

@AMATS

THE GREATER AKRON AREA'S TRANSPORTATION JOURNAL

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ABOVE:

New Franklin was one of two communities to land a \$40,000 study grant from the AMATS Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program in March. Akron also received a connectivity study grant for its Summit Lake Neighborhood. For more information, turn to **page 5.**



Round and Around We Go!
Greater Akron Area Embraces 'Circular' Logic
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Round and Around We Go!

Going around in circles in a good way in the Greater Akron area

Roundabouts may become an increasingly common sight within the Greater Akron area if a new safety study approved by AMATS is any indication.

During its May 16 meeting, the AMATS Policy Committee accepted the *AMATS Areawide Roundabout Study*, a comprehensive safety evaluation of traffic roundabouts across Portage and Summit counties and a portion of Wayne County.



STEWART

The study shows promising safety improvements across the region, according to AMATS Planning Administrator Matt Stewart.

“Generally, we’re finding that the level of severity for crashes in locations with roundabouts is dropping off sharply. Many locations are showing declines in overall crash totals too, but the drop in crash severity is the most welcome finding from our study,” Stewart says.

A roundabout is a type of circular intersection or junction in which road traffic is permitted to flow in one direction around a central island. Compared to stop signs, traffic signals, and earlier forms of traffic circles, modern roundabouts reduce the likelihood and severity of collisions by reducing traffic speeds and minimizing accident impacts. Area communities, most notably Akron, Green, and Kent, have pursued roundabouts to improve traffic flow and safety.



Stewart says that the study presents comprehensive data for each of the region’s 28 roundabouts prior to their construction and post-construction.

The study not only inventories existing and planned roundabouts, but also assesses the crash and safety data of roundabouts operating in the region during a 10-year period spanning 2012 through 2022.

The study is a follow-up to the agency’s *Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Action Plan*, which was adopted by the committee in May 2023. The *SS4A Action Plan* details various proposed infrastructure investments and policy strategies to promote safe travel throughout the Greater Akron area.

Roundabouts are just one type of potential safety project that communities may pursue. For more information about the *AMATS Areawide Roundabout Study*, please click [here](#).



CIRCULAR LOGIC:

Roundabouts, like the one at East Summit Street and Johnston and Ted Boyd drives in Kent, shown at left, are being embraced by more Greater Akron area communities as an effective safety strategy.

Actively Planning for the Future

AMATS greenlights a new area Active Transportation Plan

The new *Active Transportation Plan* (ATP) prepared by AMATS presents what has been accomplished in improving the Greater Akron area’s active transportation network and offers a vision for its future.



Active transportation is human-powered mobility such as biking and walking. Adopted by the AMATS Policy Committee during its May 16 meeting, the ATP is another step in the agency’s pursuit of regional transportation infrastructure that is accessible and safe for all users, not just motor vehicles, throughout Portage and Summit counties and northeastern Wayne County.

AMATS Mobility Planner Heather Davis Reidl says that the plan evaluates the current status of bike and pedestrian networks within the Greater Akron area and identifies regional goals to promote accessibility, efficiency, equity, and safety.

While the area has witnessed significant growth in its active transportation networks in recent years, particularly with new hike-and-bike trails such as the Freedom Trail and The PORTAGE, active transportation users remain the most vulnerable on area roadways. Many people eventually become users through everyday activities such as walking their dogs or neighborhood bike treks, according to Reidl.

“Many would-be cyclists and pedestrians are reluctant to travel because of safety concerns. Our new ATP, coupled with our *Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Action Plan*, aims to cure their reluctance,” Reidl says. She adds that a widespread hesitance to try active transportation may contribute to other problems such as declines in regional air quality and public health.

The plan presents the agency’s vision of a region in which biking and walking are vital components of the region’s multi-modal transportation system of roadways and transit service. New shared use paths, bike lanes, and quality sidewalks are among the goals and strategies recommended in the plan. For more information about the ATP, please click [here](#).



ACTIVE GROWTH:
New hike-and-bike trails such as the Freedom Trail, shown here, have contributed to the growth of the Greater Akron area’s active transportation network.

STORMING DESPITE RAIN:

Although the ride portion of the May 11 Bike & Brainstorm in Hudson was cancelled due to rain, would-be participants still gathered in the Hudson Library & Historical Society for a morning brainstorming session with agency and city officials, top at right.



