

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Williamsport Area Transportation Study

Metropolitan Planning Organization

2017-2018 LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT

Prepared by Lycoming County Planning Commission

August 3, 2018



Williamsport MPO 2017-2018 LTAP Annual Report

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Lycoming County Planning Commission, (LCPC) proposes to partner with PennDOT during 2017-2018 to work with all 52 municipalities in Lycoming County to identify their training needs and arrange for delivery of this training in a strategic and cost effective manner to properly maintain and upgrade Lycoming County's local transportation network.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This is the 13th year the Williamsport MPO has partnered with PennDOT to assist in the LTAP program. The contracting mechanism for MPO involvement was inclusion of Task VII-A in the FY 2016-2018 WATS Unified Planning Work Program. We have found numerous ways to integrate LTAP with our other local transportation planning initiatives. We have verified that municipal officials are aware of LTAP services and benefits that are readily available and have received very positive feedback on the usefulness and value of the program to address their transportation training needs.

The Lycoming County Planning Commission agreed to become involved in the LTAP Program because our staff believed we could add value to the process given the strong relationships we have already established with our municipal officials on a variety of planning related programs over the years. Also, the LTAP Program objectives are a logical extension of our overall MPO transportation planning programs and functions. Our MPO is charged with development of a Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program so we work closely with municipalities in the identification and prioritization of transportation capital improvement project needs within Lycoming County.

Since these documents must be fiscally constrained as per federal requirements, it is important that preventive maintenance measures are employed to extend the life of roads and bridges to avoid the high capital expenditures on larger scale projects that become unaffordable for our MPO to program. The LTAP Program provides municipal officials with a wealth of educational materials

targeted at preventative maintenance, in order to stretch limited transportation dollars to perform cost effective transportation asset management.

On December 19, 2013 the Williamsport MPO adopted their 20 year Long Range Transportation Plan Update in fulfillment of Federal MAP-21 compliance requirements and has worked with municipalities and other stakeholder organizations to develop the FFY 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program which was adopted by the MPO on June 18, 2018. A total of 67 highway and bridge transportation projects valued at an estimated \$82 million are now programmed on the TIP. The Long Range Plan and TIP emphasize system preservation with focus on correcting poor condition bridges. LTAP courses and technical assistance can help us implement the MPO Long Range Plan and TIP projects with our local municipalities by providing guidance, education and technical assistance regarding sound system preservation practices which is also a high PennDOT priority. Now that PA Act 89 is in place providing significant additional funding to local municipalities for roads and bridges, it is important that municipal officials receive the proper training to begin to quickly implement the backlog of municipal road and bridges projects. It is important to note that the Lycoming County Commissioners have adopted an ordinance to authorize PennDOT to collect an additional \$5 vehicle registration fee, as authorized in Act 89, to assist municipalities in undertaking additional municipal transportation improvement needs such as reducing the backlog of poor condition local bridges.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Below is a list of what we believe to be our most significant accomplishments:

1. The Lycoming County Planning Commission staff is now much more educated on the services offered through LTAP which will allow us to more effectively market the program with our municipal officials. Effective marketing begins with a thorough understanding of the product or service you are offering.
2. The Lycoming County Planning Commission is finding ways to integrate LTAP with existing County Programs to deliver more cost effective results for our municipalities. Examples of such integration including our county liquid fuels grant program linked with LTAP technical assistance and the County Bridge Inspection Program are highlighted later in this report. For example, using LTAP supplemental funding, the LCPC has completed a pilot program to expand the Lycoming County Bridge Inspection Program to include small municipal bridges between 8 and 20 feet where federal regulations do not currently require routine inspections. This new program provides a more complete picture of local bridge needs throughout Lycoming County and is being used a model for other counties/municipalities in the Commonwealth to consider integrating with their bridge improvement programs. Lycoming County has completed systematic NBIS level inspections of 104 locally-owned bridges between 8 and 20 foot span length in June, 2016 using Bassett Engineering, Montoursville, PA. *It is significant to note that currently Lycoming County continues to be one*

