

6



1962 - 2022

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

The Yearly Chronicle of the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study

Celebrating a Diamond Anniversary

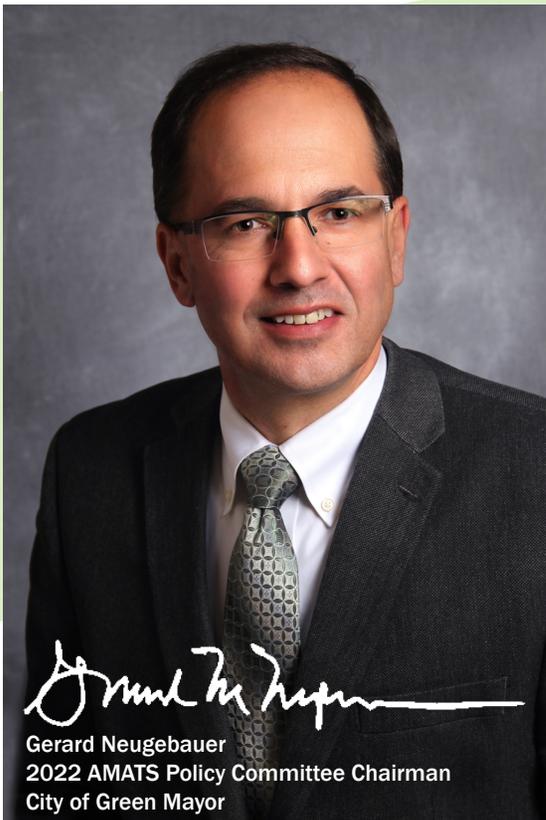
2022 wasn't just another year for the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS). The agency celebrated a milestone: Its 60th year as a metropolitan planning organization.

AMATS was created in April 1962 following the passage of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962. This sweeping law stated that no federal funds would be approved for projects in any urban area of more than 50,000 in population unless such projects are based on a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process.

The scope of the agency's initial study area was about 230 square miles and included the urbanized area as defined by the 1960 U.S. Census. Since that time, the agency's study area has grown to nearly 997 square miles and encompasses Portage and Summit counties and a portion of Wayne County. Later, the agency's planning concerns would reach beyond roads and highways to include public transit, pedestrian concerns, and bicycle networks.

The agency's growth is due to a combination of factors, but mostly to the recognition of leaders within the Greater Akron area that their respective communities benefit by participating and supporting an ongoing transportation planning process. Their active participation in such a process sustains a vibrant region.

2022 was not just another year or another anniversary. It was the year that another far-reaching piece of legislation, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), took effect. Much like the law that created AMATS in 1962, the BIL has significant ramifications for the Greater Akron area and how the agency oversees the regional transportation planning process. The legislation introduced new considerations into the planning process such as climate change and social equity and revamped or created various funding sources, most notably the Carbon Reduction Program. AMATS and its committees met each of these challenges head on throughout the year.



The agency began the year by selecting 37 projects to receive nearly \$40 million in funding from the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), Resurfacing, and Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) programs.

Safety as a planning consideration gained new momentum during the year as evidenced by the many reports AMATS completed. In 2022, AMATS completed two crash reports – the *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2018-2020) Report* and the *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2019-2021) Report*. Another significant accomplishment was the first-of-its-kind *2021 Annual Report on Roadway Traffic Congestion in the AMATS Region*. Safety concerns were also paramount in AMATS' decision to commit the Greater Akron area to the national *Vision Zero* and Safe Streets for All (SS4A) initiatives.

Additionally, the year gave witness to achievements by AMATS to promote active transportation throughout the region. The AMATS Connecting Communities Program is an ongoing success. In December, the program awarded a significant planning grant to the Village of Lakemore and Springfield Township for a unique livability study. Bike-N-Brainstorm and Jane's Walk events continued to be key strategies used by the agency throughout the year to encourage cycling and walking in area transportation planning.

Our *2022 Annual Report* documents a single year of an evolving agency that has grown in significance since its inception 60 years ago. It is an honor for me to lead the AMATS Policy Committee during the year of its diamond anniversary. Those living and working in the Greater Akron area will appreciate the quality transportation planning provided by this exceptional agency as documented in the pages of this annual report.



Table of Contents

- Celebrating a Diamond Anniversary. 1**
- Planning. 2**
 - 2021 Annual Report on Roadway Traffic Congestion in the AMATS Region 2
 - Vision Zero 3
 - Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Taskforce 3
 - Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program 4
 - State Route 59 Alternative Transportation Improvements 4
 - City of Stow City-Wide Connectivity Plan 4
 - Living in Lakemore / Spartan Trail Extension Study. 4
 - Bike-N-Brainstorms. 5
- Engineering 6**
 - 37 In '22. 6
 - Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2018-2020) Report 8
 - Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2019-2021) Report 8
 - Engineering Activities. 9
 - Traffic Counting Program 9
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts. 9
- Outreach 9**
 - New 3P. 9
 - Aged Population Outreach. 9
 - Celebrating 60. 10
- Financial Data for Fiscal Year 2022 10**
 - Revenues by Type 10
 - Expenditures by Type 10
- Policy Committee and Staff 11**
 - 2022 Policy Committee Members 11
 - AMATS Staff. 11

Cover Photo courtesy of:
Rubber City Aerial Photography / Rubber City Drones, LLC

Planning

2022 was a significant year for AMATS in terms of planning for the Greater Akron area's transportation needs.

