

## A Few Thoughts Before I Retire

*From Executive Director Steve Deck, AICP*

It's with a mix of emotions that I tell you this is my last column as Executive Director of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.

I'm incredibly proud of what TCRPC has accomplished since I've been here thanks to its fantastic staff, so I'm a bit sad to leave. But I'm excited about the opportunities and relaxation that retirement offers after 40 years of full-time work. I really do think our mission statement, "Stronger When We Work Together," reflects the way TCRPC's staff thinks and operates.

As someone who was born and raised in the Harrisburg area and raised two children here, I'm keenly aware of how dramatically the region has changed since TCRPC's formation in 1966. Thankfully, many of these changes have been for the better. And I know that TCRPC is uniquely well-positioned to address the challenges to come.

Below are just a few of the issues we currently face in South-Central PA, where TCRPC has and will continue to make a positive difference.

While you may get caught in traffic after an incident on one of our major roadways, our region really doesn't have the congestion that's common in so many other metropolitan areas. However, we do have significant safety issues, averaging close to one traffic fatality per week and a serious injury crash almost daily. Our state and local police do a great job addressing traffic safety, but are often only able to react to crashes rather than prevent them. Recognizing this issue, TCRPC will soon be undertaking multiple demonstration projects through our ongoing Safe Streets for All plan to reduce and even eliminate these crashes. I'm proud of the progress we've already made, and I'm confident TCRPC will continue to work with regional stakeholders to boost our efforts

With a degree in environmental science, I know the importance of water resource issues. But whether it's stormwater management, flooding, water quality or recreation, these issues cannot be effectively addressed at a highly localized or municipal level. They require a regional, watershed-based approach. Through our Water Resource Enhancement Program (WREP) serving Dauphin and Perry counties, I'm happy to say we've seen water quality improvements and flooding reduction in some key areas. And I'm confident TCRPC will continue the watershed-level planning that's necessary over the long-term.

Affordable housing is another issue requiring both a regional and municipal approach. I'm afraid we've only scratched the surface of the challenge, but I know our staff and commission members are dedicated to making quality housing attainable for the region's residents.

I'm so pleased to have been a small part of TCRPC's many accomplishments over the past seven years, and I'm excited to see what's to come.

Please watch for an announcement about our upcoming open house in late August, where you'll be able to see our new office space, wish me good luck, and begin working with the new executive director on the regional issues most important to you.

Thanks for your support!



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## TCRPC Moves to Strawberry Square

After 40 years in the Veterans Memorial Building on the first block of Market Street in downtown Harrisburg, TCRPC has moved its offices to the third floor of Strawberry Square.

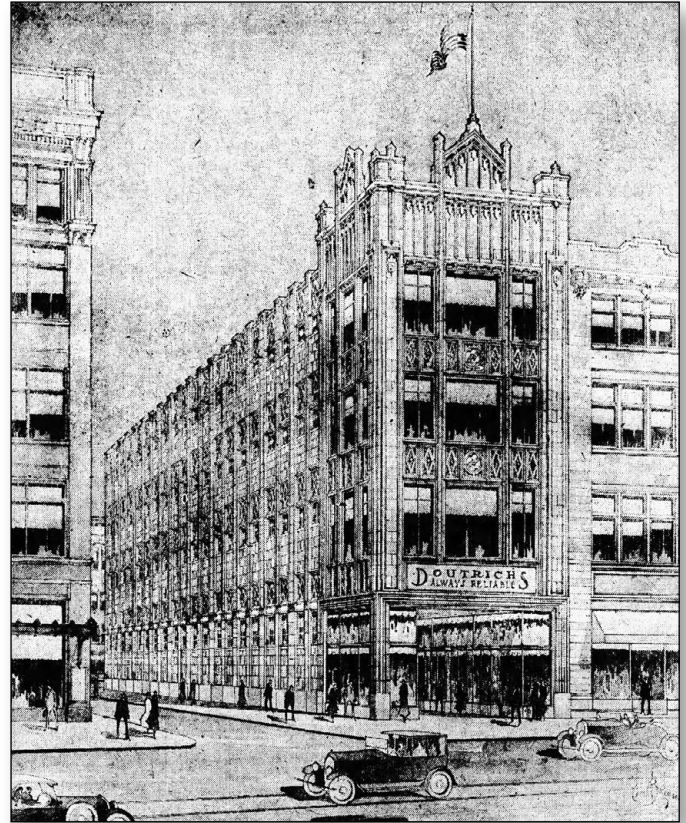
According to TCRPC Executive Director Steve Deck, the move was necessitated due to the sale of the Veterans building, built in 1920, and its planned conversion into apartments.

