

@AMATS

THE GREATER AKRON AREA'S TRANSPORTATION JOURNAL

January - June 2019

Volume 8, Issue 1

Inside



Walking With a TIGER
.....page 5.

Warmer Weather +
Longer Days = More
Bike Crashes
.....page 6.

We Roll Out Our New
Switching-Gears Page
.....page 7.



**Working Hard to Keep What We Have:
Preservation's Price Tag in the AMATS Area**
.....page 2.

Preservation's price tag in the AMATS area

It won't be cheap to preserve the Greater Akron area's highway system to the year 2045. In fact, preserving the region's more than 3,422 lane miles of federal-aid roadways and its 947 bridges carries a pretty hefty price tag. AMATS estimates that the area will need approximately \$3.78 billion over the next 27 years just to maintain its current transportation system.

As the area's federally designated metropolitan planning organization, AMATS completed its latest *Highway Preservation Needs Report* on May 16. The report estimates the federal funds in 2019 dollars that the Greater Akron area will need to preserve and maintain its existing highway system between now and 2045. While not listing specific maintenance projects, the report describes the region's existing highway system and outlines highway resurfacing and replacement needs and bridge maintenance and replacement needs. The report will be a major component of the agency's upcoming update of the area's long-range regional transportation plan – *Transportation Outlook 2045*.

AMATS Engineer Amy Prater explains that the agency based its projected cost to preserve the region's transportation system on the assumption that roadways are typically resurfaced every 10 years, which means that the region's roadways will likely be paved twice during the report's 27-year span. The total lane mileage for each roadway type is multiplied by two – the expected number of resurfacings - and that total is then multiplied by the cost per lane mile provided by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) in 2019 dollars. AMATS projects the region's total resurfacing needs to be approximately \$1.25 billion.

Along with the region's resurfacing needs, pavement must occasionally be completely replaced. The area's anticipated repaving needs are considerably lower than its resurfacing needs. The report projects that only 5 percent of all area roadways will be repaved during the period at a cost of about \$0.16 billion. The total cost of the area's pavement resurfacing and replacement needs combined is just over \$1.41 billion.

Bridges in Ohio are inspected annually and are rated by ODOT as "Poor," "Fair" or "Good." A rating of "Poor" signifies that the bridge is deficient while a rating of "Fair" or "Good" means that it is acceptable. The report identifies 41 bridges within the Greater Akron area with a rating of "Poor." The total preservation cost of AMATS area bridges is approximately \$2.37 billion.

The total cost of preserving the region's existing highway system is estimated to be close to \$3.78 billion, which is approximately 17 percent higher than the nearly \$3.3 billion estimated in the previous report compiled in 2016. There has been no increase in roadway lane mileage while there was a mere 0.6 percent increase in bridge deck square footage throughout the region. The higher preservation costs are primarily due to increasing construction costs for both pavement and bridge maintenance. The *Highway Preservation Needs Report* is available by clicking [here](#).

‘Fast Track’ our committee meetings

Followers of AMATS have a new option to find out what will be discussed at the agency’s committee meetings. In March, the agency launched *Fast Track* podcast summaries of its various committee agendas.

Hosted by AMATS Director Curtis Baker, *Fast Track* podcasts describe upcoming agenda items in three minutes or less. Visitors to the agency’s web site – amatsplanning.org – may now hear Baker summarize upcoming topics in addition to downloading pdfs of meeting materials.

“We’re pursuing new media in our efforts to promote transparency. We’ve provided MP3 podcasts of actual meetings for years in addition to traditional paper minutes. This just seemed like a natural and useful step for people who don’t have time to search through pages,” Baker explains.



A LIGHT TURNS ON:

The AMATS Staff hosted a StreetLight Orientation in mid-March for Greater Akron area planners. The StreetLight Data app is a database that collects cell phone usage. This database is available for public entities to use through a contract with the Ohio Department of Transportation. AMATS and other governmental planning entities are increasingly using this information for transportation planning such as in identifying locations for potential bike and hike trail amenities.