The agency's most outstanding planning achievement during the year was the completion of the *2021 Annual Report on Roadway Traffic Congestion in the AMATS Region*. Other bold planning actions by AMATS were its decision to commit the area to the national *Vision Zero* Initiative and the formation of the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Taskforce.

In other planning endeavors, the agency continued to make tremendous strides in its promotion of regional connectivity through its Connecting Communities Program and various Bike-N-Brainstorm and Jane's Walk events. These programs promote connectivity in planning among the region's roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian networks.

2021 Annual Report on Roadway Traffic Congestion in the AMATS Region

In May, AMATS completed the *2021 Annual Report on Roadway Traffic Congestion in the AMATS Region*.

The report assesses traffic congestion on road segments located on interstates, freeways, interchanges, ramps, arterials, and various intersections within the Greater Akron area of Portage and Summit counties and northeastern Wayne County. The report found that the area's roadway network functions at a "tolerable" level of congestion even during peak drive-times.

Out of 7,100 segments analyzed, the report found that only 23 segments experience severe congestion at various times during the day. Nineteen of the 23 segments experiencing severe congestion are in Summit County while two are in Portage County and two are in Wayne County.

AMATS calculated area congestion based on a mix of performance measures that included the average travel speed of vehicles on segments, the average free flow speed of vehicles travelling unhindered on segments, and vehicle hours of delay.

For its analysis, the agency defined the peak morning drive-time as between 6 and 10 a.m., the mid-day drive time as 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., and the peak evening drive-time as 3 and 7 p.m. In the agency's listing of congested segments, the Interstate 271 southbound off-ramp to state Route 8 located in Macedonia experiences the area's most severe congestion during the peak evening drive-time. The East Bartges Street eastbound lane through the South Main Street Interchange in Akron and the West Avenue eastbound link to Tallmadge Circle in Tallmadge are listed as second and third in the agency's listing of segments experiencing severe congestion. These segments experience severe congestion during the peak evening drive-time.

The highest listed Portage County segment is Tallmadge Road between Cascades Boulevard to just west of the Interstate 76 Interchange in Brimfield Township. This segment experiences severe congestion during the mid-day drive time. The state Route 14 western leg of the state Route 43

intersection in Streetsboro becomes severely congested during the peak evening drive-time. These segments appear as the seventeenth and eighteenth most severe congested segments in the agency's listing.

Two Wayne County locations - the state Route 21 northbound and southbound left-turn links to Edwards Road in Chippewa Township - are listed among the area's most severely congested segments. Interestingly, the northbound portion experiences severe congestion during the peak evening drive-time while the southbound portion of this segment experiences severe congestion during the peak morning drive-time. These segments appear as the fourth and eighth most congested segments in the agency's listing.

By community, the cities of Akron and Tallmadge each have five locations identified as experiencing severe congestion at various times during the day. Other communities with multiple listings are Macedonia with three locations and Hudson with two locations.

AMATS used StreetLight InSight to compile the report. StreetLight InSight is a Cloud-based software analytics platform that tracks vehicle movements. Congestion estimates for segments were calculated over a five-month period spanning March through August 2021.

The report is the first of its kind to be compiled by the agency and will be updated on an annual basis. Congestion is not only an inconvenience to motorists, but also raises safety concerns for commuters on their trips to work, school, and other daily activities. Traffic delays also have negative impacts on air quality, the economy, and the timely delivery of goods and services.

The agency will use this report and its future editions to identify long-term regional congestion trends as part of its oversight of the area's Congestion Management Process (CMP). The report will help AMATS to identify and plan congestion-improvement projects throughout the region.



Vision Zero

In August, the AMATS Policy Committee committed the Greater Akron area to the national *Vision Zero* initiative. *Vision Zero* is a road traffic safety program promoted by the U.S. Department of Transportation that aims to achieve the ambitious goal of zero road traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries across the nation. In its approval of Resolution 2022-16, the AMATS Policy Committee also promised to increase safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all over the next 28 years.

The agency's *Vision Zero* concept will establish realistic timelines to ensure safety for all people as they move about their communities. AMATS' *Vision Zero* goal within the Greater Akron area is to reduce the number of crashes resulting in fatalities and severe injuries on a consistent basis until reaching a goal of no area roadway deaths by 2050.

Previous approaches to transportation planning were largely based on the assumption that most road users are responsible for their own safety. While users will continue to bear a significant amount of responsibility for their actions, *Vision Zero* recognizes that responsibility and safety are shared by transportation system designers as well as road users.

How will the agency reach the goal of zero fatalities? *Vision Zero* advocates argue that collisions resulting in death and severe injury are not inevitable, but can be prevented through changes in behavior, technology, and traffic designs that accommodate multimodal transportation uses.

One of AMATS' strengths in its *Vision Zero* approach is that the agency has a strong record of prioritizing and compiling crash studies for all transportation modes. In recent years, the agency and the area have made demonstrable progress in improving motor vehicle, pedestrian, and cyclist safety by making systemic changes in how the area's transportation network is planned, built, and operated. That progress will continue with the adoption of the *Vision Zero* resolution.

The resolution's passage was the first step necessary for AMATS



to begin developing a regional Safety Action Plan as required by the federal grant program, Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A). AMATS has established a taskforce of its membership to guide development of the area's Safety Action Plan, which the agency and its committee members will follow as they pursue AMATS' *Vision Zero* goals.

To view the *Vision Zero* resolution, please click [here](#).

Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Taskforce



The AMATS Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Taskforce, shown at left, began in October. The taskforce is responsible for crafting an action plan for the Greater Akron area to identify common causes of fatal and serious crashes and offer possible solutions for unsafe locations.

The national SS4A Program was created through the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The multibillion-dollar program's focus is to prevent fatalities and injuries on roadways. SS4A grants may be used to develop action plans or projects.

At the suggestion of Akron officials, AMATS opted to craft a systemic, action plan for the entire region rather than a piecemeal approach with separate communities developing their own individual plans. Agency officials agree that developing a plan now - without using SS4A funds - will allow the region to prepare a list of potential projects that will be eligible for future program implementation grants.

The upcoming action plan will emphasize Complete Street principles while encompassing various transportation modes including walking, biking, and transit. The plan will also advance social equity ideals and speed management strategies in planning. The taskforce agreed that the initial steps in the plan's development should be engaging stakeholders, conducting public surveys, and analyses of available crash and safety data.

Among AMATS' first steps in the plan's development was hosting a series of in-person and virtual focus group meetings with various transportation stakeholders in November. Among the stakeholders invited to participate were transit providers, active transportation advocates, first responders, and social service agencies. In December, the agency launched an online survey to gauge public opinions regarding potential safety measures.

AMATS expects to complete the plan by May 2023.



Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program

2022 marked another successful year for the AMATS Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program and its efforts to promote regional connectivity 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.

Two separate studies led by the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA) and the city of Stow, which were awarded grants in 2020, were completed in May. The program approved a grant for a new livability study in the Village of Lakemore and Springfield Township during December. These studies are summarized below.

State Route 59 Alternative Transportation Improvements

This study identifies necessary transit, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements along state Route 59, between Horning Road and state Route 261, in Franklin Township. PARTA was the lead entity for this study, which identifies areas where sidewalks could be extended, crosswalks installed, crossing signals implemented, mid-block crossing areas highlighted, and better transit passenger amenities added.



City of Stow City-Wide Connectivity Plan

This study establishes 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.



Living in Lakemore / Spartan Trail Extension Study

In September, AMATS accepted grant applications for Fiscal Year 2023. These applications were evaluated by the Connecting Communities Taskforce in October. Based on this evaluation, the AMATS Policy Committee awarded a \$52,000 planning grant to the Village of Lakemore and Springfield Township for the *Living in Lakemore/Spartan Trail Extension* study in December.



The study will allow the village to identify connectivity improvements between its residential neighborhoods and commercial and recreational areas. New sidewalks in key locations across Lakemore are the most likely strategy to be pursued under the study while dedicated bike lanes and improved transit access are other possibilities.

The study will identify potential sidewalk locations to provide safe access not only to the Spartan Trail and Springfield Middle and High schools, but nearby METRO bus stops, shopping, and parks. Because the village and township share the Springfield Local Schools system, both communities will

use the study to identify sections of the Spartan Trail suitable for development as neighborhood access points to the middle and high schools.

To learn more about these studies and others funded by the Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program, please click [here](#).



WALKS AROUND AKRON

After a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Jane's Walk returned to the Greater Akron area. The Downtown Akron Partnership organized this year's walking tours, which occurred on May 6-7 in various locales in Akron. Jane's Walk events are part of a global walking initiative that was launched by friends of urban planning pioneer, Jane Jacobs.

Jane's Walk tours offer participants chances to explore local neighborhoods and encourage dialogue between neighbors and community planners. AMATS promotes active transportation and connectivity principles in transportation planning. The agency frequently utilizes such events as one of its planning tools.

This year's events included tours of the historic buildings along Main Street in Akron's downtown, shown in top and middle pictures below. This year's tours even got walkers' canine friends involved during a Downtown Dog Walk, shown at bottom.

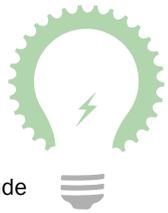


Photos courtesy of the Downtown Akron Partnership and The University of Akron.

Bike-N-Brainstorms



During 2022, the AMATS Switching Gears Program hosted a successful Bike-N-Brainstorm event in Cuyahoga Falls, shown at left and below. Bike-N-Brainstorms are public meetings that include a bike ride and brainstorming session. Following rides, participants share their insights on how to improve biking and pedestrian access in a community.



Bike-N-Brainstorm

The program hosted a Bike-N-Brainstorm in downtown Cuyahoga Falls in June. Cyclists met on the evening of June 11 at the Bicycle Fixit Station in Downtown Plaza for a seven-mile ride through the city. Cuyahoga Falls Mayor Don Walters was among those participating in this event.

Public feedback collected by agency and city officials following this Bike-N-Brainstorm will be used to identify active transportation strategies for the area in the future.

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



Engineering

2022 was a year of notable achievements for AMATS with regards to its engineering activities. Most notably, the agency began the year by selecting 37 projects to receive nearly \$40 million in funding from several programs administered by AMATS.

Safety concerns dominated the agency’s engineering accomplishments in 2022, which included the completion of two crash reports – the *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2018-2020) Report* and the *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2019-2021) Report*.

In addition to these achievements, AMATS completed various data collection activities necessary to its mission as the region’s federally designated metropolitan planning organization.

37 In ‘22

In January, the AMATS Policy Committee selected 37 highway, resurfacing, and bike and pedestrian projects throughout the Greater Akron area to receive nearly \$40 million in federal funds. The committee unanimously approved the slate of projects which will receive funding through 2028.

