

CHAPTER 6
TRANSPORTATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Borough should work with Berks County authorities, PENNDOT, and developers to improve the existing transportation system, while promoting pedestrian, bicycle, and transit alternatives to typical motor vehicle travel.

A large burden, however, may fall on developers:

- Developers should address the impacts of their developments through road improvements and/or financial contributions.
- Developers should incorporate alternative modes of travel into their developments.
- Developers should incorporate access management techniques into their developments, based upon Borough ordinance and PENNDOT requirements.
- Developers should interconnect roads and walkways
- Developers should provide adequate parking, primary access, and emergency access.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

1. Update zoning ordinances as necessary.
 - a. Include access management standards within zoning ordinances and/or subdivision and land development ordinances as determined by the Borough:
 - (1) Establish access location standards
 - (2) Establish access point separation requirements
 - (3) Require access to streets of lower functional classification
 - (4) Require coordinated/shared ingress and egress
 - (5) Require interconnection of properties – access, parking, loading

- (6) Establish separations from intersections
- (7) Require coordinated traffic movements
- (8) Require acceleration and deceleration lanes where appropriate
- (9) Require left and right turn lanes where appropriate
- (10) Establish design standards for intersections, driveways, internal circulation, and parking lot design
- (11) Minimize entrances to roads
- (12) Prohibit inappropriate turning movements
- (13) Require signalization of high volume driveways
- (14) In mixed use areas where pedestrian activity is high, discourage curb cuts over sidewalks to limit pedestrian/vehicular conflict.

2. Update subdivision and land development ordinances as necessary.

- a. Establish appropriate road design standards for each functional classification of road. Consider the Pennsylvania [Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan](#) and [Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#) by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the [Berks County Bike and Pedestrian Plan of 2010](#). Bike and pedestrian lanes can be required on those roads determined to be appropriate by the Borough.
- b. Require traffic impact studies for proposed developments at a time agreed to by the Borough. Such studies would require analysis of existing circulation conditions, the impact of proposed development and resulting circulation conditions and the need for traffic improvements to adequately support the development.
- c. Establish appropriate standards for driveway design and access to streets for access management. Coordinate with zoning ordinance design standards and access management provisions. Plans should be reviewed for access management concerns.
- d. Require developers to recognize existing trails and to provide for new trails where planned or required by municipalities. Standards for trails can be included in the

Ordinances. Sufficient rights-of-way and easements can be required during the review process.

- e. Require developers to provide pedestrian paths and sidewalks.
- f. Require appropriate ultimate rights-of-way along roads.
- g. Require necessary roadway improvements along the frontage developments.

3. Adopt Official Map designating proposed public facilities, streets and interchanges, road improvements, and trails.

4. Establish pedestrian pathway improvement programs to enhance walkability in the Borough, such as completion of gaps in and extensions of the sidewalk and trail system to provide improved access to schools, Kutztown University, day-to-day shopping facilities, parks, community facilities, transit facilities, and employment. ADA requirements should be complied with. Pedestrian crossings at street intersections can be facilitated through consideration of crosswalks, stop signs, limitation of cartway radii, and use of pedestrian buttons and pedestrian cycles at signalized intersections. PENNDOT involvement for safety at State roads is important. Pedestrian circulation can be enhanced through amenities such as benches; maintenance and improvement of existing pathways and sidewalks; and adequate buffering and setbacks from roads.

PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS

5. Continue planning for greenways and riparian buffers along the streams in the Region pursuant to the [Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan](#) and the Draft Open Space and Greenways Plan. Provision should be made for benches and other amenities along pathway and trail systems.

6. Continue implementation of Sacony Creek Trail project.

7. The walking trail system within the Borough should connect to walkways in the Borough Park, to the Sacony Marsh, to the old Borough swimming pool property, and provide a walkway around the Borough's perimeter.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

8. Work with PENNDOT to assure adequate maintenance of roads which receive substantial volumes of truck and school bus traffic in addition to automobile traffic.

