

Williamsport Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization

WILLIAMSPORT AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY MPO

2019-2020 LOCAL TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ANNUAL
REPORT

Table of Contents

Williamsport MPO 2019-2020 LTAP Annual Report.....	3
MISSION STATEMENT	3
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	3
PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS	4
FY 2019-2020 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS	7
LTAP Municipal Training Needs Survey	7
LTAP Course Offerings	7
Communication / Marketing	8
BUDGET EXPENDITURES	10
<i>Quarterly Budget Expenditures for LTAP Task (VII-A)</i>	10
PROGRAM SUCCESS STORIES	11
Diversity of Course Offerings.....	11
High Participation across Municipalities	12
MAJOR MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES 2020 & BEYOND	12
Achieve Full LTAP Participation by Lycoming Co. Municipalities & Neighboring RPO's	12
Technical Assistance.....	13
ATTACHMENT A LTAP COURSE ANNOUCEMENT FLYER.....	15

Williamsport MPO 2019-2020 LTAP Annual Report

Name:	Sal Vitko	E-mail:	svitko@lyco.org
Agency:	Lycoming County Department of Planning & Community Development	Phone:	(570) 320-2140
		Fax:	(570) 320-2135
Address:	48 West Third Street Williamsport, PA 17701		

MISSION STATEMENT

The Lycoming County Department of Planning & Community Development (PCD) proposes to collaborate with PennDOT during 2019-2020 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

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a planning body composed of elected and appointed officials representing local, state, and federal governments or other agencies having an interest or responsibility in local transportation systems. The MPO is responsible for creating a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). An MPO can be a regional, multicounty organization or a single county. The Williamsport Area Transportation Study (WATS) is the single county MPO covering Lycoming County. The role of the WATS MPO is to develop transportation policies, programs, and projects that move people and goods in a safe, efficient manner, promote economic development, protect the environment, and preserve Lycoming County's outstanding quality of life.

The Lycoming County Department of Planning & Community Development 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 LRTP and the TIP so we work closely with municipalities in the identification and prioritization of transportation capital improvement project needs within Lycoming County.

This is the 15th 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 2018-2020 WATS UPWP. 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.

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 Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act compliance requirements and has worked with municipalities and other stakeholder organizations to develop the FFY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which was adopted by the MPO on June 15, 2020. 61 highway and bridge transportation projects valued at an estimated \$60 million are now programmed on the TIP. The LRTP and TIP emphasize system preservation with a focus on correcting poor condition bridges. LTAP courses and technical assistance can help us implement the MPO LRTP 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 in 2017, the Lycoming County Commissioners 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 Department of Planning & Community Development 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. With the COVID-19 public health emergency and Governor Wolf's Stay-at-Home guidance the 2019-2020 LTAP program faced significant challenges. The PCD staff, working with PSATS and LTAP, was able to convert a number of, typically "in-person" courses, to a virtual format. Currently the PCD staff is planning to resume in-person courses for fall 2020.
3. The County, utilizing LTAP supplemental funding completed the Lycoming County Small Bridge Inventory Pilot program. The pilot program demonstrated the general lack of awareness 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 by Lycoming County, identified 104 such structures.
4. Using the data obtained through the Small Bridge Inventory Pilot program, the County, working with PennDOT Engineering District 3-0 and local municipal bridge owners has developed a local bridge bundling program to begin to repair or replace 17 poor condition locally owned bridges (a \$7 million local investment). The Lycoming County Bridge Bundling RFP was issued in January 2020. PCD staff received nine (9) proposals from engineering firms for the Bridge Bundling project. After interviewing a number of the firms, the PCD staff extended an offer to Bassett Engineering, Inc. for the bridge bundling project. The Lycoming County Commissioners approved the contract

with Bassett Engineering on June 13, 2020. Work on the Lycoming County Bridge Bundling project began July 2020. The Bridge Bundling program will have a significant impact on addressing Lycoming County's poor condition locally owned bridge backlog. This project would not have been possible without the assistance of LTAP supplemental funds.