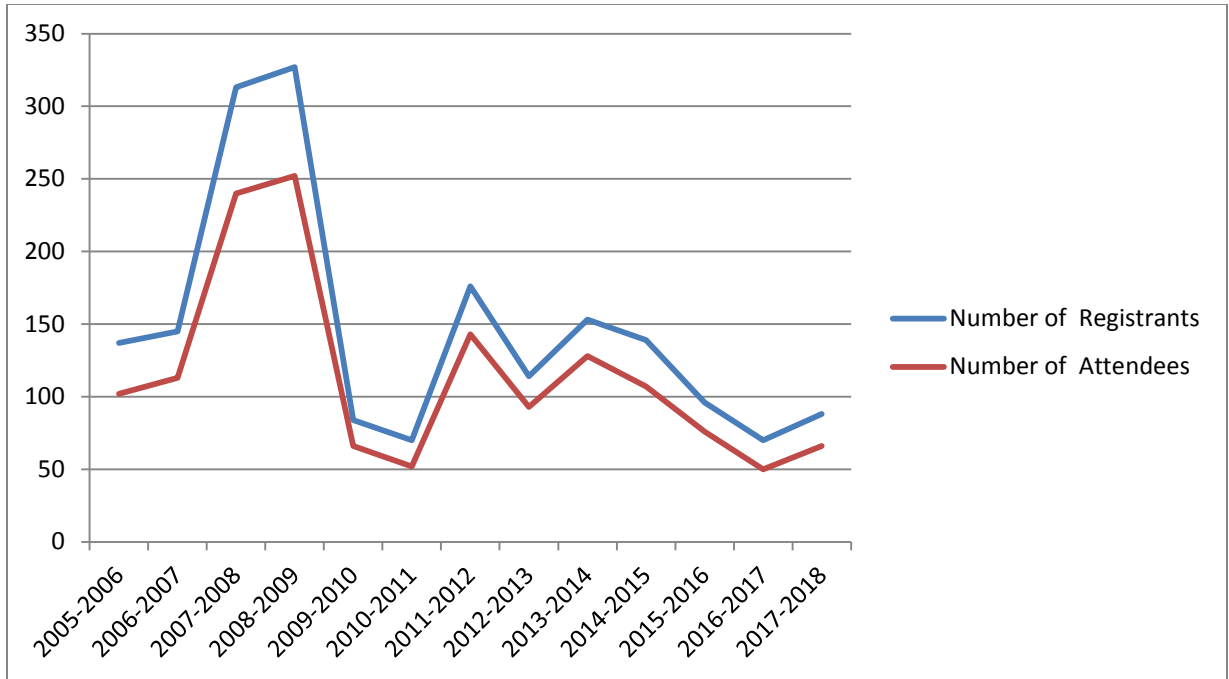
of the few counties in PA that is conducting NBIS quality bridge inspections on locally owned bridges with span lengths between 8 and 20 feet. A major finding from this initiative shows that 35% of these structures are classified as being in an overall condition of poor! Also a total of 25 poor condition bridges have either been rehabilitated or replaced by municipalities since the pilot program started in 2011 further underscoring the value this LTAP Pilot has made in addressing this critical problem.

The County working with PennDOT Engineering District 3-0 and local municipal bridge owners are developing a local bridge bundling program to begin to repair or replace 17 poor condition locally owned bridges (a \$7 million local investment) and to institute an effective preventative maintenance program for all structures in order to reduce the number of poor condition bridges and to avoid other bridges from degrading to a poor overall condition rating in the future. LTAP bridge maintenance course training will be an essential tool in this regard. Certain other low volume local bridges are also being targeted for closure and removal.

