



CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
RESOLUTION 2022-3

A RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION AND APPRECIATION  
FOR THOMAS P. ZILLA ON HIS RETIREMENT AFTER 32 YEARS OF SERVICE  
BY THE CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

WHEREAS, Tom began his tenure with the Centre Region Planning Agency on August 31, 1988, and currently serves as the Principal Transportation Planner for the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO); and

WHEREAS, Tom served as a passionate advocate for transportation planning in the Centre Region; volunteered countless hours to improve Commonwealth-wide issues related to transportation planning; supported and mentored staff; thoughtfully and deliberately advised leaders on the CCMPO Technical and Coordinating Committees; guided COG Committees, the COG General Forum, and municipal governing bodies on many critical transportation projects; built credibility for the transportation planning program; and

WHEREAS, Tom served as a servant-leader for his staff when guiding the Region through many contentious projects during his tenure, displayed honesty in all aspects of his work, treated all with respect and fairness regardless of standing in the community; and

WHEREAS, under Tom's leadership, the CCMPO actively planned for a variety of successful transportation projects by:

- Successfully completing many Long-Range Transportation Plans, Unified Planning Work Programs, and Transportation Improvement Plans for Centre County Region. These documents satisfied Federal and Commonwealth obligations and provided the guidance for planning, funding, and construction schedules for many projects that provide the backbone for the transportation system in Centre County.
- Encouraging the successful completion of the State Route 322/Potters Mills Gap project. This \$96 million dollar project significantly improved safety and travel efficiency on this mountainous section of State Route 322.
- Taking the lead to help build an innovative consensus process with state and federal legislators, the business community, local residents, and others to successfully advocate for a high-speed interchange between I-99 and I-80, and construction of a local access interchange and local road improvements to Jacksonville Road from I-80.

WHEREAS, Tom has been a realist when it comes to transportation improvements in the Centre Region. He has described himself in his self-deprecating way as the "dream squasher" on numerous projects, whereas others describe him as a pragmatic leader; and

WHEREAS, Tom was known for being a thoughtful, respectful, humorous, articulate, and selfless leader, guiding his team with strength, confidence, and empathy; he endeared himself to staff, and;

WHEREAS, Tom has embodied honest and effective communication and teamwork that has been valued by elected officials and colleagues in the Centre Region due to his helpfulness, responsiveness, and overall good nature, and

WHEREAS, Tom is a recognized state and local transportation planning expert and has excelled at building credibility and partnerships to integrate transportation into the community. Tom has also assisted the Centre Region municipalities with many consequential projects over the years including:

- Warner Boulevard Improvement Project in Harris Township. This project changed from a proposed road resurfacing project into a project that improved safety and provided bicycle and pedestrian connections from Atherton Street to Oak Hall Park and Mount Nittany Middle School.
- The Atherton Street reconstruction project in Patton and Ferguson Townships. The successful completion of this project resulted in long-overdue improvements to the road and pedestrian facilities in one of the busiest transportation corridors in the Centre Region. This project will continue into State College Borough and Harris Township.
- Whitehall Road improvements in State College Borough, College Township, and Ferguson Township. This project resulted in widening the road through State College Borough and College Township to western Ferguson Township. The project included wider shoulders to accommodate bikes and provides access to the Whitehall Road Region Park. The project improves safety throughout the corridor for cars, bikes, and for farmers who often travel on Whitehall Road with farm equipment.

WHEREAS, as Tom retires from his position of Principal Transportation Planner, the Centre Region Council of Governments staff and the members of the General Forum wish to express their admiration and appreciation for his leadership, commitment, and years of service to the COG and the residents of the Centre Region.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Forum of the Centre Region Council of Governments, honors, thanks, and commends Tom for 32 years of service and guidance in the transportation field, wishes him the best in his future endeavors.

RESOLVED this *twenty-fifth day of April 2022*, meeting in regular session.

Attest:

  
Eric Norenberg  
Executive Director, Centre Region COG

By:

  
D. Richard Francke  
Chair, Centre Region COG