



# Seneca County Transportation Improvement Plan: Update & Priorities

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Coordinated by the Seneca County Transportation Committee  
In conjunction with the Seneca Transportation Improvement District  
June 2016 – February 2017

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# Transportation Improvement Plan Update

2017

**Purpose:** This update to the 2001 Transportation Improvement Plan aims to identify and describe critical roadwork infrastructure projects for which outside funding sources are needed.

## Existing Plan

- Comprehensive Plan (2001)
- Infrastructure a major focus
- **Has Transportation Improvement Plan**
- Recommends upgrades to road system
- Recommends funding for connections
- Recommends strong access management
- Recommends trail system investments
- Recommends updates, priorities, details

## Recent Efforts

- County Strategic Planning (2015-2016)
- SR 53 Corridor Study (2014) identifies 20 safety hotspots, gives negative ROI for \$80M Super 2
- **County Strategic Plan (2015) has transportation as one of four major goals**
- Transportation Improvement District (TID) formed and registered with ODOT (2016)
- Transp. Committee updating TIP (2016)

**Note:** This update's prioritized project list supersedes all earlier lists, and it has the support of Seneca County's, Tiffin's, and Fostoria's engineers, administration, and economic development.

### 1 - Fair Lane Extension

- 2-phase, \$8.0M Tiffin project
- **Phase 1 (\$4.0M, 0.5-mi widening of US 224, 2 signals) needs funding now**
- Phase 2 (\$4.0M, 0.6-mi extension) - future
- ODOT approved traffic study
- Design has been initiated

### 2 - Tiffin Fostoria Connector

- 3-phase, \$7.0M Seneca Co. project
- **Phase 1 (\$3.0M, 4.0-mi widening and curb straightening of Maule Rd.) needs funding**
- Phase 2 (\$1.0M, 2.0-mi widening of CR592)
- Phase 3 (\$3.0M, 4.0-mi widening of CR592)
- Helps congestion, development; connects

### 3 - Fostoria Loop Road

- 7-phase, \$61.2M Fostoria project
- Phase 1 (\$1.9M Stearns Rd.) done in 2014
- Phase 2a (\$6.5M Jones Rd. grade sep.) done
- **Phase 2b (\$5.2M Jones Rd. resurface/SR 12 intersection) needs funds**
- Helps safety, maintenance, business

### 4 - Active Transportation Plan

- **Plan needs to be funded first**
- Then, an RFP would be prepared and issued
- A firm would be selected and the plan prepared
- Would evaluate walking, bicycling, and busing
- Large impact on quality of life, safety, etc.

## 1. Background

In 2001, Seneca County adopted a new Comprehensive Plan, and within it, a Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The plan is included as an appendix and a more detailed summary is provided in Section 3 (Comprehensive & Transportation Improvement Plans). There were two key statements made about the TIP:

- **Regular Updates** – “This plan is based on a 20-year horizon, yet it should be updated regularly to coordinate with the plans of other County agencies.”
- **Priorities Document** – “In order to implement the goals and objectives outlined in the plan, a more detailed document should be developed by the County that prioritizes projects, identifies potential funding sources, and sets a timetable for the necessary improvements.”

In addition to the plan’s recommendations to update and expand the TIP, there have been a few recent events which have also provided motivation to community leaders to pursue that course:

- **Unprecedented Collaboration** – The establishment of the state’s first ever county-city Joint Justice Center, combining common pleas, municipal (Tiffin-Fostoria), and juvenile probate was a significant accomplishment in working together to save taxpayers funds and provide a better justice system for all. The effort received assistance and recognition from the State’s Local Government Innovation Fund program in the form of a planning grant and low-interest loan. Local leaders believe an updated and prioritized TIP builds on this success.
- **Advocacy Alignment** – Transportation is a critical issue in the county’s ability to keep its citizens safe, provide a great quality of life, and facilitate economic growth and prosperity. Over the past few years, various public and private leaders have advocated for important projects (e.g., Tiffin Industrial Loop Project, Fostoria Loop Road Project, SR 53 Improvement Project), but have done it separately. There is a belief by all that by updating the TIP and developing joint priorities, it better will assist state and federal legislators and agencies in helping provide resources. In addition, we are aware that most of Seneca County, with the exception of Fostoria, is not represented by the large regional metropolitan planning organization (TMACOG), so the need to have strong joint advocacy efforts locally.
- **Funding Opportunities** – There has been concern expressed that Seneca County does not obtain state roadwork funding proportional to its population, and ODOT has commented that the great condition of the infrastructure as well as large-scale projects (e.g., Interstate) are two of the reasons for this. Intensive discussion and lobbying have revealed a need to present specific project options as one of the best ways to secure additional funding dollars to improve our infrastructure. Our State legislators have confirmed this. An updated TIP and prioritization of projects would give them a specific identification of transportation needs that they, and people here locally, use for seeking funding opportunities.
- **Strategic Planning** – Planning has received increased focus the last two years for Seneca County. In 2015, the Seneca County Commissioners, in conjunction with elected officials and key stakeholders, started a year-long strategic planning effort to address key areas,

