

## TRANSPORTATION

### INTRODUCTION

**Transportation System**

A sound transportation system includes adequate and well-maintained roads, available public transportation, safe and convenient pedestrian access, and bicycle routes. However, few communities are able to achieve this ideal level of service. This is particularly true in small, less populated communities with limited budgets. In other words, local municipalities must evaluate transportation needs, set priorities, and garner all available resources to make improvements. It is also important to remember that there is a direct correlation between land use and transportation needs. As residential and commercial land is developed, more and more people use the roads, and the roads become congested for longer periods of time. This is particularly true for rush hours. In response, roads are improved to address the traffic congestion, the adjoining land becomes easier and more lucrative to develop, and more traffic is generated.

**Access - Mobility**

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 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.

### TRANSPORTATION GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

**Transportation Goal: Establish and maintain an adequate circulation system to safely and efficiently move people and goods.**

Safe and well maintained roads are vital to all communities, serving not only as the means of travel within the community, but as the direct link to the region and beyond. No major state routes cross Franklin Township, with Eighth Street (State Route 1021) serving as the primary route between the Village of Orange in the center of the Township to West Wyoming Borough and the greater Wilkes-Barre area. Local officials must plan carefully to ensure adequate funding for the improvement and maintenance of locally-owned roads. Franklin Township owns and maintains 15.96 miles of roads, PennDOT owns 11.18 miles, and Luzerne County owns 6.96 miles. Land use management tools must consider the capacity of roads, directing commercial and higher density development to areas served by roads capable of carrying increased traffic and the trucks necessary to serve commercial establishments.

**C***irculation* - Planners typically talk about "circulation" rather than transportation because circulation (getting around) is the goal of the citizens they serve, whereas transportation is just a method of achieving that goal. A good circulation plan includes more than streets and roads – it includes means of pedestrian and bicycle circulation and, in many communities, some form of mass transportation.

*Although good circulation plans involve more than roads, the starting point for an existing conditions analysis of circulation is a map of streets and highways in the community.*

*Source: Community Planning, an Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan, p. 80.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

**Classification**

**Inventory and classify according to function all public roads and bridges, and assess maintenance and safety concerns and the improvements needed.**

- Road Task Force - Consider organizing a local Road Task Force with nearby municipalities to address regional traffic impacts and highway improvement needs.
- Planning - Actively participate in all County and PennDOT highway planning programs.
- Improvements Program - Develop a local road and intersection maintenance and capital improvements program.

**Local Actions**

**Develop a coordinated Township program to maintain an adequate capacity of the road network.**

- Development Location - Limit higher density and higher traffic impact development to areas with adequate highway capacity.
- Parking and Access - Require adequate off-street parking and loading, limit curb cuts, and require well designed access points.
- New Development - Maintain up-to-date standards for construction of new subdivision roads.
- Road Linkages - Include the consideration of through road connections as part of the development review process.
- Road Dedication - Continue the policy of not accepting development roads for public dedication unless the road serves a clear benefit that accrues to the public as a whole and not only residents of the development.
- Official Map - Using an official map, establish and reserve public street alignments and adequate rights-of-way for planned street improvements.

**Pedestrians and Bicyclists**

**Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in all transportation planning.**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ACTIONS**

**Highway 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.

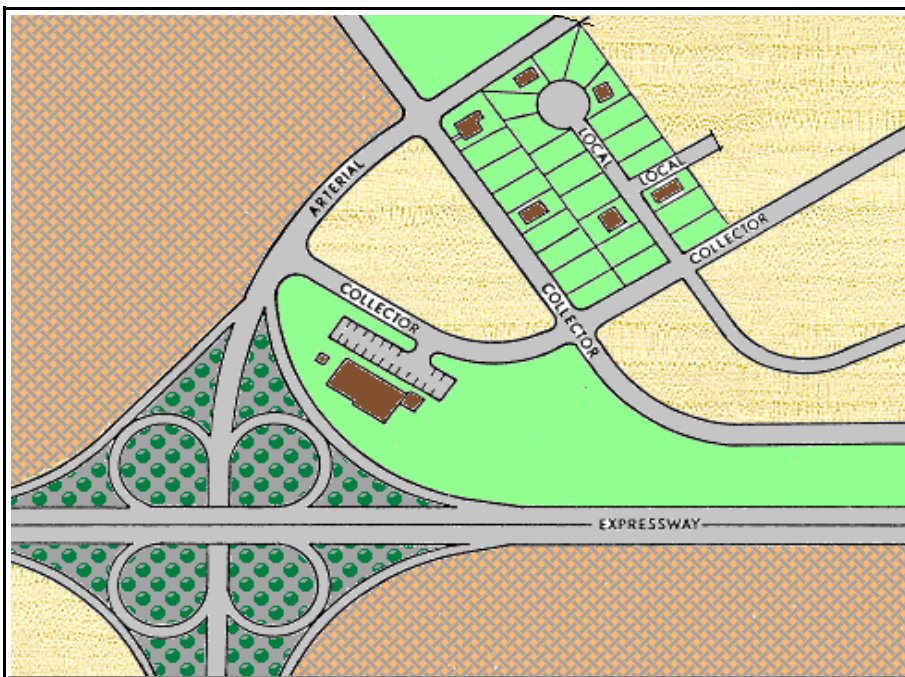
However, in areas of rapid growth and associated traffic increases, the amount of traffic carried by specific roads may increase to the point of exceeding the road's capacity. The road, in terms of traffic, may be serving as an arterial route, but may not have been physically upgraded from a minor collector 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.

