

## TRANSPORTATION

### Access - Mobility

A sound transportation system includes adequate and well-maintained roads, available public transportation and pedestrian and bicycle paths. There is a direct correlation between land use and transportation needs. As residential and commercial land is developed, more people utilize automobiles for transportation, and thus the roads become congested for longer periods of time. This is particularly true for rush hours. Also, as new roads are built to address traffic congestion, the adjoining land becomes easier and more lucrative to develop.

Each highway, road or street in a community plays a specific role for the movement of traffic and it is useful for planning purposes to classify roads according to the particular function each serves. In general terms, the functional classification of a road is based largely on two factors -- access and mobility -- and typically, as access declines mobility increases. For example, Interstate Route 81 clearly serves a different function than does a street in a residential subdivision. Although the I-81 and private street example compares streets at the opposite ends of the road classification hierarchy, it clearly depicts the relationship between access and mobility. Traffic on Interstate 81, a limited access highway, travels over long distances at high rates of speed. On the other hand, traffic using a private residential street with unlimited access from individual properties moves at minimum speeds to reach roads that connect the residential community with other areas in both municipalities and the region at large.

### Other Classification Factors

As previously noted, access, how traffic enters the traffic stream; and mobility, the physical capability of the road to carry traffic, are the key determinants of a road's functional classification. However, several other road and network characteristics also affect the functional classification of a road. Traffic volume in relationship to the physical design of the road, including lane and shoulder width, right-of-way alignment and surface treatment, is important to its classification. Generally, as a community develops, roads are improved to meet the increased traffic demands, with specific routes moving higher in the functional classification as they are improved.

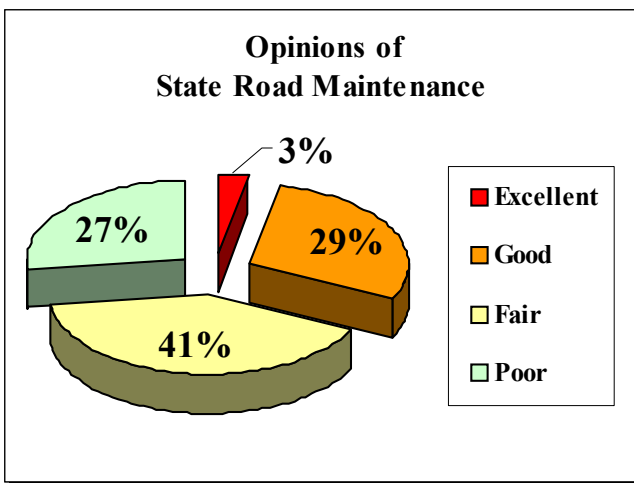
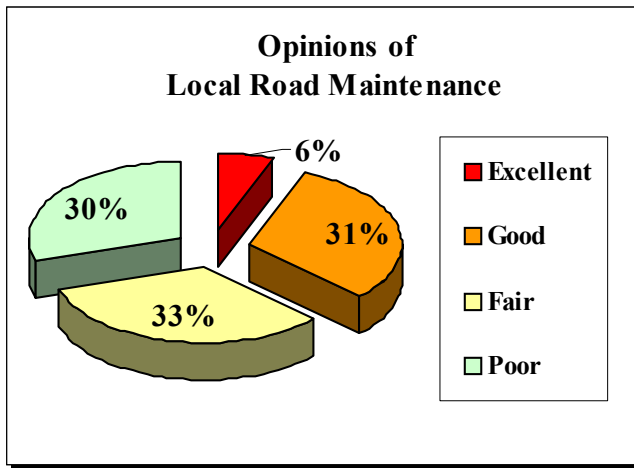
However, in areas of rapid growth and associated traffic increases, the amount of traffic carried by specific roads may increase to the point of exceeding the road's capacity. The road, in terms of traffic, may be serving as a principal collector, but may not have been physically upgraded from a minor collector or local road. In urban areas, mass transit and non-capital approaches such as ride sharing and staggered work hours are promoted as a means of reducing traffic congestion as an alternative to upgrading roads.

A road's location and relationship to other roads in the intra-community and inter-regional highway network may also help define the road's classification. Those roads which provide direct and convenient connection to arterial routes and expressways typically develop into roads which carry increasing amounts of traffic. Conversely, interchanges for expressways are normally located to provide connection with those roads in a community which historically have developed into arterials and collectors. Traffic flow problems and declines in level-of-service on routes connecting areas of the municipalities and routes providing access to the region are directly related to the capacity of collector and arterial roads. As traffic increases on the collectors and arterials, where access to abutting properties has historically not been limited to any significant degree, increasing traffic congestion can be expected. Also resulting from such access by adjoining residential and commercial properties and intersecting streets are the safety problems associated with increased congestion.

### NTC Community Survey Findings Regarding Transportation

The Community Survey conducted during assembly of this Comprehensive Plan queried residents regarding their opinions on road issues. The results included the following relevant findings:

- Some 6% of survey respondents believe that township and borough road maintenance is excellent, with the good, fair and poor ratings each receiving about 30% of responses.
- State road maintenance was viewed similarly by residents surveyed, but fewer residents gave PennDOT excellent and poor ratings.



