



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

The Yearly Chronicle of the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study



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A Challenging Year

If I had to pick a single word to describe 2020, that word would be “challenging.” The ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic not only continues to challenge the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) in fulfilling its mission as the Greater Akron area’s metropolitan planning organization, but this unique health crisis is testing the fortitude of individuals, families, communities, governments and the world as well.

I am proud to report as chair of the AMATS Policy Committee in 2020 that the agency met its share of challenges head on and has a host of accomplishments to show for it. The most significant achievement by the agency was fashioning a new four-year *Transportation Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2021 Through 2024 (TIP)* in the midst of a public health crisis. Our latest *TIP* represents a more than \$993 million investment in regional infrastructure. Communities and project sponsors throughout the Greater Akron area will benefit from the new program, which includes more than \$642.7 million for highway projects, \$338.7 million for public transit needs, and slightly less than \$12 million for bike and pedestrian projects.

I am amazed that development of the *TIP* progressed seamlessly without interruption despite the agency staff and our committee members shifting to remote work. I am also impressed with how quickly the agency embraced new public outreach strategies and technologies during the program’s development. From the onset of the pandemic in Ohio in March until the *TIP*’s ultimate approval by the AMATS Policy Committee in May, the agency quickly mastered the intricacies of new virtual media by making extensive use of Facebook Live and Zoom.

As important as the *TIP* is to the Greater Akron area, it is only one element of the region’s ongoing transportation planning process. Along with maintaining a four-year program of projects, AMATS must plan for the area’s long-term needs in the form of a long-range regional transportation plan. In late September, the agency completed two significant components of the next long-range plan: the *2020 Transit Plan* and the *2020 Freight Plan*. These plans present recommendations and strategies to improve the region’s transit systems and transportation corridors that are vital to area commerce.

The agency ended the year with the completion of the *Congestion Management Process (CMP)* report, another key element of the regional transportation plan. The *CMP* identifies existing and future congestion in the Greater Akron area and presents recommendations to reduce or eliminate problems. The report’s findings regarding the impacts of the pandemic and subsequent state-mandated lockdowns on traffic congestion are telling. Area traffic volumes dropped over 40 percent and transit ridership fell 60 percent during the depths of the crisis. AMATS is still determining

whether the pandemic’s aftermath will have long-term impacts on the region’s transportation systems.

The *2020 Annual Report* presents the agency’s many accomplishments during a year unlike any other in recent memory. I think that you will be impressed with how the agency adapted to the challenges posed by 2020. Reading how the agency dealt with this year and its seemingly never-ending stream of crises may reassure you as to how well the region’s transportation planning process is positioned to meet future challenges.



Linda S. Clark
2020 AMATS Policy Committee Chairwoman
Village of Mantua Mayor



Planning

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic, 2020 was a year of solid accomplishment for AMATS in terms of planning for the Greater Akron area's transportation needs.

During the year, the agency took a number of key steps on the region's path to 2045. AMATS developed and approved a new *2020 Transit Plan*, a new *2020 Freight Plan* and an updated *2020 Congestion Management Process (CMP)* report. Each of these items will be key components of the Greater Akron area's next long-range regional transportation plan, which will extend to the year 2045.

The agency also took great strides in other areas of regional transportation planning most notably through its AMATS Connecting Communities Program. The program continued to build on its success to promote connectivity among the region's bicycle, pedestrian and roadway networks.

2020 Transit Plan

In September, the AMATS Policy Committee approved the *2020 Transit Plan*. The plan charts a new route for transit service within the Greater Akron area. In crafting the *2020 Transit Plan*, the agency applied new state and federal performance measures to gauge the current effectiveness of the area's transit authorities, METRO in Summit County and the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA) in Portage County. Working with the authorities, AMATS analyzed aspects of the region's transit systems with regards to route and community access and coverage, and services for disabled, elderly, minority and low-income residents.



METRO and PARTA provide an impressive level of service for roughly 700,000 transit users throughout the Greater Akron area and operate a combined 53 routes - 36 for METRO and 17 for PARTA - along with providing demand response and express bus services. Both transit agencies provide mobility access for disabled, elderly, minority and low-income residents. The *2020 Transit Plan* notes that excellent transit coverage is provided in Akron, Barberton, Cuyahoga Falls, Franklin Township, Kent, Ravenna, Silver Lake and Windham. METRO's Downtown Akron Shuttle (DASH) service and PARTA's Route #58 - Summit East/Front Campus attained the highest performance ratings in the plan.

The plan notes that, while both agencies have made tremendous strides in their service offerings and embraced the use of new technologies such as Compressed Natural Gas systems and phone apps such as EZfare and SPOT PARTA, there are new opportunities for both transit authorities to improve their services. These opportunities are in the areas of frequency, locations and infrastructure.