**Highway Functional Classification**

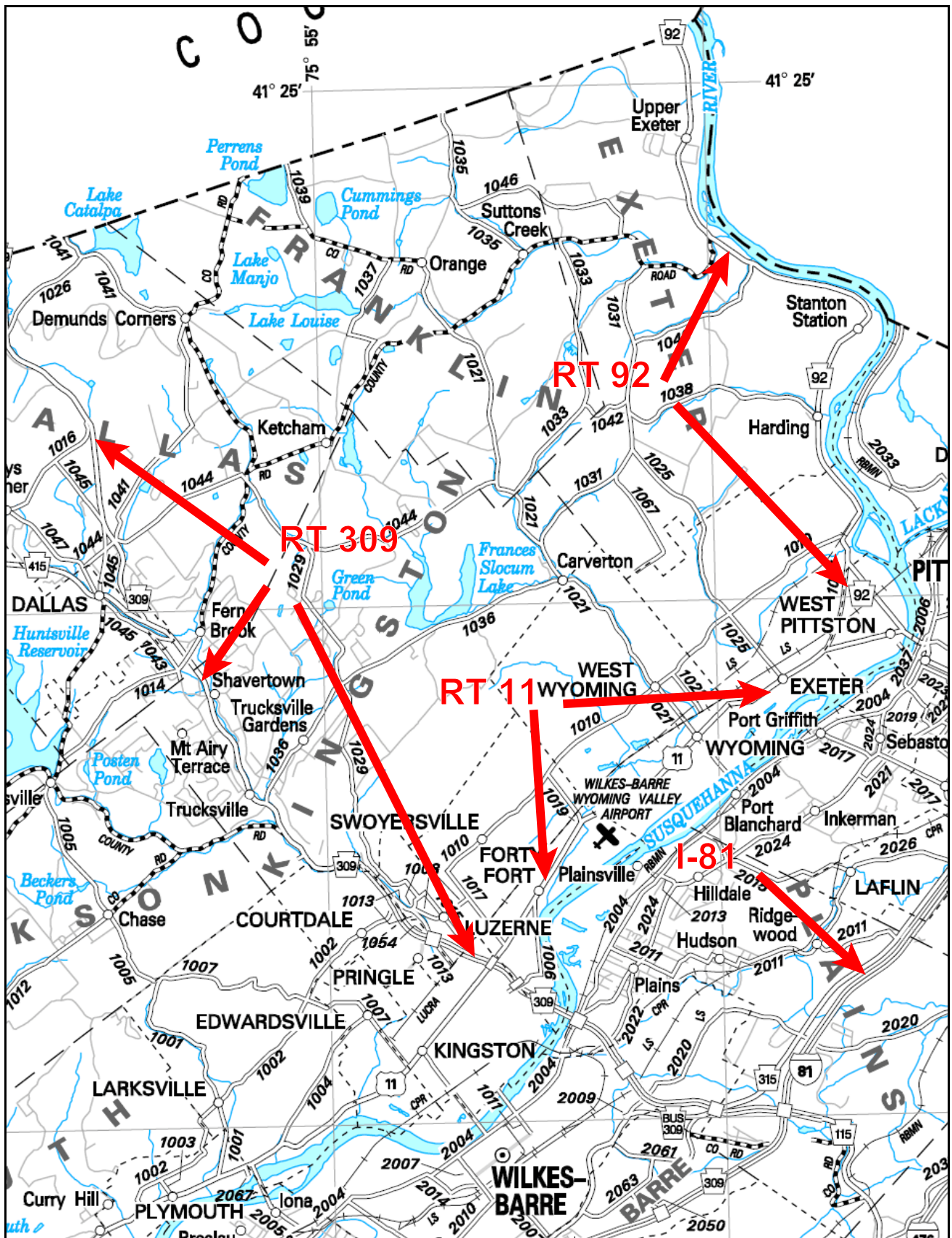
The nomenclature used for a *Highway Functional Classification* also differs from one jurisdiction to another throughout the Commonwealth and the United States. Road classification in metropolitan and suburban areas is often very complex, with the various categories of roads being divided into subcategories based on land use type served and the designation of specific traffic volumes. The nomenclature for classification being used for Franklin Township is based on the type and density of the land uses served by the road and the volume of traffic on the road. The small-scale

commercial development interwoven with the residential development pattern in the rural - agricultural setting warrants a more simplified highway classification system for the Township. While simplified, this classification will meet the needs for identification of problem areas and needed improvements, and for long-range planning. The designation of the Highway Functional Classification for roads serving the Township includes *expressway*, *arterial highway*, *collector road* and *local road*. A description of each classification follows and, the *Highway Functional Classification Figure*, provides an illustration, and the *Highway Classification and Annual Average Daily Traffic Figures* provide an overview of the road system.