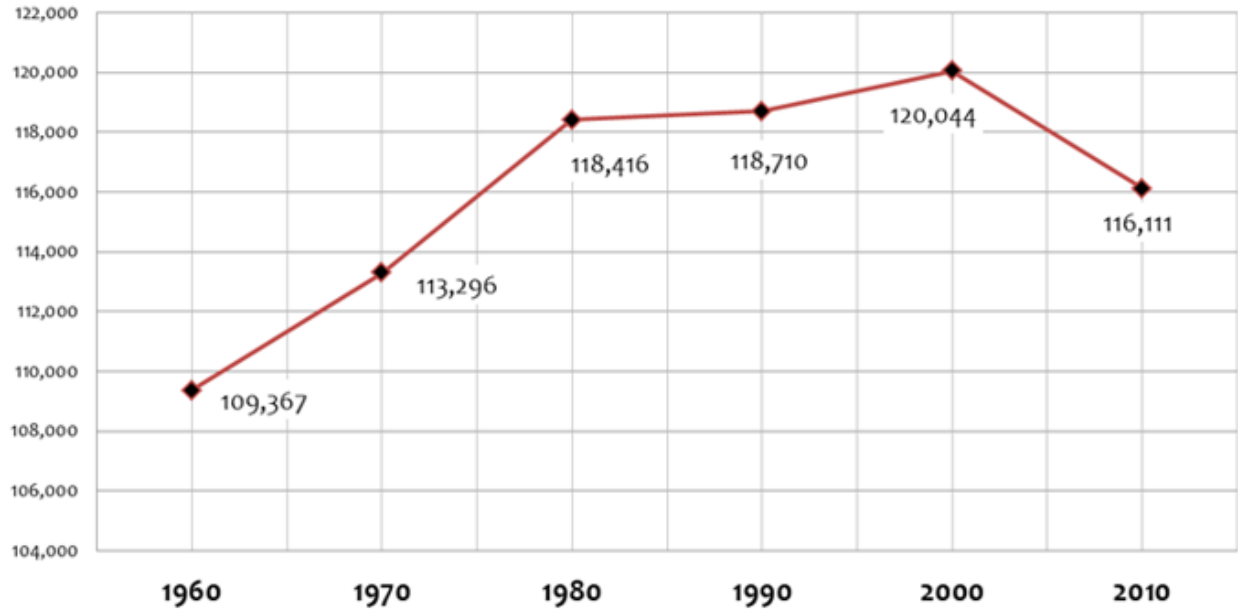
5. In addition, the County and PennDOT are collaborating to institute an effective preventative maintenance program for all bridge structures in order to reduce the number of poor condition bridges and to avoid other bridges from degrading to a poor overall condition rating in the future. The LTAP Bridge Maintenance and Inspection course will be an essential tool in this regard (the County had to reschedule the course due to COVID-19 orders and expects to hold the course in fall 2020). Certain other low volume local bridges are also being targeted for closure and removal.
6. 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.
7. 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
2019-2020	3	82	82	27
15 Year Total	103	2,136	1,685	16.5

