Creating Walkable Communities in PA

Local, Regional and State Perspectives

APA PA Conference, Pittsburgh, 10/18/15
Our Panel

• Jamie L. Klink – Blair Co. Planning Commission
• Nicole Zimsky – Marshall Township
• Mark J. Magalotti, Ph.D., P.E. – University of Pittsburgh Center for Sustainable Infrastructure

• Richard C. Feder, AICP – University of Pittsburgh Center for Sustainable Infrastructure
APA PA Strategic Policy Statement on Transportation includes:

• Improve intermodal connections
• Permit gas tax to fund all modes
• Give counties responsibility for apportioning transportation funds
• Encourage transit- and pedestrian-oriented and mixed land-use development
• Complete Streets-type approaches
State Approaches

• Use Multimodal Funding
• Incentivize sidewalk ordinances and adding sidewalks
• Use liquid fuels bonus funding or another source
• Prioritize Complete Streets projects
• Do sidewalks as part of every state project
Federal Approaches

• Re-authorization
• Use available funding categories
• PROWAG – Public Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines
• Partner up

• Update ADA
Overall Approach

- Engage the citizenry
- Education and marketing program
- Coalitions
- Funding and incentives
- Pass sidewalk ordinances
- Enforce sidewalk ordinances
Overall Approach

- Develop sidewalk plan
- Develop trails plan
- Address the implementation process
- How are existing sidewalks working?
Presentation Points of Brian Hare, PennDOT

• Transportation Projects Involve Good Planning
  – Context-sensitive design and solutions
  – Right-sizing of projects
  – Linking planning and NEPA
  – Smart Transportation guidebook
Presentation Points of Brian Hare, PennDOT

- Accessibility as a basic principle
Presentation Points of Brian Hare, PennDOT

• Context Needed for Complete Projects
  – Understand project surroundings
  – Understand community’s vision
  – Existing and needed land use controls
  – Purpose and need
  – Feedback loop to PennDOT’s process
  – Understand the budget
Presentation Points of Brian Hare, PennDOT

• Local Support is Key
  – Local government
  – Planners and engineers
  – PennDOT is working to improve their approach to bicycle and pedestrian accommodations
New Leadership, New Vision

- Exciting time for planning at PennDOT
- DOT secretary is a planner with passion for planning
- Support staff has same credentials
- New focus: planners must have seat at the table
- Projects to be products of good planning
My Takeaways from Brian’s Presentation

• Projects must include pedestrian accommodations consistent with municipal planning requirements
• How can PennDOT encourage trails and sidewalks?
• Proposal: Every time a PennDOT project is in a municipality with a sidewalk ordinance, sidewalks must be part of the project
• Proposal: Same with County roads
• Create incentives programs including funding and priorities
National Broad-based Efforts

- “America Walks”
- “Everybody Walk! Collaborative”
- Plan4Health
- “Health in All Policies”
- WalkWorks
- Step it Up! U.S. Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities
- PROWAG