In Summit County, Stow and Twinsburg have large populations of elderly, low income, minority and people with disabilities. The communities of Green and Tallmadge also show gaps in their transit coverage. In Portage County, Streetsboro has significant populations of low income, minority and people with disabilities. The plan finds that there is limited transit coverage for low income riders and poor coverage for minority and disabled populations within this community.

The plan recommends that these communities would benefit from improved coordination with METRO and PARTA regarding travel patterns and which amenities would better serve the needs of their respective residents. The plan further recommends that both transit agencies improve access to their routes and services and consider increasing service frequency to certain busy routes.

Bus shelters and sidewalks present additional opportunities to improve transit access. The plan notes that new shelters could be part of a larger effort by the region to foster a strong multimodal network that includes bike paths, crosswalks and sidewalks as key elements. The plan urges communities and project sponsors to make pedestrian improvements a priority on those routes and streets with high traffic volumes and speeds. Area communities should also work closely with METRO and PARTA when developing new sidewalk networks and when planning improvements to existing ones.

The *2020 Transit Plan* is available for viewing by clicking [here](#).

2020 Freight Plan

In September, the AMATS Policy Committee approved the region's *2020 Freight Plan*. The plan recommends potential improvements to promote freight-related commerce and delivery throughout the region. Examples of transportation projects that are freight-related or critical to goods movement include bridge replacements, road operational improvements, rail-access improvements, grade separations for highway and rail, and connections for new commercial infrastructure.



The *2020 Freight Plan* is the first such report to be developed under new state and federal performance measures. These performance measures address such issues as safety, infrastructure condition, traffic congestion, system reliability, vehicle emissions and freight movement.

The plan's recommendations state that improvements to the Greater Akron area's highway system represent the region's highest priority with regards to freight transport needs. Freight movement is heavily concentrated on the region's freeways and major state routes. The number of trucks on these roads range from 50 to 15,000 trucks per day, with Interstate 76 through Portage and Summit counties being the busiest freeway for trucks.

The plan presents three general recommended strategies to guide the region's freight planning process and sets of specific approaches to meet identified highway, rail and railroad-highway grade separation needs. These strategies include: developing and maintaining databases and analysis tools for decision-making; interacting with AMATS members and freight stakeholders to better understand the freight system; and incorporating freight into the regional transportation planning process.

Specific recommendations to meet identified highway needs include the addition of a truck lane to northbound Interstate 77 in the Bath Township/Richfield area and improvements to the I-77/state Route 21/state Route 18 Interchange. Rail needs recommendations include improvements to the CSX Lambert (Southwest Akron) Line extending to the Warwick section near Clinton and improvements to the Norfolk-Southern Cleveland to Pennsylvania Line extending through Macedonia, Hudson and Ravenna.

The *2020 Freight Plan* is available for viewing by clicking [here](#).

2020 Congestion Management Process

In December, AMATS approved an updated *2020 Congestion Management Process (CMP)* report for the Greater Akron area. The *CMP* report identifies existing and future congestion on the area's freeways, arterials and intersections. The report offers specific highway, transit, freight and system-wide recommendations to improve congested locations throughout the region and evaluates strategies based on previous projects.



The report also examines public transit levels of service availability, freight needs, and the impact that crashes have on congestion.

The *CMP* report also marks the first time that AMATS has relied upon GPS device tracking technology to calculate congestion. This new technology enables traffic engineers and planners to obtain traffic data through tracking actual vehicle movement using cell phone and other GPS devices in vehicles. Such GPS-based data can be collected over months and years and is more representative than data collected by the agency using mechanical and radar-based counting devices over a few days.

The report finds that there are fewer extremely congested locations in the Greater Akron area today than in the past. A benefit of this congestion reduction is that the region can better leverage decreasing transportation funding by focusing on only the most important regional areas of concern. Unfortunately, most of these remaining areas – such as various arterial segments on state Route 91, the Wheatley Road & Brecksville Road Intersection in Macedonia, and the State Route 59/Perkins Street & State Route 8 Interchange in Akron – have not yet been addressed due to their tremendous complexity and cost.

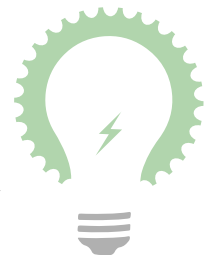
The report adds that the many communities and entities that comprise AMATS must continue working together diligently to find unique solutions to address the region's remaining congested areas. They must also wisely allocate available resources to implement potential viable solutions, according to the report.

