



BOROUGH OF PERKASIE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE: PERKASIE RECEIVES FEMA GRANT TO REPAIR HISTORIC COVERED BRIDGE

Perkasie Borough has been awarded funding under the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Public Assistance program to repair its historic 1832 covered bridge, the Borough announced on Monday.

The remnants of Hurricane Ida damaged the South Perkasio Covered Bridge in September 2021. The FEMA grant award, along with a 10 percent match from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), will pay for damage directly related to Ida. Other funds raised prior to Ida will go to repairing sections of the bridge's Town Lattice truss not impacted by the storm.

At a minimum, the FEMA and PEMA grant award is for a minimum of \$427,554.56. Before Ida, the Perkasio Historical Society raised \$120,000 to rehab the bridge, and Perkasio Borough was awarded a \$100,000 state grant in June 2020 based on the Society's match.

In all, the South Perkasio Covered Bridge repair project now has a minimum of \$ 668,554.56 in dedicated funding, including a \$41,000 FEMA emergency grant in 2021 to stabilize the bridge. Under FEMA's grant guidelines, costs related to undiscovered damage to the bridge caused by Ida also will be fully covered by federal and state funds.

"FEMA and PEMA's financial support allows us to move forward with saving our beloved covered bridge, the symbol of our Perkasio community," said Scott Bomboy, chair of Perkasio Borough council's historical committee. "We expect to publicly advertise for planning proposals for the project shortly. Once we award those bids, the borough will have an estimated completion date for the project."

Perkasie Borough applied for FEMA public assistance immediately after the record September 2021 flood moved the bridge 15 feet off its abutments. The project went through a detailed review, including a consultation with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and the state Department of Environmental Protection.

"Over the past 15 months, Perkasio Borough and FEMA have worked together diligently to find ways to maximize FEMA and PEMA's contributions to this unique project. We also would like to thank Representative Brian Fitzpatrick, our former state Representative Craig Staats, our former state Senator Steve Santarsiero, Bucks County commissioner Robert Harvie, and their staffs for their support since September 2021," said Perkasio Mayor Jeff Hollenbach. "In addition, I would like to add my congratulations to Scott Bomboy, Andrea Coaxum, and others in our Borough Administration who demonstrated remarkable patience and persistence in acquiring this dedicated funding for the restoration of our South Perkasio Covered Bridge."

The South Perkasio Covered Bridge is Pennsylvania's third-oldest covered bridge and the oldest covered bridge in Bucks County. Built in 1832, the bridge still has unique architectural features. It was moved to its current

location in Lenape Park by the Perkasie Historical Society in August 1958 and rededicated in August 1959. The Department of Interior placed the South Perkasie Covered Bridge on its National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

“This is great news for the Borough and Society who have been working together for the past four years to restore this historic 1832 landmark in Lenape Park,” said Charles W. Baum, former Perkasie Historical Society president for 25 years. “The Perkasie Historical Society saved the bridge and raised funds to move the span one-half mile into the park in 1958 and dedicated the bridge a year later to the Borough and its residents. We are delighted to hear the great news that FEMA and PEMA are approving the funding to restore Bucks County's oldest covered bridge.”

In addition to the government agencies and non-profits listed above, other funding partners for the project include American Heritage Federal Credit Union, Free Will Brewing, Penn Community Bank, Penridge Development Enterprises, the Bucks County Covered Bridge Society, the Perkasie Industrial Development Authority, and Univest. Community sponsors include Covenant Bank, Dunkin' Donuts, McDonald's, The Perk, the Perkasie Lions Club, the Perkasie Owls, the Pezzanite Family Charitable Trust and QNB.

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