



## District Executive's Message

I am very pleased and excited to begin a very important project to us here in District 12, and to the entire region. The interchange project for I-70 and Route 51 was bid on April 21, 2022. The low bidder was Golden Triangle Construction Company Incorporated from Oakdale, PA with a bid price of \$120,661,976.00. This will be the highest dollar value project ever bid in District 12. The project has been issued a Notice to Proceed with the work on May 20, 2022.

This project is the widening and reconstruction of Interstate 70 along with reconstruction of the Route 51 Interchange (Exit 46) to eliminate the substandard cloverleaf interchange and replace it with a Diverging Diamond Interchange in Rostraver Township, Westmoreland County.

The Diverging Diamond Interchange (commonly referred to as a DDI) is an innovative interchange type that moves traffic both safely and efficiently. The first DDI in Pennsylvania was also built here in District 12 in Washington County at the I-70 interchange with US 19 (Murtland Avenue). It is functioning very well and has been well received by the motorist and emergency services personnel. These interchanges are a good example of the innovative spirit of the employees in District 12.

As part of the project, 1.7 miles of I-70 will be widened to include a wider median and wider shoulders, similar to the design you are seeing on other recently completed I-70 projects. One mile of PA 51 will be widened as well.

The project includes work to replacement of the bridges carrying PA 51 over I-70 and the Wheeling and Lake Erie Railroad over PA 51, as well as rehabilitation of the Smithton High Level Bridge carrying I-70 over the Youghiogheny River.

The Project also involves several intersecting roads including the relocation of Finley Road to form plus intersection with PA 981 and construction of three cul de sacs. Additionally, the project will include stormwater management basins, traffic signals, new interchange signing including overhead sign structures, pavement markings, guide rails, drainage, highway lighting, Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) relocation work.

I am very pleased to see the project through the design process and into construction. It will greatly improve the safety of this interchange.

A project video presenting more information about this interchange is now available for online viewing. The video, which is just over six minutes in length, explains how the future project will improve both Interstate 70 and PA 51.

The video and other project information can be found on the [www.I-70Projects.com](http://www.I-70Projects.com) website. Just select this project on the map to get to the additional information. An informational project brochure is also available there to view or print. This website is designed to provide a single source of information and updates on all PennDOT I-70 projects, from the West Virginia state line east to New Stanton (Exit 57) in Westmoreland County.

Travelers may view maps, pictures, and other information for projects that are in various stages of development including design, construction and those completed along I-70 in Washington and Westmoreland counties.

We encourage the public to explore the website to view this new video for the I-70 at PA 51 interchange, and to learn more about each of our projects along the I-70 corridor, including upcoming public meetings, and events, the project development process and our overall vision for this important interstate roadway.

As the work begins to impact traffic, you will hear additional information about upcoming traffic pattern changes.

Please remember as we are now in the peak of the construction season, to please be attentive and obey posted speed limits in this construction zone as well as all others. If everyone follows those two rules, both the motorist and all of the highway workers can arrive at home safely each night.

Sincerely,

William L. Kovach, P.E.  
District Executive



## PennDOT, Partners Tout Improvements, Safety, and Opportunities for Bicycle Use

To mark May 20, 2022 as Bike to Work Day in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), rabbittransit and Commuter Services of PA held an event at the Middletown Train Station to highlight improvements and opportunities for cyclists in Pennsylvania.

“PennDOT has taken our Active Transportation Plan and made it a part of everyday business, linking people to their communities by enhancing facilities for biking, walking, and transit,” said Deputy Secretary for Multimodal Transportation, Jennie Louwse. “With our planning and safety resources, PennDOT is focused on making sure that everyone, no matter how they travel, has access to transportation options.”

The Department makes available information, graphics, and videos to help riders and pedestrians of all ages travel safely. Further demonstrating commitment to safe travel options, the Wolf Administration recently announced 64 projects to improve transportation alternative options and enhance mobility and accessibility across the state. The federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is expanding these Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside program investments by providing an additional 43 awards. Another 56 multimodal projects were recently selected for state Multimodal Transportation Fund investments.

“Bike to Work day is a great example of expanded mobility. Providing safe and efficient opportunities is the key to success,” said rabbittransit Executive Director Richard Farr. “When we connect bicycles to other modes of transportation, we help individuals travel further, truly enhancing mobility on our communities. All of our fixed route vehicles have bike racks and bikes ride free!” The new Middletown Train Station which opened to the public in January exemplifies the coordination of rail, car, bus, pedestrian, and bicycle transportation modes through the planning, design, and construction of a multimodal hub.

