



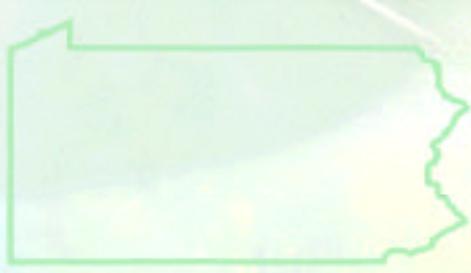
Prepared by:  
Governor's Center for  
Local Government Services  
with assistance from:  
Governor's  
Sound Land Use  
Advisory Committee

January 2000

1st Edition

# LAND USE IN PENNSYLVANIA: Practices and Tools An Inventory







## Message from Governor Ridge

Dear Reader:

The first edition of *Land Use in Pennsylvania: Practices and Tools* is designed to support you in planning the future of your community. Created by the Governor's Center for Local Government Services with invaluable assistance from the Governor's Sound Land Use Advisory Committee, this document contains more than 100 practices and tools currently used in Pennsylvania to promote responsible land use.

More than theoretical approaches to shaping our futures, the practices and tools in this inventory are used by communities like yours to preserve natural and cultural environments, to revitalize downtowns and older communities, and to manage growth. Some of these practices and tools will be familiar; others may be part of a planning method you'd like to learn more about. With each practice or tool, we've included examples of where and how Pennsylvania's communities are using that approach.

This first edition of *Land Use in Pennsylvania: Practices and Tools* is part of an ongoing educational outreach program. It is one of a number of resources that can support sound land use, and it is a resource that will be continually improved. In the back of this book, you'll find a form you may return to the Center with your suggestions for ways to improve this resource or examples you'd like us to showcase in future editions.

We think this is a resource that you will find useful. It is a catalogue of tools rather than a prescriptive, step-by-step planning guide. Some of the practices will apply to your community; others will not. We believe that you have the best sense of what will work in your own community. If you have questions about when to use a practice or tool, how the tools can be used in combination or in what sequence, we are here to help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Ridge". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tom Ridge, Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



**A Land Use Planning Inventory  
and Workbook for Municipal Officials  
in Pennsylvania**

**1st Edition**



# Land Use in Pennsylvania: Practices and Tools - An Inventory

Prepared by the  
Governor's Center for  
Local Government Services

with assistance from  
Governor's Sound Land Use  
Advisory Committee

with support from the State  
Interagency Land Use Team

Department of Agriculture

Department of Community and Economic  
Development

Department of Conservation and Natural  
Resources

Department of Education

Department of Environmental Protection

Department of Revenue

Department of Transportation

PA Historical and Museum Commission

PA Housing Finance Agency

PA Infrastructure Investment Authority

PA Rural Development Council

Office of the Budget

Office of General Counsel

Governor's Policy Office

Governor's Green Government Council

Lieutenant Governor's Office

**January 2000**

Produced by:

**MTA**  
**McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc.**



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:**

The Governor's Center for Local Government Services and the Sound Land Use Advisory Committee acknowledge with thanks McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc. for its labor and endeavor in the development and production of this report.

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# The Sound Land Use Advisory Committee

The Sound Land Use Advisory Committee is comprised of the Governor's appointees representing legislators, local governments, builders, environmentalists, planners, farmers, architects, educators and others...

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**Louis J. Appell, Jr.**, President,  
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**Donald M. Bernhard**, Manager,  
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Community Affairs, PP&L, Inc.

**Barry Denk**, Executive Director,  
Center for Rural Pennsylvania

**Andrew McElwaine**, President,  
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**John Brosious**, Deputy Director,  
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**Betty Conner**,  
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USDA/Rural Development

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PA State Association of Boroughs

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Pennsylvania House of  
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**Honorable Anthony H. Williams,**  
Senate of Pennsylvania





## I. Introduction

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## A. Introduction to *Land Use in Pennsylvania: Practices and Tools*

### LAND USE: A NEW AGENDA FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

Pennsylvania is a land of abundance. As citizens of the Commonwealth, our lives are enriched by an abundance of productive farmland, pristine streams and woodlands. We are equally fortunate to have a wealth of quaint historic villages, bustling urban areas and developable land served by safe, efficient roadways.

With this abundance, however, comes responsibility. Leaders from our state's past – Gifford Pinchot, Horace McFarland and Rachel Carson among others – recognized this connection and set the course for responsible stewardship. More recently, local and state leaders have begun to explore ways to more effectively manage land use.

*Land Use in Pennsylvania: Practices and Tools* is the product of an intense and sustained examination of the issue of land use in the Commonwealth – a focused stewardship effort that began with a larger analysis of the state's environmental quality.

When Governor Ridge established the 21st Century Environment Commission in June 1997, he asked its members to recommend methods and policies that would improve the environmental quality of the Commonwealth and measure results, allowing for enhanced economic and social progress.

Among the Commission's broad goals, detailed guidelines, and more than 240 specific recommendations, it gave top

priority "to the challenge of promoting responsible land use."

It is clear why the Commission cited "the need to change our patterns of land use." Existing trends – in which prosperous communities struggle to plan for and manage the rapid growth that is a result of their prosperity while distressed communities experience declining populations, vacant industrial commercial areas and decaying infrastructure – require us to reevaluate our approach to planning.

*Without responsible land use planning, land is permanently committed to new uses – which may not enhance our environment or our economies.*

### THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT PLANNING

Without responsible land use planning, land is permanently committed to new uses – which may not enhance our environment or our economies.

In *Land Use Trends in Pennsylvania*, a recently released report issued by the Governor's Center for Local Government Services, we are provided with an analysis of the changes in land use that are occurring in our state: we are converting cropland, forests, and other open space to development at the second-highest rate in the nation.

Between 1982 and 1997, total developed land in Pennsylvania grew

### *(The Consequences of Not Planning, Cont'd)*

from 2.7 to 4.3 million acres. And the rate of development is increasing rapidly. In the five-year period from 1992 to 1997, 1.12 million acres were developed. This represents an unprecedented growth rate, approximately five times the rate of the previous 10 years.

In Pennsylvania, the rate of land development far exceeds the population growth rate. Between 1982 and 1997, while the developed land area increased by 56 percent, the population increased by only 1.4 percent.

These development statistics reflect a significant conversion of agricultural land to new uses. At the same time that farmland is being developed, many Pennsylvania rural communities find themselves making a great effort to promote their local economies.

*All Pennsylvanians can mutually benefit from a sound or 'smart' approach to growth. Such an approach recognizes that there are different land use solutions for urban, suburban and rural areas.*

A more effective approach to land use planning is needed to address both the rate of change in land use and the disparate benefits of change. This approach should consider the unique needs of areas in growth and areas that are working to attract growth. It should be built on anticipating and planning for economic development and growth in a timely, orderly and predictable manner.

All Pennsylvanians can mutually benefit from a sound or 'smart' approach to

growth. Such an approach recognizes that there are different land use solutions for urban, suburban and rural areas.

### **A DIALOGUE OF CONCERNS**

Responsible land use has become a public issue. Across the state, there is increasing concern about how our communities are changing and how these changes affect our quality of life. Many citizens are talking about undesirable growth patterns and their effects on communities throughout the Commonwealth. Some are asking: how can my rural community share in the positive aspects of this growth? All are concerned whether these patterns of growth and development are making our communities better or worse places to live, and what can be done to change the situation if we don't like what we see.

During the summer of 1999, communities began to share their visions. Over a three-month period, the Governor's Center for Local Government Services held 53 Land Use Forums across the state to provide Pennsylvanians with a venue for speaking on the subject of sound land use.

The return on time and effort invested in this dialogue has been invaluable. Almost 4,000 people attended. Without exception, each forum resulted in a civil discourse around a very emotional issue. The Center also received hundreds of faxes and e-mails from citizens who could not attend the forums, but wanted to make sure their voices were heard.

In person and through correspondence, Pennsylvanians shared their vision of the



*(A Dialogue of Concerns, Cont'd)*

future and provided creative solutions to land use issues facing the Commonwealth. They voiced their concerns and opinions with regard to land use -- past, present, and future -- and made clear their call for change.

Citizens who participated in the forums identified *intergovernmental cooperation* as the most desirable land use practice. *Farmland preservation* was one of the most frequently expressed concerns, followed by *open space preservation*. Rounding out the top ten issues raised at the forums were: *infrastructure concerns, urban revitalization, water concerns, planning, education of local officials, concerns for farming and the family farmer, property taxes and sprawl*.

These concerns have been heard. Representatives of the many state agencies that monitored the forum proceedings listened and became more knowledgeable about the broad and diverse land use issues facing municipalities. The Center has prepared a companion report summarizing the forums which is available through the Governor's Center for Local Government Services. To obtain a copy of *Pennsylvanians Speak: The Sound Land Use Forums Report*, you may contact the Center at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837) or online at [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us).

**TAKING ACTION ON LAND USE ISSUES**

The sound land use forums represent one of many actions the Commonwealth has taken to address land use issues since the 21st Century Environment

Commission issued its report in September 1998.

In January 1999, Governor Ridge issued Executive Order 1999-1, acknowledging the importance of responsible land use planning and setting forth the state's land use policy objectives. Sound land use is, as the Executive Order states, "in the best long term interest of the Commonwealth and should be encouraged at all levels of government."

The Executive Order directed the Center to report annually to the Governor on land use trends in Pennsylvania and make recommendations, if appropriate, regarding changes in law or policy to support the land use policy goals of the Commonwealth.

In February 1999, Governor Ridge proposed the 'Growing Greener' budget initiative designed to retarget state environmental spending in ways recommended by the 21st Century Environment Commission to promote sound land use, enhance Pennsylvania's natural resources, address age old problems such as abandoned mines, and implement a watershed approach to protecting the environment. Both legislative and administrative steps were proposed.

In May, the General Assembly took the first step in adopting the Growing Greener initiative by creating the Environmental Stewardship Fund.

And on December 15, 1999, Governor Ridge signed his Growing Greener

*(Taking Action on Land Use Issues, Cont'd)*

initiative into law, providing for \$645.9 million over five years providing for environmental stewardship, including farmland preservation and the preservation of open space. With funding of \$105.9 million in the first year and \$135 million a year for the next four, this law represents the largest environmental investment in modern Pennsylvania history.

### THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR'S CENTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The Governor's Executive Order designated the Governor's Center for Local Government Services as the principal state entity responsible for land use assistance and monitoring. It is to advise local governments of the existing tools available to manage growth within their communities. Toward this end, the Center was charged with establishing an Advisory Committee to help develop and disseminate an inventory of sound land use practices and to make this inventory available to interested local governments and developers. The Center is also required to report annually to the Governor.

*Sound land use is not synonymous with no growth. To be a proponent of sound land use practices does not make you an opponent of growth. Rather, sound land use practices promote growth in a smart and efficient way.*

Five fundamental principles guide the Center's work. They are:

1) Sound land use is not synonymous with no growth. To be a proponent of

sound land use practices does not make you an opponent of growth. Rather, sound land use practices promote growth in a smart and efficient way;

2) A one-size-fits-all sound land use strategy is not realistic in this diverse Commonwealth and will not work;

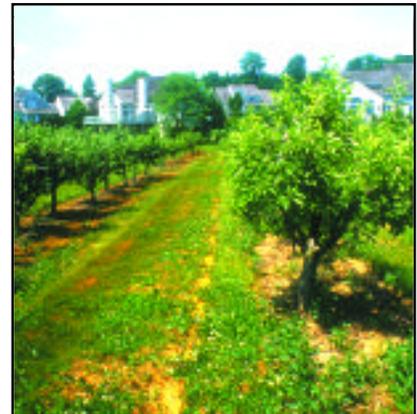
*Implementing sound land use practices addresses both our community and economic development needs, and allows the Commonwealth to improve, not diminish, the quality of life for the residents of our cities, boroughs, townships, and small villages.*

3) Implementing sound land use practices addresses both our community and economic development needs, and allows the Commonwealth to improve, not diminish, the quality of life for the residents of our cities, boroughs, townships, and small villages;

4) Successful sound land use strategies are best developed and initiated at the local level; and finally,

5) Regional cooperation is a necessary and effective tool for communities to achieve development objectives while conserving open space and natural resources.

Since January 1999, the Center has made substantial progress in addressing the issue of land use. A state inter-agency team has been formed and meets regularly to assist the Center in carrying out its sound land use responsibilities. Personnel from the



*(The Role of the Governor's Center, Cont'd)*

Departments of Environmental Protection, Transportation, Conservation and Natural Resources, Community and Economic Development, and Agriculture serve on this team. The Governor's Policy Office, Legislative Office, Press Office, Office of General Counsel, PennVest, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, the Pennsylvania Rural Development Council, the Green Government Council, and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission are also represented.

The Center has revised, republished and sent its Planning Series (see page 7 of this document) to each local government in the Commonwealth. This series of ten documents on land use planning under current Pennsylvania law covers topics such as comprehensive planning, subdivision and land development, and zoning, as well as background information on newer programs such as Land Recycling.

This inventory of land use practices and tools is a new resource which is intended to complement those documents.

*Each community's residents will have to decide for themselves what types of growth are consistent with their vision of a good, livable community.*

**HOW THIS INVENTORY CAME ABOUT**

Experts on growth and development issues can suggest technical and policy solutions to the challenges that growth -- or lack of it -- brings, but they can't answer the most important questions.

Each community's residents will have to decide for themselves what types of growth are consistent with their vision of a good, livable community, and then be willing to build a framework that supports and implements that vision under the state's Municipalities Planning Code (MPC).

Many of Pennsylvania's public officials and community leaders have asked for additional assistance to effectively guide development while they retain the unique character of their communities. This inventory of land use practices and tools was produced by the Governor's Center for Local Government Services and its Sound Land Use Advisory Committee as an additional resource for these communities.

The Sound Land Use Advisory Committee is a group of 44 practitioners of diverse professions -- all with a stake in enhancing Pennsylvania's communities and in preserving Pennsylvania's precious, finite resource: its land.

With their assistance, review and coordination, the Center has produced this document, which contains a wealth of useful ideas for municipal officials engaged in, or contemplating, sound land use planning and implementation. The land use practices described in this report can help to encourage the most effective use of land and protect our communities from undesirable growth patterns.

The Sound Land Use Advisory Committee is working with the Center as part of a sustained discourse that fosters

## *(How This Inventory Came About, Cont'd)*

the transition toward a new understanding of how our environment, economy and community all function together. These issues are critical, complex and interrelated, and it is the continued hope of the Sound Land Use Advisory Committee that the practices in this inventory provide the early design for an improved future.

### **IDENTIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING SOUND LAND USE PRACTICES**

In considering sound land use practices, it is important to recognize that managing growth does not mean stopping growth. Sound land use is about planning for and guiding development while enhancing and protecting our cultural and natural resources.

This report includes practices and tools that Pennsylvania communities have used to meet the demand for growth in 'smarter ways' – both by managing new development and revitalizing existing development. These responses to the need for smart growth include planning for and building to higher densities, preserving open space, and protecting environmentally-sensitive areas. At the same time, the practices in this inventory have been used to revitalize cities and inner suburbs, direct new development to targeted areas, and encourage growth where appropriate in rural areas.

*In considering sound land use practices, it is important to recognize that managing growth does not mean stopping growth.*

The practices and tools described in this report are more than theoretical

approaches to shaping our future. In small townships, in major cities and in the open spaces in between, they have found practical applications. Many – such as comprehensive planning – are standard tools that have been used by planning professionals and municipal officials for decades. Others, such as special district zoning, represent more recent, innovative approaches to managing land use. The Sound Land Use Advisory Committee members identified these practices and have recognized their real-life applications in the examples included with each practice.

Additionally, the sound land use forums provided many examples of creative solutions being implemented at the local level to deal with the many challenges communities face with expanding growth or working to attract new growth.

In identifying Pennsylvania's land use practices and tools, the Sound Land Use Advisory Committee did not take a narrow view of what is needed. Some of the practices described in this report, such as crime prevention programs, cannot be strictly defined as land use techniques. However, since such practices do support principles of sound land use, and the Committee felt it was worthwhile to focus on a comprehensive approach to meeting citizen-supported land use objectives, those practices were included in this inventory.

### **CHOOSING THE RIGHT PRACTICES AND TOOLS**

The Sound Land Use Advisory Committee believes that these practices, when used during the planning and

*(Choosing the Right Practices and Tools, Cont'd)*

implementation processes, can help create communities that enhance the quality of life of for all Pennsylvanians.

However, it is clear that the issues related to sound land use are as broad and diverse as the Commonwealth. No single strategy will work for all communities. There are urban, suburban, and rural perspectives to this issue. What may be an effective and efficient land use tool in the southeastern part of the state may prove useless in the rural northeast.

*The issues related to sound land use are as broad and diverse as the Commonwealth. A one-size-fits-all strategy will not work.*

When undertaking any of the practices outlined in this inventory and workbook, it is best to follow these basic guidelines:

- identify where in the planning process the tool fits;
- identify what method of implementation is required, such as an ordinance, map or plan; and
- determine whether a prerequisite, such as zoning, must be met before the practice can be implemented.

Basic land use planning techniques must be in place to have the legal backing to implement – and enforce – the practices. Therefore, before accepting a practice as a probable solution or innovative tool, be sure your municipality has the legal provisions in place to carry it through.

The Governor's Center for Local Government Services is committed to helping communities identify and implement the practices that are right for them. The Center has produced a body of printed resources to assist local planners, and will continue to provide assistance in choosing and applying sound land use practices through additional publications, educational outreach and its Web site.

Other planning resources offered by the Center include:

- The Governor's Center for Local Government Services Planning Series, consisting of the following titles:
  - #1 *Local Land Use Controls in Pennsylvania*
  - #2 *The Planning Commission in Pennsylvania*
  - #3 *The Comprehensive Plan in Pennsylvania*
  - #4 *Zoning*
  - #5 *(Reserved for Future Use)*
  - #6 *The Zoning Hearing Board*
  - #7 *Special Exceptions, Conditional Uses and Variances*
  - #8 *Subdivision and Land Development in Pennsylvania*
  - #9 *The Zoning Officer*
  - #10 *Reducing Land Use Barriers to Affordable Housing*
  - #11 *Technical Information on Floodplain Management*
- *Pennsylvanians Speak: The Sound Land Use Forums Report*
- *The Land Use Trends Report*

*(Choosing the Right Practices and Tools, Cont'd)*

In addition to these publications, a list of additional resources is found in the back of this inventory and workbook. ■



## B. About Land Use Planning

### THE BASIC PLANNING PROCESS

While land use planning can involve a complexity of technical, procedural, economic and legal issues, it may be useful to approach planning in its most basic form. Generally, planning needs to deal with the WHERE, WHAT and HOW of land use.



The next part of the WHERE in planning can be assisted with an understanding of the man-made infrastructure created to provide the necessities of our modern lifestyle: roads, transit, utilities for power, water and sewer treatment. With a complete inventory and understanding of the green and the man-made infrastructure of our landscape, we are well-equipped to make decisions about the WHERE component of planning. This knowledge of the land is typically completed and presented up front in the comprehensive planning effort.

*With a complete inventory and understanding of the green and the man-made infrastructure of our landscape, we are well-equipped to make decisions about the WHERE component of planning.*

### WHERE WE DEVELOP

The WHERE component should address the capability and sensitivity of the land. This report has identified many tools and methods to accomplish the inventory and mapping of the “green infrastructure” – the essential natural environment. With the completion of a landscape features map and an understanding of how the landscape functions, the WHERE component of planning has begun.

*This report has identified many tools and methods to accomplish the inventory and mapping of the “green infrastructure”.*

### WHAT WE DEVELOP

The WHAT component of development and land use is a greater challenge for planners, public officials and citizens of our Commonwealth. These decisions are a more difficult part of planning and land use in our constitutional form of government, which carefully protects the rights of landowners. The rights of landowners must be balanced against the needs of society to use our natural resources and man-made infrastructure equitably and wisely. Will we plan for open space, low-density development or high-density development?

The spatial orientation -- function and feeling of future land use -- can be

### *(What We Develop, Cont'd)*

guided by a few principles of planning, but primarily by the values, references, and goals of each community. This vision of a community's future is or can be articulated in the goals and objectives statement of a comprehensive plan. If there is a thoughtful vision for the future of a community, and a productive, open discussion of the alternatives, informed decision-making will result and the WHAT component of land use can be planned.

### HOW WE DEVELOP

The remaining component of planning future land use in our communities is HOW. The HOW component of planning is perhaps the most challenging. It requires an understanding of many variables, including financing, timing, and many procedural and legal considerations. These variables apply to the private business and development community, as well as all levels of government.

*To achieve the preservation of open space, agriculture, and ecologically important land, planning and zoning may not be enough.*

Determining how to achieve a community's land use goal or vision requires technical knowledge, creativity, and as importantly, a commitment to achieving the desired result.

The move from commitment to implementation often comes with an associated cost. To achieve the preservation of open space, agriculture, and ecologically important land, planning and zoning

may not be enough. Preservation may require public funds to purchase land or development rights. If sufficient public funds are not available, creative techniques, such as Transferable Development Rights (TDRs), may need to be employed to accomplish land use goals.

*Public resources or financial incentives may be necessary to achieve the land use and development goals of rural areas.*

Similarly, for a rural community to achieve a desired community goal for development of commercial, residential or industrial uses, planning and zoning alone will not be sufficient. Public resources or financial incentives may be necessary to achieve the land use and development goals of rural areas.

Many rural communities are encouraging growth to maintain their sense of community, their ability to support employment and their attractiveness for future generations.

*A better understanding of the true costs and impacts of ever-expanding suburbs on urban centers could help support the value of our cities and need for urban and downtown revitalization.*

The redevelopment and revitalization of our cities and urban centers may also require more than comprehensive planning and zoning. Economic policy and redevelopment programs combined

*(How We Develop, Cont'd)*

with strong community leadership will be required to make struggling communities vibrant places to live and work. A better understanding of the true costs and impacts of ever-expanding suburbs on urban centers could help support the value of our cities and need for urban and downtown revitalization.



Perhaps the remaining critical ingredient for consideration of the HOW component of planning is our interest in working together in an atmosphere of open communication, mutual understanding, trust, and respect.

As we continue the land use discourse in Pennsylvania and the future of our communities, we can learn much by listening to each other and considering the rich diversity of opinions in our community. If we are willing to consider the diversity of thought on what is sound land use and work toward a balance of new development, urban revitalization and open space preservation, we will leave our children and future generations a Commonwealth of planned open spaces, diverse communities and a quality of life to be cherished.

## THE LAND USE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS IN PENNSYLVANIA

Through power granted by the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), planning for land use and regulation of development is largely the responsibility of local governments in the Commonwealth. Although counties are required to develop and adopt comprehensive plans, municipalities in Pennsylvania are not required to plan or zone. However, if a municipality desires to plan and enact land use programs, the MPC gives the municipality substantial latitude in the development of these programs. Provisions found in the MPC provide direction for local governments in developing and implementing these plans.

## IT BEGINS WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Land use planning begins with a municipality developing and adopting a *comprehensive plan*. The comprehensive planning process should result in a clear and comprehensive plan for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional uses and necessary infrastructure and public facilities to serve such development. The plan should also provide for agricultural and other rural uses, open space and natural resource areas, though this is not clearly required under present law. Ideally, the plan is based on a widely shared vision for the future of the community developed with broad public participation.

Article III of the MPC outlines the guidelines for preparation of a comprehensive

*(It Begins with the Comprehensive Plan, Cont'd)*

plan, which will be the basis for the zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance. It is important when planning and zoning to understand the legal responsibilities applicable to each municipality that chooses to plan and zone.

*Land use planning begins with a municipality developing and adopting a comprehensive plan.*

Under Pennsylvania law, each municipality must zone the entire municipality and must zone for all categories of use. Landowners can challenge the validity of an ordinance through a curative amendment process if the ordinance fails to provide adequately for the use proposed by the landowner. If the landowner prevails in court, the court may order the municipality to approve the use on the landowner's site – for example, if it is shown that the municipality does not have its "fair share" of a particular housing type or a quarry or a particular commercial use.

The Pennsylvania rules often mean that a rural municipality that chooses to plan and zone because it anticipates growth, will have to plan for more development and uses than its existing rural character. Some municipalities therefore choose not to zone, but to rely on the county plan and subdivision ordinances. Another approach is to adopt joint planning and zoning with contiguous municipalities so that the required uses can be spread over a larger geographic area, and a part of the joint area maintained in rural use. The comprehensive plan is not an

ordinance, but rather a community's guide for future development.

As previously stated, municipalities are not required to have a comprehensive plan. However, there are three circumstances that require the adoption of a comprehensive plan: (1) when the governing body is a county; (2) when a transportation impact fee ordinance is enacted; and (3) when municipalities enact joint zoning.

*Following adoption of a comprehensive plan, a municipality can develop and adopt zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances through the authority granted in the MPC.*

### **ORDINANCES ARE USED TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN**

The comprehensive plan provides the basis for a municipality's zoning and subdivision land development ordinances. Approximately 57 percent of the municipalities and 90 percent of the counties in Pennsylvania have adopted a comprehensive plan. Over 93 percent of the municipalities in the Commonwealth either regulate the subdivision of land or are covered by county ordinances, and approximately 64 percent of the municipalities of the Commonwealth are covered by a zoning ordinance (either their own or the county's).

Following adoption of a comprehensive plan, a municipality can develop and adopt *zoning and subdivision and land development* ordinances through the

*(Ordinances Are Used, Cont'd)*

authority granted in the MPC. Such ordinances are used to implement the comprehensive plan.



The subdivision and land development ordinance is the most used land use ordinance in Pennsylvania. The term "subdivision" refers to changes in property lines or the creation of new lot lines. The term "land development" refers to improvements to land. Municipalities use subdivision and land development ordinances to try to ensure that growth in the community is effectively managed. Land development regulations are further used to avoid problems such as storm water runoff and inefficient traffic patterns. A municipality that has not enacted zoning, but has enacted land development regulations, may regulate land improvements involving two or more residential or nonresidential buildings.

Another method a municipality may employ to implement its comprehensive plan is to prepare and adopt a *zoning ordinance*. Zoning ranks second only to subdivision and land development as the most used land-use ordinance in the state. A municipality may use zoning to regulate the use of land and the location

and intensity of development. The existing and future needs of the municipality that are documented in the comprehensive plan should be integrated into the zoning ordinance. Generally, the zoning ordinance must provide for all land uses and set required standards. The MPC also provides for alternative zoning techniques such as clustering, lot averaging, flexible setbacks and performance zoning.

Approximately 60 percent of the municipalities and 19 percent of the counties in Pennsylvania have adopted zoning ordinances.

A municipality that has prepared and adopted a comprehensive plan, a zoning ordinance and a subdivision and land development ordinance has completed the three most important steps of land use planning and implementation in Pennsylvania.

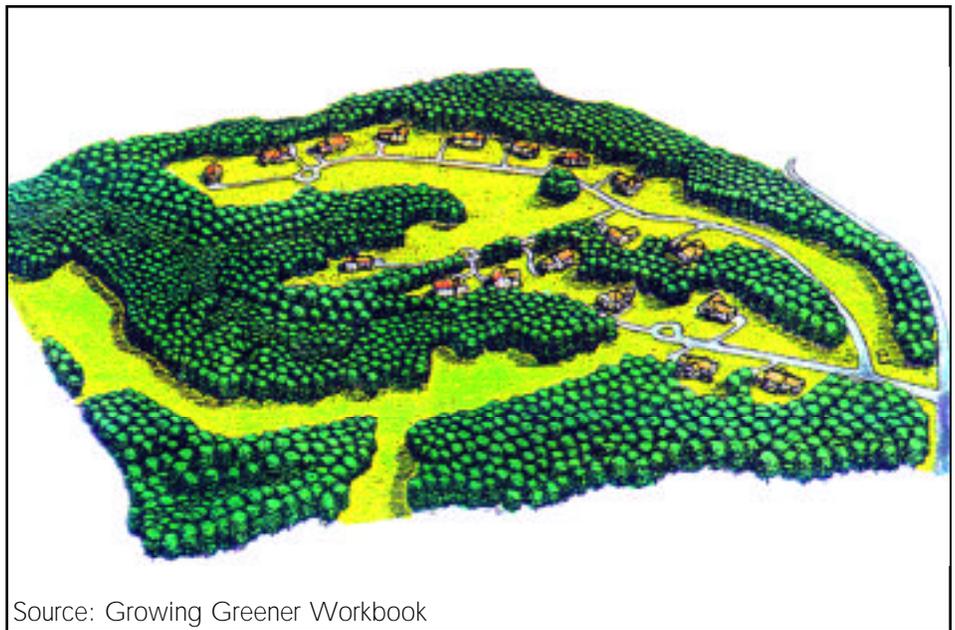
*A municipality that has prepared and adopted a comprehensive plan, a zoning ordinance and a subdivision and land development ordinance has completed the three most important steps of land use planning and implementation in Pennsylvania.*

At this point, the municipality may, as change occurs, enhance the planning process through utilization of additional planning tools that are provided for in the MPC, or other laws. These additional tools include: Planned

*(Ordinances Are Used, Cont'd)*

Residential Development (PRD) provisions; an official map; Transferable Development Rights (TDRs); mobile home and mobile home park regulations; and municipal capital improvement (transportation impact fee) ordinances.

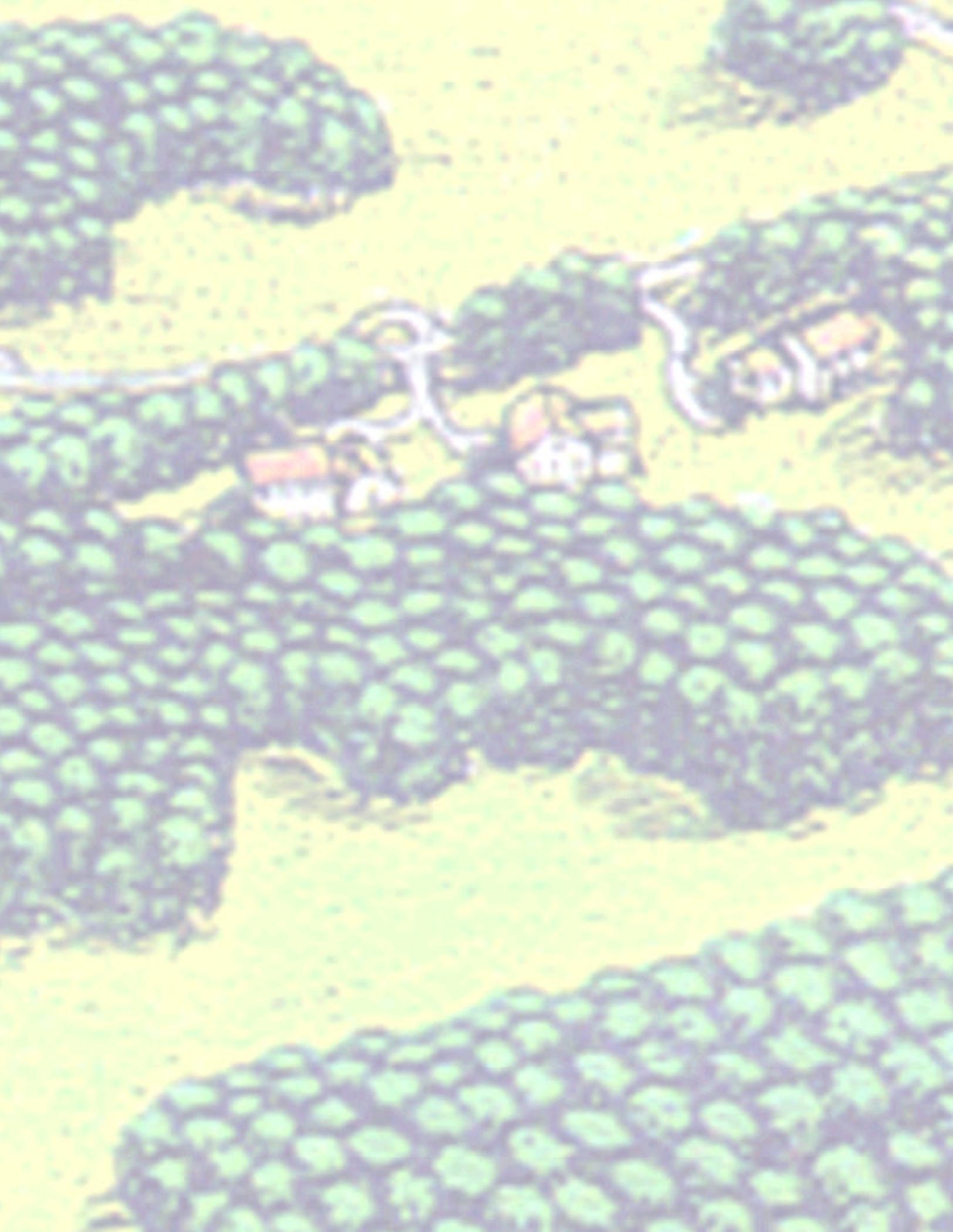
For additional information about the basics of planning, the legal framework for planning in Pennsylvania or sound land use issues, please refer to the Resources section of this report. ■



## II. Creating a Community Vision

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When discussing sound land use, one compares what is existing to what should or could exist. This is the beginning of the process of planning. This important exercise of visioning is the cornerstone of good, effective planning. To that end, there are a number of practices that enable communities to visualize their future form and function. Planning practices, such as community goals and objectives, and comprehensive community planning, have existed for a long time and are deemed to be traditional planning tools. Tools and new practices, such as visioning and build-out maps, help identify alternatives for future residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and conservation uses. Identifying individual visual preferences is a tool recently being integrated into creative community planning. The key to these visioning and early planning practices is an effective, open public dialogue that considers the full diversity of opinions about future land use alternatives. An effective community visioning process will lead to the development of a comprehensive plan that sets forth the best vision of the community. ■



## A. Community Visioning

### DESCRIPTION:

Community visioning is a facilitated process by which residents of a community develop and articulate their preferences for the future of their community. Identifying a community vision is a vital exercise not only in the development of goals and objectives but in the comprehensive land use planning process. A community vision should reflect the aspirations of the residents regarding environmental, social, and economic values, as well as consider prospective or future land uses, residents, and the corresponding wants and needs of each. The visioning process should include some means of providing input for prospective or future residents or occupants of the land in the community. Broad public involvement is essential to provide guidance to municipal officials as they identify and articulate community visions and preferences. Methods of community participation include information distribution, surveys, committees and public meetings. A build-out analysis or build-out map can help visualize a range of future outcomes for the community.

A visual preference study is a tool that can be used to aid the visioning process. Basically, graphics or images, primarily of the subject municipality and some other comparable places, are used to represent landscapes and development forms which either exist in a municipality, or which may be appropriate for a municipality in the future. The images depict a variety of approaches to planning and development issues that a municipality may face.

The graphics or images are evaluated by participants in a public forum. The evaluations are then calculated and a rating for the entire group of participants is assigned to each image. The results are presented back to participants during a vision planning workshop.

In the workshop, participants are divided into workshop groups according to types of community settings (e.g., rural, suburban, urban) to conduct an in-depth analysis and discussion of the graphics. The images that are selected by the workshop participants are included in a final document, along with the evaluations from the initial public input session.

### BENEFITS:

The community visioning process provides opportunity for citizen input into county or municipal planning policy. This provides a sense of ownership in the development of a plan and, thus, a willingness to follow its recommendations. An on-going process of communication among the citizens can lead to reconciling of conflicting views and agreement on preferred courses of action. It also helps to facilitate inter-governmental cooperation and regional partnerships to resolve problems and address issues that cross municipal boundaries.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Broad-based, public input is necessary to identify the representative range of public preferences. Surveys and opinion polls should use good scientific

*(Community Visioning, Cont'd)*

methods to get valid and defensible data, otherwise specific interest groups or highly vocal groups can dominate the process. Professional input and guidance may be necessary to develop and implement a community visioning process.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

**Doylestown Township, Bucks County** –

The Township conducted a survey by mail of residents when preparing their 1992 Park and Recreation Plan. The results of the survey were used to develop the plan's goals and objectives and recommendations.

**Keswick Commercial District, Abington Township, Montgomery County** –

The revitalization of the Keswick Business District is an example of a cooperative planning effort resulting in an improved downtown commercial area. The proactive, visionary process that was employed involved public and private stakeholders identifying concerns and goals for economic development. This became the Vision Plan. The results were streetscape improvements, traffic-calming techniques, pedestrian enhancements, and a cohesive street tree program.

**Pike County** – Approximately 130 residents of Pike County assembled within five task forces: Economic Development, Environment, Government/Infrastructure, Land Use, and Quality of Life, and defined the "vision" for the County in 2020.

**Windber, Paint, Scalp Level Boroughs and Ogle and Paint Townships, Somerset and Cambria Counties** – Known collectively as the "Windber

Area", Windber, Paint, Scalp Level Boroughs and Ogle and Paint Townships are included within the designated State Heritage Parks. In an effort to address conservation of unique cultural and scenic landscapes while maintaining the quality of life, a pilot visioning process was developed to tap into the voices of a selected volunteer regional community to enable a process that achieved a common vision. The formalized visioning program culminated in a Landscape Policy Plan for the communities' use in future land use decisions.

After individual visioning exercises were completed, a community meeting was held to present the different "communities" developed in the visioning exercise. Important places and community values common to all groups were identified. Community goals were identified and prioritized by the regional community as well. The Landscape Policy Plan reflects the community goals and provides a working base for the communities to continue their planning efforts to implement their vision.

**Crawford County** – The Crawford County Planning Commission undertook an extensive visioning program to act as the foundation for the preparation of its county comprehensive plan update. The visioning program involved over 100 persons representing the key components of the county. The results were incorporated into the statement of Goals and Objectives of the county comprehensive plan.

*(Community Visioning, Cont'd)*

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Doylestown Township, Bucks County  
(215) 348-9915

Montgomery County Planning  
Commission  
(610) 278-3730

Pike County Community Planning and  
Human Development  
(570) 296-3400

Somerset County Planning Commission  
(814) 443-1431

Cambria County Planning Commission  
(814) 472-2106

Crawford County Planning Commission  
(814) 336-1151

### **FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG) provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

The World Class Communities Program (WCCP) also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

Contact the Governor's Center for  
Local Government Services at  
1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



## B. Community Goals and Objectives Statement

### DESCRIPTION:

A community goals and objectives statement is a written statement of goals and desired actions for the future of a community. It is a tool used as part of the process of planning to develop a comprehensive plan. Goals provide a basic direction to guide the treatment of an issue while objectives are a statement of commitment to achieve a desired end result in the community. There are many tools and techniques which can be used to develop the goals and objectives statement. Some examples include public meetings or forums, and community opinion surveys.

A goals and objectives statement can include a strategic plan for implementation with priorities and progression of steps to be taken. The MPC requires a "statement of community development objectives" as part of a zoning ordinance.

### BENEFITS:

A goals and objectives statement provides elected officials and planning staff with a framework for making decisions on policies and activities to implement the goals. It is the basic starting point or foundation of a comprehensive plan.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

A goals and objectives statement alone will have little effect on land use patterns without a comprehensive plan and the tools to implement the plan. The goals and objectives

statement is not binding on decision-makers; municipal officials are not required to abide by the goals of the plan. To be valuable, the goals and objectives statement must be based on public input from a true cross-section of the community. Land development regulations that are exclusionary, unduly restrictive or unconstitutional have been struck down by the courts when challenged.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Landscapes – A Comprehensive Plan Policy Element, Chester County** – A public opinion survey was conducted in March 1995. Over 5,000 responses were received, and by a 10 to 1 margin, citizens preferred changing to a development pattern that consumes less land rather than a continuation of suburban sprawl. Thus, goals and objectives were outlined and measures recommended creating livable landscapes as an alternative to unmanaged growth.

Recent examples of goals and objectives statements can be found throughout Pennsylvania. In **Bucks County, Bedminster Township, Middletown Township, Warrington Township and Sellersville Borough** have goals and objectives statements that can be modeled.

**Myersdale Borough, Somerset County** conducted an extensive perception survey of Borough residents to act as a foundation for development of goals and objectives statements and a comprehensive plan.

*(Community Goals and Objectives Statement,  
Cont'd)*

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Bedminster Township, Bucks County  
(215) 795-2190

Middletown Township, Bucks County  
(215) 943-0300

Warrington Township, Bucks County  
(215) 343-9350

Sellersville Borough, Bucks County  
(215) 257-5075

Myersdale Borough, Somerset County  
(814) 634-5110

### **FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

#### **The State Planning Assistance**

**Program (SPAG)** provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

#### **The World Class Communities Program**

**(WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

For more information contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



Plan for Ludwigs Corner  
Source: The Hankin Group

### III. Developing A Plan

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For areas of Pennsylvania experiencing population growth and development, changes to the landscape and community structure are inevitable. The choice facing communities in such areas is whether to try to actively shape those internal and external forces that bring change, or to passively accept any development and try to cope with the results in the best way possible.

The future that faces most communities which have not adopted and implemented land use plans is to witness the systematic conversion of every acre of buildable land into a developed use. Without comprehensive planning and land use regulations, communities may find themselves in a position where they are forced to accept one development after another, typically occurring in an unplanned pattern of houselots, streets and commercial strips.

Communities which have adopted land use planning and regulations to manage growth face additional choices. Those choices range from conventional planning, zoning, and subdivision codes, to newer creative planning tools that can effectively protect the community's most valued resources and its most special places – while still accommodating growth.

For communities desiring a future comprised of diverse residential neighborhoods, well-designed commercial development and substantial acreages of open space reserved each time a tract is subdivided, real, practical alternatives exist. These alternatives to unplanned development and inefficient land use can be realized through proactive planning and a variety of land use practices. ■



## A. Comprehensive Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

A comprehensive plan is a guide to future growth, development, land use, and community character. Comprehensive planning is a key component and basic building block of a sound land use strategy in any community - rural, urban or suburban. It is advisory and not a regulatory ordinance. However, it is a valuable foundation for zoning or official map implementation. A comprehensive plan is also required for enactment of municipal capital improvement ordinances, otherwise known as "transportation impact fees".

The comprehensive planning process facilitates a community's thinking about the land and its future use. This includes residential, commercial, and industrial development as well as agriculture, recreation, and open space. Comprehensive planning can have a positive impact on land use if it is implemented through consistent ordinances and actions. Through the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Pennsylvania law requires counties to "prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan." In addition, numerous municipalities, particularly those in high growth areas, also prepare and adopt their own comprehensive plans to guide growth in their communities.

The planning code requires that the plan contain at least a separate element for future land use, housing, transportation and circulation, and community facilities (MPC Section 301). It should also contain a plan for agricultural and rural use area, and protection of identified natural resources.

One of the most critical parts of the comprehensive plan is the section detailing how its policies will be implemented. The implementation strategy section of the plan can serve as a checklist to determine if the county, municipality and other parties are keeping up with the tasks assigned to them in county and municipal comprehensive plans.

### BENEFITS:

Comprehensive planning can help facilitate the orderly development or preservation of land. A comprehensive plan provides a process for community dialogue as well as a framework for adoption of an official map, zoning, and subdivision and land development ordinances.

Other benefits of comprehensive planning include allocation of land for development to accommodate population growth, early identification of public facilities and infrastructure needs, and protection of sensitive natural and cultural features.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The MPC contains the procedural requirements for adopting the comprehensive plan. At a minimum, the planning agency must hold at least one public meeting scheduled pursuant to public notice prior to forwarding the proposed plan to the governing body. The governing body of the municipality must hold at least one public hearing after having given public notice of the hearing. The primary tools used by most

*(Comprehensive Planning, Cont'd)*

municipalities to implement the comprehensive plan are the zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance. Most municipalities with comprehensive plans use both zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances as implementation mechanisms.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:****Mercer County Comprehensive Plan** —

In the county's 1991 strategic plan, elected and citizen leaders called for a county land use and development plan. The land use component of the plan was developed through much public meeting input using a "hands-on planning" process. Community leaders and citizens created land use plan maps for each of their regions. These maps were pieced together to have a land use plan map for the county. The result was a comprehensive plan that looked to create a vision for the county, not only through the eyes of professionals, but through the eyes of its citizens. The Plan was adopted by the County Commissioners in 1996 and has been endorsed by 43 of the 48 municipalities and 10 county-wide community/economic development agencies.

In addition, a partnership between the Mercer County Regional Planning Commission and the Penn-Northwest Development Corporation has developed into Strategy 1000, an effort to achieve 1,000 acres of economic development in the coming ten years with an emphasis on brownfields reuse.

**Wyoming County's Comprehensive Plan** stresses future development areas and future water and sewer service area boundaries. The plan recommends

defined future development areas reinforced by defined water and sewer service areas to bring about a "Centers" or "Village" concept for future land use development throughout the county. A model zoning ordinance was drafted, which is specifically tailored for the boroughs of the county, as well as one specifically tailored for the townships of the county. The intent of these two model ordinances is to bring about the proposed land use development patterns as recommended in the comprehensive plan.

**Crawford County's Comprehensive Plan** aides development through infill development and utility extension service areas.

**Orbisonia Borough, Huntingdon County,** has a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance that provides for community conservation and infill development to accommodate anticipated increases in heritage tourism due to the East Broad Top Narrow Gauge Railroad.

Examples of recent comprehensive plans in **Bucks County** include **Bedminster Township, Middletown Township, Warrington Township and Sellersville Borough.**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Information on Mercer County's Comprehensive Plan can be found at [www.mcrpc.com](http://www.mcrpc.com) or by contacting the Mercer County Regional Planning Commission at (724) 962-5787.

Information on Wyoming County's Comprehensive Plan can be obtained by contacting the Wyoming County Planning Commission at (570) 836-3200.

Information on Crawford County's Comprehensive Plan can be obtained by

*(Comprehensive Planning, Cont'd)*

contacting the Crawford County Planning Commission at (814) 336-1151.

Information on Orbisonia Borough's Comprehensive Plan can be obtained by contacting Orbisonia Borough at (814) 447-3255.

Information on comprehensive planning in Bucks County communities can be obtained by contacting Bedminster Township at (215) 795-2190, Middletown Township at (215) 943-0300, Warrington Township at (215) 343-9350, and Sellersville Borough at (215) 257-5075.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

**The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG)** provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

**The World Class Communities Program (WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

**Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)** provides up to 100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal comprehensive plans and implementing ordinances. Program guidelines emphasize compliance with Community Development Block Grant Program requirements.

For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



## B. Elements of Comprehensive Plans (Functional Plans)

### DESCRIPTION:

Individual plans for one component of a comprehensive plan are sometimes prepared because the comprehensive plan may not address the issue in adequate detail or appropriate time frame. These elements are commonly called functional plans. These comprehensive plan elements are yet another part of the process of comprehensive planning.

These plans may be prepared at any time to address an issue of particular concern or an area of the municipality with special problems. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) mandates that comprehensive plans contain certain basic elements (see MPC Section 301). Examples of plan components include:

- A plan for land use;
- A plan to meet the housing needs of the community;
- A plan for movement of people and goods;
- A plan for community facilities and utilities;
- A plan for the reliable supply of water;
- A plan for energy conservation; and
- A plan to locate schools.

The comprehensive plan would contain a referenced summary of the functional plans, thereby keeping it concise and manageable. Any topics not covered by a functional plan would be detailed in the comprehensive plan as required by the MPC.

A functional plan is often developed in anticipation of adopting regulations

focused on a particular problem or issue. If the functional plan is adopted by the municipality, it provides support for the regulation.

### BENEFITS:

Functional plans focus full attention on a specific issue or geographic area, providing a detailed, targeted plan and implementation strategy. These plans can allow a community to focus more effort on a specific planning issue. This allows a specific element to be updated or addressed to an appropriate level of detail. Other elements of the comprehensive plan may be up to date and not require attention at the same time.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

A municipality can start by adopting a basic framework of goals and actions, and then proceed to update and supplement the comprehensive plan with more in-depth information.

On its own, a functional plan has little impact. It is not binding on decision-makers; municipal actions are not required to abide by the directions of the plan. However, as part of a comprehensive plan, it becomes effective when implemented through zoning or subdivision and land development ordinances.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**1994 Quakertown Area Linked Open Space Plan**, prepared by the Quakertown Area Planning Committee

*(Elements of Comprehensive Plans , Cont'd)*

for Haycock, Milford, and Richland townships, and Trumbauersville Borough, and the Quakertown Community School District in Bucks County.

**1994 Doylestown Community Joint Comprehensive Pedestrian/Bicycle Transportation Plan**, prepared by the Bike and Hike Committee for Doylestown Borough and Township in Bucks County.

