



moving FORWARD

FALL 2019

A quarterly review of news and information about Pennsylvania local roads.

Successful Grant Writing Begins with Good Practices

by Amy Bobb, PSATS

Grants can be a windfall, an influx of cash to help tackle much-needed projects in a community. Going after a grant, however, may feel daunting to a municipality. It requires good organization and attention to detail.

If municipalities take the time to plan, prepare, and seek the help of experts when pursuing grants, they can streamline the process and increase their chance of securing needed funds.

“There is money out there,” says Mike Keith, chair of the board of supervisors of Rayne Township, Indiana County.

“Many times, local officials are intimidated by grants because they may not have the technical know-how or want to take the time to fill out the paperwork.”

That’s where your PennDOT Municipal Services representative can help, he says. His township relied on the expertise of Allen Williams, the Municipal Services supervisor at PennDOT District 10, to help obtain several Multimodal Transportation Grants from the state Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Rayne Township received a \$479,037 grant in 2017 and a \$250,000 grant in 2019 to reconstruct portions

of Tanoma Road. The township has also applied for another Multimodal Grant to pave and add drainage to another road.

Going after grant money is absolutely worth the effort, Keith says.

“It will stretch your township dollars and help to improve transportation for your residents,” he says. “Take the time to fill out the application, and use your PennDOT Municipal Services resources to assist you with the process.”

Tips for Getting Grants

Here are some other tips for writing successful grant applications:

- **Have a clearly defined project in mind.**

Know what you want to do and how much it will cost, and then look for a grant program that fits. To increase the chances of obtaining a grant, the project should have a significant impact on the community, and if it’s part of a long-range or multimunicipal plan, all the better.

“Do your homework and show that your project is part of a larger effort to improve the community,” Dan Zimmerman, manager of Warwick Township, Lancaster County, told the *Pa. Township News* last year. His township received a Multimodal Transportation Grant to tackle a large project involving several intersections and public and private partners. “The grant proposal explained that the project would manage traffic and ease congestion and was part of a long-term plan for the area.”

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Grants can help to make transportation projects more affordable for a municipality.

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Successful Grant Writing *continued from page 1*

- **Start the application early.**

Putting together a grant application doesn't happen overnight. It can take six weeks to three months to complete, and it requires information and support from many sources and stakeholders.

By starting early, you can review your draft and incorporate thoughts and ideas that you think of as you go, Williams of PennDOT District 10 says.

Take the time to read the grant application and guidelines, understand the funder's priorities, and note the instructions. If you don't understand what is required, ask questions. Find out what is most important to the agency that will be reviewing your proposal, and emphasize this in your proposal.

- **Use the application to tell your story, and be complete in your descriptions.**

"Don't be shy about describing your project," Williams says. He advises applicants to think through all modes of transportation, from business (such as timber, gas, or coal industries) and pleasure (such as biking, hiking, or horseback riding) to services (such as ambulance, school buses, mail trucks, or med-vac airlifting landing sites) and recreation (such as parks and tourist destinations).

"Tell your story the way you want them to hear it," he says.

Be persuasive but take care not to be too wordy. Write concisely and clearly, and be as specific as possible. Have someone proofread your application to avoid misspellings, grammar mistakes, and budget numbers that don't add up.

- **Think ahead when developing a cost estimate.**

When estimating costs, keep in mind that the project will likely not begin until two to three construction seasons after your application was first submitted.

"When developing a scope of work for a road rehabilitation project, you need to think about what condition the road may be in a year or two from today," Williams says.

To help defray local costs, also consider combining other funding sources into the project. Some examples include county Liquid Fuels Funding, Marcellus Legacy (Act 13) dollars, county Low-Volume and Dirt and Gravel Roads funding, impact fee money from local developers, and contributions from corporations and businesses.

- **Don't be afraid to ask for help.**

Before seeking the advice of a paid consultant, consider using the expertise of PennDOT Municipal Services representatives. They can help draft an application, create a narrative, and estimate costs, Williams says, and their assistance is available free of charge.

"Municipal Services representatives will know of similar projects, the hot 'buzzwords' of the moment, and the types of projects that the state is focusing on," he says.