The *CMP* report will be a key element in meeting the Greater Akron area's future needs. AMATS will consider the report's recommendations for inclusion in the upcoming long-range regional transportation plan. Final recommendations accepted by the agency will be based on fiscal constraint, cost benefits, and changing transportation demands.

The *CMP* report is available for viewing by clicking [here](#).

Bike-N-Brainstorms

The AMATS Switching Gears Program hosted a successful Bike-N-Brainstorm event in 2020. Bike-N-Brainstorms are public meetings that include a bike ride and brainstorming session. During sessions, participants share their insights on how to improve biking and pedestrian access in a community.



The September Bike-N-Brainstorm in Munroe Falls served a *Bike-N-Brainstorm*

dual purpose for the agency. Not only did it promote active transportation planning amongst members of the public, but it also promoted physical activity as a means to stave off illness during the ongoing public health crisis posed by COVID-19.

For more about the agency's Bike-N-Brainstorms, please visit Switching-Gears.org.



AMATS and Munroe Falls officials hosted a Bike-N-Brainstorm in late September. Event participants included members of the Munroe Falls Recreation Board and Munroe Falls City Council President Chris Ritzinger. The group travelled on a 6.5-mile loop that started and ended in Burst Park and included portions of the Summit Metro Parks Bike & Hike Trail, State Route 91 (South Main Street), Munroe Falls Avenue, and several residential streets. At the end of their journey, the group shared their ideas on how to improve bike and pedestrian travel in the community.

Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program

2020 marked a year of solid progress for the AMATS Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program in the Greater Akron area. The program helps communities strike a balance between their land use decisions and transportation investments by providing financial grants for the development of plans and studies that promote vibrant, livable communities.

The program functioned smoothly throughout the year with no interruption. By February, AMATS had received a total of five grant applications to the program from the communities of Lakemore, Stow, and Tallmadge, and the region's two



AMATS and Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan, Cuyahoga Falls Mayor Don Walters and Tallmadge Mayor David Kline got rolling with the *Move With The Mayor* initiative in late July. The initiative is part of a nationwide effort to promote heart health by encouraging people to stay active during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The mayors urged everyone to enjoy the area's many bike and hike trails. Using GoPro cameras, the mayors recorded their individual rides on the area's Towpath and Freedom trails. These virtual rides were later posted online. Above right, AMATS Planner Darryl Kleinhenz, in foreground, joins Mayor Kline on the Freedom Trail. To view a video about the *Move With The Mayor* initiative, please click [here](#).

transit authorities, METRO in Summit County and the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA) in Portage County. Throughout the spring and summer, the Connecting Communities Planning Grant Task Force considered the merits of each application.

In December, the program recommended that two applicants – PARTA and the city of Stow – should receive grants to promote livability in the region. The AMATS Policy Committee agreed with the program recommendations and approved two separate \$40,000 grants for the PARTA and Stow studies. These studies are described below:



State Route 59 Alternative Transportation Improvements

This study will identify necessary transit, pedestrian and bicycle improvements along state Route 59, between Horning Road and state Route 261, in Franklin Township. Due to the lack of sidewalks, crosswalks and signage, it is difficult for the community members who live, work, and travel this area to navigate it amongst the higher speed single-occupancy automobiles.

This study will identify areas where sidewalks could be extended, crosswalks installed, crossing signals implemented, mid-block crossing areas highlighted, and better transit passenger amenities added. This study will determine what strategies and improvements are feasible to make the roadway safer and more navigable for alternative modes of transportation.



City of Stow City-Wide Connectivity Plan

This study will establish Stow's framework for a city-wide, multi-modal trail network to accommodate all users. This network will not only serve Stow's various populations, businesses and visitors, but will connect the city to adjacent and regional destinations and multi-modal networks.

This study will explore the potential of shared-use paths and sidepaths as the primary facilities for Stow's trail network. The study will determine the viability of placing trails within one-quarter mile of every resident and business. Such a network would also place users within a one-quarter mile of METRO service routes within the city. Among Stow's goals is to construct its trail network over the next 20 years.



To learn more about the AMATS Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program, please click [here](#).

Engineering

The end of 2020 marked the conclusion of a tumultuous, but productive year for engineering initiatives undertaken by AMATS. During the course of the year, the agency completed the *Transportation Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2021 Through 2024* (TIP) and the *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2017-2019)* report. Along with these items, the agency completed a joint Speed Tables Pilot Program with the city of Akron and a host of other engineering activities necessary for the regional transportation planning process.

Transportation Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2021 Through 2024

The AMATS Policy Committee unanimously approved a four-year, multi-million dollar program of new highway, public transit, and bike and pedestrian projects for the Greater Akron area during an online, virtual meeting of the committee in May.



