

Transportation Profile

Town of Bloomsburg Comprehensive Plan

Transportation by the Numbers

Miles of state highway	7.92 miles
Miles of local roads	33 miles
Miles of rail line	2.25 miles
Miles of flowing waterways	17.5 miles
Average number of vehicles traveling through downtown each day	16,100
Number of parking spaces in downtown	920
Average number of flights per day from the Municipal Airport	32

Introduction

The transportation system is a key infrastructure component for a community's development and economic prosperity. As a system, it should provide reasonable travel and transportation options - including both vehicular and non-vehicular - for residents, merchants and industry, as well as University students and tourists. A carefully planned and well maintained transportation system will help sustain the Town's existing quality of life and shape future opportunities for growth.

Transportation Facilities

The total length of roadway miles in the Town of Bloomsburg is 40.92 miles. This total includes state highways and local streets, roads and alleys.

State Highways

The State owns and maintains 7.92 miles of roadway. US Route 11 passes through the Town as Main Street, East Street and the New Berwick Highway and intersects PA 487 at the east end of downtown. PA 42 passes briefly through Bloomsburg at the western edge of the municipality.

The functional highway classifications and average annual daily traffic volumes for these and other state highways are shown on Maps 7 and 8 and summarized in Table 7-1.

Local Roads

The Town owns and maintains 33 miles of roadway, which includes 0.36 miles of roadway previously owned and maintained by PennDOT. The local roadway system follows a close-knit gridded street pattern which includes one-way streets and alleys.¹

Bike Trails

Bloomsburg has one on-road bike trail through town. Due to sign theft, Council voted to remove the remaining signs, however a few signs still remain on their posts. There are also bike trails on Bloomsburg University's upper campus.

¹ PennDOT Town of Bloomsburg Type 5 Map, ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/BPR_pdf_files/Maps/boro/Columbia/19501.pdf.

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Table 7-1 Roadway Classification and Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)

Classifications	Roadways	AADT
Urban principle arterial (non-Interstate)	Main St. (US Route 11) west of East St.	15,237
	New Berwick Highway (US Route 11)	13,391
	East St. (US Route 11)	12,357
Urban minor arterial	Lightstreet Road (PA 487)	9,786
	Poplar St. and Ferry Rd.	9,285
	Market St., from Main to 9 th St.	7,550
	Millville Road	6,466
	5 th St., from Railroad St. to East St.	4,105
	Railroad St., from Main St. to 6 th St.	1,101-3,850
	6 th St., from Railroad St. to East St.	1,916
Urban collector	9 th St., from Market St. to Poplar St.	917
	Market St., from 9 th St. to Fort McClure Blvd.	7,550
	Old Berwick Rd.	5,141
	Fort McClure Blvd., from Market St. to Ferry Rd.	1,101-3,850
	Railroad St., from Main St. to the bridge	1,101-3,850

Source: PennDOT

Sidewalks

Wide sidewalks line the streets in downtown Bloomsburg. They are an integral part of town and street life and infrastructure. Sidewalks give pedestrians safe places to walk through various districts and neighborhoods. Street festivals, trick-or-treating, children playing, people eating at sidewalk cafes, window shopping, exercising, and other day-to-day activities take place on sidewalks. Sidewalks are also good tools in helping businesses bring in customers. Overall, they help to create a welcoming atmosphere in urbanized areas by encouraging people to walk, observe and interact with the community at a slower pace than vehicular travel. This creates closer connection between the pedestrian and the community.

Railroads

The North Shore Railroad, a freight rail line, traverses Bloomsburg parallel to the river. It runs northeast-southwest along 6th Street and Columbia Boulevard and is operated by the SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority.² The North Shore Railroad has a rail to truck transfer station in Bloomsburg. The railroad adjoins the Lycoming Valley Railroad and the Canadian Pacific railway operated by Norfolk Southern Railway Company approximately 20 miles down river in Northumberland.

Bloomsburg Municipal Airport

The Bloomsburg Municipal Airport is publicly owned by the Town of Bloomsburg and privately operated by Columbia Aircraft. The airport is located along the Susquehanna River in the eastern portion of the

² Pennsylvania Railroad Map,
ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/BPR_pdf_files/MAPS/Statewide/parail.pdf.