In addition, reach out to legislators and others in the community for letters of support. These endorsements can help to establish credibility, show collaboration, and display community commitment.

- **Finally, keep a positive attitude and go for it.**

Applying for grants takes time and effort, but don't let the work scare you from trying. Preparation is half the battle, so identify what you need and who can help and then get started.

"Don't think you won't get a grant," Zimmerman says. "You don't know unless you try." 🚀



PHOTO COURTESY OF PENNDOT.

BEFORE & AFTER: Rayne Township road shown at the end of phase II of the grant project (lower portion) and at the beginning of phase III before paving has begun (upper section).



PHOTO COURTESY OF RAYNE TWP.

Rayne Township in Indiana County received two grants through DCED's Multimodal Transportation Grant Program to reconstruct Tanoma Road. "The Multimodal Grant is a wonderful tool made available to municipalities to improve the quality of life across the commonwealth," says township supervisor Mike Keith.

Common Grant Sources

- PennDOT Municipal Services: penndot.gov (click on "Local Government" under the "Doing Business" tab)
- Dept. of Community and Economic Development: dced.pa.gov/programs-funding
- Dept. of Environmental Protection: dep.pa.gov (click on "Grants, Loans, and Rebates" under the "Residents" tab)
- Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources: dcnr.pa.gov (click on "Grants" under the "Communities" tab)
- Low-Volume and Dirt and Gravel Roads Program: dirtandgravel.psu.edu

Transportation Resources

Brochure Highlights Community Assistance Funding Options

Every year, PennDOT updates its community and local government assistance funding brochure to provide a list of transportation funding programs and information about each option. Municipal Services representatives at PennDOT's district offices can help municipalities and counties navigate these programs, which include Liquid Fuels Funding, Multimodal Transportation Program, Highway Turnback Program, Automatic Red Light Enforcement Program, Green Light-Go Program, Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank Loans, Agility program, winter municipal agreements, and local bridges.

PennDOT representatives can also help municipal officials apply for funds and get in touch with knowledgeable resources. In addition, they act as liaisons between PennDOT and local governments, provide technical assistance, help with yearly reports, assist with road bonding, and process road additions to the Municipal Liquid Fuel Inventory on which payments are based.

You can access PennDOT's community and local government assistance brochure, which includes contact information for the agency's district Municipal Services specialists and financial consultants, at www.penndot.gov. Go to "Local Government" under the "Doing Business" tab and click on "Community and Local Government Assistance Brochure" under the "Local Government Resources" heading. 📄

WalkWorks Aims to Expand Physical Activity in Communities

WalkWorks, developed in partnership with the state Department of Health and the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health Practice, seeks increased opportunities for physical activity in a community through safe walking routes, support of walking groups, walk-to-school programs, and local policies designed to increase safe walking.

The organization also provides mini-grants that municipalities can use to develop active transportation plans, "complete streets" policies, and "vision zero" policies. This grant money helps communities implement policy and infrastructure improvements that will optimize physically active lifestyles for residents, such as increasing active transportation (walking, biking, and public transit) and connectivity to common destinations.

To date, the boroughs of Bristol, Elizabethtown, Jersey Shore, Morrisville, New Britain, and Oakmont; the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission; and the townships of Hatfield, Lower Allen, Springettsbury, Upper Dublin, and West Earl have received funding to develop active transportation plans. The Montgomery County Planning Commission and Plumstead and Wilkins townships were awarded grants to create complete streets policies.

Recipients of this year's grants will be notified October 4. Look for another round of funding to open next summer. For more information, go to pawalkworks.com. 📄



Chamber Reps, PennDOT Discuss Best Time for Road Construction Projects in Poconos

Used with permission from Blue Ridge Communications TV 13*

Sometimes it seems PennDOT road projects happen during the worst times around holidays or special events. PennDOT officials recently met with members from several Pocono-area chambers of commerce to open the line of communication.

Chamber members from the counties of Carbon, Monroe, and Pike met with PennDOT designers from the same counties to talk about how to better plan construction in an area reliant on tourism.

"It's critical because we have 27.7 million people traveling into our four-county destination each year," says Chris Barrett from the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau.

Barrett says PennDOT construction in the summer months sometimes will happen during festival or holiday weekends. Meeting with community members is part of a new initiative called PennDOT Connects, and PennDOT is aiming to meet with more than local elected officials.

