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Why?

It was another step in the development of the *Montrose Connectivity Plan*.



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Something to think about on your walk - Pedestrian Crashes

There were a few surprises in a new first-of-its-kind pedestrian analysis released by AMATS in late March. The three-year report spans 2010 through 2012 and is a comprehensive look by the agency at crashes involving pedestrians in the Greater Akron area. As the area's transportation planning agency, AMATS regularly prepares vehicle crash reports - but with increased public interest in alternative forms of transportation such as walking - agency officials felt that the time was right to take a close look at pedestrian-related crashes.

Among the key findings of the analysis are:

- Akron tops the list of communities with the most pedestrian-related crashes with Kent coming in second.
- There were 14 fatalities from pedestrian-related crashes between 2010 and 2012.
- Pedestrian-related crashes account for less than 1 percent of all area crashes, but account for over 10 percent of fatalities.
- Eighty-six percent of pedestrian-related crashes result in an injury to the pedestrian with 31 percent of those resulting in an incapacitating injury.
- Vehicle drivers were faulted in 47 percent of pedestrian-related crashes in the Greater Akron area while pedestrians were faulted in 24 percent. (The fault was undetermined in 19 percent of such crashes.)
- People between the ages of 11-20 account for 28 percent of the area's pedestrian-related crashes while people between the ages of 21-30 account for 15 percent.

AMATS Engineer Dave Pulay says that the pedestrian analysis comes on the heels of a similar three-year bike crash report released by the agency late last year. While bike and pedestrian analyses are relatively new pursuits for the agency, they are fast becoming a significant resource of information for the Greater Akron area.

"As more communities are incorporating sidewalks and bike lanes into their improvement projects, this data will play an increasingly prominent role in the area's transportation planning," Pulay predicts. The agency and its member communities will use this and future analyses to weigh the awarding of funds for projects to reduce pedestrian crashes such as crosswalks, mid-block crossings and improved signage.

Copies of the *Pedestrian Related Traffic Crashes 2010-2012* analysis and a [map](#) are available at amatsplanning.org.



Walking toward better connections in Montrose

AMATS, Bath and Copley townships and METRO hosted a May 15 community meeting at the Acme Fresh Market in Montrose as part of their efforts to create the *Montrose Connectivity Plan*. The meeting was an opportunity for those who live, work, shop and dine in the Montrose area to share their ideas on how to improve connectivity within one of the Greater Akron area's largest retail districts.

"We were delighted with the level of turnout for this meeting. We had 37 attendees and constructive input from them," says Krista Beniston, AMATS planning coordinator.

During the course of the meeting, the agency presented the results of its recently completed *Building a Better Montrose* survey, which generated nearly 740 responses. The survey revealed that slightly more than 98 percent of respondents use their cars to visit Montrose. Meeting attendees had some ideas on how to change that situation with suggestions such as the construction of pedestrian and bicycle bridges, sidewalks along state Route 18, new bike lanes, improved crosswalks, signal improvements, and new streetscaping.

The meeting was another step in the development of the *Montrose Connectivity Plan*. Last May, the agency awarded Bath and Copley townships a \$50,000 grant from its Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program. The plan will identify pedestrian, bicycle, public transportation and traffic improvements throughout the Montrose area and offer ideas as to how to enhance the area as a destination and experience.



MEETING IN MONTROSE: Michelle Johnson of EDG, standing at right, describes the primary study area of the *Montrose Connectivity Plan*.



JANE'S WALK COMES TO AKRON: AMATS and the Downtown Akron Partnership (DAP) hosted Akron's first Jane's Walk events on May 3, above and at right. Jane's Walk was created to celebrate the life of urban activist, Jane Jacobs, and provides opportunities for people to engage in city planning by meeting and exploring cities through short walking tours. AMATS and DAP hosted a Towpath Walk, a Downtown History Walk and an Arts & Culture Walk.



Community Focus: Northfield

Community Focus presents information about communities within the Greater Akron area. The village of Northfield has been a member of the AMATS Policy Committee since 1970.

Founded – 1935

Population – 3,677 (2010 U.S. Census Bureau) **Area** – 1.08 square miles

Policy Committee Member – Mayor Jesse J. Nehez



History – Olde Northfield Township was the original name of the area that now encompasses the communities of Macedonia, Northfield Village, Northfield Center Township, and Sagamore Hills. It started as 27 square miles in the northeast corner of Portage County, before Summit County was established. Isaac Bacon of Massachusetts, the first settler, came by covered wagon and arrived with his family in 1807 at their new homestead on the north side of Valley View Road west of Boyden Road. The township was later separated into four communities. In 1912, Olde Northfield evolved from a township to a village, followed by the separation and creation of Sagamore Hills Township in 1932. In 1935, Northfield Center Township separated from the village.