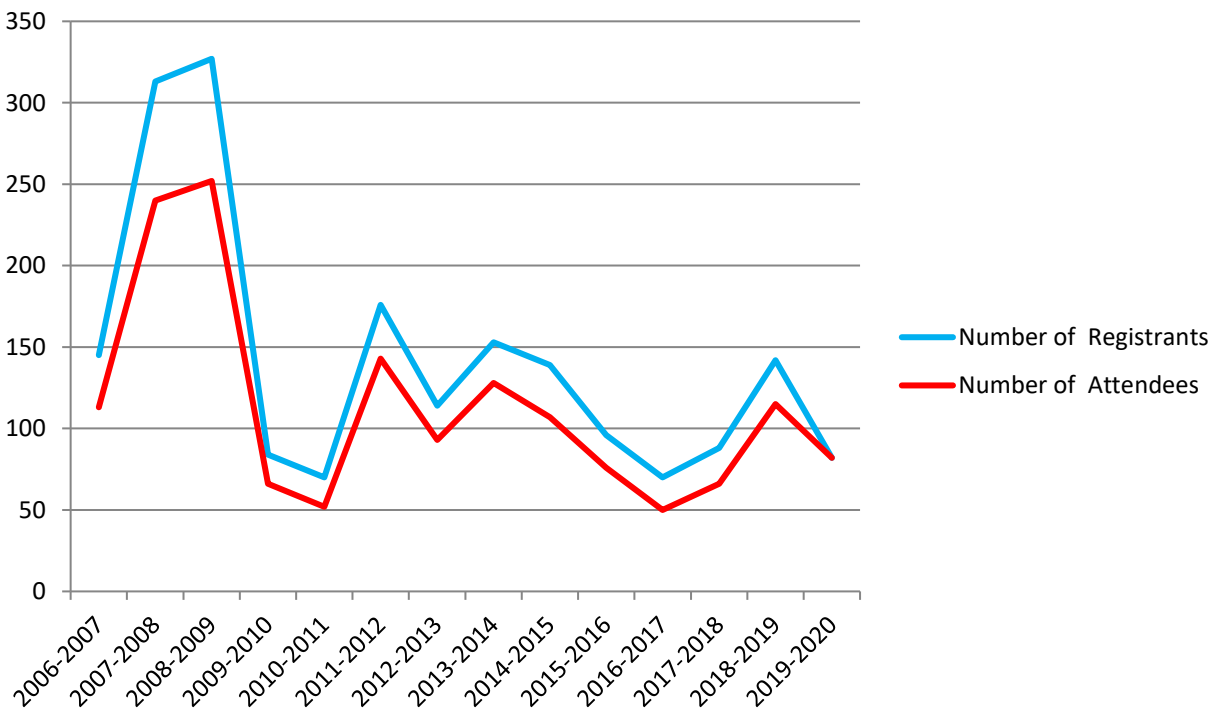
Due to some staffing changes during the 2019-2020 LTAP program period, the PCD held three (3) LTAP courses in the fall of 2019. The PCD staff scheduled six (6) LTAP courses for the 2020-2021 LTAP program. However, due to Governor Wolf's emergency orders regarding COVID-19 and the mandatory shutdown, the PCD was forced to cancel the three (3) spring 2020 courses. The PCD staff worked with PennDOT to offer online courses, webinars, and other remote training opportunities. The 2019-2020 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.

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.

Lycoming County Population

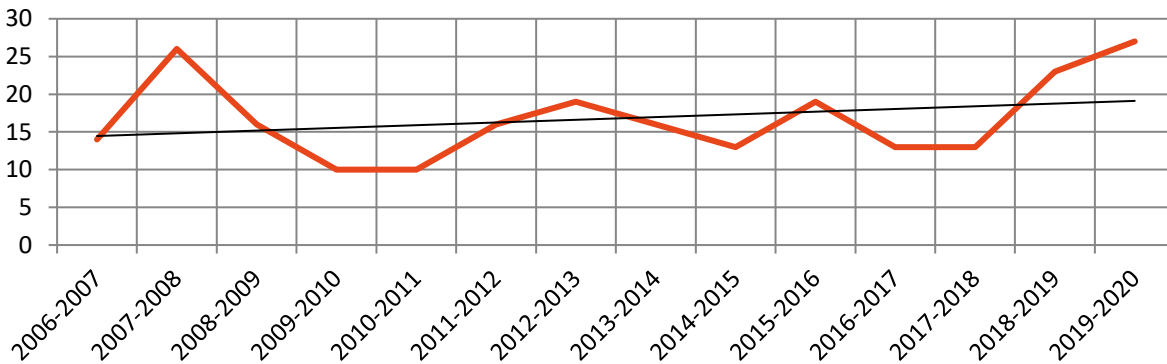


Overall registration and attendance levels fluctuated widely over the past 15 years.



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

Average Number of Attendees Per Course



As WATS plans our LTAP 2020-2021 program 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, PCD will continue to pursue innovative ways to boost registration and attendance.

