

**Williamsport Area Transportation Study**  
**Metropolitan Planning Organization**  
**2018-2019 LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

Prepared by Lycoming County Planning Commission

August 7, 2019



### **Williamsport MPO 2018-2019 LTAP Annual Report**

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#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Lycoming County Planning Commission, (LCPC) proposes to collaborate with PennDOT during 2018-2019 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 14th year the Williamsport MPO has collaborated 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. In addition, the LTAP Program objectives are a logical extension of our overall MPO transportation planning programs and functions. Our MPO is tasked 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 preventative maintenance measures be 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 17, 2018 the Williamsport MPO adopted their 20 year Long Range Transportation Plan Update (LRTP) 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 (TIP) which was adopted by the MPO on June 18, 2018. A total of 62 highway and bridge transportation projects valued at an estimated \$86 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 bridge 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:

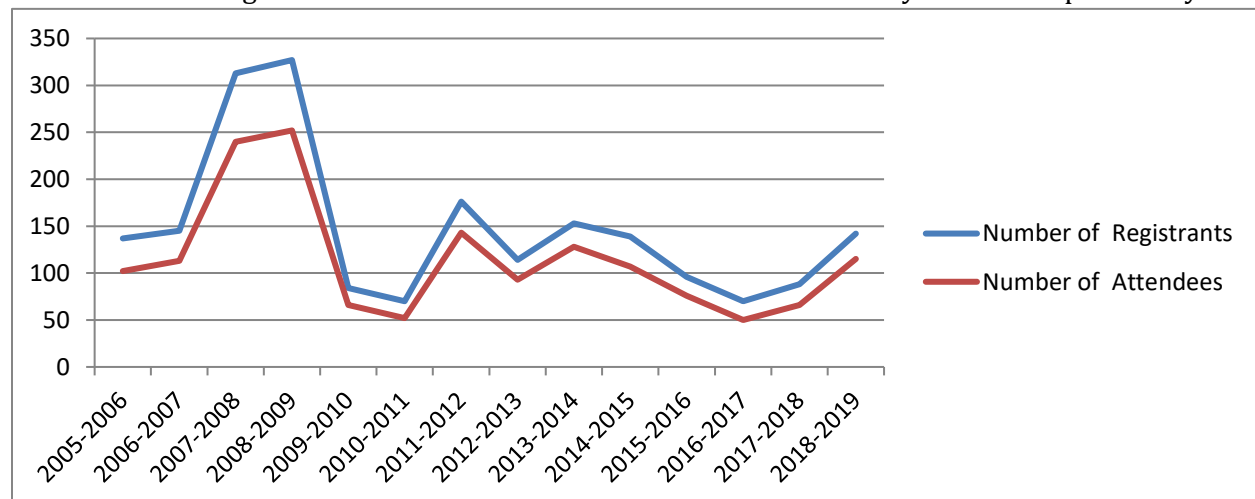
1. The Lycoming County Planning Commission staff is now more highly educated on the services offered through LTAP, which will allow us to more effectively market the program with our municipal officials. Effective marketing begins with a thorough understanding of the product or service you are offering.
2. The 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). In addition, the County and PennDOT are collaborating 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.

