

4.6 Policy-Level Guidance

PennDOT's long range plan guidance indicates that successful plans should "Emphasize Planning, not Programming". In addition to the specific projects, line-items, and revenue assumptions that are explicitly programmed as part of the 2040 LRTP's Preferred Scenario, there is equal value in a more general set of policy-level guidance or recommendations. It is this set of information that will help to steer planning stakeholders throughout the county in a consistent and meaningful direction aimed at achieving the plan's overall goals and objectives. To that end, policy-level guidance has been summarized below in terms of:

- General Planning Practices
- Land Use Planning
- Economic Vitality
- Multimodal Transportation Safety
- Multimodal Transportation Security
- Roadway System
- Pedestrian / Bicycle / Trail Network
- Public Transportation
- Rail Service
- Air Travel
- Waterborne Transportation
- System Sustainability and Livability
- System Efficiency and Preservation

General Planning Practices

- *Overarching Themes* – The Erie MPO should encourage planning efforts that promote the 2040 LRTP themes of Economic Vitality, Multimodal Transportation Safety, Multimodal Transportation Security, Multimodal Choices and Connections, System Sustainability and Livability, and System Efficiency and Preservation; and support projects that advance the goals and objectives of the 2040 LRTP.
- *Prioritization Programs* – The Erie MPO should develop and maintain prioritization programs to address area-specific traffic operations issues, traffic signal improvements, emergency preemption, and ped/bike/trail needs.
- *Future Project Aspirations* – The Erie MPO should maintain a list of future project "aspirations" covering prioritized candidates that could not be included in the latest fiscally-constrained plan due to revenue shortcomings. Such a list may be used to

Themes & Goals of the 2040 LRTP

Economic Vitality – Ensure that transportation investments support the economic vitality of Erie County, and enable global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.

Multimodal Transportation Safety – Increase the safety of the transportation system for all users.

Multimodal Transportation Security – Increase security of the transportation system for all users.

Multimodal Choices and Connections – Increase the integration and connectivity of the transportation system across modes to increase accessibility and mobility options for people and freight.

System Sustainability and Livability – Ensure that transportation investments protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency with state and local planned growth and economic development.

System Efficiency and Preservation – Ensure efficient system management and operations that emphasize preservation of the existing transportation system.

encourage proactive and insightful project selection in the event that additional revenues or future development and construction opportunities become available.

- *Travel Demand Model Support* – The Erie MPO should maintain and apply their updated Travel Demand Model to assist with planning-level decision making, sensitivity analysis, and additional scenario planning. The following future enhancements to the model should also be considered:
 - Pedestrian and bicycle modeling
 - Freight modeling
 - Large-scale Traffic Impact Study evaluation tools

Land Use Planning

- *County Review Assistance* – Erie County should continue to review all land development and subdivision applications for those communities that have their own SALDO, to provide municipalities with professional planning perspectives and recommendations.
- *Preferred Land Use Practices* – Erie County should continue to promote practical and effective principles included in the Erie County Land Use Plan to:
 - Conserve Natural and Scenic Assets
 - Maintain a Clear Edge Between Town and Countryside
 - Build Livable Communities
 - Preserve Historic Resources
 - Respect Local Character in New Construction
 - Reduce the Impact of Automobiles

- *Traditional Growth Standards* – Erie County should promote practical and effective guidelines for zoning and proposed SALDO standards.
- *Highway Access Standards* – Erie County should update its current Land Use Plan by pursuing adoption and incorporation of new highway access control standards for use as a technical reference, while also stressing the importance and benefits of such standards to local governments and other agencies. Efforts should particularly encourage the control of access along major roads and corridors while also requiring future developments to provide adequate internal circulation and connectivity to maximize linkages with other nearby development. Such standards should also support the construction of marginal access roads / frontage roads to serve both new and existing developments.
- *Residential Development Standards* – The current standards for residential development should be reconsidered, potentially including new separate criteria for multi-family and single family developments in the Erie County Land Use Plan.
- *Institutional Development Standards* – Given the predicted growth significance of the education and health care sectors and their potential overall traffic generation, new standards for Institutional Development should be considered in the Erie County Land Use Plan.
- *Land Uses of Regional Impact and Significance* – Erie County should reexamine its current Land Use Plan and its potentially outdated definition of “Land Uses of Regional Impact and Significance”. The current threshold levels used to identify such land uses should be revised. (i.e. - industrial development – current standards may be too high, and consideration should be given to drop the current threshold of 500 jobs to 300 jobs)
- *Active Local Involvement* – Erie County should continue a policy of active involvement and assistance as a land use consultant for local governments. It should become an active partner with the City of Erie and surrounding municipalities within the Urbanized Area.
- *Official Map* – The Erie MPO should encourage municipalities to plan for future developments, improve access management, and provide for marginal access roads through the use of corridor and right-of-way preservation as part of the Official Map process. Currently only three municipalities in Erie County use an Official Map.
- *Planning & Development Coordination* – The Erie MPO should encourage land use practices that consider transportation system issues early in the development process, as well as consistency with relevant components of local comprehensive plans. Also, the MPO should ensure that transportation planning and investment decision-making will balance local land use and development objectives with regional transportation needs.