At approximately \$21 million for seven projects, the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program will provide the lion’s share of new project funding for the region. STBG funds provide a flexible funding source for communities seeking to improve highways and bridges on any public road. Major reconstruction projects on East Market Street in Akron, Wyoga Lake Road in Cuyahoga Falls, and Darrow Road in Stow are among the seven selected by AMATS to receive STBG funds in the coming years. These three projects alone will receive slightly more than \$16.8 million in STBG funds.

The Resurfacing Program will provide nearly \$14.9 million for 24 resurfacing projects, several of which are sponsored by county engineer’s offices throughout the region. Portage County will receive more than \$614,000 to resurface a portion of Ravenna and Diagonal roads in Franklin Township and more than \$321,000 for Cleveland Road in Ravenna Township. Summit County will receive \$787,500 apiece for projects on South Main Street in Coventry Township and Valley View Road in Sagamore Hills Township. Wayne County will receive more than \$508,000 for a project on Doylestown Road and Portage Street in Chippewa Township.

The area’s trail and sidewalk networks will continue to expand as six projects totaling nearly \$4.2 million will receive funding from the federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program. The TASA Program provides funding for projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities that provide transportation alternatives to motor vehicles.

Phase 2 of the Rubber City Heritage Trail in Akron and pedestrian improvements along East Main Street (state Route 59) in Kent will each receive \$700,000 in TASA funds. The Heartland Trail project in Wayne County, which will construct a new multi-purpose trail with berms wide enough to accommodate horse-drawn buggies, is also slated to receive nearly \$659,000 in TASA funds.

Tables detailing projects that received STBG, Resurfacing and TASA funds appear below:

SPONSOR	PROJECT	PROJECT LIMITS	DESCRIPTION	AMATS FUNDING
Akron	E. Market Street (SR-18)	From SR-8 to Case Avenue	Full-depth pavement reconstruction and concrete curbs and sidewalk. A complete and green streets approach will be utilized. New striping configuration, including crosswalks	\$6,100,000
Cuyahoga Falls	Wyoga Lake Road	From E. Steels Corners Road to Seasons Road	Reconstruct with two-way left-turn lane, signals where warranted, shared-use path, drainage improvements.	\$6,100,000
Green	Arlington Road Reconstruction	From Boettler Road to September Drive	Widen from two to four lanes, new sidewalk on one side and shared-use path on the other.	\$2,373,642
Hudson	SR-91 and Terex Road Turn Lane Improvements	At the intersection of SR-91 and Terex Road	Construct left-turn lanes along Terex Road from 750 feet west of SR-91 to 300 feet east of SR-91.	\$400,142
Macedonia	Highland Road and Valley View Road	At the intersection of the two streets.	Northbound, southbound, and eastbound exclusive left-turn lanes, exclusive right-turn lanes at all approaches, new traffic signal, resurface all pavement.	\$302,051
Stow	Darrow Road Reconstruction	From the Stow South Corporate Line to just south of Norton Road	Complete reconstruction, completing the sidewalk/shared-use path, adding a bus pull-off lane and shelters near Commerce Drive, replace and update all traffic signals to a coordinated system.	\$4,660,000
Streetsboro	SR-14 and SR-43 Intersection Reconstruction	0.11 miles on SR-14 and 0.04 miles on SR-43	Full-depth concrete pavement reconstruction	\$1,089,752

Table 2 - Resurfacing Projects

SPONSOR	PROJECT	PROJECT LIMITS	AMATS FUNDING
Akron	Miller Road	Ridgewood Road to W. Market Street (SR-18)	\$409,500
Barberton	Norton Avenue	Barber Road / Fourth Street to West Corporate Line	\$499,662
Cuyahoga Falls	Bailey Road	Front Street to Graham Road	\$787,500
Cuyahoga Falls	Hudson Drive	Front Street to Graham Road	\$787,500
Fairlawn	Cleveland Massillon Road	Ridgewood Road to Kumho Drive and Springside Drive to 200 feet south of Ghent Road	\$787,500
Green	S. Main Street	790 feet south of Caston Road to SR-619	\$787,500
Hudson	Valley View Road	Hudson North Corporate Line to S. Cleveland Avenue / Portage County Line	\$787,500
Hudson	E Barlow Road	Norfolk Southern railroad tracks to Stow Road	\$439,744
Macedonia	Valley View Road	Twinsburg Road to Macedonia South Corporate Line	\$292,500
Mogadore / Summit County	Albrecht Avenue	Stull Avenue / Akron Corporate Line to S. Cleveland Avenue / Portage County Line	\$787,500
New Franklin	Cleveland Massillon Road	Grill Road to Serfass Road	\$700,000
Norton	Cleveland Massillon Road	Norton North Corporate Line to I-76	\$787,500
Norton	Greenwich Road	S. Medina Line Road to Cleveland Massillon Road	\$787,500
Portage County	Ravenna Road / Diagonal Road	SR-43 to Brady Lake Road	\$614,409
Portage County	Cleveland Road	Ravenna City Limits to SR-14	\$321,557
Ravenna	S. Prospect Street	Main Street to South Corporate Line	\$247,500
Rittman	Main Street	Ohio Avenue to Rittman North Corporate Line	\$400,262
Stow	Graham Road	750 feet east of Darrow Road to Newcomer Road	\$787,500
Streetsboro	Frost Road - Phase 2	SR-43 to Page Road	\$461,835
Summit County	S. Main Street	Green Corporate Line to Warner Road	\$787,500
Summit County	Valley View Road	Dunham Road to Olde 8 Road	\$787,500
Twinsburg	Highland Road	Hadden Drive to Darrow Road (SR-91)	\$522,000
Twinsburg	Glenwood Drive	Ravenna Road to Darrow Road (SR-91)	\$787,500
Wayne County	Doylestown Road / Portage Street	Doylestown Road - from Rittman East Corporate Line to Doylestown West Corporate Line Portage Street - from Whitman Road to Doylestown West Corporate Line and from Doylestown East Corporate Line to Eastern Road	\$508,829