“We’re very glad for the opportunity because it’s allowed us to move to the heart of a vibrant neighborhood that includes Harrisburg University, SoMa, new shops and restaurants, redeveloped residential buildings and much more,” Deck explained. “It’s fitting for a regional planning agency like ours to be in a historic part of town that’s recently seen such tremendous growth and evolution.”

He added that having Harristown Enterprises as its new landlord and moving into Strawberry Square’s Lerner Tower, with buildings originally constructed a century ago, sends a clear message that TCRPC is living up to its mission “to foster the long-term livability and vitality of our communities, counties and region.”

Deck noted that the new office is about the same size as the old one, at roughly 4,600 square feet.

TCRPC’s new address is 320 Market Street, Suite 301E, Harrisburg, PA 17101.



The newly constructed Doutrich Building, part of which houses TCRPC’s new office, as illustrated in the Harrisburg Telegraph in September 1925.



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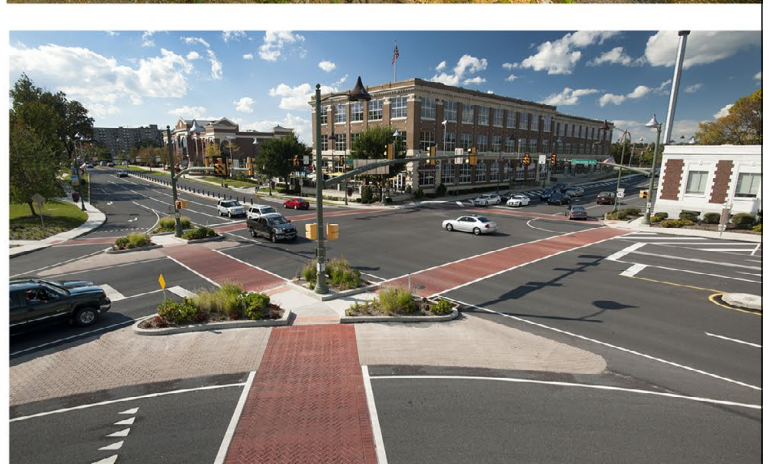
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# HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR ANNUAL LUNCHEON

THANKS to everyone who attended on May 9!

Here are some moments from this special event:

Thursday, May 9, 2024



Over 120 guests enjoyed a fine meal at the **Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel** in Swatara Twp. and had plenty of opportunity for socializing and networking. Special thanks to our annual sponsors for helping to make it happen. You can [see the full list here](#).



Our panelists spoke about traffic safety in the region, including, from left: **Jeff Riegner** (moderator), senior principal engineer with Kittelson & Associates; **Jeff Bergsten**, Carlisle's assistant borough engineer; **Chris Flad**, traffic engineer with PennDOT District 8; Harrisburg Deputy Police Chief **Kenneth Young**; and **Lt. John Biever** of Troop H with the PA State Police.

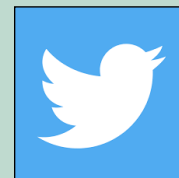


As usual, TCRPC Executive Director **Steve Deck** was our master of ceremonies, delivering a message of progress for the region in a spirit of cooperation.



Our TCRPC staff enjoyed the chance to have a meal together and mix and mingle with planning leaders from around the Tri-County region.

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# HATS 2050 RTP Outreach is Underway

By Andrew Bomberger, *Transportation Planning Coordinator*

The Harrisburg Area Transportation Study's 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is underway.

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry counties, HATS is responsible for developing the RTP, which documents the current status of transportation projects and programs, identifies long-term needs, and recommends projects to meet those needs.



The long-range RTP sets a framework and priorities for the expenditure of federal transportation funds over a 25-year period.

As with any planning effort, input from the public and our region's stakeholders is a vital part of the development process. Later this summer, HATS staff will be meeting with municipal officials to establish the transportation needs to be included in the updated RTP Project Pipeline.

HATS staff will also meet with representatives from a variety of organizations and constituencies to discuss topical issues such as freight, congestion and safety to ensure the information and recommendations in the plan are as up-to-date and relevant as possible.

To gather input from the general public, HATS staff has made a [public survey](#) available online. The brief survey asks participants to gauge the importance of the 10 focus areas of the plan, which will be used to establish regional priorities and recommendations.