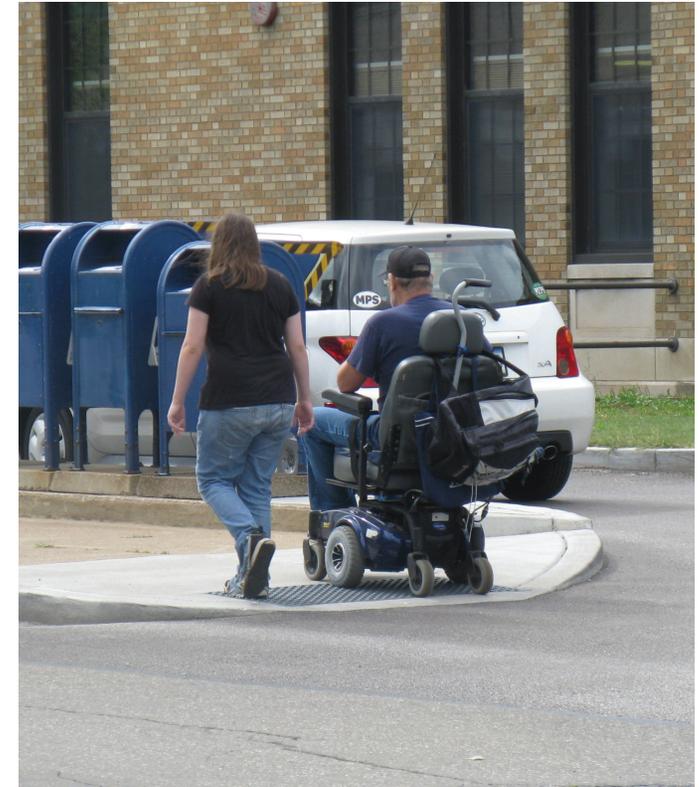
Economic Vitality

- *Local Plan Consistency* – Give priority to transportation projects that are consistent with economic development priorities established in local government comprehensive plans.
- *Roadway Infrastructure* – Resolve existing and future deficiencies in the county’s roadway infrastructure, while also planning for potential economic development issues such as improving access to the Port of Conneaut, Port of Erie, or future Erie Inland Port.
- *Intermodal Freight Infrastructure* – Support should be given to efforts that capitalize on and improve opportunities for the county’s existing intermodal rail and waterborne freight infrastructure. Examples may revolve around market demands for the Erie Inland Port initiatives, rail-served industrial properties, the Port of Erie, or potential feeder service to Canadian ports.
- *Tourism Corridors* – Identify tourism corridors for further study and potential investment consideration based on their importance to the regional economy.
- *Visitors Centers* – Improve promotion of Erie County’s visitor’s centers and their importance to the region with regard to providing directions and tourist information to the traveling public.

Multimodal Transportation Safety

- *Safety Focus Areas* – Future safety-related planning efforts in Erie County, including capital investments and programs, should improve the safety of the transportation system in a manner consistent with PennDOT’s “Vital Six” Safety Focus Areas of:
 - Reducing Aggressive Driving
 - Reducing Impaired (DUI) Driving
 - Increasing Seat Belt Usage
 - Infrastructure Improvements (Reducing Roadway Departure and Intersection Crashes)
 - Improving the Crash Records System
 - Improving Pedestrian Safety
- *Crash Database Reference* – Reference and maintain available crash data and analyses to help identify priority safety areas where limited funds might be best allocated at various levels of planning (e.g., long-rang, TIP updates, local priorities, etc.).