- Road maintenance has historically been a key local government service - one of the most basic expectations of public officials by the voters. Survey respondents confirmed that it is a major issue for them as well, some 41% reporting it is extremely important and 56% rating it as very important. Moreover, when residents were asked, *Which of the following programs would you be willing to support with local tax revenues?*, they overwhelmingly cited road improvements as their top choice from among ten categories of services. Altogether, road improvements were identified as a priority by 51.3% of respondents. Nothing else even exceeded a third of responses.
- Evaluations of road maintenance services by Community Survey respondents reveals that some communities enjoy much higher ratings than others. A ranking of communities by the combined number of excellent and good ratings is shown in the *Opinions of Local Road Maintenance by Survey*

Opinions of Local Road Maintenance by Survey Respondents			
	Excellent	Good	Total
Rush	13.8%	36.5%	50.3%
Franklin	8.9%	40.5%	49.4%
Bridgewater	7.8%	32.5%	40.3%
Choconut	4.5%	32.8%	37.3%
Forest Lake	5.2%	32.1%	37.3%
Silver Lake	3.4%	32.6%	36.0%
Friendsville	3.1%	31.3%	34.4%
Middletown	3.6%	30.4%	34.0%
Little Meadows	6.6%	26.2%	32.8%
Apolocan	4.3%	25.8%	30.1%
Jessup	3.8%	20.8%	24.6%
Liberty	1.1%	21.2%	22.3%

*Respondents Table* and reveals that municipal road maintenance is generally rated quite high.

- The *Survey Respondent Support for Using Tax Revenue for Road Improvements Table* shows that support for road improvements by Borough and Township survey respondents is generally stronger where road maintenance is perceived as weaker, indicating there is a basis for upgrading in those cases.

Survey Respondent Support for Using Tax Revenue for Road Improvements		
	#	%
Friendsville	24	72.7%
Middletown	36	62.1%
Silver Lake	199	58.4%
Jessup	61	56.0%
Liberty	104	53.6%
Choconut	72	53.3%
Forest Lake	115	52.5%
Franklin	83	51.9%
Apolocan	47	49.0%
Bridgewater	231	45.5%
Little Meadows	29	45.3%
Rush	70	42.9%

**Road Inventory and Conditions**

The *NTC Township Road Inventory Table* summarizes the basic details of the road system serving the Northern Tier region’s twelve municipalities. ten townships. The data was obtained by surveying individual municipalities and from PennDOT.

NTC Township Road Inventory				
	Total Road Miles	Paved Miles	PennDOT Road Miles Acquired	# of Local Bridges
Apolocan	27.5	0.0	9.0	2
Bridgewater	61.1	1.1	10.6	2
Choconut	24.3	2.4	6.1	1
Forest Lake	48.2	0.7	10.1	0
Franklin	36.3	0.0	8.4	1
Friendsville	2.0	2.0	0	0
Jessup	38.5	0.0	3.3	1
Liberty	38.5	0.0	8.3	5
Little Meadows	3.3	1.9	0	3
Middletown	38.0	0.0	12.3	3
Rush	55.0	0.0	9.5	1
Silver Lake	44.0	6.5	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>416.7</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>77.6</b>	<b>19</b>

Altogether, there are over 416 miles of local roads in the Northern Tier Coalition region, of which only 14.6 miles, or 1.9%, are currently paved. Slightly less than eighty miles, or 18.6%, came from PennDOT under Road Turnback transfer incentive program. Although four of the township’s participate in the PennDOT Agility program where services are coordinated or traded with the Commonwealth, none have contracted to do winter maintenance on State roads. One township dropped out of the Agility program due to dissatisfaction with the results.

The NTC municipalities own and maintain a total of nineteen bridges. One of these bridges, on Carmalt Road (Choconut T-695), is subject to a weight limit and requires deck replacement. Another on Hill Road (Liberty T-723) is also weight limited but needs to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$265,000. Jessup Township has also identified a need to replace a bridge on Ainey Road (T-684) at a projected cost of \$650,000. Little Meadows Borough is currently replacing the bridge on Cemetery Road.

Four of the nine townships who answered, reported that *many areas require improvement such as surface restoration, widening, shoulders, drainage, etc.* Another three townships stated that most of their roads required such improvements. Bridgewater Township offered that some areas of its road system needed improvements while Rush Township stated that *most (roads) are in good condition and simply require normal maintenance and repair.*

The NTC municipalities were also identified the types of general improvements that are most important in maintaining and upgrading their road systems. The *Ranking of Needed Road Improvements by Importance Table* reports the municipal concerns.