The Transportation Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2021 Through 2024 (TIP) represents a more than \$993 million investment in regional infrastructure. The program includes more than \$642.7 million for highway projects, \$338.7 million for public transit needs, and slightly less than \$12 million for bike and pedestrian projects. These projects are programmed to receive federal funds for fiscal years 2021 through 2024.

Among the significant items in the TIP are two large-scale improvement projects in Akron: a \$164 million project to resurface portions of state Route 8 and Interstates 76 and 77 and a \$146 million state Route 8 bridge replacement over the Cuyahoga River Valley.

Other notable projects in the program include a more than \$17.5 million upgrade of East Main Street (state Route 59) in Kent through the university area and the construction of two new roundabouts on Massillon Road (state Route 241) in Green totaling more than \$10 million. Additional improvements include the construction of two-way left turn lanes on the Portage Trail Extension in Cuyahoga Falls totaling more than \$7.7 million and a more than \$6.9 million reconstruction of Wooster Road West in Barberton.

In keeping with the agency's goal of preserving the region's transportation network rather than pursuing costly expansions, the TIP has a record number of resurfacing projects that are programmed to use more than \$18.3 million in federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds.

The TIP addresses other needs beyond the area's highways and roads. The region's transit authorities, METRO in Summit County and PARTA in Portage County, will receive significant federal funds to supplement their fare box and countywide sales tax revenue and anticipated state funds during the four-year span of the program. The program includes \$40.6 million in federal funds for capital projects and \$17.9 million in federal funds for preventive maintenance expenditures.

The Greater Akron area's bike and pedestrian networks will continue their growth under the TIP. More than \$1.2 million will go for the construction of the Brady's Leap Section of The PORTAGE Hike and Bike Trail in Kent. Other upcoming projects include new portions of the Freedom Trail in Akron, Kent, Stow and Tallmadge and various new sidewalks throughout the region most notably on Cleveland Massillon Road in Bath Township, Darrow Road (state Route 91) in Stow, and Raber Road in Green.

The TIP is available for viewing by clicking [here](#).

Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures 2017-2019

In December, the AMATS Policy Committee approved the *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2017-2019)* report. This three-year report details the number of traffic crashes within the Greater Akron area and is divided into three sections concerning: roadway and intersection crashes; bicycle and pedestrian crashes; and a performance-oriented section.

The report's findings are based on the agency's analysis of 55,230 motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian-related crash records for the area's roadway sections and intersections provided by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). High-crash locations identified in the report may be used by communities as a starting point when seeking federal Highway Safety Program funds through ODOT for safety improvement projects.

For this report, the agency identified 181 high-crash roadway sections and 350 high-crash intersections in the region. The agency's analysis found that fatalities and fatal

crashes in the Greater Akron area increased between 2018 and 2019. The number of fatalities in the region jumped from 35 in 2018 to 44 in 2019. The number of fatal crashes rose from 31 in 2018 to 43 in 2019.

Despite the increase in fatal crashes, the news isn't all bad for the region in the agency's latest crash report. The report finds that area crashes trended down from 18,787 in 2017 to 18,697 in 2018 before dropping to 17,746 in 2019. That decline represents a decrease of 951 fewer crashes in 2019 than the year before. Crashes that resulted in injuries also decreased from 4,261 in 2018 to 4,101 in 2019, a decrease of 160.

The report contains other mixes of good news and bad news for the region. Crashes that resulted in an injury decreased from 4,261 in 2018 to 4,101 in 2019. Unfortunately, crashes that resulted in serious injuries increased from their decade-low nadir of 290 in 2018 to 303 in 2019.

Out of the 252 bicycle-related crashes that occurred between 2017 and 2019, 183 resulted in an injury and seven in a fatality. The most recent fatality number for bicycle-related crashes represents a more than doubling of fatalities from the previous report's recorded three fatalities.

During the same three-year period, there were 466 pedestrian-related crashes with 385 resulting in an injury and 24 in a fatality. Like bicycle-related crashes, fatalities from pedestrian-related crashes saw a significant increase from the previous report when 17 fatalities were recorded. Overall, pedestrians accounted for over 19 percent of all area crash-related fatalities that occurred between 2017 and 2019.

This report includes safety performance measures and targets for the Greater Akron area. Recent federal legislation requires the agency and ODOT to demonstrate fatal and serious injury reductions on all public roads. The required performance measures for safety are:

- Number of fatalities
- Fatality rate
- Number of serious injuries
- Serious injury rate
- Number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries

In this report, AMATS endorsed the statewide goals set forth by ODOT rather than adopt separate targets and goals for the region. In 2020, following an extensive review of historical crash trends, external factors and consultation with the state's metropolitan planning organizations, including AMATS, the department decided to continue its

pursuit of a 2 percent annual reduction target across all five safety categories. AMATS used a five-year average to calculate the Greater Akron area's initial safety targets based on totals starting in 2015. These averages will be the benchmark to which all future calculations for the region will be compared. All future values will be calculated using five years of data.