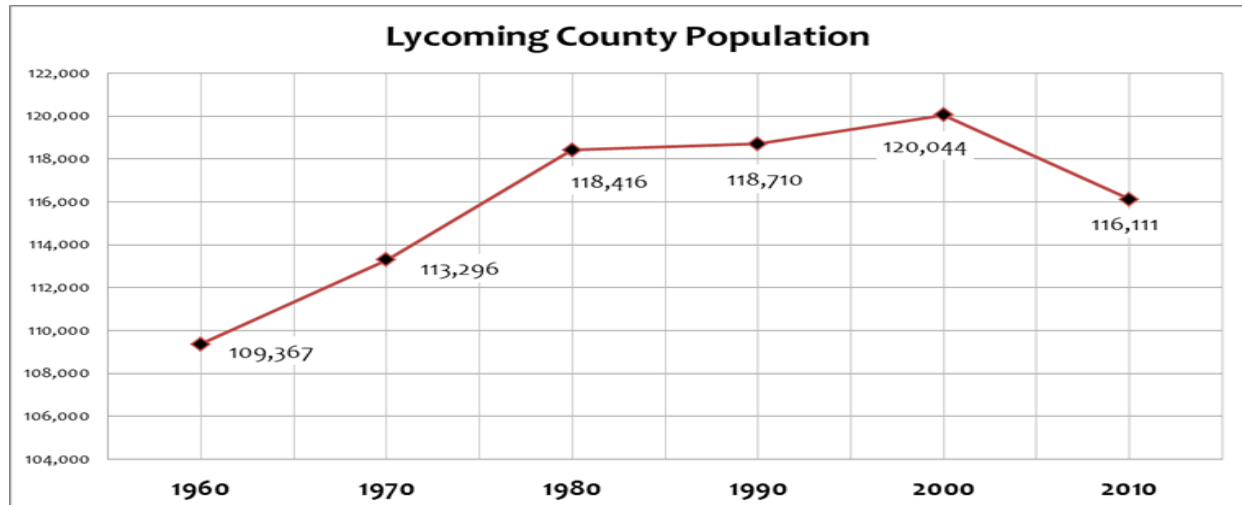
<i>Program Year</i>	<i>Number of Courses Held</i>	<i>Number of Registrants</i>	<i>Number of Attendees</i>	<i>Average Number of Attendees Per Course</i>
2005-2006	7	137	102	15
2006-2007	8	145	113	14
2007-2008	9	313	240	26
2008-2009	16	327	252	16
2009-2010	7	84	66	10
2010-2011	5	70	52	10
2011-2012	9	176	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
2018-2019	5	142	115	23
<b>14 Year Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>2,037</b>	<b>1,591</b>	<b>16</b>

As noted from the chart, the 2018-2019 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. However, the 2018-2019 attendance numbers did pick up over the 2017-2018 attendance. We believe this may be in part due to the additional liquid fuels funding that municipalities are eligible for if they attend an LTAP course.

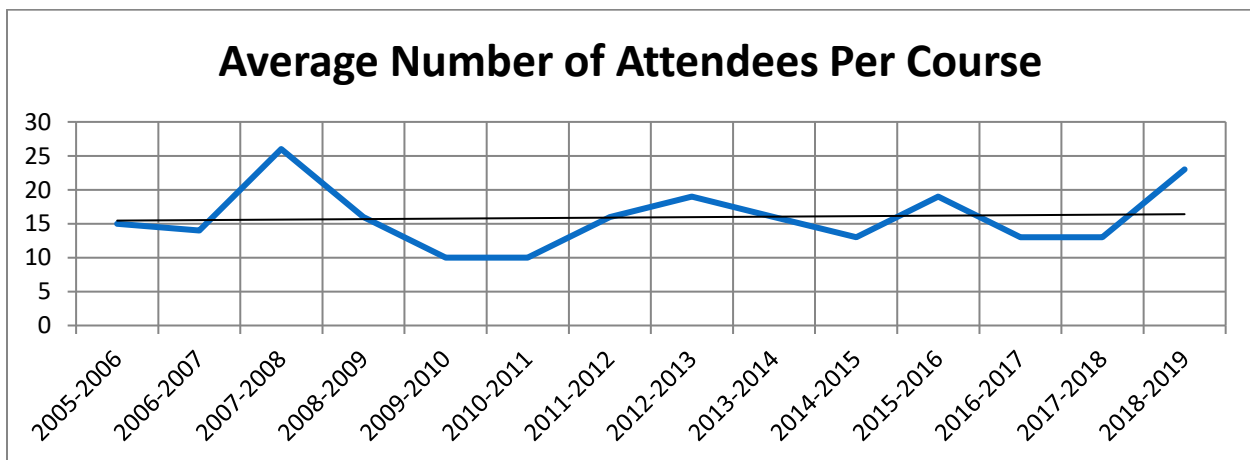
Overall registration and attendance levels fluctuated widely over the past 14 years:



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 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. In addition, 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, because 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 focusing on courses with significantly updated material and try to 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 2018-2019 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 2018-2019 LTAP program year, LCPC Staff continued issuance of a two page simplified course survey in November 2018. 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 six 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 2018-2019 LTAP courses that were offered and held 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 2018-2019. 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.
- 142 individuals registered for classes during FY 2018-2019.
- 115 individuals actually attended classes and received training during FY 2018-2019.
- On average, there were approximately 23 attendees per session.
- 4 of the courses were held at the Woodward Fire Hall and 1 course was held at the Trade & Transit II Center. Both are centrally located and easily accessible to most municipalities and house ideal training facilities at a reasonable cost.