Highway Functional Classification





I-81 and Arterial Routes

**Expressways**

- Provide interregional and interstate connections
- Designed for unrestricted, high speed (55+ mph) mobility of traffic
- Limited access only – no direct access from private property
- Provide highest level of mobility
- Intersect with selected arterial or collector routes by means of interchanges
- Carry highest volumes of automobile and truck traffic with longer trip lengths

Interstate 81, running north and south through Luzerne County some ten miles east of the Township, is the closest expressway to the Township. While the Township has no direct access to I-81, the development pattern of Luzerne County and all of Northeastern Pennsylvania has evolved in large part to the access provided by this expressway that connects to other interstate highways and the entire Nation.

**Arterial Highways**

- Provide connection between commercial and population centers in the region
- Provide connection between the municipalities and adjoining communities, counties and states
- Carry larger volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds (45-55 mph)
- Serve a mix of local and through traffic
- Carry low volumes of through truck traffic
- Provide moderate to high levels of mobility
- Access limited only by PennDOT highway occupancy permits and local zoning and subdivision ordinances

No arterial highways cross Franklin Township. Roads from the Township connect to several of arterials in nearby communities, all state highways. Route 309 just west of Franklin Township connects the Dallas area south to Wilkes-Barre and north to Tunkhannock via Route 29. Route 92, paralleling the Susquehanna River, connects Tunkhannock north of Franklin Township to West Pittston and Route 11 to the south. Route 11, although congested with reduced speeds, carries traffic between the boroughs and cities along the Wyoming Valley.

**Collector Road**

- Collect traffic from local streets for connection of residential areas to commercial and activity centers and arterials
- Serve moderate levels of traffic at reduced speeds (35-45 mph)
- Serve more locally oriented traffic and few through trips
- Carry primarily only “local delivery” truck traffic
- Access from smaller and more numerous properties
- Access limited only by local municipal and PennDOT highway occupancy permits and local zoning and subdivision ordinances
- Provide reduced levels of mobility

Collector roads in the Township include:

Eighth Street (SR1021)

Connects the Village of Orange with Wyoming and Route 11 to the south.

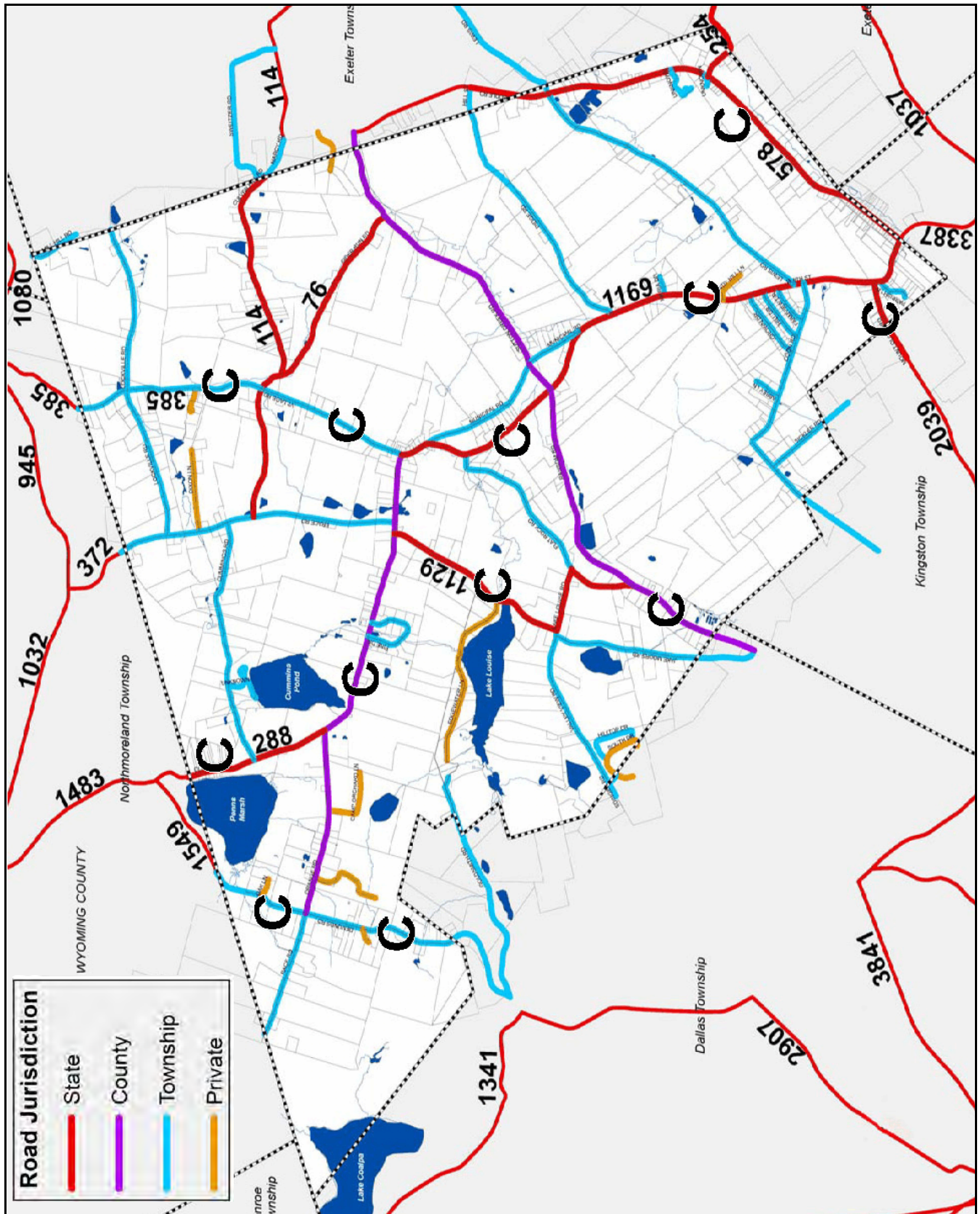
Orange Road (County Road) /Old Mill Road (SR 1039)

