

MEDIA RELEASE



COUNTY OF ERIE
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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County Executive announces construction progress on bridges

Erie, PA – County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper, along with representatives from the Erie County Department of Planning & Community Development and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, today shared construction progress on bridges that has been made possible by the \$5 local use fee.

Erie County Council adopted an ordinance on Dec. 19, 2017, to put in place an Act 89 \$5 Local Use Fee on all non-exempt vehicles in the county. The fee went into effect March 31, 2018, allowing Erie County to collect a total of \$602,555 in 2018. These funds are being provided back to the county on a semi-annual basis. All funds paid by Erie County residents stay within Erie County. In addition, passing the local use fee allowed Erie County to secure a \$2 million match from PennDOT to use on poor condition, locally owned bridges within Erie County.

Erie County does not own any roads or bridges. Erie County Council has given control of the local use funds to the Erie Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to prioritize projects owned by Erie County municipalities.

“In order to secure the PennDOT matching funds, the MPO prioritized locally owned, poor-condition bridges using a data-driven approach,” said Emily Aloiz, Erie County planning program administrator. “In Erie County, there are 112 locally owned bridges over 20 feet in length. Eighteen poor condition bridges were ranked by condition, average daily traffic (ADT) and detour.”

The top seven priority bridges have received funding. Three bridges in McKean Township are funded with the \$2 million PennDOT match, and four others will be funded with the first \$2 million collected from the local use fee.

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“Rural bridges, both state and locally owned, serve as a vital connection for local residents and travelers. Recognizing this, PennDOT took on a focused approach to preserving and replacing structures and substantially decreasing the number of state owned bridges in poor condition in recent years,” said Brian McNulty, PennDOT District 1 Assistant District Executive – Design. “This partnership of the local fee and the state matching funds will assist municipalities in doing the same to tackle their needs in Erie County, where one in three locally owned bridges are rated in poor condition.”

Two of these bridges – State Line Road Bridge in Conneaut Township and Reservoir Road Bridge in Elk Creek Township – were just completed and opened to traffic this November.

“It is evident by the progress being made on the bridges in Erie County that the \$5 local use fee is effective,” Dahlkemper said. “I am grateful for the partnership and proactive approach by Erie County Department of Planning & Community Development and PennDOT in making sure Erie County residents can travel safely and with the least interruption to their daily commutes.”

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