

Allegheny Tunnel Transportation Improvement Project

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHY IS THE PROJECT NEEDED?

The project needs were established in 1997 and reassessed in 2010. A project need equates to an issue or problem identified for a particular project. Five needs have been established for this project:

- **Transportation Demand:** The current and future transportation demands on the tunnel and its approaches result in unacceptable Levels of Service (LOS) and traffic congestion.
- **Existing Geometric Constraints:** Some geometric features of the tunnel and its approaches do not meet current highway design standards with respect to lane width, termination of truck climbing lane, horizontal curvature, and sight distance.
- **Accident Rates:** The accident rate for the tunnel and its approaches is higher than the entire Turnpike system and PennDOT statewide rates.
- **Tunnel Conditions:** Both the eastbound and westbound tunnels are in need of major rehabilitation.
- **System Linkage and Continuity** (continuous travel without exiting): System linkage and continuity on the Turnpike is currently disrupted because certain hazardous materials (hazmats) are not permitted through the Allegheny Tunnel. Trucks carrying certain types of hazmat cargo must divert off the Turnpike system and use an alternate route involving local roads.

WHAT PHASE IS THE PROJECT IN?

The Allegheny Tunnel Transportation Improvement Project is currently in the study (alternatives analysis) phase.

WHAT TYPES OF ALTERNATIVES ARE BEING EVALUATED?

Three project corridors (brown, yellow and gray) are being evaluated. Each corridor consists of one open cut (bypass) alternative and one tunnel alternative.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE STUDY?

The goal of the study is to identify a preferred alternative to move forward to preliminary design.

WHAT WILL THE STUDY EVALUATE?

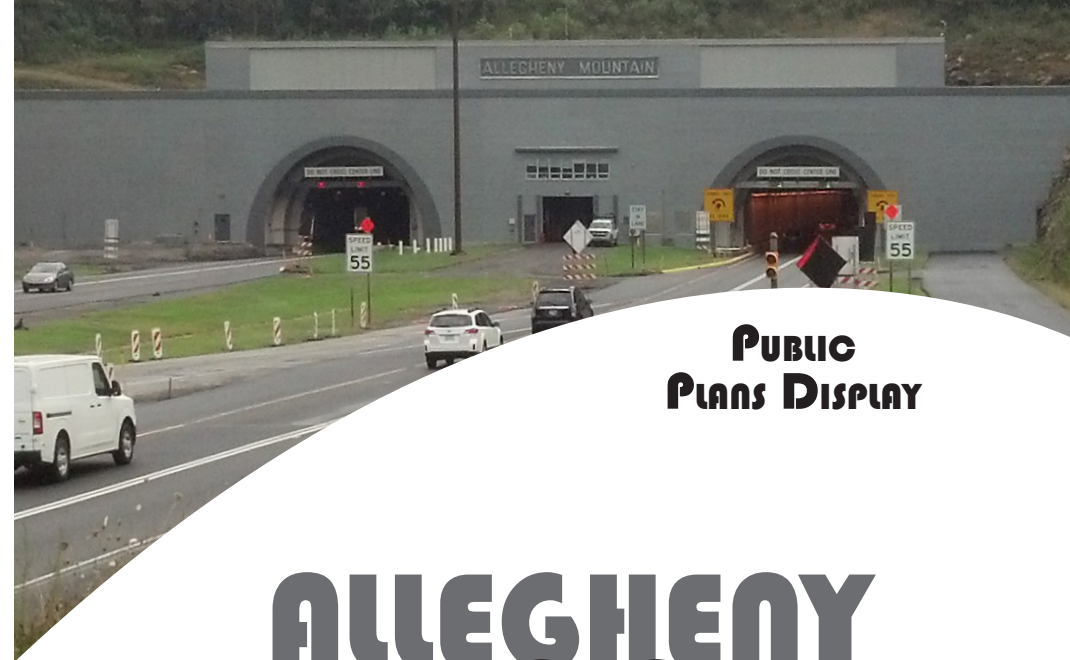
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|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| • Accident data | • Natural resources | • Roadway data |
| • Agency involvement | • Noise impacts | • Social resources |
| • Cultural resources | • Permit needs | • Traffic impacts |
| • Emergency response routes | • Project purpose and need | • Utility locations |
| • Hazardous materials | • Public involvement | • Weather |
| • Mitigation measures | | |

WHO IS THE PROJECT STUDY TEAM?

- The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission — Project Owner
- L.R. Kimball — Project Prime Consultant (Engineering & Environmental Design Lead)
- Gannett Fleming — Sub-consultant to L.R. Kimball (Tunnel & Noise Analysis Support)
- Paul C. Rizzo Associates — Sub-consultant to L.R. Kimball (Tunnel & Geotechnical Support)
- Heberling Associates, Inc. — Sub-consultant to L.R. Kimball (Cultural Resource Management)
- Bat Conservation and Management, Inc. — Sub-consultant to L.R. Kimball (Specialty Wildlife Consultant)

HOW CAN I KEEP INFORMED OF THE STUDY'S PROGRESS?

The project website will be updated regularly. Visit www.paturnpike.com then click "Major Design and Construction Projects" to learn more.



