



HARRISBURG AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

PLANNING STAFF OFFICE: TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
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April 24, 2009

The Honorable Tim Holden
17th Congressional District, Pennsylvania
United States House of Representatives
2417 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

***RE: U.S. Route 22 (Walnut Street)/Progress Avenue
Susquehanna Township, Dauphin County***

Dear Congressman Holden:

On behalf of the Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS), I am writing to support Susquehanna Township's request for federal transportation funding for the U.S. Route 22 (Walnut Street)/Progress Avenue intersection improvement project.

The Walnut Street/Progress Avenue intersection project is one of several key initiatives derived from the final report of the Walnut Street Corridor Redevelopment Planning Study. The study was led by a steering committee of representatives from each of the four municipalities involved (the City of Harrisburg, Lower Paxton Township, Penbrook Borough, and Susquehanna Township), the Dauphin County Commissioners, Dauphin County Department of Community and Economic Development, the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), and the state legislative delegation for the study area.

Identified as a lynchpin improvement for the Walnut Street Corridor, the proposed project would address both redevelopment and safety issues from both a redevelopment and a transportation perspective. The improvements specifically include the development of a jughandle with a continuous green T-intersection that will raise the level of service in that area to a level A, as defined by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). This cost-effective design was the preferred alternative of the citizen stakeholder group that was associated with the Walnut Street Corridor Redevelopment Planning Study.

HATS is designated by state and federal law as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry Counties, along with a small portion of Lebanon County. HATS is responsible for regional transportation planning and programming, which includes preparing the region's long-range transportation plan and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in accordance with federal and state regulations. The HATS 2030 Regional Transportation Plan identifies overall strategies and individual projects to improve traffic operations and pedestrian safety. The Walnut Street/Progress Avenue intersection improvement is included as part of the fiscally-constrained HATS 2030 Regional Transportation Plan.

As stipulated in federal regulations, projects cannot be programmed on the TIP unless they are consistent with the MPO's long-range planning documents and have secured all of the funding necessary for completion. Based on Susquehanna Township's commitment to work with local and state officials to successfully secure the required nonfederal share of the project, the Walnut Street/Progress Avenue intersection improvement would be eligible for inclusion on the HATS TIP once the Township's federal request is fulfilled.

We sincerely encourage your favorable consideration of this project during future dialogue on transportation funding. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Honorable Mark K. Keller
PA House of Representatives
Chairman, Coordinating Committee
Harrisburg Area Transportation Study