“Bike Month is an excellent reminder that having a multimodal approach to our transportation network helps meet the needs of our regional commuters and directly supports our mission of reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality,” said PA Commuter Services Deputy Project Manager Stacy Newcomer. “The Middletown station and the covered bike racks at this facility are outstanding assets to help commuters travel regionally and ease their decisions to make more sustainable commute choices.”

Learn more about cycling and walking in Pennsylvania at [www.pennDOT.pa.gov](http://www.pennDOT.pa.gov). Learn more about rabbittransit and Commuter Services of Pennsylvania on their websites.

---

## District 12-0 Line Painting Program

The PennDOT Maintenance unit puts emphasis on providing the public with a high-quality roadway to travel that is both safe and well maintained. One aspect of maintenance where this is vital is in the operation of line painting. The District has experienced and skilled paint crews that work to provide the best possible product on its routes. Through the years, paint crews have been able to coordinate operations with construction, reduce encounters with motorists, and meet deadlines all while providing a service in a timely manner.

A standard paint operation consists of three vehicles: A paint truck, the foreman’s truck, and a crash/supply truck. District 12 currently has two paint trucks. The operator who drives the paint truck utilizes a sight laser to ensure the lines are placed in the correct locations. On the back of the truck, two more workers run the paint sprayers to lay and place the lines on the roadway. Following the paint truck is the foreman. The final vehicle carries supplies and is a crash prevention truck to ensure safety. This convoy also ensures the paint will have sufficient time to dry. The typical “no track” time for paint to dry is roughly 90 seconds in ideal conditions. Meaning within 90 seconds the paint most likely can be driven on without spreading, smearing, or spraying onto any vehicles. However, it takes about 1 day for the paint lines to be fully cured onto the roadway.

In 2021, District 12 was able to complete 7,139-line miles of painting. Line miles are calculated by how much paint is physically placed on the roadway. The Department has higher priority routes that are focused on first, an example being all interstates. The majority of the routes within the District receive paint, but low volume roads and routes that cannot safely accommodate the paint truck are omitted. In addition to paint, the crews add nearly 1 million pounds of glass beads to the mixture every year. These beads improve the reflectivity for the paint on the road surface, enhancing visibility and safety.

In addition to getting a better product, the consistency of the paint crews has also benefitted the travelling public. An issue crews take seriously is that of customer claims. This normally is due to vehicles that drive on freshly painted roads and the result is paint stains on their vehicle. Crews take all claims into account and even proactively write down license plate numbers for potential claims.

With consistent practice and skilled labor, the PennDOT line painting process will continue to provide quality work while keeping the public safe.



## Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Seeking High School Students for Young Ambassadors Program for 22-23 School Year

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), invites Pennsylvania rising 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students to help keep Pennsylvania clean and beautiful through the Young Ambassadors of Pennsylvania program. The program was recommended in the commonwealth's litter action plan, announced by Governor Wolf, in November 2021. Students will be chosen through a competitive application process.

Chosen candidates will commit to nine months of service as an ambassador and represent and uphold the mission and values of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.

From September through May 2023, Young Ambassadors will build community stewardship by inspiring, engaging, and empowering Pennsylvanians to keep their communities clean and beautiful and develop civic leadership to champion and advocate for clean and beautiful communities across Pennsylvania.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful will provide education and training to program participants on such topics related to the impact of litter on roadways, litter prevention, waste management and recycling, civic engagement and related public policy, volunteer management, and social media marketing. The program will provide networking opportunities to not only build a sense of community within the program but also to promote professional development of the individual students.

**WHO ARE YOUNG AMBASSADORS OF PENNSYLVANIA?** Ambassadors are passionate about the environment and their community and are committed to making Pennsylvania the best place to live, work and play through volunteerism, leadership and community stewardship.

### AMBASSADORS ARE REQUIRED TO:

- Commit to one school-year of service as an Ambassador and represent and uphold the mission and values of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful,
- Attend the virtual orientation, review the Ambassador handbook and sign the participation agreement,
- Attend four virtual education and training workshops throughout the year and up to two virtual networking events,
- Organize and participate in at least one community cleanup event through Pick UP Pennsylvania,
- Conduct one community education event or activity targeting peers or youth in your community,
- Promote your participation and community impact on social media.