transportation being one. Out of that effort, a Transportation Committee was formed. The Committee began meeting this year, and it is now being facilitated by the Seneca Regional Planning Commission, which also just finished their own strategic plan. In addition, the Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corp. (SIEDC), which functions as Seneca County's and the City of Tiffin's economic development agent as well as the community development agent for the city, placed the development of a prioritized list of transportation projects in its 2016 Scope of Work, with the addition of a bike trail plan in 2017.

Since 2001, there have been no official updates to the TIP, nor has a more detailed "priorities" document been crafted. To follow the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and for the reasons just provided, the Seneca County Transportation Committee, in collaboration with the Seneca County Transportation Improvement District, has created this document.

## **2. Transportation Improvement Plan (pre-update, 2011)**

As this document is an update to the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), it is important to lay the groundwork by describing what is in the original plan. This provides a summary of that, with a particular eye toward projects that that Transportation Committee is identifying here, some fifteen years later. A copy of the TIP is included as Appendix 1.

In 1999, the Seneca Regional Planning Commission began the process of facilitating an update to the first comprehensive plan completed in the 1970s. Over the next couple of years, the plan was crafted, and the new update was officially adopted by the Seneca County Commission in November 2001. In addition to the RPC itself, other people and groups involved included representatives of municipal and township government, soil and water district as well as OSU Extension, and members of the Farmland Task Force. Columbus-based community planning firm Burns, Bertsch & Harris, together with Bennett & Williams Environmental Consultants, led the planning effort.

Goals, objectives, and policies in the 2001 Comprehensive Plan (Update) were developed from input provided by focus groups, local official interviews, and citizen surveys. The three themes that emerged were (1) quality of life, (2) balanced growth, and (3) efficient services. The efficient services major goal was stated this way: "Ensure timely and orderly development within the County by making strategic public investments in infrastructure and services." The first key objective relating to transportation strove to preserve the character of rural highways while promoting "a safe and efficient transportation system" (p. 3.2) This is later broken out into six strategies (p. 9.4):

- **Focus on Needed Upgrades** – "Maintain and enhance the existing County road system, focusing on roads that necessitate upgrading to meet their functional classification requirements."
- **Use Access Management** – "Encourage the adoption and use of strong and effective access management strategies."

- **Fund City Arteries & Connections** - “Provide preferential funding support for arterial road capacity improvements within urban growth areas and major connectors between municipalities.”
- **Plan New Roads** – “Identify the location and alignment of new roads in advance of future need to coordinate establishment of right-of-way requirements and access control.”
- **Avoid Random Cuts** – “Discourage random driveway cuts along State and County roads.”
- **Construct Grade Separations** – “Where necessary, construct grade separations at rail crossings to increase safety, traffic flow, and emergency access.

The reasoning and development of these strategies is provided in Chapter 8 of the Comprehensive Plan, which focuses exclusively on transportation. It analyzes existing conditions (general, traffic volume, railroad crossings, accidents, functional classifications) and makes some findings; current plans (ODOT District 2, City of Fostoria, and City of Tiffin); develops a Transportation Improvement Plan (new construction, system improvements, and access management).

The Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) recommends the development of a loop road system around Tiffin and Fostoria, where “the greatest traffic volume is located.” It also recommends “decreasing” the “functional classification” of state routes (18, 53, 12) through Tiffin and Fostoria from principal arterial to minor arterial as well as the increase of the loop roads to at least minor arterial. In summary, it seeks to “provide adequate capacity for increasing truck and passenger traffic on these roads in the years ahead” (p. 8.17).