Ranking of Needed Road Improvements by Importance	
	%
Improving drainage	23%
Routine maintenance of existing surfaces	20%
Widening	13%
Adding or improving shoulders	11%
Eliminating Hazardous curves	11%
Reducing steep grades	7%
Bituminous paving of additional roads	2%
Oil and chipping additional roads	2%
Other (maintenance, bases, sluices)	10%

Drainage is clearly the top issue and was also cited among the other activities needed as *replacement of aging sluices*. Addressing this issue is one of the most important aspects of reducing other long term maintenance and reconstruction costs as well avoiding flooding conditions that pose safety hazards to drivers and threaten properties. Among the other specific State and local road improvement needs identified by townships were the following:

**Apolocan Township**

- Grading, cleaning and replacement of sluices on State Route 57083 (Bowbridge Road).
- Replacement of the bridge deck on T-775 (Lake-O-Meadows Road).
- Cutting back banks and brush at the Benjamin Road intersection.

- Filling pot holes, repairing berms and replacing sluices on all State roads.

### **Bridgewater Township**

- Address drainage and related ditching issues along T-518 (Cantone Road) at an estimated cost of \$12,000.
- Address drainage and related ditching issues along T-527 (Lake Street) at an estimated cost of \$5,000.
- Reduce the steep approach to Hillendale Drive at an estimated cost of \$10,000.
- Address the drainage issues, sluice replacement needs and collapsing edge problems of Route 29. Also, redesign and address sight distance issues associated with intersections of SR 3029 and T-732 (Ellsworth Road) with Route 29.
- Upgrade, widen and straighten Route 706 to better handle truck traffic. Also, realign intersection of SR 1026 with Route 706 to 90 degrees, create turning lanes or signals to improve access to shopping plazas and light the intersection with Route 167 at Tiffany Corners.

### **Choconut Township**

- Address surface treatment needs of T-695 (Carmalt Road), T-634 (Kinney Road), T-768 (Stanley Lake Road) and T-769.
- Resurface major State roads through Choconut Township (e.g. Route 267, Quaker Lake Road).

### **Forest Lake Township**

- Clean culverts, resurface, and rebuild and widen bridges on Route 267 in Forest Lake Township.
- Address the long-term improvement and routine maintenance needs associated with roads carrying large amounts of quarry traffic. Dust and mud control, as well the need for continual resurfacing, are issues that need attention and cooperation of quarry owners.

### **Franklin Township**

- Resurface, ditch and replace sluices on T-683

(Forks Hill Road) for approximately 1,900 feet from Route 29.

- Build up, resurface and install new sluice pipes on Booth Road (T-768) from Milk Can Corners approximately one-half mile.
- Blacktop intersections with Route 29 for 75-100 feet (including Forks Hill, Bailey, Buckley, Porter, Booth, Olszewski, Mitchell, Conroy and Quarry Roads).
- Repair pot holes, fix shoulders, clean ditches and resurface Route 29. Also, correct sight distance problems at key intersections (Olszewski Road, Quarry Road, Buckley Road and Forks Hill Road) by cutting brush, addressing sign needs and reducing speeds.
- Improve sight distances at the T-763 / T-769 and SR 4012 / SR 1018 / T-768 intersections by cutting brush and installing yield signs.

### **Jessup Township**

- Improve drainage on T-533 at an estimated cost of \$10,000.
- Widen, stabilize and resurface T-512 (Dakey), T-600 (Ranch) and T-602 (Fair Hill) at a combined estimated cost of \$50,000.
- Resurface Ridge Road.
- Clean ditches, cut brush and mow grass along Route 706. Also, address grade and sight distance issues at intersections with T-318 and T-684.
- Address grade and sight distance issues at the intersection of T-594 and Route 57009.

### **Liberty Township**

- Widen and improve drainage on T-723 (Mill Road), T-808 (Howard Hill Road) and T-841 (Mucky Run Road).
- Address drainage issues and repair shoulders on Route 29 (Snake Creek Road).
- Repair berms, address drainage issues and repair surfaces of State Routes 1022 (Liberty Park Road),

1020 (Rhiney Creek Road) and 4002 (Laurel Lake and Franklin Hill Roads).

- Repair the washed out section of State Route 1037 (Steam Hollow Road) by the old reservoir.
- Upgrade the following intersections:
  - Route 29 and T-794 (Bailey Road) - requires relocation, raising to improve sight distance and realignment to 90 degrees
  - Route 29 and T-796 (Creamery Road) - needs further raising to better accommodate Route 4002 truck traffic using this as an alternate route.
  - Route 29 and SR 4002 (east side, Franklin Hill Road) - requires major raising of road surface to allow stopping and restarting in bad weather.
  - Route 29 and SR 4002 (west side, Laurel Lake Road) - requires major re-engineering to address sight distances and steep grades that result in sliding of vehicles across Route 29 in bad weather.
  - Route 29 and SR 1002 (Liberty Park) - cut brush and enforce no parking regulation to address sight distance issues.
  - Route 29 and T-721 (Jones Creek Road) - requires major excavation or relocation to address slope, alignment and sight distance issues.
  - Route 29 and T-798 (Shadow Brook) - relocate intersection south to create 90 degree alignment and improve sight distance.
  - Route 29 and T-721 (Muck Run Road) - relocate Route 29 one lane east to provide sight distance or excavate hill and widen bridge to create sight distance.
  - Route 29 and T-745 (English Flat) -move to provide sight distance and realign to a 90 degree intersection.
  - Route 4002 (Laurel Lake Road) and T-813 (Tripp Lake Road) - relocate Route 4002 slightly south to address steep grade and sight

distance issues.