Connects the Village of Orange with Wyoming County to the north.

Village Road (T 810 - SR 1035)

Connects the Village of Orange with Wyoming County to the north.





Collector Roads (C) and Annual Average Daily Traffic

Lake Louise Road (SR 1037) / Ransom Road (County Road)

Carries traffic from the Township to Dallas and Route 309.

Mount Olivet Road (SR 1044)

Connects Eighth Street from the southern section of the Township to Trucksville, Dallas and Route 309.

Bodle Road (SR 1033)

Runs along the southern border of the Township connecting Exeter Township with Eighth Street south to West Wyoming.

Demunds Road (County)

Carries traffic from Wyoming County through the Township to Dallas.

**Local Roads**

All other public roads in the Township not classified as collectors are considered local roads.

- Provides connection of residential properties and communities and less populated areas to collectors
- Serves lowest levels of traffic at slowest speeds (less than 35 mph)
- Provides high level of access from smaller residential parcels or areas with little development
- Carries local trips only with no through trips
- Carries minimal truck traffic for local deliveries

**Public Roads in Franklin Township**

The total length of public roads in the Township is 34.10 miles, with 15.96 miles of Township roads, 11.18 miles of PennDOT-owned routes, and 6.96 miles of County roads. (See the *Public Road Mileage Table*.) The Township-owned roads are part of the State Liquid Fuels Programs which provides state payments to the municipalities for road maintenance and reconstruction based on population and miles of roads meeting PennDOT specifications. However, the Liquid Fuels Funds comprise only a small part of the Township road maintenance budget and do not nearly cover the cost of long term maintenance and replacement.

**Traffic Volume**

It is obvious that traffic on the roads in the Township and all of Luzerne County have been increasing in association with population growth in non-urban areas and shifts of population from urban areas to suburban and rural municipalities. Additional suburban and rural residents traveling to work and shopping and services increases traffic.

Annual average daily traffic (AADT) volumes provide an overview of the traffic flow in the Township for planning purposes. PennDOT conducts traffic counts on state roads and the counts provide a means of assessing the overall traffic conditions. Traffic counts for 2008 for all state roads in the Township, reported as annual average daily traffic (AADT), are shown on the *Collector Roads and Annual Average Daily Traffic Figure*. An important point to remember is that AADT does not reflect daily and seasonal traffic volumes which can far exceed AADT. The proportionate increase in daily and seasonal counts can be significant, exacerbating any congestion far beyond what is found on the average day.

Traffic volumes on Township and County roads are not available, but in some cases connections to state roads provide a measure of traffic volume (e.g., Demund Road).

Given the limited development served by most Township roads, traffic volumes are not excessive. In fact, traffic volume on most Township roads is relatively low.

As would be expected, the collector roads in the Township carry the highest traffic volume, with Eighth Street, Mount Olivet Road and Demunds Road registering AADT of 3,387, 2,039 and 1,549, respectively. Traffic volumes on arterials in the larger area range from 9,300 AADT on Route 92 in West Pittston to 17,000 on Route 11 in Wyoming up to 27,000 on Route 309 in Dallas.

**Road Network  
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, volume of trucks and terrain. Level-of -service is calculated using peak hour traffic volume. The peak hour is that time when traffic volume is heaviest and this most often occurs on weekends in a rural/recreation area. The peak flow of vehicles during the busiest quarter-hour of the day is compared with the adjusted flow rate standard for each level-of-service.

