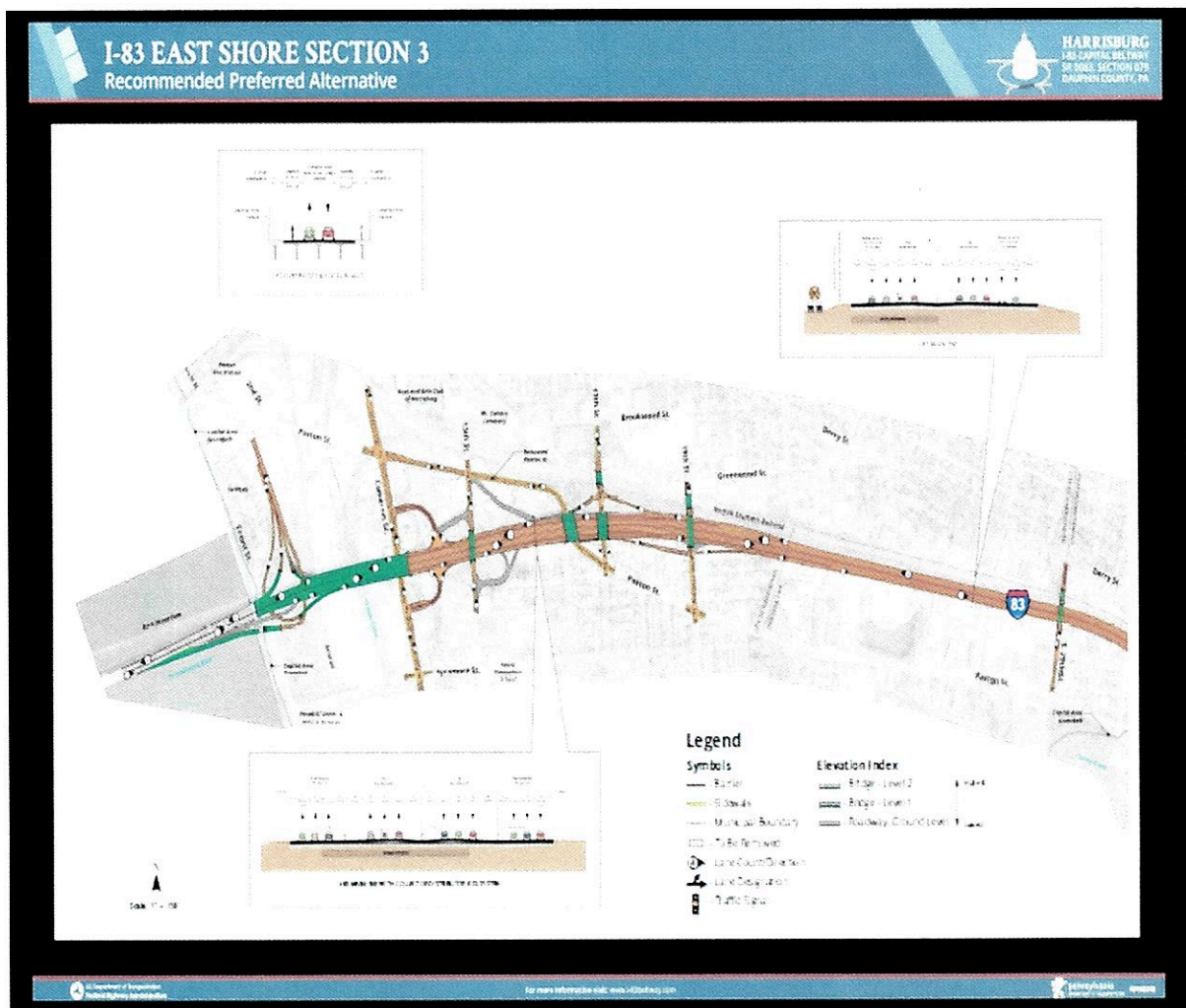
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### **Implementable Solution**

This project includes the widening of I-83 to up to 3 travel lanes in each direction from to 29<sup>th</sup> Street to the South Bridge at the Susquehanna River. The project also includes reconfiguring traffic patterns on the streets in the City of Harrisburg leading to the bridge.

### **Actions Taken, Status and Project Costs**

The "Recommended Preferred Alternative" was released to the public in October of 2018. Environmental Assessment Studies are currently being conducted. The timing of the work in this Section may coincide with some of the phases of Section 2. Both projects are currently listed as being in preliminary design stage. PennDOT has not released a final cost estimate at this time. The Township Board of Commissioners will support funding of projects in this corridor through the regional Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). For more information and to track progress, DOT has created the website [www.I-83beltway.com](http://www.I-83beltway.com).





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**Possible Additional Planning Projects:**

PROJECT A.13: Chambers Hill Road Safety Study (Penhar Road to U.S. Route 322)

**Problem Description**

This section of Chambers Hill Road is the state road that connects the entire southeast quadrant of the Township. This is an old two-lane road that has a number of side streets intersecting with it. While there are not many commercial properties in the area, there is an elementary school, church and fire house. Many residents use this road to commute to their jobs and travel to nearby shopping districts. At this time there is only one traffic control "Stop" sign along its length – at Mushroom Hill Road. This is one of the few sections of the township where there is still residential development. As time goes on there will be more traffic. It is suggested here that the Township Board of Commissioners petition the PA Department of Transportation to conduct a full Road Safety Study to document the existing conditions and make plans for any needed safety improvements to minimize traffic accidents and fatalities.

PROJECT A.14: Eisenhower Boulevard Safety Study (Lindle Road to Paxton Street)

**Problem Description**

Eisenhower Boulevard is another key collector route that connects the southwest quadrant of the township with the Eisenhower Boulevard on one end and the Borough of Highspire at the other end. This particular section will be impacted as part of the I-83 East Shore Section 2 project. At the conclusion of the project this road will no longer connect directly to the Interchange but will just merge with Paxton Street. It is suggested here that the Township Board of Commissioners petition the PA Department of Transportation to conduct a full Road Safety Study to document the existing conditions and make plans for any needed safety improvements to minimize traffic accidents and fatalities.

PROJECT A.15: Local Road Safety Plan (Township collector roads)

This Plan would examine conditions of other roads not mentioned as a separate project and help identify safety issues and identify solutions and opportunities for improvements. No cost has been identified.

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**PROJECT A.16: Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Plan**

The purpose of this plan would be an in-dept examination of the challenges bicyclists face when they want to travel from their neighborhoods to work or to shopping districts along the township and state collector roads. The plan would identify solutions and opportunities for improvements. No cost has been identified.

**PROJECT A.17: Transportation Improvement Plan (Act 219) and Impact Fee Ordinance**

This is a special type of plan authorized by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The process includes the examination of developable land and possible traffic generation based on current zoning. The traffic generation portion of the study is then used to project needed roadway and intersection improvements. The result is an Impact Fee Ordinance that would impose a fee on future building permits to help pay for the transportation improvements. This is a time and labor-intensive planning process. No cost has been identified to conduct this plan.

END OF TRANSPORTATION SECTION