**Allegheny County Sidewalk and Bikeways Plan** - The Community Development Department sought to fully study a network of sidewalks that would foster the concept of community and also increase the safety of transportation within the service area. The goals of the plan are to locate sidewalks and bikeways with the needs of residents in mind. The guiding principles are to give students an opportunity to walk safely to school, pedestrians the ability to travel to points of interest, senior citizens the convenience to walk outdoors, and bicyclists the freedom to ride separate from motorized vehicles.

**The World Class Communities Program (WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

**Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)** provides up to 100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal Comprehensive Plans and implementing ordinances. Program guidelines emphasize compliance with Community Development Block Grant Program requirements.

For more information, please call the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Bucks County Planning Commission  
(215) 345-3400

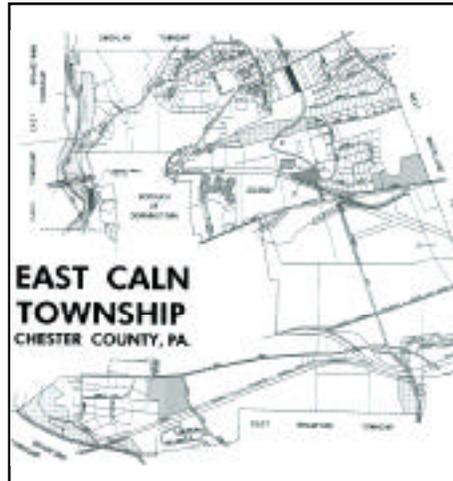
Allegheny County Department of  
Economic Development  
(412) 350-1000

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

**The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG)** provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.



## C. Official Map



Official Map  
Source: Chester County Planning Commission

### DESCRIPTION:

An official map, under the MPC, is a land use ordinance and is adopted like any other land use ordinance. This land use technique allows a municipality to reserve private land for future public use. An official map may focus on one type of improvement, such as streets or parkland, but usually includes a variety of public facilities or lands.

The official map is both a map and a land use ordinance. It is an implementation tool that identifies public lands and allows a municipality to identify and reserve private land for future public use. It legally establishes the location of existing and proposed streets, waterways, parks and other facilities within a municipality.

The official map is not required to cover an entire municipality. Instead, an official map may cover a growth area. It may focus specifically on one type of improvement, such as streets or

parklands, but usually is comprehensive in its inclusion of a variety of public facilities or lands.

The official map also notifies land owners and developers about the location of future improvements. It also may establish a fixed time that land is reserved for public use. However, the reservation of private property identified on the map for future public uses lapses one year after the date that the owner of the land files written notice of an intention to develop. At that time, the municipality must acquire the land to preclude its development.

### BENEFITS:

The official map lets developers know the community's long-range goals for roads, public facilities and open space and implements elements of the municipality's comprehensive plan. Incorporating references to the official map in local zoning, subdivision and land-use ordinances ensures that the official map will be taken into consideration by developers. The official map reserves important lands without immediate purchase. Improvements identified on the map also provide positive support for grant applications by illustrating a historical commitment to specific projects.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The governing body must adopt the official map by municipal ordinance, following public notice and a public hearing. The Municipal Planning Organization – as well as adjacent

*(Official Map, Cont'd)*

municipalities where planned roads continue into their jurisdiction – must also review the map. After adoption, a copy of the official map must be recorded at the County Recorder of Deeds.

The official map may be amended if necessary. Additionally, subdivision plats containing streets, parks, or other land to be dedicated as public are considered amendments to the official map.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

**Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County**, uses an official map to delineate intersection and other roadway improvements, parks, public grounds and open space reservation, flood control basins, floodways, floodplains, farmland preservation, and bikeways.

Other communities that use an official map include:

**Millcreek Township, Erie County**

**West Bradford Township and East Caln Township, Chester County**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

East Caln Township, Chester County  
(610) 269-1989

West Bradford Township, Chester County  
(610) 269-4174

Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County  
(215) 493-3646

Millcreek Township, Erie County  
(814) 833-1111

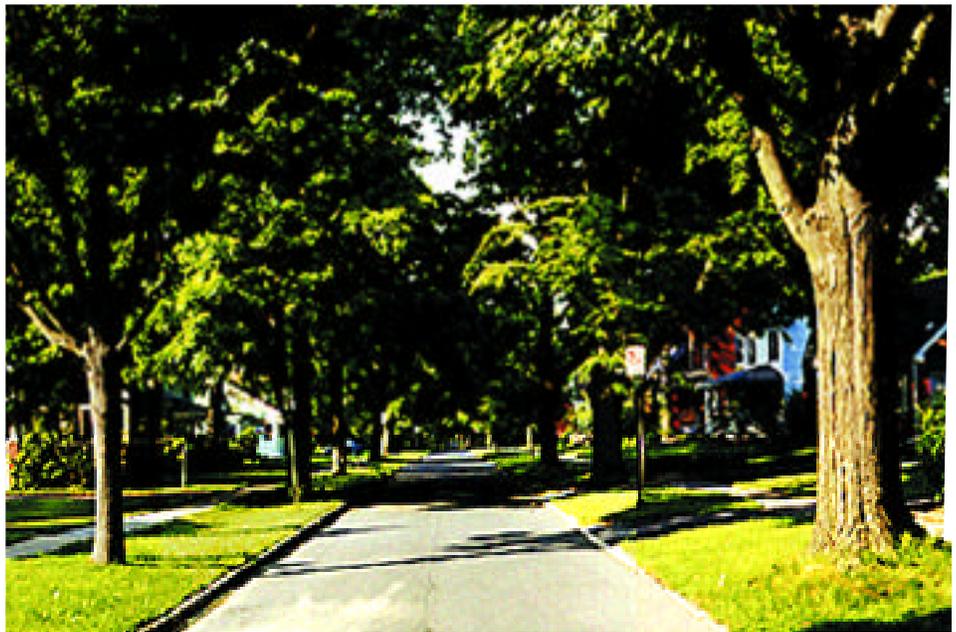
**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

**The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG)** provides 50-50 matching funds for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

**The World Class Communities Program (WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

**The Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)** provides up to 100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal Comprehensive Plans and implementing ordinances. Program guidelines emphasize compliance with CDBG Program requirements.

For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



## IV. Planning for Infrastructure and Growth

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To implement a community's vision, a balance must be struck between preservation and growth, between new and old. The land use practices presented in this section can be easily linked to both local and county comprehensive planning processes discussed in Section III and cover a wide range of planning, zoning and land use regulations and techniques to assist with appropriate planning for infrastructure. As used here, infrastructure means transportation, sewer and water facilities, schools, parks, greenways and open space. Many of these basic practices have shaped the landscape and communities in which we live, work and play. The newer land use planning and development techniques will shape the kind of Pennsylvania we want to leave for our children.

For infrastructure, sound land use practice involves coordinating and integrating planning for infrastructure with land use planning. Moreover, all levels of government should implement those plans through consistent actions. Since infrastructure usually extends beyond municipal boundaries, planning for infrastructure should be both multi-municipal and local. State agency action should be consistent with county and local planning, and local zoning and subdivision and land development regulation should also be consistent with such plans.

Because Pennsylvania is such a diverse state with diverse interests and goals, there can be no universally appropriate land planning technique. However, certain general sound land use principles can be derived from this section of the inventory. Each community must find and apply its own sound land use practice. Whether rural or urban, high growth or low growth, this section provides a menu of planning techniques and practices for every Pennsylvania community to choose from. ■



## 1. Assessment of Water Resources on a Watershed Basis

### DESCRIPTION:

There are 356 watersheds in the Commonwealth. This practice looks to consider all water resource issues (quality and quantity for surface water and groundwater including drinking water supplies, wastewater and sewage, and stormwater issues) holistically on a watershed basis. Water resources can be assessed to create a sound scientific basis for establishing water resources management criteria that can be integrated into land use and development decision-making within a watershed. The information provided can assist planners and officials in determining development patterns that can be sustained by the existing water resources.

### BENEFITS:

A water resources assessment can characterize and quantify the potential impacts that can result from land development. By understanding the magnitude of the potential adverse impacts, planners can adjust the design of development to minimize impacts. In the future, safe and adequate water supplies can be ensured, unsustainable development may be avoided, and locations of particularly sensitive, stressed or vulnerable water resources can be identified and may be protected.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

By definition, water resource assessment studies must be conducted on a watershed basis. Then, a comprehensive water resources plan is developed and implemented for the watershed.

The disparity between the geographic boundaries of a watershed and political boundaries tends to complicate the implementation process. Also, assessments require technical studies, computer modeling, and/or Geographic Information System (GIS) applications. These are data intensive and therefore costly. To maintain the model over time, data must be input and updated regularly.

Defining areas for protection and implementing plans can be difficult and controversial. This approach which requires coordinated planning beyond municipal and sometimes county boundaries, may be a significant departure from existing community planning practices.

It should be noted that water withdrawal approvals are pre-empted by the multi-state organizations, such as the Susquehanna River Basin Commission and the Delaware River Basin Commission.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**The Water-Based Land Use Regulatory Program (WBLUR)** is a tool for water resource protection that has been developed by the Environmental Management Center of the Brandywine Conservancy. This science-based program uses a water budgeting computer model and GIS to evaluate the impacts of various land and water uses or development proposals on the natural hydrologic system of a community or watershed. The Center has developed model ordinances that can be adapted to a community's water resource protection

*(Assessment of Water Resources on a Watershed Basis, Cont'd)*

goals. It must be noted, however, that this science-based approach cannot be used to supplant or replace decision-making powers allocated to other agencies or property owners.

**The Lancaster County Water Resources Plan**

was developed by the Lancaster County Commissioners and Planning Commission to provide a county-wide framework for water resources planning, and to provide information to help local communities develop and coordinate water supply plans and wellhead protection programs with county, regional and local growth management efforts.

**The Chester County Comprehensive Water Resources Plan**

aims to integrate the assessment, planning and management of water withdrawals and discharges to groundwater and streams, stormwater runoff volume and pollutant loads, and riparian corridor enhancement, and encourages involvement and stewardship of the resources at all levels. The plan is being conducted on a watershed basis and covers 19 watersheds, 73 municipalities within Chester County, and portions of surrounding counties. The plan is being developed utilizing extensive public outreach and involvement including watershed associations, municipalities, industry, purveyors, and others. With the county taking the lead, it also fosters a multi-municipal approach that makes the most sense for effective watershed management.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

PA DEP Division of Drinking Water Management (717) 772-4018

PA DCNR Rivers Conservation Program, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (717) 787-2316

The Brandywine Conservancy Environmental Management Center (610) 388-2700 or (610) 388-8351

Lancaster County Planning Commission (717) 299-8333

Chester County Water Resources Authority (610) 344-5400

Chester County Planning Commission (610) 344-6285

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Grant funding is available from PA DEP and PA DCNR to conduct water resource assessment studies and prepare watershed plans.

PA Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) Bureau of Water Quality Protection (717) 787-2666

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR), Conservation Partnerships Division, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Keystone Rivers Conservation Grant Program (717) 787-2316 ■



## 2. Water Supply System Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

Community water supply systems are defined as ranging from large regional systems (typical in urban and suburban areas), to small systems (serving less than 3,300 persons) such as those which serve individual developments and mobile home parks. While some of the larger community water supply systems use surface water, most of the smaller systems use groundwater. Planning for water supply systems, whether public or private, involves many variables for municipal decision makers. This planning can also be done on a municipal, multi-municipal or county level.

The quantity and quality of water are obvious concerns. However, location of sources, pollution impacts, engineering design and costs, installation requirements and costs, treatment criteria, service and other logistical considerations need to be dealt with. Act 247, the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), allows for review and comment of water related plans. Section 209.1(a)(7.1) allows the local planning agency to conduct a water survey taking into consideration pertinent components of the state water plan, river basin water resource plans and local public water supplier plans. Section 301(b) allows a municipality to incorporate a water supply plan to their comprehensive plan and Section 303(a)(4) allows the planning agency to review and comment on the expansion of water lines if they have adopted a comprehensive plan. Section 304(a)(4) gives the same review and comment option to a county planning

agency. State and multi-state entities such as DEP, PA Infrastructure Investment Authority (PennVEST), the Delaware and Susquehanna River Basin Commissions, and the federal Rural Utilities Service may have review, oversight or regulatory jurisdiction over local and regional water planning.

### BENEFITS:

Planning for community water supplies involves both the use and protection of water resources. It also helps to delineate the logistical concerns from an environmental, engineering, financial and land use perspective that revolve around the expansion of water services. By requiring applicants for subdivision and land development approvals to plan for new water supply systems, the most appropriate system for the proposed development is selected. In addition, proper planning usually avoids future problems with the system, including possible water shortages during times of drought.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Evaluations of proposed water supply systems should be done by professional planners, engineers and hydrogeologists. The complexity of state, regional and federal regulations that may apply to the various aspects of water treatment and supply need to be addressed by municipalities and/or public and private water suppliers as they implement sound water planning techniques. It is useful to have a county or local planning entity involved in this process.

*(Water Supply System Planning, Cont'd)*

Some communities have taken a broader approach to water supply planning by looking at the issue from a watershed basis and by addressing all water resources issues in an integrated water resources plan. (See the practice titled "Assessment of Water Resources on a Watershed Basis", page 29.)

In addition, it may be important to work with local utilities where communities rely on private water suppliers. One example provided below involves the development of a voluntary agreement between a county and PUC-regulated water utility. Voluntary agreements may be useful in some cases but have limitations because they are not binding. The Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) also does not clearly authorize the use of such agreements for planning and zoning purposes.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

**Perry County:** The County is developing a County Water Supply Plan. The plan will evaluate the technical, managerial and financial capacity of all 27 community water systems in the county and identify ways to improve and maintain capacity. Specific areas of concern to be addressed in the plan include insufficient sources of water supply, old distribution systems, recent Safe Drinking Water Act requirements and residential growth. The plan is intended to be a guidance document for federal, state, and local officials, as well as community water suppliers. The County Water Supply Plan and the county's on-going Regional Planned Growth Management Plan are to be closely coordinated.

**Pike County:** The County has developed and is implementing a County Water Supply Plan/ Wellhead Protection Program. As part of this effort 59 community water systems were evaluated to determine their current ability to comply with Safe Drinking Water requirements and the systems' needs for at least the next 10 years. In addition, a wellhead protection workbook was developed to provide assistance to other public water suppliers in developing wellhead protection programs of their own. An inventory of potential contaminant sources was completed for the entire county to highlight the need for wellhead protection.

**Forest County:** The County completed a year long Small Water System Regionalization Study. The technical, managerial and financial capacity of four community water systems was evaluated to determine the feasibility and benefits of system consolidation. The study identifies individual system strengths and weaknesses, along with current and future needs. Costs to address these needs were developed for various alternatives including one system merging with one or more other systems, cost sharing among systems to address common needs, and remaining as a "stand-alone" system. DEP's Division of Technical Assistance and Outreach has offered technical and financial assistance to the county to implement the study.

**York County:** A local water utility worked closely with the county to delineate where growth would occur and voluntarily agreed not to expand connections in non-growth areas.

*(Water Supply System Planning, Cont'd)*

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

PA Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) – Bureau of Water Supply Management, (717) 787-5017

supply and distribution systems, waste water collection and treatment systems and other related costs including feasibility studies. ■

For more information on the Perry, Pike and Forest County examples, contact PA DEP at (717) 787-0122.

**FUNDING SOURCES:**

Several grants and technical assistance programs are available to help with community water supply planning. Grants cover small water systems regionalization, formation of water authorities and county water supply planning.

PA Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) – Bureau of Water Supply Management, (717) 787-5017

PA Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST)  
(717) 787-8137

Provides loan and supplemental grant funding for feasibility studies, design and engineering of systems and for construction, improvement, expansion, extension, acquisition, repair or rehabilitation of systems.

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development Program, Rural Utilities Service (RUS)  
(717) 237-2188

Provides loan and grant funds for rural areas with up to 10,000 population, to construct, repair, modify, expand, improve water



### 3. Source Water Protection: Wellhead and Aquifer Protection Zoning

#### DESCRIPTION:

"Source Water Protection," a term which applies to both large regional systems and small systems, places emphasis on assessment and protection of source waters for public water supplies through delineations, assessments and ordinances.

Wellhead Protection and Aquifer Protection Zoning are two types of source water protection available for 96 percent of the public water systems in Pennsylvania which are derived from groundwater.

While source water protection is mandated for all public water supplies by the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, the implementation of source water protection programs is voluntary on the part of local communities.

#### BENEFITS:

This practice protects public water drinking supplies by minimizing potential sources of pollution and reduces cost of water treatment needed to comply with Safe Drinking Water Regulations. It also reduces the need to develop new and more costly sources of water or to import water from other regions. The protections afforded maintain the longevity of the sources of the water supply. In addition wellhead and aquifer protection zoning encourages local citizens to assist in planning to address water quality and supply.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

Authority to control land use is essential for the protection of drinking water sources, and does exist in the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC).

Procedural steps in wellhead protection are: [1] public participation in planning for wellhead protection; [2] delineation of wellhead protection areas; [3] assessment of potential sources of contamination; [4] management of the protection area through regulatory or nonregulatory methods; and [5] contingency planning for emergencies and planning for future needs.

Protective zoning that identifies areas that contribute water directly to wells or aquifers make it possible to control the location and effects of various land uses that can threaten groundwater sources.

The PA Rural Water Association has a program to help rural communities prepare wellhead protection plans.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

There are over 160 existing water supplies in Pennsylvania that have had some or all of the steps implemented in wellhead and aquifer protection. The following are a few examples:

**The Borough of Kutztown, Berks County**, and three surrounding municipalities have delineated wellhead protection zones and enacted ordinances to protect their

*(Source Water Protection, Cont'd)*

groundwater sources of public water supply;

Kutztown Borough, Berks County  
(610) 683-6729

**South Middleton Township, Cumberland County**, Wellhead Protection Zones and Ordinances;

South Middletown Township, Cumberland County  
(717) 258-5324

Municipalities in **Lancaster County** that have implemented wellhead protection areas (WHP areas) include: the **Boroughs of Christiana, Mount Joy, Terre Hill, New Holland, and Strasburg**; and **East Cocalico, East Earl, and Earl Townships**.

Christiana Borough, Lancaster County  
(610) 593-5199

Mount Joy Borough, Lancaster County  
(717) 653-5355

**East Marlborough Township, Chester County** adopted zoning amendments that created a special groundwater protection overlay zone. Development within the protected zone must minimize any threats of groundwater contamination; and

Terre Hill Borough, Lancaster County  
(717) 445-4581

New Holland Borough, Lancaster County  
(717) 354-4567

Strasburg Borough, Lancaster County  
(717) 687-7732

**West Whiteland Township, Chester County** has strict standards for development approvals to minimize adverse impacts on groundwater, including the installation of liners and monitoring devices for underground storage tanks, the use of fill not contaminated with materials defined as hazardous under state law, and the prohibition of grading, construction, or site improvements that would diminish the flow of natural springs.

East Cocalico Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 336-1720

East Earl Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 354-5593

Earl Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 354-0773

East Marlborough Township, Chester County  
(610) 444-0725

West Whiteland Township, Chester County  
(610) 363-9525

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

PA DEP Bureau of Water Supply Management, (717) 787-0122.  
Wellhead Protection Information:  
[www.dep.state.pa.us](http://www.dep.state.pa.us).

Chester County Water Resources Authority  
(610) 344-5400

*(Source Water Protection, Cont'd)*

PA Rural Water Association  
(800) 653-7792  
(814) 353-9302

**FUNDING SOURCES:**

DEP provides grants and technical assistance to local communities for developing and implementing Wellhead Protection Programs. The PA Rural Water Association has a statewide program to help rural communities prepare wellhead protection plans. Contact them at (800) 653-7792 or (814) 353-9302. ■



## 4. Sewage Facilities Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

Pennsylvania's Sewage Facilities Act, commonly known as Act 537, places on local municipalities the responsibility of ensuring that sewage and wastewater is properly treated and disposed. This responsibility extends to existing developed areas as well as new land developments, and includes new and existing individual and community sewage systems. The level of involvement by the municipality in the ownership and management of sewage facilities is a local decision that can affect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizenry by affecting the type of system chosen, the overall system design, the quality of the system, system operation and cost to the users. Municipal management of community sewage systems is most applicable where large public sewer systems are not available. Municipal management is also important where an existing privately owned community system is not being managed properly and/or is malfunctioning.

### BENEFITS:

Establishing policies for the ownership and management of community sewage facilities can provide adequate financing and maintenance ability throughout the life of the facility. Such policies can support planning goals that call for higher density development patterns, such a cluster development and mixed use or open space areas. These policies also ensure that high quality sewage facilities are provided in the municipality, and that the type of sewage facilities provided are the type

desired by the community at large. This tool can also help municipalities carry out their primary responsibility of providing for the health, safety, and welfare of the citizenry.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Act 537 requires each municipality to provide an updated sewage facilities plan. Plan revisions to properly plan for the sewage facilities needs of a development must be approved by both the municipality and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP). Any resident or property owner within the municipality can request that the plan be revised to permit a proposed sewage system when it can be shown that the plan is inadequate to meet the resident's or property owner's sewage disposal needs.

Provisions can be added to municipal subdivision and land development ordinance to require submission of a community sewer facilities agreement covering operation and maintenance. Separate municipal ordinances can be used to govern sewage-related issues such as the use of holding tanks, the designation of sewer service areas, and the establishment of sewer connection policies and fees.

Municipal officials may require engineering support to properly select adequate and appropriate systems. Many municipalities prefer not to become "owners" of the sewage systems or be responsible for the management of the community system.

*(Sewage Facilities Planning, Cont'd)*

Act 537 plans should be consistent with and based upon the Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances.

Suburban and rural municipalities that have used the practice have determined that active involvement in the ownership and management of community sewage systems is essential for managing growth and encouraging higher intensity land uses in appropriate places.

Sewage planning can be done on a multi-municipal or county basis. One example cited below involves the use of a county-wide on-lot sewage ordinance to implement a program of multiple municipalities. Further examples can be found in the practice titled "Cooperative Approaches to Sewer and Water Management."

In some parts of the Commonwealth, County Health Departments and other local agencies have been delegated authority by PA DEP to administer the 537 program.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

Sewage facilities planning can take a variety of forms. Several examples are identified below.

**East Marlborough Township in Chester County** has been facing growth pressures, and also has had to deal with malfunctioning on-lot disposal systems in some older developed areas. To provide needed sewage facilities to areas determined in their Act 537 Plan, the Township now owns and operates two wastewater systems and has a third system under construction. The newest system is being funded by a combination of connection fees,

construction "seed" monies, grants and annual fees. In its most recent Act 537 Plan Update, the Township evaluated institutional alternatives for the newest system. The alternative selected was administration of the system by the Township Manager.

The Township also evaluates facility management policies and a wastewater management program to accommodate and manage new facilities that may be created as the result of new land developments. The management policy for community sewage systems requires: review and approval of system design and review of construction; a 100 percent construction escrow fund; routine maintenance; a continuous offer for dedication to the Township; routine inspections by the Township; and adherence to the management program.

The Wastewater Management Program contained in the Act 537 Plan states: "The intent of the Program is to provide for improved design, installation, operation, and maintenance of wastewater systems through municipal administration and ordinances." To make this program effective, the Township has taken on the following responsibilities: review of plans and systems by the Township Engineer; enacting and implementing ordinances to ensure the long term viability of systems; and developing and implementing an inspection program.

**West Hanover Township, Dauphin County:** West Hanover began its sewage management program in November 1993 as a result of a need to update its official sewage plan. The township is served 100

*(Sewage Facilities Planning, Cont'd)*

percent by on-lot sewage systems. The township's program includes registration of septic pumpers and an inspection of on-lot sewage disposal systems at the time of pumping using a township form. The program is reportedly proceeding satisfactorily and without serious citizen complaints.

**Carroll Township, York County:**

Carroll Township hired an engineering firm to handle its sewage enforcement duties. Several areas of the Township were identified with patterns of malfunctioning on-lot sewage systems, so the Township revised its official sewage plan to provide for a management system within these areas. Carroll Township adopted an ordinance in 1984 to address the problem and, as a further preventive measure, mandated that zoning approval and building permits may not be issued until there is certification that a sewage system which meets all state standards can be installed on the property. The ordinance also grants authority for the Township to own and operate community and alternate systems.

**The Lebanon County Planning Department** under voluntary agreement enforces Act 537 for 23 of the 26 municipalities in Lebanon County. This maximizes general consistency of enforcement county wide.

A similar structure exists in **Blair County**, where its Sanitary Administrative Committee administers Act 537 for 21 of the 24 municipalities of the County.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

East Marlborough Township, Chester County  
(610) 444-0725

West Hanover Township, Dauphin County - Contact Codes and Zoning Administrator at (717) 652-4841.

Carroll Township, York County –  
Contact Sewage Enforcement Officer at  
(717) 258-5114.

Lebanon County Planning Department  
Contact: Sewage Administration  
(717) 228-4444

Blair County Sanitary Administrative  
Committee  
(814) 696-1229

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

PA DEP funds comprehensive sewage planning with 50 percent matching grants. It will also pay up to 85 percent for costs incurred in administering a sewage program where certain quality criteria are met. This can cover the staffing and administration costs. PA DEP Bureau of Water Quality Protection, Planning Assistance and Grants Program:  
(717) 787-8184 ■



## 5. Alternative Treatment and Disposal Options for Community Sewage Systems

### DESCRIPTION:

Alternative sewage treatment and disposal options are important in areas where large public facilities are not available and where higher density, open space and cluster designs or new development is desired. The policies that specify the type of sewage systems preferred by the municipality and the types that must be evaluated for proposed new land development, can also specify the order in which various treatment and disposal options are evaluated. The availability and cost of land is one of the most important factors in selecting certain treatment and disposal options.

Wastewater treatment options include: septic tanks, aerobic units, package treatment units, sequencing batch reactor, treatment lagoons and ponds, sand filters land application of biosolids and other alternative or experimental systems. Effluent disposal options include: stream discharge, surface spray irrigation, drip irrigation, subsurface disposal and land application rapid infiltration.

### BENEFITS:

This practice supports goals for higher density development patterns such as cluster development and mixed-use areas. Use of this practice ensures that adequate sewage facilities are provided in the municipality, and that the type of sewage facilities provided are the types desired by the community at large. This encourages utilization of sewage treatment and disposal technologies that typically could

potentially minimize environmental impacts, low life-cycle costs and low user costs.

Land application of biosolids or wastewater effluent allows nutrients to be used as a value producing resource in agricultural applications.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

To be most effective, these options should be discussed and planned for within the context of the Comprehensive Plan and local 537 sewage facilities plan. Permits are required from PA DEP for use of these options.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Chester County:** Several municipalities are requiring that a hierarchy of community sewage system alternatives be evaluated to help ensure that the most desirable alternatives are selected for new land developments. The following examples are from Birmingham, East Marlborough and London Grove Townships. These municipalities have instituted policies in their Comprehensive Plans and Act 537 plans to implement the selection of community sewage systems. These concepts can also be incorporated into a municipal subdivision and land development ordinance as was done in Pennsbury Township. Other Chester County municipalities, which have implemented this technique in one form or another include East Pikeland, North Coventry, South Coventry, and Warwick Townships.

*(Alternative Treatment and Disposal Options, Cont'd)*

**Birmingham Township, Chester County** — The basis of the Township's policies and objectives is the municipal Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1979. The residents and supervisors have strongly supported the preservation of natural resources and have adopted this specific policy: "To prohibit direct discharge of sewage and effluent and foreign material to streams." Their Comprehensive Plan also contains a policy to maintain the quality and quantity of ground water for water supply and includes the following: "Establish, as a basic Township planning criterion, the intent to obtain maximum recharge of the ground water supply." The Comprehensive Plan states that new land development proposals "... should identify those waste disposal alternatives compatible with the Township's Land Use policies and controls, and identify areas where such methods appear most feasible, e.g., possible sites for land application of effluent based on soils, vegetation and other natural considerations...". These and other related policies contained in the municipal Comprehensive Plan were incorporated by reference into the 1987 Official Sewage Facilities Plan of the Township, thereby helping to achieve the environmental goals of the community.

**East Marlborough Township, Chester County** — The Township prepared and adopted a sewage facilities plan (Act 537 Plan) in 1993. This plan contains a section on wastewater system selection strategy for both individual and community sewage systems for

proposed new land developments. A list of systems or technologies, is evaluated by a project sponsor or applicant.

The methodology used to evaluate the technologies relies on a hierarchy of system preference. This hierarchy is intended to direct applicants proposing wastewater systems in the Township to utilize the technology most desired by the municipality.

The purpose of this hierarchy is to place the responsibility of demonstrating the feasibility of a particular technology upon the applicant. This evaluation process is conducted under the close scrutiny of the Township and must fully comply with the DEP wastewater regulations.

**London Grove Township, Chester County** — The Municipal Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan begins by stating the following goals and objectives:

1. Allow Township zoning ordinance to be implemented;
2. Provide for orderly growth and protection of the natural resources in the Township;
3. Maintain and improve the quality of local streams and protect the quality and supply of groundwater within the Township;
4. Encourage the preservation and protection of open space, wooded areas and stream valleys within the Township; and

*(Alternative Treatment and Disposal Options, Cont'd)*

5. Encourage groundwater recharge throughout the Township as follows:
  - Utilize spray irrigation disposal for wastewater flows greater than 10,000 gallons per day;
  - For flows less than 10,000 gallons per day the preferred method is still spray irrigation, but subsurface disposal systems providing groundwater protection are acceptable.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

DEP Bureau of Water Quality Protection  
(717) 787-8184

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

East Marlborough Township, Chester County  
(610) 444-0725

London Grove Township, Chester County  
(610) 869-2896

**Broad Top Township and Coaldale Borough, Bedford County:**

This multi-municipal, local agency has a unique and all-inclusive sewage management program. It includes a combination of central and on-lot systems.

Broad Top Township  
(814) 928-5253

Carlisle Region Water Pollution Control Facility  
(717) 240-6993

**Carlisle Borough, Cumberland Borough:**

The Carlisle Region Water Pollution Control Facility has a successful biosolids recycling program. After treatment, biosolids are spread in a controlled way on 25 farms. The program is so popular that additional farms are on a waiting list to join the program.

Delaware Valley College  
(215) 489-2334

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

PennVEST  
(717) 787-8137 ■

**Delaware Valley College Project, Bucks County:**

Established as a research Center to develop and evaluate new on-lot sewage disposal options. This includes the following technologies: constructed wetlands, at-grade absorption beds, drip irrigation, various sand filters and filter media technology.



## 6. Locating Individual Sewage Systems in Open Space

### DESCRIPTION:

Locating individual sewage systems in a development's open space provides opportunities for creative residential subdivision designs that conserve critical environmental resources. Such an option creates an alternative to constructing a community sewage system. This practice applies to primarily new residential land development projects not located near a public sewer system.

### BENEFITS:

This practice supports cluster development designs and other alternative residential subdivision designs by creating flexibility in variable lot sizes. Such designs strive to conserve critical environmental resources and open space within a development. Lots within these developments are significantly smaller than the customary one or two acre building lots, and therefore makes the use of traditional septic systems or on-lot systems more difficult. This practice also allows for subdivision designs where some of the lots are served by on-lot systems and some lots are served by off-lot systems.

Use of this practice potentially provides a better match between land use needs and specific site characteristics. It also reserves the soils most suitable for subsurface disposal of treated sewage effluent. Typical individual sewage systems return most of the water used in a home back to the local groundwater system.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Approving the use of individual sewage systems in open space areas is a decision that is made at the local municipal level. Such a decision to utilize this concept can be implemented through a combination of provisions contained in municipal Act 537 plans, a subdivision and land development ordinance, building codes and Home Owner Association agreements. Additional municipal involvement in the form of a sewage system management program is a key element in providing for the health, safety and welfare of residents and is necessary to ensure the successful implementation of this practice.

Municipalities that are already engaged in an active sewage facilities management program will be the most prepared to handle the administrative responsibilities of individual off-lot systems. Other municipalities that see the potential benefits of the individual off-lot sewage system concept should first establish a facilities management program.

Factors such as the size of the tract, soil conditions, and environmental resources present need to be considered to determine if, and how many, individual off-lot sewage systems should be used. While smaller subdivisions may lend themselves to the use of individual systems, there is a point where it is likely to be more cost effective to build a community system or connect to a public sewage system.

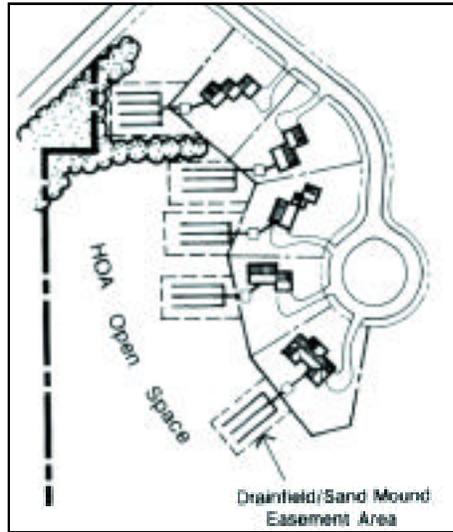
*(Locating Individual Sewage Systems In Open Space, Cont'd)*

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

**Chester County:** The concept of using designated open spaces for individual sewage systems is relatively new.

Currently, **Franklin, West Vincent and New Garden Townships** have the most experience working with developers attempting to create conservation subdivisions with individual sewage systems in open space areas. East Bradford and West Brandywine Townships also have reviewed projects proposing to use designated open spaces for individual sewage systems.

**Sample Ordinance Standards** — In a recent update of its Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan, **Wallace Township** included a policy which supports the use of individual off-site sewage systems in certain circumstances. The Township has implemented this policy through amendments to its subdivision and land development ordinance. While the Township still requires that the treatment tank and primary absorption area be located within the boundaries of the building lot, they allow up to ten percent of the total building lots in a development to have secondary or replacement absorption areas in designated open spaces. The replacement areas are required to be no more than 100 feet from the boundary of the lot the system serves. In order to use this option, the applicant must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Township that a more environmentally sensitive site design can be achieved by locating the on-lot system in the open space.



**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Franklin Township, Chester County  
(610) 255-5212

West Vincent Township, Chester County  
(610) 827-7932

New Garden Township, Chester County  
(610) 268-2915

Wallace Township, Chester County  
(610) 942-2880

PA DEP Bureau of Water Quality  
Protection  
(717) 787-8184

Environmental Management Center of  
the Brandywine Conservancy  
(610) 388-2700 ■

## 7. Cooperative Approaches to Sewer and Water Management

### DESCRIPTION:

This practice describes multi-municipal, county-wide and other cooperative efforts for the management of sewer (on-lot and/or treatment plants) and water supply issues. Such cooperative efforts include a more formal approach involving establishment of sewer and/or water authorities to address sewer and water issues across municipal boundaries.

When systems fail and an authority is asked to provide additional connections and more capacity to address the failure, extension of systems can, in some instances, be a precursor to additional development. Therefore the service area of the authority or the multi-municipal agreement should be guided by and be linked to a proactive comprehensive planning effort that integrates 537 and water supply planning elements into one planning framework.

### BENEFITS:

Putting a joint authority in place or establishing other means to cooperate for multi-municipal management of water and/or sewer systems can provide for better and more efficient management of resources. This is especially valuable since water resources are not tied geographically to municipal boundaries. An authority can provide for an around-the-clock, professionally operated and managed system that can minimize the potential for health, safety and environmental problems that otherwise may result from a mismanaged system. An authority has the potential to take a broader view of the entire service area when sewer and water infrastructure

development decisions are being discussed. They can also designate a certain service area within which they will operate in an attempt to guide new growth to those areas. Cooperative efforts also help local jurisdictions leverage grant and loan funding as is with the case in the USDA example cited below.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

In the establishment of a joint authority, a group of municipalities, a county or multiple counties may choose to create an authority to take on the task of operating, maintaining and managing all or some of the water and/or sewer systems within an area. Contractual arrangements can be established where the locality retains ownership of the system(s) and the authority serves an operations and management role. A locality can also sell or relinquish its ownership of the resource and/or infrastructure to the authority.

Another approach involves the creation of voluntary agreements or memoranda of agreements between local government jurisdictions and others to provide sewer and water service, or to expand or limit connections or service to particular areas. In some instances, specific terms regarding limits on system expansion and/or new connections can also be placed in funding agreements for loans or grants that may be forthcoming for the construction of system infrastructure.

A local Comprehensive Plan can easily support these types of multi-municipal and other cooperation management approaches and implementation can

*(Cooperative Approaches to Sewer and Water Management, Cont'd)*

take place through adoption of local ordinances.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

**Lehigh County:** The county created a multi-municipal, joint sewer and water authority that services about one dozen or so communities in the western part of the county. On its own, the authority provides a water treatment and distribution system as well as a sewer collection system. However, it also has a contract with the City of Allentown for treatment of sewage.

**Centre County:** The University Area Joint Authority in Centre County runs a sewage collection and treatment operation on a multi-municipal level.

**Allegheny County: The Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN)** provides interceptor service and treatment plant for a system of approximately 83 municipalities. Each municipality provides the collection services and the links to the interceptor.

**Chambersburg Wastewater Treatment Plant** — Regional plant that serves the boroughs of Chambersburg, Greene, Guilford and Hamilton Township. Each municipality has its own collection system, and regulates and maintains its system. However, the municipalities utilize a single treatment facility and share the operation costs of the plant.

**Chambersburg Borough and Bear Valley Joint Water Authority** — The two water systems are interconnected. Chambersburg sells water to the Bear Valley Authority.

**Indiana County:** Joint municipal authority owns, operates and manages several independent water and sewer systems.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development Program.** Several examples exist where municipal authorities enter into memoranda of agreement with USDA to specify appropriate sewer and water project boundaries as a condition of grant and loan funding.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission  
(610) 398-2503

University Area Joint Authority  
(814) 238-5361

Allegheny County Sanitary Authority  
(412) 766-4810

Chambersburg Borough, Franklin County  
(717) 264-5151

Indiana County Municipal Services Authority  
(724) 349-6640

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

PA Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) – Bureau of Water Quality Protection, (717) 787-8184 and Bureau of Water Supply Management, (717) 787-0122. Funding and technical support is available to support intergovernmental cooperation for sewer and water management.

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development Program,  
(717) 237 2299 ■

## 8. Floodplain Management

### DESCRIPTION:

The Pennsylvania Flood Plain Management Act (Act 166) requires every municipality identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that is subject to flooding to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP enables property owners to buy subsidized flood insurance in participating municipalities. In return for making flood insurance available for their residences, the participating municipalities are required to enact flood management regulations which comply with the minimum requirements of the NFIP and with regulations adopted by Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development.

Municipalities are required by law to place special controls over the 100-Year floodplain as defined and delineated by the NFIP and FEMA.

### BENEFITS:

Most municipalities regulate floodplains in some way. The extent of the regulations vary from municipality to municipality. However, not all regulations are aimed at preservation or protection of natural resources. Generally, they are designed to protect people and developed property.

If floodplains are not managed, increased flood heights and velocities will cause greater flood damage to unprotected buildings, land uses and natural resources. In addition to preventing loss of life and property damage, floodplain management reduces public funding for disaster response, assistance and relief efforts.

Floodplains can often provide opportunities for parkland and open space in a community.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Floodplain management regulations and ordinances are focused primarily on preventing the loss of property and life. Floodplain regulations are found in zoning ordinances, subdivision and land development ordinances, and in building codes. DCED provides model ordinances and suggested provisions that can be enacted as amendments to zoning ordinances, a subdivision and land development ordinance, building codes or as a separate ordinance. Regulations located in the zoning ordinance may be included as an overlay district that places special controls over the 100-Year floodplain. This allows municipalities to regulate development in the 100-Year floodplain, the 500-Year floodplain, or within floodplain soils.

Act 166 permits a municipality to adopt floodplain management regulations without adopting a zoning ordinance. See also the practice "Open Space Zoning Conservation Design" in Chapter V, as an alternative to encroaching upon the 100-year floodplain.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Lebanon County** - The Lebanon County Planning Department acts as a liaison between municipalities and the state and federal floodplain administrators.

*(Floodplain Management, Cont'd)*

In this capacity, the planning department develops model regulations, assists municipalities in their adoption, and enforces those regulations as the community zoning officer for 18 of the 26 municipalities in Lebanon County.

**Lycoming Economic and Community Development Services** also has a similar arrangement with many of the municipalities within County borders.

**North Londonderry Township, Lebanon County**, is a good example of a municipality that is partnering with the County Planning Department to effectively manage floodplain development.

**Upper Moreland Township, Montgomery County**, is a good example of a municipality that has floodplain management provisions in its zoning ordinance which exceed FEMA, NFIP, and state requirements.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837).

For Center information on floodplain management issues ranging from permits to regulating development in the floodplain to variances. Consult Planning Series # 11, Technical Information on Floodplain Management, Administrative Guidelines.

Lebanon County Planning Department  
Phone: (717) 228-4444

Lycoming County Economic and Community Development Services  
(570) 320-2130

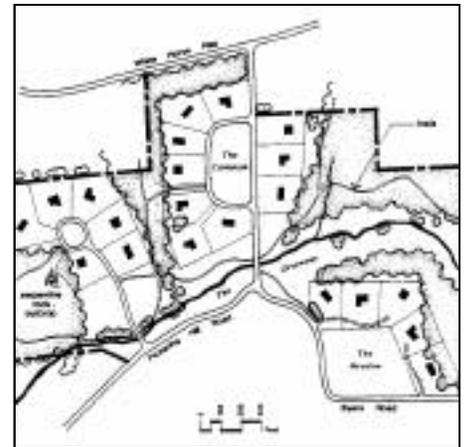
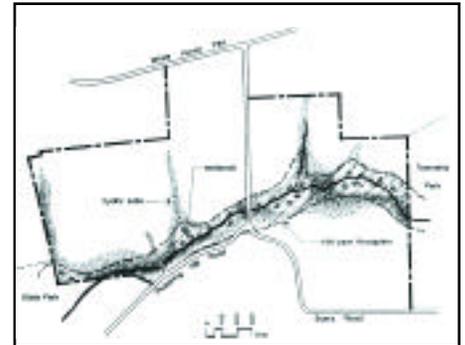
Upper Moreland Township,  
Montgomery County  
(215) 659-3100

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
(215) 931-5542

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Municipalities are reimbursed for 50 percent of their administrative costs, upon request.

DCED provides funding through the Floodplain Management Act Reimbursement Program. Contact the Center at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837) for Act 166 Administrative Cost Reimbursement forms. ■



## 9. Stormwater Management Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

The Pennsylvania Stormwater Management Act (Act 167) provides for planning, development of ordinances, technical guidance and funding to assist local governments in stormwater control and management. The Act is designed to limit impacts of stormwater to streams, groundwater, floodplains and storm sewers by controlling increased volumes and rates of stormwater runoff and changes in the water quality that can result from development. The Act requires that every county develop and adopt stormwater management plans for the watersheds within their boundaries and also to update those plans every five years.

The Act utilizes zoning and forecasting of future development to infer how development impacts flow and calls for preparation of plans to manage flow accordingly. The Act directs counties to do planning for stormwater management which is to be implemented by local ordinances.

The stormwater management plan is intended to assess existing problems and the cumulative impact of proposed development within a watershed. Depending on the type of problems and the level of development within the watershed, the plans may specify best management practices like structural controls (e.g., dams or retention basins) or changes in the type and form of future development to reduce or delay runoff volumes.

### BENEFITS:

Use of this practice to plan for and develop a stormwater management plan can limit impacts of stormwater to streams, ground water, floodplains and storm sewers by controlling increased volumes and rates of stormwater runoff and changes in the water quality that can result from development.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Act 167 requires general consistency between stormwater management plans and other municipal, county and regional, and state environmental land use plans. This allows planning to occur on a more comprehensive regional level. To assist in the development of effective stormwater watershed plans, the DEP provides technical assistance and grants to support plan development and implementation.

Stormwater management plans are implemented by municipalities through enactment or amendment of local ordinances. Since stormwater flow does not recognize geographic boundaries, multi-municipal cooperation is ideal. Municipalities, when addressing drainage problems, should consider the impact of their actions on upstream and downstream communities. When adjoining municipalities have different stormwater control criteria conflicting requirements must be dealt with by developers.

The requirement of general consistency under Act 167 is accomplished in part by requiring the formation of a watershed plan advisory committee.

*(Stormwater Management Planning Cont'd)*

Generating interest and commitment from individuals within each municipality in a watershed is a critical part of the process.

Centre County Planning Commission  
(814) 355-6791

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission  
(610) 264-4544

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

**Centre County** – Centre County's stormwater planning efforts on Spring Creek is recognized by DEP as one of the best examples of stormwater planning in the state. The plan includes many new aspects of stormwater planning, including use of BMPs specifically designed for a karst (limestone) region. The plan not only includes stormwater quantity issues but water quality aspects as well. The plan has had an excellent stakeholder participation component.

Lebanon County Planning Department  
(717) 228-4444.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Grants are available that cover up to 75 percent of the cost of preparing storm water management plans, enacting ordinances, and administering and enforcing stormwater requirements.

PA DEP – Stormwater Management Program:  
(717) 772-5661 ■

**Lehigh County** – Lehigh County Planning Commission is also credited with successful stormwater management planning.

**Lebanon County Stormwater Management Ordinance and**

**Enforcement** – By voluntary agreement, the Lebanon County Planning Department enforces the Lebanon County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance for 18 of the 26 municipalities in Lebanon County. Chapter 5 of that ordinance addresses stormwater management and design criteria.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

PA DEP – Stormwater Management Program  
(717) 772-5661

Center for Watershed Protection  
(610) 461-8323  
[www.pipeline.com/~mrrunoff/](http://www.pipeline.com/~mrrunoff/).

## 10. Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs)

### DESCRIPTION:

Best Management Practices (BMPs) for stormwater, are a combination of techniques designed to minimize the impact of development on surface water quantity and quality. Techniques related to site design will best manage the anticipated stormwater flow and quality based on an evaluation of site conditions and planning requirements. Traditional BMPs include dry detention ponds, wet ponds, wetlands, water quality inlets, oil and grit separators, among others. Emerging BMPs that are gaining recognition for their effectiveness include retention basins, infiltration basins, sand filters, biofilters, grassed swales and riparian buffers, pervious pavements and walkways, curb-less streets, and pollution prevention practices, among others. In addition, landscape practices can be designed into an initial site plan, with land owners accepting responsibility for maintenance.

### BENEFITS:

Implementation of stormwater management BMPs through municipal subdivision and land development ordinances provides acceptable practices for compliance with municipal regulation of stormwater management. These practices minimize the increase of surface runoff volumes, rates and frequencies resulting from development. They minimize the increase in downstream flooding, and thereby improve public safety, reduce property damage, and reduce flood impacts such as road closures.

Such practices also increase the recharge to groundwater, and decreases erosion and stream downcutting in upper reaches, and sedimentation in lower reaches. And, the practice reduce infrastructure requirements, space requirements, and maintenance costs for stormwater handling facilities.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Stormwater management is implemented through the municipal subdivision and land development ordinance or in a separate stand-alone stormwater management ordinance. Within the ordinance, a hierarchy of BMPs can be established to encourage the use of those practices that best suit the condition and needs of the municipality.

The individual, organization or agency to be responsible for operation and maintenance (O&M) of the BMPs for the life of the project must be identified at the onset of the project. It must also be ensured that the responsible party for O&M has the financial ability to fulfill that responsibility. Increased use of BMPs requires increased application review, as well as increased inspections and enforcement during and after construction.

Any stormwater not retained for infiltration must be discharged off-site and may adversely impact adjacent properties.

Implementation generally tends to be through engineering solutions that are

*(Stormwater BMPs, Cont'd)*

aimed at detention rather than recharge of aquifers and maintenance of the hydrologic cycle.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**London Grove Township in Chester County** adopted a stormwater management plan and ordinance standards that promote groundwater recharge, improve water quality, flood control, and includes a BMP hierarchy. The Township also provides a how-to manual for developers and engineers that shows examples of appropriate BMPs.

**Buckingham Township in Bucks County** has a good set of ordinances that spell out a hierarchy for BMP use.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION/ FUNDING SOURCE(S)

London Grove Township, Chester County  
(610) 869-2896

Buckingham Township, Bucks County  
(215) 794-8834

PA DEP Stormwater Management  
Program  
(717) 772-5661

PA Association of Conservation Districts,  
"Pennsylvania Handbook of Best  
Management Practices for Developing  
Areas" manual  
(717) 545-8878

US Department of Agriculture – Natural  
Resources Conservation Service  
(717) 237-2200

Center for Watershed Protection  
(610) 461-8323 or  
[www.pipeline.com/~mrunoff/](http://www.pipeline.com/~mrunoff/). ■

## 11. Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) and Permitting Control Measures

### DESCRIPTION:

Pennsylvania's Clean Streams Law authorized the Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program. Under this program, the landowner, municipality or developer responsible for earthmoving activities is responsible for developing, implementing and maintaining sediment control measures for all projects involving construction that disturbs the surface of land. These projects include excavation, land development, subdivision development or storing, moving or depositing soil, rock or earth. This program is designed to reduce soil loss and the resulting water quality impacts associated with earthmoving and development activities.

