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LANta to Host Public Forums on Improvements *Bus Rapid Transit on the Agenda*

The Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANta) is currently developing plans for a series of improvements aimed at making the region's public transportation system faster, more reliable, and more efficient.

Known as Enhanced Bus or Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT"), these improvements may include things like improved bus stops and shelters, limited stop/express services, traffic signal priority for buses, and/or off-board fare collection.

In order to make sure that planned improvements meet the needs of current and prospective system users, LANta will be hosting a series of public meetings aimed at soliciting input on possible BRT enhancements at the following times and locations:

- 3:00 PM on August 1 at the Grand Eastonian Suites Hotel, 140 Northampton Street, Easton



- 7:00 PM on August 1 at the Hyatt Place Bethlehem, 45 W. North Street, Bethlehem
- 10:00 AM on August 2 at the Baum School of Art, 510 W. Linden Street, Allentown
- 6:00 PM on August 2 at the Baum School of Art, 510 W. Linden Street, Allentown

AECOM, HDR Engineering, and Taggart Associates form the team working with LANta, with Taggart Associates primarily responsible for coordinating stakeholder and public involvement.

Bridge Replacement Moving Forward

For the past several months, Taggart Associates has been a part of a design team lead by P. Joseph Lehman Consulting Engineers working with Cass Township, Huntingdon County and PennDOT District 9-0 on the replacement of the Ridge Road bridge over Hare's Valley Creek. Originally built in 1900, the existing structure is a two-lane, single-span, steel wide flange beam structure that was recently closed due to scour caused by flooding in the fall of 2011. (Continued on page 3)





From the President July 2012

This past month, I was privileged to make the alumni commencement address to the Class of 2012 at Northampton Community College. Almost 40 years ago, I told them, I was sitting where they were, and I had the same mixed emotions — relief that the class work was done, but apprehension about what lay ahead.

But the main gist of my talk was about why I continue to stay connected and involved with Northampton Community College as a volunteer: it's because I understand how important my education has been to my career success, and because it's the right thing to do to give back. We sometimes kiddingly refer to payback time; I do believe in payback time, all the time. And I have made the conscientious decision to walk that walk, in business and in my personal life.

This community has stayed healthy in good times and in bad times due to the ongoing support of the literally hundreds of non-profit organizations that provide essential programs and services to those less fortunate than most. Connecting to those organizations brings untold rewards: new friends, new colleagues, new partnerships and new beginnings. And especially now, with the economy affecting so many of these non-profits, it's more important than ever for us all to consider our role in keeping the community healthy.

One of the projects that I am most proud of is the connection that I have helped to create between Taggart Associates' client, Sands Casino Resort Bethlehem, and Donegan Elementary School in South Bethlehem. Ninety-eight percent of the children who attend Donegan live below the poverty level. The Sands is helping to underwrite the cost of the summer school programs, and their Team Members volunteer by helping the students with their Homework Club. The Sands management clearly understands the impact that this support will have on these children and their families, and on the community as a whole. It's a great partnership, one that benefits both sides.

If you're not already doing so, I encourage you to join me in walking the walk — stay connected and find a way to get involved, volunteer and give back.

**"I have made a
conscientious
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'Walk the Walk.'"**

South Bethlehem Property Owners Consider Community Benefit District

Property and business owners on the south side of Bethlehem recently came together to form a steering committee focused on exploring the possibility of forming a Community Benefit District (CBD) as a way to fund various downtown improvement initiatives. CBDs use funds generated through property assessments on all taxable properties within the proposed District, as well as through voluntary contributions from non-profits, grants, and other program income to complete downtown improvements such as removing litter, weeds, and graffiti, providing “Ambassador-style” pedestrian assistance, and enhancing district identity/branding.

The committee is working with New City America East, which is a partnership of Taggart Associates and national CBD consulting firm New City America, to analyze community needs and consider whether a CBD



might play a role in downtown revitalization efforts in south Bethlehem. Taggart Associates staff is looking forward to coordinating with property and business owners, the City of Bethlehem, and various downtown stakeholders over the course of the next year or so on this important initiative.

Huntingdon County Bridge

(Continued from page 1)

The new bridge will be a two-lane, precast reinforced concrete box culvert that will restore safe vehicular and pedestrian access in the area. As the public involvement coordinator for the project, Taggart Associates worked with township and state officials to plan and coordinate the stakeholder and public involvement plan following state and federal requirements. A public plans display and open house was held this past spring and the project is now in Final Design, with construction scheduled for the spring of 2013.

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