JANE'S WALK KENT:

Jason Prufer, at far right in top photo, led 30 participants on a **Jane's Walk** tour through Kent on May 4. Prufer is the author of *Small Town, Big Music: The Outsized Influence of Kent, Ohio, on the History of Rock and Roll*. His book explores Kent's rich rock music heritage and spotlights such acts as DEVO, Joe Walsh, Patrick Carney, and Chrissie Hynde.

Prufer led his Jane's Walk group to significant locations in Kent's musical legacy. Jane's Walk events are part of a global walking initiative that was launched by friends of urban planning pioneer - Jane Jacobs. These events offer participants a chance to explore local neighborhoods and encourage dialogue between neighbors and community planners.

AMATS was one of the coordinators of the Kent tour as part of its efforts promote connectivity principles in transportation planning throughout the Greater Akron area. Public feedback from Jane's Walk events are one of the agency's key planning tools.



Project Updates

The following table lists significant projects that were awarded between Dec. 15, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

PROJECT	ESTIMATED COMPLETION	AMOUNT
State Route 91 / US 224 / Canton Road - Widening of Canton Road/state Route 91 to create a northbound left-turn lane, an eastbound right-turn lane, and various improvements at the US 224 intersection in the Village of Lakemore and Springfield Township. Project includes construction of a raised concrete median on Canton Road, from US 224 to south of Arcadia Road to Meadow Drive, and new sidewalks.	6/30/2021	\$8,257,930
Howe Avenue - Reconstruction of Howe Avenue, from Main Street to Buchholzer Boulevard, in Cuyahoga Falls. Project includes pavement replacement and lighting, signage and storm sewer improvements.	9/30/2020	\$5,940,368
State Routes 14, 43 and 303 - Signal improvements along various intersections on state Routes 14, 43 and 303 in Streetsboro. The signals will be connected through fiber optic cables to a central control center with pan cameras.	5/30/2020	\$3,693,815
Bridge Maintenance - Bridge repairs to various structures on state Route 8 and Interstates 76 and 77 in Akron, Cuyahoga Falls, and Fairlawn in Summit County and state Route 44 in Randolph Township in Portage County.	10/31/2019	\$1,045,017
State Route 585 - Resurfacing of state Route 585, from west of state Route 57 to Thompson Drive. (A portion of this project is in Chippewa Township and within the AMATS area.)	10/15/2019	\$2,016,501

WALKING WITH A TIGER: The Downtown Akron Partnership (DAP) hosted a walk for the AMATS staff on April 25. Led by DAP Director of Business Relations Kimberly Beckett, pointing in photo below, the walk gave the staff a firsthand view of how Akron is using its \$8 million Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant to transform its downtown.



Warmer Weather + Longer Days = More Bike Crashes

AMATS wants to remind cyclists and motorists in the Greater Akron area that temperatures and daylight hours aren't the only things increasing as summer approaches. Their chances of being in a bicycle-related accident are going up too.



As the region's metropolitan planning organization, AMATS compiles crash-related data for various safety studies and improvement projects. The agency's most recent three-year crash report spans 2015 through 2017 and is based on its analysis of nearly 59,000 motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian-related crash records for the area's roadway sections and intersections provided by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

The report finds that the number of bicycle-related crashes within the Greater Akron area begins a steady climb in February before spiking in July. February is one of the lowest months in terms of crashes with seven recorded in the region during the period. With its sunshine and vacation days, July is the worst month for crashes with a peak of 38 before dropping off to 27 crashes in August. (Agency officials note that crashes tend to have a secondary spike of 36 in September, possibly due to less daylight hours and children riding bikes to school.)

Dave Pulay, the agency's transportation improvement program (TIP) coordinator, says that it's not surprising that there are more bicycle-related crashes during the summer months when outdoor conditions are more inviting to cyclists and motorists in Portage and Summit counties. A contributing factor to the summertime increase in crash totals may be that school is out and more children are riding their bikes as part of their outdoor playtime.

Out of the 242 total bicycle-related crashes during the period, 191 or 79 percent resulted in an injury and three resulted in fatalities. Pulay sadly notes that many crashes involve younger cyclists, including children. The largest age group involved bicycle-related crashes during the period was 14-year-olds with 18 crashes. "Fortunately, there are some common-sense precautions that people can take to lessen their chances of adding to our statistics," he adds.