The table below shows the calculation of the AMATS rolling averages for the five safety performance measures. The 2015 averages are the benchmark values that the 2019 values are compared to. In three out of the five safety performance measures, AMATS far exceeded the previous ODOT goal of reducing each category by 2 percent when compared to the 2015 averages.

Performance Measure	2015 Five-Year Average	2019 Five-Year Average	Percent Change
Number of Fatalities	46	48	4
Fatality Rate	0.60	0.64	7
Number of Serious Injuries	590	431	-27
Serious Injury Rate	7.79	5.73	-26
Number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries	57.4	48.8	-15

The *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures 2017-2019* report is available by clicking [here](#).

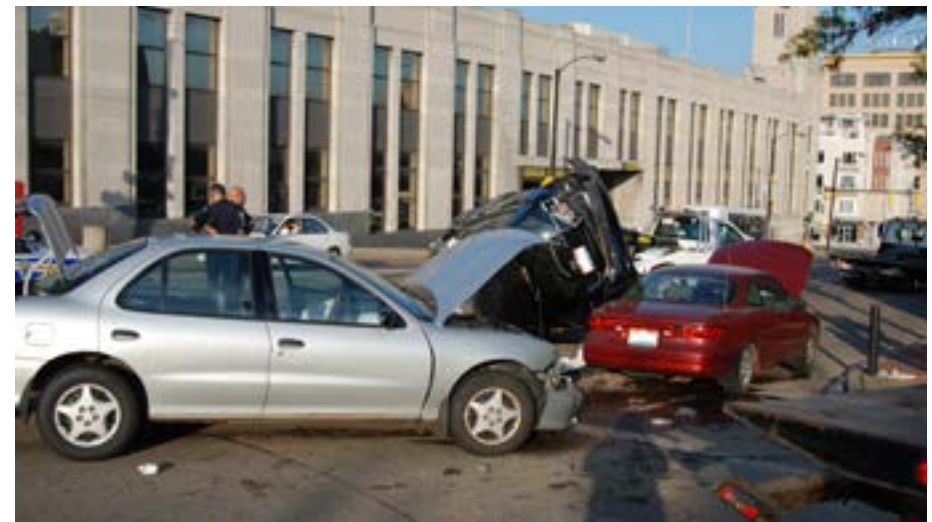


Photo courtesy of the Akron Police Department

Engineering Activities

Traffic Counting Program

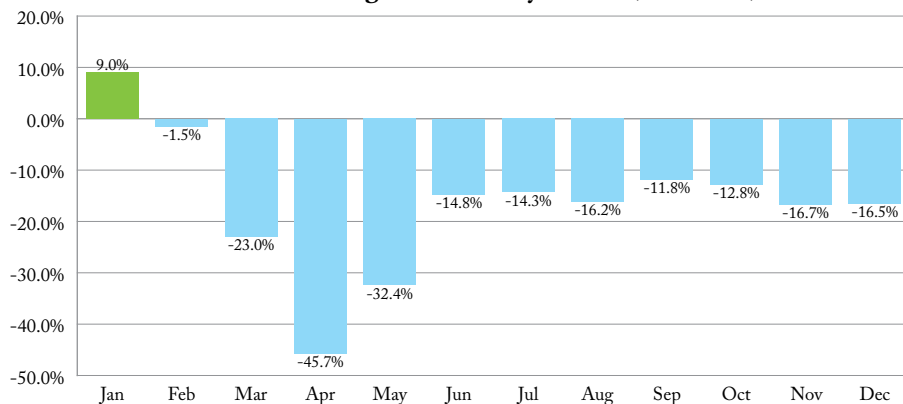
Traffic count data is a key component of transportation planning. AMATS collects data regarding traffic volumes on Greater Akron area roadways and intersections for use in various regional analyses and evaluations of new projects.

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 Pandemic and the commensurate statewide lockdown that began in March, the agency conducted 20 counts at various area roadway segments using radar counters. However, the agency was unable to conduct extensive counts throughout the region due to staff unavailability and traffic pattern changes resulting from the lockdown.