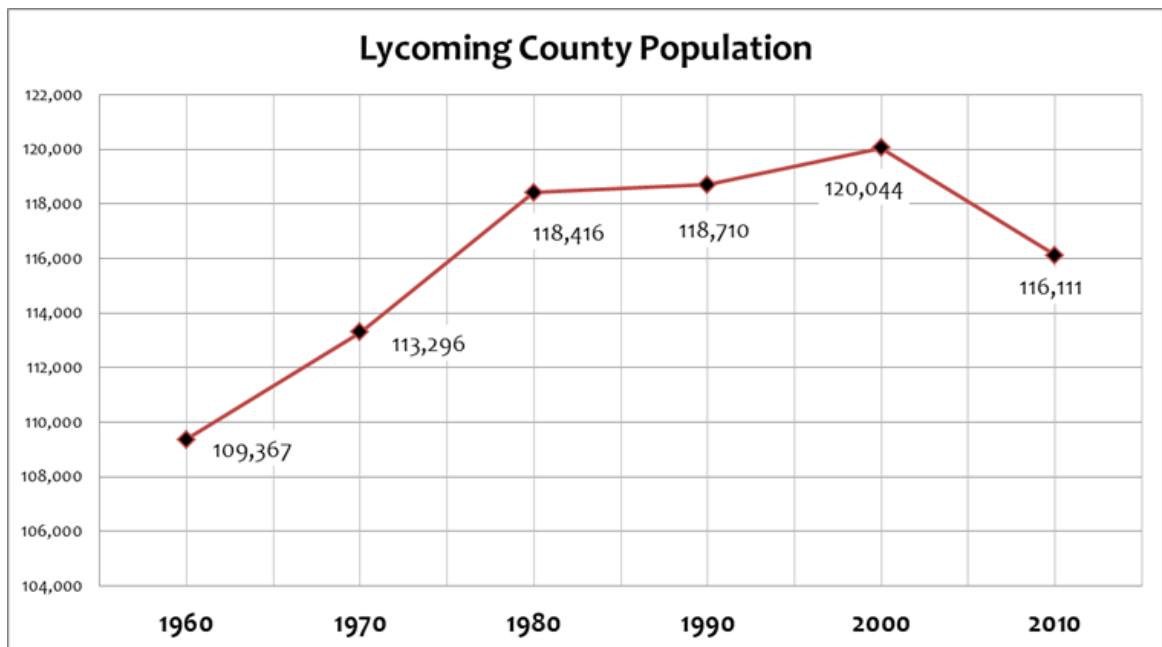
3. Most of the LTAP classes offered in Lycoming County are consistent with the most frequent courses requested by our municipalities through our survey results which help to contribute to good course attendance and feedback by municipal officials.
4. The Williamsport MPO LTAP program has been analyzed in terms of number of courses offered, registrants and attendees.

<i>Program Year</i>	<i>Number of Courses Held</i>	<i>Number of Registrants</i>	<i>Number of Attendees</i>	<i>Average Number of Attendees Per Course</i>
2005-2006	7	137	102	15
2006-2007	8	145	113	14
2007-2008	9	313	240	26
2008-2009	16	327	252	16
2009-2010	7	84	66	10
2010-2011	5	70	52	10
2011-2012	9	176	143	16
2012-2013	5	114	93	19
2013-2014	8	153	128	16
2014-2015	8	139	107	13
2015-2016	4	96	76	19
2016-2017	4	70	50	13
2017-2018	4	71	54	13
12 Year Total	95	1,912	1,488	15

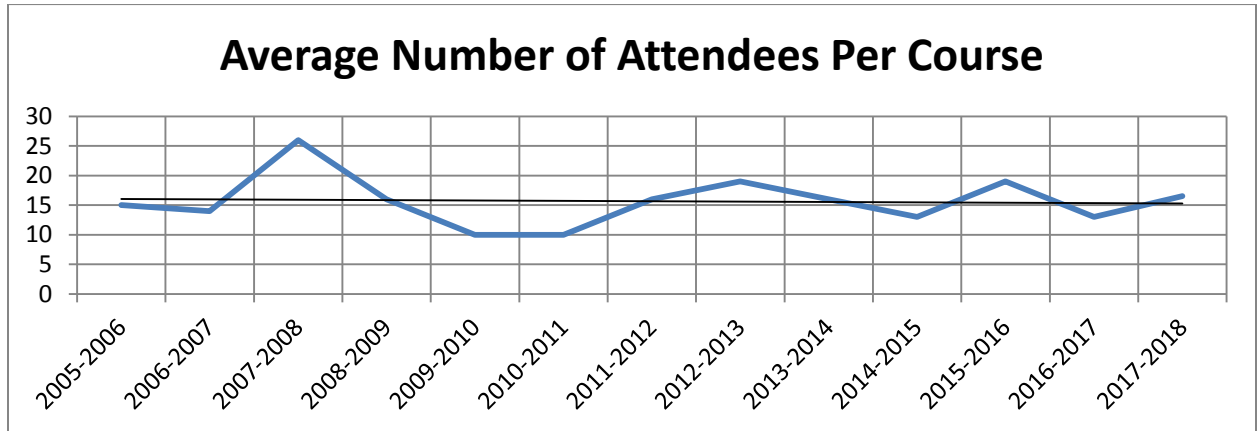
As noted from the chart, the 2017-2018 program period continued a reduced number of course offerings compared to prior years. This has been in response to a decline in overall registration and attendance numbers. Overall registration and attendance levels fluctuated widely over the past 10 years:



Lycoming County is the third smallest MPO in Pennsylvania by population but is also the largest county in the Commonwealth by land area. The population in the county is decreasing.