"Anything that we can do to help facilitate that process and make it easier for them by telling them when large events are so they can stop work on roadways will make it easy not only for our guests, but also for folks who are local," Barrett says.

It's critical because we have 27.7 million people traveling into our four-county destination each year.

Tamara Chant from the Pike County Chamber of Commerce says all the chambers at the table recently underwent new leadership, which could help as PennDOT is becoming open to listening to more community and business leaders.

"It's a very new interesting and new group. I believe we have lobbying power," Chant says. "Bringing our chambers together, we all communicate together; we all work together."

She thinks it's vital to let commerce chambers weigh in on the construction project conversation because they're the connector between government and business.

"Chambers really make that link between the county, the supervisors, and the individual businesses," she says.

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Agility Program Encourages State and Locals to Work Together to Improve Roads

Maintaining Pennsylvania's large road network poses significant challenges for both state and local governments. PennDOT's decades-long Agility program forges relationships with local partners to extend transportation benefits to the traveling public.

The program began in 1996 with a pilot service-sharing project among PennDOT's District 1; the cities of Meadville, Franklin and Oil City; Crawford, West Mead, and Vernon townships in Crawford County; and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). PennDOT painted traffic lines on local streets while municipal crews did mowing, cutting, cleaning, and other services on state highways.

The initial savings amounted to about \$25,000. Within five years, the program was in place in all 11 PennDOT engineering districts. Since then, the program has attracted more than 3,000 partners.

More important, Agility opened the door to ongoing task sharing that helps PennDOT and local governments stretch taxpayers' resources and overcome the jurisdictional boundaries that sometimes can impede the delivery of seamless service to Pennsylvania drivers.

PennDOT is responsible for nearly 40,000 miles of roads, while local governments manage more than 78,000 miles of roads.

'Neighbors Helping Neighbors'

"Agility agreements are like neighbors helping neighbors," says Joe Saxe, PennDOT's assistant highway maintenance manager in Bradford County. "The work that you agree on doing for each other needs to make sense and help each other out."

Saxe notes that his unit has done seal coating, paving, crack sealing, bridge repairs, and center-line painting in return for mowing, sweeping, snow removal, bridge deck flushing, storage for out-of-season equipment, and facilities for staff training.

"Agility agreements can be a very useful tool for PennDOT and other municipalities to work together to come up with a win-win work plan to help each other out," Saxe says. "We here at Bradford County PennDOT have had a lot of success stories with the Agility program."

Stanley Sterling, roadmaster and supervisor in South Creek Township, Bradford County, echoes Saxe's sentiments. The township's




Agility agreement with PennDOT exchanges winter maintenance that the township does on state roads in return for stone and chip paving on local roads.

"The township does not have the equipment or manpower to perform the stone and chip projects at a reasonable cost," Sterling says. "This program has enabled us to stone and chip roads that would otherwise revert to dirt roads."

The program also allows critical relationships to develop between PennDOT and local governments. Working together, both entities are in better position to deliver services that drivers demand.

"We at PennDOT are committed to adhering to Gov. Tom Wolf's promise of a government that works, and the Agility program is one way PennDOT lives up to that goal," Secretary of Transportation Leslie S. Richards says. "We welcome other municipalities and counties to join with us to make Agility the ongoing success that makes a difference for the people of Pennsylvania."

For information about partnering with PennDOT on Agility projects, please email PDAGILITY@pa.gov or go to penndot.gov and click on "Local Government" under the "Doing Business" tab. 

When Athens Township in Bradford County wanted to replace purlins under a steel bridge, it required welders, which the township did not have. Through an Agility agreement, PennDOT supplied the welders and equipment, and in exchange, the township plowed sections of two PennDOT roads. (Photos courtesy of Athens Township.)



STIC Spotlight Hot Pour Mastics: Latest Innovation to Seal Wider Cracks

Hot pour mastics, a new product used to repair wider and deeper pavement cracks and prevent potholes from forming, was showcased during a demonstration in July hosted by the State Transportation Innovation Council (STIC). The demonstration, which featured four vendors, is the latest example of how STIC, a partnership among PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and other public- and private-sector partners, continuously markets innovations to transportation stakeholders.