Photos by Matt Mullen - AMATS

The event was hosted by AMATS and Hudson as part of the northern Summit County community's update of the *Hudson Walk & Bike Plan*. The plan is part of Hudson's ongoing efforts to promote connectivity.

Middle at right, attendees view network maps and other materials regarding bike and pedestrian access throughout Hudson.



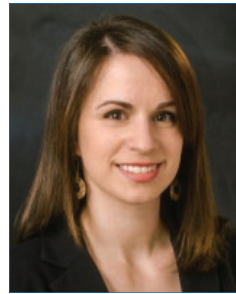
Bottom at right, Hudson City Engineer Brad Kosco, standing, describes the update of the *Hudson Walk & Bike Plan* as attendees listen.



AMATS grants to boost cycling, pedestrian safety in New Franklin, Akron

Thanks to AMATS, new cycling and pedestrian amenities may start blossoming in New Franklin and Akron soon. During its March 28 meeting, the AMATS Policy Committee awarded two \$40,000 grants from the agency’s Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program to develop plans that promote safe and livable communities along a portion of state Route 619 in New Franklin and Akron’s Summit Lake neighborhood.

The Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program promotes active transportation solutions such as walking and cycling in land use planning rather than motor vehicle use. Since its launch in 2010, the program has funded studies throughout the Greater Akron area, most recently in Lakemore Village and Springfield Township.



REIDL

AMATS Mobility Planner Heather Davis Reidl says that New Franklin’s *SR 619 Corridor Development Planning Study* and Akron’s *Summit Lake Pedestrian Safety Master Plan* were the two highest scoring proposals submitted from eight applicants across the region.

“New Franklin officials stated in their grant application and AMATS agreed that a study of the state Route 619 corridor, between South Main and State streets, is needed, especially as a new residential development is planned near the state Route 619 and Point Comfort Drive intersection,” Reidl explains.

As there are no nearby safe facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, New Franklin officials opted to pursue a proactive planning approach. Reidl says that this study will consider potential solutions to accommodate all modes of transportation for hundreds of new residents in an area expected to grow in the coming years.

Renewed investment and new cycling, pedestrian, and recreational amenities are attracting new visitors and increased traffic to Akron’s Summit Lake neighborhood. City officials will use the upcoming *Summit Lake Pedestrian Safety Master Plan* to identify a framework for the development and integration of complete street principles during the neighborhood’s ongoing renaissance. Reidl says that the aim of the plan is to improve pedestrian safety for persons of all ages and abilities in the Summit Lake neighborhood.

Photos by City of Akron Long Range Planning



SUMMIT LAKE MAKES THE SCENE!

The *Summit Lake Pedestrian Safety Master Plan* study area in Akron is bounded by Thornton Street to the north, South Main Street to the east, a CSX-owned rail corridor to the south, and Manchester Road to the west. This slideshow highlights the neighborhood and some of its current amenities.

Cuyahoga Falls, Coventry Township, and Kent land three new projects

The AMATS Policy Committee approved more than \$15.2 million for three major roadway projects throughout the Greater Akron area during its March 28 meeting.

AMATS is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization serving the Greater Akron area of Portage and Summit counties and a portion of Wayne County. The agency oversees the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding program, which provides a flexible funding source for communities seeking to improve highways and bridges on any public road.

The agency’s Policy Committee unanimously approved funding for improvement projects in Cuyahoga Falls, Coventry Township, and Kent. Cuyahoga Falls is the largest recipient of STBG funds in the region with \$6.1 million for the reconstruction of State Road between Quick Road and Boulder Boulevard. The State Road improvement project will include the addition of a two-way, left-turn lane and may include a roundabout.

The Summit County Engineer’s office landed \$5.9 million for pavement replacement and new sidewalks along South Main Street, from Portage Lakes Drive to North Turkeyfoot Road, in Coventry Township.

The Kent and Franklin Township-based project will receive more than \$3.2 million and is jointly sponsored by Kent, the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA), and the Portage County Engineer’s office. Spanning along state Route 59, from east of Horning Road to state Route 261, the project will reconstruct pavement and include various pedestrian, trail, signal, and transit improvements along the corridor.