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 LOS A through LOS F, with LOS A representing free flowing traffic and LOS F representing a total breakdown in the traffic flow or *bumper to bumper* traffic.

**Level-of-Service  
in the Township**

The roads in the Township continue to adequately carry even peak volumes of traffic without serious delays and declines in LOS, with no significant change expected in the near term. Travelers on roads and intersections in the Township typically do not experience any significant delays. Such delays would indicate that a road is approaching its capacity and reaching an unacceptable level of service. This does not mean, however, that all roads in the Township are in optimum condition, and that particular problem areas and safety concerns need not be addressed. Problem intersections and road segments are discussed in a later section.

**Land Use Planning  
Considerations**

The traffic carrying capacity of a community's road network, and the intersections associated with the network, to handle the existing and increasing 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.

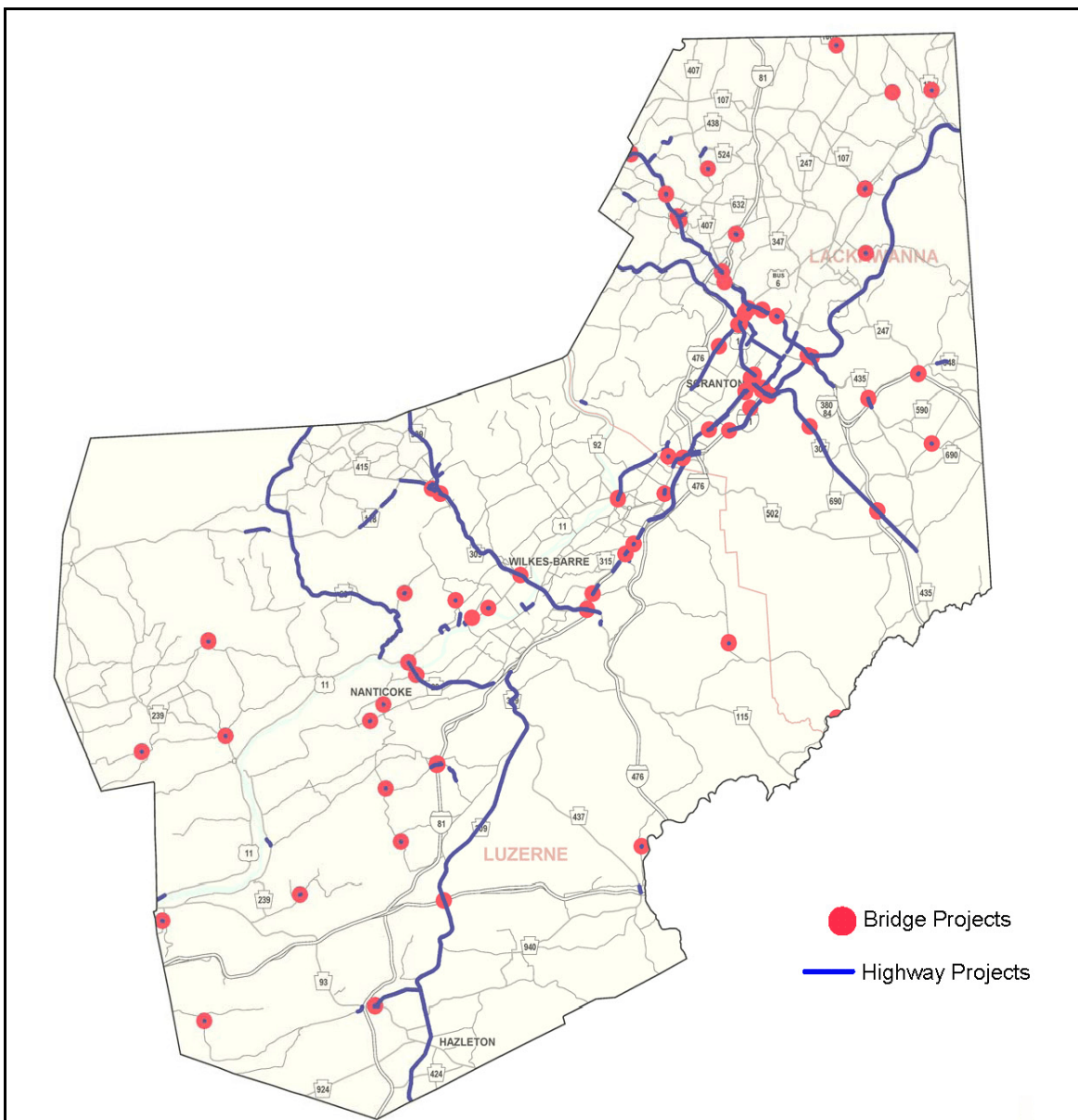


### Lackawanna / Luzerne MPO

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was established as a result of the 1973 Federal Highway Act. The MPO is a body that determines how all federal and state highway/bridge funds are allocated. The Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO encompasses all areas of the two counties.

The Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO consists of three committees: the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), the Technical Committee, and the Coordinating Committee. The TAC consists of about 22 people who represent a wide variety of interests including environment, business & industry, automotive and trucking, rail freight, and para-transit, among others. It acts as an advisory body to the Technical Committee, and meets about 4 times per year.

The Technical Committee consists of people who represent PennDOT, both counties, the Cities of Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and Hazleton, and all modes of transportation. The Technical Committee prepares all plans and documents required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and PennDOT, and presents them to the Coordinating Committee which reviews the material and takes the appropriate action. The Coordinating Committee has a similar make-up as the Technical Committee (all the committee listings are available under “MPO Committees”).



2011 Draft TIP - Scranton/Wilkes-Barre MPO (Source: PennDOT)

**Need for Regional Transportation Planning**

Traffic is an issue that transcends municipal and state boundaries and effects all of the municipalities in Luzerne County and the County Planning Office has taken the lead role in coordinating and promoting the idea of regional transportation planning. The two Counties are developing a joint Long Range Transportation Plan with the draft plan anticipated for August 2010. The Plan is expected to focus on expressway, arterial and public transportation improvements. No specific road upgrades or public transportation service in Franklin Township is anticipated because of its rural character, minimal traffic, and limited resources available for such improvements.

The Lackawanna/Luzerne Metropolitan Planning Organization determines the priority of PennDOT road and bridge projects under the Transportation Improvements program. (See the following *Lackawanna/LuzerneMPO Sidebar* and *2011 Draft TIP Diagram*.) No improvements are scheduled in Franklin Township.

**Township Roads -- Condition and Future Plans**

The community survey asked several questions related to road maintenance as shown in the *Community Survey Table*. Along with emergency services and recycling, road maintenance ranked among the highest as important community services. Survey respondents are more satisfied with Township road maintenance than State road maintenance, but the responses suggest some room for improvement on Township roads. When asked about spending Township tax receipts for facilities and services, increase road maintenance ranked just below recycling in the number of positive responses.

<b>PUBLIC ROAD MILEAGE</b>		
<b>Franklin Township Roads</b>		
Name	T - #	Miles
Coon Road	669	1.19
Lewis Road	670	1.63
Valley Road	689	0.86
Ridge Road	693	0.63
Race Road	697	0.65
Cummings Road	699	1.17
Mill Hill Road	709	0.02
Jake Moore Road	768	0.93
Sickler Road	778	0.33
Municipal Road	782	0.99
Flat Rock Road	784	0.85
Brace Road	802	1.42
Village Road	810	0.79
Lockville Road	823	1.46
Cider Run Road	824	0.62
Maria	825	0.09
Abbey Lane	827	0.14
Farm View Drive	828	0.20
Hill Drive	829	0.28
Crown Drive	830	0.35
Pine Drive	831	0.46
Natures Way		0.70
Switzer Road		0.10
Gresh Road		0.10
<b>Township Total</b>		15.96
<b>Penn DOT Total</b>		11.18
<b>Luzerne County Total</b>		6.96
<b>Public Road Total</b>		34.10

<b>Community Survey Questions</b>				
Importance of Maintenance				
	not imp	smwht	imprt	very
Township Roads	3.0%	4.5%	38.4%	54.1%
State Roads	3.1%	2.3%	43.5%	51.2%
Quality of Maintenance				
	excellent	good	fair	poor
Township Roads	13.2%	49.6%	22.5%	14.7%
State Roads	6.7%	32.1%	38.1%	23.1%

All of the roads owned and maintained by Franklin Township are in overall good condition but require continued maintenance. About ten miles of the 16-mile total are paved with the balance gravel. The Board of Supervisors identified routine maintenance, re-paving as necessary, improving shoulders and drainage as important, with no particular concerns about widening or reducing steep grades. The Township will focus resources on the maintenance and improvement of existing local municipal roads and plans no major realignment or widening projects. Paving is becoming more and more expensive with recent resurfacing projects costing about \$130,000 per mile for a 1.5-inch top course. The paving of gravel roads is also not planned because of the cost. In addition to the surface cost, sub-base preparation, drainage facilities, shoulders and bituminous base course requirements drive the cost well above affordability. The Township will monitor the effectiveness of

new materials and practices and use such innovations to best advantage. Good examples are plastic culverts and plastic head walls.

Funding for road maintenance is taken from the general fund and the Liquid Fuels Fund, and no shortfalls are anticipated to meet the maintenance needs. The Township receives about \$52,000 per year from the State Liquid Fuels Fund based on a formula accounting for population and Township road miles. General fund expenditures on road maintenance, including personnel, snow removal, materials and resurfacing contracts, amounted to almost \$120,000 in 2009 and almost \$112,000 was budgeted in 2010. The funding available for resurfacing is limited when compared to the cost per mile and resurfacing must be done on a long term rotation.