### Middletown Township

- Coyle Road needs drainage improvements in the vicinity of Sam Williams Road.
- Comfort Road needs brush removed and grading back of road to original width in vicinity of Gaylord Road.
- Foran Road needs brush cutting for approximately one mile to allow grading. Sluices also need replacing.
- Degman Road needs brush cutting for approximately one-half mile to allow grading, widening and other drainage improvements.
- Guitan Road needs brush cutting for approximately one mile.
- State Route 858 needs cutting back of banks to allow for widening, straightening and leveling. The intersection with Corby Road and Williams Road needs tree removal, regulation of parking and removal of an abandoned building creating sight distance issues. The Guitan road intersection also requires tree and abandoned building removal.
- Irish Road needs some drainage work and paving to handle heavy truck loads and other traffic it receives.
- All other intersections in the Township also need attention to brush cutting and regular grass cutting to address sight distance limitations that now exist.

### Rush Township

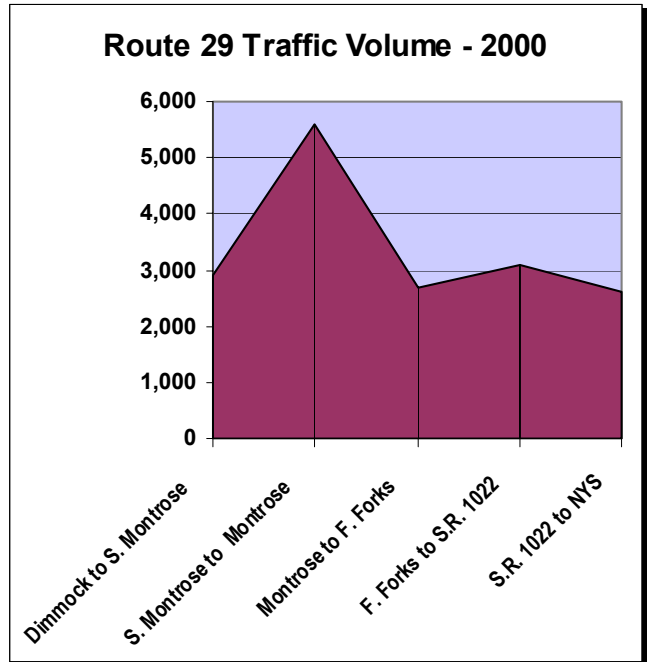
- State Route 3023 from Rush to Elk Lake needs resurfacing after pot hole repairs.
- Route 706 needs to be lowered at the intersection with Strohl Road to create better sight distance.

### Silver Lake Township

- T-717 (Donovan Road) needs widening, resurfacing, drainage improvements and new base material at an estimated cost of \$10,000.

- T-812 (Kennedy Road) needs ditches pulled, new base material, surface material and filling of deep ditches with stone at an estimated cost of \$7,000.
- T0-807 (Wilkes-Barre Turnpike) requires new sluices, other drainage improvements, base improvements, paving and guide rails at an estimated cost of \$1,200,000.
- T-701 (Heavey Road) needs base material, pulling of ditches, widening and some resurfacing at an estimated cost of \$6,000.
- T-780 (Snowhollow Road) needs some resurfacing, widening, ditching, tree removal and guide rails at an estimated cost of \$7,000.
- SR 4002 from Quaker Lake to Choconut (SR 167 to SR 267) needs recycling of the base, additional base. paving, ditching and widening.
- SR 167 (Silver Lake Road) needs guide rails.
- The Hawleyton Road needs base recycling, paving, ditching and widening.
- The Murphy’s Corner intersection needs widening and other work to take out the knoll on SR 167 and create an effective 4-way stop. This intersection is a school bus stop and in critical need of work.

Tunkhannock, Montrose and employment centers in the Triple Cities region.