The TIP also recommends that access management be used to as a tool “to balance the competing demands on a transportation system for traffic mobility and land access.” The plan quote’s ODOT’s *State Highway Access Management Manual* by saying that the “failure to manage access...is a leading cause of accidents, congestion, decline in operating speed, loss of traffic carrying capacity, and increased traffic delays.”

The other part of the Comprehensive Plan that touches transportation is Open Space and Recreation, where it discusses bike trails. It says that “in the future, the County Park District would like to create bikeways and walkways that connect existing corridors within the County.” It also recommends:

- **Trail Incentives** - creating “incentives” that will facilitate “participation in the establishment of greenways and trails” (Recommendation 5 of 7, p. 7.8); and
- **Rails to Trails** - encouraging the “appropriate conversion of railway abandonments to the greenways and trails system linking housing, services, and recreation” (Recommendation 6 of 7); and
- **Strategic Purchases** – make “strategic purchases of critical open space areas to preserve these areas and to provide important trail and habitat linkages” (Recommendation 7 of 7).

### **3. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2011)**

Ten years later, in December 2011, a new economic development strategic plan was finalized and made public. Called the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), it was the first new plan of its kind since the original one was done in the mid-1980s. Facilitated by WSOS Community Action, it was led by a steering committee of twenty, including the representatives of municipal (Tiffin and Fostoria), township, and county government; business and education; as well as chambers of commerce and economic development.

The plan outlined eight major goals, including Infrastructure, and stated that goal this way: “Provide infrastructure to support business locations, relocations and expansions throughout Seneca County.” The plan stated that the “highest infrastructure priorities in Seneca County” included the “development of truck routes” and “upgrading primary highways.” Specifically, in the strategy section, it divided the goal into eight specific objectives, including two that were roadwork specific:

- Objective 4.1 – “Develop truck routes with higher load limits to accommodate rail transshipment.”
- Objective 4.5 – “Advocate for projects that bring efficiency and safety to highways, including an upgrade (to) SR 53 (to ‘Super 2’ status), and eventual upgrade of US 224 to a four-lane highway.”

### **4. State Route 53 Corridor Study (2014)**

In February 2014, ODOT officials, together with the consulting firm DLZ, met with various public officials and stakeholders from Sandusky, Seneca, Ottawa, and Hancock Counties to discuss doing a \$50,000 study of the problem areas on State Route 53 in order to determine short-, medium- and long-term improvements that could be made. The regional initiative to study the State Route 53 corridor from Upper Sandusky to State Route 2 in Ottawa County was rooted in these earlier plans, which had an economic development focus as well as a desire to increase safety and efficiency. The study scope focused, though, only on safety.

In October that same year, DLZ released the final study, which identified 20 “hotspots” (places where more than five crashes occurred) along the 54-mile corridor. The study recommended improvements and provided cost estimates, as well as a “rate of return” (or ROR). This ROR was calculated using ODOT’s Crash Analysis Module tool and focused on determining the avoidance of cost and damage due to crashes. Full details about the countermeasures for each hotspot and the costs for each are detailed in the study.

The study went on to evaluate the “conceptual costs and rates of return (ROR) for the Super 2 concept for each section” of State Route 53:

- Upper Sandusky to Tiffin: \$35,246,200 and the ROR is -10.27%
- Tiffin to SR 12: \$18,410,034 and the ROR is -11.60%
- SR 12 to the Bypass Highway: \$9,223,066 and the ROR is -5.14%
- The Turnpike to SR 2: \$17,187,800 and the ROR is -10.68%.

Its conclusion, based on the financial impact due to safety concerns alone, was as follows: “As you can see, the costs are very high while the RORs negative, leading to the observation that the monies spent will not see a ‘return in investment’.”

The study also recommended “for items that were of specific concern by the stakeholders, DLZ encourages them to continue to examine the specific congestion areas in more detail, beyond the safety related countermeasures mentioned in this study. This includes whether passing areas are warranted within the corridor, the potential location of these areas and the feasibility of funding the improvement of sections of the corridor to a “Super 2” roadway.”

## **5. County Strategic Planning (2015-16)**

Recently, Seneca County has put additional focus on transportation and infrastructure, conducting a number of initiatives seeking to improve transportation in the county.