### BENEFITS:

Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) control measures minimize the surface runoff volumes, rates and frequencies resulting from development, minimize downstream flooding and, therefore, improve public safety, reduce property damage and reduce flood impacts. E&S control measures decrease erosion and stream downcutting in upper reaches, and sedimentation in lower reaches.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Prior to initiating earthmoving activities, the responsible party, be it landowner, municipality or developer, must submit an erosion and sedimentation control plan to DEP or the local County Conservation District. Municipal officials generally will not issue a building permit before an applicant has obtained an E&S permit or an

exemption from an E&S permit, based on its erosion and sedimentation control plan. Permits are issued by DEP if required, or are reviewed by the County Conservation District.

The plan should include standards for grading, both excavation and fill, grading for drainage, management of vegetative cover, and management of soil resources. The duration of land disturbance should be kept to an absolute minimum and all land disturbance activity should be conducted in a way as to minimize erosion and resulting sedimentation.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plans are used throughout the Commonwealth. Permits are required for all large-scale developments.

### CONTACT INFORMATION/ FUNDING SOURCE(S):

PA Association of Conservation Districts  
(717) 545-8878

Contact your County Conservation District for information on specific measures used in your county. A list of County Conservation Districts and contact information for each is listed in the Appendix. ■



## 1. Development Districts

### DESCRIPTION:

Future land use designations can be one method of designating development districts. A development district has two coordinated purposes: first is to encourage compact development, which enables the efficient, cost-effective provision of infrastructure and public services. Second, is to preserve agricultural land and protect natural resources by directing growth away from these sensitive areas.

### BENEFITS:

This approach provides a clear framework for future growth in the municipality. It bases future development on logical restraints, natural resource limitations, and the ability to serve new development with public services.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

This approach categorizes land in one of four ways: urban area, development area, rural area or resource protection area. It is important that the districts be delineated after a thorough review of a community's overall goals for future growth and development. Use of this tool should be part of, or based on, a comprehensive plan.

Given current Pennsylvania enabling legislation, municipalities are restricted in their ability to limit development outside the development area. While the development district concept assists municipalities in determining where growth should be directed, regulations such as zoning and subdivision and

land development ordinances and municipal actions implement and directly influence development patterns.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Bucks County** municipalities utilizing the development district concept in their comprehensive plan include: **Bedminster, Hilltown, and Warrington Townships**, as well as those municipalities adopting the **Quakertown Area Comprehensive Plan** and the **Newtown Area Comprehensive Plan**.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Bucks County Planning Commission  
(215) 345-3400

Bedminster Township, Bucks County  
(215) 795-2190

Hilltown Township, Bucks County  
(215) 453-6000

Warrington Township, Bucks County  
(215) 343-9350

Quakertown Borough, Bucks County  
(215) 536-5001

Newtown Borough, Bucks County  
(215) 968-2109

Newtown Township, Bucks County  
(215) 968-2800 ■



## 2. Growth Areas

### DESCRIPTION:

A growth area is a tool that can be used to build on and implement a comprehensive plan. A growth area is a geographic delineation, or boundary line, within which development at higher densities is encouraged and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to serve such development is provided for or planned. Outside of this area, land is planned to remain in predominantly rural (rural and agricultural and natural features areas) uses. Users of this tool must commit to providing for the infrastructure, including water, sewer roads, schools and parks, that will be needed to support development within the area.

Growth areas are not a tool to stop development; rather, they are used to geographically indicate where more development is appropriate and public investment in development is most appropriate. They should be used in connection with the Official Map provisions.

### BENEFITS:

Growth areas attempt to focus municipal resources to ensure that as the market creates the demand for development, the necessary facilities (infrastructure) will be available. Public and private cooperation meets growth needs by providing development in locations where it is wanted and limit growth pressures where it is not wanted. It encourages revitalization and reinvestment in development centers. Infrastructure becomes cost-effective and more efficient and to some degree

adds a sense of certainty to the development process.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The urban growth area should be drawn to include enough land for the development needs of the next 20 years. This includes needed land for residential, institutional, commercial and industrial development, and for public open space and recreational facilities, and sufficient additional land to provide for flexibility in the real estate market. The growth area should be shown in the Official Map of participating municipalities, as well as the future land use and zoning ordinance. Growth areas are ideally multi-municipal, regional or county.

There is no specific authorization for the use of growth areas in Pennsylvania law.

To be most effective, growth areas should be established as part of a regional planning effort. Use of growth areas often requires a significant departure from conventional community planning.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Lancaster County's Comprehensive Plan**, developed with its 61 municipalities, delineates 13 multi-municipal growth areas around its city, boroughs and rural villages.

The following are a sample of those Lancaster County municipalities that have adopted growth areas:

*(Growth Areas, Cont'd)*

**Warwick Township** — In conjunction with adopting a growth area, Warwick Township adopted effective agricultural zoning for one area outside of the growth area. The Township surrounds Liitz Borough and has extensive areas of prime agricultural soils. The key objective is to channel new development to areas with existing infrastructure and to protect the agricultural community. The Township government and Township Authority have worked closely together to ensure that infrastructure is consistent with the growth area objectives. Although these two bodies sometimes have different objectives, the coordination effort has produced fiscal benefits to both. Warwick Township has worked closely with the school district surrounding municipalities, developers, and the public to identify their needs and determine ways for everyone to benefit from participation in the program. Communication has been identified as a crucial component of the program.

**Manheim Township** — This Township is using transferable development rights (TDR) program to support its urban growth area. A new comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance created an agricultural district. The landowners in the agricultural district sell development rights to landowners in the receiving areas. Development within the growth area can occur at greater densities by using development rights from the agricultural area.

**East Hempfield Township** — The Township has used the growth area to identify an effective agricultural area. The Township has directed new development to areas served by sewer and water and encouraged the continued

operation of area farms. Development needs are being met and farms are remaining viable.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Lancaster County Planning Commission  
(717) 299-8333

Warrick Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 626-8900

Manheim Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 569-6408

East Hempfield Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 898-3100

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Reinvestment in established communities within the growth area can be encouraged by incentives such as Enterprise Zones, revolving loan funds to help finance the costs of development and redevelopment, small business incubator programs and marketing programs to revitalize downtown areas.

**The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG)** provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

**The World Class Communities Program (WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

**Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)** provides up to 100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal Comprehensive Plans and implementing ordinances. Program

*(Growth Areas, Cont'd)*

guidelines emphasize compliance with Community Development Block Grant Program requirements.

For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Service at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



## 1. Coordination of Transportation and Land Use

### DESCRIPTION:

Optimally, planning for transportation infrastructure should be integrated with county and local land use planning from the outset in order to assure that roads and transit will be adequate to serve existing and planned development. While this is not an existing practice in Pennsylvania, PennDOT has developed a process for coordinating transportation and land use planning and implementation in the case of major transportation projects.

Major transportation projects span a development period of four to six years or more. During this time frame a “gap analysis” may be conducted to determine where gaps exist in local land use plans, or county Comprehensive Plans, etc. for those communities impacted by the transportation project. Funding or technical assistance may then be provided to those communities to update plans to provide for anticipated impacts of the project.

### BENEFITS:

Utilizing this practice allows a municipality to update its comprehensive plan and/or zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances prior to the actual impacts associated with a transportation project. This allows a municipality to plan for access, and to update, or initiate planning in areas where the community will benefit from it. At the same time, a community can limit access to those areas designated as open space.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Transportation projects span several years and may not coincide with the local land use and/or municipal planning process. Moreover, transportation projects typically extend beyond municipal boundaries. Therefore, to adequately plan for the anticipated impacts of a transportation project, a regional cooperative effort by affected local municipalities and counties is needed. This may be inconsistent with the way local planning is conducted in some communities and/or regions.

Local municipalities and PennDOT can work together to form a partnership that fosters communication and involvement by the municipalities throughout the planning process. This partnership also allows PennDOT to take community plans and/or visions into account when considering project alternatives.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway Project** – The project is an example of a coordinated multi-municipal effort to link land use and transportation in the planning process. The Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway is a multi-lane, limited access highway that runs from Interstate 81-84 in Dunmore, just north of Scranton, to just north of Carbondale. This highway spans approximately 16 miles and crosses seven municipalities. It is intended to provide better mobility in the Lackawanna Valley, improve access to the regional expressway network and relieve traffic congestion on the Lackawanna Valley roadways. Working together, state and federal agencies and the Lackawanna

*(Coordination of Transportation and Land Use, Cont'd)*

County Regional Planning Commission undertook a study to prepare a corridor plan. The purpose of the plan is to assure the planning partners that development occurring as a result of the highway's construction would take place in an environmentally-sensitive manner. The plan provides a framework for future land use, along with transportation improvements and land development regulations (including conservation, utilities, mine spoils reclamation and community facilities) to protect environmental resources and community character. Lackawanna Valley municipalities implement the plan on a voluntary basis, although not all municipalities have done so.

**Fayette County** – In connection with the development of the **Mon-Fayette Expressway, Uniontown to Brownsville Project**, several communities along the National Road and National Road Heritage Park are working with PennDOT, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to update local zoning and land development ordinances to preserve the character and quality of the National Road.

**I-99 Partnership for Sustainable Development:** This partnership is comprised of the Centre County Commissioners, the Clearwater Conservancy and the Spring Creek Watershed Commission. Focus is on interconnecting transportation and land use planning to achieve sustainable development.

**Monroe County, Marshall's Creek**

**Project:** The project is located in Smithfield and Middle Smithfield Townships in Monroe County and Lehman Township in Pike County.

To maintain the local quality of life and provide adequate transportation facilities for the future, a Comprehensive Transportation and Land Use Management Strategy (CTLUMS) was developed by the Marshalls Creek Traffic Relief Study Land Use Committee.

The Land Use Committee created the Marshalls Creek Traffic Relief Study Land Use Partnership to implement the CTLUMS. The Partnership consisted of Monroe and Pike Counties, Smithfield and Middle Smithfield Townships, Lehman Township and the National Park Service in cooperation with PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE), USEPA and PADEP. The intent of the Planning Partnership Team is for all parties to work cooperatively to reduce traffic demands and to manage growth.

**Delaware Valley Regional Planning**

**Commission (DVRPC):** The DVRPC has adopted a year 2025 Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan. The focus of the plan is to concentrate future growth within a regional growth boundary defined by sewer/water service and transportation infrastructure. The DVRPC also received a grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to link land use and transportation

*(Coordination of Transportation and Land Use,  
Cont'd)*

planning by promoting transit-oriented development along the Schuylkill Valley Metro Transit corridor between Philadelphia and Reading.

State grants and funding may be available for local municipal planning, but those funds are typically available irrespective of ongoing, transportation projects. ■

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

PennDOT: Center for Program  
Development and Management  
(717) 787-7335  
[www.dot.state.pa.us](http://www.dot.state.pa.us)

Lackawanna County Regional Planning  
Commission  
(570) 963-6826

Fayette County Planning Commission  
(724) 430-1210

Centre County Planning Commission  
(814) 355-6791

Monroe County Planning Commission  
(570) 420-3400

Delaware Valley Regional Planning  
Commission (DVRPC)  
(215) 592-1800

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Federal funding for planning (including land use planning) is available for any major project as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). PennDOT is currently developing a 5-year initiative (beginning in 2000-2001) utilizing \$2 million in Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) planning funds specifically for this purpose.



## 2. Impact Fees

### DESCRIPTION:

Impact fees are fees authorized by a municipal ordinance which allows municipalities to assess developers for portions of the transportation capital improvement costs related to their developments. These fees are intended to generate revenue for funding the costs of transportation capital improvements necessitated by and attributed to the new development. Pennsylvania's Traffic Impact Fee Law, more commonly known as Act 209, or Article V-A of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), requires a linkage between the development and the need for transportation improvements. An impact fee can only be assessed by a municipality to address traffic concerns resulting from a new development, not to correct pre-existing deficiencies.

### BENEFITS:

The impact fee ordinance recognizes the direct relationship between land use and transportation capital improvements. Using the fees assists in capital infrastructure improvements planning. Moreover, such fees can lower municipal infrastructure installation costs or provide an alternative funding source for new capital infrastructure. Finally, these fees ensure that the cost for needed capital improvements associated with roadway improvements is applied to new development in a manner that allocates the cost for improvements proportionally among new property owners.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Act 209 contains precise, detailed provisions that a municipality must follow to establish impact fees. In order to assess impact fees on new development, the Act requires municipalities to fairly apportion the costs of infrastructure in formulating a program.

Municipalities may be reimbursed for the cost of conducting the required infrastructure planning studies, by including those costs in the impact fees.

The process to develop an impact fee ordinance is well defined in the MPC. Impact fees are limited to 50 percent of the cost of improvements on state roads even when the impact of new development may exceed 50 percent of the necessary improvements. If construction of the improvement does not begin within the prescribed time, the impact fees are refunded. Improvements are limited to a service area of seven square miles.

Adjacent municipalities may cooperate to develop coordinated impact fee programs and Transportation Capital Improvements Programs (TCIPs).

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Over 50 municipalities have enacted impact fee ordinances. Among these are:

**Cranberry Township, Butler County** – Cranberry Township was among the first of Pennsylvania's municipalities to enact and collect impact fees. When Act 209 was adopted, Cranberry

*(Impact Fees, Cont'd)*

Township conformed its existing program and has continued to collect impact fees. Since 1990 - 1991, Cranberry Township has collected impact fees in excess of \$5 million, and has leveraged that amount into \$12 million in Cranberry Township projects.

In a similar manner, Cranberry Township, Butler County has also collected "recreation impact fees" or "fees in lieu of" the dedication of land. Though this practice is authorized in a subdivision and land development ordinance, it is commonly thought of as an impact fee.

Under this practice, Cranberry Township has collected fees in lieu of dedication of land when granting subdivision and land development approvals. Since 1996, Cranberry Township has collected approximately \$700,000 in such fees. These fees have been used to purchase land and build a \$5 million community park facility.

**Uwchlan Township, Chester County  
Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance**

— The Township has used the traffic impact fee ordinance to support capital infrastructure improvements resulting from new development. The impact fees collected have enabled the Township to make a number of improvements within its identified transportation service area.

**East Goshen Township, Chester County  
Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance**

— The Township adopted a traffic impact fee ordinance to address capital infrastructure improvements related to new development. The

ordinance is relatively new and the Township has yet to apply it to any new development.

**Manheim Township in Lancaster County** was one of the first municipalities to enact impact fees.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Cranberry Township, Butler County  
(724) 776-4800

Uwchlan Township, Chester County  
(610) 363-9450

East Goshen Township, Chester County  
(610) 692-7171

Manheim Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 569-6408 ■

### 3. Transportation Development Districts

#### DESCRIPTION:

The Transportation Partnership Act, Act 47, enables local property owners or cooperating municipalities to voluntarily establish a transportation development district (TDD) and assess specific fees or assessments on property owners within the TDD for transportation improvements, including state roads and public transportation facilities. The purpose of the Act is to enable the private sector and local municipalities to contribute to the cost of needed transportation improvements.

#### BENEFITS:

This practice allows the private sector and local municipalities to negotiate and contribute to the cost of transportation improvements.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

Establishing the transportation development district is subject to a number of regulatory requirements under the Act. The initial start-up and background study costs can be prohibitive to many municipalities. Members of the development district must voluntarily agree to organize the TDD and then fund the transportation improvements. However, each property owner in a TDD does not have an equal vote.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Allegheny County, Moon Township –** The Thorn Run Transportation District was initiated in 1987. Four major projects,

of which three are completed, have been undertaken through the TDD. Approximately 5.6 million dollars in local financing was used to fund the projects. The local share was raised by a bond issue.

**Centre County, Ferguson Township – Western Inner Loop.** The Ferguson Township Transportation District is in the final evaluation stage of its first project, commonly known as Western Inner Loop. The local share of \$28 million to fund the project is being raised through a combination of assessments and taxes (real estate and transfer stamps). Construction is scheduled to begin in 2000.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Moon Transportation Authority  
(412) 262-1700

Centre County Planning Commission  
(814) 231-3050

Ferguson Township, Centre County  
(814) 238-4651

PennDOT: Center for Program  
Development and Management:  
(717) 787-7335  
[www.dot.state.pa.us](http://www.dot.state.pa.us). ■



## 4. Technical and Financial Assistance to Rural and Metropolitan Planning Organizations

### DESCRIPTION:

Technical or financial assistance may encourage multi-municipal planning as it relates to infrastructure improvements or projects. When technical or financial assistance is provided to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Local Development Districts (LDDs), these planning groups can work with local municipalities to assist PennDOT in coordinating transportation plans with local land use plans. Funding, or a portion of the funding, can be earmarked to direct the initial stage of a project (e.g., planning, locating the infrastructure, magnitude of infrastructure improvements, etc.). Technical assistance, in lieu of funding, can be another resource to encourage planning on a multi-municipal level.

### BENEFITS:

Assistance to MPOs and LDDs, be it funding or technical assistance, may bridge the gap between a local municipality's land use plan and infrastructure needs and transportation planning. When used in conjunction with grants or low interest loans from county planning commissions, multi-municipal planning for the integration of transportation and land use across municipal boundaries is encouraged.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Of the 67 counties in the Commonwealth, 64 are organized into either a MPO or LDD or small area study, and the remaining three counties are independent. The MPOs and LDDs may form a planning partnership with PennDOT and

the municipalities to coordinate land use and transportation planning.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

#### Erie County Long Range Plan:

Erie County, in the development of its long range transportation plan, provided funding to the MPO to conduct a county-wide planning study. This study was only part of an overall, larger study to prepare for the progressive future of Erie County and to meet various legislative requirements. The long range plan was adopted by the Erie MPO in February, 1995 to comply with ISTEA and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The County of Erie adopted the plan in October, 1995 as an element of the Comprehensive Plan for Erie County to bring the county into compliance with Act 247, the Municipal Planning Code and Executive order 1993-3 for State Land Use Planning. An update of this plan was completed and adopted by the Erie MPO and Erie County in 1998.

The Erie County Department of Planning worked closely with federal and state resource agencies and local organizations to establish purpose and need for the plan's major projects. This partnership led to a transportation plan that incorporates intermodal accessibility into the highway planning process. The program recommendations contained in the plan are confined to the expected available funding for the Erie MPO and contain only those projects that can be implemented using current revenues

*(Technical and Financial Assistance, Cont'd)*

while the existing system is being adequately operated and maintained.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

A listing of all MPOs and LDDs is contained in the Appendix.

Erie County Department of Planning  
(814) 451-6336

PennDOT: Center for Program  
Development and Management  
(717) 787-7335  
[www.dot.state.pa.us](http://www.dot.state.pa.us). ■

## 5. Corridor Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

A transportation corridor plan is both a description and a vision of what the corridor is, what it should be and what the corridor may be in the future. The plan may include an inventory of the corridor's characteristics, problems, assets and components that make the corridor unique. By building upon the inventory, a plan is developed which establishes recommendations for managing existing or potential concerns associated with safety, land use access, mobility, capacity or aesthetics of a highway or roadway corridor. These recommendations may include changes to municipal policy or regulations, including revisions to the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, or subdivision and land development ordinance.

A corridor plan can also be created for green infrastructure. Such corridors could include stream valleys, hiking trails, or horse trails. The plan can be used as a tool for preserving historic or scenic qualities of local roads.

### BENEFITS:

A corridor analysis plan seeks to maintain corridor mobility, increase motorist safety and establish priorities for preserving and enhancing corridor aesthetics. The plan assists in capital improvement planning, and reduces the need for extensive capital improvements through better and more efficient use of the existing corridor. The plan provides opportunities for Multi-municipal planning.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Corridor plans can be prepared by a single municipality to address local corridor concerns, but ideally are prepared by a group of municipalities to address regional corridor issues. The plan can be used for traffic management issues, to establish access management policies before development creates traffic management problems. The plan can also be used for managing existing traffic conditions.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**PennPlan: Pennsylvania's Long Range Transportation Plan** – The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has developed a corridor-based long range transportation plan. The plan, which covers a period of 25 years, divides the Commonwealth into 28 multi-modal corridors. These corridors are based on common travel patterns and include highways, transit systems, airports, passenger rail, rail freight, bikeways, ports, intermodal facilities and other transportation features of statewide importance. The plan establishes goals and objectives for each corridor and will help guide long term planning and decision making. The plan is based on the regional plans of the Commonwealth's Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Local Development Districts and county comprehensive plans.

**The Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway** is a multi-lane, limited access highway that runs from Interstate 81-84 in Dunmore, just north of Scranton, to just north of Carbondale. This highway

*(Corridor Planning, Cont'd)*

spans approximately 16 miles and crosses seven municipalities. It is intended to provide better mobility in the Lackawanna Valley, improved access to the regional expressway network and relieve traffic congestion on the Lackawanna Valley roadways. Working together, state and federal agencies and the Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission undertook a study to prepare a corridor plan. The purpose of the plan is to assure the planning partners that development occurring as a result of the highway's construction would take place in an environmentally-sensitive manner. The plan provides a framework for future land use, along with transportation improvements and land development regulations (including conservation, utilities, mine spoils reclamation and community facilities) to protect environmental resources and community character. Lackawanna Valley municipalities implement the plan on a voluntary basis, although not all municipalities have done so.

**Centre County – The U.S. Route 220 Improvements Project** addresses improvements to US Routes 220 and 322 from I-99 (US Route 220 Tyrone expressway in Blair County) to US 322 (Mt. Nittany Expressway). The project is part of a program that is intended to address both local and regional needs through coordination of projects in the development of a regional transportation solution. A major component in this project's proactive public involvement process is the Citizens Advisory Committee which is composed of representatives from affected municipalities, planning organizations, economic development groups, Chambers of Commerce and citizens

groups. The committee was formed in the early stages of the project to serve as a forum for direct exchange of information between the Project Team and interested local parties.

**Chester County – The Pennsbury Township (Chester County) U.S. Route 1 Corridor Study** focused on the Route 1 corridor and identified locations with problematic access. The study provides recommendations for circulation improvements and land use policy revisions. The circulation improvement recommendations identify intersection and roadway improvements, proper access management techniques, and design standards. Recommended land use policy revisions include changes to the township zoning ordinance regarding land use, signs, landscaping, regulations and right-of-way preservation.

**Chester County – The PA Route 100 Corridor Study** recognizes Route 100 as an important north-south link in Chester County. To assist in coordinating corridor planning efforts along Route 100, the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities prepared the plan as a regional effort. Specific improvements are recommended in the plan concerning roadway realignment, access management, channelization, signalization, safety, and general maintenance.

**The U.S. Route 202 and U.S. Route 1 Corridors Study** was prepared through the combined efforts of the Brandywine Conservancy, Delaware and Chester Counties, New Castle County, Delaware, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and PennDOT. The effort led to a planning manual for transportation and land use in the

*(Corridor Planning, Cont'd)*

Brandywine Valley section of both corridors. The primary purpose of the study was to develop strategies and methods for improving deteriorating traffic, land use, and aesthetic conditions in the corridor.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

PennDOT: Center for Program  
Development and Management  
(717) 787-7335  
[www.dot.state.pa.us](http://www.dot.state.pa.us).

Centre County Planning Commission  
(814) 355-6791

Lackawanna County Regional Planning  
Commission  
(570) 963-6826

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Delaware Valley Regional Planning  
Commission (DVRPC)  
(215) 592-1800 ■



## 6. Access Management (Highway Occupancy Permit)

### DESCRIPTION:

PennDOT utilizes several tools to develop, coordinate and grant access to state-owned and operated roads and highways. The most common tool is the Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) process. The HOP process is a regulatory program under which permits for driveway access to state owned and operated roads and highways are granted. PennDOT's HOP regulations require that PennDOT issue a HOP if all the design criteria and access requirements are met.

PennDOT's Access Management Program addresses concerns over traffic safety, as well as issues associated with expanding development. These issues include concerns over increasing traffic congestion and the escalating costs of upgrading roads.

Beyond PennDOT's programs, a municipality or county can regulate access and improve circulation and site design through land development and zoning ordinances. Other municipalities enact freestanding ordinances that specify standards for egress and ingress to public roads.

### BENEFITS:

The Highway Occupancy Permit Process and Access Management Program address concerns over traffic safety, as well as issues associated with expanding growth, such as increasing traffic congestion and the escalating costs of upgrading roads. Other benefits of the Access Management Program include maintaining the safety and capacity of existing transportation facilities.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Existing HOP regulations require PennDOT to issue a driveway permit if the applicant satisfies all safety, traffic flow and design requirements. Therefore, unless the applicant voluntarily chooses to locate its driveway and requests access based on land use considerations, PennDOT has limited, if any, discretionary authority to comment on, or change, the location or design of the driveway for reasons other than safety or traffic flow.

Currently, it is PennDOT's policy to submit HOP applications to a municipality for review, only if the municipality requests such review. However, recent re-engineering of the HOP process recommends a pre-application scoping meeting involving local municipalities.

A municipality or county, with overall comprehensive knowledge of land development patterns within the community, should review these permits, and possibly make alternative recommendations to the access requested.

Businesses or commercial entities often oppose access management programs. These opponents argue that customers patronize those businesses with easy access. Failure to grant access results in a loss of business.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Three counties in PennDOT District 8-0 (**Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry Counties**) will not issue a permit until the municipality has approved a final subdivision plat.

*(Access Management (Highway Occupancy Permit), Cont'd)*

The staff of PennDOT District 6-0 (metropolitan Philadelphia area) meets monthly with **Chester County Planning Commission** staff to review applications. It has active, but less structured interaction with staffs of the **Bucks and Montgomery County Planning Commissions**.

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (Cumberland, Dauphin, Perry Counties)  
(717) 234-2639

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Bucks County Planning Commission  
(215) 345-3400

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

PennDOT Engineering Districts

District 1-0  
(814) 678-5000

District 2-0  
(814) 765-0400

District 3-0  
(570) 368-8686

District 4-0  
(570) 963-4061

District 5-0  
(610) 798-4200

District 6-0  
(610) 205-6700

District 8-0  
(717) 787-6653

District 9-0  
(814) 696-7250

District 10-0  
(724) 357-2800

District 11-0  
(412) 429-5000

District 12-0  
(724) 439-7315

Montgomery County Planning Commission  
(610) 278-3730 ■

## 7. Right-of-Way Preservation

### DESCRIPTION:

Right-of-way preservation is a practice used for the acquisition of additional areas of land needed to accommodate new or future expansion of transportation facilities or for a variety of other public functions associated with safety, access or aesthetics. Right-of-way preservation can be accomplished either through dedication of land or the use of easements. Right-of-way preservation can be utilized by an individual municipality or municipalities to address local traffic concerns or regional transportation issues.

Right-of-way preservation includes land acquisition for many uses. Among these uses are travel lanes, median, and shoulders; public utilities — including stormwater sewers and electrical lines; future roadway widening and channelization; public sidewalks, paths and bicycle lanes; and safety buffers.

### BENEFITS:

Right-of-way preservation establishes a mutual understanding between municipal officials and landowners on the right-of-way locations. When used in the planning process, it affords a municipality or municipalities the opportunity to acquire adequate space for utility use and potential expansion of infrastructure.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Right-of-ways can sometimes be required through a municipal subdivision ordinance, although the process cannot

be utilized as a substitute or replacement for the normal condemnation process which involves compensation to the landowner for the right-of-way. Whether the right-of-way can be preserved by requiring dedication at the subdivision stage or whether it requires compensation to the landowner depends upon the type of right-of-way being established, the necessity for it to serve the proposed development on the land subject to the right-of-way, and the relationship between the land being developed and the purpose of the right-of-way. Significant litigation had occurred throughout the country and Pennsylvania on the question of unreasonable restrictions and any municipality intending to utilize the right-of-way preservation process should seek the assistance of its solicitor prior to implementation of such concepts in the subdivision ordinance or as part of a plan review and approval process.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

The following municipalities have enacted right-of-way provisions to provide solutions for future road and street improvements:

- **Westtown Township, Chester County, Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance** — The Westtown Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance provides an example of how municipalities can incorporate ordinance language to encourage ultimate right-of-way preservation.

*(Right-of-Way Preservation, Cont'd)*

- **The York County Planning Commission** facilitated a project involving a major highway located in York Township, Windsor Township, Springettsbury Township and Spring Garden Township. This project, a simple resurfacing project by PennDOT, was modified to involve the addition of a passing/climbing lane using right-of-way acquired by the municipalities through subdivision and land development ordinance as well as public and private financial contributions.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Westtown Township, Chester County  
(610) 692-1930

York County Planning Commission  
(717) 771-9870 ■

## 8. Community Impact Assessments

### DESCRIPTION:

Community Impact Assessment is a process to evaluate the effects of a transportation (infrastructure) action on a community and its quality of life. The assessment helps shape the outcome of a transportation project by providing documentation of the current and anticipated social environment of a geographic area with and without the action.

The Community Impact Assessment helps coordinate and integrate independent plans for land use, economics and transportation to achieve common goals. By doing so, state, county and local policies and regulations — such as zoning ordinances, environmental regulations, and comprehensive planning — can be met.

PennDOT is currently developing secondary and cumulative effects analyses tools to be used by PennDOT staff and planning partners to more fully understand and respond to the impacts of transportation projects.

### BENEFITS:

The Community Impact Assessment process alerts affected communities and residents, as well as transportation planners and municipal planners to the likely consequences of a project. It ensures that human values and concerns receive proper attention during project development. It helps coordinate and integrate independent plans for land use, economics, and transportation to achieve common goals.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The Community Impact Assessment process involves a comprehensive study or studies that includes the following components: define the project or study area; develop a community profile; analyze impacts; identify solutions; use public involvement; and document findings. The assessment can include such items as mobility, safety, employment effects, relocation, isolation and other community issues.

Community Impact Assessment studies usually require the expertise of planners and engineers. Because they can take several years to complete, these studies tend to be costly.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Although the example that follows is dated, it represents a complete and effective use of this tool.

**Community Preservation: Chinatown, Philadelphia — Construction of the Vine Street Expressway.** In 1968, the right-of-way acquisition and demolition began for the Vine Street Expressway Project. In 1973, amid protests of the Chinatown community aimed at preventing the acquisition and demolition of key cultural buildings in the community, a report was commissioned by the city to study ways of preserving Chinatown. In 1975, the final report was released with a comprehensive planning approach to mitigate the impacts of the transportation project on the community. Innovative mitigation measures were implemented

*(Community Impact Assessments, Cont'd)*

including the use of landscaping and noise walls, as well as retaining the religious and cultural center slated for demolition at the outset of the project. The result: a sensitively planned and aesthetically pleasing, below-grade, limited-access highway design that has helped to preserve the Chinatown community, while the completed Vine Street Expressway provides vehicular access to a successfully redeveloped downtown Philadelphia. Chinatown's subsequent revitalization and success are indicative of the comprehensive approach to planning for anticipated community impacts.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

City of Philadelphia Planning  
Commission  
(215) 686-4607

PennDOT: Center for Program  
Development and Management  
(717) 787-7335  
[www.dot.state.pa.us](http://www.dot.state.pa.us). ■

## D. Capital Improvements Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

The capital improvements plan (CIP) is a document endorsed or approved by the governing body of the municipality that schedules all planned expenditures on capital improvements, usually for a 5- to 10-year period. A CIP sets priorities for project funding and explains how projects will be financed.

### BENEFITS:

The CIP can be used to assure that spending policies are coordinated with development planned for in the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance. A multi-year scope allows for better scheduling of related improvements, and the level of detail can be tailored to a community's needs.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The first step in developing a CIP should be setting up the process for proposing, reviewing, and ranking projects, and assigning responsibility for tasks related to the CIPs preparation. Without discussing particular projects, officials and staff should determine criteria for reviewing and ranking proposals. Priorities should be based upon the goals of the municipal Comprehensive Plan, especially those related to fiscal management. These priorities should be reviewed annually to be sure they are still applicable to current circumstances.

Finally, the CIP must consider how projects will be financed. The municipality should set a limit on how much it is willing to finance through current revenues,

using savings, or through borrowing.

Other methods for financing CIP projects include lease-purchase agreements, special assessments, tax-increment financing, or Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank loans.

There is no requirement that approved projects be consistent with the municipalities comprehensive plan.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

#### Falls Township, Bucks County –

Conducts an annual study or survey of what projects or improvements are needed in the municipality and then investigates what funding and financing mechanisms should be used.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Falls Township, Bucks County  
(215) 736-0749

### FUNDING SOURCE(S):

The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG) provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

#### The World Class Communities Program (WCCP) also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts. Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP) provides up to 100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal Comprehensive Plans and implementing ordinances. Program guidelines emphasize compliance with Community

Program guidelines emphasize compliance with Community

*(Capital Improvements Planning, Cont'd)*

Development Block Grant Program requirements. For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■

## E. Residential Street and Sidewalk Design

### DESCRIPTION:

The design of streets within residential neighborhoods has a direct impact on the character and quality of the community they serve. Residential streets should be designed based on their intended function. Neighborhood streets, in addition to moving traffic, provide for pedestrian circulation, direct access to homes and are an important element of the neighborhood setting and character. Street design standards are appropriately located in subdivision and land development ordinances. Pavement width should be directly related to two factors: expected traffic volume and anticipated need for on-street parking spaces. Based on this criteria, it is often the case that streets can be less wide than typically required in current codes

### BENEFITS:

Properly designed streets lower construction and maintenance costs. When impervious surface areas are reduced, stormwater runoff is reduced, water quality is improved and less heat buildup in developed areas. Other benefits include lower travel speeds and improved safety, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. Attractively designed streets with shade trees and sidewalks may also enhance property values.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The implementation of appropriate street design standards has few drawbacks. However, where narrower streets will result in difficulty with access

for emergency vehicles, and turning of large service vehicles on smaller cul-de sac turnarounds, standards may need to be revised.

Determining proper street width is somewhat more complex than when a single set of residential street standards is employed.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Bucks County**, – The municipalities of Solebury Township and Durham Township in Bucks County have adopted the residential street principles outlined in the Bucks County Planning Commission publication, Performance Streets. Streets are first categorized as residential access, subcollector, or collector streets based on the anticipated average daily trips. Then the cartway width of new residential streets is determined based on lot widths in the proposed development, whether parking is provided on- or off-street, whether or not driveways are provided, and the requirement for curbs.

The townships did not fully comply with the recommended standards for alleys. Durham Township allows alleys only within commercial and industrial districts, where a relatively wide minimum cartway of 22 feet is required. Solebury Township prohibits the use of alleys. Both of these townships are rural and may not have viewed alleys as necessary or desirable in the context of their communities. However, if a traditional development pattern is to be allowed in some areas of even rural communities, alleys should not be ruled out as an option.

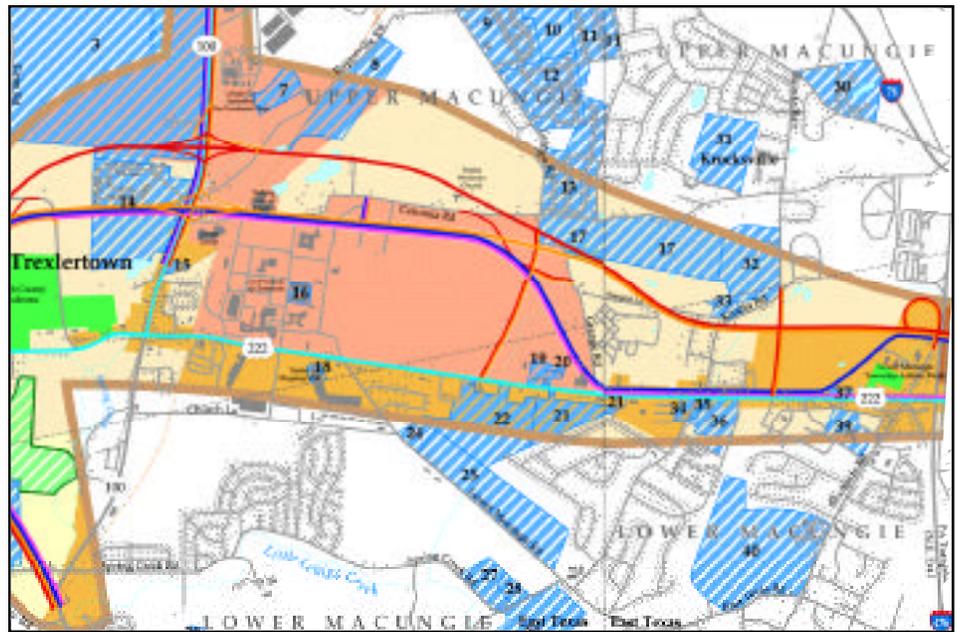
*(Residential Street and Sidewalk Design, Cont'd)*

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Bucks County Planning Commission

publication: Performance Streets

(215) 345-3400 ■

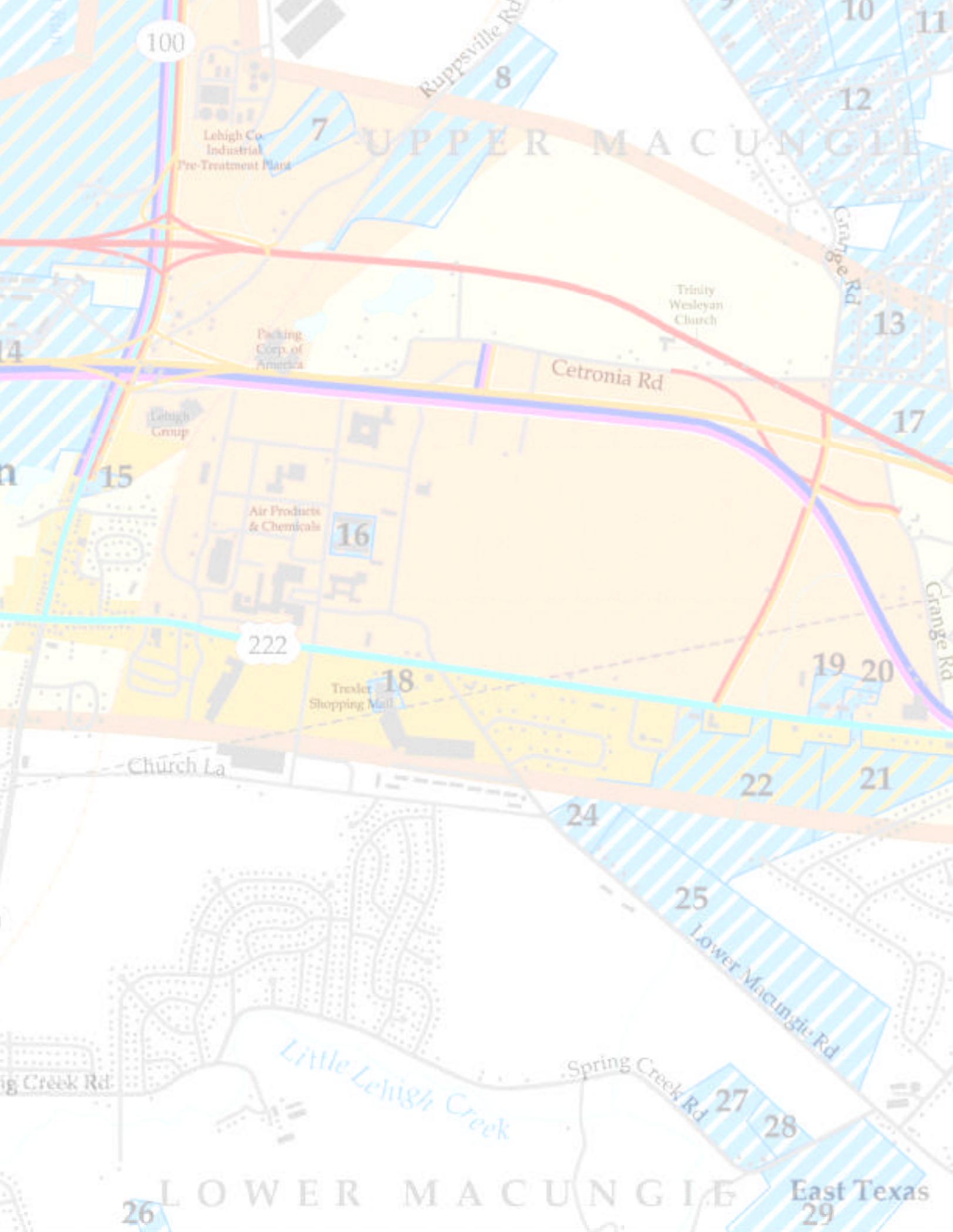


## V. Zoning Techniques

In this inventory we speak of “best practices”, tools that have been used in Pennsylvania. The predominant, and perhaps oldest, development tool in the United States is zoning. Introduced in Germany at the end of the 19th century as a way to manage density and bulk, zoning was a reaction to the squalid conditions of the working class. Zoning was adopted for use in the United States in the early 20th century as New York City enacted the first comprehensive city zoning ordinance, dividing the city into three zones: residential, commercial, and uncontrolled use. Since that time, zoning has been applied to various conditions across the United States: urban and rural, new and old, northern and southern.

Zoning is a process whereby the government, in protecting the public interest, can place reasonable limitations on the use and development of private land without the need to compensate the landowner. If the limitations are so severe that the use of the land has been significantly diminished, the government must pay reasonable compensation. The concepts of “police power” and reasonable compensation are not strictly defined and have been legally shaped many times during the past century.

Many of Pennsylvania’s municipalities, in looking to protect the interests of their citizens, have adopted zoning ordinances, and continue to apply and revise these ordinances. This chapter is dedicated to a discussion of these zoning concepts as they exist in Pennsylvania. ■



100

Ruppsville Rd

Lehigh Co Industrial Pre-Treatment Plant

# UPPER MACUNGIE

Trinity Wesleyan Church

Picking Corp. of America

Cetronia Rd

Lehigh Group

Air Products & Chemicals

Trexler Shopping Mall

Church La

222

Little Lehigh Creek

Spring Creek Rd

# LOWER MACUNGIE

East Texas

## 1. Effective Agricultural Zoning

### DESCRIPTION:

Effective Agricultural Zoning (EAZ) is a method of preserving farmland by limiting the number of dwellings permitted to a truly rural density, such as one dwelling per 20, 30, or more acres. It is a tool that requires the strong support of the agricultural land-owning community for its adoption and successful implementation. It is generally most applicable in rural areas without suburban development pressures.

The building density permitted under agricultural zoning may be regulated either in terms of a “fixed rate” (such as “x acres per dwelling”) or in terms of a variable rate, where the number of dwellings permitted is greater on smaller parcels which are presumed to have less viability for continued agricultural use. For example, the variable rate approach, known commonly as “sliding-scale zoning”, would typically allow the first dwelling on the basis of the first two acres, the second on the basis of the next five acres, the third on the basis of the next ten acres, the fourth on the basis of the next 20 acres, and so on, until the ultimate “plateau” is reached. That plateau might be 20 acres, 30 acres, 40 acres, or 50 acres. After reaching that plateau, the zoning reverts to the “fixed rate” mode, so that for each additional 20 acres (for example, when 20 acres represents the plateau), one additional dwelling is permitted.

Beyond this zoning density control, this technique also often includes a spatial regulation, to prevent a 100-acre field from being subdivided into five 20-acre farmettes. In such cases, a maximum lot

size of one or two acres (in unsewered areas) is typically established, so that 90 percent of the land will remain undivided. Sliding-scale zoning can also be combined with conservation subdivision design to set standards regulating which parts of the property will be divided into house lots (commonly the least productive soils, and/or those parts of the property furthest from any livestock operations). Some communities take an additional step to ensure that the agricultural land which has been preserved in this way does not later become future house lots. That extra step involves requiring the owner of the remainder parcel to place a permanent conservation easement on that part of his property, legally preventing further development in a manner which will preserve the land even if the zoning is later changed.

### BENEFITS:

By limiting the number of new households being established in rural areas, EAZ helps to preserve farmland in two ways. First, the majority of land is set aside for permanent open space uses. Next, the potential for conflicts between new residents and established farmers is reduced since there are fewer neighbors exposed to the effects of farming (i.e., manure dressed fields, pesticides, etc.), and because traffic issues will be correspondingly minimized.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Because farmers typically subdivide only one or two lots at a time, over a number of years, this approach requires

*(Effective Agricultural Zoning, Cont'd)*

additional record-keeping on the part of the municipality. To begin with, the municipality must maintain an accurate record of the number of parcels existing on each farm at the time the ordinance is adopted. Accurate record-keeping must continue, as land owners apply for permission to divide new lots from their larger parcels. To assist with this process, it is useful to require that notes be attached to deeds and/or subdivision plats stating how many development rights have been used and how many remain on each parcel.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

Many townships in both Lancaster and York Counties have employed EAZ for a number of years. In **Lancaster County**, where agriculture is the predominant land use, approximately 350,000 acres have been placed in Effective Agricultural Zoning. It is interesting to note that only about one-tenth of that amount (35,000 acres) has been preserved through purchase of development rights. The sliding-scale approach was first devised by the **York County** Planning Commission, and these techniques have successfully withstood legal challenges in state courts.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Lancaster County Planning Commission  
(717) 299-8333

York County Planning Commission  
(717) 771-9870

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

The **State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG)** provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and

comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

**The World Class Communities Program (WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

**Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)** provides up to 100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal Comprehensive Plans and implementing ordinances. Program guidelines emphasize compliance with Community Development Block Grant Program requirements.

For more information please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



## 2. Cluster Development

### DESCRIPTION:

This technique provides flexibility in housing density on a parcel as a means of integrating at least a minimal amount of open space into new subdivisions. Typically, both the lot size reductions and the percentage of open space that is created are fairly modest, often ranging between 20 and 40 percent. Frequently, density is calculated on the basis of total tract area (rather than on actual buildable land area), a practice that inflates the density on parcels containing significant amounts of undevelopable land. In addition, most cluster provisions permit the open space to consist of mostly undevelopable and marginally usable land.

The open space that is protected through cluster design may be owned by a homeowner association, a nonprofit conservation organization (such as a land trust), the municipality, or by a combination of the above. Part of the open space may be divided into large "conservancy lots" that are individually owned.

### BENEFITS:

Cluster developments, when well designed according to ordinance standards pertaining to the quantity, quality, and configuration of the open space, can produce very attractive and livable neighborhoods that preserve noteworthy features of the natural and cultural landscape. They can also reduce construction costs for developers and long-term maintenance costs for the municipality through shorter lengths for streets and utilities.

Cluster developments are well received by homebuyers when the open space is usable, highly visible, and well distributed through the neighborhood. Readers are referred to the description of a related technique, known as "Open Space Zoning/Conservation Design," which takes the clustering principle to a more advanced level, and which is particularly well-suited for use in lower density situations.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Cluster ordinances ideally base density on net usable land (or on "Yield Plans") to reflect the number of dwellings that could be built on the property with conventional lot layout. In addition to wetlands and steep slopes, cluster ordinances specify a percentage of the relatively flat, dry land as the minimum required open space, to provide suitable areas for village greens, playing fields, conservation meadows, and even agricultural operations. They sometimes offer a modest density incentive paired with a similarly modest density disincentive applied to conventional layouts.

A factor adversely affecting implementation is the typical designation of clustering as a Conditional Use, which adds to costs, lengthens the review period, introduces an additional public hearing to which all the neighbors are specifically invited. This increases the uncertainty of approval for applicants.

Cluster ordinances are ideally offered as a "by-right" option in the ordinance, subject to numerous but clear and detailed design standards for both the

*(Cluster Development, Cont'd)*

developed portions and the conserved parts of the subdivision.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

Numerous municipalities have provisions permitting cluster development and their zoning ordinances. Examples include:

- **Bucks County, PA** – Lower Makefield, Buckingham, Doylestown, and Tinicum Townships;
- **Chester County, PA** – Pennsbury, Willistown, East Goshen, Easttown, and Tredyffrin Townships; and
- **Delaware County, PA** – Radnor Township.

In addition, mandatory cluster development is required in **East Hempfield Township, Lancaster County**.



**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County  
(215) 493-3646

Buckingham Township, Bucks County  
(215) 794-8834

Doylestown Township, Bucks County  
(215) 348-9915

Tinicum Township, Bucks County  
(610) 294-9154

Pennsbury Township, Chester County  
(610) 388-7323

Willistown Township, Chester County  
(610) 647-5300

East Goshen Township, Chester County  
(610) 692-7171

Easttown Township, Chester County  
(610) 644-9000

Tredyffrin Township, Chester County  
(610) 408-3601

Radnor Township, Delaware County  
(610) 688-5600

East Hempfield Township,  
Lancaster County  
(717) 898-3100

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

**The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG)** provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

**The World Class Communities Program (WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

**Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)** provides up to





■ V. ZONING TECHNIQUES

*(Cluster Development, Cont'd)*

100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal Comprehensive Plans and implementing ordinances. Program guidelines emphasize compliance with Community Development Block Grant Program requirements.