Pulay reminds the region's drivers that Ohio has had a "three-foot rule" in place since 2017. This rule requires motorists to provide no less than a three-foot buffer between their vehicles and cyclists while passing on a road. Motorists found violating this law face a misdemeanor charge and a \$150 fine. With 64 percent of the area's bicycle-related crashes occurring at intersections, Pulay cautions cyclists to obey stop signs and traffic signals the same as motorists do. If dedicated turn lanes are marked, a cyclist should use them the same manner as any other vehicle. AMATS offers the following additional safety tips for the Greater Akron area's motorists and cyclists:

- Cyclists can promote safe interactions with motorists by being courteous yet assertive through such actions as riding single file when in groups and using appropriate hand signals and eye contact.
- Drivers should treat cyclists like any other slow-moving vehicle when they are attempting to pass. Motorists should pass cyclists only when there are no oncoming vehicles and sight lines are clear. When passing a cyclist, motorists should remember the three-foot rule.
- Motorists should beware of cyclists who might be in their vehicle's blind spots or are difficult to see.
- Cyclists should wear a properly fitted bicycle helmet.
- Cyclists can improve their visibility to others by wearing bright clothing even during the daytime and using lights and reflectors at night or in low-light conditions.
- Cyclists should always ride with traffic and in the same direction as other vehicles.

Pulay says that additional information is available on the agency's website devoted to cycling in the Greater Akron area – switching-gears.org - and includes the agency's free [Bike User Map](#) so that cyclists may plan their routes.



FROM BOOKS TO BIKES:

AMATS, Summit County Public Health, and Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition officials joined the staff of the Akron-Summit County Maple Valley Branch Library in Akron to launch Summit Bike Share 2019. The May 1 ribbon cutting ceremony included bike-themed giveaways and a bike maintenance demonstration.

AMATS is a participant in various cycling initiatives across the Greater Akron area through its Switching Gears Program and web site, Switching-Gears.org.

At the top, bikes stand ready for service thanks to **Summit Bike Share**, a free bicycle share system offered by the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition. Bikes are available for free use at nine stations across Summit County, including downtown Akron and Barberton and now at the Maple Valley Branch Library on Copley Road.

Second from top, Summit County Public Health's Heidi Dressler offers onlookers some free LED lights for their bikes. The event included tips on bike safety from the Summit Cycling Center's **How We Roll** Program.

At bottom, Maple Valley Intermediate Teen Librarian Emmalee Coontz works the scissors during the ribbon cutting ceremony officially opening the library's bike share station to the public.



Dates to Remember

Date	Time	Committee/Event	Location
June 20	1:30 p.m.	TAC	Hilton Garden Inn, Ballroom A
June 20	6:30 p.m.	CIC	Akron-Summit County Public Library - Main Library - Downtown Akron
June 27	1:30 p.m.	Policy	Hilton Garden Inn, Ballroom A
July 4	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - July 4th Holiday
September 2	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Labor Day
September 19	1:30 p.m.	TAC	Hilton Garden Inn, Ballroom A
September 19	6:30 p.m.	CIC	To Be Determined
September 26	1:30 p.m.	Policy	Hilton Garden Inn, Ballroom A
October 11	8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Annual Meeting	Sheraton Suites Akron-Cuyahoga Falls
October 14	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Columbus Day
November 11	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Veterans Day
November 28-29	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Thanksgiving
December 12	1:30 p.m.	TAC	Hilton Garden Inn, Ballroom A
December 12	6:30 p.m.	CIC	To Be Determined
December 19	1:30 p.m.	Policy	Hilton Garden Inn, Ballroom A
December 25	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Christmas Day

@AMATS is published by the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study, 161 S. High St., Suite 201, Akron, Ohio 44308
Editorial comments are welcome.

Director - Curtis Baker

Editor/writer - Kerry Prater

Phone - 330-375-2436 / Fax - 330-375-2275

E-Mail - amats@akronohio.gov

Please visit our web site at: www.amatsplanning.org

This report was prepared by the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and the Village, City and County governments of Portage and Summit Counties and a portion of Wayne County. The contents of this report reflect the views of AMATS, which is responsible for the facts and accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official view and policies of the Ohio and/or U.S. Department of Transportation. This report does not constitute a standard, specification or regulation.