However, despite these challenges the average attendance per course offering has fluctuated but has not declined during the program:



It should be noted that much of the high course attendance figures in the past years such as 2008 and 2012 were largely due to frequent offerings of the Posting and Bonding class when the Marcellus gas drilling activity was at its peak in Lycoming County. This course was once again offered in 2014, but municipal official interest had fallen as Marcellus drilling activity sharply declined by that time. Also, most of our municipalities in Lycoming County have already undertaken the proper steps to load post and bond locally owned roads to safeguard against heavy hauling activity.

From informal conversations with municipal officials it appears that we may have reached a “saturation point” with many of the course offerings since the turnover in personnel is so low and there is a perceived lack of substantively new information in many of the courses. As we plan our course selection and outreach for upcoming classes we are trying to focus on courses with substantial re-updates and emphasize this fact to our target audience. Additionally, many of the municipalities in Lycoming County have very small staff with very small budgets and simply cannot afford to lose worker-hours to a half- or full-day training. Despite these challenges, Lycoming County Planning Commission will continue to pursue innovative ways to boost registration and attendance.

FY 2017-2018 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

This section of the annual report provides a summary of the key outreach activities the Lycoming County Planning Commission undertook to better market the LTAP Program to our municipalities in Lycoming County. Specifically, information on the survey, courses offered, communication and marketing tools and techniques as well as budgetary figures to administer the program are provided herewith.

LTAP MUNICIPAL TRAINING NEEDS SURVEY

For the 2017-2018 LTAP program year, LCPC Staff continued issuance of a two page simplified course survey in October 2016. High priority municipal requests based responses to this recent survey were used to schedule the courses to increase attendance levels. However, a challenge has arisen because there has been no clear consensus on favored courses. With such a low population, a limited pool of potential course attendees, and with no course being selected by more than four municipalities, it will be challenging to get high registration or attendance numbers for any particular course.

LTAP COURSE OFFERINGS

This section of the report provides summary information regarding the 2017-2018 LTAP courses that were offered and conducted within Lycoming County.

- 5 LTAP classroom style courses were held through the direct assistance of the Lycoming County Planning Commission / Williamsport MPO in Lycoming County during FY 2017-2018. LCPC Staff made all preparations needed for hosting all of these courses, including securing course training facility, providing refreshments for participants, registering attendees on LTAP website, etc. and attending the courses where possible.
- 88 individuals registered for classes during FY 2017-2018.
- 66 individuals actually attended classes and received training during FY 2017-2018.
- On average, there were approximately 13 attendees per session.
- All 5 courses were held within Lycoming County at the Woodward Fire Hall which is a central location easily accessible to most municipalities and houses ideal training facilities at a reasonable cost.

Course Name	Date Held	Attendees
Drainage: The Key to Roads That Last	<i>June 15, 2017</i>	<i>12</i>
Asphalt Roads Common Maintenance Problems	<i>August 3, 2017</i>	<i>14</i>
Principals of Paving	<i>September 6, 2017</i>	<i>10</i>
Pavement Markings: Applications and Maintenance	<i>September 21, 2017</i>	<i>19</i>
Salt & Snow Management	<i>October 16, 2017</i>	<i>11</i>

COMMUNICATION / MARKETING

The Lycoming County Planning Commission used many methods to promote awareness of LTAP courses offered in Lycoming County and to achieve good attendance by our municipal officials.

The primary means of communication with municipalities involved hardcopy mailers. There was an initial calendar-formatted mailer displaying the dates when each upcoming course was to be held. Additionally, one month prior to each course an announcement flyer highlighting the next specific course was prepared. These mailers were issued by the Lycoming County Planning Commission via regular mail and sent to all 52 municipalities in Lycoming County. In addition, the course announcements were also posted on a dedicated page of the County of Lycoming's website www.lyco.org. Targeted follow-up reminder telephone calls and emails were made by LCPC staff directly with those municipalities that indicated interest in a specific course being offered where no course registration had yet been received. (Examples of the course announcement mailers are provided as Attachment A.)

The Lycoming County Planning Commission staff made marketing presentations about the LTAP Program at the Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 Lycoming County Association of Township Officials Conventions (October 25, 2017 & May 23, 2018) to promote awareness of the overall benefits of LTAP and highlight upcoming courses to municipal officials.