In addition to the online survey, HATS staff will attend public events and meetings across the region throughout the summer and fall. We will be gathering the same kinds of information as the online survey, while also being available to answer questions about the RTP and the development process.

For more information on the HATS 2050 RTP, including upcoming events and links to survey and outreach materials, visit our [HATS 2050 RTP Public Information webpage](#).



## Welcome Our Summer Interns!

A decorated veteran of the U.S. Army and PA Army National Guard, **Anthony Altobelli**, left, is an accomplished geospatial engineer and a current student in Shippensburg University's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) program. This summer he's been conducting traffic counts and plotting Perry County projects on maps.

Also a U.S. Army veteran, **Raymond Lazar**, right, is pursuing a degree in Geoenvironmental Science at Shippensburg University. He too has been conducting traffic counts as well as assisting with GIS layers and parcel data.

Thank you for your service!

We're proud to have you both as part of the TCRPC team!

# DAUPHIN COUNTY WATER RESOURCE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WREP)

## WHAT IS WREP?

A regional program to address stormwater, flooding and water quality issues.

## WHO CREATED IT?

The Dauphin County Commissioners with TCRPC, Dauphin County Conservation District, and Dauphin County Community & Economic Development.

## WHO ARE THE PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES?

See the map at right.

## WHAT WILL IT DO?

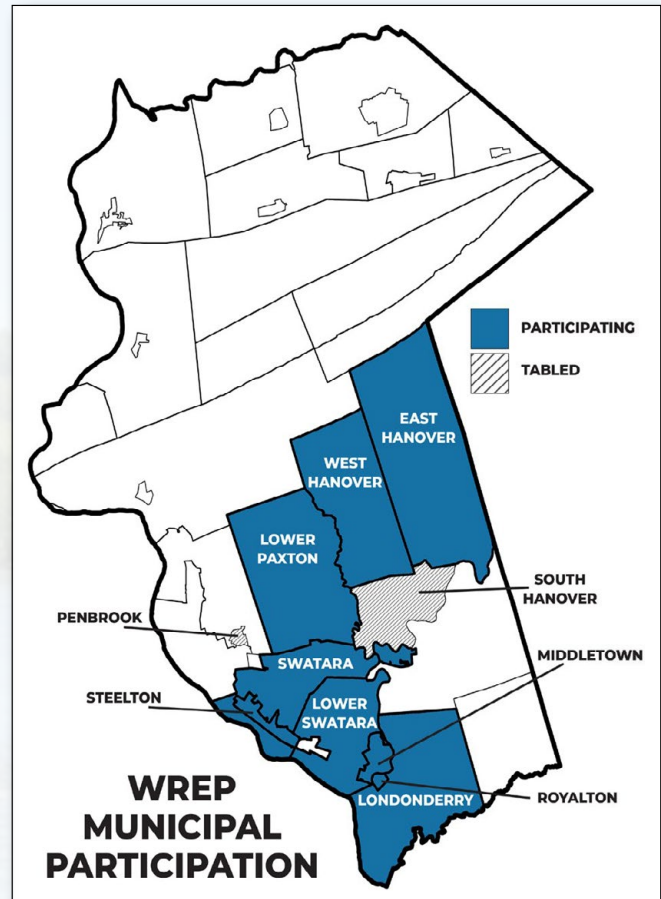
For municipalities who join, it will provide a central framework to coordinate efforts and create strategic partnerships.

## WILL IT SAVE MONEY?

It will cut municipal spending on water-related issues by as much as 60 to 90 percent and save taxpayer dollars. The overall savings will rely on participation: the more municipalities involved, the more they will save. (For example, on the current Conewago Creek Restoration Project, the participating municipalities will save an average of over \$900,000.)

## WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

Dauphin County's municipalities have faced a growing range of water-related issues in recent years. The cost to address them has risen due to the increasing complexity of their impact and the environmental regulations associated with them.



## HOW WILL IT AFFECT EXISTING PROGRAMS?

WREP is voluntary and is meant to enhance -- not replicate or replace -- existing stormwater management programs. Also, it will not create new fees.

## ARE THERE OTHER BENEFITS?

It will save municipalities considerable time and effort by enabling them to participate in regionalized services where it makes the most sense to do so.

## HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Contact Dauphin County Planning Coordinator Jerry Duke at [gduke@tcrpc-pa.org](mailto:gduke@tcrpc-pa.org) or (717) 234-2639.