Table 3 - Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Projects

SPONSOR	PROJECT	PROJECT LIMITS	DESCRIPTION	AMATS FUNDING
Akron	Rubber City Heritage Trail - Phase 2	Exchange Street / Arlington Street Intersection to Exchange Street	Extend from existing Rubber City Heritage Trail - Phase 1 to Middlebury Market area	\$700,000
Kent	E. Main Street (SR-59) Improvements	E. Main Street (SR-59) from Main / Willow Street to Horning Road	Convert to tree-lined boulevard, 10-foot brick pedestrian crossings, center pedestrian refuge islands, 10-foot wide multi-purpose trail, bus pull-offs and shelters	\$700,000
Wayne County	Heartland Trail - Phase 4A	North of Market Street to Coal Bank Road in the Village of Marshallville	New 10-foot asphalt multi-purpose trail with 2-foot and 7-foot berms to accommodate horse and buggy traffic	\$658,727
Hudson	Veterans Trail - Rails to Trails	Railroad line at Barlow Road in Hudson along existing railroad line to Springdale Road in Stow	10-foot trail along railroad from Barlow Road to Springdale Road	\$700,000
Summit County	Springside Drive Sidewalk	Montrose area of Bath Township	7-foot sidewalk	\$700,000
Stow	Darrow Road Sidewalks - Phase 2	Lillian Road to Fishcreek Road	Construct new 5-foot sidewalk	\$700,000

Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2018-2020) Report

The *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2018-2020) Report* completed by AMATS in March shows that fatal motor vehicle crashes surged in the Greater Akron area during 2020 when compared to 2018.

The report is based on AMATS' analysis of more than 51,000 motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian-related crash records for the area's roadway sections and intersections obtained from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). For the *2018-2020 Crash Report*, the agency identified 160 high-crash roadway sections and 202 high-crash intersections in the region.

In 2018, the Greater Akron area recorded 35 motor vehicle crash fatalities. (This total represents the nadir for fatalities over a 13-year span beginning in 2008.) After posting an increase to 44 fatalities in 2019, fatalities surged by 97 percent to 69 fatalities when compared to 2018.

AMATS officials suspect that a possible reason for this troubling increase is that less traffic during the lockdown led to higher speeds and more fatal crashes with some drivers mistakenly believing that they could drive faster or more recklessly with no consequences.

Surprisingly, the agency found that this recent increase in fatalities occurred during a period of significant declines in regional daily traffic, vehicle crashes, and crash-related injuries. These declines may seem contradictory initially when compared to the data regarding fatalities. However, these declines may be attributable to a combination of COVID-19 restrictions, various area safety improvement projects, and vehicle safety advancements by manufacturers.

Between 2018 and 2020, the number of thousands of daily vehicle miles traveled on Greater Akron area roadways fell from 20,087 to 17,463, a decrease of 2,624 miles travelled or 13 percent.

Much of this decrease - 12.9 percent - occurred between 2019 and 2020 most likely due to the COVID-19 lockdown. Coinciding with this drop in daily traffic, the number of crashes in the region also decreased, from 18,739 in 2018 to 14,965 in 2020, a decline of 20.1 percent.

Like the decrease in miles traveled, most of the decline in crashes occurred between 2019 and 2020, with 17,774 crashes in 2019 and 14,965 crashes in 2020, a drop of nearly 15.8 percent. Crashes resulting in injuries also decreased significantly, from 4,262 in 2018 to 3,503 in 2020, with the sharpest decline - 13.9 percent - occurring between 2019 and 2020.

As part of its mission as the Greater Akron area's metropolitan planning organization, AMATS also tracks bicycle and pedestrian-related crashes.

The agency found that, out of the 218 bicycle-related crashes that occurred between 2018 and 2020, 159 or 73 percent resulted in an injury and eight in a fatality. The numbers of bicycle-related crashes and bicycle crashes with injuries posted declines between 2018 and 2020. Bicycle-related crashes fell from 82 in 2018 to 57 in 2020, a drop-off of about 30.5 percent. Bicycle crashes with injuries dropped from 61 in 2018 to 43 in 2020, a decline of 29.5 percent. In contrast to the totals for motor vehicles, bicycle-related crashes with fatalities posted a sharp decrease from six in 2019 to one in 2020.

There were 413 pedestrian-related crashes between 2018 and 2020 with 340 or 82 percent resulting in an injury and 23 in a fatality. Pedestrians accounted for over 16 percent of all area crash-related fatalities that occurred between 2018 and 2020.

Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2019-2021) Report

In December, the AMATS Policy Committee approved the *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures (2019-2021) Report*. The three-year analysis shows that the overall number of crashes in the Greater Akron area surged by about 6 percent or 1,022 crashes, from 14,965 crashes in 2020 to 15,987 crashes in 2021.