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Town. There are currently 20 aircraft based at the airfield and an average of 32 operations per day. Most operations are local recreational flights, though some transient general aviation, air taxi and a small amount of military operations do take place. There is one paved 2800 foot runway, a runway lighting system, hangar and tie down parking, and fuel supply facilities. Oxygen is not available. There is no landing fee but there is an overnight fee. The airport is staffed by an airport manager Monday through Friday 8 AM to 5 PM and Saturdays 8 AM to 12 PM. The manager is available by phone after hours.³

There is interest among recreational flyers in expanding the hangar to accommodate more planes. Some flyers have also discussed the possibility of lengthening the runway to 4200' to accommodate small corporate jets. Additional land would be needed in neighboring Scott Township to extend the runway eastward; the runway cannot be extended westward any farther toward Ferry Road. To date, Scott Township has opposed the runway expansion.⁴

Intercity Transit

The intercity bus company, Greyhound Lines, Inc., has a ticketing office and station in Bloomsburg at the Uni-Mart on Lightstreet Road.⁵ Susquehanna Trailways, a bus company offering daily charters and tours to mid-Atlantic cities, picks up passengers at the Uni-mart on Lightstreet Road for its Lock Haven, Williamsport to New York route. Tickets are sold through the University Store at 400 East Second Street, Bloomsburg.⁶

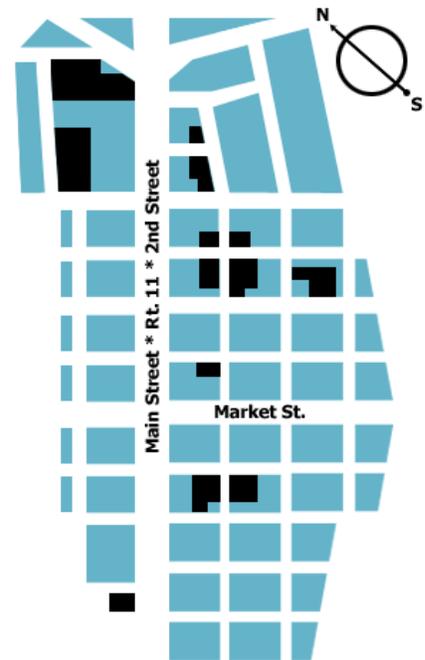
Associated System Facilities

Public Parking Lots

On-street parking is available throughout the Town. On-street spaces along Main Street and public parking lots in the downtown (shown at right) are metered. Free parking is available on the side streets. Permits are required for street parking east of East Street from 1st Street through 5th Street.⁷

Campus Shuttle

Bloomsburg University operates a campus shuttle for students. It goes to several area apartment complexes, Wal-Mart, and downtown Bloomsburg. Shuttles operate between every 10 or 30 minutes depending on day, time and location. The shuttle does a downtown loop between 7:30 AM and 9:30 PM Monday-Thursday and between 7:30 AM and until 4:30 PM on Fridays.⁸



Public Parking Lots in Downtown

³ Bloomsburg Municipal Airport, - N13, www.airnav.com.

⁴ April 17, 2008 Stakeholder Workshop for the Comprehensive Plan

⁵ Greyhound Lines, Inc., www.greyhound.com.

⁶ Susquehanna Trailways, Inc., www.susquehannabus.com/routes.html.

⁷ Bloomsburg Police Department, www.bloompd.com.

⁸ Bloomsburg University, www.bloomu.edu/current/shuttle.

Regional Facilities

Interstate 80 is two miles from downtown Bloomsburg. It is the nearest interstate highway and classified as an urban principle arterial. Approximately 17,500 vehicles travel on I-80 in each direction on an average day.

Several airports are located in within 30 nautical miles of the Bloomsburg Municipal Airport:⁹

- Northumberland County Airport (11 nautical miles SW)
- Schuylkill County (Joe Zerbey) Airport (18 nautical miles S)
- Hazleton Municipal Airport (20 nautical miles E)
- Penn Valley Airport (22 nautical miles SW)
- Williamsport Regional Airport (26 nautical miles NW)

The nearest commercial airport is Williamsport Regional Airport.¹⁰

BicyclePA Route V parallels Interstate 80 across the state. The route passes south of Bloomsburg through Catawissa Township.¹¹

Recent Improvements

Over the past three years, the following maintenance and improvement projects have been completed:

- Reconstructed the Park Street rail grade crossing in 2006.
- The intersection of Main Street, Lightstreet Road and East Street was redesigned and reconstructed in 2007.
- Signal coordination was established in 2007 for traffic signals through downtown, as recommended by the Route 11 Congested Corridor Improvement Program.
- Main Street was repaved in 2008.