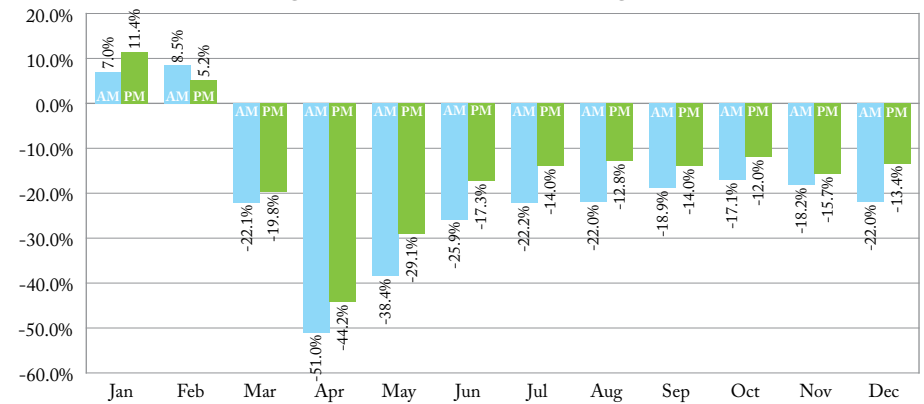
Because of this unique situation, AMATS began monitoring overall traffic volumes throughout the region before, during and after the lockdown using data collected by the 12 Automatic Traffic Recorders (ATRs) posted by ODOT throughout the Greater Akron area.

The accompanying graphs document how the COVID-19 Lockdown impacted area traffic levels in month-to-month percentage comparisons between 2019 and 2020. The *2020 Percent Change from 2019 by Month (All ATR's)* graph presents the monthly percentage change for all ATRs between the two years. The *Percent Change Peaks, 2019 vs 2020 (Average of All ATR's)* graph presents percentage changes during morning traffic peaks and evening traffic peaks based on averages for all ATRs.

2020 Percent Change from 2019 by Month (All ATR's)



Percent Change Peaks, 2019 vs 2020 (Average of All ATR's)



January is the only month in 2020 during which both charts show increasing traffic volume compared to 2019. Both charts generally show that the year began with solid increases in regional traffic volume during a time of robust activity. The charts begin to diverge in February when overall volume throughout the region declined by 1.5 percent compared to 2019, but the region still posted increasing volume during morning and evening peak times with increases of 8.5 percent and 5.2 percent respectively compared to the preceding year.

March marks the first month of declines in overall regional traffic volume and peak volume times. These declines coincide with the onset of Ohio's statewide lockdown. It was March when overall traffic volume and peak times began the first of a series of continuous double-digit monthly declines that carried through to December. In March, overall traffic volume dropped by 23 percent compared to the year before and morning peak times dropped by 22.1 percent and evening peak times by 19.8 percent.

April marked the low point for traffic volume in the Greater Akron area during 2020 with a decline of 45.7 percent in overall traffic volume and drops of 51 percent during morning peak times and 44.2 percent during evening peak times compared to 2019. Such monthly declines began easing in May from this springtime low.

Bike and Pedestrian Counts

Bicycle and pedestrian counting is an increasingly important aspect of regional transportation planning. This count data helps target the location for future bicycle and pedestrian facilities in areas where land use and development are likely to promote frequent use. The data also helps determine trends in biking and walking by measuring the benefits of these investments.

In March, the agency was forced to suspend its bike and pedestrian counting efforts in the Greater Akron area due to a lack of personnel stemming from the statewide lockdown.

Speed Table Pilot Program

In August, AMATS and the city of Akron installed speed tables on Akron's Edgewood Avenue and Schocalog Road. Speed tables are raised areas placed at mid-block points across roadways and are designed to limit the speed at which vehicles travel. Unlike speed bumps, tables have tapered ends and long flat tops to accommodate the entire wheelbase of most passenger cars. Akron's tables were interlocking pieces made from recycled rubberized material and are fastened into place on street surfaces.

The city and the agency launched the pilot program in response to residents in those areas who voiced concerns regarding vehicles speeding through their neighborhoods.

In March, AMATS purchased the tables using \$15,000 in federal Consolidated Planning Grant funds and took delivery in August. Akron installed one temporary table on Edgewood Avenue and two on Schocalog Road. The city and AMATS tested the effectiveness of the tables as a traffic calming measure from early September through early November. The agency also collected speed data on vehicles travelling over the tables using the agency's MioVision camera and radar counters. AMATS also collected public feedback regarding the tables through its web site.

As part of this project, AMATS and Akron developed a comprehensive public outreach program that included reaching out to Akron City Council members, a web page detailing the program with a comment form, a survey for the general public, multiple neighborhood mailings, and engagement with the Akron Public Schools, Akron Police Department, the Akron Fire Department and METRO.