### KEEP PENNSYLVANIA BEAUTIFUL WILL PROVIDE:

- A Young Ambassador of Pennsylvania handbook, outlining program expectations, requirements and rules for engagement,
- On-going technical assistance and guidance to program participants,
- Access to industry experts and Pennsylvania elected and public officials through various workshops and networking events,
- A promotional toolkit,
- Program merchandise and cleanup supplies.

Students interested in applying should visit [keepbeautiful.org](http://keepbeautiful.org) and choose Programs, Education then [Young Ambassadors of Pennsylvania](#) or contact Kylie McCutcheon at 724-836-4121 x114 or [kmccutcheon@keepbeautiful.org](mailto:kmccutcheon@keepbeautiful.org). Applications open in August.





### **Wolf Administration Reminds Drivers that Putting Down Their Phones and Focusing on the Roads Can Help Save a Life**

Pennsylvania Insurance Department (PID) Acting Commissioner Michael Humphreys, Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Acting Deputy Secretary for Highway Administration Mike Keiser and Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) Lieutenant Adam Reed urge Pennsylvanians to enable the setting on their cell phones that silence text and email notifications while driving, to help reduce crashes caused by distracted driving. Statistics show highway deaths, including pedestrian fatalities, and insurance rates have risen consistently since smart phones were introduced to the market.

"Distracted driving is a serious safety hazard and Pennsylvanians should consider that distractions extend beyond just texting and driving," said Humphreys. "Everything, from changing the radio station to eating, that causes a driver to take their attention and eyes away from the road or their hands off the wheel is a distraction."

In Pennsylvania, the [Texting-While-Driving Ban](#) prohibits as a primary offense any driver using an Interactive Wireless Communication Device (IWCD) to send, read or write a text-based communication while the vehicle is in motion.

The law:

- Defines an IWCD as a wireless phone, personal digital assistant, smartphone, portable or mobile computer or similar devices that can be used for texting, instant messaging, emailing or browsing the Internet.
- Defines a text-based communication as a text message, instant message, email or other written communication composed or received on an IWCD.
- Institutes a \$50 fine for convictions under this section.
- Makes clear that this law supersedes and preempts any local ordinances restricting the use of interactive wireless devices by drivers.
- Does not include the use of a GPS device, a system or device that is physically or electronically integrated into the vehicle, or a communications device that is affixed to a mass transit vehicle, bus or school bus.
- Does not authorize the seizure of an IWCD.

"We urge motorists to limit distractions when behind the wheel," said PSP Lieutenant Adam Reed, Director of the Communications Office. "Nicer weather means more vehicles will be on the roadways, so please focus on getting to your destination safely."

In a study conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, researchers found drivers can experience a "hangover effect" where the mind stays distracted for up to 27 seconds after using smartphones to send text messages, make phone calls or update social media.

"No driving distraction - whether texting or other operator activity - is ever worth the loss of life on the roadway," said Vice President of AAA Insurance John Kubeika. "These senseless deaths can easily be prevented if drivers simply choose to focus on the core task of driving when behind the wheel."

"Driver safety and the safety of our roads have always been, and continue to be, top priorities for AAA and its members," said Kubeika.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2019 distracted driving crashes killed 3,142 people in the U.S., an average of nine deaths per day. That number was up 10 percent from the year before (2,839 deaths in 2018). The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety's 2019 Traffic Safety Culture Index revealed distracted driving remains a growing traffic safety problem. The survey found most drivers (96 percent) believe typing or reading on a hand-held cellphone while driving to be very or extremely dangerous, but 39 percent admit to reading and 29 percent admit to typing on a smartphone at least once while behind the wheel.

In Pennsylvania, there were 10,826 crashes involving a distracted driver in 2020, resulting in 47 fatalities and 296 suspected serious injuries. PennDOT preliminary data shows fatalities in distracted driver crashes are up by approximately 25 percent, while suspected serious injuries in those crashes increased 17 percent.

"Distracted driving crashes and fatalities are on the rise in Pennsylvania," said PennDOT Acting Deputy Secretary for Highway Administration Mike Keiser. "The simple choice to avoid distractions while behind the wheel will help keep you, your passengers, and other motorists safe."