[VISIT THE WREP WEBPAGE](#)

# “Sober Ride Home” Pilot Project Will Offer Free Rides to Decrease DUI Crashes, Fatalities in Central PA

TCRPC announced recently that it will soon launch a pilot program called “Sober Ride Home” that will provide free rideshare alternatives to people who have consumed alcohol at local bars and restaurants.

An effort of the Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS), Sober Ride Home is made possible through a grant from the Federal Highway Administration and the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program.

According to TCRPC Executive Director Steve Deck, the demonstration project will partner with Commute PA and other stakeholders like Uber to offer on-demand rides during peak times.

Deck said Sober Ride Home will provide free rides based on mapping and data developed through HATS’ SS4A effort to identify locations and timeframes in the community that have seen the highest DUI figures.

“In our region, about 40 percent of fatal crashes and 30 percent of serious injury crashes involve impaired drivers,” Deck said. “The majority of these crashes happen between Thursday and Saturday.”

Sober Ride Home will conduct an advertising campaign and collaborate with local bars and restaurants to encourage patrons not to drive under the influence, Deck explained. It will also educate servers on how impaired patrons can secure a free ride home.

Deck said TCRPC will make the year-long program available this summer and hopes to implement it long-term.

“The ultimate goal is to improve safety on Central PA roadways and decrease DUI-related crashes and fatalities through safe, accessible transportation alternatives,” Deck said.



TCRPC Executive Director Steve Deck, center, speaks to the media at a July 2 news conference announcing the Sober Ride Home initiative. Joining him were Harrisburg Deputy Police Chief Kenneth Young, left, and Commute PA Executive Director Matthew Boyer, right.

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## PICTURE PERRY Snapshot

By Jason Finnerty, *Perry County Planning Coordinator*

The second round of 2024 implementation workgroup sessions has concluded, with summary reports now posted to the [Picture Perry website hub](#).

Among the topics discussed at these sessions were:

- funding for several street safety improvement projects;
- inclusion of mountain bike and water trails on the countywide trails data layer;
- a permitting process for painted murals on bridge abutments or sculptures in state road rights-of-way;
- a grant application to cover the feasibility of a sports and community center;
- the continued need for a hotel room tax to aid the county's tourism efforts;
- the inclusion of interested housing investors with funding to undertake projects;
- the possibility of a tiny home community for first-time home buyers;
- assisting with aging in place and elderly cottage housing opportunity (ECHO) homes;
- prioritizing natural resources and recreation needs for state grants;
- the possible creation of a Shermans Creek Water Trail;
- intersections that need attention;
- and a possible interchange at Routes 11/15 and SR 849.

The next round of workgroup sessions will take place at the county office, 25 W. Main Street, New Bloomfield. They include:

- Economic Development: Sept. 3, 10 AM
- Community Facilities and Utilities: Sept. 10, 10 AM
- Natural Resources and Recreation: Sept. 10, 1 PM
- Housing: Sept. 26, 10 AM
- Transportation: Sept. 26, 1 PM

On June 24, Perry County held a multi-municipal public hearing to consider amendments to the Picture Perry Comprehensive Plan. They included:

- Bloomfield Borough: Remove East - West Alley Repaving and Remove Lakeside Streetscape Project;
- Duncannon Borough: Add Duncannon Active Transportation Plan;
- Howe Township: Remove Guide Rail Replacement Along Auker Road (Completed);
- Jackson Township: Remove Streambank Clearance and Bank Stabilization (Completed);
- Marysville Borough: Add Building and Property Acquisition for Municipal Office Relocation and Broadband Accessibility;
- Perry Athletic and Community Complex organization: Add Feasibility Study for an Athletic and Community Complex;
- Perry County: Add Feasibility Study for County Administrative / Multi-Purpose Building;
- Spring Township: Add Pine Hill Road Bridge Replacement;
- Tuscarora Township: Remove Maintenance and Upgrades to Municipal Building, Facilities, Vehicles, and Other Equipment; Remove Review and Amend Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance; and Remove Review and Amend Zoning Ordinance.