**PUBLIC
Plans Display**



Transportation Improvement Project

Quality Inn & Conference Center
Somerset, PA

Oct. 22, 2013
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

ALLEGHENY TUNNEL HISTORY & PROJECT ORIGIN

The Allegheny Tunnel is located in Allegheny and Stony Creek Townships, Somerset County, on the Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-70/76) about 13 miles east of the Somerset Exit #110.

The current westbound Allegheny Tunnel was constructed between 1938 and 1940 and was part of the 160-mile "Original Section" of the PA Turnpike, which opened Oct. 1, 1940. Initially, the Allegheny Tunnel had just one tube and accommodated bidirectional traffic. Vehicles would merge from two lanes down to one as they entered.

This first stretch of the PA Turnpike was largely designed to follow the abandoned South Penn Railroad right-of-way. The original South Penn tunnel through the Allegheny Mountain, which was never completed, is located immediately adjacent to, and north of, the existing Turnpike tunnel.

As a result of growing traffic and congestion, a second tube was built in 1965. This new tunnel — located south of and adjoining the original — was constructed to carry two lanes of traffic in the eastbound direction. At the same time, the original westbound tunnel was refurbished and modernized.

In the late 1960's, congestion again became an issue at the westbound approach due to the steep grades, curves and the absence of a truck-climbing lane. In response, the PA Turnpike Commission (PTC) added a third westbound lane between New Baltimore and the eastern portal of the Allegheny Tunnel with the right lane designated as a truck-climbing lane.

Since the construction of the new tunnel and the refurbishing of the original in 1965, the Allegheny Tunnel and approaches have continued to be improved and modernized. These improvements include: lighting and vent control work; portal facade and signing work; tunnel lighting work; and installation of high-mast lighting. In addition, in 1987 and 1988 both tunnels underwent major rehabilitation. An inspection conducted by the PTC in 1995 and 1996 revealed that the tunnels are rapidly deteriorating and once again in need of major rehabilitation. Cosmetics repairs were completed in 2012.

The Allegheny Tunnel Transportation Improvement Project was initiated by the PTC in 1996 as a result of increasing concerns regarding:

- traffic congestion;
- the frequency and severity of accidents in and near the tunnel;
- the physical and structural conditions of the tunnel; and
- the rerouting of hazardous materials (now prohibited in the tunnels) onto local roadways.

Five project needs were established in 1997, and several alternatives were developed based on those needs and the numerous environmental studies conducted in the following years. The project was placed on hold in 2001. After nine years, it was reinitiated in 2010.

When the project resumed, the needs were reevaluated, alternatives were added and environmental studies were conducted and updated. Six alternatives are presently being evaluated. They include the Brown Cut Alternative, Brown Tunnel Alternative, Yellow Cut Alternative, and Yellow Tunnel Alternative located north of the existing tunnel and the Gray Cut Alternative and Gray Tunnel Alternative located south of the existing tunnel. Each alternative is being evaluated with regards to environmental impacts, engineering criteria, cost and public/agency input.

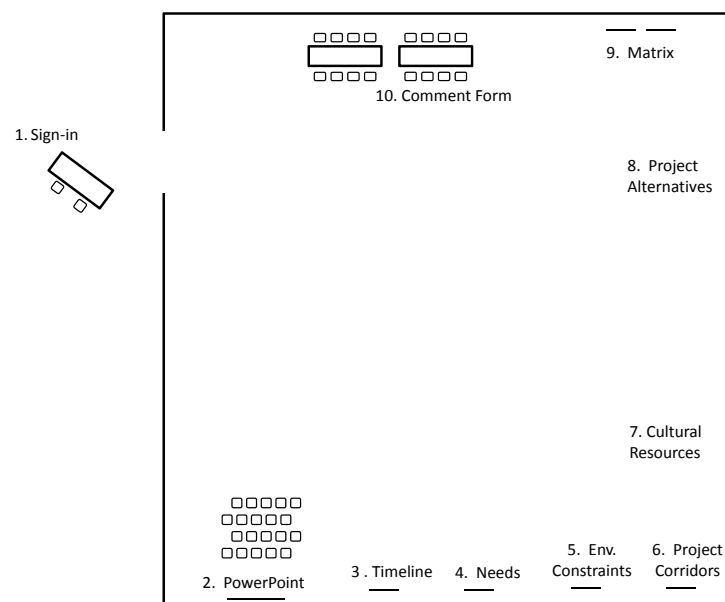
NEXT STEPS

After gathering input about the proposed alternatives from the public and permitting agencies, the Turnpike will identify a preferred alternative and will announce and display that at a future public meeting. The Commission will then proceed with the preliminary design/environmental permitting phase followed by the final design phase. Project construction could commence after successful completion of the permitting and design phases.

ANTICIPATED TIMEFRAME

The Turnpike expects to select a preferred alternative in late 2014. The design and permitting effort could start after a preferred alternative is identified, and is anticipated to take just about five to seven years. The earliest construction could begin is approximately 2019 to 2021. Construction could take anywhere from four to eight years to complete, depending on the alternative selected, funding and many other factors.

MEETING ROOM LAYOUT



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