



Planning Progress

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2013 Specialized Transportation Program

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The goal of the Specialized Transportation Program is to increase personal mobility for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities and allow them to continue being productive members of their communities by offering safe transportation alternatives.

The Ohio Department of Transportation recently announced the 2013 Specialized Transportation Program. If your agency is interested in participating in the program, the program information may be downloaded from the ODOT Office of Transit website at:

<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Specialized.aspx>.

There is no longer a requirement to submit a Letter of Intent.

The Specialized Transportation Program is funded by the Federal Transit Administration, Section 5310 Program, and provides capital grants for the purchase of vehicles and equipment by private non-profit agencies or state approved coordination projects to meet the special transportation needs of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities where existing transportation services are unavailable, insufficient or inappropriate.

The program provides 80% of the cost of capital items; the remaining 20% must be provided by local funding. Participating agency services must be part of a Locally Developed Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.

Completion of the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG)

As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Stark County applied for and received \$2.7 million as part of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program. All projects were completed within the three-year grant period from November 2009 - 2012. The purpose of this program was to help communities reduce fossil fuel emissions and total energy use, and improve energy efficiency in the building and transportation sectors while creating and/or retaining jobs and stimulating the economy. Roughly 90% of the grant was spent on energy efficiency retrofits in county-owned buildings. The projects and locations undertaken include:

- [Stark County Jail](#) - replaced four steam boilers, two chillers, and 63 ceiling light fixtures
- [Stark County Office Building](#) - replaced two hot water boilers and over 2100 light fixtures
- [Stark County Courthouse](#) - upgrades to the garage heating and ventilation system
- [Stark County Engineers Office](#) - replaced most windows and doors
- [Stark County Data Center](#) - replaced chiller, windows, some doors, and lighting fixtures
- [Stark County Board of Elections Building](#) - replaced all ceiling lighting fixtures

[Programmable Thermostat Rebates](#) - a \$25 rebate was available to Stark County residents and small business owners. A total of 532 rebates were issued.

[Local Government Rebates](#) - rebates were available for the purchase and installation of energy efficiency retrofits for local cities, townships, and villages within Stark County (max. of \$1000). Seven communities utilized this program.

[Green Office \(and home\) Tips](#) - a newsletter and monthly tips were sent to all county employees.

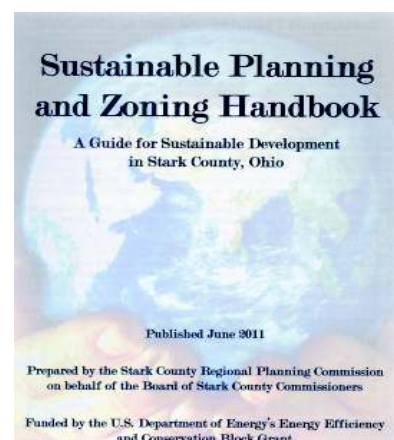
[Sustainable Planning and Zoning Handbook](#) - a handbook was created that provides local communities with guiding principles to assist them in becoming more sustainable.



Stark County
Engineers Office



Replacement Chiller Unit/Piping



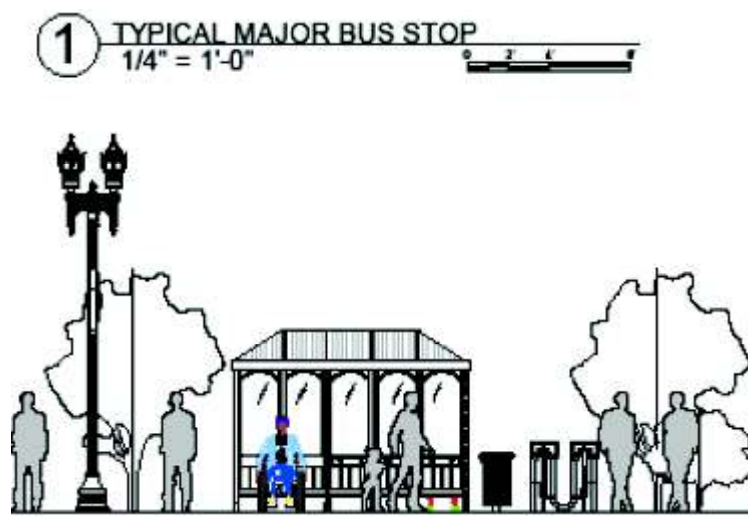
“Complete Streets” in Canton

Complete Streets is a design philosophy to improve roads in order to optimize their use for all users, not just cars and trucks. Elements can include improved pedestrian access, bike lanes, transit pull-offs and shelters, traffic “calming” designs that slow traffic, and many other features that improve the safety and movement of pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, public transit users, and others.