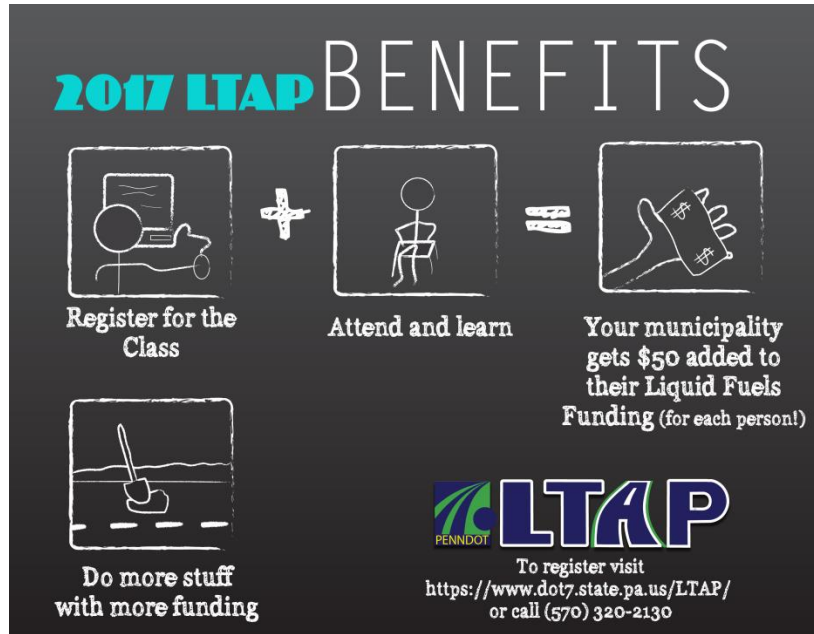
The Lycoming County Planning Commission Staff partnered with the SEDA-COG MPO jointly staffing a display booth and provided marketing materials the West Branch Council of Governments Equipment Show held on May 16, 2018 at the Lycoming County Fairgrounds in Hughesville Borough. Approximately 450 municipal attendees throughout the region were realized at this single day event. This forum provided an excellent opportunity to promote LTAP and network with municipal officials and area-wide design firms and highway equipment vendors.

The Lycoming County Planning Commission continued working partnerships with many organizations to market the LTAP Program in 2017-2018 including:

- The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Central Office & Engineering District 3-0 Bureau of Municipal Services
- SEDA-Council of Governments
- West Branch Council of Governments
- Lycoming County Association of Township Officials
- Woodward Township Fire Company
- Lycoming County municipalities
- Local News Media

In 2017, the Lycoming County Planning Commission also began an incentive program whereby any municipality that had an individual register and attend an LTAP course offering would receive an additional \$50 on their municipal liquid fuels allocation in 2018. It is hoped that this will further incentivize municipalities to send representatives to LTAP course offerings.

This program was promoted with the following graphic mailed to municipalities, emailed to municipal officials, and incorporated into the LTAP section of the Lycoming County Planning Commission Website:



Time will tell if this incentive program will become successful. Below is the 2018 liquid fuel allotment bonuses based on this new incentive program.

Municipality	TOTAL LTAP COURSE ATTENDEES, 2017	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4	Course 5	Total Benefit Earned
Muncy Borough	11	2	3	2	2	2	\$550
Williamsport City	10	2	2		5	1	\$500
Clinton Township	8			2	3	3	\$400
Wolf Township	6		3		3		\$300
Old Lycoming Township	6			2	4		\$300
Mifflin Township	5		5				\$250
South Williamsport Borough	1	1					\$50
Hepburn Township	1			1			\$50

BUDGET EXPENDITURES

This section of the annual report provides a summary of budgetary expenditures for various work tasks by quarterly reporting period in support of Lycoming County Planning Commission efforts to promote the LTAP Program in Lycoming County based on authorized work activities contained in Task VII-A of the Williamsport MPO approved FY 2016-2018 Unified Planning Work Program.