### **5.1 County Strategic Plan (2015)**

In March 2015, a group of county elected officials and stakeholders came together to create a Seneca County Strategic Plan. The effort was facilitated by Chuck Christensen, former Vice President for Academic Affairs at Tiffin University. Participants included the following:

- Commissioners Holly Stacy, Fred Zoeller, and Mike Kerschner
- Administrator Stacy Wilson, Clerk Nichole Smith
- Auditor Julie Adkins, Prosecutor Derek Devine, Treasurer Damon Alt
- Common Pleas Court Judge Steve Shuff, Clerk of Courts Jean Eckelberry
- Tiffin Mayor Aaron Montz, Fostoria Mayor Eric Keckler
- Loudon Township Trustee Jason Painter
- Job & Family Services Director Kathy Oliver, EMS Director Ken Majors
- Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Roxyanne Burrus
- SIEDC President & CEO David Zak

The group established a mission and vision statement and performed a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, including identifying infrastructure as both a weakness as well as an opportunity, listing a “bypass road project” and an “improved roadway system” as two big opportunities. Four key goal areas were identified, including “Transportation Infrastructure,” which had three specific objectives:

- Increase the percentage of ODOT funding to Seneca County
- Develop a Transportation Plan
- Identify and secure funding for the Bypass Road project

### **5.2 Transportation Improvement District (2015-16)**

Advocacy efforts (Objective 1) took place informally and formally during the course of 2015 and 2016 to work on increasing ODOT funding, and in September the group also worked on establishing a Transportation Improvement District (TID), which was created in September 2015 by the Seneca County Commissioners. TID Board Members include the following:



- Commissioner Mike Kerschner
- Seneca County Engineer Mark Zimmerman
- Fostoria Mayor Eric Keckler
- Tiffin Mayor Aaron Montz
- Seneca County Auditor Julie Adkins
- State Senator Dave Burke (ex-officio)
- State Representative Bill Reineke (ex-officio)

In February 2016, the TID met to approve an initial project list, which was part of the application to register the TID with ODOT. This list was made up of some suggestions by county and city engineers, with the idea that it could be changed later. In May 2016, an application with this initial was submitted to ODOT to register the TID, and it was accepted and approved. The \$15.9 million list had the following eight projects:

- SEN-CR26-592 Widening and safety - \$1.7 million (target date of 2018)
- CR59-CR56 Resurface - \$1.7 million (2016-17)
- CR43 Bridge Replacement - \$650,000 (2019)
- SR53 CR Intersections - \$2.0 million (2017-2020)
- CR52 Widening and rehab - \$1.2 million (2021)
- Tiffin Fair Lane Extension - \$5.0 million (2019)
- CR48 Access Rd - \$2.5 million (2020)
- CR19 Widening - \$1.2 million

### **5.3 Transportation Committee**

In June 2016, the Seneca County Transportation Committee was assembled and met. Members of the committee include the following:

- Fred Zoeller, Committee Chair and Seneca County Commissioner
- Charlene Watkins, Seneca Co. RPC Exec. Director & Committee Facilitator
- Kenny Estep, Citizen Participant
- Chris Iannantuono, Roppe Holding Company Director of Operations
- Eric Keckler, Fostoria City Mayor
- Mario Livojevic, Tiffin City Engineer
- Aaron Montz, Tiffin City Mayor
- Bryce Riggs, SIEDC Development Coordinator
- Renee Smith, FEDC President
- Shayne Thomas, Seneca County Commissioner candidate
- Dan Thornton, Fostoria City Engineer
- David Zak, SIEDC President & CEO
- Mark Zimmerman, Seneca County Engineer

At that meeting, the Committee affirmed its desire to develop a prioritized list of transportation projects for the County. It then developed an initial draft consensus list of five priority projects for Seneca County at the end of August. In September, a draft document was developed and circulated for review. Over the next few months, committee and other meetings were held to

further refine and develop the document, narrowing the list of projects to four. A new, much more detailed draft was prepared by the end of 2016 and also circulated for review. The next section details those projects.