The 12th Street project is the first project in Stark County to incorporate “Complete Streets” elements. The first phase of improvements to the 12th Street/Mahoning Road Corridor has begun with construction occurring on Walnut Avenue. The entire project involves six phases of work spread over multiple years that will improve 12th Street from Mercy Drive to Clifftown Avenue, Walnut Avenue from 12th Street to 3rd Street SE, and Cherry Avenue from 12th Street to 2nd St SE.

Design elements being incorporated into the City of Canton project include:

- Improved intersections and signals
- Improved pedestrian facilities
- Bicycle lanes
- Improved transit shelters and pull-offs
- Aesthetic streetscaping as a traffic calming measure



Part of the project is being funded by ODOT TRAC and an FTA Livability and Bus Rapid Transit grant which will improve the experience of riders on one of the busiest SARTA routes. Other sources of funding, for this and other phases, include SCATS Funds allocated by Federal Highway including Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Funds, Surface Transportation Funds (STP), Transportation Enhancement Funds, and the City of Canton.

Details of the project can be found online at the City of Canton Website (<http://cantonohio.gov/>) by going to City Services, Engineering, and Engineering News.

New Stormwater Regulations

The EPA is planning major changes to its stormwater regulations. These would be the most significant changes since the federal stormwater regulations were enacted nearly a quarter century ago.

Under one new provision, for example, the federal stormwater program would be extended to cover all “newly developed” and “redeveloped” properties in the country.

The new rules would require owners of such properties to reduce their runoff using stormwater control technologies. The EPA has not yet released the proposed rule, but it has suggested that it may require site owners to limit runoff based on predevelopment hydrology: the amount that would have occurred under natural conditions.

The four key elements in the proposed rule:

1. It will establish performance standards for discharges from newly developed and redeveloped sites.
2. Some regulated municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) will also need to address discharges from existing sites through retrofits.
3. The protection of the MS4 program will be extended.
4. Government-owned maintenance yards will now be designated as industrial sources.

When issued, these regulations could have important environmental benefits. Storm-

water runoff (and the nasty sewer overflows that often result) routinely ranks as one of leading sources of water pollution in the United States.

By increasing the amount of rainwater absorbed onsite and reducing the amount flowing off impervious surfaces and into waterways, these regulations could go a long way toward cleaning up our nation's waters.

It appears that the new regulations will expand both the scope and the stringency of the federal storm water regulations.

Currently, federal stormwater regulations only apply to municipal separate storm sewer systems in urbanized areas, to construction sites, and to specific categories of industrial sites. The agency would reduce stormwater runoff from these sites by promoting sustainable practices that mimic natural infiltration.

The rules may also create a single set of requirements applying to MS4s replacing the current Phase I and Phase II requirements and expand the number of MS4s that are subject to federal regulation.

Taken together, these new regulations would likely cover considerably more sites, and would likely require more stringent requirements than the current federal stormwater program. The proposed rules are scheduled for release in June 2013.



NPDES Permit Update

The Board of Stark County Commissioners established an ongoing Storm Water Management Program in 2003 as required under the EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. Since the inception of the County's program, SCRPC has provided services to implement several parts of this program. These services include implementing the best management practices in the Public Education and Outreach on Storm Water Impacts and the Public Involvement and Participation minimum measure categories as well as mapping the County's existing storm water conveyance system, which is one of the best management practices in the Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) minimum measure category. In addition, completing the program's annual report submitted to the Ohio EPA and revising the program to insure it remains in compliance with the NPDES permit has been done by staff.