For more information please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



### 3. Planned Residential Development (PRD)

#### DESCRIPTION:

Planned residential development (PRD) provisions are a means of permitting and encouraging innovative, well planned developments. PRD provisions allow some variation in dimensional and use requirements to achieve the preservation of sensitive natural areas or historic sites. This is accomplished by permitting development to be shifted to more appropriate portions of the site. In Pennsylvania, Article VII of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) provides municipalities with the authority to permit PRDs and provides procedures for their implementation.

Planned Residential Developments may be permitted throughout a municipality, but more commonly are permitted in limited areas as specified in the zoning ordinance. Furthermore, a community may define more than one category of PRD. Municipalities may limit PRDs to single family detached homes, but more commonly a variety of housing types are permitted in a PRD development. Nonresidential uses may also be permitted in a PRD.

#### BENEFITS:

PRDs provide a method for allowing innovative developments not permitted under existing traditional zoning. This practice recognizes that large-scale developments can be planned to include a variety of housing types.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

PRD provisions are included within the zoning ordinance of the municipality;

site design requirements for PRDs are also included in the zoning ordinance. These include basic requirements such as minimum site size, maximum density, minimum open space, maximum impervious surface, etc. Within the zoning ordinance the municipality must specify where PRDs are permitted, the uses to be allowed in a PRD, and standards for density of development within the PRD. The review procedures and any special design requirements may be included in the subdivision and land development ordinance.

The MPC provides a review process for PRDs that is different from the subdivision and land development approval process. All aspects of the design are addressed through one review by the governing body. Rather than submitting a preliminary plan, a tentative plan is prepared. The municipality may require that the PRD tentative and/or final plans include different information than a preliminary plan for a standard subdivision or land development, as well as also requiring submission of a written statement explaining the merits of the proposal.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Bedminster Township, Bucks County** – Bedminster Township allows a PRD in its R-3 district, on parcels of at least 50 acres. Permitted density is five units per acre, with 50 percent open space required. On projects of more than 100 acres, non-residential development is permitted, limited to less than five percent of the gross site area.

*(Planned Residential Development (PRD),  
Cont'd)*

### **1994 Quakertown Area Zoning**

**Ordinance, Bucks County** - Allows PRD in residential districts on sites of at least 50 acres. The development must consist of residential neighborhoods and a town center. The town center (10 percent to 20 percent of the total site area) must include a village green and civic and/or commercial uses.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Bedminster Township, Bucks County  
(215) 795-2190

Quakertown Borough, Bucks County  
(215) 536-5001

#### **FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

**The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG)** provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

**The World Class Communities Program (WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

**Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)** provides up to 100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal Comprehensive Plans and implementing ordinances. Program guidelines emphasize compliance with Community Development Block Grant Program requirements.

For more information please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■

## 4. Flexible Setback Requirements

### DESCRIPTION:

Flexible setback requirements include provisions in the zoning ordinance to allow a range of flexibility in building setback distances. This can include building setback requirements for front, side and rear yards for both residential and nonresidential development. While these standards may not be necessary or appropriate for certain development forms, they can be especially important for infill development. With flexible setback requirements, mixed use, medium to high-density villages, boroughs and urban cores, setbacks can be adjusted to maintain the character of a community and maintain the character of existing development. Single family home developments with minimal setbacks (the zero lot line approach) are an increasingly accepted design for higher density projects.

### BENEFITS:

This approach allows the continuation of existing character development in villages, boroughs, and urban settings. It encourages pedestrian activity in commercial and mixed-use centers and can reduce housing costs and preserve open space by allowing smaller, yet usable lot sizes. This practice is an important tool for infill development.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

In high-density, mixed-use centers, some municipalities not only allow reduced setbacks, but also require development to be set close to the street by using build-to lines. A build-to line determines where the

front wall of the building must be located, and is often set at the limit of the street right-of-way for non-residential development, or with room for a small front yard (based on the location of existing homes) for residential development.

In moderate density residential areas, lot areas are reduced to lower the land cost associated with the purchase. (Lot sizes are also reduced in performance standard, open space, or cluster developments where homes are grouped together to preserve open space or natural resources). However, once lots are made smaller, some of the standard dimensional requirements must also be modified, especially setback requirements. Options include having attached housing types, which by design, have no side yards or single family detached homes with zero lot line side yards. Zero lot line homes are provided an easement on the property adjacent to the lot line wall. This provision is written into each lot's deed and noted on the site plan and/or record plat. An easement gives the homeowner the ability to enter the neighbors property to perform any necessary repairs for maintenance to the lot line wall.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**The Borough Core District in Sellersville, Bucks County**, permits a mix of residential and commercial uses, has no front setback requirement, and requires only 5-foot side yards and a 25-foot rear yard.

*(Flexible Setback Requirements, Cont'd)*

The 1994 Quakertown Area Zoning Ordinance in Bucks County permits zero lot line development, as well as village house development, in performance standard developments and planned residential developments. Zero lot line housing types include patio homes and atrium homes, which have no minimum side yard requirements and a minimum front yard setback of only five feet; however, the lots must be enclosed by a fence and all rooms must open onto a private open area.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Sellersville, Bucks County  
(215) 257-5075

Quakertown Borough, Bucks County  
(215) 536-5001 ■



## 5. Incentive (Bonus) Zoning

### DESCRIPTION:

Through incentive or bonus zoning, developers are encouraged to provide amenities, such as parks, additional landscaping, plazas, streetscape improvements, access improvements, or affordable housing. In return for the developer's investment in public improvements, the municipality allows a higher density or intensity of development of a site. As alternatives to increasing the amount of development, some communities have devised bonuses which reduce development costs, such as reduced parking or setback requirements.

Other communities use this practice to encourage private developers to provide affordable housing. Bonuses can be offered for providing a certain number or ratio of low and moderate income housing units within a proposed development.

### BENEFITS:

Municipalities can receive improvements above and beyond what are normally found in a subdivision and land development ordinance through incentive or bonus zoning, because the developer is not required but rather, chooses to provide the added amenities.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Provisions for bonuses are included within the municipality's zoning ordinance. The ordinance should state the purpose of the provisions, the specific improvement or amenities

required of the developer, and the related amount of density or intensity bonus that the municipality will grant in return. Density/intensity bonuses are often found in overlay provisions, applied to special areas of the municipality.

Neighbors may oppose density/intensity increases. For this practice to be successful, these neighbors must be assured that new development will be compatible with existing community character.

Use of this approach also requires research of the real estate market prior to ordinance enactment. The goal should be to discover what the approximate value of additional density on a site is worth to a developer and set the amenity requirements at this cost.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

In the **1994 Quakertown Area Zoning Ordinance in Bucks County**, density bonuses are awarded for providing: extra open space, subsidized low/moderate income housing, unsubsidized moderate income housing, planned residential developments, school site, recreational facilities, access roads, commuter train stop, water systems dedicated to the municipality and fire equipment/facilities.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Quakertown Borough, Bucks County  
(215) 536-5001 ■



## 1. Open Space Zoning/ Conservation Design

### DESCRIPTION:

Open space zoning/conservation design is an enhanced variation on the cluster zoning technique in which a higher percentage of the site is dedicated to open space. The purpose of this more advanced technique is to preserve a larger amount of land for conservation uses, while still allowing full-density development. In contrast to cluster zoning, where the emphasis is more often placed on providing active recreational areas, open space zoning is more suited for protecting farmland, woodland habitat, historic sites, and scenic views. Although it was originally devised for use in rural areas, it can be easily adapted to residential areas.

Under this technique, subdivisions are required to dedicate a significant portion of their unconstrained land to permanent open space uses. House lots, usually for single-family homes, are sited on the remaining parts of the property, where they have views of and access to the open space. The open space is typically owned and managed (according to an approved management plan) by a homeowner association. Other possible owners include land trusts, the municipality, or individuals with large "conservancy lots", which are a form of non-common open space.

### BENEFITS:

This technique preserves large open spaces while allowing full-density development. When done, the open space in each new subdivision will

ultimately join together to form interconnected systems of conservation lands.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Open space zoning/conservation design can be implemented through a municipality's zoning ordinance. The number of dwellings permitted is based on the net acreage of buildable land and the underlying density in the zoning district. Easements are then placed on the open space to ensure that it will not be further subdivided or developed. Although open space subdivisions can be offered to developers as an option, sometimes accompanied by density bonus incentives to encourage their use, it can be more effective to allow full-density to be attained in projects that follow these design principles, with lesser density available for conventional layouts consisting entirely of houselots and streets.

The best way to ensure that land is protected in a coordinated fashion, to preserve open space networks, is to apply this subdivision design approach consistently throughout a given zoning district.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Wallace, West Vincent, London Britain, Warwick, and Newlin Townships in Chester County. Milford and Springfield Townships in Bucks County. Upper Salford Township in Montgomery County. (This technique

*(Open Space Zoning/Conservation Design, Cont'd)*

is related to the "Land Preservation District" approach advocated by the Montgomery County Planning Commission.)

Montgomery County Planning Commission  
(610) 278-3730

Upper Salford Township, Montgomery County  
(610) 287-6160 ■

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

For information relating to model ordinances available through the Growing Greener Program contact the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (717) 772-3742

Natural Lands Trust  
(610) 353-5587



Bucks County Planning Commission  
(215) 345-3400

Milford Township, Bucks County  
(215) 536-2090

Springfield Township, Bucks County  
(610) 346-6700

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Wallace Township, Chester County  
(610) 942-2880

West Vincent Township, Chester County  
(610) 827-7932

London Britain Township, Chester County  
(610) 255-0388

Newlin Township, Chester County  
(610) 436-6388



## 2. Maximum Lot Size Standards

### DESCRIPTION:

Maximum lot size standards may be used to limit the amount of land that can be devoted to a use.

Maximum lot size standards may be used for:

- Agricultural land preservation;
- Affordable housing provision;
- Maintaining community character;
- Encouraging compact development; and
- Facilitating efficient service provision.

### BENEFITS:

When used in rural areas, maximum lot size standards can help preserve agricultural land. When used in a development district, it can ensure development occurs at planned intensities so that infrastructure costs are minimized.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The maximum lot size is incorporated into the zoning ordinance as a dimensional requirement, along with minimum lot sizes, setbacks, etc. It should be noted that maximum lot size standards, if used to encourage affordable housing, do not guarantee more affordable houses. If the standards are used to influence character and aesthetics, courts have held that these are not sufficient public purposes for zoning. However, use of maximum lot size requirements for the purpose of agricultural land preservation was upheld by Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court in Codorus Twp. vs. Rodgers, (1985).

If one compares maximum lot size standards with the flexible lot size standards practice, you see that the maximum lot size standard would be voided. It is important *not* to combine these practices.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Maximum lot sizes have been used in conjunction with area-based allocation zoning for agricultural land preservation in a number of townships in York County.

Lower Merion Township, Montgomery County

West Vincent Township, Chester County

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

York County Planning Commission  
(717) 771-9870

Lower Merion Township, Montgomery County  
(610) 645-6145

West Vincent Township, Chester County  
(610) 827-7932 ■



### 3. Lot Averaging Standard

#### DESCRIPTION:

Lot averaging adds flexibility to subdivision design. This practice allows lot sizes to vary while the overall density of a site is kept constant. Lot averaging can be used to assist in the preservation of natural features, such as wetlands or wooded areas. Allowing variation in lot sizes may also make it easier to create a well designed subdivision on an awkwardly shaped parcel.

#### BENEFITS:

Lot averaging is a tool that facilitates full development of difficult areas within the development district. It facilitates development of sites with natural resource or other limitations to their full potential.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

Provisions authorizing lot averaging should be included in the zoning ordinance under the sections that deals with dimensional requirements.

The number of dwelling units permitted in subdivisions using lot averaging is determined by density limits in the zoning ordinance. However, to avoid disturbing natural features on a site, the size of the lots vary. Some homes are sited on large lots so that the house may be placed on the lot without encroachment into wetlands, wooded areas, or other natural features. Since some lots on the site are made larger, the size of other lots is reduced on areas of the site without resource limitations. This allows the

number of units permitted by the ordinance to be located on the site.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Doylestown, Warrington and Upper Southampton Townships in Bucks County** include provisions in their zoning ordinance for lot averaging.

**Schuylkill, West Whiteland and Birmingham Township in Chester County** include provisions in their zoning ordinances for lot averaging.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Doylestown Township, Bucks County  
(215) 348-9915

Warrington Township, Bucks County  
(215) 343-9350

Upper Southampton Township, Bucks County  
(215) 322-9700

Schuylkill Township, Chester County  
(610) 933-4428

West Whiteland Township, Chester County  
(610) 363-9525

Birmingham Township, Chester County  
(610) 793-2600 ■



## 4. Flexible Lot Size

### DESCRIPTION:

Large lot size zoning has been the traditional method for land regulation in rural areas. This approach sets minimum lot sizes at one or more acres per dwelling unit throughout areas of the community where rural character predominates, minimal public infrastructure is planned, and little development is anticipated.

Provisions for larger lots may be useful in areas that are not served by public water or sewer (on-lot sewage systems need adequate drainage field areas to function properly or wells must be located a safe distance away from the septic system's drainage field). Large lot developments may also be appropriate in areas with less productive farmland and/or sensitive natural features.

### BENEFITS:

Flexible Lot Size provisions are easy to devise, establish and administer.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Lot size standards are part of a municipality's zoning ordinance. The Pennsylvania courts have limited municipality's ability to require large lot sizes for single family homes. Courts place the burden of proof on the municipality to show that a large minimum lot size requirement furthers a legitimate public purpose and that it is not discriminatory.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

#### Newtown Area Zoning Ordinance in Bucks County –

- Conservation Management District: Three-acre minimum lots to protect groundwater resources in an area dependent on wells.
- Jericho Mountain District: Five-acre minimum lots, due to steep slopes, poor suitability for on-lot sewer systems, high erosion potential, and extremely limited groundwater availability.

#### Quakertown Area Zoning Ordinance in Bucks County –

- Resource Protection District: Five-acre minimum lots to protect areas consisting of natural features, such as forest, steep slope, scenic areas, wetlands, floodplains, and lakes/lakeshores.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Bucks County Planning Commission  
(215) 345-3400

For more information please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



## 5. “Traditional” Neighborhood Development (TND)

### DESCRIPTION:

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) is a compact form of development. It may be used to create a more diversified community for residents, by having a pedestrian oriented design and central community facilities, parks and stores.

Recreating small town character is a primary goal of traditional neighborhood development. This is achieved through a number of aspects of community design. Providing a hospitable environment for pedestrians is an important goal of a TND and vital to ensuring that residents can conveniently visit central community facilities. Within a TND all streets have sidewalks and on-street parking is common. The design of the streets (narrow, with multiple intersections) is intended to slow traffic and reduce its volume.

TNDs also include a central, mixed-use core of community facilities (schools, day care centers, post office, churches) and small retail establishments (corner markets, dry cleaners) and a variety of housing types. Public spaces reminiscent of town squares are an important component of TNDs and strict architectural codes are common. Most villages in Pennsylvania are TNDs.

### BENEFITS:

TND is a compact form of development, which uses land efficiently. Residents can walk to central community facilities and street design is intended to slow traffic.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

TND is a relatively new concept. It requires a large site and/or coordinated development of adjacent sites for full implementation of the concept.

Before a municipality can approve a project with a TND design, it must usually amend local zoning and subdivision ordinances to permit the design.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Uwchlan Township, Chester County** – The Gardens at Eagleview is a TND of approximately 100 dwelling units built on a street-grid pattern. The Gardens at Eagleview feature zero lot lines and alleyways.

**Nine Mile Run Project, City of Pittsburgh** – The 238-acre Nine Mile Run site is the largest land acquisition in the Urban Redevelopment Authority's history. The site, formerly used as a landfill for waste byproducts of steelmaking operations throughout the region, will be the site of a new neighborhood that could support more than 700 upscale housing units.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Uwchlan Township, Chester County  
(610) 363-9450

City Planning Office, City of Pittsburgh  
(412) 255-2200 ■



## 1. Landscape Features/ Site Analysis Map

### DESCRIPTION:

A Landscape Features/Site Analysis Map is a tool used to provide more information than is typically presented for subdivisions that produce only house lots and streets. Information needed to compile the site analysis map is readily available from existing published sources, and is therefore economically feasible for applicants. Landowners should be consulted because they may possess valuable information about their properties. The site analysis map is perhaps one of the more important documents in the subdivision design process, because it provides the information to assist with design decisions.

### BENEFIT:

This tool provides an information base for the site design and design type to be used in development. It provides early identification of highly regulated and sensitive natural resources.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Information that is typically required on a landscape features/site analysis map may include the following:

1. Location, size and ownership of any underground utilities, rights-of-way, or easements;
2. Contours indicating existing slope of land;
3. Natural features, large trees, wood lands, floodplains, lakes, ponds, watercourses, wetlands, soils, wildlife habitat and steep slopes;

4. Buildings, farmlands, historic, archaeological, and cultural features;
5. Views into and out from the site; and
6. Groundwater recharge areas.

The various landscape features can be grouped into two categories. The first, "primary conservation areas," includes inherently unbuildable lands that are unsuitable for development. Other resources fall into the category of "secondary conservation areas," which comprise noteworthy elements of the property that are not wet, flood prone, or steep, but which should still be considered for conservation purposes. If a community-wide Natural Resources Inventory has been completed as part of the municipality's comprehensive plan, much of this information may already exist.

Once all the pertinent features have been identified, located, and evaluated in terms of their significance, they may be compiled and looked at together and incorporated into a composite map. All "buildable" land will be those areas not limited by the primary conservation areas. The residual land to be considered for development will therefore consist of one or more of these other resource types, which are then prioritized to select those that are most critical, significant or irreplaceable (secondary conservation areas). These decisions should be based on the community or county-wide goals and desires for preservation of sensitive land features.

After completing the existing resources/site analysis map, a joint field visit

*(Landscape Features/Site Analysis Map, Cont'd)*

should be conducted to allow for planning commission members to walk the property with the developer and his design team.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Ringfield, Chadds Ford Township, Delaware County** – Approximately 55 acres of this 64-acre site have been preserved as open meadows and natural woodlands. With meadowland, dogwood trees, and a pond occupying the public viewshed, the layout of the neighborhood helps to preserve the township's rural character. The original stone farmhouse is situated on an outparcel.

**Farmview, Lower Makefield Township in Bucks County** – Located on a 418 acre site, Farmview is a 322 lot "density-neutral" subdivision whose layout was designed to conserve 213 acres of land, including 145 acres of cropland and 68 acres of mature woods. While 59 percent of the original farmland was needed for development, 41 percent categorized as prime agricultural and farmland of statewide importance was able to be preserved in addition to nearly all of the wooded areas.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Natural Lands Trust  
(610) 353-5587 ■



## 2. Early Sketch Plan Alternatives

### DESCRIPTION:

The sketch plan is a useful first step in the preliminary design process, showing the general location of proposed roads, development areas and conservation areas. The Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) does not provide for a Sketch Plan requirement before the Preliminary Plan and the Final Plan; the early sketch plan is a separate procedure.

In its basic form, the early sketch plan may consist of simple “bubble maps” drawn on tracing paper overlay sheets placed on top of the landscape feature/site analysis map, and for this reason they are sometimes referred to as “Sketch Plan Overlays”.

### BENEFITS:

Sketch plans cost little to prepare, as they involve virtually no engineering input except for a general knowledge of soil and slope conditions (which are pertinent for septic systems and street alignments). These plans can encourage innovative and high quality development and alert a developer to early limitations and potential conservation areas. When employed in the earliest stages of site planning, this tool often saves time overall by effectively avoiding protracted discussion and delays at the preliminary plan stage.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

This tool is not specified in the MPC. However, if the local ordinance requires a sketch plan to be submitted, it must be reviewed as a preliminary plan within the required ninety-day time limit.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Farmview, Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County** - Located on a 418 acre site, Farmview is a 322 lot “density-neutral” subdivision whose layout was designed to conserve 213 acres of land, including 145 acres of cropland and 68 acres of mature woods. While 59 percent of the original farmland was needed for development, 41 percent categorized as prime agricultural and farmland of statewide importance was able to be preserved in addition to nearly all of the wooded areas.

### CONTACT INFORMATION/ FUNDING SOURCE(S):

Natural Lands Trust  
(610) 353-5587 ■





## 1. Residential Performance Zoning

### DESCRIPTION:

Performance zoning, like cluster zoning, allows lot sizes to be reduced, in exchange for providing open space on a site. Residential performance zoning allows increased flexibility in site design to protect sensitive natural areas and allow for the provision of a variety of housing types. Performance zoning is more sophisticated than cluster zoning, in that it requires natural resource protection and allows for developments with multiple housing types.

The three standards controlling performance-zoning subdivisions are:

**Density** – The number of dwelling units allowed per acre of the site. Most communities using performance zoning require a site capacity calculation be made, to determine the number of permitted units on the site.

**Impervious Surface Ratio** – Performance zoning limits the percentage of a site that can be covered by impervious surfaces.

**Open Space Ratio** – All performance-zoning subdivisions are required to have a minimum percentage of community open space. Undeveloped land devoted to natural resource protection can count toward fulfilling open space requirements. Some communities require that a certain amount of the open space be suitable for recreation purposes.

Within zoning districts of a community, each of the performance zoning standards

for density, open space, and impervious surface can vary to permit development with the desired character. The tool permits a variety of housing types to be used in the subdivision, so long as the required density, open space, and impervious surface requirements are met.

### BENEFIT:

Residential performance zoning ensures protection of sensitive natural areas and allows innovation in project design. It also provides opportunity for construction of a variety of housing types.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Performance zoning is a complex form of zoning. The zoning ordinance should specify minimum lot sizes, setbacks, parking requirements, and any other site design requirements for each housing type. This type of zoning can require more engineering and higher design costs compared with conventional zoning.

The list of calculations and formulas that must be met for performance zoning developments is substantial. It is useful for a municipality enacting performance zoning to have educational materials available to illustrate how these calculations are made, and the benefits that performance zoning can have.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Bucks County Planning Commission** – has developed a model Performance Zoning Ordinance that has been

*(Residential Performance Zoning, Cont'd)*

adopted, with slight modifications, by 29 of the county's 54 municipalities. This model ordinance provides standards for natural resource protection, as well as density, open space ratios, and impervious surface limits for a variety of housing types in a number of districts.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Bucks County Planning Commission  
(215) 345-3400 ■

## 2. Design and Improvement of Commercial Settings: Commercial Boulevards, Buffer Yard Provisions and Parking Provisions

### DESCRIPTION:

Three commercial performance standards exist to facilitate the design and improvement of commercial settings. They are: commercial boulevards, buffer yard provisions and parking provisions.

**Commercial Boulevards** – Designating and improving a commercial boulevard is a method of enhancing the appearance and character of a community. It can give identity to a stretch of road and make it a safer and more attractive place to travel and shop.

One of the most viewed portions of suburban areas is the highway strip. Communities can institute programs to give highway strips a more inviting identity.

**Buffer Yard Provisions** – Areas used to soften the outline of buildings, to screen glare and noise, and to create a visual and/or physical barrier between land uses. Buffer yards may be provided for between different types of uses (e.g. industrial and residential) and along existing or proposed streets. The amount of buffering required is determined by the type of use proposed and the adjacent uses or street types surrounding the proposed development.

**Parking Provisions** – Parking is one of the most necessary, and often the least attractive elements of site development. Parking lots can cause environmental degradation. However, there are steps municipalities can take to reduce the amount and impacts of parking on their community. These include: public transportation, incentives for

carpooling, public parking garages, off-site parking lots, staggered shared parking, reduces parking requirements, reductions in space sizes, angled parking, and pervious surface paving.

### BENEFITS:

With commercial boulevards public and private investment is made towards improvements. By investing in the roadway, local government provides an example to neighboring property owners of its commitment to corridor improvements, thus encouraging property owners to make similar investments. Examples of roadway improvements include:

- traffic management improvements;
- landscaping;
- installation of street trees;
- sidewalks/bike paths;
- relocation of utilities below ground;
- lighting improvements; and
- coordination of traffic signage.

Buffer yard provisions, on the other hand, minimizes the impacts of neighboring uses. Communities can allow existing vegetation to count toward buffering requirements.

Parking provisions can help a municipality minimize the impacts on the streetscape and the environment.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

**Commercial Boulevard** – Effective commercial boulevard programs have two components:

1. Public investment in the roadway; and

*(Design and Improvement of Commercial Settings, Cont'd)*

2. Regulation of private development along the roadway.

Improvement of the amenities within the road right-of-way are the responsibility of the municipality, unless they are state highways under the authority of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and would need to be coordinated with PennDOT.

Sometimes the highway corridor is designated as a unique zoning district. More often, an overlay district is placed along the corridor. The corridor district sets zoning ordinance requirements which facilitate safe travel along the corridor, through permitting compatible land uses and requiring their siting and access design to be in keeping with the character of the corridor. Examples include: sign controls, land use limitations, landscaping requirements and access management.

**Buffer Yard Requirements** – Buffer Yard Provisions should include:

1. A method of determining when buffer yards must be installed;
2. The width of the buffer yards; and
3. Screening requirements (either landscaping or fence wall).

Under performance-based buffer yard requirements, a table is devised, where the proposed uses are matched with existing adjacent uses (or zoning class of adjacent vacant land), and a resulting required buffer yard class is set. In general, uses that have greater incompatibility require larger width yards and/or increased amounts of landscaping. Options are provided for the method of landscaping as well.

**Parking Provisions** – Municipalities can take steps to ensure that parking areas will be designed and landscaped to minimize their impacts on the streetscape and the environment. Examples include: buffer requirements, landscaping requirements and prohibiting front yard parking.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

**Warrington Township in Bucks County** has a Growth Management Plan that includes a discussion of a boulevard treatment of Route 611 through the Township.

**Middletown Township in Bucks County** provides several planting options and allows existing vegetation to contribute to the buffer.

**Buckingham Township in Bucks County** has provisions in its zoning ordinance for shared parking lots, off-site parking, and reductions in required parking amounts.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Warrington Township, Bucks County  
(215) 343-9350

Middletown Township, Bucks County  
(215) 943-0300

Buckingham Township, Bucks County  
(215) 794-8834

For more information please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



### 3. Industrial Performance Standards

#### DESCRIPTION:

Industrial performance standards provide a method for determining the manufacturing uses permitted within a zoning district and allow industrial uses based on the impacts of the manufacturing process. Maximum standards for emissions of noise, vibrations, odor, and other aspects are specified in a zoning ordinance. Industrial facilities that violate federal, state or local standards are not permitted in the zone, and may be forced to cease operation and/or be fined.

#### BENEFITS:

Industrial performance standards recognize the ability of industry to change and adjust its process to minimize impacts. The standards regulate actual impacts.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

The review standards for this tool should be measurable and fair. Absolute numbers and thresholds can be measured and met. Potential impacts of a project are estimated at the site plan review stage. This requires an understanding of the process that will occur on the site, the materials being used and created in the process, and any remediation measures being implemented. Understanding all these factors requires knowledge, and the actual plan review may take a considerable amount of time. Communities may wish to evaluate potential impacts prior to construction of a project.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Doylestown Borough and East Rockhill Township in Bucks County have performance standards for noise, emissions, odor, and other potential impacts which may apply to all development in the municipality.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Doylestown Borough, Bucks County  
(215) 345-4140

East Rockwell Township, Bucks County  
(215) 257-9156 ■





## 4. Overlay Zoning Provisions

### DESCRIPTION:

An overlay zoning district applies regulations to an area in addition to and superseding the requirements of the underlying zoning district(s). Such a district may recognize unique features, either natural or man-made, requiring special attention, or may facilitate development of a special character.

### BENEFITS:

Overlay zoning allows regulations to be tailored to specific conditions. Administration is the same as any zoning district.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

In general, the provisions of a zoning district must apply uniformly to each class of uses or structures within each district. However, Section 605 of the MPC authorizes additional classifications, potentially through the use of overlay zoning, for:

Making transitional provisions at and near the boundaries of districts;

Regulating nonconforming uses and structures;

Regulating, restricting, or prohibiting uses and structures at, along or near:

- major thoroughfares, their intersections and interchanges, transportation arteries and rail or transit terminals
- natural or artificial bodies of water, boat docks and related facilities

- places of relatively steep slope or grade, or other areas of hazardous geological or topographic features
- public buildings and public grounds
- aircraft, helicopter, rocket and spacecraft facilities
- places having unique historical, architectural or patriotic interest or value
- floodplain areas, agricultural areas, sanitary landfills, and other places having a special character or use affecting and affected by their surroundings;

Encouraging innovation and the promotion of flexibility, economy and ingenuity in development, including subdivisions and land developments, and for the purpose of authorizing increases in the permissible density of population or intensity of a particular use based upon expressed standards and criteria set forth in the zoning ordinance; and

Regulating transferable development rights on a voluntary basis.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

#### Yardley Borough in Bucks County

has placed areas adjoining the Delaware Canal in an overlay district to protect its historic and recreational qualities.

#### Hollidaysburg Borough in Blair County

has an overlay zoning district encompassing the National Register Historic District of the Borough.

*(Overlay Zoning Provisions, Cont'd)*

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Yardley Borough, Bucks County  
(215) 493-6832

Hollidaysburg Borough, Blair County  
(814) 695-7543 ■

## 5. Overlay Districts

### DESCRIPTION:

The concept of an overlay district implies that, for a specific area within a municipality, because of some unique characteristic of that area, more than one zoning district regulates development. An overlay can be used as a layer over more than one zoning district; it can even cross municipal boundaries if applied at a multi-municipal or county level by the participating municipalities. While the underlying zoning district(s) designates basic zoning regulations, such as permitted uses, conditional uses, and yard and bulk requirements, the overlay district may establish more restrictive development regulations, such as setbacks, design guidelines, signage, buffers and an additional list of uses. The overlay district regulations will generally prevail over those of the underlying zoning district(s).

For infrastructure planning, overlay districts can be used in a variety of ways for managing concerns related to such things as viewshed protection, safety, access, environment, mobility, aesthetics and land use planning in the area. Examples of the use of overlay districts for these purposes would include a scenic overlay district, an interchange overlay district, and a floodplain overlay district.

### BENEFITS:

In the context of infrastructure planning, overlay districts provide buffers for adjacent land uses while allowing continued traffic movement around the overlay district. They provide sufficient setbacks to facilitate potential widening of right-of-way and/or access ramps,

without disrupting surrounding uses. And, maintain circulation movement through the overlay district while accommodating additional development.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

When an overlay district crosses municipal boundaries, impacts from outside the municipality can adversely affect the district and hinder its success. In this case a multi-municipal or county plan may be a successful approach to overlay district planning.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Examples where scenic overlay districts have been used include:

**The Newlin Township, Chester County Comprehensive Plan** emphasizes the unique value of scenic roads to the Township, and summarizes the Township's Scenic Roads Inventory. Scenic roads in the inventory were classified by applying a set of standard physical characteristics, including proximity to watercourses, horizontal and vertical curves, narrow cartways, focal points, historic sites, and so on. Each road has different scenic qualities due to views of streams, woodlands and mature trees, meadows, farmlands, notable or historic structures, and other scenic features. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that natural features adjacent to these roads impose strong design limitations for improvement of roads. The scenic road element of the Township Comprehensive Plan provides strong support for efforts the township may undertake to protect the scenic quality of its roads. To this end, the implementation section of the plan

*(Overlay Districts, Cont'd)*

indicates that the zoning ordinance will be linked to the protection programs identified in the Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan for scenic and historic resources.

**The North Coventry Township, Chester County, Zoning Ordinance**, adopted in 1996, includes a Scenic Preservation Overlay District. The purpose of this district includes the preservation of scenic approaches to the Township, promotion and preservation of historic structures, and encouragement of the continued preservation of open space, recreation, and conservation uses. The ordinance specifies the location and extent of the district on each side of Route 724, a scenic entranceway into the Township. While uses permitted in the district are limited, the ordinance allows open space and recreation uses associated with residential development to be located within the designated setback. It is hoped that this will encourage developers to use the cluster development option in a way that will both preserve open space and limit visual intrusion into the scenic district. Adaptive reuse of historic structures within the district is also permitted to encourage their preservation. The use of off-premises signs (billboards) and portable signs is prohibited within the district. The construction of new roads and driveways crossing the overlay district is discouraged where access can be taken from existing roads and driveways.

Examples where Interchange Overlay Districts have been used:

1. **North Coventry Township, Chester County**, has an Interchange Overlay District in their zoning ordinance. The district is comprised of land

areas adjacent to the Route 100/724 interchange. This district permits certain uses by conditional approval, in addition to those permitted by the base zoning. The district also establishes additional regulations for buffers, transition between uses, signage, parking, and access management.

2. **Lower Pottsgrove Township, Montgomery County**, adopted an Interchange District in 1972. The district is located south of the Pottstown bypass (S.R. 422), and allows a mix of uses, aimed toward the "future economic vitality of the interchange area."
3. **Upper Providence Township, Montgomery County**, has successfully used two zoning districts along the Pottstown Expressway (S.R. 422) to encourage the development of corporate centers in the Interchange Office District, and multi-use commercial and office campuses with compatible uses planned as per a master plan for the complete tract in the Interchange Office Support District.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Newlin Township, Chester County  
(610) 436-6388

North Coventry Township, Chester County  
(610) 323-1694

Lower Pottsgrove Township, Montgomery County  
(610) 323-0436

Upper Providence Township,  
Montgomery County (610) 323-0436 ■



## VI. Preservation and Conservation Techniques

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The natural and cultural resources of Pennsylvania's communities are significant factors in our economic vitality, environmental health and quality of life. Farmland and forests provide for employment, personal income and taxes to local and regional economies. In fact, farming and forestry are two of the largest economic sectors in the Commonwealth. Farming and forestry enterprises use and conserve renewable natural resources. When farmers and forestland owners use best management practices, farming and forestry are sound land use practices in and of themselves.

Together with greenways, waterways, wetlands and other kinds of natural areas, farms and forests function as valuable resources for open space, wildlife habitat, water protection, recreation, and heritage tourism. Farms and forests are also important cultural resources, and their continued presence maintains Pennsylvania's rural culture, lifestyles and traditional economy.

Cultural resources such as archeological and historic sites and landscapes also shape community character and serve as an important educational and economic tourism asset. Through sound land use practices, Pennsylvania's vast array of natural and cultural resources can be enhanced, preserved and protected for the present generation, as well as for future generations. It is only through a commitment toward use and implementation of sound land use practices that future generations will be able to benefit from the Commonwealth's resources. ■



## 1. Resource Inventory / Analysis Maps

### DESCRIPTION:

Every municipal comprehensive plan should contain at least a basic resource inventory of the landscape. The Natural Resource Inventory can be used to help protect the community's special resources by mapping the exact locations of environmental, cultural, historic and scenic features in the municipality, as well as resources to be used as future energy sources and mineral reserves. The ideal inventory is one that is broad enough to include the full range of natural and cultural resources existing in the community, and one that contains sufficient detail to support recommendations regarding appropriate land use activities and intensities.

### BENEFITS:

When the locations of environmental, cultural, historic and scenic features are known, they can be preserved. When such features are linear or are part of larger systems, the conservation areas within developments can be established so that they can eventually be joined together to form an interconnected network of protected open space.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Municipalities could begin this process by tapping into a considerable body of information from sources that they may access at little or no cost. When outside financial resources are available, municipalities may choose to hire consultants to produce very detailed inventories.

The following list provides a basic description of the principal resources and maps, as well as sources for information recommended for inclusion in the community inventory.

### Natural Resource Opportunity/ Constraints Map

- *Wetlands and their Buffers* – Lands that are seasonally or permanently wet comprise one of the most basic resources in any community. These should be one of the first resources to be identified, together with dry, upland buffer areas around them. Soil survey maps published by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and the National Wetland Inventory Maps published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are good sources to use for general wetland areas. For more detailed mapping, field verified wetland delineations should be used.
- *Floodways and Floodplains* – The maps published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) constitute the most accurate and readily available data on the location of floodways and floodplains in most communities.
- *Moderate and Steep Slopes* – Slopes of between 15 percent and 20 percent require special site planning and slopes with gradients over 25 percent should be avoided for clearing, regrading or construction. They can easily be prepared by a surveyor,

*(Resource Inventory / Analysis Maps, Cont'd)*

- engineer, planner, or landscape architect, working from readily available topographic sheets printed by the U.S. Geological Survey.
- *Groundwater Resources and their Recharge Area* – Start with the U.S. Geological Survey to identify the aquifer(s) underlying the area and surrounding area contributing to the recharge of each aquifer.
  - *Woodlands* – In areas where the majority of original forest has been cleared away for commercial agriculture, woodlands may be described as remnants, often located in low lying areas with relatively damp soils or on the steeper slopes. Vertical aerial photographs are the best sources for defining the map of wood lands, hedgerows, or tree lines and are commonly available through county offices of the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.
  - *Productive Farmland* – Soils rated as being “prime” or “of statewide significance” should be noted and can be obtained from the county Conservation Districts.
  - *Significant Wildlife and Vegetative Habitat* – Habitats of threatened or endangered wildlife and plant species should be mapped, at least in their general location, whenever possible. Such information is available from the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI).
  - *Energy Resources* – Setting aside areas containing extractable resources as open space ensures needed and economical resources for future generations while providing needed green space. Good stewardship includes knowledge and planning of resources.

### Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources Map

Official lists such as the National Register of Historic Places and the historic or archaeological site inventories compiled by state and county offices of historic preservation and cultural resources can provide a basic inventory. Landowners and local historians or historical groups should also always be consulted. Scenic view sheds can be recorded from two person windshield surveys with an annotated base map of existing buildings and patterns of field and forest.

### Linked Open Space Network Map

This map identifies those parts of undeveloped properties where the municipality has preliminarily determined the importance of designing new development around certain land and water features in such a way that an interconnected network of open space or conservation land can be protected.

### Greenways/Trails Map

Conservation subdivisions and linked open space areas make it easier for municipalities to implement community-wide greenway network plans and maps. Local officials generally depend in part upon land designated for permanent conservation purposes in new subdivisions and designated transportation corridors.

*(Resource Inventory / Analysis Maps, Cont'd)*

#### **Water Resources Map/Plan**

All water resources, including wetlands, streams, swales, springs, and lowland areas are identified and mapped. Existing water resource facilities should also be identified including detention basin locations and capacity, other stormwater management facilities, water supply systems and other water related resources. Sensitive areas or exceptional value waterways and wetlands are of primary importance when mapping these features. The plan can also include water quality protection analysis and water quantity analysis, as well as wastewater treatment methods.

Protecting the lands identified in the Resource Inventory/Analysis Maps can take many forms. In addition to outright acquisition or the purchase or transfer of development rights (PDRs and TDRs), an inexpensive and practical technique is that called "Open Space Zoning/Conservation Design" combined with early sketch plan alternatives (Section V) may be employed.

Some communities have not yet completed a basic resource inventory due to time and fiscal constraints. However, there are some short-term alternatives available to municipalities whose comprehensive plan does not yet include a proper resource inventory. Such communities should, in the meantime, include specific language in their existing plan requiring that, in all future development proposals, the applicant shall prepare the detailed site inventory maps.

#### **EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

Under DCNR's **Growing Greener Program**, the Natural Lands Trust has prepared "Township-wide Maps of Potential Conservation Lands" for four townships: Chadd's Ford, East Pikeland, Wallace, and West Vincent, all in Chester County.

#### **Montgomery County Planning**

**Commission** – The Commission developed an aerial perspective sketch illustrating how various protected resource lands – productive farmlands, woodland habitat, roadside vistas, and municipal trail networks – will eventually coalesce to form linked open space systems in communities applying a conservation design approach.

#### **West Manchester Township, York**

**County** – West Manchester's Community-wide Open Space Network Map of potential conservation lands gives clear guidance to landowners and developers as to where new development is encouraged on their properties. Township officials engaged a consultant to draw, on the official tax parcel maps, boundaries of the new conservation lands network as it crossed various properties, showing how areas required to be preserved in each new development could be located so they would ultimately connect with each other. In this formerly agricultural municipality the hedgerows, woodland remnants, and the riparian buffer along the creek were identified as core elements of the conservation network.

*(Resource Inventory / Analysis Maps, Cont'd)*

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Montgomery County Planning  
Commission  
(610) 278-3730

Natural Lands Trust  
(610) 353-5587

West Manchester Township, York County  
(717) 792-3505

Pennsylvania Department of Conserva-  
tion and Natural Resources (PA DCNR)  
Bureau of Recreation and Conservation  
(717) 787-7672

Pennsylvania Department of Conserva-  
tion and Natural Resources (PA DCNR)  
Bureau of Geologic and Topographic  
Survey  
(717) 787-2169 ■

## 2. County Natural Areas Inventory

### DESCRIPTION:

Since 1988, the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation in the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has been partnering with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) to study and inventory the critical natural areas of the Commonwealth that contain rare, threatened or endangered species; natural communities of special concern; and significant ecological and geological landscapes worthy of protection. The inventories are done on a county or multi-county basis with the information provided to the County Commissioners and County Planning Office. The information is also incorporated into the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI), a database maintained by DCNR's Bureau of Forestry of the state's natural heritage.

As of October 1, 1999, 32 counties and parts of two counties have been inventoried or are in the process of completing inventories. There are 35 counties that have not been inventoried, and the earlier county inventories need to be updated. Current funding sources allow DCNR to fund approximately three to five counties per year.

### BENEFITS:

The counties use the inventory as base information on which to build county comprehensive plans, or to supplement plans already in place with information that helps counties make environmentally and economically-balanced decisions regarding land use, zoning, and open

space preservation. Municipalities within the county have easy access to the information to help guide local elected officials and planners with their land use, subdivision and permitting decisions and strengthen the partnerships between county and community planners when making land use decisions.

County natural areas inventories and the PNDI are used by public agencies, private developers and consultants to identify significant ecological areas, and to guide development away from those areas into other areas more suitable for development. Early use of county natural areas inventories and PNDI in the development process often saves planning and permitting time and costs.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

DCNR provides counties with 50 percent grants from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (Key 93) Program and 75 percent grants from the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program to undertake the inventories. The counties subcontract with WPC and TNC to actually perform the inventories and summarize the findings in a written report that includes maps.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Several counties have given natural areas inventories a higher degree of importance as a foundation for all other county and municipal planning, land use, zoning, permitting and open

*(County Natural Areas Inventory, Cont'd)*

space decisions. Some examples are **Allegheny County, Bucks County, Centre County, Erie County, Lancaster County and Monroe County.**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

The Nature Conservancy  
(717) 948-3962

Pennsylvania Department of  
Conservation and Natural Resources,  
Bureau of Recreation and Conservation  
(717) 787-7672

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
(412) 281-1487

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

DCNR provides counties with 50 percent grants from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (Key 93) Program and 75 percent grants from the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program to undertake the inventories.

Pennsylvania Department of  
Conservation and Natural Resources  
(PA DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and  
Conservation  
(717) 787-7672 ■

### 3. Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI)

#### DESCRIPTION:

The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) is a partnership between the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)'s Bureau of Forestry, the Pennsylvania Science Office of The Nature Conservancy, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. PNDI collects, manages, and makes available information on Pennsylvania's most significant ecological features. These features include plant and animal species of special concern, exemplary natural communities, and outstanding geologic features. Site-specific information describing these features is stored in an integrated data management system consisting of map, manual and computer files. The PNDI information system is regularly updated to include new information and to document changes at known sites. The result is Pennsylvania's most accurate, current and comprehensive source of information on special concern species and exemplary natural communities. Since 1988, a review of PNDI files has become routine in most environmental assessments.

#### BENEFITS:

With objective and accurate data, PNDI can help guide planning and development, avoiding damage to precious ecological areas.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

PNDI data is based on the best available information, but is still far from complete. For this reason, even

if a PNDI search fails to indicate the presence of species of special concern in a given area, such species may nonetheless be present. An on-site survey may reveal the presence of species not indicated by PNDI and should be used to supplement PNDI.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

PNDI is in three offices: The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy — working in Western Pennsylvania; The Nature Conservancy — working in eastern Pennsylvania; and the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry — statewide.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) Bureau of Forestry (717) 787-3444 ■



## 4. Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping

### DESCRIPTION:

Geographic Information System (GIS) is a system by which natural, cultural and political boundaries (features) are mapped by coordinating aerial photographs with the Global Positioning System. GIS gives counties and municipalities a common tool to accomplish cooperative comprehensive planning.

### BENEFITS:

GIS data is a good source of information to use for municipal and county planning. They provide accessibility to property ownership information. GIS mapping allows several layers of information to be readily available and maneuvered through the use of computer technology. Natural resources (wetlands, streams, forests, etc.) as well as infrastructure items (water, sewer, roads, etc.) can be included on the mapping so they can be considered in the planning process. Software can be used to overlay multiple layers of GIS data and analyze how this data is interrelated. Zoning overlays can also be included.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The challenges in implementing GIS mapping across Pennsylvania include the cost of the aerial photography and the technology needs (both in hardware and operator knowledge). After a municipality or county commits to GIS, there is also the challenge of upgrading the information on the maps on a continuous basis so that

they are as accurate as possible.

Another challenge is promoting a standard data environment so that data from local government GIS can be assembled for regional and state level planning.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Several townships and counties are currently using GIS mapping to help develop county and township maps for cooperative planning. **West Bradford, Pocopson and Pennsbury Townships in Chester County**, as well as **Lancaster County** are implementing GIS mapping.

### Pennsylvania Geospatial Information Council (PAGIC) –

As part of Governor Ridge's Executive Order 1999-1, the Commonwealth established a statewide geospatial data clearinghouse which provides for the sharing of common geospatial data among state agencies and local governments. PADEP uses the clearinghouse to provide information to local governments on how land use decisions may impact air quality, water quality and quantity, soil erosion and other natural resources.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Allegheny Heritage Development Corporation and the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy teamed up to develop a new watershed GIS characterization and modeling prototype for the **Kiski-Conemaugh Rivers Watershed** in Western Pennsylvania. Even though the system

*(Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping, Cont'd)*

was developed to assess the effects of acid mine drainage treatments on water quality, it can be customized to analyze a wide array of natural, cultural and recreational resource conditions and to analyze the effects and cost of sprawl and other land use decisions.

**The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Natural Lands Trust** have partnered on the development of a "Smart Conservation" GIS modeling system that is being demonstrated in the **Schuylkill River Watershed** in Eastern Pennsylvania.

The Smart Conservation model is a method of identifying, evaluating and prioritizing Natural Areas using criteria developed by regional experts on aquatics, birds, mammals, plants and invertebrates. This model can help policymakers and conservation practitioners prioritize between conservation opportunities and sound land use strategies.

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection GIS  
(717) 787-7116  
www.dep.state.pa.us. (choose Geographic Information Systems)

DCNR Topographic and Geologic Survey  
(717) 783-1582

Allegheny Heritage Development Corporation  
(814) 467-6816

Natural Lands Trust  
(610) 353-5587 ■

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

West Bradford Township  
(610) 269-4174

Pocopson Township, Chester County  
(610) 793-2151

Pennsbury Township, Chester County  
(610) 388-7323

Lancaster County GIS  
(717) 391-7550

Lancaster County Planning Commission  
(717) 299-8333

## 5. Growing Greener Conservation Design

### DESCRIPTION:

Growing Greener Conservation Design is a package of related techniques for conserving interconnected networks of open space within expanding communities. It enables local officials to designate and protect portions of nearly every property as each parcel is proposed for residential development. This package of techniques is unique in the way that it accomplishes its conservation objectives without disturbing landowner equity, without constituting a “taking,” without depending upon public tax dollars or landowner generosity, and without involving complicated regulations for transferring development rights from one part of the community to another. It does not require new state legislation or changes in state agency regulations, and has been carefully reviewed for compliance with the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) and related case law.

### BENEFITS:

The Growing Greener land-use practices benefit the protection of greenways and other interconnected networks of open space. Secondary benefits may, in some cases, include a higher quality of life for residents, enhanced protection for both the quantity and quality of water supplies, increased opportunities for passive and active recreation, improved property values, and extra protection for wildlife habitat and travel corridors. Use of the Growing Greener practices may help conservation values to become fully integrated into the development design process.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Growing Greener combines several land use practices relating to the comprehensive plan, several practices related to zoning ordinances, and several others related to subdivision and land development ordinances. Growing Greener places extra emphasis on Build-Out Maps and Greenway Maps (called “Maps of Potential Conservation Lands”) that essentially predetermine the location of open space within new conservation subdivisions. Among the practices related to zoning is Open Space Zoning, and density determination based on unconstrained lands (“Net-Outs”) or on “Yield Plans.” Those practices pertaining to subdivision ordinances include: the submission requirements, the review procedures, and a special four-step design approach for laying out new houselots and streets around predetermined greenway networks. Among the subdivision practices contained in Growing Greener are those associated with Conservation Subdivision Design and the Conceptual Preliminary Plan.