- *Highway-Rail Crossings* – Improve highway-rail crossing safety and capitalize on opportunities to incorporate the cost and prioritization of such improvements into any future development plans such as the Erie Inland Port initiative.
- *School Zone Safety* – Emphasize school zone safety, including incorporation of beneficial improvements into more broad-scoped projects such as corridor improvements, streetscaping initiatives, or traffic signal improvement programs.
- *Low Cost Safety Improvement Program* – Encourage pursuit and implementation of low cost safety improvements (e.g., tactile warning strips, rumble strips, line painting, etc.) targeted to areas of concern, particularly along rural corridors and near interstate access points



Multimodal Transportation Security

- *Inter-Agency Coordination* – MPO and County officials should encourage multi-disciplinary, inter-agency coordination meetings between stakeholders representing the “e”, the Port Authority, railroads, airports, and the Erie County Emergency Management Agency (ECEMA) to identify potential incident scenarios and response plans that capitalize on effective inter-agency communications and coordination.
- *Future Hazardous Materials Identification* – Erie MPO, ECEMA, and related officials should work toward early identification of anticipated hazardous materials, transport routes, etc., that might accompany significant future significant in order to be proactive in their emergency response planning and training.
- *Traffic Signal Preemption* – MPO, County, and municipal officials should develop a plan for the installation and maintenance of an upgraded traffic signal emergency preemption system.
- *Erie County ITS Program* – Maintain and update the countywide ITS infrastructure (e.g., real-time highway advisories, DMS, RWIS, Incident Management)
- *Interstate Detour Routes* – Continue proactive maintenance of color-coded interstate detours throughout the county, including annual coordination meetings, strategic placement and maintenance of emergency sign trailers, and updated detour maps / manuals.
- *Railroad Emergency Management Planning* - Re-assess safety / security issues and emergency management plans for potential incidents related to rail travel and/or rail cargo countywide
- *Port Emergency Management Planning* - Re-assess safety / security issues and emergency management plans and equipment needed throughout the Port of Erie.

Roadway System

- *Interstate Maintenance* – Promote efficient system management and operations of the interstate system.
- *High-Priority Deficiencies* – Identify the most important existing highway and bridge deficiencies and address them in a cost-effective manner.
- *Operational Emphasis* – Give priority to improvements that do not require additional travel lanes (i.e., changes in signal timing, addition of turn lanes, transportation systems management, and intelligent transportation systems.)
- *System Connectivity* – Improve the connectivity of the local and regional transportation network with intraregional, interregional, and interstate transportation systems and facilities.
- *Upgrade Opportunities* – Encourage opportunities to engage freight providers in operational and transportation system upgrade planning.
- *Erie Inland Port Impact Study* – Conduct appropriate planning and study efforts to evaluate, anticipate, and mitigate potential safety and traffic impacts of a future large-scale freight development. Specifically focus on potential truck access, site development connections, traffic volume increases, or related impacts relative to major corridors in western portions of the County (e.g., I-90, US 20, US 6N), access to Ohio and the Port of Conneaut, and/or access to the Port of Erie.

Pedestrian / Bicycle / Trail Network

- *Priority Pedestrian / Bicycle Network* – Erie MPO should assist municipalities interested in establishing priority bike and pedestrian networks.
- *Pedestrian / Bicycle Design Standards* – Pedestrian or bicycle design standards should be considered to establish consistency throughout the county and across various roadway and area types.
- *Complete Streets* – Plan for a “Complete Streets” approach that integrates transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, as appropriate, into highway and bridge improvement, reconstruction, or expansion projects.
- *Community Connections* – Assist municipalities in providing safe walking and biking routes to local and regional destinations, including linkages with neighborhoods, employment centers, services, commercial areas and other business districts, parks, and cultural facilities such as schools and churches.
- *Bike Route Safety* – Support bike route safety and safety education in strategic areas such as the City of Erie or along busy corridors such as US 6 / US 6N. Support signing and pavement marking improvements, shoulder improvements, “Share the Road” signage, or motorist and bicyclist education opportunities.

- *Bike Route “Spring Cleaning”* – Priority bicycle routes should be identified for community, county, and PennDOT maintenance crews so that debris removal and spring clean-up can be prioritized earlier in the season as a means to improving bicycle safety along these routes.

Public Transportation

- *Regional Connectivity* – Encourage the improvement of regional connectivity for transit, including service or route improvements to the county’s outlying communities, expanded university routes, or additional support for the county’s tourist industry.
- *Job Access* – Emphasize the movement of people to jobs by transit.
- *Park & Ride Enhancements* – Explore opportunities to add or enhance park & ride facilities at strategic locations throughout the county.
- *Bus Shelter Enhancements* – Explore opportunities to expand or improve bus shelters at key locations throughout the county (e.g., hub stops, university stops), including the development of design standards, maintenance-related Memorandums of Understanding, and strong business, institutional, or other partnerships.