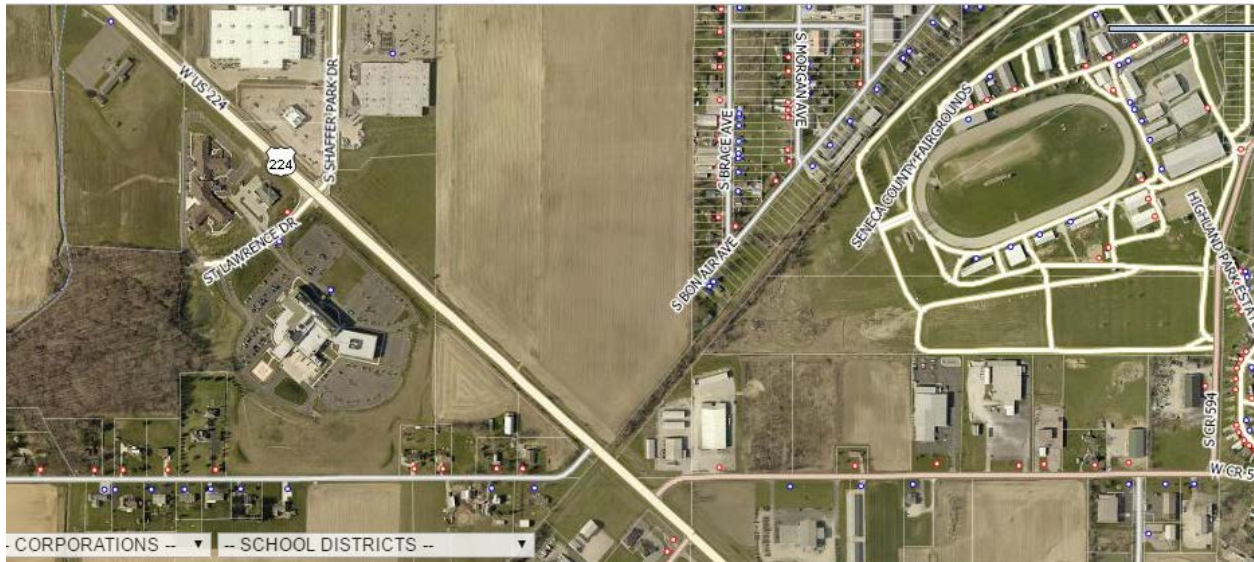
## 6. Priority Projects

The four projects listed here by consensus, include the following:

- Priority 1 – Fair Lane Extension (Tiffin)
- Priority 2 – Tiffin Fostoria Connector (Tiffin, Fostoria, Seneca County)
- Priority 3 – Fostoria Loop Road (Fostoria)
- Priority 4 – Active Transportation Plan (Seneca County)

### 6.1 Fair Lane Extension – Phase I (Priority 1)

The Fair Lane Extension project is an \$8.0 million, two-phase roadwork and signalized access upgrade and construction project in the City of Tiffin, which would be overseen by City Engineer Mario Livojevic.



Phase I is a \$4 million project involving a 1/2 mile of US 224 widening to accommodate additional lanes, a new signalized intersection on US 224 for a 60-acre commercial site and a 0.9-mile road through the site to W. Market Street, including a signalized intersection on Market. The new road will be aligned with TR 18 on US 224, and several locations are being explored for the connection to W. Market Street. ODOT has given approval for the Transportation Improvement Study which was necessary to implement this project, and design of the project has been initiated.

