



Lower Providence Township

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Stone Arch Bridge Preservation

LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP, *April 3, 2007* - The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is developing a management plan and maintenance procedures in order to preserve some of the stone arch highway bridges in the Greater Philadelphia Region. The plan, known as "Project Keystone," focuses on the 125 bridges, 20 feet in length or longer, found in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. PennDOT's goal is to produce sound management recommendations for each bridge and integrate them into a transportation improvement and maintenance plan.

Two of these historic bridges are located in Lower Providence Township: one on Ridge Pike spanning the Perkiomen Creek into Collegeville, and the other on Germantown Pike over the Skippack Creek.

As part of the project, the 125 stone arch bridges were ranked using the following criteria: condition; transportation; waterway adequacy; rehabilitation or replacement costs; anticipated development pressure; historical, recreational and cultural values; and public input. The rankings were then used to make recommendations for preservation. High ranked bridges were recommended as stronger candidates for long-term preservation.

The Skippack Creek bridge was ranked 14th and the Perkiomen bridge was ranked 38th. PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission are currently reviewing the rankings and the preservation recommendations.

These bridges have tremendous historic value to the Township and serve as critical transportation routes used daily by thousands of commuters. Residents and organizations are encouraged to view the Stone Arch Bridge Management Draft Plan online, <http://www.pastonearch.org/>, and express support of these important pieces of history. You can send comments via email by clicking the "Your Comments/Contact Us" button at the website or by calling Gerald M. Kuncio of Skelly and Loy, Inc. @ 1-800-340-7538. Public comments are being accepted until April 15.

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