Quarterly Budget Expenditures for LTAP Task (VII-A)

Task VII-A First Quarter Expenditures

(July 1, 2017-September 30, 2017) \$ 1,785.66

- Prepared 2016-2017 WATS LTAP Annual Report
- Held an LTAP Asphalt Roads Course
- Held an LTAP Principles of Paving Course
- Held an LTAP Pavement Marking Course
- Held an LTAP Bridge Maintenance Course
- Attended the PennDOT LTAP Planning Partners Annual Meeting in Enola, PA on September 27, 2017

Task VII-A Second Quarter Expenditures

(October 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017) \$ 1,407.47

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- Held an LTAP Salt & Snow Management Course
- Attended Fall 2017 Township Officials Convention and marketed 2017-2018 LTAP classes

Task VII-A Third Quarter Expenditures

(January 1, 2018- March 31, 2018) \$ 336.39

- Prepared marketing materials and mailers for upcoming 2018 LTAP classes
- Preliminary arrangements for class facilities

Task VII-A Fourth Quarter Expenditures

(April 1, 2018 – June 30, 18) \$ 2,002.72

- Finalized 2017 LTAP class rental agreement and paid Woodward Fire Hall for hosting facilities for all calendar year 2018 LTAP courses
- Attended the Lycoming County Association of Township Officials Spring Convention on May 23, 2018 and marketed LTAP classes and services.
- Partnered with SEDA-COG MPO staff to operate an LTAP display booth at the West Branch COG Annual Equipment Show on May 16, 2018.

FY 2017-2018 WATS MPO LTAP Task Budget Summary

Total FY 2017-2018 Task VII-A Expenditures	\$5,532.24
Total FY 2017-2018 UPWP Task VII-A Budget	\$ 15,00.00
Budget Savings FY 2017-2018	\$ 349.33
Program Cost Per LTAP Course Attendee, FY 2017-2018	\$ 102.45