Course Name	Date Held	Attendees
<b>Drainage: The Key to Roads That Last</b>	<i>August 22, 2018</i>	<i>31</i>
<b>Asphalt Roads Common</b>	<i>September 18, 2018</i>	<i>18</i>
<b>Unpaved &amp; Gravel Roads</b>	<i>October 18, 2018</i>	<i>18</i>
<b>Common Maintenance Practices</b>		
<b>Salt &amp; Snow Management</b>	<i>November 14, 2018</i>	<i>16</i>
<b>Salt &amp; Snow Management</b>	<i>December 5, 2018</i>	<i>32</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 three primary means of communication with municipalities involved hardcopy mailers, mass e-mails, and a webpage dedicated to Lycoming County's LTAP course offerings. 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. Four copies of each mailer were issued by the Lycoming County Planning Commission via regular mail and sent to all 52 municipalities in Lycoming County. Each mailing was followed up with an e-mail containing the same course information as the flyer and links to the County's dedicated LTAP webpage (<http://www.lyco.org/Departments/Planning-and-Community-Development/Transportation-Planning/Local-Technical-Assistance-Program-Courses>). The LCPC staff made targeted, follow-up reminder telephone calls and emails to those municipalities that indicated interest in a specific course being offered, but where no course registration had been received (An example of the course announcement mailers are provided as **Attachment A**.)

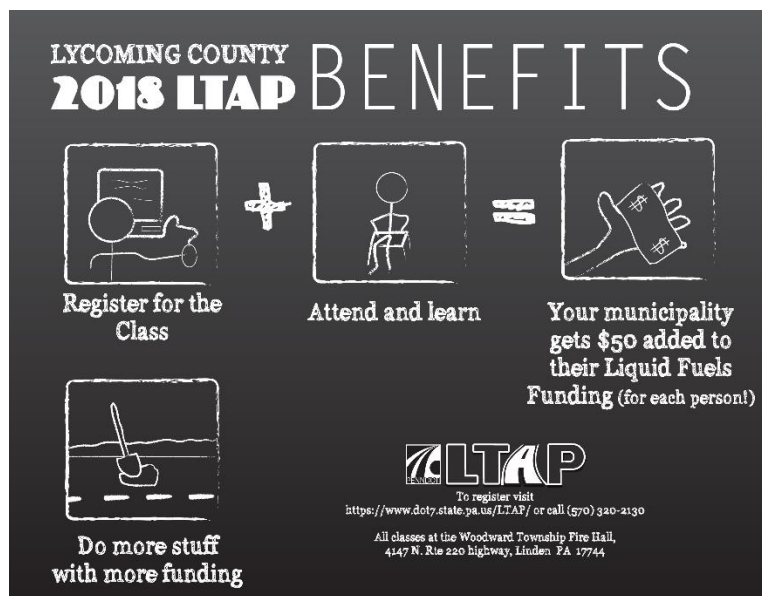
The Lycoming County Planning Commission staff made marketing presentations about the LTAP Program at the fall 2018 and spring 2019 Lycoming County Association of Township Officials Conventions (October 25, 2018 & May 22, 2019) to promote awareness of the overall benefits of LTAP and highlight upcoming courses to municipal officials.

The Lycoming County Planning Commission staff partnered with the SEDA-COG MPO by jointly staffing a display booth and provided marketing materials at the West Branch Council of Governments Equipment Show held on May 22, 2019 at the Lycoming County Fairgrounds in Hughesville Borough. We were able to connect with approximately 400-450 municipal attendees throughout the region 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 2018-2019 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
- Old Lycoming Township Volunteer Fire Company
- Lycoming County municipalities
- Local News Media

In 2018, the Lycoming County Planning Commission continued the 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 2019. 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:



While the 2018-2019 LTAP attendance does show promise that the incentive program is working, further LTAP programs are needed to determine if this incentive program will become successful.