Transportation Challenges – Northfield is bisected east/west by its only arterial roadway, state Route 8 (Northfield Road), which is a limited-access highway between the southern corporation line of the village to Ledge Road. State Route 8 does not have any separate left turn lanes, except at Ledge Road. The entire area fronting along the route north of Ledge Road is commercial development. Three major collector streets - Ledge Road, Houghton Road and Sagamore Road - run east/west and connect into state Route 8.

Village Engineer Richard Wasosky says that Northfield is in a stage of revitalization due to the new Hard Rock Rocksino development at the Northfield Racetrack. Wasosky says that this \$260 million project has brought in approximately 750 additional jobs to the village and is proving to be a major traffic generator for state Route 8. With the additional tax revenue and Tax Increment Financing monies generated by the Rocksino, the village plans on making improvements to state Route 8 and other roads. Northfield has already signalized three intersections along state Route 8 in the Rocksino area and has plans for additional signalization improvements, including a new traffic signal at Houghton Road and state Route 8. Wasosky adds that major problems in providing needed left turn lanes along the route are the lack of adequate right of way and the relocation of major underground and overhead utility lines.

The village plans on reconstructing and adding sidewalks to Ledge Road in the near future to provide safe walking access from state Route 8 to Lee Eaton Elementary School. The village also plans on making improvements and milling and resurfacing Sagamore Road.

Web site. – www.northfieldvillage-oh.gov



Project Updates

The following table lists significant projects that have been awarded between Nov. 6, 2013 to May 19, 2014.

PROJECT	ESTIMATED COMPLETION	AMOUNT
Parkman Road - Bridge replacement over Eagle Creek in Windham Township.	08/19/2014	\$671,142
State Routes 43, 59 and 261 - Resurfacing and work on four bridges in Brimfield, Franklin and Ravenna townships and the cities of Kent and Ravenna.	10/15/2014	\$1,543,362
State Route 44 - Minor rehabilitation and bridge repairs, from state Route 303 to Mill Street, in Shalersville Township and Mantua Village.	10/31/2014	\$1,612,109
State Route 82 - Resurfacing and miscellaneous bridge work, from Spencer Park to Trumbull County Line, in Hiram, Mantua and Windham townships and the villages of Garrettsville and Hiram.	09/30/2014	\$2,397,372
31st Street - Widening of 31st Street, from Wooster Road to Shannon Avenue, and various signal improvements in Barberton.	08/31/2015	\$2,560,294
Akron-Cleveland Road - Bridge replacement and miscellaneous roadway work on Akron-Cleveland Road bridge spanning Metro Parks Trail in Boston Heights.	07/03/2015	\$1,749,998
Graham Road - Adding turn lanes and signal improvements, from Bath Road to state Route 8, in Stow and Cuyahoga Falls.	05/31/2015	\$6,194,269
Englewood Street - Roadway reconstruction, from Innovation Way to Massillon Road, in Akron.	05/25/2015	\$3,952,668
State Street - Resurfacing, from Wooster Road to Elmwood Avenue, in Barberton.	08/29/2014	\$338,216
Wooster Road - Resurfacing, from Taylor Road to Krancz Drive, in Barberton.	08/29/2014	\$342,326
Brecksville Road - Resurfacing and minor rehabilitation, from Interstate 77 to the Cuyahoga County Line, in the village of Richfield.	08/31/2014	\$1,041,176
State Route 8, Interstates 76 & 77, and Wilbeth Road - Repairs to various bridges, from Waterloo Road to the Central Interchange, in Akron.	09/30/2014	\$4,380,121
State Route 8 - Construction of a noise wall at Interstate 271 in Macedonia.	09/30/2014	\$5,037,872
Interstate 480 - Slide repair on I-480 near state Route 82 in Twinsburg.	08/29/2014	\$793,421

Report finds good news, bad news for Greater Akron's infrastructure

The current condition of the region's transportation infrastructure is a mix of good news and bad news, according a new report released by AMATS in early March. The report finds that Greater Akron's major roads are in better condition than those in Northeast Ohio's other metropolitan areas, but they are in slightly worse condition than others across the state.