Information and technical assistance about Growing Greener Conservation Design is being provided by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and several other state agencies through a contractual arrangement with the Natural Lands Trust (NLT). Every year NLT conducts several county or multi-county workshops, presents the concept at state-wide or regional conferences and forums, meets with individual municipalities, conducts community audits, and provides ordinance writing and subdivision

*(Growing Greener Conservation Design, Cont'd)*

design assistance. Several technical assistance products are also available.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

- Land use regulations: Communities which have adopted Growing Greener subdivision and zoning ordinances include **Upper Salford Township, Montgomery County** and **West Vincent Township, Chester County**. **Wallace Township, Chester County**, the first Township in the Commonwealth to adopt the full menu of Growing Greener zoning options was awarded the 1999 Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence, in recognition of this innovative approach to land use.
- Land conserved through the development process: Across the Commonwealth there are examples of conservation designs which adhere to the Growing Greener design principles. For example, **Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County** has, during the past seven years, preserved over 500 acres of farmland, at no public cost, as a result of five conservation subdivisions wherein at least half of the buildable ground was set aside as permanently protected open space.



VI

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation  
 (717) 772-3742

Natural Lands Trust  
 (610) 353-5587 ■

## 6. Open Space and Natural Areas Acquisition

### DESCRIPTION:

This practice is based on the acquisition of land by a municipality or any governmental or public agency for the purpose of preservation of open space and natural areas. The purchase can be of fee simple title or conservation easements and is usually done by a governmental or public agency or a non-profit land trust organization. Land acquisition can be made at every level of government.

Along with farmland preservation programs, the above-described two acquisition programs are the primary methods and tools to help communities and non-profit conservation organizations effectuate sound land use through direct preservation and protection of open space.

### BENEFITS:

Acquisition of fee simple title or a conservation easement on land provides a more permanent long-term protection of open space and natural areas than through other methods such as zoning or subdivision requirements. Acquisition provides a means to enable nonprofit groups in partnership with communities to protect open space and natural areas at minimal or no cost and little administrative burden to local governments.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Pennsylvania DCNR has two sources of funding to help communities and non-profit groups implement acquisition of open space and natural areas projects; however, demand for DCNR's acquisition dollars currently exceeds the money

available under the Land Trust and Community Grants programs.

Because protected lands are often a magnet for development on adjacent parcels, communities may wish to adopt the technique called "Open Space Zoning/Conservation Design" (see Section V) that allows developers to create open space buffers along their common boundary with these protected properties.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Cranberry Township, Butler County** – In the early development stages of its community, Cranberry Township recognized the importance of the preservation of open space. Since the late 1980's, using the Planned Residential Development (PRD) provisions of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) (see Section V), Cranberry Township has protected over 1,000 acres of permanent open space. Since the 1990's there have been 3,080 single family residential units approved on 2,485 acres. Of this acreage, 909 acres, or approximately 37 percent, have been protected as permanent open space.

**French Pickering Creek Conservation Trust** — French Creek and Pickering Creek Conservation Trust acquired 135 acres to expand and preserve the Pine Swamp Preserve in Chester and Berks counties.

**Central Pennsylvania Conservancy** — The Central Pennsylvania Conservancy acquired 15 acres of land with

*(Open Space and Natural Areas Acquisition, Cont'd)*

“champion” trees to protect the Seven Gables natural area in Carlisle Borough and South Middleton Township, Cumberland County.

**Western Pennsylvania Conservancy** — The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy acquired 160 acres to protect Lake Pleasant glacial lake in Erie County.

**Pequea Township, Lancaster County** — Pequea Township acquired 66 acres to preserve the historic Pequea Silver Mine and surrounding unique natural areas.

**Manheim Township, Lancaster County** — Manheim Township acquired 67 acres of old growth woodlands and wet lands in Lancaster County.

**Salford Township, Montgomery County** — Salford Township, acquired 98 acres for natural resource protection along Ridge Valley Creek.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation  
(717) 783-2663

Cranberry Township,  
(724) 776-4806  
www.twp.cranberry.pa.us

Pequea Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 464-2322

Manheim Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 569-6408

Salford Township, Montgomery County  
(215) 257-5664

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Funding and technical assistance for acquisition of land can be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Fifty percent matching grants are available to nonprofit land trust conservancies for acquisition of land to protect open space and critical natural areas of the Commonwealth. In addition, other conservation organizations are also eligible for matching grants or land acquisition through the recently enacted Growing Greener legislation (Act 68 of 1999). Also, as part of its Key 93 Community Grants Program, an acquisition funding component is also available to help local governments acquire land for parks, open space, and natural areas protection.

During the five years that Key 93 programs have been in existence, over 31,000 acres of land have been acquired under these two Key 93 programs.

Several counties (Lancaster, Chester, Bucks, Montgomery and Monroe) and several communities (Buckingham and Solebury townships in Bucks County and East Marlborough and Willistown townships in Chester County) have passed bond issues or raised taxes for open space acquisition programs that are similar in scope, requirements and procedures to DCNR's programs and can provide the needed matching funds for DCNR's grants. ■



## 7. Coal Remining and New Reclamation Technologies



### DESCRIPTION:

Pennsylvania's abandoned mine lands memorialize a period of great economic and industrial growth in our state and country. However, the coal mining of the past still affects Pennsylvania's land and streams.

Mine reclamation refers to the process of cleaning up environmental pollutants and safety hazards associated with a site and returning the land to a productive condition. Since the 1960s, Pennsylvania has led the way in establishing mining laws and regulations to ensure reclamation occurs after active mining is completed. During the same time, Pennsylvania began an aggressive clean up of abandoned mine sites.

Each year, 1,500 to 3,500 acres of abandoned mine lands are permitted to be remined. The annual reclamation value of remining has reached more than \$7 million on recent years. Most permits issued in the anthracite region are for the remining of abandoned mines.

### BENEFITS:

Actively "remining" previously abandoned surface or deep coal mines is the most efficient way to reclaim abandoned mine lands.

Mine operators who mine abandoned areas must reclaim the land to current reclamation standards; remining cannot degrade existing water quality. In re-mining, the mine operator is not responsible for improving the water quality impaired by past mining, but water quality improvements are common with remining projects.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) offers many incentives to mine operators who engage in remining, but this must be done within the context of a specific permitting and enforcement program to ensure that current mining and reclamation practices will reduce, not increase, overall acid mine drainage.

County Conservation districts work to identify abandoned mine land problems and ways to reclaim them. The Western and Eastern Pennsylvania coalitions for Abandoned Mine Reclamation have organized to advise watershed groups, environmental organizations, and government about reclamation projects. These groups work with DEP to secure funding and technical support for their local projects.

DEP is also actively exploring new technologies for more effective mine reclamation. Research and demonstration projects, conducted in cooperation with other public and private entities, are proving that several different materials and processes enhance existing reclamation and mine drainage remediation projects and have

*(Coal Remining and New Reclamation Technologies, Cont'd)*

shown positive results on receiving streams. These include passive treatment systems and use of biosolids and alkaline coal ash in reclamation.

The Bark Camp Mine Reclamation Laboratory, Clearfield County, is the main stage for many of these projects. Surface applications of biosolids on mine spoil increase soil moisture and fertility and provide a beneficial alternative to disposal of biosolids in landfills or incinerators.

DEP also approves the beneficial use of environmentally safe by-products to enhance mine reclamation of remined sites. Alkaline rich materials like coal ash and lime dust are combined with mine spoil to prevent the formation and production of acid mine drainage.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

**Bark Camp Demonstration Project, Clearfield County** – The Bark Camp Mine Reclamation Laboratory is the main stage for many of DEP’s research and demonstration projects aimed at new techniques for more effective mine reclamation.

**Toby Creek Treatment Plant, Elk County** – Carbon dioxide is being used along with limestone to treat mine drainage. This project is done in conjunction with the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geologic Survey and DEP.

**Laurel Run, Cook Township, Westmoreland County** - A passive treatment test project using microorganisms to treat mine water for manganese.

**Swatara Creek, Lebanon and Schuylkill Counties** - Utilizing new system of

anoxic limestone drains and diversion wells where limestone is neutralizing agent that improves water quality.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

PA DEP Bureau of District Mining Operations  
(814) 472-1900  
www.dep.state.pa.us  
(click on to RECLAIM PA)

Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation  
(717) 622-0709

Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD140)  
(717) 236-1006

For more information on the Bark Camp Demonstration Project contact the PA DEP Hawk Run District Mining Office at (814) 342-8200.

Further information on the Toby Creek Treatment Plant can be found by contacting the PA DEP Knox District Mining Office at (814) 797-1191.

Information concerning Swatara Creek can be found by contacting PA DEP Pottsville District Mining Office at (717) 621-3118.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

DEP provides financial assistance to operators who are applying for remining permits through the Remining Operator’s Assistance Program (ROAP). ■

## 1. Greenways

### DESCRIPTION:

Greenways are generally linear corridors of public and private lands or water-based open space used primarily for recreational purposes. They can be trails, rail trails, rivers and other waterways, scenic byways, heritage tour routes, parks and linked tracts of open space. Greenways not only provide open space for human access and recreational use; they also function as corridors for wildlife habitat and movement, environmental protection and intermodal transportation.

In April of 1998, Governor Ridge created a Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Commission of 22 members representing government agencies, nonprofit organizations and the private sector. The Commission is currently undertaking a statewide greenways plan and developing a statewide greenways program that will include public workshops, GIS mapping, surveys, a web page, a clearinghouse and other technical assistance, funding, educational and outreach activities.

The Heritage Park Program, multi-county in nature, also is one of the State's leading efforts to promote greenways along corridors that demonstrate the industrial heritage of the Commonwealth.

### BENEFITS:

Greenways are a valuable asset to local and regional land use strategies by nature of their ability to create connections, protect open space, and provide economic development

opportunities. Greenways connect communities with each other, connect people with community facilities and connect wildlife with habitat corridors. They are both recreational facilities in themselves and link recreational facilities with each other. They provide venues for both non-motorized and motorized recreation and intermodal transportation uses.

Greenways are an integral part of local, regional and state tourism strategies and are becoming increasingly important generators of economic development in both urban and rural communities. Greenways contribute to environmentally sensitive growth strategies and may improve the quality of life and livability of neighborhoods, communities and regions.

From an infrastructure standpoint, greenways promote green infrastructure — that is, trails for walking, biking and canoeing, among other things. Greenways provide options for non-motorized commuting, thereby reducing vehicle use and creating pedestrian links. Greenways can connect homes and recreational areas.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Greenways can be comprehensively protected through Open Space Zoning/Conservation Design (see Section V), especially when implemented together with township-wide Resource Inventory/Analysis Maps (see Section VI).

*(Greenways, Cont'd)*

The Greenways Partnership Commission will be identifying barriers to greenways including planning, implementation, and funding that it will address as part of its strategic planning and program implementation process described above. A high priority for immediate analysis will be the policies and practices of state agencies involved in the provision of funding, technical assistance, and regulatory actions impacting greenways. Barriers will be identified and dealt with by the Commission through a grassroots public participation process and with the help of a state agency liaison group and a 120 member Greenways Partnership Advisory Committee.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

Many municipalities in Pennsylvania have provisions for the dedication of land for pedestrian walkways, trails, and bikeways in their zoning and land use ordinances. There are several major regional greenway efforts in the Commonwealth, including the **Schuylkill River Greenway** and the **Delaware River Greenway** Projects. Rails-to-Trails projects, regional initiatives involving county and local governments, represent a major part of Pennsylvania's greenway effort.

The **Heritage Park Program**, multi-county in nature, also is one of the State's leading efforts to promote greenways along corridors that demonstrate the industrial heritage of the Commonwealth. Administered by DCED, the program has designated the Lackawanna Heritage Valley in Lackawanna, Luzerne and Susquehanna Counties, as well as other parks. Two other parks are in the advanced

planning stage: the Allegheny Ridge Industrial Park (Blair, Somerest, and Cambria Counties), and the Delaware and Lehigh Canal Heritage Park (Berks, Northampton, Carbon, Lehigh, and Luzerne Counties).

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

The PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)  
(800) 379-7448

The Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Commission through the:  
PA DCNR  
(717) 783-2659

PennDOT - Center for Program Development and Management  
(717) 787-7335

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

The primary resources for funding of greenways are the Keystone (Key 93) grant programs and the PA Recreational Trails Program administered by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and the Transportation Enhancements (TEA-21) program of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). The DCNR programs can fund the planning, acquisition and development of greenway-type projects. ■

## 2. Rails to Trails Program and Rail Corridor Enhancement

### DESCRIPTION:

The post-industrial era has, among other things, provided a large number of abandoned rail corridors. Recently, municipalities and developers have discovered the value of these corridors as developable land. Conservationists have also recognized the value of these lands for trails that can be used for cycling, walking, and horseback riding.

### BENEFITS:

The Rails to Trails Program provides excellent recreational opportunities utilizing lands having very limited value for other purposes. Abandoned rail properties within the corridor can be redeveloped for private investment as well. The result is a sounder set of land-uses in and around a municipality.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Rail and trolley right-of-ways can be acquired in a variety of ways. However, the matter of ownership must be carefully researched to determine ownership, and the appropriate mechanism for acquisition. Assistance in implementation is available from sources including DCNR and the Rails to Trails Conservancy.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

The **York County Heritage Rail Trail** connects in the north and the Codorus Bikeway in the City of York and the state line with the Maryland Rail Trail providing in total a forty-mile, two-state experience. The York County portion has a parallel operating rail line that is used for recreation and

entertainment as a dinner train, as well as some limited freight shipment. The Rail Trail is heavily used, especially on weekend by bikers, walkers, and horseback riders.

**Ghost Town Trail, Indiana and Cambria Counties** – The trail is 16 miles long at the present time and the Cambria and Indiana Trail Council plans to add an additional 3.5 miles to the trail.

**Youghiogheny River Trail** – The YRT North Section is a 43-mile limestone surfaced trail built along the "railbanked" right-of-way of the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad along portions of 25 municipalities in Fayette, Westmoreland, and Allegheny counties. The trail is designed as a non-motorized, shared-use, recreational trail for bicycling, walking, fishing and canoe access, hiking, nature study, historic appreciation, cross country skiing, picnicking, and horseback riding.

In 1990, when a task force of local citizens, trail groups, and government officials led by the National Park Service prepared the concept plan for the Youghiogheny River Trail. In 1991, Allegheny, Fayette, and Westmoreland Counties formed the non-profit Regional Trail Corporation (RTC) with a mission to acquire, construct, and manage the trail. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Preservation Commission and the TEA-21 program are providing funding for the engineering and construction of the trail. County governments and private foundations are

*(Rails to Trails Program and Rail Corridor Enhancement, Cont'd)*

providing matching funds, while local townships and volunteer groups are providing labor and equipment to build the trail.

The **Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C. rail to trail corridor**, which includes 183 miles in Pennsylvania, is a regional coalition of seven nonprofit trail organizations and the counties and communities in southwestern Pennsylvania.

The 24-mile **Susquehanna River Trail** runs from Halifax to Harrisburg's City Island and is the state's first formal water trail for canoeing, rafting, camping, bird watching and other low-impact water-based recreational and stewardship activities.

**Pottstown Township, Montgomery County** – A proposed 125-acre park would encompass existing trails and parks into the 120-mile Schuylkill River Trail. This trail would link into the proposed light-rail Schuylkill Valley Metro. Using grants from the William Penn Foundation and the Pottstown Historical Society, landscape architects were hired to design a concept plan.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Rails to Trails Conservancy  
PA Chapter  
(717) 238-1717

DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation  
(717) 783-2659

PennDOT Center for Program Development and Management  
(717) 787-7335

Pottstown Borough Manager  
(610) 970-6510

Information on TEA-21 and PennDOT's Transportation Enhancement Program can be found by visiting PennDOT's website at [www.dot.state.pa.us/penndot/aviation.nsf/Trans+enhance+program?readform](http://www.dot.state.pa.us/penndot/aviation.nsf/Trans+enhance+program?readform).

For more information on the Youghiogheny River Trail visit the Regional Trail Corporation's website at [www.youghrivertrail.com](http://www.youghrivertrail.com) or contact them at (412) 350-5875. Information on the York County program can be found at [www.york-county.org](http://www.york-county.org).

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Funding sources can be varied. County and municipal funding can play a part. Federal transportation enhancement funds through PennDOT can also be used for this type of activity as well as Keystone funds from Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Foundation monies and other private donations are also possibilities.

Other programs look to enhance the properties along the corridor. ISTEA, and now TEA-21, established significant funding opportunities for surface transportation projects, including railroad corridor enhancement. PennDOT's Transportation Enhancements Program, part of ISTEA and TEA-21, targets, among other things, "Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation building, structures or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals" and "Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails)". ■

### 3. Foot Paths and Bike Paths

#### DESCRIPTION:

Foot paths and bike paths form a system of infrastructure that provides other-than-road access to common destinations. For example, paths to schools, shops, a post office, playgrounds or parks can all be connected or interconnected through a system of green infrastructure. This is an effective practice to reduce traffic and pollution and enhance the quality of life for local municipal residents.

These infrastructure facilities can be a portion of roadway, shoulder, or right of way designed for exclusive or preferential use by pedestrians and cyclists. To aid the development of infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians in conjunction with roadways, PennDOT adopted the Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in 1996.

#### BENEFITS:

When used, this practice promotes a decrease in congestion on local and collector roads as a result of increased bicycle and pedestrian commuting. There is a corresponding decrease in pollution (decrease in use of fossil fuels) as a result of this pedestrian commuting, and an economic advantage to the user (in fuel savings).

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

Pedestrian and bikeway systems are found in the provisions of a municipality's or county's comprehensive Plan. Dedication of land for these paths can be required

as a condition of subdivision approval. To accommodate bicycles, some would argue that a path must be paved. In order to qualify for federal funds for a bikeway, certain design criteria must be met (e.g., paved a width of 10 feet).

On a significant number of rural and suburban roads, there is a lack of sidewalks and/or shoulders that facilitate pedestrian or bike traffic. There is also a shortage of safe and secure storage facilities for bicycles at many commercial and institutional facilities, as well as shower and changing facilities. Safety issues may be of concern among pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, especially in congested areas or on roads with little or no separation between uses, when trying to encourage the use of such paths. The issues should be addressed when using this practice.

For a landowner who would like to make land available to the public for hiking or other recreation, fears of vandalism, littering and disturbance may inhibit the establishment of pathways. Some protection is provided through Pennsylvania's Recreation Use of Land and Water Act, and Pennsylvania's Rails to Trails Act.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

A number of townships regularly require dedication of pathways as a condition of subdivision. For example, the subdivision ordinance of **Pocopson Township, Chester County**, requires

*(Foot Paths and Bike Paths, Cont'd)*

that land be dedicated for a footpath/bridle path where a portion of the township's footpath/bridle path plan affects the subdivision. The Comprehensive Plan calls for over four miles of paths. The Township Supervisors have appointed a Trails Committee to increase citizen participation in the extension and maintenance of the systems.

**Lower Gwynedd Township, Montgomery County**, has prepared a Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan that includes first priority trails and second priority trails. Also in Montgomery County, the Lower Pottsgrove Township Planning Commission has approved a Bikeway/Trail plan.

**Manheim Township, Lancaster County** has developed a non-motorized path system to give people a safe and alternative means to travel.

**Allegheny County Sidewalk and Bikeways Plan** — The community development department sought to fully study a network of sidewalks that would foster the concept of community and also increase the safety of transportation within the service area. The goal of the plan is to locate sidewalks and bikeways with the needs of residents in mind. The guiding principles are to give students an opportunity to walk safely to school, pedestrians the ability to travel to points of interest, senior citizens the convenience to walk outdoors, and bicyclists the freedom to ride separate from motorized vehicles.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Pocopson Township, Chester County  
(610) 793-2151

Montgomery County Planning Commission  
(610) 278-3730

Lower Gwynedd Township, Montgomery County  
(215) 646-5302

Manheim Township Park and Recreation Department  
(717) 290-7180

Allegheny County Department of Economic Development  
(412) 350-1000

**FUNDING SOURCES:**

DCNR Bureau Recreation and Conservation  
(717) 783-2659 ■



## 1. Silviculture / Forestry Management

### DESCRIPTION:

Nearly 80 percent of Pennsylvania's seventeen million acres of forest land is owned by non-industrial private individuals. Similar to the routine use and stewardship of agricultural field crop lands, forests require silviculture management to ensure their long-term health, sustainability and economic viability. A number of programs exist in the state that educate private landowners to manage their forest land for sustained, productive use without having negative impacts on the health, safety or welfare of the general public. These programs recognize that the forests are in constant change and that proper harvesting practices mimic the natural disturbances that sustain forests.

Municipalities can ensure the future of forest land in their communities by encouraging private landowners to properly manage their forest land.

### BENEFITS:

Sustainable forestry practices provide both current and long-term benefits to a region. Proper timber management encourages the preservation of open space by providing a local landowner with income from standing timber and a market-driven incentive to maintain their property as forest land. Timber management also promotes forest health, lessens the potential of wildfire, protects sites of special significance, provides a rich and diverse wildlife habitat and encourages recreational opportunities. Finally, sustainable forestry practices provide an important

economic benefit to local communities by providing \$380 million in annual income to forest landowners and supporting the state's \$5.1 billion forest products industry.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

A number of Pennsylvania communities have adopted ordinances to control the location and manner in which trees and forests are cut, to protect environmental, recreational, and aesthetic values. Enrolling this land into the Clean and Green program is a good way to conserve forested space. Conversely, municipalities that seek to prohibit forestry or excessively regulate forestry practices may actually experience a loss of forest land as landowners seek an income from their land and convert it to development use. To respond to this problem, the Commonwealth enacted the Right to Forestry Act in 1992 (53 P.S. §10603(f)), which prohibits local governments from using a zoning ordinance to unreasonably restrict forestry activities. Other state laws protect watersheds from the impact of logging operations.

Local ordinances can help control stormwater runoff from logging operations, protect water quality and wildlife habitat, preserve scenic views, and prevent and mitigate logging traffic and road damage. They can also help ensure that timber harvesting practices are consistent with accepted professional forestry practices, sustaining forest quality and health for the long term.

*(Silviculture / Forestry Management, Cont'd)*

Keeping land in forest uses often requires that at least some timber harvesting occur to provide an economic return for the landowner.

A number of organizations provide landowners with information on how to make sustainable forestry decisions through planning and the utilization of best management practices. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative of Pennsylvania encourages this landowner education through a network of participating and supporting loggers, forestry consultants and members of the forest products industry. The Forest Stewardship Program assists in the development of individual forest plans. The American Tree Farm is a nationwide community of landowners linked by a desire to manage their forest land effectively.

Municipal officials can also access resources from Pennsylvania State University School of Forest Resources Cooperative Extension that outline forestry practices and provide valuable information on the role that municipalities can take in supporting sustainable forestry in their area. A model municipal forestry ordinance has been developed by the Penn State School of Forest Resources, in cooperation with the state Bureau of Forestry, Society of American Foresters and the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors. The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors has worked with Penn State to educate local governments about timber harvesting issues and appropriate provisions in local timber harvesting regulations. The report, *Working with Communities to Address Local Timber Harvesting Issues*, is available from the contact organizations below.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

As of 1992, according to a Penn State survey, over 135 townships, both suburban and rural, had adopted some type of ordinance regulating timber harvesting. Penn State's School of Forest Resources and the Pennsylvania Division of the Allegheny Society of American Foresters are maintaining a data base on existing timber harvesting ordinances.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Sustainable Forestry Initiative of Pennsylvania  
(888) 734-9366

Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry  
Forest Advisory Services  
(717) 787-2106

Penn State University  
School of Forest Resources  
(814) 863-0401

Pennsylvania Forestry Association  
(717) 766-5371

Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors  
(717) 763-0930

Pennsylvania Division of the Allegheny Society of American Foresters  
(717) 432-3646 ■

## 2. Forest Land Conservation Easements

### DESCRIPTION:

Conservation easements on working forests are a market-driven tool used to preserve open space, like those used to protect working farmland. Easements can be used to protect forests for present and future economic benefit, with subsequent attendant benefits such as wildlife habitat, watershed protection, outdoor recreation, and soil conservation.

### BENEFITS:

As open space diminishes while development advances, economically valuable forest land is lost. Timber is one of the top five sectors in Pennsylvania's economy, and its continued availability is dependent upon the existence and preservation of open space and forests. The benefits are economic as well as environmental. Side benefits of easements include lower property taxes for landowners.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Some non-profit organizations, such as conservancies and land trusts, provide financial support for purchasing easements from landowners; they also accept tax-deductible donations of easements from landowners. The U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy initiative provides funding to state governments to help purchase easements on private forestland.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

The **Western Pennsylvania Conservancy** holds easements on many pieces of privately-owned land that are dedicated working forests.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

U.S. Forest Service  
Ecosystem Management and  
Coordination  
(202) 205-0939

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
(412) 288-2777

Nature Conservancy  
(610) 834-1323 ■



### 3. Riparian Buffers

#### DESCRIPTION:

A riparian buffer is an area of vegetation maintained adjacent to a stream or other body of water. It is managed to protect the integrity of the stream channel or shoreline and to reduce the impact of upland sources of pollution by trapping, filtering, and converting sediments, nutrients, and chemicals, and to supply food, cover, and thermal protection to fish and other wildlife.

Buffers can be either forested or herbaceous. While forested buffers may be preferable, buffers that are vegetated with grasses alone provide some of the same water quality benefits as forested ones. However, they do not contribute much benefit to the aquatic ecosystem, which requires shading, leaves, and woody debris.

#### BENEFITS:

Riparian buffers protect water quality by filtering sediments and nutrients, providing cooling, shading, and dissolved oxygen, stabilizing stream banks, and regulating stormwater flow. They also provide wildlife habitat by supplying food, cover, and breeding and nesting habitat close to water. As with other protection and restoration efforts, every riparian buffer does some good, but ideally adjacent landowners throughout a watershed implement them.

The most significant loss of riparian forests occurring today is through the conversion of agricultural and forest land to urban and suburban

development. Through municipal ordinances that require retention of riparian buffers, such vegetation can be preserved in those areas where they are needed most to protect water quality and habitat from the impacts of development.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

Landowners can voluntarily conserve or restore such buffers. A number of municipalities have enacted ordinances to require riparian buffers to be maintained as part of land development. Also, education and technical assistance for landowners are essential to increase their understanding and support for riparian forest buffers. A more comprehensive approach is embodied in the technique called Open Space Zoning/Conservation Design (see Section V).

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Montgomery County** has developed a model Riparian Corridor Conservation Ordinance.

**West Fallowfield Township, Chester County**, adopted an ordinance in 1997 that includes natural resource protection overlay districts.

**Warwick Township in Lancaster County** has adopted a program that has received several awards. These districts are floodplain conservation, wetland protection, steep slope conservation, and woodland protection – all efforts to promote buffer conservation.

*(Riparian Buffers, Cont'd)*

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
(717) 234-5550

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay  
(717) 236-8825

Montgomery County Planning  
Commission  
(610) 278-3730

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

West Fallowfield Township, Chester  
County  
(610) 593-5279

PA Association of Conservation  
Districts  
(717) 545-8878

PA Department of Environmental  
Protection  
(717) 787-5267

PA Department of Conservation and  
Natural Resources  
(717) 783-5877 ■

## 4. Stream Bank Stabilization and Restoration

### DESCRIPTION:

Changes in stream hydrology are dynamic. However, they also are frequently accelerated as a result of human activity along streams, such as removal of trees and other vegetation, increased runoff resulting from urbanization, overgrazing of livestock, cultivation too close to the stream, and earthmoving and paving for development. These activities create changes in stream bank and bed configuration, soil erosion, and also alter the natural flow of stormwater. Loss of soil from fields and stream banks causes excessive sediment to enter streams, creating water quality problems for fish and aquatic life.

There are a variety of techniques that landowners can use to stabilize stream banks to prevent erosion and sedimentation, and to restore eroding streambanks. These include stream bank fencing to restrict livestock grazing to specific points along streams, “rip-rapping” banks with stone or concrete to prevent erosion, and revegetation of stream banks with grasses, shrubs, and trees.

### BENEFITS:

Stream bank stabilization measures can reduce nonpoint source pollution caused by sediment and the contaminants that accompany soil particles into waterways, including heavy metals, phosphorus, and other nutrients. They can improve aquatic habitat by reducing the level of suspended and deposited sediments in streams, which impact the ability of fish to breed and reproduce.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The costs of installing stream bank stabilization measures are borne by individual landowners, although there are a number of cost-share and grant programs available to help pay for the expense. These stream bank stabilization and restoration projects are most effective when all streamside landowners throughout a watershed implement them. That way, upstream and downstream sources of excess sediment are eliminated and water quality and aquatic habitat are enhanced.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

There are examples of stream bank stabilization and restoration in virtually every Pennsylvania county, especially on agricultural land. Some involve strong grassroots efforts now being highlighted as a model of the Chesapeake Bay Association. It involves several private, non-profit organizations, including:

- Lititz Borough, Lancaster County;
- Local county conservation districts;
- Trout Unlimited;
- Pheasants Forever; and
- private citizens.

The **Franklin County Watershed Association**, an organization comprised of local governments, county agencies, state and federal agencies, civil groups and private individuals, is working on restoration of the Back Creek Watershed in Central Franklin County. The Association has restored 25 acres of wetlands at six sites; fenced and stabilized over six miles of streambank; planted 15,000 trees and numerous acres of warm

*(Stream Bank Stabilization and Restoration,  
Cont'd)*

season grasses; and constructed thirteen stream crossings. The Association has received preliminary approval on an EPA grant for \$60,000 to continue its work. Approval of the grant will mark the first time that this particular EPA grant has been awarded in Pennsylvania.

The **East Branch Perkiomen Creek Streambank Restoration Project** (Project #1033-09-002) used approximately 40 volunteers to place rip rap, gabions, lumbers, and tree armoring to protect the streambanks. The Project not only benefited the stream but also provided an environmental education opportunity for the public.

The **French Creek** begins in Chatauqua County, New York and flows for 117 miles through the northwestern Pennsylvania counties of Erie, Crawford, Mercer, and Venango before emptying into the Allegheny River. The project brings together conservationists, landowners, farmers, the business community, local government officials, sportsmen, residents, teachers, and students in a collaborative effort to foster "Conservation Through Cooperation". The project includes an aggressive public education and outreach effort to a variety of audiences, including riparian landowners, local governments, school children, teachers, and the general public. The purpose of the project is to raise public awareness about the outstanding biological diversity of French Creek, and to spur a grassroots effort to reduce pollution.

In 1997, the French Creek Project completed a "Vision Plan" for the watershed, which outlined the various activities and priorities of the project into

the year 2000. The Vision Plan established five main areas of activity for the French Creek Project: education, stream conservation, science and research, work with local governments, and recreation.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Your Local County Conservation District Office  
(See listing in Appendix)

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP)  
(717) 787-5267

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR)  
(717) 783-5877

Bucks County Conservation District (Project #1033-09-002)  
(215) 345-7577

Allegheny College  
(814) 332-2946 ■

## 5. Nutrient Management Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

Under Act 6 (Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Act), certain agricultural operations in Pennsylvania are required to have nutrient management plans that specify how livestock waste is managed. Other operations can develop plans voluntarily. The purpose of the law is to prevent pollution from animal feeding operations.

There are several technical assistance and financing programs available to assist farmers in the development and implementation of plans.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

There are examples of nutrient management plans in virtually every Pennsylvania county.

### BENEFITS:

Improper nutrient management is a significant source of ground and surface water pollution. Nutrient management plans help to protect water quality. Although local governments may not regulate nutrients more stringently than the state, enactment of local regulations that are consistent with the state requirements may give communities the ability to have greater oversight over nutrient management than the county or state can.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

PA State Conservation Commission  
(717) 787-8821

PA Department of Agriculture  
(717) 787-4843 ■

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Plans are developed by individual farmers and their licensed consultants and submitted for review and approval by County Conservation Districts or the State Conservation Commission. Under the Nutrient Management Act, local government is specifically precluded from adopting nutrient management regulations more stringent than the state requirements. Local governments may, however, enact regulations that are consistent with state regulations.

Most nutrient management programs are implemented through County Conservation Districts or State Programs.



## 6. Wetlands Management and Protection

### DESCRIPTION:

Federal and state regulatory programs protect wetlands by requiring permits for activities in or affecting wetlands. However, municipalities must choose the level of involvement to assume in wetlands management and can plan proactively for enhancement and protection of wetlands. Section V describes how local governments can designate natural resource-based zoning districts in the practice called “Open Space Zoning/Conservation Design.” It is applicable to wetlands as well as other natural areas.

Wetlands mitigation banks have been created as a way for mitigation requirements to be met without the applicant having to construct a wetland. This is a particularly useful way for developers of projects with impacts on small wetland acreage to consolidate their mitigation projects into larger wetland acreage. Mitigation banks have been created by state and federal agencies, and also by nonprofit organizations. Local governments could create such banks in conjunction with local wetland protection programs.

### BENEFITS:

Wetlands are a critical resource that provide important wildlife habitat and play a key role in flood prevention, surface water management, groundwater recharge, and ground and surface water quality. They improve surface water quality and improve biofiltration (the removal of sediment and pollutants) of ground and surface water. Local (municipal) management can provide

additional protection of wetlands beyond what is available from state and federal agencies enforcement.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Wetlands management tools are generally located in zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances, and can be used to mitigate the impacts of development on wetland resources.

Applications for State and federal wetland permits must demonstrate that applicants have first avoided impacting wetlands to the maximum possible extent, then that they have minimized impacts on wetlands, and finally that any unavoidable wetland impacts are mitigated.

There may be the potential for administrative complexity if municipalities try to require wetland mitigation. Municipal officials may require specialized staff to properly administer wetland ordinances and coordinate with the State and federal governments. A policy basis for wetlands management should be established in the Comprehensive Plan or Open Space Plan. Finally, an implementation plan should be developed, with appropriate language included in subdivision and land development ordinance and municipal zoning ordinance.

Non-profit groups and private property owners can create wetlands to support ecological benefits ranging from flood control to habitat diversification. This proactive approach helps to balance

*(Wetlands Management and Protection, Cont'd)*

negative impact imposed by filling, grading, and construction elsewhere in the watershed. Groups such as local gardeners, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts and conservation associations can work with wetland experts at PA DEP to plan, create, and plant wetlands.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

The following are examples of municipalities that regulate wetlands and the general approach they take:

**Manheim Township in Lancaster County** – Relocation of Butter Road and Landis Run with combined benefits to flood control, wetlands preservation and storm water management expansion.

Twenty-three **Bucks County** municipalities have some form of wetland protection zoning through performance zoning or natural resource restriction ordinances.

Numerous **Chester County** municipalities currently regulate wetlands. Some merely require identification of wetlands and notification of state and federal agencies when applicable, leaving the actual regulation to those agencies. Many require identification of wetlands and net them out of lot size or density calculations. Still others include disturbance limits as well. None provides for a wetland mitigation option.

**Schuylkill Township, Schuylkill County** – Requires wetland delineation and subtracts (nets out) wetland areas from lot size requirements. Requires wetland margin of 100 feet or to the limits of hydric soils, whichever is less. Wetland margin is counted toward lot size calculations.

**Thornbury Township, Delaware County** – Requires wetland delineation and partially nets out wetlands based on a formula. Does not allow disturbance within 100 feet of any wetland.

A couple in **Venango Township, Erie County**, created four areas of wetlands on their property. The cost is estimated at \$9,500.

A private citizen and the Natural Resources Conservation Service implemented a project to restore two acres of prior converted cropland in **Columbia County**. The project created wetlands by blocking a field drain that was installed to collect and divert several spring seeps. The estimated cost was \$14,000.

**The Golden Pond Girl Scout Camp** in the Upper Susquehanna River drainage basin in **Huntingdon County** restored approximately one acre of wetland in cooperation with DEP and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The project was successfully completed by restoring an on-site spring-fed wetland community.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Manheim Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 569-6408

Bucks County Planning Commission  
(215) 345-3400

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Schuylkill Township, Schuylkill County  
(570) 668-1039

*(Wetlands Management and Protection, Cont'd)*

Thornbury Township, Delaware County  
(610) 399-8383

Venango Township, Erie County  
(814) 739-2688

Columbia County Planning Commission  
(717) 389-9146

Huntingdon County Planning and  
Development Department  
(814) 643-5091

The Environmental Management Center  
of the Brandywine Conservancy  
(610) 388-2700

PA Department of Environmental  
Protection – Bureau of Water Quality  
Protection  
(717) 787-6827  
[www.dep.state.pa.us](http://www.dep.state.pa.us)

US Department of Agriculture – Natural  
Resources Conservation Service  
(717) 237-2200 ■



## 7. River Conservation/ Watershed Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

Watershed planning is a comprehensive approach to assess how the natural and modified environment interface and how the best quality of life for the human community can be achieved with the most benefit and least degradation to natural elements and systems.

### BENEFITS:

With appropriate planning, actions and activities that benefit the watershed can result in healthier, cleaner environments; less infrastructure; and lead to more economically viable communities.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Planning on a watershed basis needs to include the following elements: a definition of the sub-watershed or watershed boundaries; a detailed inventory of the natural, cultural, and historical resources and their geographic location within the basin; and a clear picture of the issues, threats, and opportunities within the basin.

The first step is the identification of the watershed's function to the regional ecological system. Secondly, identification of activities within the watershed that threatens its function is also required. Essentially a basic understanding of cause and effect relationships and their outcomes is required to fully understand and implement watershed planning.

Opportunities to extend this information distribution should include training at township/municipal government levels and the public. Venues to approach

the public include information on television environmental programs. Watershed based programs managed by local, state, or federal government agencies, which disseminate literature and provide education is also available. Likewise, elementary/secondary and college curricula are beginning to train future watershed stewards.

Watershed planning is better performed using Geographic Information System (GIS) computer technology (see the practice titled Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping in Section VI). The GIS can assimilate the multiple facets of the watershed ecological system and systematically assess actions and predict outcomes. A GIS can also serve as a measurement of progress, if the environmental and human activities are tracked as changes occur.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

The **Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Program** has provided grants (50/50 match) and technical assistance to empower local conservancies, watershed organizations and municipalities to develop comprehensive watershed plans on a local level.

Examples of completed plans reflect the vision of the communities, organizations and residents in the watershed. Approval of the River Conservation Plans allows additional funding to be directed to recommendations and management options defined and prioritized in the plan. Each plan reflects the geographic location of the basin in the Commonwealth, both

*(River Conservation/Watershed  
Planning, Cont'd)*

through the GIS data base as well as the issues, opportunities and recommended courses of action.

Completed River Conservation Plans done on a watershed basis include: Tulpehocken and Cacoosing Creek, the Clarion River, Upper Mahoning Creek, French and Pickering Creeks, Ridley Creek, Tunkhannock Creek, from its confluence with the North Branch Susquehanna to its headwaters, and the Monocacy Creek from its headwaters to its confluence with the Lehigh River.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation Division of Conservation Partnerships  
(717) 787-2316 ■

## 1. Agriculture Protection Zoning (APZ)

### DESCRIPTION:

Agricultural Protection Zoning (APZ) ordinances designate areas where farming is the primary land use, and discourage other land uses in those areas.

Lancaster County Planning Commission  
(717) 299-8333

York County Planning Commission  
(717) 771-9870

Berks County Planning Commission  
(610) 478-6300 ■

### BENEFITS:

Agricultural Protection Zoning stabilizes the agricultural land base by keeping large tracts of land relatively free of non-farm development. This can reduce the likelihood of conflicts between farmers and their non-farming neighbors. Maintaining a critical mass of agricultural land can ensure that there will be enough farmland to support local agricultural services.



### IMPLEMENTATION:

Agricultural Protection Zoning can be economically viable by using such tools as Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs) (see TDR and PDR descriptions on the following pages).

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Examples of Agriculture Protective Zoning can be found in **Lancaster County, York County, and Berks County**.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

County Commissioners Association,  
PA Association of Township  
Supervisors (PSATS)  
(717) 763-0930



## 2. Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs)

### DESCRIPTION:

Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) is a zoning tool that allows conservation and development to coexist within a municipality. Growth is directed to preferred locations through the sale and purchase of development rights. Development rights are established for a given piece of land and can be separated from the title of that property. These rights can then be transferred in fee simple to another location within a parcel of land (in the case of a planned residential development) or to another location within a municipality where development is desirable and planned for.

The sale of TDRs leave the rural landowner in possession of title to the land and the right to use the property as a farm, open space or for some related purpose. However, it removes the owner's right to develop the property for other purposes. The transfer of development rights allows the purchaser of the development rights to then develop another parcel more intensively than would otherwise be permitted

While the TDR program is part of the municipal zoning ordinance, the actual buying and selling of development rights remain with the property owner. TDRs are implemented on a voluntary basis.

Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs) operate in a similar manner. However, with PDRs, an entity (either alone or jointly) buys the right to develop land

from the landowner. The landowner retains the use of the land, and receives tax benefits. The municipality can pass a bond issue to buy the rights and "bank" them. A developer may purchase the development rights from the municipality when he wishes to develop an area with high density. The municipal bond financing which was entered into to purchase the rights is paid off over the years by the purchase of the development rights, as development occurs.

### BENEFITS:

The value of each development right is controlled by the open market, not the municipality. TDRs are an equitable option for preserving open space and agricultural lands by compensating the owner of preserved land, while guiding the growth of development through the allowance of increased density where existing infrastructure can support it.

PDRs give immediate return to the landowner. It compensates the landowners for reduction in development potential and facilitates the goals of the development district concept. PDRs also streamline the time line for development since private sales and negotiations for development rights are not necessary to go forward with high-density development. It allows the municipality to guide the growth since it owns all the development rights.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

In PA, TDR programs can only be used to transfer development rights within a

*(Transferable Development Rights (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Cont'd)*

single municipality, or among municipalities with a joint ordinance, as authorized by 1992 MPC amendments. While the MPC authorizes the development of a system for transferring development rights, it does not provide a procedure for how the transfer is to occur. It is up to each municipality implementing TDR to set up a mechanism to accomplish the transfer. The easier it is to transfer development rights, the more likely it is that the program will be successful.

Implementing a TDR program requires a complete understanding of the real estate and development market of the municipality and surrounding areas. This information is necessary for setting up the details of a TDR program – the number of development rights per acre, the amount of increased density allowed through use of TDRs at the receiving site, etc. – in a manner that makes the TDR program work for both buyers and sellers.

The structure of a TDR program must make it more financially attractive for a farmer to sell development rights than to develop land. Permitted densities in the receiving area must be set so that developer obtains greater return through buying development rights and developing more densely than through accepting the base density of the site.

TDRs give substantial control to the municipality since it is the municipality that owns all the development rights. In order to purchase those rights, however, local municipalities must locate revenue sources. To support the purchase of the development rights, local communities

may not be willing to float a bond and incur the debt. And, since PDRs are voluntary, they may not achieve acquisition of a critical mass of land.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

Two townships in **Chester County** successfully implemented these programs. The first involved **West Bradford Township**, which focused its efforts on a highly visible and scenic property adjacent to an historic village, a strategy that helped to generate broad public support for the new technique. Officials also helped the developer identify a suitable “receiving area” where the new homes could be better serviced and where the visual impact would be lessened by the site’s woodlands.

The second successful example resulted from an initiative by the Board of Supervisors in **West Vincent Township**, where the proposal by a developer to create central water and sewage disposal facilities for 250 homes around a golf course provided an opportunity for the developer to increase his lot yield to 400 by purchasing and transferring 150 development rights from productive farmland around that community’s historic village center.

**Manheim Township, Lancaster County**, has developed a TDR program. Designated “receiving” areas (the area designated to receive development rights) are planned to be served by public sewer and water service, whereas “sending” (those areas of the municipality designated to be preserved) areas are not.

*(Transferable Development Rights (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Cont'd)*

Other municipalities which have adopted TDRs:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>
Buckingham Twp.	Bucks
Warrington Twp.	Bucks
Birmingham Twp.	Chester
E. Bradford Twp.	Chester
E. Nantmeal Twp.	Chester
London Grove Twp.	Chester
East Vincent Twp.	Chester
Warwick Twp.	Lancaster
Chanceford Twp.	York
Codorus Twp.	York
E. Hopewell Twp.	York
Lower Chanceford Twp.	York
Shrewsbury Twp.	York

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

West Bradford Township, Chester County  
(610) 269-4174

West Vincent Township, Chester County  
(610) 827-7932

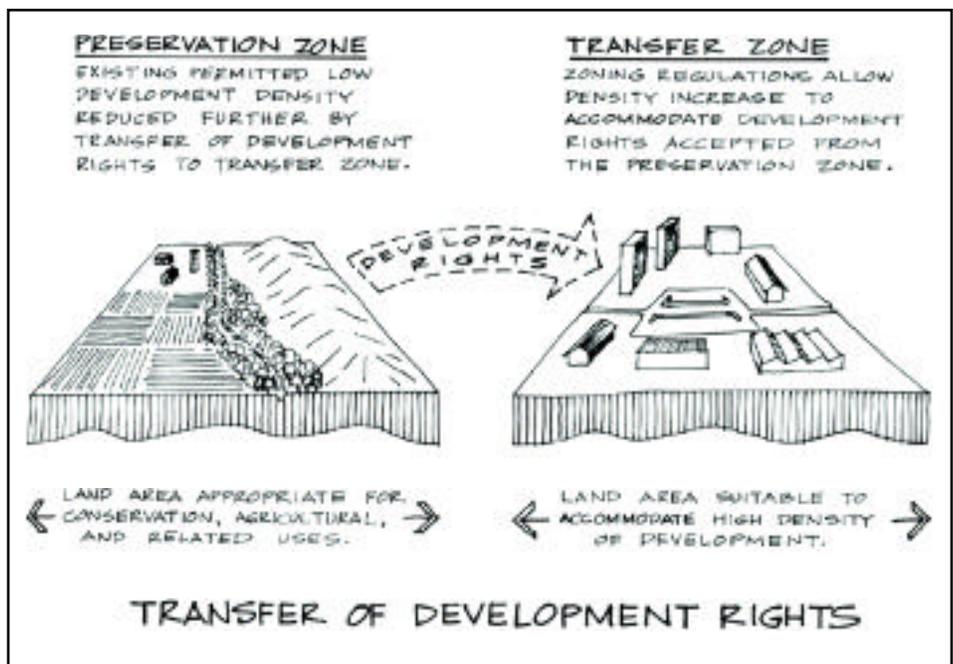
Lancaster County Planning Commission  
(717) 299-8333

Manheim Township, Lancaster County  
(717) 569-6408

Bucks County Planning Commission  
(215) 345-3400

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

York County Planning Commission  
(717) 771-9870 ■





### 3. Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs)

#### DESCRIPTION:

Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs) are authorized pursuant to the Agricultural Area Security Law, PA Act 1981-43 (Act 43). A landowner or group of landowners whose parcels together comprise at least 250 acres may apply to their local government or local governments for the designation of an ASA. The parcels must be viable agricultural land and may be comprised of non-contiguous tracts at least 10 acres in size.

#### BENEFITS:

The ASA designation encourages the preservation of agricultural land. ASAs give a landowner protection from local ordinances that restrict farm practices unless those ordinances have a direct relationship to public health or safety. ASAs also protect an area from nuisance ordinances. Additionally, the designation limits land condemnation procedures — eminent domain by the Commonwealth and local agencies — unless approval is gained from the Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board. The ASA designation also qualifies the land (if it is in an area of 500 acres or more) for purchase of conservation easements under the Pennsylvania statewide program. An attractive feature of the ASA designation is that it is not a permanent designation and this may be suitable for some communities and landowners. ASAs are reviewed every seven years.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

The process to designate an ASA must be initiated by a landowner or group of landowners.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

As of October 1999, there are 824 ASAs in Pennsylvania, with over 3.2 million acres enrolled.

Chester County has one of the few Agricultural Development Councils in the Commonwealth.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

PA Department of Agriculture  
Bureau of Farmland Protection  
(717) 783-3167

Chester County Agricultural Development Council  
(610) 344-6285 ■



## 4. Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board (ALCAB)

### DESCRIPTION:

PA Act 100 of 1979 established the Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board (ALCAB), a six-person independent administrative Board with jurisdiction over the condemnation of productive agricultural lands for transportation projects in Pennsylvania. The Board reviews proposals made by the PA Department of Transportation (PennDOT) or local authorities, and determines whether there is a feasible alternative to the condemnation of farmland. PA Act 43, the Agricultural Area Security Law, expands the ALCAB jurisdiction to non-transportation projects and airports. The PA Department of Agriculture (PDA), Bureau of Farmland Protection is the administrative body for ALCAB.