For more information on distracted driving, visit [PennDOT.pa.gov/Safety](https://www.pennDOT.pa.gov/Safety).



### Route 51 over I-70 Structure Emergency Repair

PennDOT District 12-0 is pleased to announce the completion of the Route 51 over I-70 Structure Emergency Repair Contract. This emergency project was to repair the structure that carries PA 51 over I-70 in Rostraver Township, Westmoreland County. An over-height vehicle hit the structure on December 28, 2021 causing extensive damage to the fascia girder which required that a large section be replaced. PennDOT District 12-0 reacted quickly utilizing Emergency Procurement procedures and issued the notice to proceed on January 10, 2022 to the contractor, Amelie Construction & Supply, LLC of Spring Church, PA.



Due to the emergency nature of this project, the design and submittal processes were streamlined significantly. The PennDOT District 12-0 bridge unit, traffic unit, and consultant design teams worked hand in hand with district construction staff and the contractor to come up with timely plans and solutions.

The contractor began physical work on the project on February 7, 2022. Before the damaged section could safely be removed for repair, a temporary support beam had to be installed on top of the structure with support rods installed down through the deck. This supported the damaged section of the bridge while repairs were performed. Once the temporary beam was installed, the contractor began the work to repair the damaged fascia girder with the work being completed on March 22, 2022.

The location of the bridge presented a particular challenge in that it caused major impacts to traffic on I-70. Daily single lane closures and a few overnight full detours of I-70 West were necessary to perform the repairs. The Pennsylvania State Police assisted with the lane closures on I-70. The Rostraver Township Police and road crews were instrumental in making the overnight detours run as smoothly as possible.



Overall, the project went very well. PennDOT District 12-0 was especially impressed with how well the parties on all sides of the project worked so well as a team to accomplish a common goal in a short period of time.





## Projects to be Bid

### Tentative Lettings June 9, 2022

**Bridge Bearing Cleaning** – This contract is for the bridge bearing cleaning on various structures throughout District 12 in the counties of Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmoreland.

**12-22-CJR** – This project is for the District-wide contract for milling and paving centerline joints and full lane width paving on I-79 in Greene and Washington counties, and I-70 in Washington and Westmoreland counties.

### Tentative Lettings June 16, 2022

**Route 1051 over Mounts Creek-DFB** – This project is for the replacement of the structure carrying Route 1051 (Breakneck Road) over Mounts Creek in Bullskin Township, Fayette County.

**Route 4001 over Rush Run 0050-2-DFB** – This project is for the replacement of the structure carrying Route 4001 (Rush Run Road) over Rush Run (BMS: 26 4001 0050 0582) in Luzerne, Township Fayette County.

**Route 4001 over Rush Run 0050-DFB** – This project is for the replacement of the structure carrying Route 4001 (Rush Run Road) over Rush Run (BMS:26 4001 0050 0000) in Luzerne Township, Fayette County.

### Tentative Lettings June 30, 2022

**On Demand Bridges 12-0** – This project is for bridge repairs to various structures that have high priority needs throughout District 12 in the counties of Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmoreland.

## Projects that Have Been Bid

### Bids May 12, 2022

**12-22-GR1** – This project is for performing guide rail repairs and replacements on various state routes in various locations in Fayette County. The apparent low bidder on this \$404,851.00 is Penn Line Service, Inc.

**12-22-GR2** – This project is for performing guide rail repairs and replacements on various state routes in various locations in Greene County. The apparent low bidder on this \$399,830.00 is Greene Acres Contracting Co., Inc.

**12-22-GR4** – This project is for performing guide rail repairs and replacements on various state routes in various locations in Washington County. The apparent low bidder on this \$1,798,335.00 is Greene Acres Contracting Co., Inc.

**12-22-GR5** – This project is for performing guide rail repairs and replacements on various state routes in various locations in Westmoreland County. The apparent low bidder on this \$1,201,489.00 is Penn Line Service, Inc.

**12-22-RPM** – This project is for the replacement/installation of reflective pavement markers throughout the district. The apparent low bidder on this \$298,375.50 is Greene Acres Contracting Co., Inc.

## Public Meetings

**Route 88 over Tributary of Mon River (MPMS# 76050)** – Presenting construction plans, traffic control, and project construction schedule. The virtual public display plan will be available on the District webpage on with a potential date of Late June/Early July 2022.