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\$137 Million Done, \$159 Million Underway

Who hasn't driven into a construction zone and muttered to themselves "does there have to be construction everywhere?"

The answer to that is well, yes, and that's not such a bad thing because it's necessary to keep the transportation network flowing.

The year 2019 was a productive year on the Lehigh Valley's roadways, as crews completed \$137.7 million in construction projects, while continuing work on another \$159 million worth of road, bridge and transit projects along some of the region's busiest roadways.

That includes Route 22, which handles more than 100,000 cars a day. That's where the \$101.5 million bridge over the Lehigh River opened ahead of schedule last fall, widening the region's busiest bottleneck. The project is part of a Route 22 renewal program that's relieved congestion by extending interchange lanes from MacArthur Road, through the Fullerton interchange, and across the Lehigh River.

Other completed projects include \$4 million worth of safety barriers installed along medians on Routes 33 and 222 and the \$6 million Freidensville Road Bridge over the Saucon Creek.

Some big projects that remain underway include the \$39 million Coplay-Northampton Bridge, the \$31.6 million Tilghman Street Bridge project and the \$24 million reconstruction of Route 100 in Upper Macungie Township.

"Our road network is seeing more vehicle miles traveled by Lehigh Valley drivers every year," said LVPC Director of Transportation Planning and Data Management Charlie Doyle. "It's important that we keep up with the maintenance and improvement schedule because our transportation network is the lifeblood of our economy."

The LVPC helps administrate the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study, which serves as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region. All of the projects are part of the current \$534 million 2019-2022 TIP. The TIP is updated every two years and a new \$430 million 2021-2024 TIP is scheduled to be adopted this summer.

The money was spent on projects by entities that include the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Lehigh County, Northampton County and municipal governments.

Other funds for projects completed in 2019 included:

- \$7.2 million for milling and pavement repairs on the Interstate 78 passing lanes throughout Lehigh and Northampton counties.
- \$5.8 million for safety improvements in the 15th Street corridor in Allentown.
- \$5.7 million for pavement repairs on Route 33 in Palmer and Plainfield townships.

- \$3.8 million for road improvements and signal upgrades on Easton Avenue, from Stefko Boulevard in Bethlehem to Willow Park Road in Bethlehem Township.
- \$3.5 million for pavement repairs and safety improvements at the 13th Street interchange of Route 22 in Easton.
- \$908,000 for median safety barriers on Route 222 through Lower and Upper Macungie townships.
- \$37,000 for a congestion detection system on the off-ramp from Route 222 at Route 100.

A slate of 12 line items totaling more than \$159 million of investment are still under construction or ongoing as part of the current four-year, \$534 million TIP that runs through 2022. Included among them is:

- \$39 million for the Coplay-Northampton Bridge, to be completed this winter.
- \$31.7 million to replace the Tilghman Street Bridge, to be completed in Allentown in the summer of 2021.
- \$24.9 million to reconstruct Route 100, from Industrial Boulevard to Tilghman Street.
- \$14.7 million to repave Route 22 in Bethlehem Township, between Bethman Road and Farmersville Road, including the ramps at Route 33. Completion is set for the fall of 2020.
- \$14.6 million for the Route 29 Bridge over the Reading Railroad line in Upper Milford Township.
- \$13.4 million to repair or preserve bridges throughout Lehigh and Northampton counties.
- \$7 million to rehabilitate two Route 248 bridges across tributaries to Hokendauqua Creek in Moore Township.
- *\$6.5 million to fund the Freeway Service Patrols that prevent congestion by removing disabled vehicles along Route 22 and Interstate 78.
- \$3.8 million to repair the Route 248 Bridge over the east branch of Monocacy Creek in Upper Nazareth Township.
- \$2.1 Million to diamond groove sections of Interstate 78 and Route 309 throughout Lehigh County, to improve skid resistance and improve safety.
- \$1.2 million to improve intersections and streetscapes in Coopersburg Borough's business district.
- \$503,000 to preserve Delabole Road Bridge over Greenwalk Creek.

**Includes money allocated over past 10 years*

The progress report and a comprehensive Listing of Obligated Transportation Projects are done annually by PennDOT and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

The full report of TIP Accomplishments and the 2019 Listing of Obligated Projects can be found at <https://lvpc.org/transportation-programs.html>

The current full 2019-2022 TIP, with estimated costs and schedules for more than 100 projects, is available at <http://lvpc.org/tip.html>