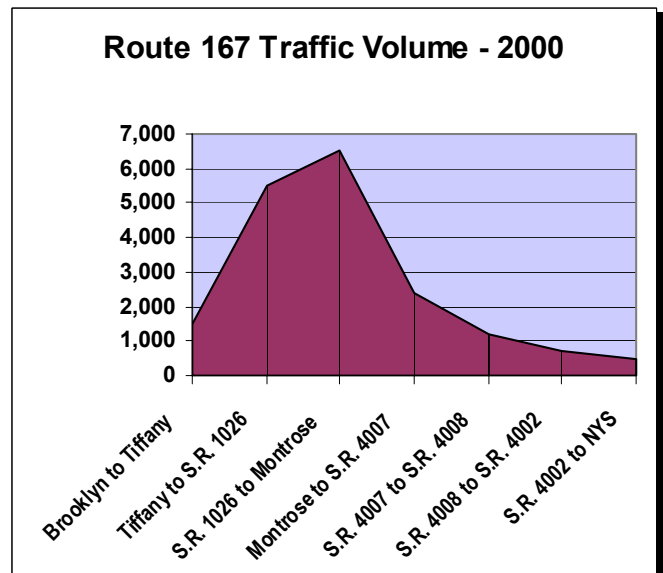


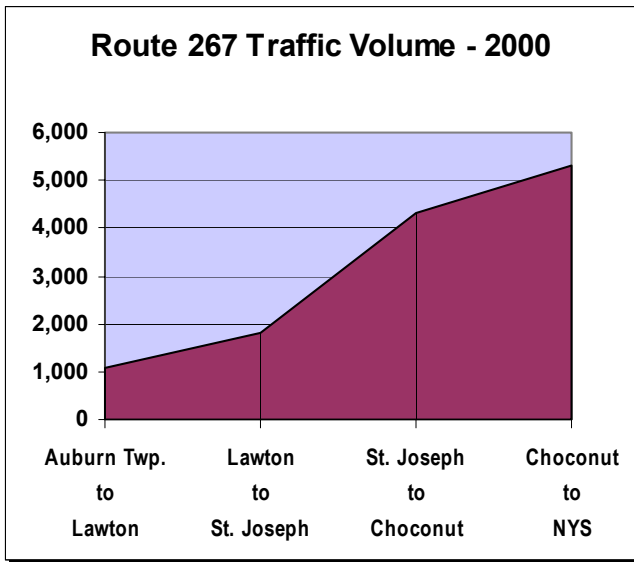
Route 167 has a very different pattern. It has very high traffic in Montrose (where it overlaps with Route 706) but fades quickly to very low levels toward New York, indicating it does not play the same arterial functions with respect to travel to work and shopping that Route 29 does.

**State Highway System**

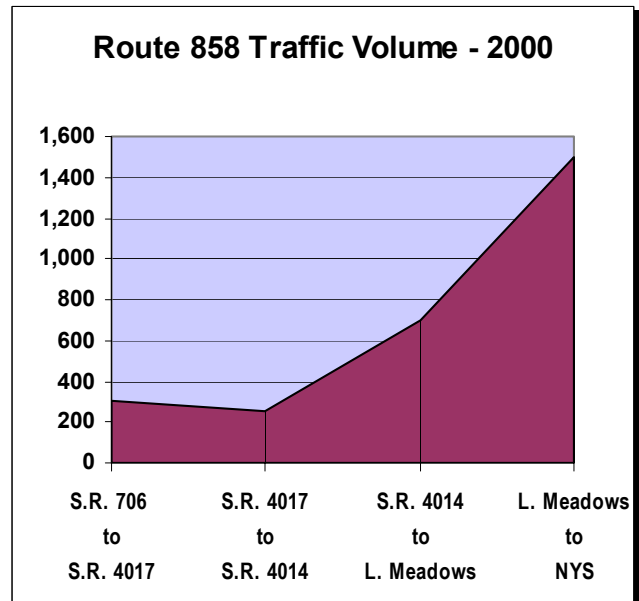
It is obvious that traffic on the roads in the NTC has been increasing steadily as development in the area has increased. Average Annual Daily Traffic volumes are a way to measure increases or decreases in road use to provide an overview of the traffic flow in the municipalities for planning purposes. Traffic volumes have historically not been a problem on local roads and traffic counting has not been conducted. PennDOT does, however, conduct traffic counts on state roads, and the counts do provide insights into the function and capacity of the entire highway system. Traffic counts for 2000 on selected State roads in the NTC area are reported as average annual daily traffic, are shown on the *following charts*.

Route 29 traffic peaks in Montrose and declines somewhat as it runs north toward New York State. However, there is a relatively large volume of traffic along the entire route. It serves as a key link between

