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## **Easton and Coopersburg get PennDOT Grants**

Pedestrians will find it easier to cross Main Street in Coopersburg and bicyclists will feel more welcome on Easton's Wood Avenue with help from two PennDOT grants designed to promote multimodal transportation.

Governor Tom Wolf announced 45 grants last month, including \$175,000 to improve Coopersburg's busy Main Street, and \$450,000 to help fund a safety project along a half-mile section of Wood Avenue in Easton.

"Our multimodal investments support important projects that help residents and local economies," said Governor Wolf. "We are making possible improvements that will bring significant benefits to these communities."

The grants are part of \$41.5 million issued to municipalities in 22 counties across the state, through the Pennsylvania Multimodal Transportation Fund. Those projects were chosen from 222 that requested more than \$241 million.

"Both of these projects are designed to make those areas more pedestrian and bicycle friendly," said Michael Donchez, Senior Transportation Planner for the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission. "That's become a focus in many of our communities."

According to Easton Public Works Director Dave Hopkins, the grant money may be used to add a planted, seven foot-wide median and traffic-calming bump outs at several intersections along a key connecting street to the busy 13<sup>th</sup> Street interchange at Route 22. It may also restrict parking to the south side of the road and designate part of Wood Avenue as a share the road segment of the street. It's part of a \$2.5 million project to improve the section of roadway that runs between 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> streets, but exactly which parts of the project come first will be decided in the coming weeks, Hopkins said.

"We're seeing speeds that are way too high for a neighborhood road," Hopkins said. "At the very least, we're going to make the neighborhood safer."

In Coopersburg, several intersections are scheduled to get stamped crosswalks, accessibility ramps and pedestrian lighting. The latest grant money will help fund a 3-year, \$4.5 million master plan to remake the borough's downtown.

“We want to calm traffic down and make the downtown more walkable,” said Coopersburg Borough Manager Tim Paashaas. “This will certainly encourage people to get out to our commercial district.”

Coopersburg will begin holding public meetings about its downtown projects March 15.

To be eligible for the grant money, Easton and Coopersburg must have the projects completed within three years.