Preventing Potholes

Hot pour mastics, the next step after crack sealing, is used for wider and deeper cracks, says Stacey Cleary, executive director of the Pennsylvania Association of Asphalt Material Applicators, who notes that many states have adopted the use of the material.

"This material is designed to fill holes two inches or bigger and go deeper than routine crack sealing," she says. "It helps seal cracks and prevent water from getting in."

This sort of maintenance activity helps head off pothole formation, Cleary says, and can be used to smooth out joints between bridge decks and adjacent pavements.

"While it is not familiar to PennDOT, we know that it works," she says.

One of the benefits of the new material is that it stays

flexible even at lower temperatures so long-lasting fixes can be completed during winter and spring. In addition to providing an improved ride for motorists, the material helps to protect and preserve pavement surfaces.

"It is a preservation technology," Cleary says.

Municipal Reaction

Four vendors demonstrated their hot pour mastics products for the municipal officials attending the showcase, as well as representatives of PennDOT, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, the Federal Highway Administration, and STIC. In addition to Crafcoc, which already has approval and is listed in PennDOT's Bulletin 15, the other vendors were Fibrecrete Preservation Technologies of North Carolina, Right/Pointe LLC of Pennsylvania, and Maxwell Products of Utah.

The municipal officials who came to the demonstration hoped to learn more about the products and their benefits. Marc Woerner, manager of West Manheim Township in York County, says he is always looking for cost-effective ways to improve roads. He applauded PennDOT for providing the opportunity for municipalities to come out and see the latest innovations.

"We have about 8,500 residents in the southwest corner

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Vendors show the benefits of hot pour mastics at a STIC-sponsored demonstration in a parking lot near the PennDOT Materials Testing Laboratory in Harrisburg.



STIC Spotlight

Hot Pour Mastics *continued from page 5*

of York County," he says. "As township manager, I am responsible for bringing recommendations to the board, so they can make decisions."

While the costs of building and maintaining a local road network continue to grow, Woerner notes that maintenance is still cheaper than total road reconstruction.

"If we can find a product here that will match our needs to maintenance, that's a large improvement and will hopefully cut our costs in the long run," he says.

Harrisburg City councilmember Dave Madsen, who is also chair of the council's Community and Economic Development Committee, attended the session to "look and learn."

"We have a lot of potholes and cracks," he says. "It's a major concern."

He describes the dilemma that Harrisburg faces as host to the state capitol complex. While the city's population doubles during a workday because of the capitol, half of the property in the city is owned by the state government and not taxable. At the same time, the city has a 30% poverty rate.

With the pressure that commuters put on the city's infrastructure, Madsen is particularly interested in pursuing a partnership with PennDOT to "explore new products and technology as a cost-effective way to fix and improve roads, prolong their usable life, and not put the burden of preventable roadway reconstruction projects on taxpayers."

The demonstrations for the hot pour mastics impressed him.

"It was beneficial," he says. "I'm excited to further explore these products and their potential use in Harrisburg."

Taking it Statewide

PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Highway Administration George McAuley is looking forward to seeing this latest

STIC innovation deployed throughout the state.

"We brought it to Pennsylvania through the State Transportation Innovation Council," he says.

While the hot pour mastics product that Crafcro manufactures has been approved for use in the state, applications from the other vendors are still under review. The STIC Maintenance Technical Advisory Group is working to secure the required approvals by the end of the year, says Matt Briggs, chief of PennDOT's New Products and Innovations Section, noting the challenge has been to identify the specifications for the materials.


PennDOT District 5 Executive Mike Rebert, who represents the region around Allentown, believes that the new materials could be used to deal with a tough statewide issue — longitudinal cracks on expressways.

"This is something we have struggled with for years," he says.

At a STIC meeting immediately following the demonstration, McAuley applauded the practical benefits of the demonstration.

"It was great to not only think about new products, but to see how they are deployed," he says. He suggested that PennDOT LTAP provide training about hot pour mastics and their use to local officials.

"It is critical to understand what the products will do so we don't use them in the wrong place," he says.

More information on the Pennsylvania STIC can be found at penndot.gov/STIC. 