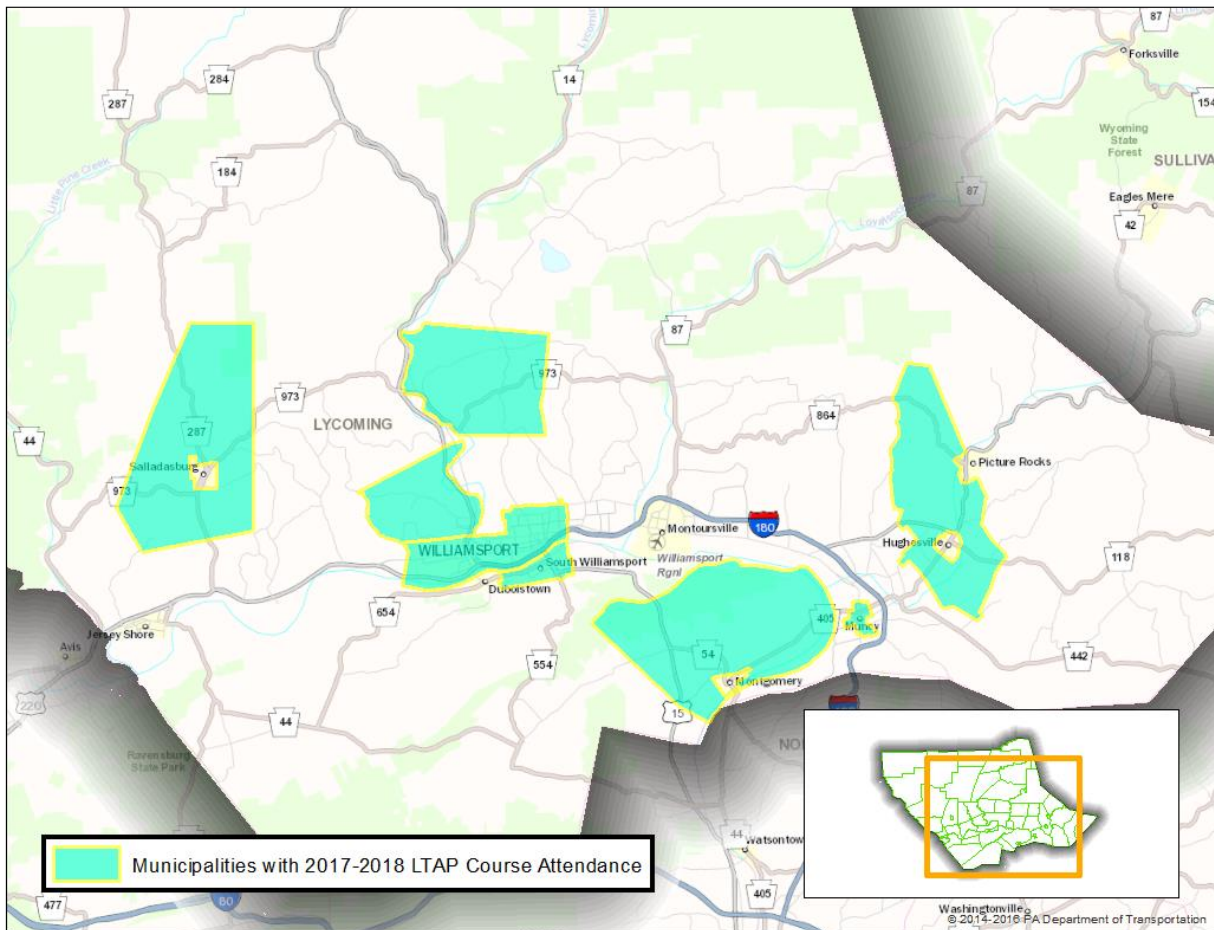
PROGRAM SUCCESS STORIES

DIVERSITY OF COURSE OFFERINGS

Since the Lycoming County Planning Commission began its partnership with PennDOT in 2005 to market LTAP courses in Lycoming County, we have offered 95 courses with 1,488 municipal officials in attendance yielding an average of 15 attendees per course which is strong considering our MPO represents a single county (Lycoming) with a small municipal catchment base and large geographic area (largest land area of any PA County) involving long travel times for some of our municipal attendees.

HIGH PARTICIPATION ACROSS MUNICIPALITIES

51 of the 52 Lycoming County municipalities (98%) have attended LTAP courses or have used LTAP services since 2005. About 16% of all Lycoming County municipalities attended LTAP classes this year which is a 20% decrease over last year. These statistics illustrate the fact that Lycoming County’s marketing efforts have produced significant results in achieving participation by our municipalities but they also underscore some of the difficulties encountered in getting consistent registration and attendance.



SMALL BRIDGE INVENTORY

The completion of the Lycoming County Small Bridge Inventory Pilot using LTAP supplemental funding is a significant accomplishment not only for Lycoming County but for the entire Commonwealth. This pilot program may also have national implications. This pilot demonstrated that there is a general lack of awareness by local municipalities regarding the condition of smaller local bridges less than 20 feet long due to the fact that federal inspections are not required on these structures. Follow-up NBIS level inspections completed in June, 2017 by Lycoming County identified 104 such structures where 35% of structures are classified as poor condition, thus creating an alarming backlog of problem bridges that need addressed and where preventative maintenance is critical. The Lycoming County Commissioners expended over \$ 525,000 of county liquid fuels funds to conduct these bridge inspections to date at no cost to the municipal bridge owner.

Our pilot provides a blueprint for other counties and municipalities to consider to identify, inventory and inspect smaller locally owned bridges in a manner that is coordinated through PennDOT and their Bridge Management System II databases and PennDOT has now initiated a statewide inventory of small local bridges with all PA MPO's and RPO's. Our County is in the process of developing the first ever Local Bridge Bundling Program in PA using PA Act 89 Vehicle Registration surcharges as the PA Bridge Bundling Program initial round has excluded locally owned bridges.

We believe other MPO's and RPO's participating in the LTAP Program can and should look beyond their basic LTAP marketing and promotion functions to identify innovative programs that can be extremely useful to municipal officials to address unmet transportation needs.

MAJOR LTAP MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2018 AND BEYOND

At their February 29, 2016 public meeting, the Williamsport MPO approved the continuation of the Lycoming County Planning Commission's participation as a partner with PennDOT in the LTAP Program by including a separate task once again in the FY 2018-2020 WATS MPO Unified Planning Work Program. The LCPC will continue to pursue a marketing plan that will identify strategies to maintain consistent levels of attendance at LTAP trainings and expand participation in technical assistance in Lycoming County.

In 2017, as an added convenience to our municipal officials, the LCPC began to offer free lunches for full day training secessions in addition providing morning refreshments that have been previously offered.

MARCELLUS SHALE NATURAL GAS DRILLING MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

With the discovery of extensive Marcellus Shale natural gas deposits in Lycoming County, significant natural gas well drilling activity had been occurring in most areas of our County and throughout the Northcentral and Northeast PA region. In fact, the Marcellus Play is the largest

natural gas deposit in the United States and the second largest in the world. It is estimated that over 100 natural gas exploration companies and support companies have established office locations in Lycoming County with over 1,000 wells drilled in our county alone to date ranking Lycoming County as the highest number of wells drilled among all PA Counties in 2012 and 3rd highest in 2013. However, it is important to note that overall well drilling activity has dropped substantially starting in 2014 due to the large supply of natural gas on the market, weakening consumer demand and much lower natural gas trading prices.