Below is the 2019 liquid fuel allotment bonuses based on this new incentive program.

Municipality	TOTAL LTAP COURSE ATTENDEES, 2018	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4	Course 5	Total Benefit Earned
Anthony Twp.	1					1	\$50
Brady Twp.	1	1					\$50
Brown Twp.	1	1					\$50
City of Williamsport	19			7		12	\$950
Clinton Twp.	6		3			3	\$300
Cogan House Twp.	1					1	\$50
Hepburn Twp.	2	2					\$100
Hughesville Borough	3		2		1		\$150
Lewis Twp.	2	2					\$100
Limestone Twp.	1		1				\$50
McHenry Twp.	2	2					\$100
McNett Twp.	3	2		1			\$150
Mifflin Twp.	4	4					\$200
Montoursville Borough	12	4	3			5	\$600
Muncy Borough	9	3	3	2		1	\$450
Nippenose Twp.	2	2					\$100
Old Lycoming Twp.	7					7	\$350
Piatt Twp.	2				2		\$100
Picture Rocks Borough	2					2	\$100
South Williamsport Borough	3	1	2				\$150
Washington Twp.	5	2		1	2		\$250
Watson Twp.	1	1					\$50
Wolf Twp.	6	3			3		\$300
2018-2019 Total Benefit							\$4,750

The total amount of additional liquid fuels funds received by Lycoming County municipalities participating in the incentive program in 2018-2019 was \$4,750.00.

### ***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, 2018-September 30, 2018)***\$ 4,826.52**

- Prepared 2017-2018 WATS LTAP Annual Report
- Held an LTAP Drainage: The Key to Roads that Last course
- Held an LTAP Asphalt Roads course
- Attended the PennDOT LTAP Planning Partners Annual Meeting in State College, PA on October 22 – October 24, 2018

*Task VII-A Second Quarter Expenditures**(October 1, 2018 - December 31, 2018)***\$ 5,557.38**

- Held an LTAP Unpaved & Gravel Roads Common Maintenance Practices course
- Held two LTAP Salt & Snow Management courses
- Attended Fall 2018 Township Officials Convention and marketed 2018-2019 LTAP classes

*Task VII-A Third Quarter Expenditures**(January 1, 2018- March 31, 2019)***\$ 1,045.97**

- Prepared marketing materials and mailers for upcoming 2019 LTAP classes
- Preliminary arrangements for class facilities

*Task VII-A Fourth Quarter Expenditures**(April 1, 2019 – June 30, 2019)***\$1,463.44**

- Finalized 2019 LTAP class rental agreement and paid Old Lycoming Township Fire Hall for hosting facilities for all calendar year 2019-20 LTAP courses
- Coordinated with SEDA-COG MPO staff to operate an LTAP display booth at the West Branch COG Annual Equipment Show on May 16, 2018.
- Attended the Lycoming County Association of Township Officials Spring Convention on May 22, 2019 and marketed LTAP classes and services.

**FY 2018-2019 WATS MPO LTAP Task Budget Summary**

Total FY 2018-2019 Task VII-A Expenditures	<b>\$12,893.31</b>
Total FY 2018-2019 UPWP Task VII-A Budget	<b>\$ 15,000.00</b>
Budget Savings FY 2018-2019	<b>\$2,106.69</b>
Program Cost Per LTAP Course Attendee, FY 2018-2019	<b>\$112.11</b>