9. Work with the County, Legislators, and PENNDOT to list needed transportation improvements on the Long Range Transportation Plan. Coordinate with the [Reading Area Transportation Study \(RATS\)](#) as appropriate.

10. Determine whether Transportation Impact Fee ordinances will be used by the Borough and require land developers to address needed transportation improvements in the Borough as they develop.

11. Prepare multi-year programs for street maintenance.

12. Coordinate utility and road improvements so utilities are constructed before road improvements are made.

13. Require property owners to keep street rights-of-way available for required improvements and pedestrian systems.

TRAFFIC SPEEDS/FLOW

14. Institute appropriate traffic calming techniques in the Borough. Work with PENNDOT to establish appropriate speed limits, reducing them as necessary, in existing developed areas.

15. Encourage enforcement of current speed limit and continue to work to reduce speed limit on Main Street in Kutztown.

16. Work with PENNDOT to keep traffic signal timing current and optimized.

17. Implement traffic controls to improve the safety of the Normal Avenue-Sander Alley intersection.

18. Pursue permission from PENNDOT to install left turn signalization on Main Street at College Boulevard.

19. Work with PENNDOT to prepare a truck routing plan for the Borough and plan for necessary road improvements.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

20. Work with Kutztown University to promote bus ridership for students and Borough residents in an environmentally responsible manner that includes maintaining a set pick-up schedule for bus stops appropriately located throughout the Borough.

21. Work with transportation organizations and agencies providing services to seniors to facilitate mobility of seniors by determining desired destinations and means of providing access to those destinations. Implement a circulator system through cooperation with BARTA and area businesses, the school districts, and community groups to increase the mobility of the elderly, physically impaired, and those who do not own or lease an automobile, and provide an alternative to automobile use.

PARKING

22. Within physical constraints, increase public parking within the Borough.

23. Continue to encourage business employees to park away from Main Street to keep parking spaces open to potential customers.

24. Designate appropriate spaces for short-term parking near active public destinations as needed.

25. Continue to address issues of having adequate parking provided for rental housing and housing conversions.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION

26. Encourage study of use of the Borough railroad line or tourist excursions.

27. Solicit ways in which the Borough could better accommodate horse and buggy traffic.

GATEWAY AND STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS

Gateway enhancements can be considered at the entrances to the Borough. A gateway is an entrance corridor that defines the arrival point as a destination. Gateway planning concerns arranging the landscape and visual experiences to help create a sense of arrival at the destination and provide a positive image of the destination. The Borough can work with property owners to enhance commercial areas through coordinated landscaping, signage, lighting, street furniture, paving materials, design of site improvements, building facades, and window displays. Streetscape plans should be considered.

When infill, redevelopment, or new development occurs, developers could be required to comply with performance and design standards, which would require them to address these elements. When new parking facilities are constructed, they should be landscaped, buffered, and placed to the side or, preferably, the rear of buildings.

Signage should be minimal, and appropriate to the character of the Borough.

Property owners should be encouraged to maintain and improve properties, particularly those that may have negative impacts on surrounding properties. Where the rear of commercial properties face or abut residential properties, attention should be paid to the appearance of the commercial property and its impact on the residences. Existing shopping areas should receive streetscape enhancements.

Voluntary design guidelines addressing the following elements could also be suggested within the Borough, unless the Borough would consider mandatory design guidelines. Such guidelines could:

- Discouraging the use of drive-thru facilities
- Encouraging new development to be compatible with, and integrated into, existing streetscapes by addressing:
 - Maintaining appropriate siting patterns, such as setbacks of buildings on lots
 - Respecting the massing (volume created by sections of the building) within the neighborhood
 - Using materials of similar appearance and texture to those on existing attractive buildings
 - Using similar architectural details as other buildings in the neighborhood
 - Maintaining the scale and proportion of buildings near the building. Scale deals with the relationship of each building to other buildings in the area; and, proportion deals with the relationship of the height to the width of a building and with the relationship of each part to the whole.
 - Using similar roof shapes
 - Maintaining similar footprints of buildings and rooflines (matching facade masses with existing buildings)
 - Using similar building heights
 - Having store fronts of commercial buildings compatible with existing buildings

The use of coverage, density, intensity, and yard bonuses for architectural treatments, building design, amenities, street furniture, open spaces, and desired parking designs could be considered in the Borough. The intent of bonuses is to provide incentives to developers, not just regulation, to allow economic use of property.