Using information from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), AMATS finds that nearly half of the area's roads are in "good" condition, but a significant portion are in "poor" condition. Among the key findings of the report are:

- 71 of the region's 984 bridges are classified as "structurally deficient," meaning that they will require significant investment to be brought back to a state of good repair.
- The average age of a bridge in the Greater Akron area is 49 years old.
- 12 percent of the area's major roads are in "poor" condition.
- Overall, our roads and bridges are in a reasonably good state of repair, but keeping them that way will be an ongoing and costly proposition, which will consume a large proportion of our region's limited transportation funds.
- Significantly improving our bridge and pavement conditions is likely to require nearly all of our region's currently available federal and state highway dollars.
- In order to significantly improve bridge and pavement conditions, AMATS, ODOT, and local governments will need to make a concerted and coordinated effort to have road and bridge maintenance, rather than congestion relief, be the top transportation priority in our region.
- With an average age of 49, our bridges, especially, are likely to require a larger and larger share of our limited transportation funds in the coming years, simply to maintain the maintenance status quo.
- Given that our region is declining in population and that Ohio ranks 45th in population growth; and given that vehicle miles traveled and transportation revenues remain stagnant, we should avoid building additional highway capacity, and instead, "fix-it-first."



Copies of the [**AMATS: The State of Our Region's Transportation Infrastructure**](#) report and a [**summary sheet**](#) of report findings and policy conclusions are available online at amatsplanning.org.

Agency, community leaders seek state Route 8 re-designation

AMATS - acting in concert with several mayors whose communities are located along the state Route 8 corridor and the Summit County Executive and Engineer – are urging the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to consider redesignating the route as Interstate 380.

AMATS Director Jason Segedy says that the transportation planning agency initially proposed the idea in late October. The agency and community leaders sent their initial written request to ODOT Director Jerry Wray in February. The department rejected the idea in March due to costs associated with replacement signage, maintenance personnel, facilities and materials.



In mid-April, AMATS and leaders sent a second letter with proposals by the communities to defray departmental expenses by sharing routine maintenance in the short-term and working with the department toward equitable sharing of costs. The local communities would also seek methods to land local and federal funding to replace existing state route signage with the new Interstate 380 designation if granted.

Segedy notes that re-designating state Route 8 makes sense as ODOT recently upgraded the route to a limited-access, multi-lane freeway. "State Route 8 is 18 miles long and carries 120,000 vehicles per day. It's a lifeline between Akron and Cleveland and a link to four major interstates. By way of comparison, Interstate 277 in Akron is only one-quarter of its length, carries half of the traffic, and connects with two interstates, and I-277 doesn't extend beyond the city of Akron. State Route 8 does," Segedy says.

One of the oldest state routes in Ohio, state Route 8 is a ribbon of asphalt and concrete that links Akron, Cuyahoga Falls, Stow, Hudson, Boston Heights and Macedonia. It also connects those communities to Interstates 76, 77, 80 (Ohio Turnpike) and 271 and provides Summit County with easy access to Cleveland's eastern suburbs. The prominent role that state Route 8 plays in the daily lives of nearby residents and businesses is one of the reasons that mayors within the SR 8 corridor and county officials joined AMATS in seeking interstate status, according to Segedy.

Among the signatories to the agency's letters and re-designation supporters are:

- Summit County Engineer Alan Brubaker
- Hudson Mayor William Currin
- Stow Mayor Sara Drew
- Village of Boston Heights Mayor Bill Goncy
- Macedonia Mayor Don Kuchta
- Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic
- Summit County Executive Russ Pry
- AMATS Director Jason Segedy
- Cuyahoga Falls Mayor Don Walters

"We are excited about partnering with ODOT on what we see as an low-cost and innovative solution for improving our region's transportation system and providing new economic development opportunities," Segedy adds.

Dates to Remember

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Committee/Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
June 26	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Switching Gears - Active Transportation Conference	Akron-Summit County Library & John S. Knight Center
July 4	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Independence Day
July 17	1:30 p.m.	TAC	Quaker Square Inn, Grand Ballroom B
July 17	6:30 p.m.	CIC	To Be Determined
July 24	1:30 p.m.	Policy	Quaker Square Inn, Grand Ballroom B
September 1	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Labor Day
September 18	1:30 p.m.	TAC	Quaker Square Inn, Grand Ballroom B
September 18	6:30 p.m.	CIC	To Be Determined
September 25	1:30 p.m.	Policy	Quaker Square Inn, Grand Ballroom B
October 13	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Columbus Day
October 17	8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	Annual Meeting	Sheraton Suites - Cuyahoga Falls
November 11	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Veterans Day
November 27-28	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Thanksgiving
December 11	1:30 p.m.	TAC	Quaker Square Inn, Grand Ballroom B
December 11	6:30 p.m.	CIC	To Be Determined
December 18	1:30 p.m.	Policy	Quaker Square Inn, Grand Ballroom B
December 25	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Christmas

Persons with disabilities needing assistance are asked to contact Billy Soule, Assistant to the Mayor for Community Relations, 166 S. High Street, Room 200, Akron, Ohio 44308, (voice) 330-375-2189, (TDD) 330-375-2345, at least seven (7) days in advance.

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