FY 2019-2020 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

This section of the annual report provides a summary of the key outreach activities the PCD 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 2019-2020 LTAP program year, PCD Staff continued issuance of a two page simplified course survey in October 2019. High priority municipal request based responses to this recent survey were used to schedule the courses in an attempt to increase attendance levels. As with past surveys there has been no clear consensus on favored courses. With a limited pool of potential course attendees, and with no course(s) 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 2019-2020 LTAP courses that were offered and held within Lycoming County.

- Three LTAP classroom style courses were held through the direct assistance of the Lycoming County Department of Planning & Community Development / Williamsport MPO in Lycoming County during FY 2019-2020. PCD 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.

- 82 individuals registered for classes during FY 2019-2020.
- 82 individuals actually attended classes and received training during FY 2019-2020.
- On average, there were approximately 27 attendees per session.
- All of the LTAP courses were held at the Old Lycoming Twp. Volunteer Fire Dept. Social Hall, which is centrally located and easily accessible to most municipalities and houses ideal training facilities at a reasonable cost.

Course Name	Date Held	Attendees
Roadside Vegetation Control	<i>September 16, 2019</i>	<i>19</i>
Pavement Preventative Maintenance	<i>October 8, 2019</i>	<i>29</i>
Salt & Snow Management	<i>November 12, 2019</i>	<i>34</i>

Communication / Marketing

The PCD 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 PCD 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](#). The PCD 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 PCD staff made marketing presentations about the LTAP Program at the fall 2019 Lycoming County Association of Township Officials Conventions on October 23, 2019 (the May 2020 meeting was postponed due to COVID-19) to promote awareness of the overall benefits of LTAP and highlight upcoming courses to municipal officials.

Unfortunately, due to Governor Wolf's COVID-19 mandatory shutdown order the PCD staff was unable to attend the West Branch Council of Governments Equipment Show on May 20, 2020, due to the Equipment Show being cancelled. In previous years, PCD staff were able to connect with approximately 400-450 municipal attendees throughout the region.

The Lycoming County Department of Planning & Community Development continued working partnerships with many organizations to market the LTAP Program in 2019-2020 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
- Old Lycoming Township Volunteer Fire Company

- Lycoming County municipalities
- Local News Media

In 2019, the PCD 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 2020. 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 [WATS MPO website](#).



While the 2019-2020 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 2020 liquid fuel allotment bonuses based on this new incentive program.

Municipality	2019 TOTAL LTAP COURSE ATTENDEES	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Total Benefit Earned
Cascade Twp.	2			2	\$100
City of Williamsport	21		9	12	\$1050
Clinton Twp.	1		1		\$50
Cogan House Twp.	3			3	\$150
Hepburn Twp.	1			1	\$50
Hughesville Borough	1			1	\$50
Lewis Twp.	2	2			\$100
Limestone Twp.	1			1	\$50
McNett Twp.	1	1			\$50
Montoursville Borough	3		3		\$150
Muncy Borough	8	3	2	3	\$400
Old Lycoming Twp.	18	6	6	6	\$900
Piatt Twp.	6	3	3		\$300
Watson Twp.	2	2			\$100
Wolf Twp.	6		3	3	\$300
2019-2020 Totals	76	17	27	32	\$3,800

The total amount of additional liquid fuels funds received by Lycoming County municipalities participating in the incentive program in 2019-2020 was \$3,800.00.

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 Department of Planning & Community Development 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, 2019-September 30, 2019)

\$ 4,942.61

- Prepared 2018-2019 WATS LTAP Annual Report
- Held an LTAP Technical Assistance visit with Picture Rocks Borough in August 2019
- Held an LTAP Roadside Vegetation Control course in September 2019
- Attended the PennDOT LTAP Planning Partners Annual Meeting in Hampden Twp., PA on September 25, 2019
- PCD staff began to coordinate with PSATS on scheduling 2019-2020 LTAP courses

*Task VII-A Second Quarter Expenditures**(October 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019)*