This activity involves large amounts of heavy truck traffic transporting well assembly materials and water/sand needed for hydro-fracking operations and pipeline construction. Many of these large and heavy weight vehicles are using locally-owned roads at levels never before seen and in most cases these roads were not designed and constructed to handle this activity. Therefore, given the widespread and potentially catastrophic impacts that can occur, it is extremely important to have a short-term focus to offer training courses and technical assistance that can provide our affected municipal officials with the tools necessary to ensure locally owned roads and bridges can be properly maintained during these operations in a manner that is not a strain on municipal budgets. Because we have repeatedly offered Posting and Bonding Courses in Lycoming County along with other Marcellus related LTAP courses since June 2008 we have seen a strong response by most of our municipal officials to conduct the necessary studies, to adopt the required ordinances and follow all other PA Motor Vehicle Code requirements to establish and enforce a Posting and Bonding Program and undertake other state of good repair maintenance activities using their LTAP training resources. The updated Posting and Bonding of Local Roads course was most recently offered in July, 2014 in Lycoming County.

Therefore, the LCPC will continue to strategically target training to assist municipal officials to deal with the transportation impacts from Marcellus Shale gas exploration by offering training courses and technical assistance relevant to heavy hauling activity occurring in their municipalities, however course offerings will not be as frequent since many municipal officials are properly trained and have developed posting and bonding programs for their local roads and Marcellus heavy hauling activities have declined significantly during the past year. It is expected that Marcellus gas drilling activity has begun to rebound based on new well permits currently being processed.

ACHIEVE FULL LTAP PARTICIPATION BY LYCOMING CO. MUNICIPALITIES & NEIGHBORING RPO'S

LCPC staff will continue to target the one remaining non-responding municipality (Bastress Township) through special outreach efforts to educate these particular local officials about the value of utilizing LTAP services. Our special outreach was successful this past year in getting two

other municipalities that never attended LTAP training (Jordan and Jackson Townships) to start attending courses in 2016. Also, we continue to be successfully partnering with the SEDA-COG MPO and Northern Tier RPO to promote LTAP on a more region-wide basis by cross-promoting classes and attending regional events that draw municipal officials such as the equipment shows and we are seeing non-Lycoming County municipalities from these neighboring planning regions attending our courses and equipment shows. We will continue to make efforts to offer either new LTAP courses (that have not been previously offered in Lycoming County) or updated classes with new material to ensure we are providing an up to date and diverse training program in a variety of disciplines attractive to our local municipalities.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

LCPC Staff will continue to monitor Tech Assist requests via the LTAP website and informational flyers targeted at our 52 municipalities in Lycoming County. Municipal requests for technical assistance in Lycoming County is generally low primarily due to the fine efforts of PennDOT District 3-0 ongoing routine municipal outreach activities and numerous county sponsored programs that provide free services to municipalities such as local bridge inspections, liquid fuels funding assistance and ongoing technical assistance from our Planning Department.



ATTACHMENTS

LTAP COURSE ANNOUNCEMENT FLYER



**SPECIAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITY SPONSORED BY
Lycoming County Planning Commission &
PennDOT Local Technical Assistance Program**



**DRAINAGE: THE KEY TO ROADS THAT LAST
(MUNICIPAL TRAINING COURSE)**

DATE: Thursday, June 15, 2017
TIME: 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM
PLACE: Woodward Township Fire Hall, Lycoming County, PA
4147 North Route 220 Highway
Linden, PA 17744

DESCRIPTION:	This course covers the effect water has on roadways. Emphasis is on problems covered by poor drainage with discussion on various ways to handle these problems. Basic roadway drainage systems and their usage are reviewed. Industry standard procedures for replacing cross pipes are presented in detail. Regulatory agency policies and permit requirements are presented. The importance of performing routine inspection of drainage system assets is discussed with emphasis on the relationship to planning and federal aid reimbursement in the case of a disaster.
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This is FREE training so take advantage of it. Morning refreshments and lunch provided.

TO REGISTER, CALL JANE MAGYAR NO LATER THAN JUNE 1, 2017 AT (570) 320-2130 OR VISIT THE LTAP WEBSITE AT www.ltap.state.pa.us