

FY 2023 Planning Grant Application

What is the name of this project?

Improvements to North Segment of Belmont Corridor

What community is the lead applicant for this grant?

Liberty Township

Is this project a collaboration with other communities?

No

Enter the name of the project coordinator

Arnold Clebone, Liberty Township Trustee

Provide a brief description of the project area

Project area is one segment of the Belmont Corridor Plan that extends from Federal St in Youngstown to Giant Eagle Plaza. The Plan, completed by Eastgate in 2020, covers 4.6 miles divided into five segments. The project area is within the northernmost segment, designated as "Interchange North", spanning a one mile distance from Liberty St. to the Giant Eagle Plaza. Per the Eastgate Plan - Most of the activity can be directly attributed to on and off ramp traffic and the land use is influenced by this behavior. There are Gas stations, hotels and lodging, and fast food and chain restaurants that are common developments for a Interstate Exit. There is little regard for hotel guest, bicycler, or nearby residents desiring to transverse or cross the street to patronize restaurants, grocery store, ice cream parlor, salon, medical facility or township park. The area might be described as non-descript, lacking cohesion and unappealing and a place you would want to circumvent.

How was this location selected for the project?

It is the most likely traveled through (guest of hotel, and those having a Youngstown destination) or used by residents. What is seen at this location is often a visitor's only impression of Liberty and the Mahoning Valley. The image conveyed may well be the deciding factor in choosing a place for education, a job or starting a businesses in the Liberty Twp. or Region. The area is designated as "Interchange North" in the the Belmont Avenue Corridor Plan. Within the Belmont Corridor plan a Safety Study is cited that was conducted in 2016 where Rate, Crash Severity and Frequency was evaluated for every intersection in the Eastgate region. Within the planning area is the #4 priority, a segment from SR 304 to Naylor Lloyd where, within a three year period, 18 crashes occurred. A second segment within the Planning Area was the #13 high priority that include the intersection of Belmont Ave at Churchill Hubbard Rd. This area had experienced 39 crashes in the last 3 years.

Describe the issues present within the study area that this project plans to address

There is a need to address poor sidewalk connectivity, lack of lighting, and the nonexistence of safe crossing/landing locations that are hazards for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

This is especially important with the confluence of restaurants, hotels, major bus route, park on both sides of high-speed highway where there are lack of safe crosswalks and sidewalks. There are five hotels, ten eateries, a variety of other businesses, township park access, and areas of vacant frontage to serve new enterprises; a high volume of traffic fed by I-80 exit and entrance ramps, commuter traffic; and destinations into Youngstown.

Mundane and deteriorating condition that discourage patronization of existing businesses and location of new.

Need for plans to Insure \$750,000 in WRTA and TAP grants committed for sidewalks and crosswalks are designed and constructed to maximize potential for safety, streetscaping, use of public transportation and furthering business growth

Relevance to broader planning efforts

Area is part of the Eastgate Belmont Corridor Plan containing the following recommendations for the area:

- Improve connection to Churchill Park.
- Further refine the streetscape plan for Belmont Ave north of the interchange. This project has the potential to best benefit the residents of Liberty Township. Another popular point of feedback received is that Liberty doesn't have a civic gathering space or Town Center. This is a feature that could be worked into the design and reinvention of what this section of Belmont Ave could be.
- Along with the streetscape plan, define the vision for this area. This section of Belmont Ave could be successful at attracting a lifestyle center type development that mixes commercial shopping with office buildings and residential to give an urban feel to a more suburban setting. The three recommendations above will be considered in the scope of work.

Outline the scope of work required to conduct this planning process

Identify means to transform the Belmont Corridor from being mundane, to interesting, safe, stimulating, and walkable.

The plan will propose means to make it safe and appealing for hotel patrons and nearby residents to walk and bicycle to and between businesses and access to bus stops including:

1) Design of sidewalks and crosswalks being funded with WRTA and TAP grant to maximize impact on safety, aesthetics, accessibility to businesses, Churchill Park, bus stops including, placement, routing, landscaping and lights. Particular attention on prescribing placement of sidewalk fronting the township cemetery and the creek crossing north of SR 304 where space is limited.

2) Landscaping and signage to enhance attractiveness.

3) Additions to way-finding signage and possible bike lanes

- 4) A pedestrian and cycling network to link the planning area to other points of interest in the community
- 5) Identify potential federal, state and private foundation funding to implement.

What is the total cost to develop this plan?

14,805

How much in funding from the Planning Grant is being requested?

13,324

How much local cash match is being contributed to this project?

1,481

Local Cash Match Commitment - *A Letter of Commitment from the lead applicant community confirming the local cash match contribution identified above is required by May 31, 2022. A resolution will be required should your project be selected to receive funding.*

Do you agree to provide the information regarding local cash match contribution as a part of the application process?

Yes

Project Area Map

Liberty Township

Improvements to North Segment of Belmont Corridor