### BENEFITS:

ALCAB gives protection to farmland when feasible alternatives exist. The Bureau of Farmland Protection provides environmental clearance for most transportation projects impacting agricultural lands, as mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Dozens of projects received PDA concurrence each year. Many are not required to go to ALCAB, but still require agency approval. PennDOT's 10-step environmental process provides resource agencies the opportunity to influence decision-making at the beginning stages of a project. Often, agencies question the adverse effects a transportation project will have on local land use. If concurrence is not reached, a project cannot move forward.

Monthly Agency Coordination Meetings (ACM) are also an avenue for PDA to keep PennDOT and private consultants current on farmland preservation/open space issues.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

It is the responsibility of the condemner to petition ALCAB.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Types of projects which may need ALCAB approval are highways, airports, sewage treatment plants, schools, and recreational facilities.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

PA Department of Agriculture  
Bureau of Farmland Protection  
(717) 783-3167

PennDOT: Center for Program  
Development and Management  
(717) 787-7335 ■



## 5. Agricultural Conservation Easements

### DESCRIPTION:

Conservation easements permanently protect farms from development. Landowners voluntarily sell conservation easements to a government entity or private conservation organization or land trust. The agency or organization usually pays them the difference between the value of the land for agricultural use, and the value of the land for its "highest and best use" which is generally residential or commercial development. A deed of conservation easement is recorded in the county recorder of deeds office.

Statewide, there are currently more than 1,500 farm owners on county waiting lists to sell agricultural conservation easements. Conservation easements may also be sold or donated to private land trusts.

### BENEFITS:

Conservation easements permanently preserve land for agricultural use. Purchase of easements by municipalities on their own can be done more selectively and expeditiously as they do not have to conform to the county or State guidelines. The donation or bargain in sale of a conservation easement can also provide significant federal and state tax benefits to the land owner. PA Act 153 of 1996 allows school boards to cap real estate taxes for preserved land.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

County Agricultural Land Preservation Boards have primary responsibility for developing application procedures. They also establish priority order for easement

purchases based on a numerical ranking system. The ranking system is modeled upon state regulations that require consideration of soil quality, conservation practices, development pressures in the County, and the location of other permanently preserved farmland and open space.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

As of October 1999, 144,000 acres of farmland (1,160 farms) have been preserved through the Pennsylvania Program. Currently, 47 counties participate in the Program.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

PA Department of Agriculture  
Bureau of Farmland Protection  
(717) 783-3167

Lancaster Farmland Trust  
(717) 293-0707

### FUNDING SOURCE(S):

The Commonwealth, counties, and some municipalities provide funding. Total state funding available for 1999 was \$70 million, with county matching funds of \$16 million. ■



## 6. Agricultural Tax Incentives

### DESCRIPTION:

Differential assessment laws direct local governments to assess agricultural land at its value for agriculture, instead of at its full market value, which is generally higher. Differential assessment laws are enacted at the state, and implemented at the local level.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

PA Department of Agriculture  
Bureau of Farmland Protection  
(717) 783-3167

Chester County Assessment Office  
(610) 344-6105

Dauphin County Assessment Office  
(717) 255-2435 ■

### BENEFITS:

These programs afford protection to farmers to continue operating an agricultural operation in the face of development, thus helping to ensure the economic viability of agriculture. These tax laws align agricultural property taxes with what it actually costs local governments to provide services to the land.



### IMPLEMENTATION:

Landowners must apply to the County Assessment Office.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**PA Act 319**, as amended in 1998 ("Clean and Green") is designed to provide incentives to landowners for preserving land in agricultural use, agricultural reserve, and/or forest reserve. The program is voluntary and provides a financial disincentive to participating landowners to convert the land to other than agricultural uses, since land converted to another use becomes subject to rollback taxes and penalties. Currently, there are over five million acres enrolled in "Clean and Green" in 48 counties.



## 1. State Heritage Parks

### DESCRIPTION:

A State Heritage Park is a multi-county region of the Commonwealth designated by the Governor to plan, conserve, develop and market the natural, historic, cultural, scenic and recreational resources of the area for heritage tourism. It is one of the few programs of the Commonwealth that has attempted, and in most cases accomplished, the creation of economic development opportunities and conservation and preservation strategies that complement each other.

There are currently nine Governor designated State Heritage Parks and two under study. The primary funding and technical assistance resource is the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program administered by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and a State Heritage Parks Interagency Task Force consisting of other state agencies, the National Park Service and other statewide non-profit organizations. Some of the state heritage areas are also national heritage areas or part of a federal heritage region, and also receive federal funding and technical assistance through the National Park Service.

### BENEFITS:

The primary goal for the State Heritage Program is planning, enhancing and promoting heritage conservation, development, and tourism in large-scale geographic and cultural landscapes. The program has been able to advance the coordination of several land use

practices, such as, multi-municipal planning, downtown revitalization, brownfields site reuse, cultural conservation, historic preservation, open space and natural areas protection, greenway corridor and other green infrastructure development, scenic and heritage tour routes, education and interpretation, economic development, the provision of recreational and tourism opportunities, and intergovernmental cooperation.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The State Heritage Park designation process is based on a grassroots process with widespread public participation and partnership coalitions of government, non-profit, private sector and citizen representatives. The heritage conservation development and tourism strategies resulting from this process become part of land use planning in the communities within the Heritage Park region.

This is the primary program of the Commonwealth dealing with heritage conservation, development and tourism. However, the 11 projects currently in the State Heritage Park system do not geographically cover all areas of the state and therefore this is not an available land use tool for all communities. With additional funding, other areas and communities could benefit from similar opportunities.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

The designated State Heritage Parks and their general geographic areas are:

*(State Heritage Parks, Cont'd)*

- **Lackawanna Heritage Valley** in Susquehanna, Lackawanna and Luzerne counties;
- **Allegheny Ridge State Heritage Park** in Blair, Cambria, Somerset and Huntingdon counties;
- **Delaware and Lehigh Canal Heritage Corridor** in Luzerne, Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton and Bucks counties;
- **Oil Heritage Region** in Venango and Crawford counties;
- **National Road Heritage Park** in Somerset, Fayette and Washington counties;
- **Schuylkill Heritage Corridor** in Schuylkill, Berks, Chester and Montgomery counties and the City of Philadelphia;
- **Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor** in Franklin, Fulton, Bedford, Somerset and Westmoreland counties;
- **Rivers of Steel Heritage Area** in Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Washington and Westmoreland counties; and
- **Endless Mountains Heritage Region** in Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna and Wyoming counties.
- **Lumber Heritage Region** and the **Allegheny River Region** of Armstrong County are currently under study for possible inclusion in the Pennsylvania State Heritage Parks system.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

State Heritage Parks  
(717) 783-0988

PA DCNR Bureau of Recreation and  
Conservation  
(717) 783-0988 ■

## 2. Certified Local Government Program

### DESCRIPTION:

The Certified Local Government (CLG) Program is a federal incentive-based program created under the authority of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. It provides technical assistance and funding to local governments in order to enhance their ability to implement a historic preservation approach through land use planning and regulation. To participate in the program, a local government must be certified by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission as having established an ordinance protecting the municipality's historic resources. CLG's can benefit from workshops, special programs, and the opportunity to compete for grant assistance. Presently, there are only 24 Certified Local Governments out of the over 500 National Register-listed historic districts in Pennsylvania.

### BENEFITS:

The Certified Local Government Program was established to assist municipalities to develop the best historic preservation programs possible. It encourages boroughs, townships, and cities to professionalize their programs and to have well-trained historical commissions and historical and architectural review boards to guide the future of their communities. To assist in this effort, technical assistance and financial incentives are available.

The program has a broader goal of preserving the neighborhoods, downtowns, and historic assets.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

To qualify for the program, a local government must establish a historic preservation ordinance and must appoint a historical commission or historical and architectural review board under the Local Historic District Act or other authority and must implement its provisions.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Certified local governments in Pennsylvania range from the **City of Philadelphia** to the **Borough of Bellefonte**. In **Lancaster City**, funding from the program has supported architectural assistance for the Historical and Architectural Review Board, information on the historic preservation program in Spanish to reach out to the growing Hispanic community in Lancaster, and the development of a conservation district ordinance as an innovative approach to protecting the city's history.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) Bureau for Historic Preservation  
(717) 787-4363

### FUNDING SOURCE(S):

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission is required to award at least 10 percent of its annual historic preservation funds from the federal government to certified local governments in the Commonwealth. Grant funding can be used for obtaining qualified staff, undertaking historic

*(Certified Local Government Program, Cont'd)*

surveys, National Register nominations, and other historic preservation planning and educational programs. Funding cannot be used for capital projects and bricks and mortar grants. ■



### 3. Historic District Act

#### DESCRIPTION:

The Pennsylvania Historic District Act of 1961 authorizes municipalities, other than first and second-class cities, to protect historic areas through the enactment of historic district ordinances. Governing bodies are empowered to identify historic areas that have historical significance, establish a board of historical and architectural review to advise the local government on alterations, new construction, and demolition within this historic area. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission is responsible for certifying to the historic significance of any area so protected.

#### BENEFITS:

The preservation of historic traditional neighborhoods, commercial main streets, and central business districts has been demonstrated to retain and attract businesses and residents. In addition, historic districts attract heritage tourism. The most popular attraction listed in the Pennsylvania Heritage Tourism Study was visiting the state's historic towns and districts.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

There are 71 municipalities in Pennsylvania including cities, boroughs, and townships that have established historic district ordinances to protect 93 historic districts (some municipalities regulate more than one historic district). To establish a district, the local government must identify a historic area to be protected, prepare an ordinance that establishes a historical and architectural review board, and requires the review

of changes to the historic fabric for final decision-making by the local government. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission certifies to the historic significances of the area.

Although local historic district designations have been shown to preserve property values, only one-fifth of the 500 historic districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places has adopted local historic district protection. In some cases, local governments feel the program could be too restrictive to property owners. A number of local governments have addressed this issue by establishing conservation districts. They use the historic district authority to regulate only major changes to properties such as demolition, additions, or new construction.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Of the historic districts established in Pennsylvania, **Bethlehem** and **Gettysburg** have decades of experience in managing a local historic district program that has a demonstrated benefit for the local economy. In addition to these districts that have a long track record, Lancaster has recently adopted a conservation district utilizing the Historic District Act to preserve community character, but only regulates major changes to the district.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) Bureau for Historic Preservation  
(717) 787-4363 ■



## 4. Historic Preservation Zoning/ Municipalities Planning Code

### DESCRIPTION:

Historic preservation provisions can be incorporated by local governments into municipal planning and zoning through the authority of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Incorporating preservation initiatives into both the comprehensive plan and into the zoning ordinance of a community is particularly effective for townships where historic resources may be widely scattered. Some of the techniques that have been used as part of a local government's zoning ordinance include demolition ordinances, historic zoning overlays, zoning bonuses for the preservation of specific historic resources, and protection of landscape features such as scenic vistas and historic roads. Other zoning techniques such as agricultural zoning can also enhance the historic setting of a region.

### BENEFITS:

Placing historic properties within the framework of a local government's planning and zoning make sense and allows local communities to move beyond the preservation of an individual property or historic district and look at the historic everyday landscapes in their region. By incorporating historic preservation into the zoning ordinance, municipalities are in a better position to balance the preservation of resources with development.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The first critical step in protecting historic resources is to include them in the comprehensive planning process.

A historical and architectural survey or inventory may be necessary. The next step is for the public to identify those resources that the community envisions preserving for the future. The local government should incorporate those preservation tools, such as a historic zoning overlay, zoning bonuses to provide an incentive to keep these features on the landscape, and other incentives including special provisions for in-house businesses or bed-and-breakfasts. Finally, agricultural protection zoning can play an important part in preserving the setting of many Pennsylvania townships with an agricultural history.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

A number of townships in southeastern Pennsylvania have provided for the protection of their historic past through zoning and planning. **Warwick Township in Chester County** has enacted a comprehensive program to protect its history including historic overlay zones and identification of the area's archaeological sensitivity. The township encourages clustered or higher density options to preserve character and to provide a buffer around historic properties. **West Whiteland Township**, also in **Chester County**, has had 20 years of experience with protecting historic resources in a high development area.

A community that has taken more of an agricultural protection approach is **Oley Township in Berks County**. The entire township is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its

*(Historic Preservation Zoning, Cont'd)*

agricultural heritage. Its farmland preservation program protects both the lifeways and the history of the valley.

**Hollidaysburg Borough** – The National Register Historic District of the borough is protected by a historic district overlay in the recently updated zoning ordinance and map for the Borough.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) Bureau for Historic Preservation  
(717) 787-4363

Warwick Township, Chester County  
(610) 286-6363

West Whiteland Township, Chester County  
(610) 363-9525

Oley Township, Berks County  
(610) 987-3423 ■

## 5. Financial Incentives — Historic Preservation Grants

### DESCRIPTION:

Funding is available to assist both historic preservation studies and plans and to assist non-profit organizations and local governments in rehabilitating and restoring their historic properties. These grants are available from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on a competitive basis and can be used for identification, evaluation, and preservation planning initiatives at the local government or regional level. The rehabilitation and restoration grants can be used for capital projects and major maintenance including roof replacements, exterior restoration, interior restoration and improvements that address the functionality and accessibility of the structure.

### BENEFITS:

Both of these grant programs can be used to enhance the preservation and protection of historic resources in neighborhoods and downtowns. They can address quality-of-life issues in existing communities, they can improve the understanding and educational value of historic resources, and they can be used as cornerstones for other economic development initiatives. Protection of the historic integrity of communities and their history contributes to the growing heritage tourism industry in Pennsylvania.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Funding is available on an annual basis for both programs. Historic preservation grants for planning, policy development and public outreach are available to

local governments and non-profit organizations that have been in existence a minimum of two years and are located in Pennsylvania. Historic preservation bricks and mortar grants, also known as Keystone grants, are available to publicly accessible historic properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The grant applicant must have been in existence for a minimum of five years.

Both programs are very competitive with only one-out-of-three qualified projects funded in the Historic Preservation Survey and Planning category. The ability to fund larger projects such as Comprehensive County Resource Surveys are also limited by funding availability. Funding for the Keystone historic preservation grants is also limited with only 15 percent of qualified projects funded. A preference to Heritage Park projects is given in this program. (See Heritage Park Program for more information).

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Many communities have benefited from these programs. Recently, a number of communities have utilized the Planning Grant Program to spur economic development initiatives in their downtowns. These communities include **Milford, Altoona and Oil City**. Keystone grants have also played an important role in preserving critical elements of community character and have sparked revitalization efforts. Examples include restoration of the **Carnegie Library in Homestead, Allegheny County**, fixing the windows

*(Historic Preservation Grants, Cont'd)*

and siding of the headquarters of the Puerto Rican Organizing Committee in Harrisburg, Dauphin County, and the Ridgeway Library, now the School for Performing Arts in Philadelphia.

**CONTACT AND FUNDING SOURCE INFORMATION:**

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) Bureau for Historic Preservation  
(717) 787-4363 ■



## 6. Financial Incentives — Tax Credits for Historic Preservation

### DESCRIPTION:

Tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic structures are available for qualified projects that rehabilitate properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places or properties located in National Register – listed districts. To qualify for the tax credits, the rehabilitation must meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The tax credits are available for depreciable properties including commercial rehabilitation, low and moderate-income residential rental housing, and for individual properties in a business use.

### BENEFITS:

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives is a successful and cost-effective community revitalization program. It rewards private investment for rehabilitating historic properties such as offices, rental housing, and retail stores. The tax credits have been particularly effective when utilized with the low-income housing credits to reuse larger abandoned or underused properties such as schools, warehouses, or factories as affordable housing in existing communities. The tax credits can attract private dollars to key character defining properties in a downtown or neighborhood. Additional benefits of this rehabilitation are community revitalization, support for heritage tourism, and attracting additional investment.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

A tax credit lowers the amount of taxes owed by a property owner. In general, a dollar of federal tax credit reduces

the amount of federal income tax owed by one dollar. The tax credits available through this program include a 20 percent credit for the certified rehabilitation of a certified historic structure. Also available is a 10 percent rehabilitation credit for the rehabilitation of a non-historic building built before 1936. Certified historic structures must be listed individually in the National Register or be a contributing feature of a National Register district. In addition, the property must meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Establishing National Register status or listing a district in the National Register is an important first step for communities to attract this kind of investment. The State Historic Preservation Office will provide technical assistance in both the listing of properties and in the review of buildings during the design and development phase.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Since the beginning of the program, over \$2.5 billion has been expended rehabilitating properties using these credits. Examples include the **PSFS Building in Philadelphia** and a number of other important older properties adjacent to the Convention Center for hotel uses. Tax credits can be used in rural and urban communities, large and small alike. In **Brookville**, for example (population 4,100), more than 15 individual rehabilitation projects have taken advantage of the historic preservation tax credits. In addition,

*(Tax Credits for Historic Preservation, Cont'd)*

there are many examples of large, older properties rehabilitated for affordable housing including the **McFarland Press Building in Harrisburg**, the **Hanover Shoe Factory in Hanover**, and blocks of properties in the **Manchester Historic District in Pittsburgh**.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum  
Commission (PHMC), Bureau for Historic  
Preservation, The State Historic  
Preservation Office (SHPO)  
(717) 787-4363 ■



## VII. Revitalizing Our Communities

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The effects of unmanaged growth are felt in our cities, suburbs, and rural areas. As development continues to move outside of the urban core, formerly strong urban centers see significant deterioration. The Pennsylvania Downtown Center believes “land use policy has created an economic environment that encourages greenfield development and often discourages development or redevelopment of areas with existing infrastructure, i.e., downtowns.” Despite the effects of this growth, downtowns remain cultural, historical, educational, architectural and entertainment centers. Facilities related to these uses are among the few unique assets and competitive advantages of cities.

In recent years, a number of land use practices, some based on the unique aspects mentioned above, have been established that look to revitalize our communities. These practices cover a wide range of topics, from historic preservation to development partnerships, and from grant and loan programs to place-based community and economic development initiatives. The practices involve federal, state, county and local agencies and resources, in addition to the involvement of the general public. What runs common through these practices is the desire to revive the urban core. Making our communities safe from crime, improving the quality of schools and creating employment opportunities are the prerequisites for rebuilding downtowns.

Pennsylvania’s communities are the foundation of our Commonwealth and their social and economic viability is critical to the overall health of Pennsylvania. The following practices look to strengthen that foundation. ■



## A. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

### DESCRIPTION:

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), commonly known as Business District Authorities (BDAs) in Pennsylvania, are legal entities created for the implementation of business improvement activities in defined districts. They typically consist of commercial uses and are based on the ability to levy assessments on property within the district. Common initial activities of BIDs usually cover “clean and safe,” meaning the focus is on cleaning up the district and improving safety. Other typical activities of a BID include: strategic planning, maintenance, security, consumer marketing, business recruitment and retention, parking and transportation management, facade programs, social services and capital improvements.

### BENEFITS:

BDAs organize and fund a number of programs under the umbrella of one authority or one district. This allows improvements or development to be focused on the specific downtown district.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

This practice is authorized under the Municipality Authority Act of 1945, the Business District Authority Act (Act 41) of 1980, and Pennsylvania Statute Title 53 (Municipalities Generally), Part V (Public Improvements, Utilities and Services), Chapter 54 (Business Improvement Districts). BIDs, or BDAs, are usually organized by district property owners.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Mount Pleasant Borough Business District Authority, Westmoreland County** – One of the smaller BDAs in the State, it was formed as a result of an extensive strategic planning process involving downtown stakeholders. The Borough has been able to maintain an active, viable downtown despite the threat of suburban “big-box” retail.

**Oakland Business Improvement District, City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County** – In March 1999 Pittsburgh City Council created the Oakland Business Improvement District. The property owners in the Oakland neighborhood agreed to have their taxes increased in order to pay for BID services. These services include a 10-person cleaning crew working to clean up the Oakland business corridor as well as the perception of the area. Public works and district officials tour the neighborhood every two weeks to identify problems. The BID is working toward having its own police officer and addressing area graffiti.

**Center City District, City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County** – The national model of a BID, it has gone beyond the traditional functions of a BID to include facade improvement programs (Facade Improvement Grants program), comprehensive marketing campaigns, and decreased vacancy rates, all of which have helped increase the residential population of Center City (while the rest of the city has lost 30 percent of its population since 1960, Center City has grown by more than 20 percent).

*(Business Improvement Districts, Cont'd)*

Along with the various programs and policies that the Center City District manages, maintenance and graffiti crews have provided employment opportunities for disenfranchised people.

**City Avenue Special Services District, City of Philadelphia and Lower Merion Township, Philadelphia and Montgomery Counties** – The first multi-jurisdictional BID in North America, the tax assessment that makes up the bulk of the District's budget will come from property owners on both sides of the town line. One of the prime reasons for the creation of the District was to improve communication between police forces. In the future, more traditional BID functions, street cleaning and graffiti removal, along with streetscape analysis will be addressed.

District, and are trained to handle medical and other security concerns. The Custodial Crew's responsibilities include daily manual and mechanical cleaning, as well as, seasonal steam cleaning and graffiti removal.

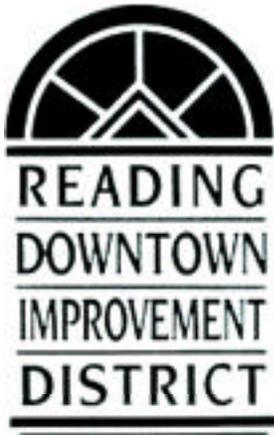
**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

General information pertaining to BIDs and BDAs can be found at the Pennsylvania Downtown Center's Website at: [www.padowntown.org](http://www.padowntown.org) or by calling (717) 233-4675.

For more information on Philadelphia's Center City District call (215) 440-5500 or visit their Website [www.centercityphila.org](http://www.centercityphila.org).

More information about the Oakland BID can be found at (412) 683-6243.

Further information on the Reading Downtown Improvement District can be found at [www.berksweb.com/did/did.html](http://www.berksweb.com/did/did.html) or by contacting them directly at (610) 376-6424. They can also be reached by writing to: DID, 125 South Fifth Street, P.O. Box 1555, Reading, PA 19603-1555. ■



**City of Reading Downtown Improvement District (DID), Berks County** – Established by district property owners in 1995, the Reading DID provides enhanced cleaning and security to complement the downtown's services. Eight Community Service Personnel (CSP) are assigned to the

## B. Crime Prevention Programs

### DESCRIPTION:

Crime throughout the United States and Pennsylvania has dropped significantly in the past decade. Much of this decrease has been attributed to community-based initiatives that have focused on crime prevention and intervention. These initiatives range from improved street lighting to an increase in the number of police officers on the street.

### BENEFITS:

Efforts and funding for crime prevention have grown significantly. The result is that citizens and businesses feel better about the community, and both feel better about remaining in the community. A decrease in crime and an increase in prevention means safer communities for Pennsylvania families.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

DCED's Project for Community Building has a Community Crime Prevention program that provides resources that allow communities and organizations to develop community-driven, community-directed strategies which can help to eliminate the factors that contribute to crime.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**City of New Castle Community Policing, Lawrence County** – The community-policing program in New Castle has created a sense of safety and ownership within the communities. Police officers (on foot as well as on bicycles) are assigned to neighbor-

hoods and are responsible for all activities that occur in that neighborhood. Not only do the officers care about their communities, but the public, as well, knows that it has "its man on the streets."

### Pennsylvania Weed and Seed Projects, – City of York, City of Chester, City of Lancaster, and City of Wilkes-Barre.

This state-funded program is administered by the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and the PCCD. Pennsylvania Weed and Seed is designed to "weed out" narcotic and other criminal offenders through an intensive law enforcement partnership between local police and the Pennsylvania State Police, and "seed" revitalization programs to eliminate the social and economic deterioration of the community.



**City of Pittsburgh Operation Weed and Seed, Allegheny County** – A federally funded, comprehensive, joint law enforcement and community investment strategy. It looks to "weed out" violent crime, gang activity, drug use, and drug trafficking in targeted high-crime neighborhoods. It also "seeds" the target area by helping to restore those neighborhoods through social and economic revitalization. This is done by 1) developing a comprehensive

*(Crime Prevention Programs, Cont'd)*

multi-agency strategy, 2) coordinating existing federal, state, local, and private agency resources, and 3) implementing community policing.

**City of Allentown, Lehigh County** – Allentown pioneered the use of bicycle police in its downtown. This highly effective companion to foot patrols has been expanded to adjoining neighborhoods. Allentown has also established a growing network of neighborhood police offices and has effectively employed concentrated patrols.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

For more information on Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency's crime prevention initiatives, call (800) 692-7292 or visit their website at [www.pccd.state.pa.us](http://www.pccd.state.pa.us).

Information on DCED's Project for Community Building has a Community Crime Prevention program can be found by calling (717) 787-7401 or visit the Project website at [www.dced.state.pa.us/PA\\_Exec/DCED/project/project.htm](http://www.dced.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/DCED/project/project.htm).

Information provided by the City of York for the Pennsylvania Weed and Seed Project can be found at [www.yorkcity.org](http://www.yorkcity.org).

Information on Pittsburgh's Weed and Seed Program can be found at [www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/weed&seed](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/weed&seed).

Contact the Weed and Seed Coordinator in the office of the Lt. Governor at (717) 783-0551, ext. 3088.

Additional information about the City of New Castle Community Policing program can be found by contacting the City of New Castle at (412) 656-3500.

Information on the programs of the City of Allentown can be found by calling (610) 437-7751.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency administers the grants from the DCED's **Project for Community Building** (approximately \$1 million a year), but also awards \$25 million in grants for other crime prevention programs that are not DCED-related, including juvenile justice initiatives, DARE, other substance abuse education, school resource officers, school-based probation officers, bullying prevention, before- and after-school programs, balanced and restorative justice initiatives, and mentoring programs.

The federal COPS program also provides funding for crime prevention programs. ■

## C. Community Development Partnerships

### DESCRIPTION:

Community development partnerships are those that involve the combination of agencies, communities, and citizens to work, fund, or champion a common cause. These conglomerations include business organizations, civic associations, public-private partnerships, coalitions, and community based organizations and financial institutions.

### BENEFITS:

The combination of forces and funding allows for land use planning to occur, without the burden being placed solely on one municipality or agency. Any potential for controversy is reduced due to the disparate groups working together toward a common goal.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Most of the community development partnerships are grass-roots, community building coalitions that draw upon the knowledge of the community, held by those most seriously impacted by community decline and who have the most vested interest in the sustained economic stability of their own community.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Better York, York County** – A York based non-profit business association that analyzes the economic impacts of uncontrolled growth, educates the region's business, government and community leaders, and advocates for more coordinated regional planning as part of the strategy to revitalize downtown York.

**The Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP)** – Founded in 1994 by a group of foundations, businesses and individuals, the mission of the PDP is to make Downtown Pittsburgh the premier place to work, shop, live and visit. The PDP initiatives include making downtown Pittsburgh cleaner and safer, attracting more people downtown, and becoming an advocate on various downtown issues. The PDP has also worked closely on a variety of development and planning issues impacting downtown Pittsburgh. These include working with the City of Pittsburgh on the Downtown Plan, working on an overall downtown circulator, and addressing other development issues in and around downtown Pittsburgh.

**Borough of Pottstown, Montgomery County** – A coalition of area civic and business groups is promoting a plan to resurrect areas along the Schuylkill River. The proposed 125-acre park would include existing trails and parks and create a park on the existing/ planned 120-mile Schuylkill River Trail. This urban park would link into the proposed light-rail Schuylkill Valley Metro. Additionally, the park would include the Stanley G. Flagg Company property, a 58-acre brownfields site in a KOZ. Using grants from the William Penn Foundation and the Pottstown Historical Society, landscape architects were hired to design a concept plan.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Information on the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership can be found at [www.downtownpittsburgh.com](http://www.downtownpittsburgh.com)

*(Community Development Partnerships, Cont'd)*

More information about the City of Pittsburgh can be found at their website: [www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us).

Further information pertaining to Better York can be found by contacting them at (717) 852-2635.

For more information on the Schuylkill River Trail, contact the Borough Manager at (610) 970-6510. ■

## D. Downtown Arts and Entertainment

### DESCRIPTION:

Downtowns often contain unique clusters of arts and entertainment related facilities. Downtowns continue to promote and enhance these facilities through specific strategies. Included among these strategies is generating a separate arts and entertainment component of a community's downtown plan.

### BENEFITS:

Downtowns remain cultural, historic, educational, architectural and entertainment centers. Facilities related to these uses are generally located only in a downtown or urban setting.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Many of the art related programs involve historic preservation and are initially developed through voluntary participation.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**City of Allentown, Lehigh County** – Allentown's downtown contains the Historic Symphony Hall, the Allentown Art Museum, and the Baum Art School. The City of Allentown has made art enhancement a companion strategy of entertainment, including night clubs and restaurants in the Allentown Downtown Plan.

Other examples include: Philadelphia (Avenue of the Arts), Harrisburg (Whitaker Center), Indiana (Jimmy Stewart Museum), New Castle (Warner Brothers Movie Theater),

Jim Thorpe, Lancaster, Lebanon, and Oil City.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Additional information on Allentown's programs can be found by contacting the Allentown Economic Development Corporation at (610) 435-8890.

More information about Harrisburg's programs and the Whitaker Center can be found by contacting the Mayor's Office at (717) 255-3040.

### FUNDING SOURCE(S):

Historically-related programs receive some help and funding from the Pennsylvania Historical Preservation Society. Most funding for local art and entertainment projects comes from DCED.

More information can be found at DCED's website [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us) or by contacting them at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■





## E. Downtown Educational Opportunities

### DESCRIPTION:

Among the most important real estate components is the quality of education. When moving to a new area, one of the early considerations of a potential buyer is the quality of the school system. A number of initiatives and programs throughout Pennsylvania have looked to strengthen individual schools and school systems. On the primary and secondary level, these initiatives include privatization through charter and magnet schools. Junior and community colleges that have opened branches in downtowns have made significant impacts on the community. Areas where there is little or no opportunity for education beyond high school can offer a center where regional colleges/universities can offer off campus courses in a wide variety of subject area.

### BENEFITS:

Empowers a community by strengthening citizen involvement. Once the citizens are involved, a revitalization of the community as a whole may take place. This concept will benefit students who can't or don't want to leave the area to obtain an education. The facility can be used by businesses and industries in the area to train new employees. It provides a place for continued learning.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The Pennsylvania Department of Education's mission is to "assist...in providing for the maintenance and

support of a thorough and efficient system of education."

These programs, while not directly administered by the Department of Education, falls under the auspices of its mission.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**The Learning Center, City of New Castle, Lawrence County** – In New Castle, Lawrence County, the city of New Castle and the County worked together to create the Lawrence County Learning Center. Two community colleges, along with two colleges/universities, (a branch of Penn State), outside Lawrence County, offer a wide variety of credit and non-credit courses. Each institution hires their own instructors and collect tuition. The Center's only employees are a director and assistant who coordinate courses between institutions, schedule classroom time, and find trainers for businesses who need training for their employees

The Center is used by several area businesses (including AT&T) for training of new and existing employees. The operation is funded through tax dollars from around the county and city. The Center has also received state grants.

**Nueva Esperanza Campus, City of Philadelphia** – Nueva Esperanza has embarked on a five-year, holistic, human development and economic revitalization strategy designed to create jobs, enhance business opportunities, and provide social services for residents of the "Latino Corridor."

*(Downtown Educational Opportunities, Cont'd)*

The State has committed \$110,000 to conduct a comprehensive physical and economic plan for the corridor. The grant will enable Nueva to complete land use and ownership studies; conduct feasibility and marketing studies for the development of a retail center; determine the economic impact of investments into the corridor; and obtain a preliminary exterior design to change the 19th century warehouse exteriors into commercial/office building facades.

Nueva Esperanza will turn this 6.1-acre site, which is located in a state Enterprise Zone, into a commercial and community services center, the Nueva Esperanza Campus. It is anticipated that the campus will generate 50 new jobs for lower income community residents, in addition to retaining existing jobs.

A number of organizations and businesses have expressed an interest in leasing space in the property. Aspira, Inc. is looking to develop a non-traditional after-hours "Twilight High School" for older high school students from Olney, Edison and Kensington High Schools. The program will provide a place for students who find it difficult to work within the traditional high school setting to obtain a high school diploma.

The property at 301 West Hunting Park Avenue includes 40,000 square foot that are vacant on the street level, which Nueva anticipates leasing to an educational tenant. There are also plans to construct a gymnasium/community center that will be available to young people for recreation activities, including "midnight basketball." A

daycare center will provide care to 150 children from low-income families and employees in the area.

Other examples include:

- The International High School, City of Philadelphia
- The Aspira School, City of Philadelphia
- Lifelong Learning Center, City of Philadelphia
- Wilkes-Barre Community College, City of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County
- Lehigh-County Community College, City of Allentown, Lehigh County

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

DCED's Project for Community Building has a program that focuses on charter schools. Call (717) 787-7401 for more information.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

The State Department of Education provides a number of grants that elevate downtown educational opportunities. Contact them at (717) 783-6788. ■



## F. Downtown Residential Development

### DESCRIPTION:

One aspect to downtown revitalization is the emergence of a residential character downtown. In many cases, the buildings and infrastructure exist for residential re-use. Programs exist that can be used for creating better downtown residential opportunities. Among these programs are: Adaptive re-use, in-fill housing, renovation of existing buildings, and the demolition and reconstruction of new housing.

### BENEFITS:

If there is a significant population downtown, property values will rise, downtown businesses will be more successful, and investments will follow. In many cases, empty land is developed into parks, gardens and low-density, mixed income housing and businesses. Of the programs available to support downtown residential development, several provide incentives for a diverse community in the downtown area. In other cases, programs promote the re-use of older buildings for residential uses.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Through the use of federal, state, and local monies municipalities, counties, and development agencies develop a systematic strategy for a development project, and distribute the funding in a permit application process. They formulate and provide information on sustainable development to for-profit and non-profit developers and builders as part of the application process.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**City of Philadelphia**, – The City is mapping every vacant building in the city. It plans to bulldoze 26,000 homes, 19,000 which are beyond repair. Once the buildings are torn down, the City is selling the empty lots, sometimes for as little as \$1, to adjacent homeowners. Philadelphia's New Kensington Community Development Corporation has managed to transfer ownership of 270 properties to local homeowners. Another group has taken 111 abandoned lots and is overseeing the construction of the first inner-city shopping center in 30 years. Instead of vacant land, neighborhood residents will have a supermarket and a McDonald's restaurant.



**Crawford Square Development (Hill District), City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County** – The City's Urban Redevelopment Authority teamed up with a private developer, McCormick Baron Management Services, and several community-based organizations including the Hill Community Development Corporation and the

*(Downtown Residential Development, Cont'd)*

Hill Project Area Committee, to rebuild the historic Lower Hill District located near the Civic Arena, overlooking downtown's Golden Triangle. This comprehensive, \$55 million, 18.5-acre development has developed over 500 affordable homes and apartments and has plans to expand the existing shopping center, and develop an entertainment and cultural center in a renovated theater. The community plans and building designs were prepared using "New Urbanism" ideas. The development of Crawford Square/Crawford Roberts was financed in part with Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership Program funds, as well as state Housing and Redevelopment Assistance dollars.

**Armstrong Landing (Strip District), City of Pittsburgh** – The redevelopment of the former Armstrong Cork industrial property entails creation of 317 new upscale residential apartments, 45,590 square feet of retail space, 31,000 square feet of office space, and a 606-space parking garage. The project will expand the City's stock of rental residential units in close proximity to the Central Business District. The development's commercial component is expected to create more than 150 new jobs and to generate approximately \$610,000 annually in new real estate tax revenues. The historic rehabilitation of the former Armstrong Cork property, which has been vacant and environmentally contaminated for decades, will remove a blighting influence on this low-to-moderate income neighborhood. The project location is within the State-designated Lawrenceville

Enterprise Zone and a Federally designated Enterprise Community.

**City of Pittsburgh Green Neighborhood Initiative** –

A program that targets low to moderate-income neighborhoods for significant energy, water and resource savings in order to increase household income and spur neighborhood redevelopment. Tangible results have already been seen in participating Pittsburgh communities, where the program has helped to reduce pollution, improve business, and increase the value of local housing.

**Chocolate Works, City of**

**Philadelphia** – This innovative adaptive re-use project provides modern conveniences in a historic setting. A former chocolate factory comprised of five separate buildings was transformed into 135 modern residential units designed to appeal to young professionals. The heavy timber beams, exposed brick, and other elements of the original industrial building remain.

**Hanover Borough, York County** –

The McAllister Inn, formerly a hotel and nursing home in the business district, was rehabilitated and converted into apartments for low income elderly persons. There additionally was limited first floor commercial use and satellite county human services agency offices. Financing for the McAllister Inn in Hanover Borough came from the County Community Development Black and Home funds, Historic Tax Credits, PHFA low income housing tax credits and private financing.

*(Downtown Residential Development, Cont'd)*

**The Boston Store, City of Erie, Erie County** – This project was a major adaptive re-use project in Erie's downtown, renovating the former Boston Store, a landmark department store, into apartments and commercial space. The project is a six-story building, comprised of 92 units for tenants whose incomes do not exceed 60 percent of the area median income and 33 market rate units located on the upper floors and commercial space on the ground level floor. Financing for the Boston Store in Erie consisted of Erie Redevelopment Authority funds, a private mortgage loan, Historic Tax Credits, and Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

**Other Downtown Residential Redevelopment** – Schain Building, Columbia County; City of Meadville, Crawford County; Brookville Borough, Jefferson County; Abraham Lincoln Court, Berks County.

**Downtown Rural Residential Redevelopment** – Girardville Towers, Girardville, Schuylkill County; Waynesburg House, Waynesburg, Greene County; Blair House, Huntingdon, Huntingdon County; Clinton County Women's Center, Lock Haven, Clinton County; Fort Bedford Inn, Bedford, Bedford County.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

General information on the City of Philadelphia can be found at their website: [www.phila.gov](http://www.phila.gov).

Specific information on the Crawford Square Neighborhood can be found at the following Website: [www3.pitt.edu/~hilldc/histdist.html](http://www3.pitt.edu/~hilldc/histdist.html).

More information about the City of Pittsburgh can be found at their website: [www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us), at the Urban Redevelopment Authority's Website: [www.ura.org](http://www.ura.org), or by contacting them directly at (412) 255-6666.

For more information concerning the Boston Store, contact Landmark America, LLC, at (207) 772-3399.

For more information on downtown rural residential redevelopment, contact USDA Rural Development, Multi-Family Housing/Community Facilities Division.

For additional information, contact the Housing and Development Office of the PA Department of Community and Economic Development at (717) 720-7407.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Local funds, such as Act 137 (Housing Trust Fund), can be used, as well as HUD HOME money.

The development of Crawford Square/Crawford Roberts was financed in part with Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership Program funds, as well as state Housing and Redevelopment Assistance dollars.

*(Downtown Residential Development, Cont'd)*

Financing for the McAllister Inn in Hanover Borough came from the Community Development Block Grants and HOME funds, Historic Tax Credits, PHFA low income housing tax credits and private financing.

Financing for the Boston Store in Erie consisted of Erie Redevelopment Authority funds, a private mortgage loan, Historic Tax Credits, and Low Income Housing Tax Credits. ■



## 1. Community Development — Housing for all Needs

### DESCRIPTION:

Infrastructure typically is viewed as those essential prerequisites to housing (streets, water, waste disposal, etc.). In a broader view, housing is itself a part of the total “infrastructure” of a community. The quantity and quality of a community’s available housing stock affects the quality of life for current residents, and are factors considered both by potential residents and potential employers. Whether part of a residential subdivision, or land development plan, planning for downtown revitalization or preservation of farmland and other open space, communities doing infrastructure planning are looking at housing issues as an integral part of an overall strategy.

Other practices in this inventory also touch on housing and related infrastructure considerations, such as residential street design, planning for commuters’ transit needs, zoning techniques and rehabilitation of unused buildings into multi-family housing as a neighborhood revitalization tool. The impact of lot size requirements on housing affordability and effective on-lot waste disposal also impacts community housing needs. This practice places all of those considerations front and center in an infrastructure discussion.

### BENEFITS:

This practice promotes integration of residents’ most basic needs with considerations of such issues as: quantity and quality of available housing, placement of commercial areas and mass transit outlets; zoning

for future residential growth; design of future traffic flow; utility rights of way; and public health-based measures such as sewer and water systems.

This practice also allows a community to enjoy the economic benefits of new construction and rehabilitation. The tax revenues generated by a robust housing sector can greatly enhance a community’s ability to implement other aspects of its infrastructure improvement plan.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Using this practice requires a broader view of the concept of “infrastructure,” and is perhaps best done as a part of comprehensive planning.

There is a trend of continuing increase in standards imposed by municipalities, as well as increased review requirements and times. Advocates of this tool have suggested that this trend may work to diminish, if not eliminate, opportunities to provide affordable housing. Since 1992, thirty-six counties have adopted Act 137 Housing Trust Funds, a legislative tool that local governments can use to create housing resources to meet the affordable housing needs of their residents.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**City of Lock Haven, Clinton County** – One of several Federally-recognized Enterprise Communities in Pennsylvania, Lock Haven has successfully implemented much of its strategic plan for improving the community’s total asset base, including

*(Community Development, Cont'd)*

housing. Among other issues, the plan addressed affordable rental housing, affordable home ownership, weatherization and rehabilitation of existing homes, and the City's desire to assist Clinton County with setting up a Housing Trust Fund under Act 137.

**Reed House, City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County** – This project is a two-story development for homeless individuals on South 32nd Street, a mixed residential/industrial area in Philadelphia. Reed House offers 66 single room occupancy (SRO) units and 1 manager's one bedroom unit, all of which are wheelchair accessible. The Salvation Army, one of the City's largest providers of housing and supportive services for the homeless, is the sponsor and management agent of the project.

**Newport Square Apartments, Newport Borough, Perry County** – This project is a three-story rental development for older adults on South Second Street in Newport, comprised of 11 one-bedroom rental units, including two apartments for persons with disabilities. The development was sponsored by Tri-County Housing Development Corporation, a nonprofit corporation, and is managed by G.N. Management, Inc. of Lancaster.

Other Pennsylvania projects include: Project HOME Fairmont, Philadelphia County; Jardines de Borinquen, Philadelphia County; Rittenhouse School, Montgomery County; King Theatre Apartments, Lancaster County.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**  
General information can be found at DCED's website at [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us).

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency administers the PennHOMES and Low Income Housing Tax Credit Programs. General information on these two programs can be found at PHFA's website at [www.phfa.org](http://www.phfa.org).

For additional information, contact the Housing and Development Office of the PA Department of Community and Economic Development at (717) 720-7407.

A report on the implementation of Pennsylvania's County Housing Trust Fund Legislation can be obtained from the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency at (717) 780-3800.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Local, state, and federal funding sources are available to assist communities in addressing resident-housing needs.

Federal Enterprise Program Director  
20 East Church Street  
Lock Haven, PA 17745

Contact the Salvation Army, at (215) 787-2802 for more information on Reed House. For more information on Newport Square Apartments, contact Tri-County Housing Development Corporation at (717) 231-3604.

Financing for the Reed House project consisted of a Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency deferred loan, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Community Development Block Grant loan, local homeless funds, and a Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program loan.

*(Community Development, Cont'd)*

Financing for the Newport Square project consisted of a Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency deferred loan, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Department of Community and Economic Development Community of Opportunities loan, a Community Development Block Grant, and a mix of private financing.

Funds for the federal HOME Investment Partnership (projects consisting of one to four units), Community Development Block Grant, Communities of Opportunity, Community Revitalization Programs are awarded through the Department of Community and Economic Development. ■



## G. Entrepreneurial Assistance

### DESCRIPTION:

The growth and development of small businesses is vital to the economic well being of the Commonwealth. The simple fact is, small companies provide the majority of our jobs across the state and throughout our nation. In order to promote the establishment of successful firms, technical assistance and incentives must be made available to entrepreneurs willing to accept the risks associated with business ownership. A number of practical resources are available to help individuals and companies acquire the tools necessary to compete in today's marketplace. These include: the Entrepreneurial Assistance Office; Small Business Resource Center; Minority and Women's Business Advocates; Small Business Development Centers; Local Development Districts; REAL (Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning) Enterprises; Entrepreneurial Networks; Industrial Resource Centers; and the Ben Franklin Partnership.

### BENEFITS:

The risks associated with entrepreneurship are reduced when individuals have access to training, counseling, information and other resources designed to help them grow their businesses. Small firms remain a prominent force in the economy, and special initiatives aimed at minority and woman-owned companies have an important impact on our downtown business communities.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

Entrepreneurial Assistance Office (EAO) is the first stop for businesses and communities seeking technical assistance or related services. The Minority Business Advocate works to encourage the creation, expansion and retention of minority-owned businesses. Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) provide top-notch management consulting, training and information for small businesses and prospective entrepreneurs. Local Development Districts (LDDs) provide services in 52 Pennsylvania counties offering counseling in specialized areas such as financing, exporting, government marketing, and downtown revitalization. The Industrial Resource Center Network provides financial and technical assistance to manufacturers to improve their manufacturing operations. The Ben Franklin Technology Partners support the development and application of new products, technologies and ideas among entrepreneurs and established companies. The REAL Enterprises program is designed to establish experiential courses in rural high schools, vocational schools, community colleges, and four-year institutions. In the REAL course, students assess their interests and abilities, analyze the local community, and research and write a business plan for an enterprise they may open and operate.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Universal Community Homes, Philadelphia County** - The Community Conservation and Employment Program has allowed Universal the ability to launch a Business Support Center in

*(Entrepreneurial Assistance, Cont'd)*

what had been one of Philadelphia's deteriorating neighborhoods. The Center has catalyzed local business by offering technical assistance, capital loans, and financing with the development and support of business associations. The Business Support Center will continue to offer a "one stop shop" approach, which will assist in linking the South Philadelphia business community to the region's economic promise.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

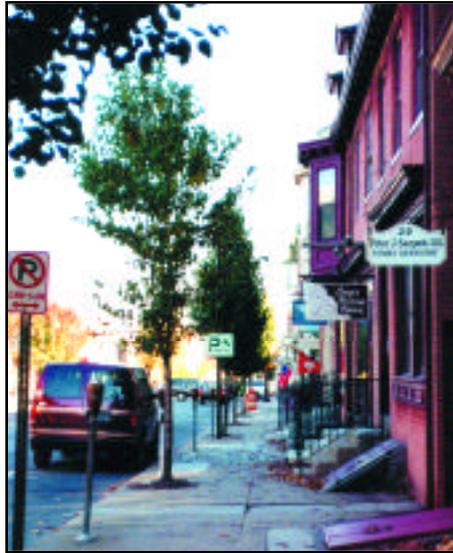
The DCED Entrepreneurial Assistance Office (EAO) may be contacted toll free at (800) 280-3801 or by visiting their website at [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us).

Contact the DCED Small Business Resource Center (SBRC) at (800) 280-3801.

The Minority Business Advocate can be reached at (717) 787-9147.

The Women's Business Advocate may be contacted at (717) 787-3339 for more information on special initiatives for women entrepreneurs and the annual "Best 50 Women in Business" recognition program.

More information on Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) can be found at their website at [www.pasbdc.org](http://www.pasbdc.org) or contact the State Director's office at (215) 898-1219. ■



## H. Financial Incentives for Development and Community Revitalization

### DESCRIPTION:

There are a number of federal and state funding programs that provide incentives for community revitalization. These include: Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG); Community Revitalization Program (CRP); HOME Investment Partnership; Manufactured and Industrialized Housing; Industrial Sites Reuse Program (ISRP); Infrastructure Development Program; Opportunity Grant Program; Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program; Historic Tax Credit Program; Neighborhood Assistance Program; Penn HOMES; Historic Preservation Grant Program. These incentives look to decrease or eliminate local, state or federal taxes to stimulate job creation, housing opportunities and community renewal. The sources of these incentive are the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

### BENEFITS:

These are established programs with sufficient funding. The decrease or elimination of taxes attracts economic activity where little or no activity existed before.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Many of the programs require that a project must serve low-income persons or residents of economically distressed neighborhoods.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Lititz Borough, Lancaster County** – Lititz Township established a tax incentive program targeted to commercial and industrial businesses interested in locating or relocating in the Borough. The tax abatement is provided to all new businesses for seven years and has promoted the redevelopment of the Borough's downtown business area.

#### **Philadelphia Center City Office**

**Conversions** – The Central Philadelphia Development Corporation focuses its attention on the 4.5 million square feet of vacant office space (80 percent of it in hard-to-rent Class C buildings) in Center City. In 1997 the group helped win a 10-year tax abatement for the conversion of vacant office buildings to residential uses.