State Transportation Innovation Council (STIC)

(717) 772-4664 RA-pdPennDOTSTIC@pa.gov

www.penndot.gov/about-us/PennDOT2020

PennDOT Connects *continued from page 3*

She also states that during these networking opportunities, they might be able to meet those in charge of public and private development projects in hopes of speeding up processes that sometimes take years.

Watch the news video about this story at www.brctv13.com/news/local-news/23918-penn-dot-meets-with-three-chambers-of-commerce-to-talk-construction-timing. 

**NOTE: This article was lightly edited for clarity and style.*

PennDOT Connects is an initiative launched by the agency in 2017 to involve municipalities early in the transportation planning process and improve transportation systems statewide. The program encourages PennDOT district personnel to work with regional planning partners and communities to integrate land use, development, and transportation more effectively into local projects. PennDOT Connects Municipal Support offers free assistance and technical expertise to municipalities. Learn more at paconnects.org.

Upcoming 2019 Classes

To Register:
PHONE: 1-800-FOR-LTAP (367-5827)
WEBSITE: www.ltap.state.pa.us

This represents some of our scheduled courses. Look for updates on the website.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

November 21 – Allegheny County

Bridge Maintenance & Inspection

November 18 – Cumberland County

Drainage: The Key to Roads That Last

October 15 – Dauphin County
November 21 – York County

Equipment & Worker Safety

October 15 – Clearfield County
November 7 – York County

Erosion and Sediment Control

December 10 – Cumberland County

Full-Depth Reclamation

October 1 – Luzerne County
October 3 – Mercer County

Local Roads Safety Plans

October 31 – York County

Managing Utility Cuts

October 2 – Monroe County
October 9 – Carbon County

Pavement Markings: Applications and Maintenance

October 23 – Berks County

Pavement Preventative Maintenance

October 8 – Lycoming County
October 8 – Chester County

Posting and Bonding of Local Roads

November 13 – Juniata County

Project Oversight

October 8 – Monroe County
October 10 – Centre County
October 17 – Erie County
November 19 – York County

Risk Management Strategies

October 9 – Montgomery County
November 6 – Montgomery County

Road Safety Audit

November 14 – Crawford County

Safe Driver

October 3 – Union County
October 15 – Allegheny County
October 29 – York County
November 14 – Indiana County

Salt and Snow Management

October 1 – Lehigh County
October 3 – Cambria County
October 3 – Cumberland County
October 8 – Chester County
October 10 – Pike County
October 15 – Lackawanna County
October 16 – Schuylkill County
October 17 – Allegheny County
October 22 – Venango County
October 23 – Crawford County
November 12 – Lycoming County
November 18 – Northumberland County
November 14 – Berks County

Sign and Safety Features for Bridges/Culverts

October 22 – Lehigh County

Speed Limits and Speed Management

October 2 – Butler County
October 2 – Somerset County
October 24 – Potter County

Stop Signs and Intersection Traffic Control

December 18 – Montgomery County

Stormwater Facility Operation and Maintenance

October 16 – York County
November 8 – Lehigh County

Work Zone (Temporary) Traffic Control

November 7 – Schuylkill County

Congratulations to the following Roads Scholar I recipients

(Certified between May 1 and July 31, 2019)

- Jeremy N. Garl, Muhlenberg Twp., Berks Co.
- Matt McGough, Reading City, Berks Co.
- Jeffrey D. Simpson, East Marlborough Twp., Chester Co.
- Ken Brinckman, New Hanover Twp., Montgomery Co.
- Julio Guzman, Philadelphia City, Philadelphia Co.

Congratulations to the following Roads Scholar II recipients

(Certified between May 1 and July 31, 2019)

- Nate Hughes, London Grove Twp., Chester Co.

Roads Scholars, Share the News! LTAP has a press release you can modify and use to announce your accomplishment to your local media. To obtain a copy of the release, go to www.ltap.state.pa.us and look for the release under "Roads Scholar Program."

Become trained as a Roads Scholar... and be a valuable part of your municipality's team

Through the Roads Scholar Program, municipal employees and officials are trained by LTAP's professional team in the latest road-related technologies and innovations and receive recognition as a certified Roads Scholar.