Speed analysis determined that the average speed of vehicles travelling on Schocalog Road dropped from 33.7 miles per hour to 26.9 miles per hour and the number of speeders dropped from over 90 percent to 67 percent of total traffic. Analysis on Edgewood Avenue showed that the average speed dropped from 34.4 miles per hour to 28.9 miles per hour while the number of speeders dropped from 90 percent to 65 percent of total traffic.

The agency reviewed traffic volumes on adjacent streets and found few significant changes as vehicles did not appear to be avoiding the roadways following table installation. AMATS performed analyses of speed data collected after the tables were removed and determined that traffic had returned to pre-installation speeds.

Public engagement efforts led to over 300 requests for future speed table locations and over 100 survey takers. Public response based on these surveys and feedback to the agency was favorable to the concept of and the installation of speed tables.

In December, the agency released its *2020 Temporary Speed Table Pilot Program Evaluation Report*. In this report, the agency recommended that the Temporary Speed Table Program continue in 2021 at a new location.

The *2020 Temporary Speed Table Pilot Program Evaluation Report* is available by clicking [here](#).



Outreach

Going Virtual

AMATS, like many other organizations, had to master the intricacies of virtual meetings quickly in 2020. Starting in March, the agency began hosting virtual meetings of its Policy Committee, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Citizens Involvement Committee (CIC). The agency utilized a combination of the online videoconferencing and streaming services, Zoom and Facebook Live, for its meetings.

In March, when the statewide COVID-19 lockdown began, the agency quickly embraced new public outreach strategies to promote the availability of the Draft *Transportation Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2021 Through 2024 (TIP)*. The agency launched extensive print, email and social media campaigns to announce that the draft program would be available for public review and comment through Twitter and Facebook and at amatsplanning.org, the agency website. Agency officials also made the decision to extend the Draft TIP comment period beyond its originally scheduled two weeks to the end of April.

Also in April, the agency presented the Draft TIP to the public for review in a virtual



meeting of the CIC using Facebook Live. In May, during a Zoom conference of the Policy Committee, the committee unanimously approved a new four-year TIP representing a \$993 million investment in the Greater Akron area's highway, public transit, and bike and pedestrian systems.

Throughout the course of the year, the agency distributed regular announcements via email and social media to its committee members and the public that – despite the agency's doors being closed due to COVID-19 – the agency was still accepting written and email comments regarding meeting agenda items.

Transportation Talk

AMATS presented new episodes of its podcast series, *Transportation Talk*, during 2020. The series presents interviews between AMATS Director Curtis Baker and key figures in regional transportation planning within the Greater Akron area. City Architecture Principal Alex Pesta was interviewed twice during the year. Pesta's first interview was pre-pandemic during which he and Baker held a freewheeling discussion regarding the transportation planning process in the Greater Akron area and across the nation. A second interview between Pesta and Baker focused on the impacts of the COVID-19 lockdown and its impacts on transportation and potential planning ramifications.



Transportation Talk podcasts are now available on multiple podcasting platforms, including [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#) and [Spotify](#). To access these podcasts on our website, please click [here](#). To subscribe, please click one of the links below:



Tabling the Issue

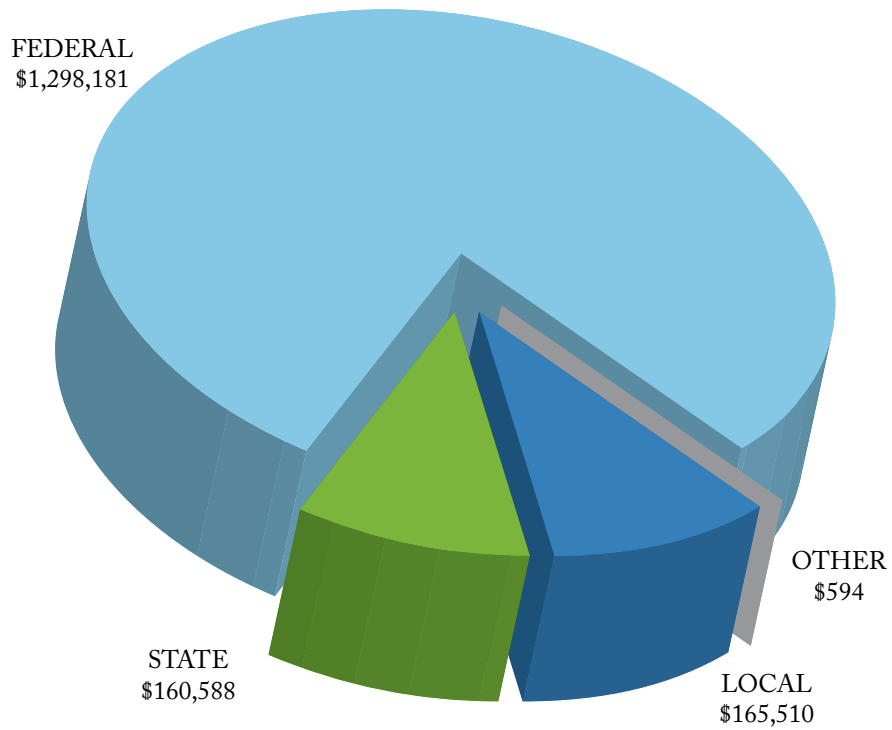
In August, AMATS and the city of Akron launched a pilot traffic calming program to curb speeding through two residential areas. The agency provided roughly \$15,000 for the installation of speed tables on Akron's Edgewood Avenue and Schocalog Road. The city installed the tables based on concerns raised by residents regarding speeding through their neighborhoods.