\$ 2,508.40

- Held an LTAP Pavement Preventative Maintenance Course in October 2019
- Held an LTAP Salt & Snow Management courses in November 2019
- PCD staff finalized arrangements for the LTAP 2020-2021 courses with the host facility
- PCD staff finalized plans to hold six (6) LTAP courses with PSATS for the 2020-2021 program

*Task VII-A Third Quarter Expenditures**(January 1, 2020- March 31, 2020)*

\$ 1,051.73

- Prepared marketing materials and mailers for upcoming 2020 LTAP classes
- Preliminary arrangements for class facilities
- Held an LTAP Technical Assistance visit with Muncy Borough in March 2020
- Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, many of the spring 2020 LTAP courses were either cancelled or converted to a virtual format. PCD staff worked with PSATS and local municipalities to offer as many virtual courses and the virtual Drop-In sessions as possible

*Task VII-A Fourth Quarter Expenditures**(April 1, 2020 – June 30, 2020)*

\$6,115.31

- Began discussion with Old Lycoming Township Fire Hall for hosting facilities for calendar year 2020-2021 LTAP courses
- Coordinated with PSATS to promote virtual LTAP courses in June 2020
- Assisted municipalities in registering for LTAP virtual courses
- Conducted field visit in Clinton Twp. for drainage issues and schedule phone LTAP Technical Assistance
- Received approval from PennDOT to utilize LTAP funding for future LTAP course promotional items for LTAP course attendees
- Coordinated with vendor for purchasing of LTAP promotional items

FY 2019-2020 WATS MPO LTAP Task Budget Summary

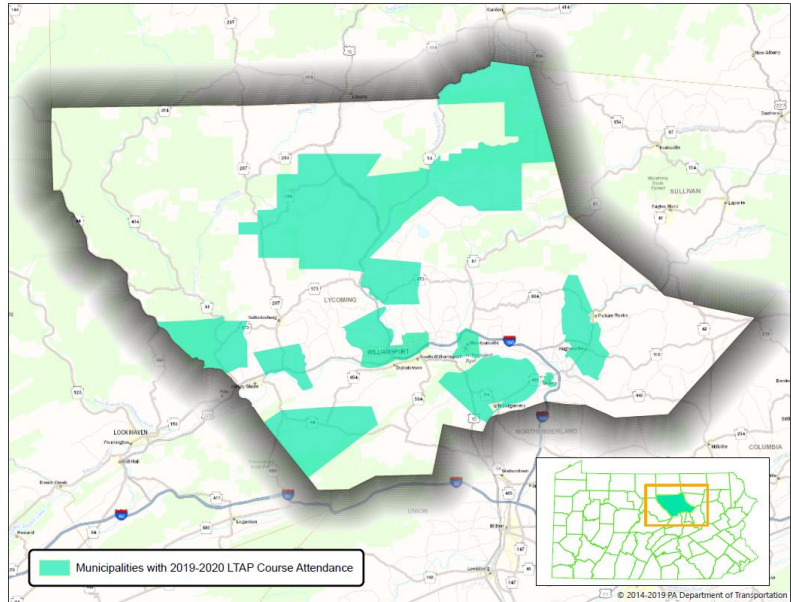
Total FY 2019-2020 Task VII-A Expenditures	\$14,618.05
Total FY 2018-2020 UPWP Task VII-A Budget	\$15,000.00
Budget Savings FY 2019-2020	\$381.95
Program Cost Per LTAP Course Attendee, FY 2019-2020	\$178.27

PROGRAM SUCCESS STORIES**Diversity of Course Offerings**

Since the PCD began its partnership with PennDOT in 2005 to market LTAP courses in Lycoming County, we have offered 103 courses with 1,685 municipal officials in attendance. These courses yielded an average of 16.5 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 28% or 15 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. The PCD staff reorganization did limit the number of LTAP courses offered in 2019-2020. However, now that the Williamsport MPO is fully staffed our goal is to offer more LTAP courses in future program years.