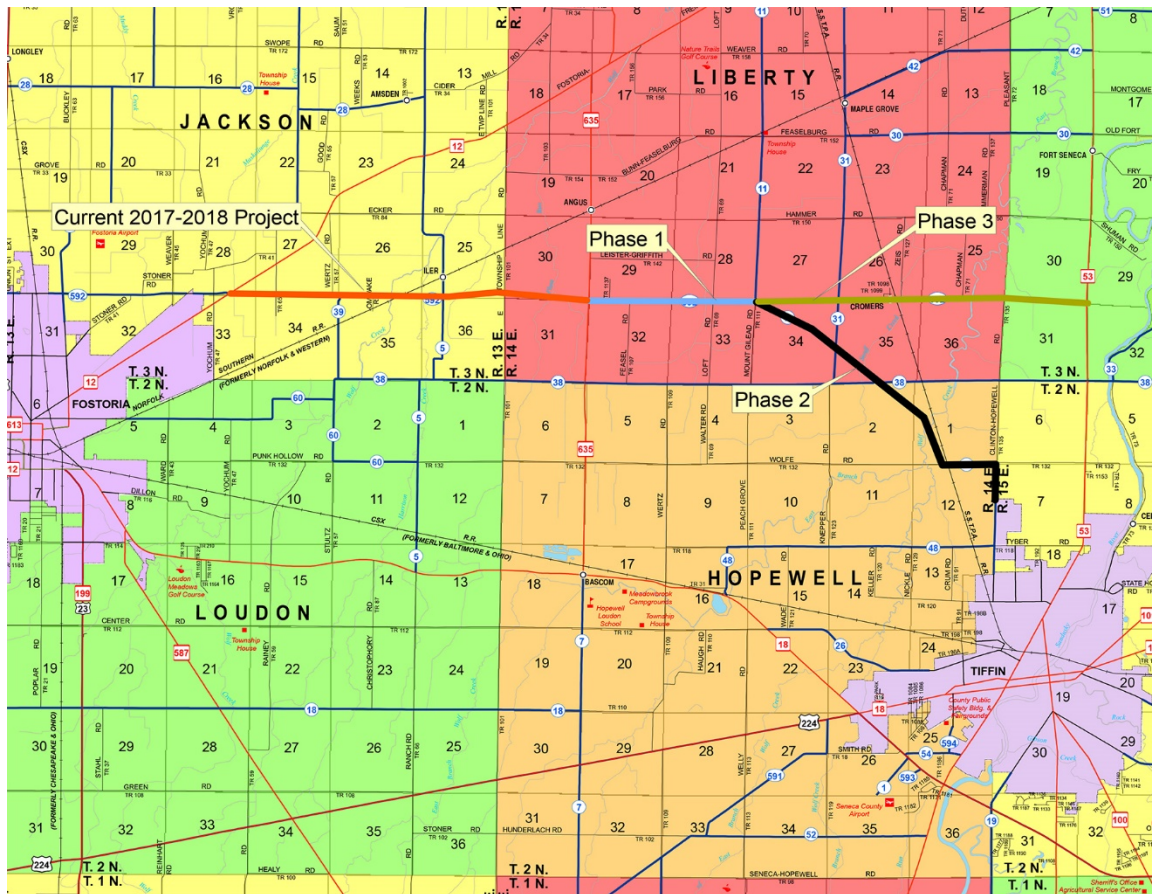
Phase II is a \$4 million, 0.6-mile extension of Fair Lane between the Phase I access point on US 224 and the current terminus of Fair Lane off Hopewell Avenue adjacent to the Seneca County Fairgrounds. This phase would also include upgrades to existing Hopewell Avenue between W. Market Street and Fair Lane to accommodate the increased traffic. The traffic study submitted to ODOT for review has been attached as Appendix 3. ODOT is in the process of reviewing the

study, but preliminary indications are that they want a fully signalized access at this time, given the probability of the whole site developing.

This entire project is not in the City Engineer’s budget, but the need to start Phase I is urgent and imminent. The City has invested in master planning the development and committed to investing funds into the project but is looking for state assistance to make it a reality. The City has only constructed one new public road in the last quarter century. That was S. Shaffer Park Drive, which was a successful project in terms of attracting development. This project is similar in nature, with the potential for even larger scale development. The remainder of the road construction projects arose from private development.

## 6.2 Tiffin Fostoria Connector – Phase 1 (Priority 2)

The Tiffin Industrial Connector project is a \$7.0 million, three-phase 10-mile project, widening and straightening project in Seneca County north of Tiffin, which would be overseen by County Engineer Mark Zimmerman.



Phase 1 is a \$3.0 million, 4.0-mile widening and curb straightening project of Maule Rd. beginning at Tyber and going north to County Road 592. The road is currently 20’ wide, and this would take it to 24’ in width (two 11’ lanes with shoulder), which would allow it to accept a higher volume of traffic and make it acceptable for trucks (24’ is the minimum for truck traffic). With respect to

the curbs, there are a couple where the speed is restricted to 35 or 45 MPH for safety. This project would allow that to be fixed so it could be 55 MPH the entire length.

Phase 2 is a \$1.0 million, 2.0-mile widening project (with ditch setbacks) of County Road 592 from Maule Rd. to State Route 635. Like Phase 1, this project would take the road width from 20' to 24'. An example of this type of road can be seen west of Fostoria, along County Road 592. Unlike Phase 1, no curb straightening is needed with this project.

Phase 3 is a \$3.0 million, 4.0-mile widening project of County Road 592 from State Route 53 to Maule Road, where it will connect to Phases 1 and 2. This phase will widen the road from 18' to 24'. Like Phase 2, no curb straightening is needed.