Rail Service

- *Rail Infrastructure* – Intermodal infrastructure, equipment, and property development issues should be supported.
- *Industrial Property Access* – Development of new rail-served industrial properties should be encouraged, as well as investment in new and improved rail-siding at existing industrial properties along mainline routes.
- *Intermodal Ramp* – Support the develop an intermodal rail ramp capable of handling 25,000-50,000 lifts per year to serve existing and projected market demands.
- *At-Grade RR Crossing Improvements* – Update the 2000 At-Grade Rail Crossing Safety and Delay Study to specify candidate improvements or eliminations countywide.
- *Amtrak Station Improvements* – Support improvement needs and opportunities at the existing Amtrak Station as related to parking demands, parking needs, or coordination of transit or shuttle services during station operating hours.
- *Passenger Rail Service* – Opportunities for expanded passenger train service, additional routes, or conversion to high-speed rail should be considered with respect to the 2010 Pennsylvania Intercity Passenger & Freight Rail Plan.



Air Travel

- *ERI Market Expansion* – Capitalize on the pending completion and success of the Erie International Airport’s runway extension project as a means to exploring and expanding new market opportunities for commercial service, vacation charters, or corporate travel.
- *ERI Master Planning* – Revisit the Erie International Airport’s detailed master plan to update the 20-year planning horizon and assess “life after the runway extension” with consideration to efforts such as the development of an air cargo facility, terminal expansion, and other priority infrastructure and facility improvements.
- *Corry-Lawrence Airport Planning* – Continue to focus on maintenance and improvement of existing Corry-Lawrence Airport infrastructure and related assets, including planning for expansion of corporate air travel opportunities.

Waterborne Transportation

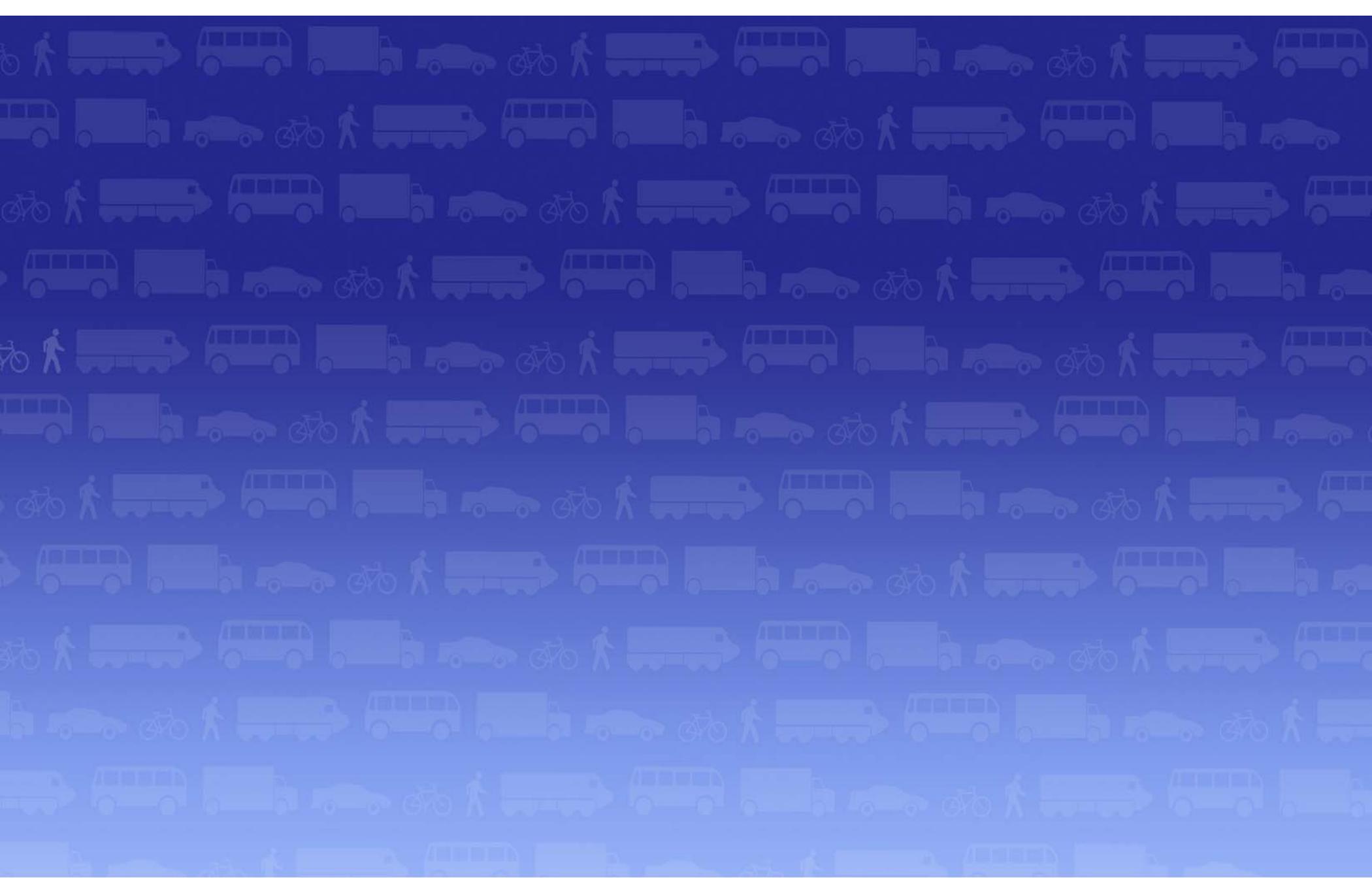
- *Port of Erie Infrastructure* – Support for waterborne freight transportation opportunities should focus on intermodal infrastructure, equipment, and property development issues at the Port of Erie as required by industrial or market demands and potential feeder service opportunities to Canadian ports.
- *Mountfort Terminal* – Efforts to complete intermodal infrastructure improvements should focus on facilities beginning at the Mountfort Terminal and including:
 - Required dredging, installation of dock facing and construction of freight transfer marshalling / staging areas adjacent to the Ore Dock Road.
 - Improved rail access, including adequate storage and bypass tracks and geometric improvements as necessary.
 - Development of terminal backlands for industrial development and commodity handling to diversify freight types and increase freight volumes.
- *Private Terminals* – Additional planning efforts should help to facilitate development of new, private terminals (including wharfs, new staging areas, storage and material handling equipment) to handle specialized cargos (e.g. liquid bulk, wood products) as dictated by market demands.
- *Waterfront Master Planning* – Agencies should revisit the 2009 Erie Waterfront Master Plan to incorporate the latest insights and recommendations resulting from the 2011 Bayfront Mobility Initiative freight analysis.