*At left, Transportation & Community Planner Tanner Stroup and Transportation Planning Coordinator Andrew Bomberger meet with local residents during a recent public comment event at Strawberry Square for the Harrisburg Area Transportation Study's 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). You can learn more about the TIP [here](#).*

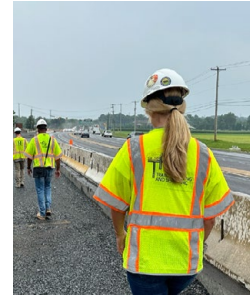
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# SusqueCycle Bikeshare Program Unveils New Fleet of Bicycles

By Karen Dixon, *Transportation & Community Planner*

The SusqueCycle bikeshare program recently unveiled 60 new bikes, promising sleeker and more comfortable mobility.

The new fleet builds upon the program's success, introducing new features and enhancements that improve the user experience, including better seats and baskets.

The system's previous bikes will be donated to Recycle Bicycle Harrisburg.

Now in its second full season, SusqueCycle also added two new stations recently: in the State Capitol Complex at Commonwealth and North streets, and in the TransitPark lot at 10th and Market streets. This brings the total number of stations to 11 in the City of Harrisburg -- downtown, in midtown, on City Island and in Allison Hill -- and one in Hummelstown Borough. The Hummelstown station also connects to the Hershey Bikes bike share program. More locations are in the works, including Paxtang Borough.

Established to provide an efficient and eco-friendly travel mode, SusqueCycle is gaining ridership and is becoming a noticeable fixture in the Harrisburg community. The program offers a convenient solution to the city's transportation needs, allowing individuals to easily navigate its bustling streets, scenic riverfronts and vibrant neighborhoods.



The rollout of the new fleet symbolizes a renewed commitment to sustainability and community engagement.

By pedaling instead of driving, residents can reduce their carbon footprint and contribute to a cleaner, greener future for future generations.

So, grab your helmet, hop on a bike, and discover the beauty of the Harrisburg area from a whole new perspective this summer!

For more information, please visit:

[www.susquecycle.org](http://www.susquecycle.org)

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## REQUEST A PLANNING CONSISTENCY LETTER

Many grant/funding programs require applicants to submit a letter from their local, county or regional planning agency to confirm that a project is consistent with local plans. [Click here](#) to request a planning consistency letter, or call the TCRPC office at 717-234-2639 for more information. You may also email us at [planning@tcrpc-pa.org](mailto:planning@tcrpc-pa.org).



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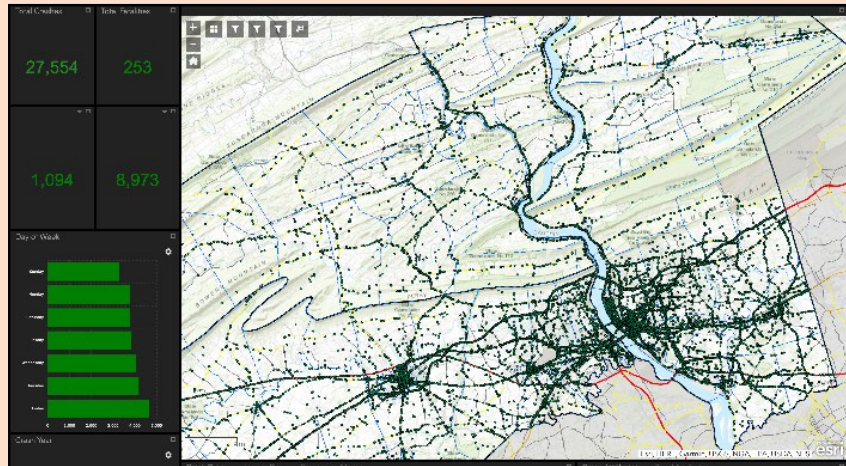
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## HATS Crash App Being Updated to Include PennDOT's 2019-2023 Data

With PennDOT's recent release of its 2023 crash data, HATS staff will soon update the [Regional Safety App](#) to include 2019-2023 crash information -- the most up-to-date crash data over the past five years.

For questions about the app or its data, email [Ben Warner](mailto:Ben Warner) or call (717) 234-2639.



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### PUBLIC INFORMATION & PARTICIPATION

This newsletter is a primary means, other than such items as may be published on the TCRPC website or broadcast by the general media, by which information concerning the Regional and Transportation Planning programs is made available to the citizens and public of the Tri-County Region. It is distributed four times a year and has a circulation of over 2,000. The meetings of the Regional Planning Commission and the Harrisburg Area Transportation Study are open to the public. Persons who wish to receive issues of this newsletter, obtain other information or comment about the planning programs should email [planning@tcrpc-pa.org](mailto:planning@tcrpc-pa.org).



Strawberry Square,  
New Home of TCRPC

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