The report is based on AMATS' analysis of nearly 49,000 ODOT motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian-related crash records for the area's roadway sections and intersections. For the *2019-2021 Crash Report*, the agency identified 143 high-crash roadway sections and 231 high-crash intersections within Portage and Summit counties and northeastern Wayne County.

While crashes resulting in an injury increased by a significant 8 percent or 279 crashes, from 3,503 in 2020 to 3,782 in 2021, the area was more fortunate with regards to total fatalities and fatal crashes. Although area fatalities increased by one, from 69 in 2020 to 70 in 2021, and the total number of fatal crashes posted a decrease, from 64 in 2020 to 63 in 2021, these numbers lose their luster when compared to 2019's totals. There were 44 total fatalities and 43 fatal crashes in 2019, the year before the COVID-19 Pandemic.

This report aligns with the findings of the agency's previous three-year crash report, which spanned 2018 through 2020. These reports have prompted agency officials to theorize that the pandemic and subsequent lockdown created a substantial decrease in area travel and in overall crashes during 2020. Fewer vehicles on area roadways during the lockdown may have led to more reckless driving, higher speeds, and more fatalities. Unfortunately, the number of fatalities increased significantly during that time and remained high through 2021.

Two area roadways tied for first place in the agency's rankings of high-crash roadway sections. State Route 59, from Alpha Drive to state Route 261, in Portage County's Franklin Township, and state Route 241 (Massillon Road), from Krumroy Road to Oaks Drive, in Summit County's Springfield Township, scored at the top of the region's high-crash roadway sections. State Route 585, from Benner Road to state Route 57, in Milton Township ranked 29th in the listing, the highest appearance for a section based in AMATS' portion of Wayne County.

State Route 18 (Medina Road) and Medina Line Road in Summit County's Bath and Copley townships and state Route 14 and state Route 44 (North Chestnut Street) in Ravenna ranked first and second respectively for high-crash intersections in the region. The highest-ranking northeastern Wayne County intersection was State Route 57 (Wadsworth Road) and state Route 604 (Easton Road) in Chippewa Township, which placed at seventeen in the listing.

In its tracking of bicycle and pedestrian-related crashes in the Greater Akron area, the agency found that, out of the 200 bicycle-related crashes that occurred between 2019 and 2021, 151 or 75.5 percent resulted in an injury and eight in a fatality. There were 382 pedestrian-related crashes between 2019 and 2021 with 319 or 83.5 percent resulting in an injury and 26 in a fatality. Pedestrians accounted for over 14 percent of all area crash-related fatalities that occurred during the three-year period.



Photo courtesy of 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. This data is collected using radar counters.

The agency conducted 345 traffic counts at various area roadway segments during 2022.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts

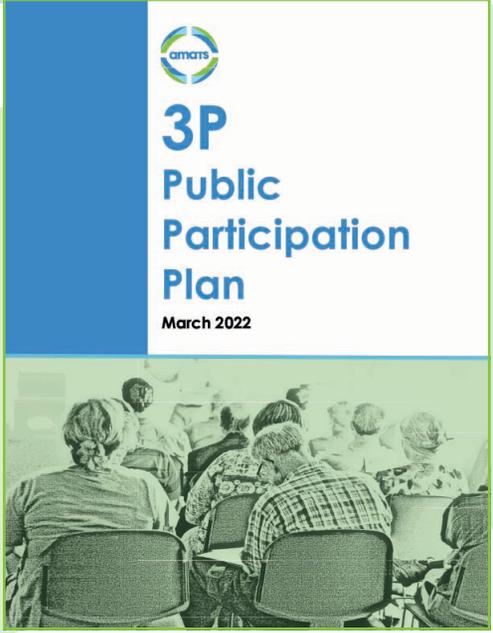
Bicycle and pedestrian counting have become increasingly important aspects of transportation planning in recent years, especially in light of AMATS' efforts to promote regional connectivity. This count data helps target the location for future bicycle and pedestrian facilities in areas where land use 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 December, the agency conducted bike and pedestrian counts along the Main Street Corridor in downtown Akron on two separate days. The data compiled from these counts is presented below in Table 4.

Table 4 - Downtown Akron's Main Street Corridor Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts			
December 1, 2021 (12:00 PM - 12:00 AM)			
Total Bikes	Total Pedestrians	Peak Hours (Bikes)	Peak Hours (Pedestrians)
15	435	3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (8)	3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (173)
December 2, 2021 (12:00 AM - 12:00 PM)			
Total Bikes	Total Pedestrians	Peak Hours (Bikes)	Peak Hours (Pedestrians)
4	99	8:30 AM - 11:00 AM (2)	8:30 AM - 11:00 AM (69)

Outreach

Engaging the public is an integral part of regional transportation planning. Public insight aids planners and engineers in identifying the needs of various communities and populations. 2022 was a year of solid achievements by AMATS with regards to its public outreach activities. The year saw completion of a new *Public Participation Plan* or "3P," a first-of-its-kind meeting with representatives of an underserved population, and the resumption of the agency's annual meetings.



New 3P

The AMATS Policy Committee unanimously approved a new *Public Participation Plan* or "3P" in March. AMATS relies upon public participation as it selects which highway, public transit, bike, and pedestrian projects are worthy of receiving federal funds. The 3P identifies the strategies that the agency uses to engage and empower the public throughout the planning process.

