



Thank Goodness It's Friday

The Erie County Department of Planning welcomes Christopher Friday as the new MPO Transportation Planner/Program Administrator. Christopher brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Department.

We asked Christopher a series of questions so you can get to know him...

What position did you hold prior to becoming the transportation planner for the Erie County MPO? How does that apply to the work you will be doing as a transportation planner?

I was most recently an Area Manager of a diverse portfolio of parking and transportation projects in Atlanta where my emphasis was destination locations and revenue collection. Starting my career in parking, I was the Assistant Director for a Major League Baseball team. This role gave me a customer service mindset that

we work for not only the team, but the County, and the City for which we represent.

Based on your past job history, you had worked in many industries, all very different from another. How does this translate to what you are doing now?

Being versatile says that you're willing to accept certain things and you must ask yourself, do you work for money or are you working to provide a better service for someone else; for a better place? Of course, I think we all work for money, but I'm always thinking, in the back of my mind that you work to provide for other people.

When you do that, it's not as hard to transition into something new because you're willing to accept that everything is changing. Change is the hardest thing for anybody to accept and when you can do that, everything else just gets a bit easier.

What are the strengths or perspective you are bringing to your new position? What improvements do you feel can be made?

Living in not only Atlanta but Milwaukee, Tampa, Rural south GA and Western PA have given me the chance to see many levels of community and how we all interact with the space in which we live. I think all places I have lived can improve their walkability/livability and Erie is no exception.

Want to know more? Contact Christopher at (814) 451 7325 or cfriday@eriecountypa.gov

**Erie County
Department of Planning**
www.eriecountypa.gov
814-451-6336

Erie MPO 101



Why do I need to know about the MPO?

It is the forum for growth and development in your community by way of transportation. So for example, if you are concerned about the number of accidents you see near your neighborhood school bus stop; the MPO is where your local representative will have a listening ear that can assist in planning, funding and execution of a data based solution. To clarify, transportation is the movement of goods, animals, or people from one location to another. This could be via many different modes such as air, rail, water, road, or trails.

What is the purpose of the MPO?

In order for Erie County to receive Federal Transit and Federal Highway funds, an agency is designated (by federal law) for Erie County to take responsibility for the transportation planning and programming decisions. This agency is called an MPO or Metropolitan Planning Organization.



Does every county have an MPO?

No. Not all counties have their own MPO many in fact are required to partner with neighboring counties to meet the federal funding standard. According to Federal law an MPO is required for areas with a population over 50,000. Population numbers are referenced to the most recent US Census (2010)

Who sits on the MPO?

The Organization is comprised of a complete mix of key stakeholders that hear the voice of the citizens and business owners about transportation. The Federal Government, State Government (PADOT District 1-0), municipal leaders, transit providers (Erie Metropolitan Transportation Agency EMTA), Major providers of transportation (Port Authority, Airport Authority), and most importantly key stakeholders from the community. These members operate under a committee structure consisting of a Technical Committee and a Coordinating Committee.

What does the MPO do?

The Erie County MPO serves as the forum for cooperative transportation decision making for the Erie metropolitan area and surrounding boroughs. The MPO channels federal funding for transportation projects and programs through a sound planning process that is comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing. The Erie MPO serves the 38 Municipalities of Erie County, Erie International Airport, Inland Port of Erie, EMTA.

Within the Community - Build and maintain safe and healthy communities (Americans With Disabilities Act, traffic flow, air quality, biking/walking)

Community to the Region - Connect the communities to recreational, social, and economic opportunities within the MPO region. (Travel time improvement, integrate land use and transportation)

Erie Region to Neighboring Regions - Grow economic opportunity via investment in critical regional infrastructure. (interstates, water ports, and airports)

How are projects moved from planning to reality?