#### **Towanda Borough, Bradford County**

– This rural municipality of 3,000 persons has been persistent in searching for funding to help revitalize its downtown. The municipality has found funding through federal transportation sources (ISTEA, TEA-21) and state sources (Main Street, Enterprise Zone, Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program). In addition to securing appropriate funding, the municipality has been consistent in integrating the funding with the municipality's master plan.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Many of the above funds are awarded through the Department of Community and Economic Development's State Planning Assistance Grant (SPAG);

*(Financial Incentives, Cont'd)*

Neighborhood Assistance (NAP); Family Savings Account (FSA); Employment and Community Conservation (ECC); and federal HOME Investment Partnership programs. General information can be found at the Department of Community and Economic Development website: [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us).

General information on the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program and the Penn HOMES program can be found at the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency's website [www.phfa.org](http://www.phfa.org) or by phone at (717) 780-3800.

General information concerning the City of Philadelphia can be found at their website: [www.phila.gov](http://www.phila.gov).

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Funding is provided through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), DCED and the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency. HUD can be contacted in Philadelphia at (215) 656-0600 and Pittsburgh at (412) 644-6428.

Further information on funding sources can be found in DCED's July 1998 publication *Funding Source Directory* also available by contacting the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



## 1. Enterprise Zone Program

### DESCRIPTION:

This program provides grants to financially disadvantaged communities to prepare and implement business development strategies, and loan funds to Enterprise Zone businesses to assist in financing business growth and job creation. There is additionally the Enterprise Zone Tax Credits Program. This program provides tax credits to businesses located in enterprise zones to encourage private investment and promote job growth and economic development in designated zones. In addition, businesses locating or expanding within an enterprise zone may apply for funds (Enterprise Zone Tax Credits) that will provide low interest loans. Funds may be used for the purchase of real property, machinery and equipment, and working capital. Terms are negotiated locally and loan repayments remain within the community to stimulate other business development.

### BENEFITS:

The program works with local governments to build their capacity to improve the business climate and to increase their ability to respond effectively to local business expansion opportunities and constraints.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

To qualify as an Enterprise Zone community, DCED must recognize the community as financially distressed. One job must be created or retained for every \$15,000 of capital. Eligible activities include building acquisition, construction, renovation, machinery and

equipment purchases, and on a case-by-case basis, training and new equipment. Eligible activities for Enterprise Zone Tax Credits include improvements to real property through new construction and/or rehabilitation to existing buildings in a designated enterprise zone.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Fayette County** – In 1996, Fayette County was successful in obtaining Enterprise Zone designation from the State for 14 municipalities located along the Route 119/Southwest Pennsylvania railroad corridor from the Westmoreland County border to Smithfield Borough. Enterprise Zone designation gives projects located in these municipalities priority consideration when applying for assistance under state programs. In 1997, with the assistance of the Fayette County Board of Commissioners, Fayette County received \$200,000 in Enterprise Zone funding for a total of \$250,000 since its inception.

**Steel Valley Enterprise Zone, Homestead, Munhall, and West Homestead Boroughs, Allegheny County** – Located in the “Historic Steel Valley”, the Steel Valley Enterprise Zone Program was established to help these communities develop and implement business development strategies and programs. It is a private sector driven program, compatible with public sector purposes and designed to increase both the quantity and quality of available job opportunities and business creation,

*(Enterprise Zone Program, Cont'd)*

expansion, and retention projects. The Steel Valley Enterprise Zone includes more than three hundred acres of vacant riverfront property along the Monongahela River. The Enterprise Zone is located less than 15 minutes from downtown Pittsburgh, 10 minutes from the heart of the Oakland medical and university center, and only about seven minutes from the new Pittsburgh Technology Center.

**City of Corry, Erie County –**

The Corry Area Enterprise Zone Program provides incentives and other assistance to encourage business growth and investment in three target areas of the City of Corry and Columbus and Wayne Townships. The program is administered by the Redevelopment Authority in the City of Corry and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. The Redevelopment Authority in the City of Corry manages the Corry Area Enterprise Zones consisting of two townships and one City. The Enterprise Zone encompasses all industrial and some commercially zoned areas within the City of Corry, Wayne Township and Columbus Township.

For more information visit: Fayette County's Website at [www.fforward.com](http://www.fforward.com) and Steel Valley Enterprise Zone's website at [www.pitt.edu/~prises/sezil/1100/1100.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~prises/sezil/1100/1100.html).

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

The funds are awarded through the Department of Community and Economic Development. Information can be found on their Website: [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us) or by contacting the office of Strategic Planning and Operation at (717) 787-7400. ■

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

General information can be found at the Department of Community and Economic Development website: [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us) or by contacting the office of Strategic Planning and Operation at (717) 787-7400.

## 2. Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ)



in the zones to gain benefit of the tax advantage. After the 12-year, tax-free period ends, the companies will become growing, tax-paying firms, providing both tax money and jobs for the local economy.

### DESCRIPTION:

The Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) program waives state corporate net income, capital stock and foreign franchise tax, personal income taxes, sales and use tax, business and mercantile taxes, and local real property tax from 1998 to 2010 for employers and residents doing business or living in a zone. KOZs have a one-time grant of \$250,000 for each zone. Twelve KOZs have been designated in the state of Pennsylvania; each made up of a number of sub-zones. Roughly one-quarter of the 119 sub-zones have areas in downtowns and central business districts.

### BENEFITS:

A benefit of being located in a KOZ is that a number of taxes no longer apply. Specific state taxes are waived (Corporate Net Income Tax, Capital Stock and Foreign Franchise Tax, Personal Income Tax, Sales and Use Tax) as well as local taxes (Local Real Property Tax, Mercantile Tax, Earned Income/Net Profits Tax, Sales and Use Tax).

The state does not lose much income from these tax abatements since there is little business or development in the zones anyway. By providing tax-free zones, businesses are able to locate

### IMPLEMENTATION:

To be designated a zone, the proposed region must meet specific criteria related to poverty level, property deterioration, income levels and job loss. All of this information must be submitted on a form to the state Department of Community and Economic Development. If an area receives zone designation, it will receive a one-time \$250,000 grant to implement the opportunity plan and to provide an annual update of real property and other information to the Department of Revenue. The grant is to be drawn down by the zone, as needed, over a period not to exceed the first five years of designation. The DCED will develop and implement a consolidated marketing strategy for the zone for use in job retention and attraction activities. Other arms of the state government will play an active role, such as the Department of Education and the Governor's Center for Local Government Services. Each entity is to provide needed technical assistance to bolster the needs of the zone, ranging from housing assistance and job training to filling out annual reports on the progress being made in the zone.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**City of Chester Keystone Opportunity Zone, Delaware County** – Located in a

*(Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ), Cont'd)*

KOZ, the former McCaffery Village public-housing complex will be razed to accommodate new multi-family townhouses on the site to encourage homeownership. A supermarket and neighborhood shopping center also will be built on the site.

**City of York, York County** – The Boundary Avenue area, just south of downtown along George Street, is a unique site within the city and the KOZ subzone. On this site come together three distinct neighborhoods. A \$20 million mixed-use commercial development is planned for this area, designed to bring wealth into the Southeast Neighborhood, retain wealth within the neighborhood, and create jobs for neighborhood residents. Development on this site is expected to secure previous public and private investments in the physical and social development of the Southeast Neighborhood of at least \$16 million since 1990. Elements of the Boundary Avenue Development Project include a new 36,000 square foot building to serve various departments and for-profit subsidiaries of York Hospital, the renovation of a former auto dealership into new retail and office space, and the creation of a 20,000 square foot grocery store.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

General information on the KOZ program can be found by contacting DCED at (717) 720-7344. More specific information concerning the KOZ program can be found at the Department of Community and Economic Development website: [www.dced.state.pa.us/PA\\_Exec/DCED/community/koz.htm](http://www.dced.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/DCED/community/koz.htm).

Information on the City of York KOZ can be found on their Website: [www.yorkcity.org/KOZ/](http://www.yorkcity.org/KOZ/).

General information concerning the City of Chester can be found at [www.chestercity.com](http://www.chestercity.com) or by calling (610) 447-7707.

Local information can be found on the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Website: [www.swkoz.com](http://www.swkoz.com), and the North Central Region website: [www.ncentral.com/~ncprpdc/koz.htm](http://www.ncentral.com/~ncprpdc/koz.htm).

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

A \$250,000 one time grant is awarded for each KOZ. Additional priority consideration is extended for state grants applied for by KOZ.

Contact DCED at (717) 720-7344. ■

### 3. Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA)

#### DESCRIPTION:

The Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) program allows local municipalities, school districts and counties to offer up an abatement to projects that defer the increase in real estate taxes on the value of the construction over a period of ten years.

#### BENEFITS:

LERTA effectively reduces the real estate taxes by 50% over this period. This incentive creates a graduated increase in the payment of taxes on improvements to commercial, industrial and other business property over a 5-10 year period. The graduation of taxes applies only to the taxes that are attributable to the improvement project. LERTA applies not only to new projects, but to existing businesses with construction or reconstruction projects as well.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

The tax exemption usually applies to the commercial and industrial properties and may include new construction or the renovation of an existing building. Applications for LERTA may be obtained through local taxing agencies such as a county, city, borough, incorporated town, township, institution district or school district. The application is typically required to be submitted to a local municipality office no later than 10 days after the building permit is granted.

#### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Borough of Jefferson Hills, Allegheny County** – Jefferson Hills adopted a LERTA ordinance that places a three year tax exemption on the first \$500,000 in cost for new construction, reconstruction, or improvements to real property. The tax exemption in the initial year is 100% of the Borough's real estate taxation upon the assessed valuation attributable to the improvement. In the second year, the tax exemption is 66%, and in the third year, 33%. The West Jefferson Hills School District also adopted mirror legislation to the Borough, which exempts successful applicants, according to the schedule, from property taxes during the first three years.

#### **City of Reading, Berks County** –

The City of Reading offers LERTA to property owners in the City who make improvements to their properties that increase the assessment of their property. The City, Berks County, and the Reading School District do provide a schedule of tax abatement for the improvements to the properties. Those properties within the state-designated Enterprise Zone are given a much more aggressive schedule than the properties located within the rest of the City limits.

#### **Lower Pottsgrove Township,**

**Montgomery County** – Industrial and business properties in the Township's industrial zone are also part of the Township's LERTA District. The LERTA district provides significant tax incentives for new business.

*(Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance  
(LERTA), Cont'd)*

**York County** – LERTA legislation has been adopted in the City of York, the Townships of Hopewell, East Manchester, West Manchester, Dover and Red Lion Borough along with their respective school districts.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

For more information on LERTA in:  
Lower Pottsgrove visit their website at [www.lowerpottsgrove.org](http://www.lowerpottsgrove.org);  
in Reading visit [www.ci.reading.pa.us](http://www.ci.reading.pa.us);  
in Jefferson Hills visit [trfn.clpgh.org/jeffboro](http://trfn.clpgh.org/jeffboro); in York County visit [www.york-county.org](http://www.york-county.org). ■

## 4. Land Value Tax

### DESCRIPTION:

A tax that imposes different rates on land (higher tax rate) than buildings and improvements (lower tax rate). This gives a tax break to homeowners and businesses, while those simply “waiting for a rise” in property values are encouraged to either utilize their locations or sell them to someone who intends to do so. In standard tax systems, land value increases because they are created by community tax dollars, which have financed the needed public goods and services, land values should be taxed at a greater amount. Consequently, boarded-up and vacant properties will be too expensive to hold, providing a strong incentive for owners to put them back into use. Land value tax is sometimes called the “split-rate-tax” because of its gradual method of implementation, or “two-tiered tax.”

### BENEFITS:

Split-rate property tax discourages speculation and encourages investment by imposing different rates on land and buildings.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Pennsylvania has six general classifications of local governments that can levy taxes (cities, boroughs, townships, towns, school districts and counties), each of which operates under separate codes. The only taxing jurisdictions with a land value taxing option, other than cities and eight school districts, are forty-five boroughs, and five counties that have adopted Home Rule Charters.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

#### City of Allentown, Lehigh County –

Citizens voted in a city Home Rule Charter that included a change in property taxes to a two-tiered system that would, gradually over five years, shift the burden to land values.

#### City of Harrisburg, Dauphin County –

Considered among the nation’s most distressed cities 15 years ago, the land value tax has been a crucial tool in the city’s revival. Once plagued by more than 4,200 vacant structures, Harrisburg now has fewer than 500.

#### City of Scranton, Lackawanna County –

Along with Aliquippa, Allentown, Coatesville, and Pittsburgh, Scranton has instituted a split-rate property tax. Each of the municipalities is reporting favorable revenues and building activity.

#### City of Washington, Washington

County – After a two-tiered tax was implemented nearly 80 percent of residents in Washington’s less affluent neighborhoods saw their taxes decrease. The owners of a large office building had such a decrease in their tax bill that they constructed a large addition.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Information on Allentown’s two-tiered system can be found by calling (610) 437-7751.

For more information about Harrisburg’s land value tax, contact the Dauphin County Office of Tax Assessment at (717) 255-2735.

*(Land Value Tax, Cont'd)*

For more information on the City of Washington's two-tiered tax system please contact the City Treasurer at (724) 223-4220. ■

## 5. Tax Credits and Incentives

### DESCRIPTION:

The Department of Community and Economic Development offers as a resource a series of three types of tax credits through its Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP). The overall objective is to help improve distressed neighborhoods and communities through the creation of effective partnerships between community-based organizations and the business community.

**Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credits -**  
A one year contribution program that provides a 50% tax credit for a working partnership between businesses and community organizations.

**Comprehensive Services Plan Tax Credits -** A one year long term contribution program that provides a 70% tax credit available each year for a ten year period as a working commitment between a business and a community group. This is a more comprehensive program offering more credits than the traditional NAP program.

**Enterprise Zone Tax Credits -** 20% state investment tax credits to targeted businesses located within state designated Enterprise Zones.

### BENEFITS:

Businesses gain directly from financial incentives and directly or indirectly from the improvement of a targeted community area, usually where the business is located. The state and community gain by the commitment of the business both in time and effort.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

A business may sponsor its own project or contribute, whether in-kind or through direct financial assistance, to a nonprofit community organization for a program approved by DCED. The Enterprise Zone Tax credit is a direct benefit to a corporation for investing in their property or construction within an enterprise zone. A percentage of the contribution may then be used as a tax credit on the business's corporate tax liability with the Department of Revenue.

In order to be eligible for all three types of tax credits, projects or programs must qualify under one or more of the following categories and must serve clients who are either low income or residents of economically distressed neighborhoods: 1) community services, 2) education, 3) job training, 4) crime prevention, and 5) neighborhood assistance.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Germantown Settlement, City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County -**

In collaboration with its subsidiary organization, the Greater Germantown Housing Development Corporation and Mellon PSFS Bank, the Lower Germantown Rebuilding Community Project was initiated in 1994. Based on a ten-year comprehensive neighborhood strategy developed for, and in consult with community residents and other public and private stakeholders, the project encompasses the integration of community organizing, neighborhood planning, human services (social development) and housing, commercial and economic development.

*(Tax Credits and Incentives, Cont'd)*

**South Side Local Development Company (SSLDC), Allegheny County -**

The Neighborhood Assistance Program/Comprehensive Services Program empowers the SSLDC to develop a comprehensive approach to quality of life issues that affect residents of the South Side including the adjacent public housing communities of Arlington Heights and St. Clair Village. In 1998, PNC Bank made a ten-year commitment totaling \$2.5 million to facilitate responsible business, residential, recreational, industrial, and workforce development efforts in the community. By partnering with community organizations, such as Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation and the Brashear Association, the project not only reinforces local resources, but greatly expands ability to serve South Side residents.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

For more information contact the Department of Community and Economic Development at (717) 787-1984.

Contact the Greater Germantown Housing Development Corporation at (215) 843-6766 to learn more about the Germantown Settlement.

For more information on SSLDC, contact them directly at (412) 481-0651. ■

## 6. Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

### DESCRIPTION:

Part of a trend beginning in the mid 1970s, tax increment financing (TIF) is a state-authorized, locally implemented plan that helps finance public improvements associated with private development projects. TIF is the pledging of anticipated future tax revenues to finance current development projects. The anticipated future tax revenues will be derived from the anticipated increase in the tax revenues in the proposed tax increment district. The increase in tax revenues above the amount in the base year is the "tax increment." Pennsylvania's program was created in 1990.

### BENEFITS:

Can lead to the economic revitalization of critical areas as well as the creation and retention of jobs for the citizenry of the community. Upon retirement of the financing and the termination of this form of tax subsidy, the community's treasury will continue to receive the real estate and other local taxes attributable to such development.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

In many cases use of TIFs requires city or borough council approval. In Pittsburgh, for example, for a TIF project to be approved, the City, County and School District must jointly agree to defer for a period of up to 20 years a part of the tax revenues generated by the improvements to the property.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

#### City Hall Annex, City of Philadelphia

– Construction began in November 1999 on a 499-room Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in the former City Hall Annex directly across from Philadelphia's City Hall. The \$76 million hotel, was partially publicly financed by the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation. This funding included a \$10 million Tax Increment Financing (TIF) loan and a \$7.5 million HUD 108 loan. The Annex, built in 1926, has been closed for a decade. It is on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

**City of Pittsburgh** – Pittsburgh has eight (8) fully approved TIF projects: the restoration of the Fulton Building as a hotel, Union Switch and Signal, ALCOA, Lazarus, Buyer's Mart, Schenley Center, Mellon Bank and Giant Eagle.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office of Housing and Development in the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED): (717) 720-7407

### FUNDING SOURCE(S):

The funds are awarded through the Department of Community and Economic Development. General information can be found at the DCED Website: [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us). ■



## I. Historic Preservation

### DESCRIPTION:

The presence of historic properties in Pennsylvania's downtowns enhances the quality of our lives, helps establish our sense of place and helps define the identity and character of our communities. Historic preservation is the thoughtful management of these properties and associated landscapes and includes a broad range of activities intended to preserve the tangible remains of our architectural, cultural and historic resources.

For related information within this document, see *Section VI, E. Preserving Cultural Heritage*.

### BENEFITS:

This practice preserves our Commonwealth's history and heritage by protecting and restoring structures of architectural and historic merit.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Grants are offered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission to non-profit organizations and public agencies to preserve and rehabilitate historic structures individually designated as historic or located in a designated historic district. Leveraging sources are also available to preserve low-income housing located in historic districts.

The Pennsylvania Housing Financing Agency (PHFA) offers interest free deferred payment loans that can be used to support the development of lower income rental housing. PHFA strongly encourages applicants to make

maximum use of other financial resources and create public-private partnerships.

In many cases, as in the Manchester example below, a non-profit is established to work with local government and civic bodies for the elimination of blighting influences and to assist and foster the planning, redevelopment, renewal, and improvement of historic areas.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Chester County Municipal Historic Preservation Grant Program** – Provides support for long-term preservation designs. The program has allotted \$12,000 in matching funds to the small Borough of Elverson. Instead of assigning oversight to a regulatory board, the Borough has entrusted it to a specially formed homeowners' association.

**Manchester Neighborhood, City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County** – In 1976 Manchester was the first neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh to be listed on the National Register for Historic Places. The Manchester community was built up during the later half of the 19th Century as a middle-class neighborhood populated largely by local businessmen and their families only to see a decline in the past two decades. The Manchester Citizens Corporation (MCC), founded in 1965, is a community based non-profit that looks to renew and restore the historic character of the neighborhood. MCC helps rebuild the community by pursuing funds at all levels, as well as, provide educational opportunities, job training, life skills, and other assistance

*(Historic Preservation, Cont'd)*

programs. Another key aspect of Manchester's recent revival is due to the integration of public housing into the community. This is evident through the HOPE VI grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the mid-1990's. Much of the preservation that has been accomplished has been a product of joint efforts between MCC, the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh, HUD, and the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation.



**Villa Maria Apartments, City of Erie, Erie County** - Located on West Eighth Street in Erie, this project was a substantial rehabilitation of a former convent that now offers 40 apartments for older residents, and 30 units of affordable housing for general occupancy. Halliday Properties, Inc. and Penrose Properties, Inc. sponsored the project. Housing and Neighborhood Development Services (HANDS) or Erie manages the development. The renovated apartments were honored by the Erie County Historical Society in March 1999 at a program that featured an overview of adaptive re-use of historic buildings and around Northwestern Pennsylvania.

Other projects in Pennsylvania include: The Boston Store, Erie County; Historic

Lafayette Apartments, Butler County; The Rittenhouse School, Montgomery County.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Information on the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission can be found at [www.phmc.state.pa.us](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us) or by phone at (717) 787-3362.

Information can be found at the following Websites:

City of Pittsburgh:  
[www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us);

Chester County:  
[www.chesco.org](http://www.chesco.org).

For more information on the Manchester Neighborhood look at the website [trfn.clpgh.org/mcc/history1.html](http://trfn.clpgh.org/mcc/history1.html) or contact the Manchester Citizens Corporation at (412) 323-1743.

Information concerning the Villa Maria Apartments should be directed to HANDS at (814) 459-1047.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Information on PHFAs loans can be found by contacting them at (717) 780-3800 or via their website [www.phfa.org](http://www.phfa.org).

HUD, who manages the Federal HOME Investment Partnership Program, can be reached in Philadelphia at (215) 656-0600 or in Pittsburgh at (412) 644-6428.

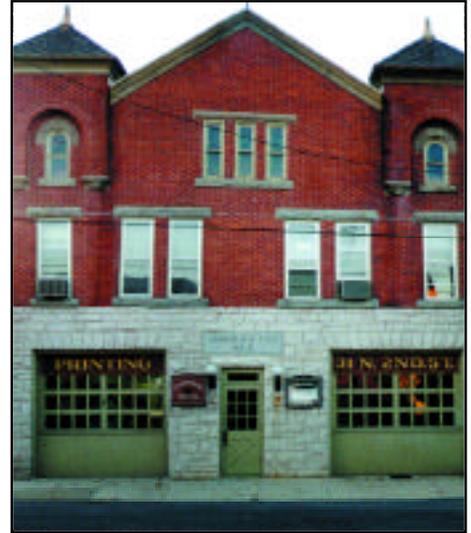
Other funding sources that can be used for historic rehabilitation include Historic Tax Credits, Community Development Block Grant Program, Low Income

*(Historic Preservation, Cont'd)*

Housing Tax Credits, Neighborhood Assistance Program, Federal HOME Investment Partnership Program, Federal Home Loan Bank Programs, and Act 137 funds.

Financing for the Villa Maria Apartments project included both Low Income Housing Tax Credits and PennHOMES funding through the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, Historic Tax Credits, Federal HOME funds provided by the City of Erie, Northwest Savings Bank through a Federal Home Loan Bank loan, and a loan from the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

Other funding information can be found at DCED's Website [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us) or by contacting the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■





## J. Land Recycling (Brownfields Development)

### DESCRIPTION:

Old industrial sites have many positive attributes such as location, existing transportation facilities, and available electric sewer, and water utilities. Pennsylvania's brownfields law, also known as Act 2, the Land Recycling and Environmental Remediation Standards Act of 1995, provides incentives for former industrial properties to be returned to productive use while ensuring the properties are environmentally suitable and safe for development. The Industrial Sites Reuse Program administered by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) facilitates this process. Other programs administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to complement brownfields remediation include Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZs), the Infrastructure Development Program, and the Job Creation Tax Credit Program.

greenways and park applications that add economic value to the overall redevelopment project. PA DEP and PA DCNR have developed a partnership, "Green Opportunities for Brownfields" to facilitate this concept.

One of the advantages brownfields offer is the opportunity to obtain land at below market value. Sites can, in some cases, be obtained for \$1 because municipalities are anxious to have the sites redeveloped. Another advantage to brownfields is that they are often situated in prime locations near the central business district, waterfront or existing residential neighborhoods. At more suburban brownfields locations, there is potential for successful retail operations because many sites, such as former gas stations, are often located at prime intersections where mini-malls, convenience stores or restaurants can take advantage of heavy traffic.

### BENEFITS:

Brownfields redevelopment:

- promotes urban revitalization by limiting the environmental liability associated with redeveloping vacant industrial and commercial sites.
- reduces sprawl by reusing sites and focusing development where existing infrastructure facilities exist, instead of developing farmland or open space.
- provides an environmental benefit by cleaning up hazardous sites.

Many sites, particularly those along riverfronts also are conducive to

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Contaminated sites must still be remediated before they are used. This can be costly. And, since many small and medium sized lenders in the financial community are still unaware of the benefits of the program, obtaining funding may present some challenges.

Brownfields initiatives have made recent strides forward, but have done little to address third party liability exposure. Although these are generally market driven insurance policies, the State and local governments have to underwrite the risk to encourage the private sector to take on the development challenges

*(Land Recycling (Brownfields Development),  
Cont'd)*

(real or perceived) brought on by contaminated sites.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

Since the start of the program in 1995, nearly 500 sites have been put back into productive use through the program.

**Former LTV Steel Plan, City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County –**

The site, former host to a variety of industries including steelmaking, beer brewing and gas production, was purchased by the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh in 1993 with the goal of integrating business, industry and the community in a mixed-use urban development. Because residential housing would be part of the mixed-use development planned for a portion of the property, cleanup had to meet residential statewide health standards in those areas of the site. PCB hot spots were excavated, and pathway elimination was used to attain a site-specific standard for an area of former tar tanks at one end of the property.

Prior to cleanup, the site had been subdivided into parcels based on their location and potential contamination. Although this partitioning could have delayed development of any individual area until all were remediated, an agreement was negotiated to allow approval of intermediate final reports as each parcel was completed. In addition, DEP facilitated a buyer/seller agreement for the first parcel between URA and the buyer, South Side Works Associates. This agreement enabled the development of the first parcel into

office, distribution and pharmacy space for the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Purchasing Department.

The master plan for the entire 123 acres, conceived through a community planning process, will feature more than 300 new housing units, nearly 500,000 square feet for retail and entertainment and approximately 1.5 million square feet for offices and research and development. The development will provide a high quality pedestrian environment with brick sidewalks, crosswalks, parks and trail improvements along the Monongahela riverfront.

**Department of Public Works Garage – City of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County**

This land recycling project began when a teleservices provider and prospective employer of approximately 2,000 became interested in the site of an operating bowling alley. With the help of the Land Recycling Program, the bowling alley owner relocated to an abandoned, city-owned maintenance garage and built a new center with twice the number of lanes. Owned by the City Department of Public Works, the site consisted of seven buildings used for parking as well as storage and use of oils, tar, fuels, road salt and cleaning solvents. Although the buildings had been demolished, the contaminants remained. The City characterized the waste on site, then removed the underground storage tanks and 53 drums of waste and contaminated soils. The City also conducted an analysis, which revealed no chemical migration within the soil or groundwater. These efforts helped the City to achieve its site-specific standard. The end result was a cleanup of a large

*(Land Recycling (Brownfields Development),  
Cont'd)*

environmental and public health liability and simultaneously brought 2,000 new jobs into Wilkes-Barre.

**Grundy Recreation Center, Bristol Borough, Bucks County** – Once an abandoned lot, the Grundy Recreation Center has become a new place for the residents of Bristol Borough to hold meetings, exercise and socialize. The property — a 7.2 acre lot, was originally home to the Grundy Carpet Mill. It was vacated in 1992, and donated to Bristol Borough in 1996 in order to replace the old recreation center which had burned in 1995. During excavation for a skating rink, the crew discovered what turned out to be pesticides in four under-ground chambered areas. The contaminated soil was treated as hazardous waste, removed from the site and properly disposed of, while the concrete and soil surrounding the chambers was cleaned. The tests showed that area ground water was not contaminated. The cleanup met the statewide health standards for soil and groundwater at the site. The new Grundy Recreation Center includes a full-size ice skating rink, locker rooms, a game room, a snack bar, a pro shop, a community meeting room and a community recreation room with televisions, pool tables and ping-pong tables. In addition, the project created 20 full and part-time jobs.

**Bethlehem Steel Remediation, Northampton County** — This 1,800-acre project is the largest brownfields development site in the nation. The project is located in an urban enterprise

zone and is an example of how an urban industrial site can be jointly investigated and remediated through a public-private partnership between the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. A component of the project, Bethlehem Works, is located on 163 acres and is envisioned as a Riverfront Renaissance District that would include a 14-screen cinema, two recreational ice rinks, and upscale hotel, and at least 20 specialty shops, lounges, and restaurants. In addition, the National Museum of Industrial History will anchor the site. The rest of the site, approximately 1,600 acres will be converted into a \$600 million business park, including a major Norfolk Southern railroad truck-to-rail intermodal terminal.

**Other Pennsylvania Brownfields Sites** — Industrial Park of York, York County; Former ACI Site, Clinton County; Ingersoll-Rand Redevelopment, Washington County; City Auto, Erie County; Pier 98, Philadelphia County; Sackville Mills Associates, Delaware County; Lower Cambria Works Reuse, Cambria County; Armstrong Cork Building, Allegheny County; Clinton Industrial Park, Butler County; Union County Greenfield Commons; Washington Landing, Allegheny County; Former Johnson Bronze Site, Lawrence County; West Chester Manufactured Gas Plant, Delaware County; Red Rose Commons, Lancaster County; Sovereign Oil Company Site, Philadelphia County.

*(Land Recycling (Brownfields Development),  
Cont'd)*

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

More information on the Land Recycling Program and brownfields can be found at the Department of Environmental Protection Website:

[www.dep.state.pa.us](http://www.dep.state.pa.us).

Information on the LTV Steel Plan can be found by contacting PA DEP Southwest Office at (412) 442-4091.

For more information on the Bethlehem Steel remediation, visit Bethlehem Steel's Website at [www.bethsteel.com](http://www.bethsteel.com) or by contacting them at (610) 694-2424.

For further information on the Grundy Recreation Center brownfields site, please contact the PA DEP Southeast Office at (610) 832-5927.

### **FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Several financial assistance programs, including grants, loans and tax incentives are available to assist with projects.

The **Industrial Sites Cleanup Fund** provides grants or low-interest loans that can cover up to 75 percent of the cost of completing an environmental study and implementing a cleanup plan.

The **Industrial Sites Environmental Assessment Fund** allows the Department of Commerce to make grants to municipalities, municipal or local authorities, non-profit economic development agencies, and similar agencies. These grants are to finance environmental assessments of industrial sites located in municipalities that have been designated as distressed communities by the Department of Commerce.

For more information on the grants and loans available, contact the Grants Office in the Department of Commerce at (717) 787-7120. ■

## K. Local Initiative Support Programs

### DESCRIPTION:

Locally and regionally, non-profit corporations have been established to enhance the quality of life in downtowns. These corporations provide programs and services that create new employment opportunities, retain and expand community businesses, secure federal and state funding, build public-private partnerships, and help revitalize urban areas.

### BENEFITS:

These programs help stabilize communities and improve the delivery of basic community services. They promote a community's image as a desirable place to invest and locate a business and create an environment where businesses can easily be established and thrive.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Programs are established and work in conjunction with community government. These programs can provide more specific help to neighborhoods.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Beaver County Community Development Program** – The program contains three primary areas of activity: 1) housing preservation, 2) economic development, and 3) infrastructure improvement. The activities focus upon assisting low income neighborhoods and areas; assisting central business districts with decaying or deteriorating building conditions; improving decaying infrastructure conditions; and assisting employers in the creation and retention of jobs.

### Bethlehem Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan SNAP, Northampton

**County** – First used in 1997, the City of Bethlehem's Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) is designed to put city government back to work in the city's neighborhoods. To reach this goal, the City created a SNAP team of workers from all departments and levels of city government that visits several neighborhoods each year. At each visit, the team talks to residents to determine what work is needed regarding public safety, streets, parks, and other basic services. The team also works with residents to form neighborhood organizations for more longer-term concerns.

### City of Bethlehem, Northampton

**County – Bethlehem Economic Development Corporation (BEDCO)** has set up a number of programs that help fund and direct community revitalization. These programs include: BEDCO Loan Pool, Fund for Revitalization and Economic Development (FRED), Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA), Facade Program, Enterprise Zone Incentives, Site Location Assistance, and other economic development programs.

### Beaver County Community Development

**Program** – The program contains three primary areas of activity: 1) housing preservation, 2) economic development, and 3) infrastructure improvement. The activities focus upon assisting low income neighborhoods and areas; assisting central business districts with decaying or deteriorating building

*(Local Initiative Support Programs, Cont'd)*

conditions; improving decaying infrastructure conditions; and assisting employers in the creation and retention of jobs.

**Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation** – Since the demise of the industrial era, many of the Lehigh Valley's communities have seen significant deterioration. The Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation has initiated a number of programs that have focused on revitalization. These programs include a comprehensive brownfields initiative; packaging financing for new employers; and developing industrial lands and incubators.

**Philadelphia Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Philadelphia County**

– Since 1981, Philadelphia's (LISC) has provided early stage support to CDC's in the form of grants and loans for the development of rental and for-sale homes, and neighborhood-based businesses of all types. LISC also works with public and private sector leaders to develop public policy initiatives that help in the revitalization of distressed neighborhoods. LISC is also involved in a number of long-range partnerships with national organizations (for example the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Pew Charitable Trusts). These partnerships typically result in the creation of multi-year, community-wide redevelopment strategies. More recently, LISC and its affiliate, the National Equity Fund, have teamed with the Philadelphia Housing Authority to help convert the 880 apartment Southwark high-rise towers into low-rise housing units, thereby greatly reducing density.

**Reading Means Business Team (RMBT), Berks County** – The RMBT was created to be a driving force in developing a prosperous business environment for the City of Reading. RMBT participants have public and private sector backgrounds comprising a wide spectrum of insight. The RMBT strives to create an atmosphere within the City of Reading that is energetic, fun, and attractive; to promote the City's image as a desirable place to invest and locate a business, and; to create an environment where businesses can easily be established and thrive. To achieve these goals the RMBT has established both a Community Promotion and Business Development task force, which meet monthly.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

More information can be found at Beaver County's Website: [www.co.beaver.pa.us/EconomicDevelopment/agencies.html](http://www.co.beaver.pa.us/EconomicDevelopment/agencies.html) or by contacting the Community Development Program of Beaver County at (724) 775-4711.

For information on the Bethlehem SNAP program call (610) 865-7100.

For more information on the Bethlehem Economic Development Corporation (BEDCO) call (610) 865-7056 or visit their Website: [www.bethlehem-pa.com](http://www.bethlehem-pa.com).

Information on the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation can be found by contacting them directly at (610) 266-6775.

The Reading Means Business Team has a website at [www.readingpa.com/rmb](http://www.readingpa.com/rmb) or can be contacted through the City of

*(Local Initiative Support Programs, Cont'd)*

Reading's Business Resource Center at (610) 655-6099.

More information on Philadelphia LISC can be found by contacting the organization at (215) 923-3801.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Financial support for Bethlehem SNAP comes from the city and the non-profit ALERT Partnership. ■



## L. Main Street Program

### DESCRIPTION:

Pioneered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the late 1970s, the Main Street Program is a local public-private partnership designed to help a community's downtown economic development efforts through: 1) establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown revitalization, and 2) management of downtown revitalization by hiring a full-time professional downtown coordinator. Since 1980, 92 communities across the State of Pennsylvania have participated in the program.

### BENEFITS:

The Main Street Program is rooted in preservation, using the quality elements of the built environment to build a positive physical image for everyone who uses the downtown area.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The Department of Community and Economic Development supports and assists local Main Street efforts through 5-year funding cycles that include Design Challenge Grants. Additionally, there is Main Street training and technical assistance available through the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, a statewide membership organization.

The Main Street Program is guided by a four point approach, focusing on organization, design, promotion/marketing, and economic restructuring.

Communities apply to DCED for funding grants and are selected based

on a number of criteria. Award of funds is premised on the development of a comprehensive volunteer-based professional downtown revitalization association to oversee the program. This organization must, among other things, 1) create a strategic plan for the downtown, 2) complete a market assessment for the community, and 3) create design guidelines.

A professional director is hired by the downtown organization to manage its Main Street program. This allows proper management of the program while not losing the local importance. There is no population restriction, but smaller communities (below 3,000 people) may be eligible for a part-time manager.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**City of York, York County** – Main Street York has increased the visibility of downtown, created promotional events, worked with retailers on cooperative advertising, and instituted a nationally-recognized facade easement program. It has been in existence since 1985 and in 1997 it was selected as one of the five Great American Main Streets by the National Main Street Center. Since 1980, approximately \$10 million in public investment has leveraged \$40 million in private investment downtown.

**Town of Bloomsburg, Columbia County** – Initiated in 1982, the Bloomsburg Main Street Program has become one of the longest running Main Streets programs in the State.

*(Main Street Program, Cont'd)*

Bloomsburg demonstrates the ability of downtown revitalization efforts to be funded locally and maintain a clear purpose over an extended period of time.

**City of Saint Mary's, Elk County –**

Created a Main Street Program through cooperative efforts of private interest, local government, retail and commercial businesses, financial institutions, and the general public. The concept generates employment and tax revenues, which in turn can be used to improve the quality of life by transforming the downtown area into a more attractive place to live and work.

**El Centro de Oro, North Philadelphia, Philadelphia County** – HACE's North 5th Street and Lehigh Avenue Main Street Program covers the traditional center of Hispanic commerce, cultural and social activity in the Delaware Valley. The Main Street program has created a venue where a wide variety of partners, such as Latino educators, professionals, residents, merchants, and government institutions are working together to build a stronger, healthier community. Among the program highlights are: Helped coordinate efforts to create a graffiti-free zone; developed a rapport with the Hispanic and mainstream media; coordinated efforts to develop the "Pascuas Latinas 97" Festival; coordinated a two day community visioning session.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

General information about the Main Street Program, as well as technical assistance, can be found at the Pennsylvania Downtown Center's

Website at [www.padowntown.org](http://www.padowntown.org) or by calling (717) 233-4675.

More information on Main Street York can be found by contacting them at (717) 812-0557.

Contact the Bloomsburg Area Chamber of Commerce at (570) 784-2522.

Contact the Marienstadt Corporation at (814) 834-1192.

For more information about El Centro de Oro, contact the Philadelphia Convention and Visitor's Bureau at (215) 636-4433.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Funding for Main Street is through the Department of Community Funding and Economic Development, Office of Housing and Development. ■

## 1. Design Guidelines and Standards

### DESCRIPTION:

One of the components of the Main Street Program, as well as historic preservation programs, is to develop guidelines and standards for building facades and streetscapes. The purpose of the development of guidelines and standards is to provide a useful manual and reference for the continuing preservation of historic structures and districts. It is intended to give the property owner, general contractor, and architect information needed to make appropriate design decisions affecting buildings. The concept, as part of historic preservation initiatives, or as a stand alone, is in use in a number of communities in the Commonwealth.

### BENEFITS:

The set of guidelines ensures a semblance of commonality in a downtown. Preserves an area's unique character and this often boosts property values and stimulates investment. This can, in turn, foster community pride and helps improve and maintain the quality of life.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

In terms of historic preservation, an owner of a building in a historic district must comply with the guidelines and secure a Certificate of Appropriateness from a managing council, usually city council or historical architectural review board (HARB), for all exterior work visible from any public right of way. No work can be done on a project until the council has made

its final decision on a project. The council may follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation which contain general standards to guide the rehabilitation of historic properties for contemporary use.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**City of Bethlehem, Northampton County** – Bethlehem's Main Street is filled with small shops and businesses. In 1961 the City of Bethlehem enacted legislation creating the Bethlehem Historic District. A local historic district ordinance was enabled, with significant emphasis on design guidelines. The eighteenth-century Moravian buildings have been preserved as museums, schools, businesses, and residences, and its surrounding residential area has become a highly desirable place to live.

**Borough of Pottstown, Montgomery County** – Pottstown has two historic districts, the Old Pottstown Historic District, established in 1986, and the High Street Historic District, created in 1991. Through the many fine examples of residential and commercial architecture, each district expresses the distinctive characteristics of Pottstown's historical and cultural heritage. In an effort to preserve the special quality of the areas, Borough Council adopted an ordinance which requires that any plans for exterior changes to existing buildings or new construction within the historic districts must be reviewed for design appropriateness and approved by

*(Design Guidelines and Standards, Cont'd)*

Council. These guidelines and the review process has ensured that the historic districts remain vital parts of the community, where property values have increased, economic development has been fostered, and the overall image of Pottstown has been enhanced.

**Rittenhouse Fittler Historic District, City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County** –

The Rittenhouse Fittler Historic District is the largest historic district regulated by the Philadelphia Historical Commission. The uniform streetscape of the many speculator-built rowhouses today provides an important backdrop for the architect-designed houses, churches, institutions, and commercial structures within the neighborhood. This dense mix of high quality residential and institutional, vernacular and architect-designed buildings is woven together into a single fabric that was designated in 1995 as the Rittenhouse Fittler Historic District. Under City law, the Historical Commission reviews all applications for work on any building, structure, site, or object listed as historic in its own right or situated in a historic district. This review includes any work that alters the appearance of a historic resource, or for which a building permit is required. Such alterations include, but are not limited to, replacing windows, cleaning or repointing masonry, and painting facades.

**Borough of Gettysburg, Adams County**

– With more than two centuries of development, the community has a rich heritage of popular expression in modes of building and taste. In 1972 Gettysburg officially recognized the value of its historic buildings and the need for their protection with the adoption of the Gettysburg Historic

District Ordinance. To carry out its goal, the Ordinance established a Historical Architectural Review Board and a process for design review. As a municipality that derives much of its income from tourism, the need to have design guidelines to keep the historic character of the downtown is integral to Gettysburg's economy. Tourism not only affects the business owners of the Borough, it also affects the residential property owners – tourists bring in money that helps support the whole town and helps keep taxes down.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

The following agencies may be contacted for information and guidance on preservation guidelines and standards: The Pennsylvania Downtown Center at (717) 233-4675. The Bureau for Historic Preservation (717) 787-0771, Preservation Pennsylvania (717) 234-2310, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation (215) 568-8162.

For more information on Bethlehem's historic district guidelines please call (610) 865-7100.

The Borough of Pottstown can be contacted by calling (610) 970-6500.

Information on the Rittenhouse Fittler Historic District can be found by calling the Philadelphia Historical Commission at (215) 683-4590.

Contact information for the Borough of Gettysburg includes the Gettysburg Historic Architectural Review Board, (717) 334-1160 and the Preservation Society of Gettysburg, (717) 334-8188. ■

## M. Project for Community Building

### DESCRIPTION:

Governor Tom Ridge created the Project for Community Building in 1996 as a way to redefine community development within Pennsylvania. The Project is an interagency approach to dealing with the barriers to revitalizing our communities. The Project recognizes that government does not have all the answers but does have a role to play in working with and motivating civic groups and citizens that are closer to the problems within their community. The Project for Community Building brings together a new arsenal of tools and resources to stimulate self-help initiatives.

The Project for Community Building was founded on some core beliefs: Helping people build assets at the individual, family and community level is necessary to promote the economic well being of low income individuals; Self-help initiatives can harness the unlimited potential of individuals and the private sector; Institutions such as the family, faith-based groups, and community based organizations are critical to the success of restoring urban and rural distressed areas and reversing social and economic decline; Leveraging private sector resources will assure the viability and effectiveness of these initiatives.

These tools and resources are contained in five areas containing eight specific initiatives. Under the area "Empowering Individuals" are two initiatives: 1) Family Saving Accounts (FSA) and 2) Housing. Under "Investing in Community Growth" are two initiatives: 1) Pennsylvania Community

Development Bank and 2) Self-Employment. Under "Educating Communities" are two initiatives: 1) Charter Schools and 2) Mentoring. Under "Preventing Teen Pregnancies" is one initiative: Abstinence Education and Related Services. Under "Improving Neighborhood Safety" is one initiative: Community Crime Prevention.

### BENEFITS:

These tools and resources help community-based organizations realize their full potential to create positive change and form strong working partnerships with government and each other to improve their communities and the lives of local residents.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

The Commonwealth agencies participating in the Project for Community Building intend to give priority in the application selection process for those applicants which propose to connect the project initiatives. The "Connections" that qualify for priority in the application selection process would have the following characteristics:

- 1) A written agreement that describes the roles of all parties involved and is signed by all parties.
- 2) Roles played by the parties involved should have included early planning of the local project.
- 3) Roles of the parties involved should be substantial.

Within the general theme of community-building, each of the Project's eight important components can relate to

*(Project for Community Building, Cont'd)*

and support other community building initiatives working to maintain and revitalize challenged Pennsylvania communities.

To design local connections between the diverse initiatives, applicants may work with a small technical assistance team drawn from each state agency participating in the Project for Community Building.

**EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:****Freedom High School, City of Bethlehem, Northampton County** –

Freedom High School's mentoring program links business and industry volunteers with students who would benefit from tutoring and a one-to-one mentoring relationship with a positive adult role model. An important part of the program is goal planning. Students who are experiencing academic problems or who need extra encouragement are identified by teachers and guidance counselors at the middle and high school levels. In the beginning, students and their mentors meet after school once a week for about an hour. Eventually, they meet more often and are encouraged to participate in different activities.

**Bethlehem Area School District, City of Bethlehem, Northampton County** –

The school district through a strong partnership with community agencies and businesses, including the YMCA; Retired Senior Volunteer Program; Columbia Gas; and the Fayette County Offices of Mental Health/Mental Retardation, offers a 3-day per week after school program for interested students in grades 1-6. Employees of participating agencies and businesses are given release time to participate.

The program includes recreational, arts and academic components.

Examples of successful efforts to provide linkages between initiatives include the **Greater Erie Community Action Agency** in Erie and **Universal Community Homes** in South Philadelphia.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

The Project for Community Building office is within the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). For questions on the Project or for more examples contact them at (717) 787-7401 or visit the Project Website: [www.dced.state.pa.us/PA\\_Exec/DCED/project/project.htm](http://www.dced.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/DCED/project/project.htm). ■

## N. Renewing Traditional Rail Freight Links

### DESCRIPTION:

Rail freight infrastructure abandoned or neglected as a result of post-WWII industrial decline presents a great opportunity for re-establishment of modern intermodal rail links. PennDOT administers three levels of programs to revitalize rail freight infrastructure through its Bureau of Rail Freight, Ports & Waterways. Owners, users and operators of existing and planned rail freight lines are eligible for matching grant assistance through the Rail Freight Assistance Program (RFAP), the Capital Budget, and the TEA-21.

### BENEFITS:

Revitalized rail freight lines can enhance commercial and industrial potential, reclaim brownfields, increase property values, add to municipal tax bases and create jobs.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

PennDOT utilizes objective criteria for evaluating and awarding RFAP funds in two categories: Maintenance/ Rehabilitation, and New Construction. Maximum dollar and percentage matches are set for each category. The RFAP is funded annually, and grants to eligible applicants are determined on a need basis. Capital Budget and TEA-21 projects are handled through PennDOT's 12 Year Program.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**City of New Castle, Lawrence County –**  
New Castle has had a successfully brought rail service and increased

commerce to the city through a successful partnership with Conrail. The partnership helped re-establish rail service using TEA-21 Rail Revitalization money.

### **Beth-Intermodal Terminal, City of Bethlehem, Northampton County –**

This new intermodal terminal, owned by Bethlehem Steel Corp., is designed for the unloading and continued shipment of trailers and containerized freight. Located on 60 acres, the terminal is the first major new operation to open in the Bethlehem Commerce Center (a 1,600-acre former brownfields site being redeveloped by Bethlehem Steel.) Norfolk Southern, which has signed on as the terminal's first rail customer, is among the businesses that have worked in partnership with government to create an environment conducive to development.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

More information can be found by contacting the City of New Castle at (412) 656-3500.

For more information on the Beth-Intermodal Terminal, visit Bethlehem Steel's Website at [www.bethsteel.com](http://www.bethsteel.com) or contact them at (610) 694-2424.

Information about PennDOT Rail Freight programs can be found by calling the Bureau of Rail Freight, Ports & Waterways at (717) 783-8567.

Applications for the RFAP can be obtained at [www.dot.state.pa.us](http://www.dot.state.pa.us). ■



## O. Residential and Non-Residential Improvement Programs

### DESCRIPTION:

Programs that focus on evaluating and financing improvements of existing residential and nonresidential structures in a community. Examples of such improvement programs include facade improvement programs, home improvement programs, and comprehensive code enforcement. A critical part of these improvement programs is controlling, or even reversing, the conversion of single family homes into multi-unit dwellings.

### BENEFITS:

The programs provide funding for building improvements at the local level. They create a set of guidelines that ensure a semblance of commonality in a downtown, preserves an area's unique character, and increases home ownership.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Municipalities can voluntarily adopt guidelines for the program, which are usually reviewed by the town's regulatory board. In most cases, projects funded through such a program must comply with the guidelines and must be approved by the consulting architects for the city.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**City of New Castle, Lawrence County** - The City of New Castle has instituted a facade program for its downtown area. The goal of the program is to preserve and rehabilitate downtown buildings.