The state Route 59 project is the result of recommendations issued in PARTA’s *State Route 59 Alternative Transportation Improvements Study*, which was completed in May 2022. The study itself was funded by the AMATS Connecting Communities Program, which is an agency initiative to promote active transportation such as walking and cycling throughout the Greater Akron area.

Committee approval ends a comprehensive selection process that began last September when the agency began sifting through 26 STBG applications from project sponsors across the region. The projects will receive funding between now and 2029.



Project Updates

The following table lists significant projects that were awarded between Oct. 25, 2023 and May 22, 2024.

PROJECT	ESTIMATED COMPLETION	AMOUNT
Frost Road Resurfacing - Resurfacing Frost Road, from east of state Route 43 to Page Road, in Streetsboro.	8/30/2024	\$497,127
State Route 18 Resurfacing - Resurfacing state Route 18, from South Hametown Road to east of Cleveland Massillon Road, in Bath and Copley townships.	9/30/2024	\$1,899,094
State Route 91 - Replace bridge over Brandywine Creek in Hudson.	10/1/2024	\$792,738
State Route 57/604 Roundabout - Convert two-way stop-controlled intersection into a single-lane roundabout.	10/31/2024	\$1,462,896
Granger Road - Replace bridge over Yellow Creek (east of Timberline Drive) in Bath Township.	11/29/2024	\$1,564,984
Wooster Road West - Resurfacing Wooster Road, from 31st Street to Hudson Run Road, and reconstruction, from Hudson Run Road to 2nd Street NW, in Barberton. Project also includes a road diet, sewer improvements, and minor work on two bridges.	9/1/2025	\$8,891,694
Randolph Road - Replace bridge over Potters Creek (west of Traes Road) in Randolph Township.	9/30/2025	\$709,351
Sunrise Boulevard - Bridge rehabilitation over Fish Creek in Kent.	10/31/2025	\$532,616
Highland Road Resurfacing - Resurfacing of Highland Road, from Hadden Road to Darrow Road (state Route 91), in Twinsburg.	10/31/2025	\$459,688
Miller Road Resurfacing - Resurfacing Miller Road, from Ridgewood Road to West Market Street, in Akron and Fairlawn.	10/31/2025	\$548,085
State Route 18 - Resurfacing state Route 18, from state Route 59 to Interstate 76, in Akron. Project includes minor bridge work to eight structures.	10/31/2025	\$3,952,428
Valley View Road Resurfacing - Resurfacing Valley View Road, from Hudson North Corporate Limit to state Route 91, in Hudson.	10/31/2025	\$695,033
East Steels Corners Road - Bridge rehabilitation over Mud Brook in Stow.	12/1/2025	\$1,049,492
Freedom Trail Middlebury Connector - Construct multipurpose trail connecting The PORTAGE Hike & Bike Trail to the Freedom Trail in Tallmadge, Stow, and Kent.	12/30/2025	\$1,899,997
Hudson Signal Improvements - Replacing and upgrading signals at 14 intersections to adaptive "smart signals" in Hudson.	10/31/2026	\$3,121,000

Dates to Remember

Date	Time	Committee/Event	Location
June 19	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Juneteenth Holiday
July 4	1:30 p.m.	*	AMATS Offices Closed - July 4th Holiday
August 1	1:30 p.m.	TAC	The Venue @ 10 Tallmadge Circle in Tallmadge
August 1	6:30 p.m.	CIC	Virtual Meeting
August 8	1:30 p.m.	Policy	The Venue @ 10 Tallmadge Circle in Tallmadge
September 2	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Labor Day
September 19	1:30 p.m.	TAC	The Venue @ 10 Tallmadge Circle in Tallmadge
September 19	6:30 p.m.	CIC	Virtual Meeting
September 26	1:30 p.m.	Policy	The Venue @ 10 Tallmadge Circle in Tallmadge
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 5	1:30 p.m.	TAC	The Venue @ 10 Tallmadge Circle in Tallmadge
December 5	6:30 p.m.	CIC	Virtual Meeting
December 12	1:30 p.m.	Policy	The Venue @ 10 Tallmadge Circle in Tallmadge
December 25	*	*	AMATS Offices Closed - Christmas

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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.