The Erie MPO is the gateway to Federal and State funds for transportation which is facilitated via three major avenues:

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

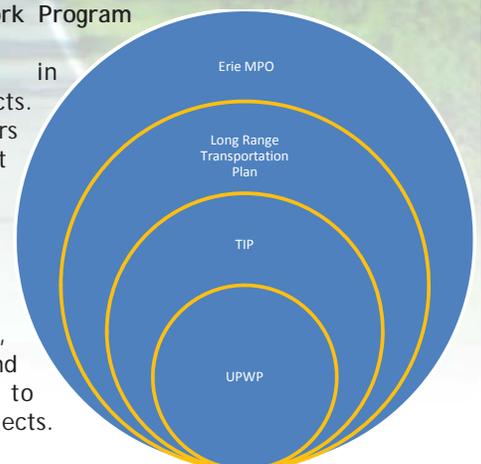
Done every 5 years as a strategic planning document based on short range and long range needs. This is to be based on the Federal and state planning goals. Data is collected and input is received from the municipalities for vision and projects. They are then ranked via priority to achieve the goal of the plan. This plan will ultimately need to be approved by the MPO to be adopted.

Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)

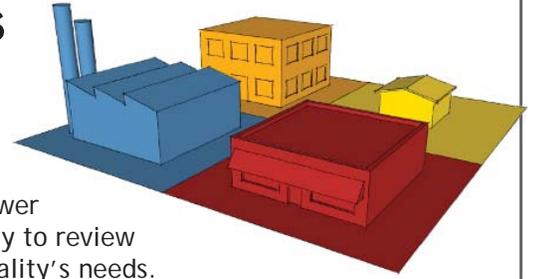
Written every 4 years to schedule work programs within the Erie MPO region. Projects from the TIP are advised and prioritized by the Erie MPO and selected from the LRTP. This includes all modes of surface transportation (street, highway, public transit, cycling, and walking). Final project scheduling comes from PADOT.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

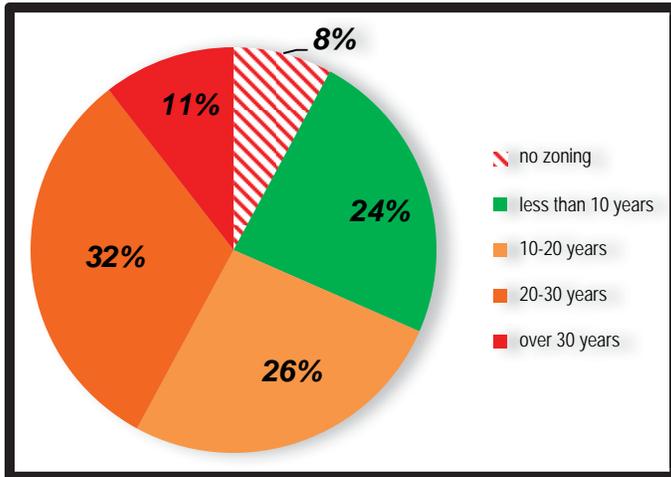
The final step in transportation projects. Adopted every 2 years and is the contract to see how state and federal funds will be used by the MPO. This contains actual work orders contained within a schedule, projected costs and resources needed to construct planned projects.



How old is your municipality's zoning ordinance?



Is your municipal zoning ordinance more than 10 years old? Does your municipality receive numerous requests for zoning amendments or variances? Has your municipality recently adopted a new comprehensive plan? If the answer to any of these questions is "yes", then it's probably time for your municipality to review its current ordinance in order to evaluate how well it addresses your municipality's needs.



Zoning ordinances help to protect and enhance property values by preserving neighborhood character, and protecting against incompatible land uses. They can help a community implement the goals and strategies of its comprehensive plan.

Unfortunately, older ordinances often fail to adequately protect a community and address its current needs. Neighborhoods change over time. Technological advances such as wireless communications and digital sign technology provide many benefits, but can also create conflicts if not regulated effectively. Changes in Federal and State laws sometimes necessitate changes to municipal zoning regulations.

In Erie County, over 74% of municipal zoning ordinances are older than 10 years, and over 45% are older than 20 years. The Erie County Department of Planning recognizes the need

for Erie County municipalities to review and update their zoning ordinances. ECPD also recognizes that in many cases, municipalities lack the funding or staffing to address this problem on their own.