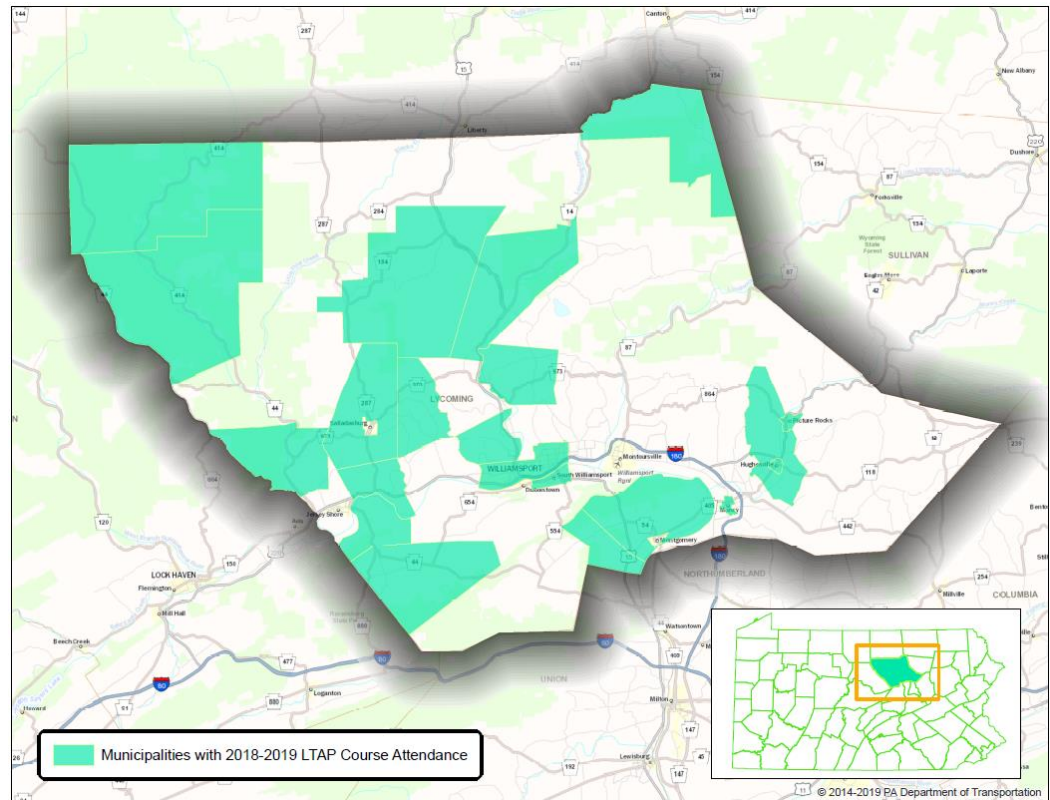
**PROGRAM SUCCESS STORIES*****DIVERSITY OF COURSE OFFERINGS***

Since the Lycoming County Planning Commission began its partnership with PennDOT in 2005 to market LTAP courses in Lycoming County, we have offered 99 courses with 1,600 municipal officials in attendance. These courses yielded an average of 16 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 44% or 23 Lycoming County municipalities attended LTAP classes this year (meaning at least one person from the municipality attended at least one of the LTAP courses offered). In contrast, approximately 16%, or 8 Lycoming County municipalities attend LTAP courses in 2017-2018. 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 also 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 because 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 2019 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 an effort to make the LTAP courses more accessible to municipal partners, the Williamsport MPO is changing the location for the 2019-2020 LTAP program, to the Old Lycoming Township Volunteer Fire Department Social Hall. This location is easily accessible to most municipalities (quick access to Route 15), houses ideal training facilities, and is reasonably priced. In addition, the LCPC will continue to offer free lunches for the full-day training sessions in addition to providing morning refreshments that have previously been offered.

Another focus of future opportunities are the LTAP Technical Assistance visits. Currently, the Williamsport MPO has one Technical Assistance field visit scheduled for the 2019-2020 LTAP program. The Williamsport MPO staff will continue to promote the Technical Assistance program and field visits at all LTAP training sessions, upcoming township and county conventions, and other events. Additionally, we have begun discussions with the Pennsylvania College of Technology to determine if there is an opportunity for the Williamsport MPO and the Pennsylvania College of Technology to offer equipment operator courses to Lycoming County municipalities.

### ***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. 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:** Wednesday, August 22, 2018

**TIME:** 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM

**PLACE:** Woodward Township Fire Hall, Lycoming County, PA  
4147 North Route 220 Highway  
Linden, PA 17744

<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	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.

Each Lycoming County municipality that attends will receive an extra \$50 in Liquid Fuels Funding per person – per course in their yearly County allocation.

**TO REGISTER, CALL JANE MAGYAR NO LATER THAN AUGUST 9, 2018 AT (570) 320-2130 OR VISIT THE LTAP WEBSITE AT [www.ltap.state.pa.us](http://www.ltap.state.pa.us)**