Additional tasks taken on by SCRPC include monitoring nearly 400 individual County outfalls. An outfall is the point location where a portion of the storm water conveyance system discharges to the surface waters of the State of Ohio. Each outfall is required to be monitored or inspected at least once during a five-year period to insure no illicit discharge is occurring. This is another one of the best management practices in the IDDE minimum measure category of the program. Monitoring of the County's outfalls was being done by the Stark County Health Department, but they have discontinued providing this service. SCRPC has also entered into an agreement with the City of Alliance to provide the expertise and services necessary to implement the City's Storm Water Management Program starting in 2013.



More information on the County's entire Storm Water Management Program can be viewed on the Board of Stark County Commissioner's website:

http://www.co.stark.oh.us/internet/docs/commissioners/Storm_Water_Management_2009-2014.pdf

Stark County Land Bank

In 2012 the Stark County Land Reutilization Corporation was formed to promote and facilitate the reclamation, rehabilitation and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property in the County. In response to the foreclosure crisis, State law allows counties with populations over 60,000 to develop a land reutilization corporation (also known as a land bank) as a tool to return vacant, abandoned and foreclosed properties to productive use. County land banks are quasi-governmental organizations that have legislative power to acquire vacant, tax delinquent property and clear it of title issues prior to being sold, held and/or redeveloped. Land Banks are an important community development tool that can benefit communities through property acquisition and subsequent demolition, rehabilitation or resale that can reduce blight, improve property values, promote economic development and strengthen the property tax base.

Working with local and state partners, Land Banks can assess attributes of individual properties to make a determination to redevelop the property to be productive as its original use or re-purpose the property to meet larger community development, economic development and planning goals. The Stark County Land Bank has received an allocation of \$2.3 million in demolition funds (if fully matched) from the Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program. Moving Ohio Forward is funded from a portion of the National Mortgage Settlement between the State and the country's five largest mortgage servicers for improperly carrying-out foreclosure procedures. All Moving Ohio Forward demolition funds must be used for blighted, vacant or abandoned residential structures and all funds must be expended by December 31, 2013. In addition to administering Moving Ohio Forward funding, the Land Bank is in the process of determining how to best implement its legislative powers to meet the specific needs in Stark County. More information will be available soon at RPC's website- www.rpc.co.stark.oh.us.

Stark State Earns LEED Gold Status

Stark State College announced, back in October, that its Corporate Continuing Education Center has been awarded Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Status.

The LEED rating system, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, is the foremost program for buildings, homes and communities designed, constructed, maintained, and operated for improved environmental and human health performance.

Stark State's Corporate Services and Continuing Education Center is located in the former Hoover Company factory and office buildings in downtown North Canton.

"This is another example of our strong commitment to sustainability here at Stark State College," said Steve Spradling, Director of Stark State's physical plant and construction.

"We are very proud to receive gold on our very first LEED project."



The Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium (NEOSCC) continues to work on making the 12-county region sustainable, resilient, and vibrant. The Consortium recently released these statistics from current research:

- 90% of Northeast Ohioans live within one mile of a park or protected space
- 31% of all in-bound freight enters the region on rail (displacing 5.1 million trucks)
- 7% fewer people live in the region than did in 1970
- 5% more of our land has been developed since 1979
- 23% fewer people reside per developed acre since 1979
- 11% fewer people were employed in Northeast Ohio per developed acre in 2006 than in 1979
- 79% of our trips in Northeast Ohio are driven alone
- 100% more freeway miles were built in 1990 to 2000
- 10% of the projected total of all brownfield sites have been identified
- 4% more daily vehicle miles are traveled since 2000, despite a 2.5% decrease in population



To view the latest news,
board meetings, work
sessions, presentations,
and events, visit
www.neoscc.org





Stark County Regional Planning Commission
201- 3rd St. N.E.
Canton, Ohio 44702

Upcoming Events

January

7	Subdivision Review	1:30 PM
8	SCRPC	7:30 PM
28	SCATS	1:30 PM

February

4	Subdivision Review	1:30 PM
5	SCRPC	7:30 PM
25	SCATS	1:30 PM

March

4	Subdivision Review	1:30 PM
5	SCRPC	7:30 PM
25	SCATS	1:30 PM

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