The Roads Scholar Program consists of two designations—Roads Scholar I and Roads Scholar II—and provides a professional certification to municipal employees and officials who attend a certain number of LTAP courses within a three-year period (10 courses for Roads Scholar I and 8 for Roads Scholar II). During these courses, participants are educated on up-to-date maintenance and safety topics so that they become even more valuable members of their municipal team.

Courses eligible for Roads Scholar credit are conducted at convenient locations throughout the commonwealth. To learn more, go to www.ltap.state.pa.us and click on "Roads Scholar Program."

Use your CPR training as class credit toward your Roads Scholar designation

Successful completion of an approved CPR training course accepted by your employer or the Pennsylvania Department of Health earns you one workshop credit toward Roads Scholar certification. A copy of a completion certificate must be forwarded to the LTAP office in Harrisburg within the three-year training window.

Check Out These Upcoming LTAP Webinars

Each of the following LTAP webinars will be repeated on two consecutive days. Registration is free and will open 30 days prior to the webinar; email notifications will be sent. Register at www.ltap.state.pa.us (under "Webinars").

Municipal Bidding October 17 or 18, Noon

This webinar will discuss the requirements for municipalities to bid public contracts for procuring material, equipment, and services. It will review limitations on purchases, quotes, and bids and cover current exemptions from municipal bidding, including piggyback contracts with the Department of General Services and COSTARS. Requirements of the state Prevailing Wage Act, such as what bidding thresholds trigger prevailing wage, will be covered. Advertising and bond requirements will also be reviewed. The webinar will include an electronic download of the Department of Community and Economic Development publication, the *Pennsylvania Purchasing Handbook*.

GRS Bridges December 12 or 13, Noon

This webinar will explore geosynthetically reinforced soil (GRS) integrated bridge systems (IBS), an innovation that helps to reduce bridge construction time and cost. GRS-IBS projects can be built in weeks instead of months because they are relatively easy to construct and make use of readily available materials and equipment. A reduced construction schedule also means improved safety since there is less exposure around work zones. The webinar will discuss the development of GRS, highlight cost savings, and review construction time. Attendees will walk through the construction of a recent GRS bridge in Pennsylvania by municipal workforces.

Mark Your Calendar for the 2019 Roadway Management Conference!

October 21-23, 2019
Turf Valley Resort
Ellicott City, MD



Attendee Registration Fee

\$175 after September 20, 2019



<https://roadwaymanagementc.wixsite.com/home>



The Roadway Management Conference is an action-packed, informative, fun, and affordable conference offering something for everyone in the local roads management game. Whether you man a shovel, operate a backhoe, or work with a spreadsheet, you will find information worth your time and money at the technical sessions and outdoor demonstrations at the conference.

Find the agenda and registration here:
roadwaymanagementc.wixsite.com/home

For a behind-the-scenes look at the conference, watch a short promotional video here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4KSb5x16oc&feature=youtu.be.



Hosted by the LTAP and T2 Centers of the Mid-Atlantic region
– PA, MD, VA, WV, and DE

Missed one of LTAP webinars? Catch up online!

Previously recorded webinars are available on the LTAP website, www.ltap.state.pa.us (under "Webinars"). The following titles can be viewed there:

- **ADA Transition Plans** – Reviews development of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan (if your municipality has 50 or more employees) or self-evaluation (if you're a smaller community).
- **Curves on Local Roads: Issues and Safety Tools** – Provides an overview of the application of horizontal alignment signs for curves.
- **Crosswalks** – Examines crosswalks and the needs of pedestrians through a review of pedestrian safety data, mobility characteristics, and behaviors.
- **Speed Limits on Local Roads** – Gives the tools needed to identify speed issues, conduct appropriate speed limit studies, install signs, and determine solutions to manage speed issues.
- **Stop Signs and Intersection Traffic Control** – Focuses on stop signs at intersections and other strategies, such as pavement markings and additional signs, to enhance visibility.
- **PennDOT Pennsylvania Crash Information Tool** – Explains how to access local road crash data and how to use the data as part of traffic studies, safety studies, and development of safety plans.
- **Truck Restrictions** – Explains the recent changes to state law that have opened local roads to more potential truck traffic and explores how your municipality can respond.