Areas of particular concern for gateway treatments include Greenwich Street (Route 737), Noble Street, and East and West Main Street.

ROUTE 222/COLLEGE BOULEVARD ENTRANCE/EXIT RAMPS PROJECT

In November 1999, the Borough of Kutztown prepared a project submission to the State Transportation Commission for the Transportation Improvement Program for the Route 222/College Boulevard Exit/Entrance Ramps. The submission report is available from the Borough. This Comprehensive Plan supports the Route 222/College Boulevard Exit/Entrance Ramps project.

College Boulevard has become a congested street due to all the traffic from Kutztown University, Sacony Cross, Briarcliff, the Fairgrounds, and Carl R. Bieber Tourways. Along with the potential future housing developments adjacent to College Boulevard and the Bypass, which would provide additional vehicles, the increase in vehicular accidents on this street and the impact it has on the Main Street intersection must be addressed.

Recommendations

Short term: Cooperate with Maxatawny Township in intelligently planning solutions to the Kutztown University traffic flow problems. Support the University and Maxatawny Township attempts to provide a loop road through the University taking traffic from old 222 before it reaches College Hill.

Long term: The addition of on-off ramps from the Bypass to College Boulevard would help ease the majority of all this congestion, diverting traffic from the Main Street intersection and out of the residential areas. Efforts must continue to support this project and to urge the State to acquire sufficient land.

KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS MASTER PLANNING

Kutztown University periodically updates the traffic and parking elements of its [Campus Master Plan](#). Such planning should be coordinated with Kutztown Borough.

BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

Bridge maintenance is an ongoing process to keep bridges open to traffic. The required maintenance for each bridge differs and some repairs may include removal of debris or resurfacing. Bridge improvement plans should be assessed each time development intensity increases. When a traffic study examines the effects a proposed development has on an existing road network, that study should be extended to cover the bridge conditions and limitation providing access to the proposed development.

PARKING ISSUES IN KUTZTOWN

With the increased volume of vehicles in town, parking has become a huge problem, especially in the commercial district and in those residential areas which are in close proximity to the University and have a high concentration of student housing. New parking areas are desperately needed to help revitalize and strengthen the commercial core.

Recommendations

Short term: Enforce two-hour parking limits in business district when businesses are open. Designate several one-hour or 30-minute spaces within each block of the business area. Encourage use of the Borough's all-day lot. Encourage business employers to have their employees park away from Main Street, keeping that area open to potential customers.

Establish a parking committee consisting of representatives of the Borough, the University, and local business people to study parking trends in both residential areas and the commercial district to identify problem areas and recommend solutions. Permit parking in residential areas should be updated as parking trends change.

Long term: Have the proposed parking committee do a long term study and seek seed money to purchase appropriate land for new parking lots, without destroying the integrity of existing neighborhoods.

Encourage removal of deteriorating outbuildings and construction of parking spaces in areas of need. Encourage consolidation of small private parking areas.

Pursue opportunities for increased utilization of existing parking areas, such as those at St. Paul's UCC and Trinity Lutheran Church.

SIDEWALK ISSUES IN KUTZTOWN BOROUGH

The lack of sidewalks in some areas of the Borough and the poor condition of sidewalks in other areas are matters of big concern for reasons of safety and convenience. With the high concentration of pedestrian traffic due to University students, a growing Borough population and the growing popularity of walking for health, safe sidewalks should be provided within the Borough limits.