In August 2021, AMATS began a comprehensive review of its 3P, which was last updated in 2018. Revisions resulting from this review are largely based on two recommendations given to the agency by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). These recommendations were issued to AMATS following the agency's federal certification review as an MPO in May 2021.

The FHWA and FTA recommended that AMATS review its Title VI complaint process to bring it into alignment with the latest guidance available through the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 addresses discrimination issues based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, or income status. MPOs must have a complaint process in place in cases of alleged discrimination in the planning process.

The FHWA and FTA also recommended that AMATS amend its 3P to include a specific process that the agency will use to respond to individual comments and input received as part of the public engagement process.

Following these recommendations, AMATS drafted new language for its Title VI complaint process to comply with ODOT policies. The agency also added new 3P passages stating that AMATS will acknowledge receiving all electronic and written correspondence from members of the public regarding transportation issues and respond within a seven-day period.

The agency also identified other unique public outreach approaches used by its sister agencies for potential co-opting by AMATS. This research led to the new 3P including a *Measures of Effectiveness Report* in which the agency will document the effectiveness of its public outreach efforts over a three-year period.

The Draft 3P was available for review and comment during a 65-day comment period that ended March 18. The AMATS Citizens Involvement Committee listened to public feedback regarding the draft plan during its regular January and March meetings. To view the 3P, please click [here](#).

Aged Population Outreach

In March, AMATS hosted its first virtual outreach meeting with representatives of one of the Greater Akron area's underserved populations identified in its 3P: the aged. AMATS officials and representatives of Direction Home-Akron-Canton and The University of Akron discussed the unique needs of the aged and potential strategies to engage this population during the regional planning process.

AMATS received a commendation for its outreach efforts to underserved or Environmental Justice populations from the U.S. Department of Transportation following its federal certification review as a metropolitan planning organization in May 2021.

Celebrating 60

After a two-year postponement due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, AMATS welcomed back a live audience to its annual meeting in October at the Sheraton Suites - Akron/Cuyahoga Falls.

The audience celebrated the agency's 60th anniversary as the Greater Akron area's metropolitan planning organization and its accomplishments during 2022. Attendees also wanted to learn what lies ahead, not only for the area, but for two other key players in the regional planning process: the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) District 4 office and the Ohio Turnpike.

AMATS Director Curtis Baker presented the AMATS perspective in a sometimes-lighthearted presentation while ODOT District 4 Deputy Director Gery Noirot and Ohio Turnpike Executive Director Ferzan M. Ahmed spoke on behalf of their respective employers.

AMATS' accomplishments since the onset of the pandemic included the completion of a new four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and an update of the area's long-range transportation plan, *Transportation Outlook*. During 2022, the agency programmed \$12.3 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant, \$1.3 million in Transportation Alternative Set-Aside, and \$7.2 million in Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funds for various area projects in Fiscal Year 2022.

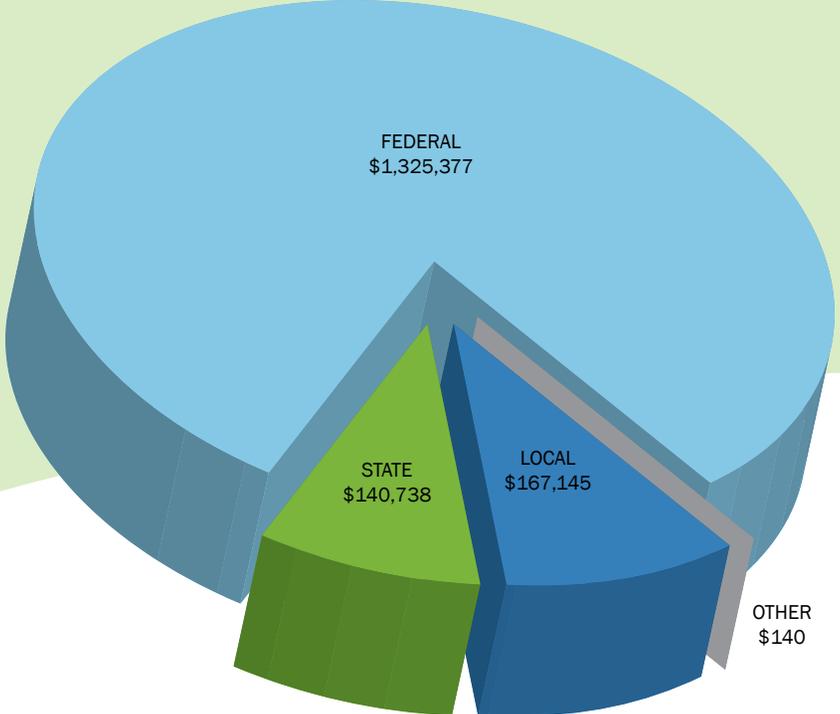
A host of area projects also proceeded with AMATS support, according to Baker. The Massillon Road Roundabout in Green, the Interstate 76/Tallmadge Road Interchange in Brimfield Township, and the Main Street Improvement Project in Akron are among the notable projects that benefitted from AMATS' programming of funds.

AMATS achieved these accomplishments despite agency staff working remotely from their homes for roughly 15 months and an unexpected move to new offices in the PNC Building in Akron upon their return to work.