During the program, which concluded in November, AMATS collected 311 public comments regarding the tables' effectiveness through an online survey available on its web site – amatsplanning.org. The agency also provided Akron with speed data, which AMATS collected using its MioVision and radar counters. This information will be used by AMATS and Akron to gauge the effectiveness of speed tables – not only at these locales – but throughout the city and region.

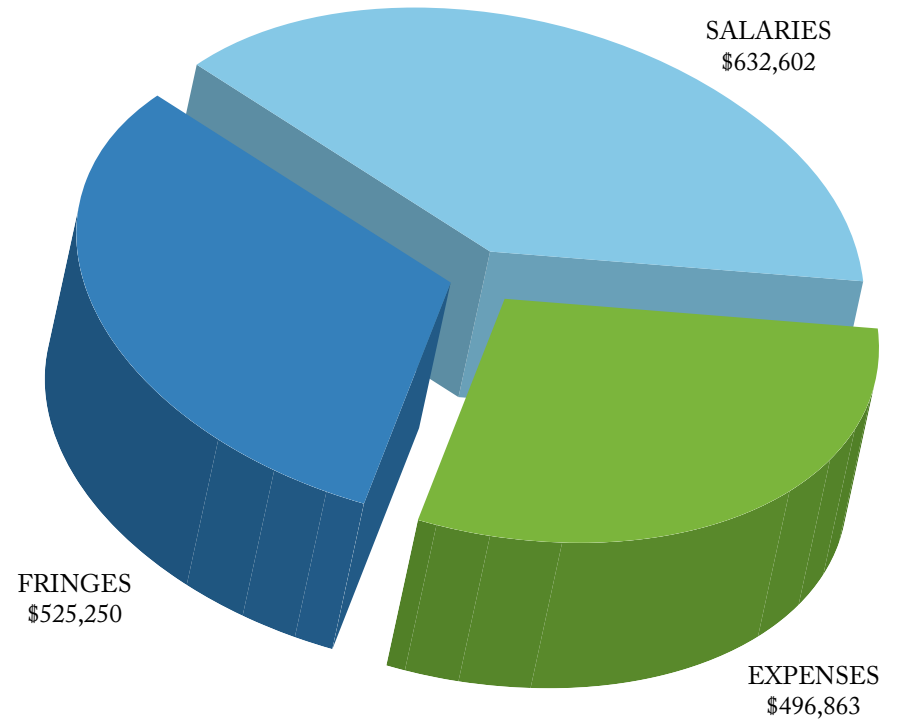


Financial Data for Fiscal Year 2020

Revenues by Type



Expenditures by Type



Policy Committee and Staff

2020 Policy Committee Members

Chairwoman

Mayor Linda S. Clark

Vice Chairman

Mayor Gerard Neugebauer

AKRON

Mayor Dan Horrigan

AURORA

Mayor Ann Womer Benjamin

BARBERTON

Mayor William B. Judge, Jr.

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AMATS Staff

Administrative

Curtis Baker
Director

Martha Chandler
Account Clerk

Engineering

Farhad Ahmadzai
City Planner

Eugene Paczelt
City Planner

Amy Prater, P.E.
Transportation Engineer

David Pulay, P.E.
TIP Coordinator

Wali Rahim
Planning Aide

Planning

Seth Bush
GIS Coordinator

Heather Davis Reidl
Mobility Planner

Jeffrey Gardner
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Phyllis Jividen
City Planner

Darryl Kleinhenz
City Planner

Louisa Kreider
City Planner

Kerry Prater
Public Information Coordinator

David Swirsky
City Planner



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 161 S High St | Suite 201
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 Editorial comments are welcome.



Director: Curtis Baker
 E-Mail: amats@akronohio.gov

Editor / Writer: Kerry Prater

Layout / Design: Seth Bush

Please visit our website at: www.amatsplanning.org

Phone: 330-375-2436 | Fax: 330-375-2275

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