System Sustainability and Livability

- *Smart Transportation* – Make transportation infrastructure investments that increase transportation choices, preserve and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life.
- *Local Planning Benefits* – Coordinate local land use planning, transportation planning, and development to maximize the use of the existing infrastructure, increase the effectiveness of investment, and retain or enhance the vitality of the local community.
- *Great Lakes Seaway Trail Management* – The Erie MPO should support the initiatives of the Seaway Trail PA Steering Committee, and assist in the implementation of policy and project recommendations promoted in the Seaway Trail Corridor Management Plan. Additional support efforts may include:
 - Establishment of strategic private and non-profit partnerships to support the Seaway Trail and seek continuity in heritage travel.
 - Identification of funding sources to sustain activities of the Seaway Trail, including marketing and promotion.
 - Encouragement of maintenance (upgrade/upkeep) and enhancement of the safety and quality of the Trail at the state and local levels, including vegetation management plans to enhance the trail visually.
- *Resource Protection* – The Erie MPO will coordinate future projects and ongoing planning efforts through the appropriate agencies and corresponding Federal and State legislation, policy statements, and guidance in order to protect the environmental, natural, cultural, historic, or other resources countywide

System Efficiency and Preservation

- *Fix It First* – Planning stakeholders throughout the county should emphasize the preservation and management of the existing transportation system. Throughout the development of this 2040 LRTP, revenue assumptions have supported this approach with a “maintenance set-aside” of 90% from applicable sources. Erie MPO and PennDOT officials should continue to coordinate specific revenue details and related project impacts or assumptions as part of their ongoing TIP, Twelve-Year Program, and related planning efforts.
- *Improvement Prioritization Programs* – Planning stakeholders throughout the county should support the establishment of priorities to address existing roadway or other deficiencies before building new or extended roads. Several prioritization programs have been specifically recommended as a part of this 2040 LRTP, and Erie MPO should establish such programs.



WHITMAN, REQUARDT & ASSOCIATES, LLP
ENGINEERS · ARCHITECTS · PLANNERS

EST. 1915