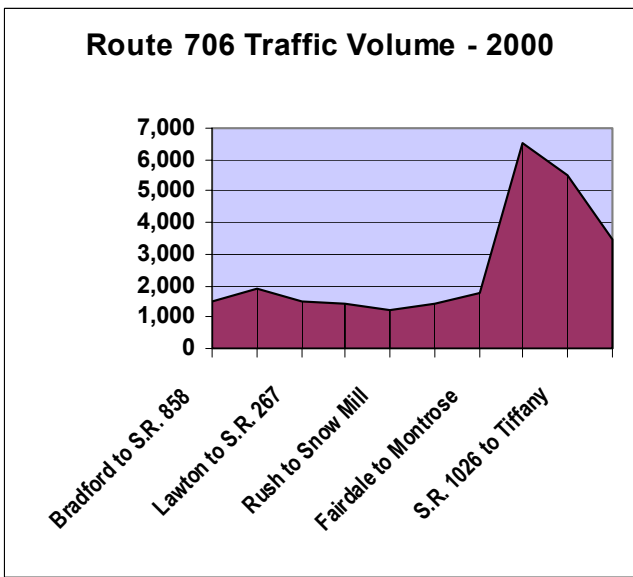




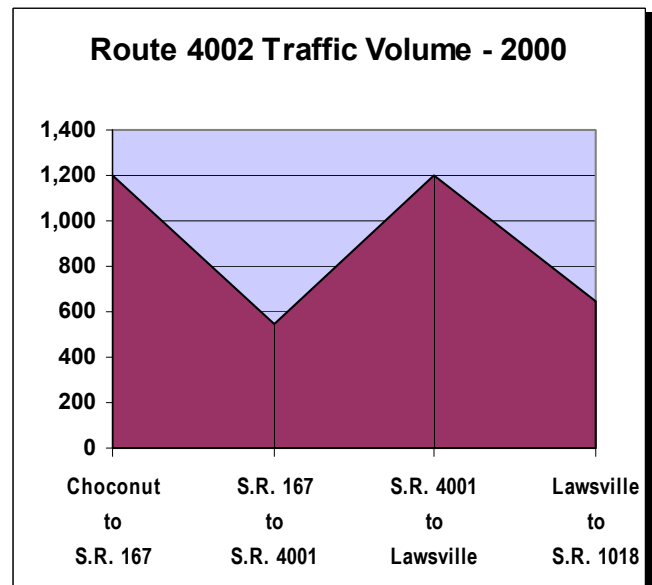
Route 267 traffic illustrates an entirely different pattern, with steadily increasing volumes as it runs north toward New York. Indeed, the traffic volume at Choconut is, at 5,300 vehicles per day, the highest in the region outside of the Montrose area. Relationships with the Triples Cities are strongest in this portion of the Northern Tier region, plus there are some local businesses that attract New York customers.



Route 858 is primarily a collector road and accumulates no significant traffic until reaching Little Meadows.

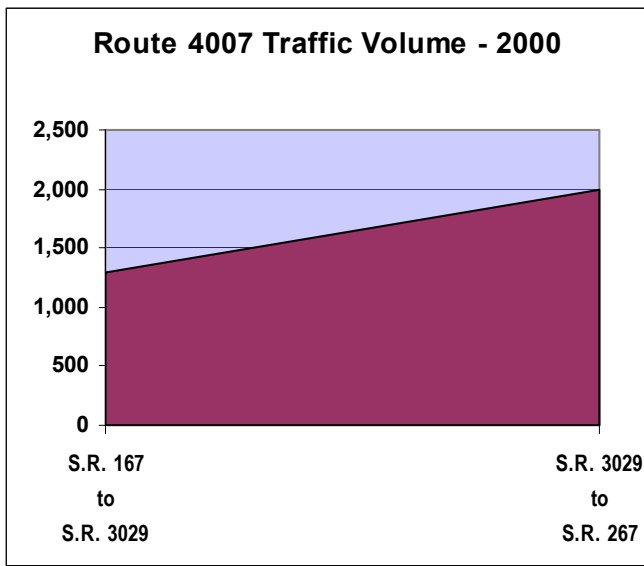


Route 706 is very busy in and around Montrose with relatively high traffic toward I-81. The horizontal and vertical alignment (steep hills and sharp curves) of this section of the Route, coupled with the relatively high number of trucks, reduces its level of service. Traffic to the west is relatively modest and steady.



Route 4002 is an important east-west route for the northern portion of the Northern Tier region and carries rather large amounts of traffic for such a highway. It serves as a connector between Routes 29, 167 and 267 and feeds into the last of these at Choconut, adding to traffic levels there.

Route 4007 also connects Routes 167 and 267, diverting south-north traffic from the former to the latter, effectively becoming part of the connection between Montrose and the Vestal area of New York.



Many of these State routes must be upgraded to accommodate the industrial traffic using the routes in order to create a more functional highway system. A large proportion of the traffic on these routes is associated with the agricultural, forestry and mining industries in the NTC, County and region. Many highways on the State system or feeding it carry many trucks hauling bluestone and quarry stone. The Wilkes-Barre Turnpike, for example, carries twenty-five large stone trucks six days per week. Other critical road sections for this type of traffic include Elk Lake to Montrose, Route 267 and Stewart Road to Forest Lake.

Many of the State highways have also experienced large increases in traffic. Route 29 between South Montrose and Montrose added 1,300 vehicles between 1992 and 2000, an increase of 30%. Route 706 between Montrose and Tiffany Corners grew to 6,500 vehicles per day, a 59% gain in eight years. Route 267 between St. Joseph and Choconut added 1,600 vehicles or 59%. The congestion around Montrose, increased traffic on Route 267 in the vicinity of Choconut, and heavy truck traffic on specified roads suggest these highways must be priorities for future improvement programs.

Truck traffic governs highway capacity in many of these cases. The section of Route 167 between Montrose and State Route 4007, for example, has approximately ten feet wide travel lanes, no shoulders, steep, hilly terrain and about 2,400 vehicles per day of traffic. If truck traffic is limited to 5% (typical for a rural highway) the rated Level of Service (LOS) for this highway is LOS D, indicating significant, but,

### Carrying Capacity and Level of Service

The traffic carrying capacity of a community's road network, and the intersections associated with the network, to handle the existing and future traffic volumes generated by development is the key element for providing safe and efficient traffic flow. Those land uses which generate larger volumes of traffic should logically be located in the areas of a community served by roads with greater carrying capacity. For example, commercial establishments generate more traffic than a single family residence and should be located on routes which have sufficient capacity to serve the use. The capacity of a highway or road typically decreases as the service area of the route declines. For example, the capacity of I-81 is obviously significantly greater than any arterial highway, which in turn have a greater capacity than collector roads, with the lowest capacity associated with local roads. The capacity of a rural, two lane highway is dependent on a number of design variables such as lane and shoulder widths and terrain.