Current Deficiencies and Planned Improvements

As a Rural Planning Organization (RPO), SEDA-COG is a PennDOT planning partner, helping to develop a regional Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and, like PennDOT, serving as a resource for transportation funding, grant management, and best practices on behalf of its member counties, including Columbia. The TIP is the regionally agreed-upon list of priority projects—projects scheduled for the first four years of PennDOT’s Twelve Year Program. The TIP contains traditional highway/bridge and transit projects, along with bicycle/pedestrian, aviation, and freight-related improvements. The official TIP is updated every two years in Pennsylvania, but it is constantly revised and amended based on available project readiness and funding. The 2009-2012 TIP lists no highway or bridge improvement projects nor any local transit improvement projects for Bloomsburg, however three projects are listed in the vicinity:¹²

- SR 4003 bridge removal
- Safety improvements for intersection of SR 42 and SR 4009 (Millville Road) north of Bloomsburg).
- SR 0042 bridge rehabilitation over Route 11 also west of Bloomsburg.

SEDA-COG is also leading the effort to establish a trail along the former route of the North Branch Canal. The project aims to create a pedestrian and bicycle trail connecting the communities of

⁹ A nautical mile or sea mile is a unit of length. It corresponds approximately to one minute of latitude along any meridian.

¹⁰ Pennsylvania Public-Use Airports Map, ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/BPR_pdf_files/MAPS/Statewide/air.pdf

¹¹ BicyclePA website, ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/bikes/bike_V_21.pdf

¹² SEDA-COG website, www.seda-cog.org.

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Danville, Catawissa and Bloomsburg and providing close to home recreation for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. The trail will also celebrate the Susquehanna River and the region's canal heritage. It would be the first major land-based trail in the region. The current feasibility study focuses on the Bloomsburg to Danville connection and is scheduled to be completed by December 2008. The Master Plan is scheduled for 2009 with acquisition and construction for this segment completed in 2010. The project has very positive local support and adds value to the Heritage Area Feasibility Study; Rediscovering RiverTowns; and the Danville Riverfront - Master Site Plan study - all SEDA-COG projects.

In addition to specific facility improvements, community and transportation planners in the SEDA-COG region have identified the need for more coordinated and integrated community, infrastructure and economic development planning. In 2007, SEDA-COG completed a regional planning effort, the Central Pennsylvania Regional Action Plan, to establish a direction for coordinated actions among local, regional and state partners. Within this plan, transportation is mentioned as a component to better planning and investment:

- Create regional maps and mapping analysis, using GIS data, that respond to identified land use, transportation and economic development questions.
- Develop a regional capital improvements plan for water, sewer, transportation, broadband & other infrastructure with a prioritized list of regionally significant projects. Link this plan to state and federal funding requirements and mechanisms. In the process, involve county planners and commissioners, COGs, and local government officials. Enlist SEDA-COG to assist in coordinating & disseminating information about this effort.
- Develop a broad, regional educational outreach about economic development, land use, and transportation for students, general citizenry, municipalities, and legislators. Raise awareness, define avenues to get involved, and stress the need to be involved.
- Design transportation processes - multi-modal, context sensitive, and "smart" - to link with land use concerns.

Findings

- Bloomsburg's transportation system is a multi-modal system for pedestrian, bicycle freight, aviation, and vehicular travel.
- Sidewalks line at least one side of most streets throughout the Town. The perimeter of town tends to lack sidewalks more than central areas. Some instances are due to slope or to unusual municipal boundaries.
- Most streets are in reasonable condition for biking but many are too narrow for occasional and recreational riders who are not comfortable riding with motorized vehicle traffic.
- Public transportation is limited to Susquehanna Trailways service between Lock Haven and New York and the Bloomsburg University campus shuttle available to students for travel between the campus and downtown.
- Lack of convenient parking is an issue in the downtown.
- The airport has plans for a runway realignment and extension to 3200 feet. Additional extension would require cooperation with Scott Township.
- SEDA-COG is leading an effort to establish a trail along the former route of the North Branch Canal. The project aims to create a pedestrian and bicycle trail connecting the communities of Danville, Catawissa and Bloomsburg and providing close to home recreation for residents and visitors.
- Should passenger rail service to the central Pennsylvania region, Bloomsburg would be well suited for a station due to its current land use pattern and density.

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