



## **MAYOR'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL AND CITIZENS OF GREENCASTLE October 3, 2022**

**MAYOR'S 9/11 WALK AS "WE REMEMBER:** Thanks to the community for supporting our walk in remembrance and weekend of unity for the sacrifices when the USA was attacked in 2001 (21 years ago).

**FIRE PREVENTION WEEK / OPEN HOUSE:** The National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) has announced "Fire Won't Wait. Plan Your Escape™" as the theme for Fire Prevention Week™, October 9-15, reinforcing the critical importance of developing a home escape plan with all members of the household and practicing it regularly. In addition, this October represents the 100th anniversary of Fire Prevention Week, the nation's longest-running public health observance on record. The Rescue Hose Company's open house is Saturday, October 8, 2022, from 10:00 A.M. till 2:00 P.M. Hope you can attend. Please do yourself a favor! Test your smoke detectors and change batteries as indicated. A chicken barbeque will be held until it's gone at the RHCo. open house.

**NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAINS REPORT:** Larry (Pittman) reports limited idling and disruptions. We'll monitor the fall and winter season and report accordingly.

**GASD HOMECOMING VS. SUSQUEHANNA TOWNSHIP:** My best wishes to all of the sports and student programs as the fall season is in full swing and appears very successful. This coming weekend is homecoming with all the students' events.

**INFORMATION / PLANNING WITH ANTRIM TOWNSHIP:** The pandemic is apparently over, however, we are still taking necessary precautions for COVID and the flu season. I encourage Greencastle Council to re-open dialogue with Antrim Township and the G-A School District regarding future development and mutual project interests. Prior to COVID a committee representing all three entities were meeting quarterly and sharing information that could be brought back to the full boards.

To that end for over a year now, there have been fragmented talks about continuing the north-east thoroughfare originally suggested 57 years ago. Few people know the original plan. It's important to holistically understand what has happened in the past 57 years. For that reason, I offer my research, analysis, and recommendations to the Greencastle Borough Council, Antrim Township Planning Commission, and Antrim Township Supervisors.

THE MAYOR'S OPINION  
THE 1965 PROPOSED GREENCASTLE "THOROUGHFARE" IN 2023  
Authored September, 2022

To: Greencastle Borough Council; Greencastle Planning Commission; Antrim Township Supervisors;  
Antrim Township Planning Commission

Greetings:

I write to you regarding my extensive analysis and research of the "Thoroughfare Plan" authored in 1965 by Marcou, O'Leary and Associates, Planning Consultants, of Washington, D.C. The document is entitled "Comprehensive Development Plan Greencastle, Pennsylvania" prepared for the Greencastle Planning and Zoning Commission. The next Comprehensive Plan was authored and adopted June 1, 1992 for the Borough of Greencastle, Antrim Township, the Greencastle-Antrim School District (cooperative agreement) prepared by the Center for Local and State Government at Shippensburg University. I was directly involved with the 1992 plan and the most recent joint 236-page Comprehensive Plan authored by Rettew Associates planners and adopted in 2012 after several years of research and review.

As a result of these plans, significant development that has occurred in the past 57 years, and comprehensive plan and transportation system changes over this period, the "thoroughfare plan" (Plan) is no longer applicable. I offer the following facts to support this statement:

1. The Plan suggested a full intersection at the Greencastle / Antrim boundary just west of the newly constructed Interstate-81 (Exhibit A). No street names were given.
2. In the 1960s' Eastern Avenue was constructed as a part of this proposed intersection. Eastern Avenue was to continue to Leitersburg, Washington, and Antrim Way.
3. This extension will not be built as further housing in the Orchards residential development removed this extension possibility along with build out of the Greencastle-Antrim School District campus and Tayamentasachta Environmental Center. Eastern Avenue ends in a cul-de-sac with residential properties and the John L. Grove Medical Center.
4. The 1965 "PROPOSED THOROUGHFARE SYSTEM" statement indicated the plan "would permit people living north, northwest, south and southwest of the Borough to reach the Interstate (81) without passing through the center of town. Interestingly, the THOROUGHFARE was recommended to assist local residents by bypassing downtown. The planners did not consider that in 2022 there would be between 46,000 and 60,000 vehicles + - per day traversing I-81 in the area of mileposts 3, 5, and 10 in Antrim Township along with regional housing, commercial, and industrial growth that generates excessive drivetime traffic (early, mid-morning; mid to late afternoon) that certainly is much more than local residents attempting to bypass downtown.
5. Further, the 1965 plan did not contemplate Greencastle public water extending so far into Antrim Township which has accelerated residential, commercial, and industrial development.
6. Today, local residents choose to avoid I-81 exit 5 for ingress and egress and use SR0011 to I-81 exits 3 and 10 for access. Statements 4 and 5 negates the intent of the 1965 THOROUGHFARE PLAN.
7. The current housing land development plan (Buchanan Flats) is not designed as a part of the THOROUGHFARE PLAN. This would create yet another T intersection on East Baltimore Street that, if connected to Walter Avenue, would create significant volumes of regional traffic greatly

impacting residential Borough streets causing safety issues, deteriorating structural conditions, and the need for intersection improvements and calming effects on Borough (and PennDot) streets.

8. The 1992 Comprehensive Plan realized that the 1965 THOROUGHFARE PLAN was no longer applicable. TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ISSUES were stated and recommended “Construction of parallel feeder roads for new large commercial establishments along Route 16 that would reduce short trip entry onto Route 16 in Antrim Township” (paragraph F, page 49). Further, “Construction of a connector road between Exits 2 and 3 of I-81 (now exits 3 and 5), parallel and east of I-81 would relieve some traffic congestion on Route 11” (paragraph H, page 49). “Incorporate road signs along I-81 to encourage truck traffic to use I-81 exits 2 and 4 (now exits 3 and 10) reducing through truck traffic along Baltimore Street” (paragraph I, page 49). Now, we have GPS that often directs traffic into downtown Greencastle.
9. A portion of the “connector road” was constructed by Antrim Township that followed the 1992 recommendation between Route 16 and Leitersburg Road known as Grindstone Hill Road. Unfortunately, the continued extension to Route 11 at I-81 exit 3 was preliminarily engineered, however, not constructed.
10. The Antrim Township OFFICIAL MAP shows “proposed phase II connector road” connecting Leitersburg Road to Route 11.
11. The 1992 Comprehensive Plan also recommends a “TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIP,” a long term strategy to improve traffic flow in the Greencastle-Antrim community.
- 12. When the current joint Comprehensive Plan was authored, now ten plus years ago, Council was not in favor of the “thoroughfare plan.” § 3.6 “The Greencastle Borough Council objects to the Moss Spring Avenue extension because of the perceived impact it may have on the Moss Spring development, however, the Council recognizes that the connection will occur in Antrim Township and that it will be the responsibility of the Antrim Township Board of Supervisors to decide the appropriateness of the connection through a traffic engineering study, and discussion with PennDot, Greencastle Borough, and local residents and businesses.”**

So, in my opinion, the 57-year-old THOROUGHFARE PLAN is not in the best interest for the Borough citizens health, safety, and welfare for traffic volumes that were not anticipated in 1965. This would create significant safety issues in residential areas and greatly accelerate the deterioration of these streets and cause future unaffordable improvements at N. Allison Street and Moss Spring Avenue and other locations in the Borough. This future planning would be the financial burden of the taxpayers of Greencastle, Pa. as liquid fuel funds received do not come close to paying for Greencastle’s street maintenance and improvements and would be supplemented by the taxpayers (General Fund) of the Borough. Greencastle’s services continue to grow due to regional development as the central hub of the community.

Therefore, any future residential or commercial development in the north-east boundaries of Greencastle-Antrim, primarily in Antrim Township, should not connect to current Borough residential streets.

Respectfully submitted,

*/S/ Ben Thomas, Jr. Mayor – Borough of Greencastle, Pennsylvania*