Local roads, because of the limited service and low traffic volumes, are not considered in terms of capacity. The quality of traffic service is discussed in terms of level-of-service (LOS). There are six levels of service ranging from Level A through Level F, with Level A representing free flowing traffic and Level F representing a total breakdown in the traffic flow or *bumper to bumper* traffic.

tolerable traffic problems. When the truck traffic is doubled to 10%, however, the Level of Service falls to LOS E, indicating a situation that approaches failure and encourages dangerous passing and other problem driving patterns. Capacities of other regional routes are similarly affected. Highways in the Northern Tier Coalition are not getting all the attention deserved because the low overall traffic volumes obscure the needs deriving from the heavy truck traffic.

### New Road Construction

In terms of new road construction, the municipalities are not likely to undertake any new road construction. Roads serving new residential developments will be constructed by developers in accord with the applicable county or municipal standards. These roads can be accepted for public dedication by the municipality, and provided such roads meet PennDOT standards, the municipality's State Liquid Fuels Fund allocation would increase.

<b>Overview of Dirt Road Upgrade Costs</b> (per mile of road, 18 feet wide)	
<b>Preparation</b> - new culverts; clean/scalp ditches; grade, shape and roll road; apply dust control	
assume 4 culverts x 30 ft. =120 lineal ft. @ \$55 .....	\$6,600
clean debris/scalp grass from parallel ditches, 5,280 x 2 = 10,560 lineal ft. @ \$0.45 .....	\$4,750
grade, shape and roll road, 5280 ft. x 18 ft. = 10,560 sq. yds. @ \$0.40/ sq. yd. ....	\$2,640
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED PREPARATION COST PER MILE</b> .....	<b>\$13,990</b>
<b>Bituminous oil and chip surface</b> - double surface treatment	
0.40 gal./sq. yd. E3M asphalt (first coat)	
40 lbs./sq. yd. #67 aggregate	
0.35 gal./sq. yd. Asphalt (second coat)	
20 to 22 lbs./sq. yd. #8 aggregate	
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED OIL AND CHIP COST PER MILE</b> .....	<b>\$15,840</b>
<b>Total for Preparation and Oil and Chip per Mile</b> .....	<b>\$29,830</b>
<b>Oil and chip maintenance</b> - seal coat every 3 years on average, interim pot hole repair not included	
0.40 gal./sq. yd. E3M asphalt	
20 to 22 lbs./sq. yd. #8 aggregate	
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST OIL AND CHIP MAINTENANCE PER MILE</b> .....	<b>\$8,130</b>
<b>Repair oil and chip surface when wheel rutted</b> - using leveling surface, typically after 7 or 8 years of use	
1" thick, 60# leveling surface .....	\$13,300
1" thick, 120# ID2A or ID3A overlay pavement .....	\$26,610
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST FOR LEVELING SURFACE PER MILE</b> .....	<b>\$39,910</b>
<b>Construct new road</b> - 18 feet wide per typical subdivision ordinance	
4" sub base .....	\$36,960
4" BCBC .....	\$83,635
1" wearing surface ID2A or ID3A .....	\$26,610
shoulders (4" thick. x 4 ft. wide) .....	\$14,000
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST FOR NEW ROAD PER MILE</b> .....	<b>\$161,206</b>
<b>ASSUMING 30 MILES OF GRAVEL ROADS</b>	30.0
cost per mile to oil & chip	\$30,000
total oil & chip cost for 30 miles	\$900,000
annual cost on 10-year oil and chip program (approx. 3 miles/yr)	\$90,000
cost per mile of oil & chip maintenance - 3-year cycle	\$8,130
miles of 30 total requiring maintenance each year	10.0
annual cost of oil and chip maintenance when all miles completed	\$81,300
cost per mile of leveling surface to repair oil and chip surface when wheel rutted	\$39,910
total cost for leveling surface on 30 miles	\$1,197,300
annual cost on 10-year leveling program beginning in 9 <sup>th</sup> year (approx. 3 miles/yr)	\$119,730

However, the long term cost of the maintenance of public roads falls far short of the funds received from Commonwealth for liquid fuel funds. Local officials must carefully weigh the long term maintenance costs against the local tax revenues generated by development and increased state funding before accepting private roads for dedication. The annual payment from the state is based on the municipal population and the amount of road miles maintained.

New road construction in the planning area is associated with residential development. The subdivision and land development ordinance sets standards for road layout, design, and construction. Roads may be owned and maintained by private communities, or if a road is constructed to the required standards of the road dedication ordinance it may be accepted by the municipality for general public use. Dedicated roads are then added to Pennsylvania Liquid Fuels Program reimbursement list and are owned and maintained by the municipality.