Recommendations

Short term: Enforce sidewalk ordinance already enacted by Borough Council in order that sidewalks be constructed and/or repaired where required. (Adhere to [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) and Planning Commission recommendations.)

Long term: Require sidewalks for all properties within the Borough limits to ensure safety for everyone. Create and implement a plan to upgrade sidewalk conditions.

PUBLIC RESTROOM ISSUES IN KUTZTOWN BOROUGH

Problems relative to public restrooms have been noted in the Borough. There are too few restroom facilities available for use by customers of businesses in the commercial areas (the Constitution Boulevard shopping center and along West Main Street).

Recommendations

Short term: Encourage business establishments to install public restrooms and clearly mark those which exist.

Long term: Strictly enforce Code requirements for providing restroom facilities whenever the opportunity arises (e.g., when renovations to existing businesses are planned).

BIKEWAY SYSTEM PLANNING

There is a national trend toward increasing bike usage. Providing bike lanes in the Borough could increase bike riding, not only for recreational use, but for transportation use to get to and from work, school, shopping, as well as many other errands such as banking. As more and more people become aware of increased pollution from automobiles and people become more health conscious, they are turning to bikes as a

healthy alternative. Since the Region has a large student population and Mennonite population, who already ride bikes, the following recommendations are appropriate:

Recommendations

Short term: Designate a bike lane on College Boulevard (from Briarcliff to Main Street), across Main Street and along Normal Avenue to South Laurel Street, continuing along South Laurel Street to the Kutztown Park. Add bike racks to the Village Shopping Center.

Long term: Develop bike trails around the perimeter of the Borough which would connect to the old Borough swimming pool site. Plan other bike trails pursuant to a master plan. Coordinate the development of pedestrian and bicycle pathways with the adjoining municipalities and the Berks County Planning Commission. Coordinate the development of pedestrian and bicycle pathways with the adjoining municipalities and the Berks County Planning Commission. Please refer to the following resources for Berks County bicycle, pedestrian and greenway plans and maps.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan for Berks County. (2002).
http://www.co.berks.pa.us/Dept/Planning/Documents/RATS/BikePed/Reading_MPO_Bike-Ped_Plan.pdf

Reading Area Berks and Pedestrian Transportation Plan and Maps. (2010).
http://www.co.berks.pa.us/Dept/Planning/Documents/RATS/BikePed/FINAL_Bike-Ped_Plan_11-18-2010.pdf

Berks County Planning Commission (2007). Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan.Hawk Mtn. Grenway Network
http://www.co.berks.pa.us/Dept/Planning/Documents/greenway/hawkmtmaps/berksgreenway_3.2_hawk_networkmap.pdf

SPEED LIMIT CONCERNS IN KUTZTOWN BOROUGH

Besides serving as the Borough's main traffic link, Main Street serves other purposes. It traverses the business district, provides much needed parallel parking (along its curbs) and is the location of community facilities.

Noble Street not only has a high concentration of residential housing units (including student housing), but it also serves as headquarters of the local fire company. It is a State route but also serves as a collector road and the main access road to Lyon Station.

Greenwich Street also serves as both a State Route and a collector road. It has a high concentration of residential properties, but also serves several businesses. This street is Kutztown's main access road to the Kutztown By-Pass, to Route 22/78 and to the Kempton area.

While these streets serve so many purposes, the control of local problem areas with proper speed limits or signs is imperative.

Recommendations

Short term: A traffic study should be conducted as an ongoing program by the Borough to provide maximum safety, with the possible intent to post speed limits (such as 25 MPH on Main, Noble and Greenwich Streets) and any other streets as needed. Also recommended is the posting of a warning sign at the curve on Normal Avenue near West Main Street, e.g., "Slow, Dangerous Intersection."

Long term: Slow down traffic and stress safety. Continue the traffic study by the Borough as noted above in the Short term Recommendation.