### **Township Road Posting and Bonding**

Townships in Pennsylvania have the authority to establish weight limits on local roads to prevent damage and to require bonding to ensure any damage can be repaired. A number of landowners in the Township and many more in the region have signed leases for the extraction of natural gas, landowners continue to harvest timber, and other some construction activities require heavy trucks. The Township should begin the process required to study, post weight limits and bond Township roads. (See the *Dealing with Potential Damage to Local Roads Sidebar* on the following page.)

### **New Road Construction and Public Dedication**

Franklin Township is not likely to undertake any new road construction. Roads and intersections and associated drainage facilities serving new residential developments will be constructed by developers in accord with the applicable Township and State standards. If determined beneficial to the overall public good, these roads can be, but are not required to be, accepted for public dedication by the Township. If the roads meet PennDOT standards, the State Liquid Fuels Fund allocation would increase. As noted earlier, the annual payment from the state is based on the municipal population and the amount of road miles maintained.

The Franklin Township policy is to not accept any new development road unless the road clearly serves a general public purpose other than providing access to homes in the residential subdivision. Public dedication would only be considered if the road provides connection between existing public roads and therefore clearly serves the general public. The long term cost of the maintenance of public roads falls far short of the funds received from the Commonwealth liquid fuel program and the taxes typically collected from residential development. 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.

### **Condition of State and County Roads**

Continued maintenance, improved drainage, resurfacing and identified intersections are the primary concerns on State and County roads. Although the Township has no direct control over State and County roads (the roads that carry the most traffic at higher speeds and present the most critical safety issues) this *Plan* identifies a number of concerns which must be monitored:

- Correction of dangerous intersections
- Surface restoration
- Increasing volumes of traffic
- Speed limit enforcement
- Adequate maintenance
- Improved signs for hazards and traffic control

**DEALING WITH POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO LOCAL ROADS**

*The potential impact of logging truck traffic on local roads concerns many officials. Some of the roads and bridges in forest areas may not be designed to support heavy loads, and the prospect of costly repairs has prompted some local governments to enact road bonding ordinances. In addition, the Pennsylvania legislature has mandated legal standards for all overweight hauling in Title 75PCS, Chapter 49. Under this system, local road posting and bonding must comply with state procedures and standards required by law as specified in Road Bonding Regulations: Hauling in Excess of Posted Weight Limit on Highways (67 Pa. Code, Chapter 189). Information about these laws and regulations can be found in PennDot publication 221: Posting and Bonding Procedures for Municipal highways, which may be obtained from the Local Technical Assistance Program. (See the Appendix for the address and telephone number.) The section below describes some of the key procedures and standards for posting and bonding of roads and for bridges located on posted roads. Similar requirements apply to bridges posted independently of roads.*

**Posting.** *A road must be posted with a weight limit before a bond can be required of a hauler. The steps taken to establish a weight limit include (1) completing an engineering and traffic study that supports the need for a weight restriction; (2) passing an ordinance identifying the road segment and setting the weight restriction; (3) advertising the posting two times in a general circulation newspaper at least five days prior to actual posting; (4) contacting known heavy haulers who are using the road about executing a maintenance agreement; and (5) erecting standard signs showing the weight limit.*

**Excess maintenance agreement.** *After posting a road, the local government enters into an excess maintenance agreement with each hauler who will be operating overweight vehicles on that road. This agreement allows the local government to shift responsibility for repairing road damages on a pro rata basis to the haulers who damage the road. Note that haulers are only responsible for damage they cause in excess of normal wear and tear on the road.*

**Permits.** *Driving an overweight vehicle on posted roads generally requires a permit. The type of permit depends on the number of vehicles, the number of posted roads used, and the amount of use. Permits are issued only after an excess maintenance agreement has been signed.*

**Inspections and monitoring.** *Before overweight hauling begins, the local government inspects the road to determine its condition. The hauler, who pays for this service, has the right to be present. After hauling begins, the local government is responsible for monitoring the condition of the road and notifying the hauler of any necessary repairs. If the local government is responsible for making the repairs under the excess maintenance agreement, the local government bills the hauler for the costs.*

**Security (bonding).** *Haulers generally must provide security to ensure payment for any road repairs for which they are responsible under the agreement. This security is usually a performance bond, a standby letter of credit, or a certified bank check. The regulations specify the amount of security that may be required for unpaved roads (\$6,000 per linear mile) and paved roads (\$12,500 per linear mile) in cases wherein the hauler agrees not to downgrade the road. When the local government and the hauler agree that the road type can be downgraded during hauling and restored after hauling ceases, the amount of security required is \$50,000 per linear mile. If the hauler uses several roads for only a short time or makes relatively few trips, the rates per mile may be replaced with a flat rate of \$10,000. By following these rules, local officials can assure taxpayers that they will not have to pay for road repairs caused by overweight vehicles, including logging trucks. In addition, landowners and loggers know what to expect when uniform statewide procedures are followed.*

Source: *Timber Harvesting in Pennsylvania*, Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, School of Forest Resources.