MAJOR MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES 2020 & BEYOND

At their November 18, 2019 public meeting, the Williamsport MPO approved the continuation of the Lycoming County Department of Planning & Community Development participation as a partner with PennDOT in the LTAP program by including a separate task once again in the FY 2020-2022 WATS MPO Unified Planning Work Program. The PCD 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 will retain the host facility location for the 2020-2021 LTAP program, 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. Throughout the COVID-19 public health emergency the host facility has been accommodating and understanding in working with the PCD staff as LTAP courses were cancelled, postponed, or converted to a virtual format. In addition, the PCD will continue to offer free lunches for the full-day training sessions in addition to providing morning refreshments that have previously been offered.

Achieve Full LTAP Participation by Lycoming Co. Municipalities & Neighboring RPO's

PCD 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.

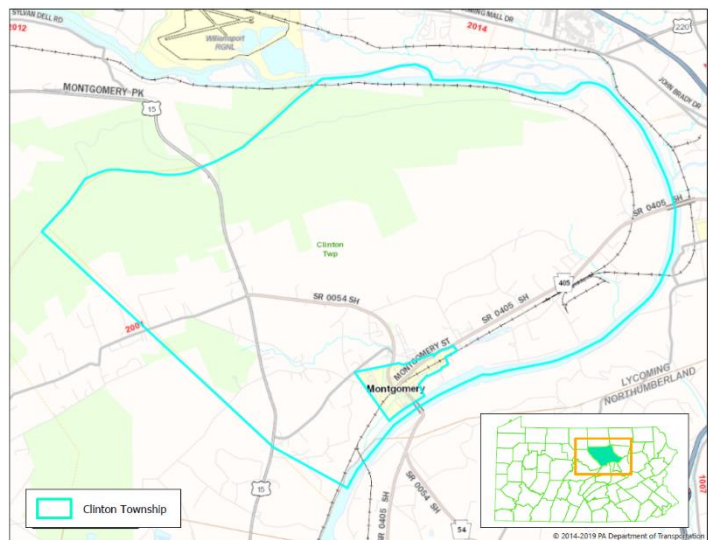
Technical Assistance

Another focus of future opportunities are the LTAP Technical Assistance visits. Municipal requests for technical assistance in Lycoming County is generally low, primarily due to the fine efforts of PennDOT District 3-0's 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 the Planning Department.

PCD Staff will continue to monitor Technical Assistance requests via the LTAP website and informational flyers targeted at Lycoming County's 52 municipalities. The PCD staff received three (3) requests for Technical Assistance visits during the 2019-2020 LTAP year.

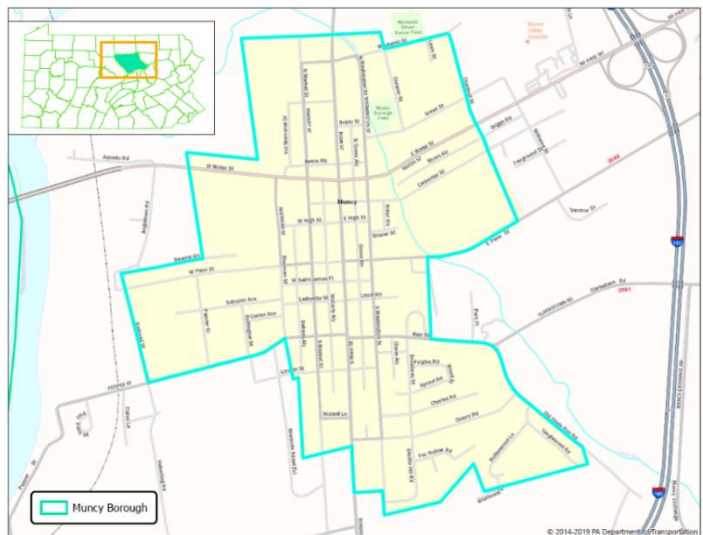
Clinton Township:

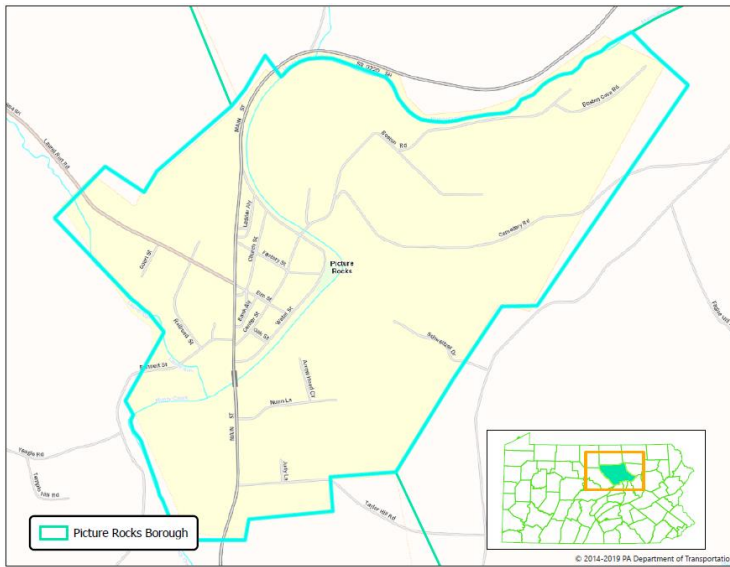
PCD staff coordinated a LTAP Technical Assistance visit in June 2020 with Clinton Township. PCD staff met with the Clinton Township Road-master to review a pipe replacement project. PCD staff coordinated with a LTAP engineer to provide a telephone Technical Assistance visit using photos and information gathered during the field visit. The LTAP engineer provided Clinton Township with a Technical Assistance Memo outlining the best method to replace the old drainage pipe and alleviate the issue. The project is scheduled to be completed in fall 2020.



Muncy Borough:

PCD staff coordinated a LTAP Technical Assistance visit in March 2020 with Muncy Borough. PCD staff and a LTAP engineer met with the Muncy Borough Manager, Borough Streets Department Staff, and Borough Council President to review drainage issues caused by dated stormwater management infrastructure on various Borough streets. The LTAP engineer provided Muncy Borough with a Technical Assistance Memo with suggested solutions to the drainage issues. Muncy Borough is pursuing funding opportunities to begin work on the project.





Picture Rocks Borough:

PCD staff coordinated a LTAP Technical Assistance visit in August 2019 with Picture Rocks Borough. PCD staff and a LTAP engineer met with the Picture Rocks Borough Council Secretary, and Borough Street Department staff to review stormwater run-off issues the Borough is facing. The LTAP engineer provided the Borough with a Technical Assistance Memo offering a variety of potential solutions to the stormwater run-off issues the Borough is facing. Picture Rocks is pursuing funding opportunities to complete the project.

The PCD staff scheduled a fourth Technical Assistance visit with Porter Township, however, due to Governor Wolf's COVID-19 mandatory shutdown order; PCD staff had to reschedule the assistance visit until fall 2020. These technical assistance visits are extremely helpful to Lycoming County municipalities, providing them with the necessary information and best practices to correct a number of maintenance issues. The Williamsport MPO staff continues to promote the Technical Assistance program and field visits at all LTAP training sessions, upcoming township and county conventions, and other events.



ATTACHMENT A LTAP COURSE ANNOUNCEMENT FLYER



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



**PAVEMENT PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE
(MUNICIPAL TRAINING COURSE)**

DATE: Tuesday, October 8, 2019

TIME: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

PLACE: Old Lycoming Township Volunteer Fire Department
Social Hall, Lycoming County, PA
1600 Dewey Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

DESCRIPTION: This course will teach the proper planning and execution of two important pavement preservation techniques: Micro-Surfacing and Ultra-Thin Friction. Local government agencies will be provided information on selecting the correct treatment to the appropriate pavement at the right time to extend the useful life of roadways. The course will cover the requirements of PennDOT specifications, proper pavement selection, project planning, and operational oversight of successful projects.

This is FREE training so take advantage of it. Morning refreshments 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 September 30, 2019 AT (570) 320-2130 OR VISIT THE LTAP WEBSITE AT www.ltap.state.pa.us