In response, ECDP has created an Erie County Model Zoning Ordinance for use by Erie County municipalities. The model is intended to be a template, to be modified and tailored to the individual needs of the municipality. There is no "one size fits all" in zoning. The model can be used in its entirety if a new zoning ordinance is desired, or it can be used as a resource for zoning amendments needed to address specific topics. For example, the model ordinance includes an article on signs and a section on wireless communications

facilities. Either of these sections can be pulled from the model and used as an amendment to an existing municipal zoning ordinance.

ECDP is currently assisting the Venango Township Planning Commission with an update to the Township's zoning ordinance, and has agreed to assist the Union Area Planning Commission with updates to Union Township's and Union City Borough's zoning ordinances as soon as staff time permits.

If your municipality has questions about the model ordinance, please contact John McGranor at (814) 451 7329 or jmcgranor@eriecountypa.gov

If your municipality is interested in receiving assistance from ECDP with the drafting of a new ordinance, please contact Katherine S. Wyrosdick, AICP at (814) 451 7338 or kwyrosdick@eriecountypa.gov

Coastal Code Enforcement Officer Meeting

The Erie County Department of Planning with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Coastal Resources Management Program will be holding a meeting for Code Enforcement Officers for Lake Erie coastal municipalities.

Staff will be available to discuss enforcement of the Bluff Recession Setback Act in Erie County, control point monitoring, and other updates of the Coastal Resources Management program.

All code enforcement officers within the coastal municipalities are welcome to attend and share their experiences in addressing the challenges of bluff erosion in their municipalities.



For more information, please contact Amy Murdock at 814-451-7328 or at amurdock@eriecountypa.gov.

When: May 25th, 830am
Where: Brugger House at Avonia Beach, 101 Avonia Rd, Fairview PA

Lets Get Composting

Get ready for spring by learning to compost. Here are some important tips to remember:

Try using an indoor pail to collect food waste such as vegetable peelings, fruit rinds, or leftover bread. This will reduce the number of times you need to open your compost bin.

Never compost meat, dairy, or bones in a backyard compost pile or bin, these attract animals and may take longer to breakdown.

Turn your pile or bin at least every time you add food waste.

Stop adding material once your bins is almost full and continue to rotate until fully composted, usually 3-12 months depending on temperature. Never fill the bin to the top; this reduces air flow, which is important to the composting process.

To help absorb excess moisture and smell from your compost pile or bin, add more brown materials such as leaves or saw dust to your pile or bin.



Composting Workshops

The Erie County Recycling Program in partnership with Environment Erie and Millcreek Township Recycling will be running composting workshops starting in April and running through June. Registration for these workshops opens in May. Don't miss the workshops in June! For additional information or questions, call 814-440-3953

June Workshops:

- Wed, June 1st
5:30-8:30pm;
Asbury Barn,
Millcreek Twp
- Sat, June 4th
9am-12pm;
NorthEast Twp bldg

Registration Fee:
\$15 per household
Registrations Open May 16th

Please register at
www.environmenterie.org



Erie County Department of Planning begins to collect food waste...

In our office kitchen, you can now find a small pail used to collect food scraps. We are separating vegetable scraps, fruit rinds and peels, and even coffee grounds, filters and all, from going into the trash.

Once full, one of our staff will take the pail home to add to their backyard compost bin. With all the coffee we drink, we can easily fill the pail with just coffee grounds each week.



Hazardous Waste and Electronics Collection Events

Starting spring cleaning? Finding lots of chemicals, left over paint, or old electronics? Bring them to one of the County sponsored collection events for Hazardous Waste and Electronics. Pre-registration is required for all events, please call 1-866-815-0016

Where: Erie County Recycling Convenience Center
1624 Filmore Avenue, Erie PA.

When: May 14th, June 11th, July 9th; 9am

For the first time, we will be holding one collection event in the City of Corry. Thank you to Corry Cares for funding participant fees for Corry Residents only for this event!

Where: Erie County Redevelopment Authority
1524 Enterprise Road, Corry, PA.

When: April 23rd; 9am



5 ways to celebrate Earth Day

(because Mother Nature deserves some appreciation)

1. Reduce your carbon footprint by biking or carpooling to work
2. Avoid the TV, get outside, breathe deep and plant a tree
3. Conserve water by taking a shorter shower
4. Clean up your neighborhood by volunteering with a litter pickup
5. Get engaged and teach your kids about the importance of Nature