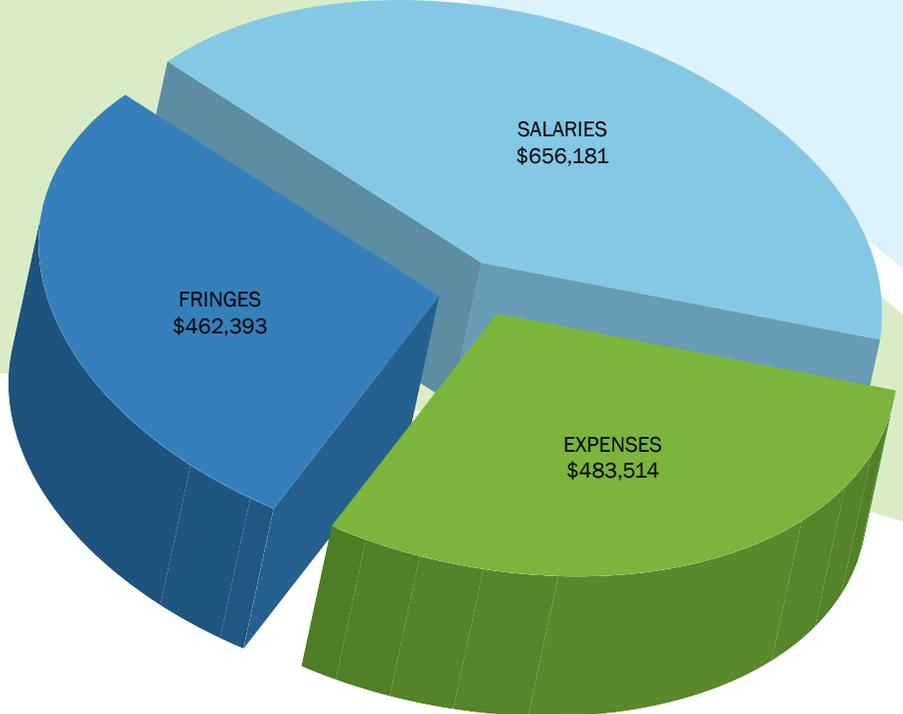


Financial Data for Fiscal Year 2022

Revenues by Type



Expenditures by Type



Policy Committee and Staff

2022 Policy Committee Members

CHAIRMAN	Mayor Gerard Neugebauer
VICE CHAIRMAN	Michael Marozzi
Akron	Mayor Dan Horrigan
Aurora	Mayor Ann Womer Benjamin
Barberton	Mayor William B. Judge, Jr.
Boston Heights	Mayor Bill Goncy
Clinton	Mayor Clarissa Allegra
Cuyahoga Falls	Mayor Don Walters
Doylestown	Mayor Terry L. Lindeman
Fairlawn	Mayor Russell Sharnsky
Garrettsville	Mayor Rick Patrick
Green	Mayor Gerard Neugebauer
Hiram	Mayor Lou Bertrand
Hudson	City Manager Thomas J. Sheridan
Kent	City Manager David Ruller
Lakemore	Mayor Richard Cole, Jr.
Macedonia	Mayor Nick Molnar
Mantua	Mayor Linda S. Clark
METRO	Dawn Distler
Mogadore	Mayor Michael A. Rick
Munro Falls	Mayor Allen Mavrides
New Franklin	Mayor Paul Adamson
Northfield	Mayor Jenn Domzalski
Norton	Administrative Officer Robert Fowler
ODOT	Gery Noiro
PARTA	Claudia Amrhein
Peninsula	Mayor Daniel R. Schneider, Jr.
Portage County Commissioners	Anthony J. Badalamenti
	Vicki A. Kline
	Sabrina Christian-Bennet
Portage County Engineer	Michael Marozzi
Ravenna	Mayor Frank Seman
Reminderville	Mayor Sam Alonso
Richfield	Mayor Michael Wheeler
Rittman	City Manager Bobbie Beshara
Silver Lake	Mayor Bernie Hovey
Stow	Mayor John Pribonic
Streetsboro	Mayor Glenn M. Broska
Sugar Bush Knolls	Mayor John Guidubaldi
Summit County	Diane Miller-Dawson
	David Lukas
Summit County Engineer	Alan Brubaker
Summit County Executive	Ilene Shapiro
Tallmadge	Mayor David G. Kline
Twinsburg	Mayor Sam Scaffide
Wayne County Commissioners	Chippewa Township Trustee Dominic Oliverio
Wayne County Engineer	Scott A. Miller
Windham	Mayor Deborah Blewitt

AMATS Staff

Administrative	
Curtis Baker	<i>Director</i>
Matt Stewart	<i>Planning Administrator</i>
Martha Chandler	<i>Accounting Technician</i>
Engineering	
Farhad Ahmadzai	<i>Transportation Designer</i>
Eugene Paczelt	<i>City Planner</i>
Amy Prater, P.E.	<i>Transportation Engineer</i>
David Pulay, P.E.	<i>TIP Coordinator</i>
Wali Rahim	<i>Planning Aide</i>
Planning	
Seth Bush	<i>GIS Coordinator</i>
Heather Davis Reidl	<i>Mobility Planner</i>
Jeffrey Gardner	<i>City Planner</i>
Phyllis Jividen	<i>City Planner</i>
Kerry Prater	<i>Public Information Coordinator</i>
David Swirsky	<i>City Planner</i>



Director: Curtis Baker
Phone: 330-375-2436
E-Mail: amats@akronohio.gov
Web: www.amatsplanning.org

The *AMATS 2022 Annual Report* is published by:
Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study
1 Cascade Plaza - Suite 1300
Akron, Ohio 44308-1423

Editorial comments are welcome.

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.