Should the condition of these routes deteriorate due to lack of maintenance, or if PennDOT and Luzerne County do not make improvements in anticipation of traffic volume increases over the long term, the capacity and level-of-service could degenerate. The Township should work with Luzerne County, PennDOT and the Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO to identify the most critical improvement needs in Franklin Township and work to have the improvements programmed by the County and PennDOT.

**Specific Areas of Concern** Specific areas of concern include:

- 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Flat Rock Road - sight distance limitations due to curve in 8<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Sutton Creek Road - sight distance limitations due to steep approach on 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

### **Bridges**

Franklin Township owns and maintains no bridges. The six bridges on Township roads, which are primarily large culverts, are owned and maintained by Luzerne County. Bridges on state roads are owned and maintained by PennDOT. All are in relatively good condition and are adequate for the amount and types of traffic carried, including bridges with posted weight limits.

### **Subdivision Roads**

New road construction in the Township is associated with residential development. The subdivision and land development ordinance sets standards for road layout, design, and construction. Roads in subdivisions in Franklin Township are owned and maintained by private communities.

Specific actions for new subdivision roads include:

- Maintain up to date standards in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance for new development roads.
- 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.
- Undertake the process to study, post weight limits and bond Township roads.

### **Airports, Railroads and Public Transportation**

Given the regional nature of airport and railroad development and required support, this *Comprehensive Plan* calls for no specific action to be taken by the Township with regard to air and rail service. Direct local municipal provision of public transportation is not feasible and no action is anticipated other than participation in regional transportation planning efforts.

- Area residents rely on regional airports in Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey for major commercial carrier service. The Wilkes-barre/Scranton International Airport in nearby Avoca is the closest to the Township.
- The Canadian Pacific Railway parallels Route 11 through the Wyoming Valley with connections to area shortline and regional railroads providing freight service north to Binghamton and south to Sunbury. The Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad provides connection to Towanda and north and Carbon County and south.

- The Luzerne County Transportation Authority provides public bus service in the County but no routes serve the Township. The closest connection is in Wyoming Borough.

Public transportation in rural communities is generally limited by low population density, the cost of providing the service, and uncertainty of public acceptance and use. In short, the cost is too high in relation to the potential revenue from the users of the system, and without public subsidy, it is simply not feasible. In addition, even in areas where the public subsidy has been provided, use of public transport is low given long trips and limited schedules, and the historic reliance on automobiles in rural areas. The Area Agency on Aging continues to provide van service for senior citizens and handicapped residents.

**Bicycle Routes**

*Bicycle PA* is the name for a network of cross-state bicycle routes that guide the bicycle tourist across the Commonwealth. The routes generally use existing highways that have been identified as desirable roads for bicycling. In some cases, the route uses improved rail trails to bypass difficult sections. No *Bicycle PA* routes cross Franklin Township. *Bicycle PA Route L* crosses southeastern Luzerne County and *Bicycle PA Route V* crosses the southern section of the County.

**PLANNING POLICIES AND ACTIONS**

**Overview**

Future planning and policy recommendations are intended to address the identified transportation issues and achieve the goals established by the Township.

**Local Roads**

- Continue regular maintenance of local municipal roads.
- Improve drainage problems of local roads.
- Maintain an up-to-date inventory of road maintenance equipment as a means of planning for replacement and inclusion the capital improvements program.
- Complete and update annually a detailed Township road inventory and evaluation to identify needs and develop an improvements schedule within normal budgetary process, and to identify potential capital projects.
- Begin the process required to study, post weight limits and bond Township roads.

**Local Ordinances**

- Maintain an up-to-date road ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO) setting standards for construction of roads and establishing procedures for dedication to the public.
- Consider public dedication would only if the road provides connection between existing public roads and therefore clearly serves the general public.
- Maintain an up-to-date road occupancy ordinance setting standards for driveway access to Township roads and for stormwater and utility improvements within the road right-of-way and require the issuance of a highway occupancy permit by the Township for any access or drainage work along Township roads.
- 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.

- Review and update zoning standards for parking and loading areas to ensure safe and adequate parking facilities.
- Amend the SALDO to provide rights-of-way for emergency access and road connections through dedication of land and easements.

**Official Map**

- Consider an Official Map to identify and reserve land needed for road and intersection improvements and connections.

**State and County Roads**

- Participate in the PennDOT Customer Advisory Board to communicate concerns to PennDOT.
- Continue to work with the Lackawanna/Luzerne Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the County Public Works Department and PennDOT officials to discuss highway improvement needs and prioritize and promote specific improvement projects.
- Work with local legislators, the MPO, the County Public Works Department and PennDOT to schedule studies to identify improvements to correct identified road and intersection deficiencies

**Public Transportation**

- Encourage the establishment of a ride-share (car pool) system and provide for park and ride areas in certain zoning districts to facilitate commuting to work outside the Township.
- Recognize the potential future need for public transportation and plan accordingly (e.g., locate residential development along main roads where transit stops are most likely to be located).