Big thing was to the Interstate to 75. Talk about all the nexuses. Point A to B. Not going to do it through State (those means). Came into play, City of Fostoria talking about their improvements on Stearns Rd. Is it the best way. Best way is 53 or 224, but those aren't real. This is real. Can be done. We would be doing it. Without the ability to improve Stearns Rd. in Wood Co. We are connecting Tiffin to US 23 and 199, which are good highways to get people where they want to be going west to 75. Even if we're not directly routing them there. Getting two of our highways 23 and 53 connected. Instead of heading through town now to get to 224, don't have to head through town. Basically, a county bypass. Leaving some congestion in the city.

- Nothing connects to this.

### 6.3 Fostoria Loop Road Project – Phase 2b (Priority 3)

The Fostoria Loop Road project is a massive seven-phase, multi-million, multi-decade project designed to provide a safe, efficient transportation loop around the City of Fostoria that is good for residents, business, and economic development. The project concept was developed in a 2008 study by TetraTech (included as Appendix 4). Phase 1 (Stearns Road) and the first part of Phase 2 (Jones Rd. grade separation) have been completed. This priority project is the completion of the second part of Phase 2 (upgrade of Jones Rd. and intersection realignment).

#### Summary of entire project

In June 2008, Tetra Tech finished a transportation study for ODOT District 2 that looked at the long-term roadwork infrastructure needs for the City of Fostoria and surrounding area. That report was titled the Fostoria Loop Road Study, and it identified seven separate and independent projects that were desirable for safety, congestion, and economic development reasons. The City of Fostoria and the Ohio Department of Transportation agree that these are the projects that most need attention.

The title of the study refers to the fact that he identified projects connect and form a circular loop on the outer edge of the city. The projects, in order of priority, along with their inflation-adjusted estimated costs (adding 12.1%) are as follows:

Priority	Project	Connects	Loc	Cost (M)	Status
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1	Stearns Rd. TIP	SR199 to US23	NW	\$1.9	Complete
2	Jones Rd. TIP	US23 to SR12	NE	\$12.2	Underway
3	Wood County Loop	SR613 to SR 199	NW	\$2.8	Not Started
3	Hancock County Loop	SR613 to SR 12	SW	\$18.4	Not Started
3	Seneca County Loop	SR18 to SR12	E	\$11.1	Not Started
6	Southern Super 2 Project	SR12 to US 23	SW	\$13.1	Not Started
7	Southern Connector Project	US23 to SR18	SE	\$1.7	Not Started

**Phase 1 - Stearns Road Project (Wood County, complete)**

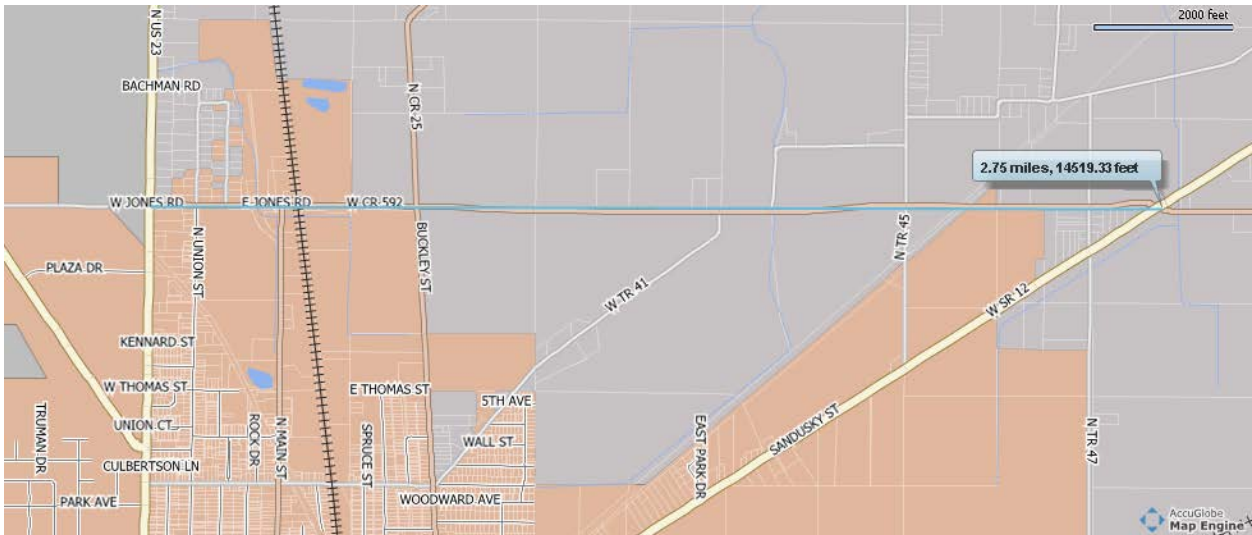
The Stearns Road Transportation Improvement Project was a \$1.9 million, 0.5-mile roadwork upgrade and intersection improvement project. It upgraded Stearns Road between State Route 199 and US 23 to a Super 2 highway and added a turnlane at the intersection of Stearns and State Route 199. The State awarded CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement) funds to the project in 2008, but the City of Fostoria needed to take care of the engineering (\$175K) and right of way purchase (\$142) first, which took several years (three years for engineering, 1.5 for ROW), but they completed it in 2014. Here is a picture showing the improvements at the intersection of Stearns Road and State Route 199 (McCutchenville Road), which was below ODOT standards:



**Phase 2 – Jones Road Project (underway)**

The Jones Road Project is a \$12.2 million roadwork project in two parts. The first part (Phase 2a) builds a \$6.5 million grade separation on Jones Road, separating the road and rail. The second part (Phase 2b) is a \$5.7 million, 2.7-mile resurfacing (Jones Rd. and County Road 592) and

intersection improvement (County Road 592 and State Route 12). Phase 2a was completed in 2012 and was funded through state safety funds made available by the Taft administration. The second part breaks down into \$5.2 million for the intersection improvement and \$500,000 for the resurfacing. Below is a picture of the intersection as well as a picture showing where the resurfacing will take place.



The road resurfacing is a maintenance issue, and the intersection is challenging and unsafe for truck drivers. Several businesses, including Poet Energy, NSI Crankshaft, and Roppe Rubber, are located on State Route 12, just down from the intersection. To get to US 23, I-75 or simply to go east means either navigating the 45 degree turn, going through town, or finding an alternate route not meant for truck traffic. In addition, the Fostoria Metropolitan Airport is located along this section of road, which increases its importance.

#### 6.4 Seneca County Active Transportation Plan

In light of the previous planning efforts and the clear importance of trailways and bikeways for a high quality of life, safety, tourism, and economic development, the Transportation Committee has determined that an Active Transportation Plan needs to be developed in Seneca County. The plan would create active transportation routes across Seneca County utilizing existing county and township road, and the routes would link population clusters, our towns and villages (e.g., Attica to Tiffin). Special attention would also be paid to creating routes emanating from major parks such as Hedges-Boyer (Tiffin); The Iron Triangle (Fostoria); Garlo and Steyer Nature Preserves (Seneca County); Collier Nature Preserve (State of Ohio). Priority would be given to creating a bike route in the county from the northeast corner near Bellevue to the Southwest corner near Carey, which would serve to connect the North Coast Inland Trail in Sandusky County with the existing designated ODOT active transportation route in Wyandot County.



Research identified several examples of concrete impact made by such a plan and implementing that plan:

- Protected bicycle lanes led to a 49% increase in retail sales at local businesses in Manhattan.
- Home values were raised 11% to otherwise identical homes in Indianapolis for every half mile closer to the trail.
- The Outer Banks invested \$6.7 Million and now generates annually \$60 Million in bicycle tourism.
- Iowans save \$87 million in health costs and generate \$400 million in economic activity annually from commuter and recreational cycling.
- “We’ve added bike lanes and expanded our greenways to better connect residents to jobs, neighborhoods and great amenities to attract a new generation of talent.” – Mayor Greg Ballard, Indianapolis.

## **7. Next Steps & Appendices**

The Transportation Committee approved the plan with a few minor changes. Next steps include recommending the TIP update to the Transportation Improvement District, Seneca County Commission, City of Tiffin and City of Fostoria for formal review and approval. Once approved, the document will be given to and discussed with state officials (legislators and agency representatives), consultants and other key stakeholders to begin to identify potential funding sources.

**Please note - there are a number of appendices which are available at the following web address but were not attached for size reasons: <http://bit.ly/TIPAppendices>.**

Please contact David Zak at [zak@senecacounty.org](mailto:zak@senecacounty.org) or by cell at 419.912.1150 if there any issues in accessing them.