Specific actions for new subdivision roads include:

- Maintain an up-to-date road ordinances setting standards for construction of public roads and establishing procedures for dedication to the public.
- Maintain an up-to-date road occupancy ordinance setting standards for driveway access to Borough and Township roads and for stormwater and utility improvements within the road right-of-way.
- Review road construction standards to ensure adequacy for public safety and eliminate excessive requirements to minimize the consumption of resources for construction and long term maintenance.

### **Transportation Goals and Actions**

The above analysis suggests a number of specific transportation goals for the Northern Tier region. Many of these goals demand the leadership of Susquehanna County and the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission, but the Northern Tier Coalition is the appropriate entity for securing that assistance. The recommended transportation goals and action steps are as follows:

- The NTC municipalities will focus on the maintenance and improvement of existing local municipal roads, and monitor the need and ability to correct specific width and alignment problems

which would require reconstruction as traffic volumes dictate and available funds allow. The major maintenance concern is providing good drainage for all roads along with normal maintenance. Based on this policy, the Borough and Township will use the *Road Inventory and Evaluation Form* included in the Appendix along with projected revenues, to plan for the improvement of local roads over the next five to ten years within the normal budget process, and include any reconstruction projects in a capital improvements program.

- State Road Classification and Upgrades
  - Routes 29, 267 and 706 should be classified as industrial roads and be continually upgraded for these purposes.
  - Route 167 and 4007 between Montrose and Route 267 also need to be considered part of this system for north-south traffic movements.
  - Routes 29 and 267 provide the essential connections to the Triple Cities that will drive future economic development.
  - Route 706 links the NTC with I-81 and needs attention along the entire route to ensure reasonable access to the Northern Tier region.
- Other connector routes identified earlier (e.g., Wilkes-Barre Turnpike) should be upgraded, not only to accommodate truck traffic, but also to fulfill the role as evolving elements of the functional collector system.
- The NTC should partner with the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC) on the proposed pilot program for bridge maintenance. This program would coordinate maintenance activities, inspections and capital upgrades. NTRPDC would administer it, manage upgrades and help secure funding for these. The NTC would benefit from such a program given its limited number of bridges and resources.
- There have been proposals to establish a regional rail-trail through the Northern Tier Coalition region. However, much of the right-of-way has reverted to private ownership. Moreover, such a program would compete for highway improvement funds needed to upgrade truck routes. Therefore,

independent trails are not in the Northern Tier Coalition's interests. Ancillary bike paths in connection with upgrading of highways such as Route 706 could be important to developing more tourism and should be encouraged where the cost is reasonable.

- All-terrain vehicles (ATV's) are becoming a major problem on rural highways everywhere. The Coalition should consider enacting some local regulations that would confine ATV's to private property. It should also work with State Police to do some targeted enforcement of key problem areas from time to time to discourage abuse. An education program reminding taxpayers of the law could also be useful. Finally, some communities may want to consider encouraging some private ATV parks where these activities could take place without creating unsafe conditions or disturbances for neighbors.
- Sidewalk improvements are needed in the Boroughs of Friendsville and Little Meadows. Certain areas on the periphery of Montrose may also warrant future consideration of sidewalks to remove pedestrians from high-volume traffic areas. Funding for these purposes should be sought through the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program and other sources.
- Public transportation in the Northern Tier region is limited to senior vans operated by Barnes-Kasson Hospital and Montrose Minuteman. These are largely demand-responsive systems and suitable for meeting present needs. Nonetheless, if the population starts to grow more rapidly and continues to age, the area may require a more extensive system. A coordinated demand-responsive service supported by multiple social service entities, where services are bid out to private providers on a zone base with the Northern Tier representing a distinct service area, may be appropriate in such a circumstance.
- Rail service is available in nearby New Milford, Binghamton and Tunkhannock. No particular improvements are required, but the availability of that service could help attract economic development to the region. It is also possible that some of the stone traffic to New Jersey, New York and New England could be transferred to rail and ease the burden on the local highway system (outside the NTC).

- Air transportation services are available in Binghamton and Scranton and should be used to promote economic development.
- The members of the Northern Tier Coalition have already cooperated on highway projects serving multiple municipalities, sharing equipment and manpower to lower costs. This is an excellent initiative and should be emulated everywhere it is possible. It will not only pay economic benefits through the efficiencies gained, but also lower capital costs for new equipment, ensure road improvements are coordinated between adjoining communities and increase the opportunities for leveraging outside funding.
- Cooperative road projects also offer some opportunities to do capital improvements programming on a joint basis. Moreover, if this were accomplished in the context of imposing highway impact fees under the authority of the Municipalities Planning Code (a practical impossibility for most communities individually) there would be a foundation for funding the capital improvements program.

The Northern Tier Coalition should pursue this by working with NTRPDC to secure funding for the transportation studies required under the Code. It should also consider adding impact fee requirements to its land use regulations. These should ultimately be based on the transportation studies but in the interim communities should often be able negotiate such fees with developers. Contributions from heavy highway users such as stone companies, where the improvements serve their interests, could also help.