

## **CHAPTER 3: TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Transportation is an important element of the Comprehensive Plan because it determines the accessibility of the area to those on the outside and the ease of movement within the area to local residents. The location, quality, and connectivity of the transportation system elements helps to determine which areas will grow and which will remain stagnant. Hence, the internal use of land is in large measure determined by the transportation system and through that the locational demand for infrastructure is created. The location of community facilities is also affected. This process works in the other direction as well. When an area grows, it creates the demand for better transportation to service it. Clearly, both internal and external links are of concern in the planning process.

### **HIGHWAYS**

East-west highway access through Clearfield County is quite good. I-80 enters the County in Cooper Township and passes just north of Clearfield Borough and DuBois City. This is one of the major interstate highways for the transportation of both people and freight between New York City and the Midwest. U.S. 322 provides access to State College, Harrisburg, and Philadelphia to the Southeast. Both of these provide critical external links. Significant improvement to U.S. 322 between Philipsburg and Clearfield is recommended, as is a bypass around Philipsburg, to improve the quality of access.

North-south access is fairly poor. U.S. 219 is a major connector between New York State and Maryland. Between Ebensburg and Somerset, it is a limited-access highway. In Clearfield County, it is primarily a two-lane highway with a major bottleneck in DuBois. The relatively poor quality of this external link limits the accessibility of the southwestern corner of the County. Plans to upgrade this road to a four lane, limited-access, highway have been developed as have plans for a bypass around DuBois. Two corridors have been proposed for the upgraded highway. One of these (Corridor E) traverses Clearfield County; the other passes largely through Jefferson and Indiana Counties. While any improvement to U.S. 219 should be welcomed, the County should push for the Corridor E route and should begin to identify potential development sites along this corridor, especially near the proposed interchanges. No matter which corridor is chosen, sensitivity to the potential loss of prime agricultural land and land in Agricultural Security Areas is a paramount concern.

Collector roads within the County may also be important for both internal and external linkages. Of particular importance are State Routes 53, 153, 453, 255, and 879. While the volume of traffic on these routes does not justify upgrading all of them, they should all be maintained at a high level because they provide the critical internal linkages between the population centers in the County. Careful planning must be given to these roads when new traffic generators are created. For example, S.R. 255 between Penfield and DuBois now carries almost 5,000 vehicles per day. A large portion of this traffic is due to the Treasure Lake Development. As growth proceeds

in Sandy Township, this road is likely to become congested. Also, S.R. 879 between Curwensville and Clearfield will require attention as the volume of traffic increases. In addition to those items specified on the 12-Year Plan, priorities for highways in the County include:

1. Improvement of U.S. 219 throughout Clearfield County
2. Improvement of U.S. 322 from Philipsburg to Clearfield
3. Improvement of S.R. 53 along its entire length
4. Support of efforts to improve U.S. 119 along its entire length.
5. Completion of the proposed airport access road for the Clearfield/Lawrence Municipal Airport
6. Improvement of S.R. 255 from DuBois to St Mary's
7. Improvement of S.R. 879 from Clearfield to Karthaus
8. Improvement of U.S. 322 from Clearfield to the west
9. Improvement of S.R. 879 from Clearfield to Grampian
10. Improvement of S.R. 153 from U.S. 322 to Penfield
11. Improvement of S.R. 453 from Madera to Curwensville
12. Construction of a U.S. 322 Bypass at Philipsburg
13. Improvement of the County-owned access road to Curwensville Dam Recreation Area.
14. Improvement of S.R. 2011 from Amesville to Henderson

#### **OTHER TRANSPORTATION**

Despite the loss of over 100 miles of trackage in the past twenty years, rail service in the County is adequate to the needs of most shippers. Rail service should be monitored through the Business Visitation Program, and the County Office of Economic Development should be willing to intercede with Conrail or the operators of the Buffalo and Pittsburgh if need be.

Air service is becoming increasingly important as an exterior link to other areas of the region and nation. The majority of Clearfield County is not well served by air at this time. The closest commercial flights available are through U.S. Air Express at the DuBois/Jefferson County Airport, located a few miles west of DuBois in Jefferson County. This commuter service provides connections at the Pittsburgh Airport for all major carriers. While this airport provides the western part of the County with access, Central and Eastern Clearfield County residents and businesses are not so fortunate. The only other nearby airport to provide commercial service is in State College--a 45-minute drive from the Moshannon Valley.

The Clearfield/Lawrence Municipal Airport is being upgraded. A 1,000-foot extension to the runway will permit commercial craft to land there. However, an instrument landing system (ILS) must be installed and airport zoning must be in place before any commercial carrier can operate from there. Plans are in place for the ILS, and efforts are underway by the Airport Authority and the five affected municipalities (Clearfield Borough, Lawrence, Graham, Bradford, and Goshen Townships) to create and adopt

a suitable ordinance. All efforts should be encouraged to bring commercial air service to the Clearfield/Lawrence Municipal Airport.

Clearfield County has one of the better public transportation systems in rural Pennsylvania. The Area Transportation Authority provides bus service within most of the major population centers of the County and between those centers and Clearfield, DuBois, Brockway, Puxsuatawney, and Philipsburg. Hence, internal linkages for those without access to an automobile are quite good. The busses are handicapped equipped and senior citizens ride for ten (10) percent of the regular fare. This system is very important to the mobility of senior citizens and others in the County. It should be supported and, as the percentage of elderly persons increases, expanded.