The city has adopted guidelines for the project, which are reviewed by the mayor, business administrator and a city financial officer. Under the program the city offers a loan/grant to building owners that is limited to 50 percent or \$20,000 of the renovation project, whichever is less. The applicants 50 percent match can be for any type of general improvements on renovations to the building or sidewalk. There is a ten-year forgiveness on the loan if the building is occupied. The loan will be forgiven at 10 percent per year as long as the building remains occupied. If the building becomes vacant, the loan will be repaid at a rate of 3.75 percent. Work financed under the program is limited to the following activities:

- 1) Facade improvements (painting, awning installation and replacement, cleaning, lighting, etc.).
- 2) Masonry repair.
- 3) Window and storm window repair, installation and/or the rehabilitation and restoration of display and transom windows.
- 4) The creation of additional access points and/or handicapped access.
- 5) The removal of inappropriate coverings and/or additions to storefronts.
- 6) Roof repairs shall be considered an ineligible activity, except when said improvements are incorporated within facade improvements.
- 7) Improvements to sidewalks or parking lots shall be considered an ineligible activity except when such improvements are incorporated within facade projects.

*(Residential and Non-Residential Improvement Programs, Cont'd)*

All projects founded through the program must comply with the guidelines and must be approved by the consulting architects for the city.

**City of Bethlehem, Northampton County**

– Through the Bethlehem Economic Development Corporation, no interest 15-year loans are granted for the purpose of improving facades and restoring storefronts of businesses in the Northside and Southside Central Business Districts. Approximately 25 loans have been granted over the program's 5-year period and provide \$25,000 per facade. Demand for the loans has enabled BEDCO to look to expand the program beyond the Northside and Southside CBDs to other parts of the city.

**Pennsylvania Green Buildings, City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County**

– In 1996, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy created the first "green" building in downtown Pittsburgh. The organization was looking for an opportunity to create a sustainable, environmentally sound location for its new headquarters, and chose to retrofit a historic downtown building to showcase energy efficiency and green redesign.

**Brookville Borough, Jefferson County**

– Used HOME money to rehabilitate historic 1st and 2nd stories of community buildings. Money was also used to refurbish the more residential uses on higher stories.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

General information can be found at the Department of Community and Economic Development website: [www.dced.state.pa.us](http://www.dced.state.pa.us).

HUD can be contacted in Philadelphia at (215) 656-0600 and Pittsburgh at (412) 644-6428.

More information can be found by contacting the City of New Castle at (724) 656-3500.

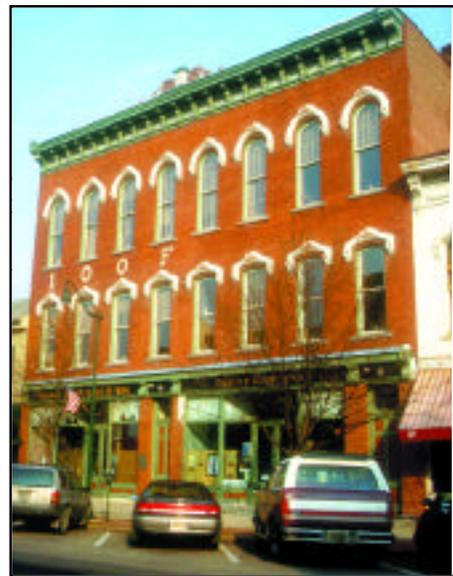
More information about the City of Pittsburgh can be found at their Website: [www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us). More specific information on residential and nonresidential programs in Pittsburgh can be found at the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) of Pittsburgh's Website: [www.ura.org](http://www.ura.org).

For more information on the City of Bethlehem call the Mayor's office at (610) 865-7100 or visit their Website: [www.bethlehempa.org](http://www.bethlehempa.org).

Information on Brookville Township can be found at Jefferson County's Website: [www.jeffersoncountypa.com](http://www.jeffersoncountypa.com).

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

The Federal HOME Investment Partnership and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs generally support these programs and are provided through the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. ■



## P. Technology Financing

### DESCRIPTION:

The fundamental economy of our world is changing from one focused on industrial and manufacturing techniques to one focused on technology. The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has recently focused much effort on ensuring that all segments of Pennsylvania are ready to grow and succeed in the new digital economy. DCED has created the Pennsylvania Technology Investment Authority (PTIA) to establish a regionally based financing tool that enables Pennsylvania businesses and communities to thrive in the digital economy.

### BENEFITS:

By working with businesses, local governments, community leaders, and individuals to address technology, Pennsylvania will be better able to compete in the evolving economy.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

PTIA has three distinct components. One that focuses on direct business investment, another focusing on the university component, and another on small business and the creation of digital communities.

PTIA is a decentralized program organized regionally by committees made up of a cross section of the community. These committees were pulled together by the regional Ben Franklin Technology Centers, the local Team Pennsylvania representatives, and DCED. These committees have

established a technology vision for their region that will be used to guide the development and funding of the initiative. These visions are constantly refined and developed.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

#### City of Lock Haven, Clinton

**County** - KCNet, a nonprofit organization in Lock Haven, was the recipient of state money to be used to create the Lock Haven Electronic Village. The funding is being used to connect three existing networks in the downtown area to provide high speed access to businesses, individual residents and vacant lots in a 17 square block area. The networks connected included an educational based system including Lock Haven University, the Keystone Central School District, and the Clinton County government structure.

#### City of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne

**County** - The City of Wilkes-Barre in partnership with the Greater Wilkes-Barre Industrial Fund received state support for a feasibility study to determine the possibility of wiring a fiber optic network through the city's existing unused sewer pipes/tunnels. If feasible, which appears to be the case, the plan is to connect a complex network which would allow citizens, businesses, and vacant locations in downtown Wilkes-Barre to have high speed access to the world wide web. The result would be enhanced business opportunities and better and faster access for all citizens.

*(Technology Financing, Cont'd)*

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

PTIA is coordinated throughout the state by a liaison in DCED, but much of the work is done regionally. For more information you may contact DCED at (800) 379-7448, or call regional contacts:

Innovation Works (Southwest Pennsylvania): (412) 681-1520

Northeast Ben Franklin Technology Center: (610) 758-5210

Southeast Ben Franklin Technology Center: (215) 382-0380

Northern and Central Pennsylvania Ben Franklin Technology Center: (814) 863-4558

Information about the Wilkes-Barre example can be found by contacting Greater Wilkes-Barre Industrial Fund at (570) 823-2101. ■

## Q. Zoning and Building Code Re-Evaluation

### DESCRIPTION:

There are a number of municipalities throughout the State that have voluntarily re-evaluated their zoning codes. Many of these municipalities found that their codes were not only outdated, but also did not serve the best interests of sound community development. Among the chief goals of these re-evaluations is to more emphatically create a mix of uses and density for a vibrant community. Recently, a State Building Code was created. This standardizes building codes throughout the state, and, in many ways, encourages municipalities to re-evaluate zoning.

### BENEFITS:

The re-evaluation analyzes the past and present development situations for a municipality and allows the municipality to better plan and shape its future growth. This creates a mix of uses and can help create districts.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Requires a willingness to recognize the limitations and weaknesses in existing zoning ordinances. A re-evaluation of zoning may require a comprehensive review and rewrite of many ordinances. In addition, to revise the zoning code, significant local support is needed.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Towamencin Township Overlay Zoning District, Montgomery County** – The District was designed with the intention of providing an opportunity for redevelopment of Kulpsville Village.

An additional purpose was to encourage development of a multi-modal transportation system that would allow the Village to be more transit-oriented, thereby relieving traffic problems that have been generated by increasing development in the area. The overlay-zoning district is divided into 8 sectors, each of them permitting different types of land uses and densities.

**City of Pittsburgh's New Zoning Code, Allegheny County** – For the first time since 1958, Pittsburgh has enacted a new comprehensive zoning code to facilitate mixed use of land and diverse housing, with small single-family home lots. A city council committee will review the code after six months.

**City of Allentown, Lehigh County** – Liberal zoning for the Central Business District of Allentown has allowed for a greater mix of uses.

**Chester County Vision Partnership Program** – This program, under the County's comprehensive Landscapes policy plan, seeks consistent zoning and land use regulations. The program has given 40 of Chester County's 73 municipalities grants to update their zoning ordinances.

**City of Chester, Delaware County** – Originally enacted in the 1940's, Chester's zoning ordinance is being re-evaluated and re-written to more specifically meet the needs of the city. A task force was established consisting of community leaders to solicit their response to current and

*(Zoning Re-Evaluation, Cont'd)*

proposed zoning in the city. At the end of the process the new zoning ordinance will be presented to city council for approval.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

To find out about the recently enacted changes State Building Code contact the Department of Labor and Industry at (717) 787-3323.

Information about the Coastal Zone Management Program can be found by contacting DEP's Bureau of Watershed Conservation at (717) 783-7420.

For more information on Towamencin's Overlay Zoning District visit their Website: [www.towamencin.org](http://www.towamencin.org).

Information on Pittsburgh's new zoning code can be found at their Website: [www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us).

More information can be found at Chester County's Website: [www.chesco.org](http://www.chesco.org).

Information on the City of Chester's new zoning code can be found via their Website: [www.chestercity.com](http://www.chestercity.com) or by calling (610) 447-7707.

Information on Allentown's liberal zoning can be found by calling (610) 437-7751.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

The City of Chester embarked on a two-year revision and re-writing process of its zoning using grants from various agencies, including the Coastal Zone Management Program. ■



## VIII. Beyond Local Boundaries: Cooperative and Intergovernmental Planning

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In a state with 2,568 municipalities — each responsible for providing its residents with services — the practices of intergovernmental cooperation offer users considerable benefits. Among the gains that participating counties, cities, townships and boroughs can achieve from these voluntary liaisons are improved services, enhanced environments and significant savings.

A look at current cooperative practices in Pennsylvania reveals a wide variety of shared operations, services and visions. From multi-municipal zoning to regional comprehensive planning, communities are thinking beyond local boundaries — and when they do, they increase their ability both to offer services and to apply a larger vision to land use. Working together, local governments are effectively addressing many issues that cross municipal boundaries: transportation, schools, emergency services, recreation and resource protection.

Intergovernmental Cooperation was identified as the number one concern of the citizens who attended the Sound Land Use Forums. This interest in finding new and more effective ways to work cooperatively indicates a willingness to explore, adopt and implement the practices and tools that are described in this chapter. ■



## A. Municipal Consolidation and Merger

### DESCRIPTION:

This is a voluntary practice under state law that enables two or more municipalities to join together and become one municipality. As defined in state law, a merger is a boundary change where one unit goes out of existence and is absorbed by another, usually a larger unit. Consolidation is a boundary change where the separate lives of two units terminate upon their combination to create a new and different municipality.

### BENEFITS:

This practice allows smaller communities to join together. It allows for more efficient use of land and financial resources.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

This practice is often initiated by two or more municipalities in response to regional issues. It requires broad community support and voter approval.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Creation of the new **Township of Fairview, Erie County**, through the structural consolidation of Fairview Borough and Fairview Township, with implementation of a community visioning process leading to new comprehensive planning, official map and zoning and land use ordinances consistent with the community visioning citizen input.

**City of St. Mary's, Elk County**, was created through the consolidation of St.

Mary's Borough and Benzinger Township. A new home rule municipality was created with all new comprehensive planning, zoning and land use ordinances, which reinforce the vitality of the town center with environmentally conscious, cost-effective development around it.

**Fairview Township**, created through the successful merger of West Fairview Borough and East Pennsboro Township in Cumberland County.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Cumberland Tri-County Regional Planning Commission  
(717) 234-2639

Elk County Planning Commission  
(814) 776-1161

Erie County Department of Planning  
(814) 451-6336

Assistance can be provided by the Governor's Center for Local Government Services. It can be reached at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



## B. Joint / Multi-Municipal Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

Joint, or multi-municipal planning and municipal/county level planning is used across the Commonwealth to address a broad range of planning objectives including growth, economic development, infrastructure needs, education, preservation, tourism and recreation and community services. By working with neighboring jurisdictions, a municipality can increase its ability to address planning objectives that do not start and end within municipal boundaries — for example, traffic control or water and sewer connections.

### BENEFITS:

This practice allows cooperating municipalities to direct uses to their most logical location throughout a larger geographic area, rather than providing for all uses within each municipality. It also allows municipalities to share technical expertise. By using a joint planning approach, a municipality can more effectively address issues that extend beyond its municipal boundary, such as transportation issues. And, it also allows for more coordinated planning within a school district.

Among the advantages to this type of planning, municipalities may:

- save money;
- reduce redundancy in infrastructure projects;
- minimize environmental impacts;
- preserve open space;
- maintain productive farmland, and
- balance population densities.

Projects with multi-municipal partners are often viewed more favorably for grant funds than single municipality projects. Joint zoning allows the transfer of development rights across municipal borders.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Multi-municipal infrastructure or resource preservation planning can be done either as part of joint planning or in a less formal planning approach such as through voluntary agreements. See the practice titled “Voluntary/ Intergovernmental Agreements” under the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act in Section VIII, H.

Under current law there is no legally effective means for carrying out joint plans, other than joint zoning. Joint zoning must be based on a joint Comprehensive Plan adopted by all affected municipalities. And no municipality may withdraw from or repeal a joint zoning ordinance during the first three years of its adoption date.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Chester County — The Federation of Northern Chester County Communities** adopted their regional land use plan in 1997. The Northern Federation has also cooperatively completed a wide range of planning studies on subjects including surface water runoff, wastewater facilities, transportation, scenic river management guidelines, and a feasibility study for the re-use of the Pennhurst Center.

*(Joint / Multi-Municipal Planning, Cont'd)*

**Cumberland County** — There are several significant projects involving county to county and county to municipality cooperation in economic development, sound land use practices, storm water control and greenways.

**Greater Chambersburg Partnership** — An important regional planning organization of public and private entities involved with education, transportation, water quality, the environment, and visioning.

**Lancaster County Growth Areas** — Cooperative effort of county and municipalities to designate growth areas to accommodate future development and conserve farmlands.

**The Lancaster Intermunicipal Committee (LIC)**: Twelve municipalities are participating in a traffic congestion planning tool to develop major highway and roadway improvement plans. The LIC has recommended and will likely gain approval for a County-wide Lancaster County Transportation Authority.

**Liberty Region Strategic Plan:** A three municipality region centered along the corridor of improved US Route 15 is comprised of Liberty Borough and Liberty Township in Tioga County and Jackson Township in Lycoming County. The Strategic Plan was formulated to guide future growth and to capitalize upon the economic development potential of the region. Major recommendations of the Strategic Plan include: the preparation of a Comprehensive Plan, the preparation of the Act 537 Sewage Facility Plan, and the preparation of zoning, subdivision and development ordinances to guide anticipated future growth.

**Mercer County Regional Council of Governments** — Multi-jurisdictional organization involving programs in economic development, recreation and other projects.

**Tuna Valley Council of Governments** is preparing for regional joint comprehensive planning in the Bradford area, McKean County.

**Warren Area Intergovernmental Co-Op** is preparing for regional joint comprehensive planning in the Warren area, Warren County.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Chester County Planning Commission  
(610) 344-6285

Cumberland Tri-County Regional  
Planning Commission  
(717) 234-2639

Lancaster County Planning Commission  
(717) 299-8333

Lycoming County Economic and  
Commercial Development Services  
(717) 320-2130

Tioga County Planning Commission  
(570) 723-8251

McKean County Planning Department  
(814) 887-5571

Mercer County Regional Planning  
Commission  
(724) 962-5787

Warren County Planning and Zoning  
Commission  
(814) 726-3861



■ VIII. BEYOND LOCAL BOUNDARIES:  
COOPERATIVE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANNING

*(Joint / Multi-Municipal Planning, Cont'd)*

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG) provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

The World Class Communities Program (WCCP) also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP) provides up to 100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal comprehensive plans and implementing ordinances. Program guidelines emphasize compliance with Community Development Block Grant Program requirements.

For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■



## C. Multi-Municipal Open Space Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

This practice involves a voluntary approach to preserving and enhancing municipalities' open spaces for recreation and environmental protection.

### BENEFITS:

Open space planning expands and protects natural open space linkages across jurisdictional boundaries, creates important planning and conservation partnerships, helps to preserve ecosystems rather than fragmenting them, and helps to create recreational facilities.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Multi-municipal open space planning requires broad community support and possible voter approval in each community. It helps to have incentives to encourage cooperation and also to have low-cost technical assistance to facilitate cooperation.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Capitol Area Greenbelt** — The Greenbelt, a 20-mile recreation pathway that runs through the City of Harrisburg, Paxtang Borough, Pennbrook Borough, Susquehanna Township, and Swatara Township, was built in the early 1900's but never completed. Utilizing a dedicated pool of volunteers, grants, and donations, the Capitol Area Greenbelt Association has been able to work with the five municipalities in the Harrisburg area to complete the Greenbelt. In the

next two years the final 5.6 miles should be completed, connecting the pathway.

### Conestoga Greenways Study

— Funded in part by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), this study looks at all the important tributaries of the Conestoga River, which flow through the participating municipalities. The study recommends a series of linked trails and parks, along with preserved private properties to be built in stages over the next generation. The first phases of this system are funded for construction in 2000.

### Elizabeth Area Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan

— A joint planning project between Elizabethtown Borough, Conoy Township, Mount Joy Township, and West Donegal Township to develop a Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan partially funded by DCNR. The plan develops a regional approach to providing enhanced leisure time facilities and opportunities including parks and open space. The plan recommends establishment of a regional recreation and park authority and makes specific recommendations regarding acquisition and development of parks and open space areas including linear parks and greenways.

### Pennsylvania Route 6 Strategic Plan

— This multi-municipal plan covers 11 counties: (Bradford, Crawford, Erie, Lackawanna, McKean, Pike, Potter, Tioga, Warren, Wayne and Wyoming)

*(Multi-Municipal Open Space Planning, Cont'd)*

and was recently awarded \$6,000 in state Regional Marketing Initiative funding. The plan will be developed under the guidance of a multi-county task force consisting of representatives from the public and private sector. Tasks to be completed are the documentation and evaluation of corridor assets, documentation of the history of the corridor, development of an interpretation and educational plan and development of organizational strategies.

**Sandy Lake-Stoneboro Multi-Use Trail**

— In Mercer County, the Boroughs of Sandy Lake and Stoneboro, in cooperation with PennDOT, are constructing a 2.7-mile multi-use recreation trail.

**Swatara Creek Greenway Study** —

A county sponsored planning study partially funded by DCNR which included all municipalities along the Swatara Creek in Dauphin County. The plan developed an integrated approach to conserving natural areas along the Creek while at the same time developing the stream corridor for public recreation.

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

**The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG)** provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

**The World Class Communities Program (WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837).

Additional information can be found by contacting PA DCNR's Bureau of Recreation and Conservation at (717) 772-3742.

## **D. Multi-Municipal Waste Planning and Recycling**

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Through the Municipal Planning and Recycling Act (Act 101) of 1988, responsibility for waste planning in Pennsylvania became that of the counties. Counties were required to do comprehensive solid waste planning and management, and were permitted to control and regulate waste flows within their jurisdictions. To do so, they were given the authority to enact necessary ordinances, and must provide adequate processing and disposal capacity for municipal wastes generated within their boundaries. Counties also provide the resources of a county recycling coordinator to support municipal recycling programs.

### **BENEFITS:**

Multi-municipal waste planning allows individual municipalities to participate in the county planning process but not be burdened with waste planning on their own.

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Counties and municipalities work together to successfully implement waste planning and recycling programs. Host local municipalities are authorized to take an active role in overseeing landfills and resource recovery facilities within their boundaries. A host municipality may adopt regulations concerning truck routes to the facility and the times when the facility is permitted to receive waste.

### **EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:**

Every county in Pennsylvania has a solid waste plan and a county recycling coordinator.

**The Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority** is an example of voluntary cooperation of all the municipalities in Lebanon County to form a county solid waste authority that offers county-wide waste disposal capacity and comprehensive recycling services. All 26 of the municipalities in the County are represented on the Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority Board which was formed in 1959 and operates the landfill that receives waste from local haulers.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority  
(717) 867-5790

### **FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

Grants are available from PA DEP to support county waste planning and recycling programs.

PA DEP Recycling Program  
(717) 787-7382  
[www.dep.state.pa.us](http://www.dep.state.pa.us). ■



## E. Multi-Municipal Transportation Planning

### DESCRIPTION:

This voluntary practice allows communities to address traffic operations along corridors that pass through more than one municipality. To enhance the validity of multi-municipal planning, the planning should be coordinated with the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or Local Development District (LDD).

### BENEFITS:

This practice offers a group of municipalities, on a multi-municipal basis, the ability to address a problem that is too large or complex for a single municipality, or that crosses municipal boundaries. Early planning by several municipalities can assist those municipalities affected by regional transportation projects to anticipate and plan for growth and development.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

To effectively use this practice, municipalities have to actively work together to establish and administer this type of planning. If this practice is based on the cooperating/voluntary efforts of municipal officials, such plans are not enforceable.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Lancaster Inter-Municipal Committee (LIMC)** — Includes the City of Lancaster and 11 surrounding boroughs and townships, has used joint transportation planning to accomplish the following:

- Report of the Transportation Task Force of the Lancaster Inter-Municipal

Committee — Produced in 1996, this report looked at all modes of transportation and made a series of recommendations, which ranged from lobbying for an increase in the liquid fuels tax, to hiring an LIMC traffic engineer, to creating a transportation authority to do road improvements.

- **Traffic Congestion Management Study** — An outgrowth of the previous report, this study looks at site specific recommendations for major traffic corridors that flow through one or more municipalities and recommends low-cost and maintenance-type improvements that would improve traffic flow. In addition, the study also lists, in order of cost-benefit ratio, non-site-specific recommendations to improve traffic flow.
- **Transportation Authority** — The formation of an authority — expected to be functioning in 2000 — was a recommendation of the original report. LIMC has proposed, and the County Commissioners have agreed to create a county-wide authority to fund, engineer, and construct road improvement projects. Such projects would be those too large or complex for a single municipality.

**Washington County Highland-Ridge Study** — This revitalization master plan for the Route 19 Corridor in the City of Washington will guide the community's effort in

*(Multi-Municipal Transportation Planning, Cont'd)*

developing a sustainable village  
concept in an urban setting.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Lancaster County Planning  
Commission  
(717) 299-8333

Washington County Planning  
Department  
(724) 228-6811 ■

## F. Multi-Municipal / Joint Comprehensive Planning and Zoning

### DESCRIPTION:

Multi-municipal/joint comprehensive planning and zoning is a practice that utilizes a cooperative agreement between contiguous municipalities that makes it possible to establish a joint planning commission and to plan and zone for all participating municipalities. Under the MPC, the joint municipal zoning ordinance must be based on a joint Comprehensive Plan and contain a statement of community objectives that includes the basis for the geographic delineation of the area.

### BENEFITS:

This practice offers one legal mechanism that allows participating municipalities to spread fair share and all-use requirements over a broader geographic area.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

To implement multi-municipal zoning, more time, effort and municipal cooperation are needed to establish and administer joint ordinances. Joint zoning must be based on a joint Comprehensive Plan adopted by all affected municipalities. No municipality may withdraw from or repeal a joint zoning ordinance during the first three years of its adoption date.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Allegheny County, Crafton, Rosslyn Farms and Thornburg Boroughs** — Joint plans and joint zoning ordinance in place.

### Berks County Joint Municipal Comprehensive Planning

— The County funds joint plans and joint zoning. Berks County currently has 10 joint plans with one-third of the County participating. The County contributes to the Center for Local Government at Albright College, which offers a municipal official training program that certifies citizens as “master planners” to prepare them for their roles on local planning commissions.

**Blair County** – The Blair County Planning Commission was created in the early 1960s as a countywide regional planning agency with each of its 24 constituent municipalities plus the county unit of government as a participating member, each of which financially contributes to its operation. This structure substantially strengthens the communication, coordination, and the relationship between county level planning and local level planning.

### Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

— Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties — along with four New Jersey counties — approach land use, transportation planning, and livability issues through a “New Regionalism” that relies upon regional design, an understanding of the Delaware Valley’s specific assets, a commitment to prioritize the reclamation of existing communities, and choice.

**Lebanon County** — In the absence of a county-wide ordinance, the County voluntarily administers local zoning

*(Multi-Municipal/Joint Comprehensive Planning and Zoning, Cont'd)*

if requested. Two-thirds of the municipalities participate.

**Lycoming and Warren Counties** — The use of a county-wide zoning ordinance to aid local municipalities and their enforcement of regulations.

**Newtown Area Joint Planning Commission** — Prior to their joint venture, Newtown, Wrightsville and Upper Makefield townships in Bucks County were each required to provide for all categories of land use. After joining to create a unified land use plan and adopting a joint zoning ordinance, they were able to redirect heavy residential, commercial and light development to one township, while conserving the other two townships for open space and farmlands. By creating a healthy regional mix of urban, rural and suburban environments, they were also able to save \$35 million in infrastructure costs.

**Northern Montour Regional Planning/Zoning** — Three townships with small populations formed a Council of Governments and developed a Comprehensive Plan and subdivision ordinance.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Allegheny County Department of Economic Development  
(412) 350-1000

Berks County Planning Commission  
(610) 478-6300

Blair County Planning Commission  
(814) 940-5978

Bucks County Planning Commission  
(215) 345-3400

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission  
(215) 592-1800  
www.dvrpc.org

Lebanon County Planning Commission  
(717) 274-2801

Lycoming County Economic and Community Development Services  
(570) 320-2130

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

**The State Planning Assistance Program (SPAG)** provides funds on a 50-50 match basis for visioning and comprehensive planning projects involving multi-municipal efforts.

**The World Class Communities Program (WCCP)** also provides funds up to 50 percent for multi-municipal planning and visioning efforts.

**Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)** provides up to 100 percent of the cost to prepare multi-municipal comprehensive plans and implementing ordinances. Program guidelines emphasize compliance with Community Development Block Grant Program requirements.

For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■

## G. Joint Municipal Services

### DESCRIPTION:

Joint municipal services allows communities to voluntarily combine emergency services (police, ambulance and fire fighting services) to provide quality services for a larger area. Communities voluntarily practice joint recycling, which impacts how land is used/not used for landfill. Communities voluntarily enter into joint water and sewer treatment services.

### BENEFITS:

This practice allows municipalities to share the costs of providing a variety of services.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Requires broad community support in all affected municipalities.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Allegheny Regional Asset District** — The mission of the District is to support and finance regional assets in the areas of libraries, parks and recreation, cultural, sports and civic facilities and programs. In addition to providing grants from proceeds of the Allegheny County Sales and Use Tax, the District works with citizen boards and government officials monitoring the assets for effective operation and development.

**Antrim Township, Greencastle Borough, Mont Alto Borough, Quincy Township and Washington Township** — Worked together to implement a curbside recycling program for their residents.

**Blair County** — The Blair County Sanitary Administrative Committee was formed in the late 1960s to administer the enforcement provisions of the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act 537. This committee exists today with a dozen members of the municipalities of the county.

**Chambersburg Ambulance Board** — Franklin County, Chambersburg Borough, and Greene, Guilford and Hamilton Townships share ambulance services.

**Chambersburg Borough and Greene Township** — Have an agreement to allow the Chambersburg Police Department to serve the Chambersburg Mall, which is located in Greene Township.

**Lancaster County** — Joint services examples include intergovernmental grants supporting equipment sharing and charter school bus sharing.

**Lehigh County** — Lowhill and Weisenberg Townships share a zoning officer who is also the joint sewage enforcement officer. Lynn and Heidelberg Townships also have a similar arrangement.

**Mercer County Regional Council of Governments** — Developed and implemented a number of intergovernmental projects and programs, including Mercer County Community Transit, Shenango Valley Animal Shelter and Animal Control Program, the Joint Municipal Purchasing

*(Joint Municipal Services, Cont'd)*

Program and the Joint Municipal Traffic Signal Maintenance and Repair Service.

Quincy Township  
(717) 749-5244

**South Hills Area Council of Governments (Allegheny County)** — developed a joint purchasing program comprised of 120 municipalities, saving local taxpayers millions of dollars.

South Hills Area Council of Governments  
(412) 341-3750

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Allegheny Regional Asset District  
(412) 227-1900

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

For more information, please contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837). ■

Antrim Township  
(717) 597-3818

Blair County Planning Commission  
(814) 940-5978

Chambersburg Borough  
(717) 264-5151

Greene Township  
(717) 263-9160

Greencastle Borough  
(717) 597-7143

Guilford Township  
(717) 264-6626

Hamilton Township  
(717) 264-2946

Lancaster County Planning Commission  
(717) 299-8333

Lehigh County Planning Commission  
(610) 264-4544

Mont Alto Borough  
(717) 749-5808

## H. Voluntary Agreements and Intergovernmental Agreements Under the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act

### DESCRIPTION:

Voluntary agreements, such as a Memorandum of Understanding, provide a mechanism for carrying out policies and programs that involve more than one municipality or municipalities and a county.

Such agreements can be used for a number of purposes, including:

- a) Economic development projects;
- b) Operation of some facilities and services; and,
- c) Planning for multi-municipal resources.

Pennsylvania's Intergovernmental Cooperation Act affords the Commonwealth's municipalities broad authority for intergovernmental cooperation.

### BENEFITS:

A municipality is enabled to cooperate or agree in the exercise or transfer of any function, power or responsibility with any other municipality or district in Pennsylvania, the federal government or any other state or its governmental units. Multi-municipal or regional planning is promoted through such agreements.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Although the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act appears to authorize agreements for any purpose, their use for planning and zoning has been challenged on the grounds that the Municipalities Planning Code is

more specific than the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, and therefore is controlling over planning and zoning.

### EXAMPLES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

**Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority** is another example of voluntary cooperation of all the municipalities in Lebanon County to form a county solid waste authority that offers county-wide waste disposal capacity and comprehensive recycling services. All 26 of the municipalities in the county are represented on the Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority Board which was formed in 1959. The Authority owns and operates the landfill that receives waste from local haulers.

### Lancaster County Planning

**Commission**, by using municipal resolutions adopted by adjoining municipalities, has established the alignment of growth boundaries. It is also actively encouraging groups of two or three municipalities to enter into agreements to form water and sewer authorities and to engage in joint comprehensive planning and zoning.

**Northern I-99 Enterprise Zone** in Blair County is comprised of the City of Altoona, two boroughs, and two townships, and is utilizing inter-municipal agreements and tax-base sharing to advance economic development along the I-99 growth corridor.

*(Voluntary Agreements and Intergovernmental Agreements, Cont'd)*

**South Central Assembly for Effective Governance** — Adams, York, Franklin, Cumberland, Dauphin, Perry, Lebanon and Lancaster counties created a membership of over 300 individuals who serve on 14 committees to address specific concerns and undertake studies, examine innovative ways to deliver government services, and to recommend improvements.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

For more information on the Northern I-99 Enterprise Zone, contact the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-2CENTER (223-6837).

Blair County Planning Commission:  
(814) 940-5978

Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority:  
(717) 867-5790

Lancaster County Planning Commission:  
(717) 299-8333

South Central Assembly for Effective Governance:  
(717) 948-6324 ■



## IX. The Work Ahead

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## IX. The Work Ahead: Advisory Committee Members Share their Perspectives with the Center

*Cooperative and intergovernmental planning; revitalizing our communities; preserving our natural and cultural heritages; and planning for infrastructure and growth.*

Since it was signed one year ago, a substantial amount of good work has been carried out under the Governor's Sound Land Use Executive Order 1999-1. Perhaps much of what we've accomplished has occurred because this Executive Order addresses compelling, long-term issues that are felt deeply by many people.

Pennsylvania's land, the Order reminds us, is a precious, yet finite resource. No one recognizes the quality and quantity of this resource more than the general public. That acknowledgement motivates people to work quickly and passionately to address land use issues.

The 44 members of the Governor's Sound Land Use Advisory Committee have offered the Commonwealth the resource of their deeply-felt convictions, broad knowledge and experience. Created to assist the Governor's Center for Local Government Services, this task force of practitioners -- all of whom have a stake in improving our communities and in preserving our land -- have worked aggressively since May 1999 to identify practices that can be used successfully to guide development in the Commonwealth.

From the start, they recognized that these essential areas of land use planning required their attention: cooperative and intergovernmental planning; revitalizing our communities; preserving our natural and cultural heritages; and planning for infrastructure and growth.

Focusing on these specific areas of concern, they drew upon their professional experiences -- as public officials, planners, environmentalists, educators, economists, farmers, developers, entrepreneurs, and representatives of associations -- to identify actions that can be taken to ensure sound land use. They also identified issues that Pennsylvania's local governments may encounter when implementing these practices and tools.

Out of their collective experience as leaders, planning practitioners and neighbors, we have this inventory, which includes examples from communities that have adopted and used these practices. This inventory of planning and implementation practices and tools will be updated as the Governor's Center for Local Government Services continues to serve as a resource for sound land use.

Committee members recognized that in addition to the guidance we can find in the inventoried practices, there will continue to be ongoing challenges for communities that strive to balance preservation and vitality.

### COOPERATIVE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANNING

The members of the Sound Land Use Advisory Committee recognize the

*(The Work Ahead, Cont'd)*

challenges of working together. In Pennsylvania, where municipalities have diverse needs – many with limited planning and funding resources – the demand for government services will continue to increase. Yet many municipalities will be hard-pressed to continue to serve as the sole provider of many government services.

Committee members told us that when communities look beyond local boundaries, they can increase their ability both to offer services and to apply a larger vision to their planning. When local governments cooperatively create green space, site a sewage treatment plant, or guide development along a highway corridor, land use can be positively affected by their joint decisions.

Pennsylvania's citizens who attended the 1999 Sound Land Use Forums identified intergovernmental cooperation as their number one concern. Given this level of interest and importance, and Committee members' first-hand knowledge of planning issues, they believe that local governments can benefit from a better understanding of how to work together, and also may profit from both incentives and new frameworks that encourage cooperation.

As representatives of both development and preservation initiatives, Sound Land Use Advisory Committee members realize that all communities face difficult challenges and choices, and that achieving balance requires planning and vigilance.

**REVITALIZING OUR COMMUNITIES**

For our urban and older communities, that balance often begins with

revitalization and our ability to address issues that are known to undermine urban areas and older communities and contribute to flight. These issues include the quality of public education; crime and safety; the upkeep and maintenance of our downtown buildings; investment in infrastructure; and preservation of cultural and historic resources.

Revitalization strategies – such as the adoption of housing initiatives that encourage and aid businesses in establishing targeted employer-assisted housing programs, the rehabilitation of downtown rental housing, insuring homeowner equity, and the creation of a revolving pool of funding for downtown revitalization – need to be developed and implemented to make or keep our urban areas and older communities attractive.

**PRESERVING OUR NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

The members of the Sound Land Use Advisory Committee also understand the complexity of preserving our rich heritage and protecting our natural resources while balancing economic needs. This balancing act – which recognizes that communities must understand the impacts that planning decisions may have on natural and cultural resources – may require an approach that extends beyond local municipal boundaries.

From Sound Land Use Advisory Committee members as well as the people who attended the forums, we've heard that sustaining farming and farmland is important to Pennsylvanians. Farmland maintains open space and heritage, and is a major productive

*(The Work Ahead, Cont'd)*

industry. As part of our continuing sound land use dialogue, we will need to strike a balance between providing incentives to support our farming heritage – such as the restructuring of property and inheritance taxes – and addressing communities' desire for growth.

In addition to farming, the rural environment supports a way of life – rural life – which depends upon the preservation of open space and the natural environment. Many counties and municipalities are working hard to preserve rural character and local heritage and are searching for assistance. To address challenges of managing growth, they are focusing resources on older communities to provide alternatives to scattered, inefficient development; and utilizing low-density development zones. They are exploring ways to create rural resource areas that would be protected from development.

#### **PLANNING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT**

Out of their experiences with planning and growth management in Pennsylvania, Sound Land Use Advisory Committee members have witnessed a statutory structure that has evolved slowly over the last 70 years, as the legislature has reacted to emerging problems and responded to the needs of Pennsylvanians. It will undoubtedly continue to evolve. Under the present structure, however, the challenge is to coordinate the actions of agencies and all levels of local, county, and state government

to promote both responsible growth and conservation of resources.

Ideally, if there is good comprehensive planning at the local level that is generally consistent with planning at the county and state levels, all agencies should make spending and regulatory decisions based on those plans. But currently, there is no process for achieving that general consistency from local to county to state agency planning, and to advance a coordinated planning effort, a process for achieving general consistency will be critical.

Early and coordinated planning of water resources, transportation, and other forms of infrastructure resources can benefit a community, a watershed or a region. Inherent in the challenge for early and coordinated infrastructure planning is the need to allow a municipality the flexibility to address a new or specific need. Flexibility may be realized through the refinement of strategies such as consistency, impact fees, targeting growth where infrastructure exists, and financial assistance for multi-municipal planning.

#### **CONTINUING THE WORK**

The members of the Governor's Sound Land Use Advisory Committee are experienced stewards of preservation and development who have generously shared their knowledge and time with the Governor's Center for Local Government Services. They are working to address these challenges as individuals, and as a group. Through the Center, in addition to

*(The Work Ahead, Cont'd)*

providing this inventory of planning and implementation practices and tools, the Sound Land Use Advisory Committee will continue to serve the Commonwealth in an important resource and advisory capacity.

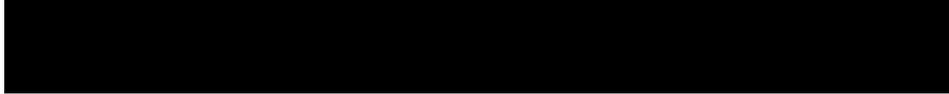
We thank them – and the thousands of citizens who attended the Sound Land Use Forums – for their important work.

-- Governor's Center for Local  
Government Services  
January 2000





## Glossary



**Adaptive re-use** - The development of a new use for an existing building or for a building originally designed for a special or specific purpose.

**Affordable housing** - As defined in Section 502-A of the Municipalities Planning Code, affordable housing is that which is available with rents or mortgage payments, including property taxes and insurance, that do not exceed 30% of the adjusted gross annual income for households within the metropolitan statistical area (MSA) or the county in which the housing unit is located.

**Affordable Housing Fund Act (Act 137)** - Act that established housing trust funds in Pennsylvania. Housing trust funds are public funds established by legislation, ordinance or resolution to receive specific revenues, which can only be spent on housing.

**Americans with Disabilities Act** - A 1990 federal law designed to bring disabled Americans into the economic mainstream by providing them equal access to jobs, transportation, public facilities, and services.

**Aquifer** - A geologic formation that contains a usable supply of water.

**Aquifer recharge area** - The outcropping part of the aquifer through which water enters.

**Awning** - A roof-like cover that is temporary or portable in nature and that projects from the wall of a building for the purpose of shielding a doorway or window from the elements and is periodically retracted into the face of the building.

**Best Management Practices** - The methods, measures, or practices to prevent or reduce the amount of pollution of waterways from point or non-point sources, including:

1. structural controls;
2. non-structural controls; and
3. operation and maintenance procedures.

**Biofilters** - Natural and environmentally safe biological filters (such as vegetation or rocks) used to improve water quality and eliminate dissolved nitrogen compounds.

**Biological diversity or biodiversity** - The variety of life and its processes and includes the variety of living organisms, the genetic differences among them, and the communities and ecosystems in which they occur.

**Board of Adjustment** - A quasi-judicial body appointed by the elected officials in the cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The powers of the Zoning Board of Adjustment

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

are contained in the enabling legislation for both cities, and the duties include holding hearings and making decisions on zoning appeals. Under the provisions of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), a similar body, called the Zoning Hearing Board, is authorized in all other municipalities and counties in Pennsylvania. Prior to the enactment of the MPC in 1968, Zoning Hearing Boards were known as Boards of Adjustment, but the term Board of Adjustment no longer is applicable to any municipality in Pennsylvania, except the City of Pittsburgh and the City of Philadelphia. (See Zoning Hearing Board definition)

**Brownfields** - Abandoned industrialized site left unused or underused, often because of the presence of environmental contaminants. These abandoned properties, once remediated, can provide viable spaces for sustainable industries, commercial uses, and even parkland or open spaces.

**Build-out analysis** - Illustrates the form and pattern that development can be expected to take under a continuation of current trends and the manner and degree to which this form and pattern are contrary to planning goals. A description and illustrations of the consequences of a continuation of current trends help to identify the kinds of action that are needed and to build public support for these measures.

**Build-out map** - Shows the probable location of new roads and houses that could legally be constructed on the vacant and buildable land remaining within the municipality (or a portion of the municipality).

**Business District Authority Act (Act 41 of 1980)** - Act legislated in 1980 for the establishment of Business District Authorities in Pennsylvania (entities created for implementation of business improvement activities).

**Capital Improvements Plan** - A list or schedule of public projects that a municipality intends to undertake over a period of time, usually one year, but sometimes up to five years. Projects are prioritized, costs are estimated and methods of financing are outlined. The capital improvements program should be consistent with policies in the comprehensive plan and should be updated annually. Not to be confused with a Transportation Capital Improvements Plan or Program, which is one of the mandated prerequisites a municipality must develop if it intends to adopt transportation impact fees under Article V-A of the Municipalities Planning Code.

**Central Business District (CBD)** - The largest, most intensively developed, mixed-use area within a city, usually containing, in addition to major retail uses, governmental offices; service uses; professional, cultural, recreational, and entertainment establishments and uses; residences, hotels, and motels; appropriate industrial activities; and transportation facilities.

**Channelization** - The separation or regulation of conflicting traffic movements into definite paths of travel by the use of pavement markings, raised islands, or other suitable means to facilitate the safe and orderly movement of both vehicles and pedestrians.

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

**Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA)** - Federal amendments that made sweeping changes to the way air quality is regulated in the United States. The legislation was designed to curb three major threats to human health and the environment: acid rain, urban air pollution, and toxic air emissions. There are 11 sections or "titles" that outline how each state must approach cleaning its air.

**Cluster** - A form of development that permits a reduction in lot area and bulk requirements, provided there is no increase in the number of lots permitted under a conventional subdivision or increase in the overall density of development, and the remaining land area is devoted to open space, active recreation, preservation of environmentally sensitive areas, or agriculture.

**Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM)** - A program of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection that seeks to protect and enhance both coastal waters and adjacent shorelands, while reducing conflict between competing land and water uses. Coastal zones include open oceans, tidal flats, estuaries, bays, inlets, wetlands, lagoons, beaches, dunes, bluffs, and the uplands draining into these waters.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** - Provides financial and technical assistance to aid communities in their community and economic development efforts. Funds may be used to address local community development needs in the areas of infrastructure improvements, housing rehabilitation, public services and community facilities. 70 percent of the funding must benefit low to moderate-income residents. Only local government units not designated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as an entitlement municipality may apply for the program

**Concurrency** - Adequate public facilities are available when the impacts of development occur. Although not currently authorized, amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code which would address concurrency have been introduced in the PA General Assembly in recent years.

**Conditional use** - As defined in Section 603 of the Municipalities Planning Code, conditional uses may be allowed or denied by a governing body subject to express standards and criteria set forth in the zoning ordinance.

**Congestion Management System (CMS)** - A study that identifies locations of traffic congestion and provides methods to monitor it. Methods mitigating negative impacts are recommended.

**Conservation easement** - A legal document that provides specific land-use rights to a secondary party. A perpetual conservation easement usually grants conservation and management rights to a party in perpetuity.

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

**Conservation subdivision design** - Residential development in which the majority of flat, dry, and otherwise buildable land is protected from clearing, grading, and construction by reducing lot sizes in order to achieve full-yield density.

**Consistency** - A policy or standard that either encourages or requires comprehensive plans and other planning documents of neighboring municipalities or different levels of government to be compatible with one another. Although not currently required, amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code which would address consistency have been introduced in the PA General Assembly in recent years.

**Council of Governments (COG)** - A voluntary association of political entities or agencies who join together to communicate, attempt to solve area-wide problems, and conduct programs and activities that are normally conducted by individual municipal governments. The Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of 1972 (Act 180) permits groups of municipalities to form a COG and to do anything as a group that a local government can do individually, except levy taxes.

**Curative Amendment Challenge** - A process provided for in the Municipalities Planning Code that enables landowners to challenge the validity of a zoning ordinance on constitutional or other grounds. If a municipality declines to "cure" its zoning ordinance to provide for the landowner's proposed use, a court may order the municipality to allow the use on that specific site, if the landowner prevails on appeal.

**Density bonus** - A percentage of the maximum base density which is used to define the number of additional dwellings or other individual uses which will be allowed if a development meets certain requirements.

**Detention basin** - A facility for the temporary storage of stormwater runoff.

**Development right** - The nature and the extent to which land, including the air space above, may be improved under a development regulation.

**Down Zone** - A zoning practice that decreases the intensity of use or densities or reduces the types of uses that were previously permitted by the zoning ordinance.

**Dry detention ponds** - The outlet structure of a dry pond modified as a "detention outlet" to provide for slow release of stormwater runoff. Retention ponds provide for permanent storage of stormwater.

**Due process** - This entails allowing all parties reasonable notice of proceedings, treating all parties fairly and equally, giving access to records and to information used for decision-making, providing a fair opportunity to be heard before a decision is made, avoiding a conflict (or the appearance of a conflict) of interest, and assuring the right to submit and challenge evidence.

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

**Easement** - A grant of one or more of the property rights by the property owner to and/or for use by the public, a corporation, or another person or entity.

**Eminent Domain** - The power of government to acquire private property for public use without the owner's consent, when the proposed use of the property promotes a public purpose. Just Compensation must be paid to the property owner. It is usually determined by appraisals which establish the market value of the lands.

**Enabling Acts** - Legislation granting specific powers to municipalities and authorizing the powers and duties they can perform.

**Enterprise Zones** - Special districts created by local taxing bodies (county, municipality, and school district) where property taxes are abated for a specific period of time to encourage economic development.

**Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** - A federal agency with the mission to protect human health and safeguard the natural environment, i.e. air, water, and land, upon which life depends. EPA works to ensure that:

1. national efforts to reduce environmental risk are based on the best available scientific information;
2. federal laws protecting human health and the environment are enforced fairly and effectively;
3. environmental protection is an integral consideration in U.S. policies concerning natural resources, human health, economic growth, energy, transportation, agriculture, industry, and international trade, and these factors are similarly considered in establishing environmental policy;
4. all parts of society-communities, individuals, business, state, and local governments, tribal governments have access to accurate information sufficient to effectively participate in managing human health and environmental risks;
5. environmental protection contributes to making our communities and ecosystems diverse, sustainable, and economically productive; and
6. the United States plays a leadership role in working with other nations to protect the global environment.

**Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) calculations** - One EDU equals the assumed sewage flow from a single family home, 400 gallons per day (gpd). The expected daily sewage flow from a proposed development is divided by 400 to derive the number of EDUs.

**Escrow** - A deposit of money or acceptable security provided to a municipality by a developer to guarantee that sufficient monies are available to construct required improvements.

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

**Exaction** - Contributions or payments required as an authorized precondition for receiving a development permit.

**Facade** - The exterior walls of a building exposed to public view or that wall viewed by persons not within the building.

**Field view** - An organized overview of a project location to assess project needs and location.

**First-Class City** - As defined by Pennsylvania Act 188 (The City Classification Law), any municipality with a population that exceeds one million persons. Philadelphia is the only First-Class City in the Commonwealth.

**Floodplains** - A low-lying area near a river or stream that can be expected to flood following heavy rains and snowmelt.

**Floodways** - The channel of a river or watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the 100-year flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot. Floodways are only delineated in communities where detailed hydraulic analyses have been completed.

**Geographic Information System (GIS)** - A computerized system of compiling, presenting and analyzing spatial or geographic-based data.

**Global Positioning System (GPS)** - A satellite navigation system funded by and controlled by the U.S. Department of Defense. Provides specially-coded satellite signals that can be processed in a GPS receiver, enabling the receiver to compute position, velocity, and time.

**Grassed swales** - A shallow, vegetated ditch above the watertable. It is used as an infiltration/filtration method to provide pretreatment before runoff is discharged to other treatment systems.

**Grassroots** - Being, originating, or operating in or at the basic, community level.

**Green infrastructure** - Natural areas such as parks and greenways. As opposed to gray infrastructure which includes, roads, transit lines, and sewers.

**Greenbelt** - An open area that may be cultivated or maintained in a natural state surrounding development or used as a buffer between land uses or to mark the edge of an urban or developed area.

**Greenway** - A linear open space established along either a natural corridor, such as a riverfront, stream valley, or ridge line, or over land along a railroad right of way converted to recreational use; a canal, a scenic road, or other route; Any natural or landscaped course for pedestrian or bicycle passage; An open space connector linking parks, natural reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

with populated areas; and locally, certain strip or linear parks designated as a parkway or greenbelt (Little 1990).

**Groundwater recharge** - A process by which precipitation or surface water flow enters the subsurface of the soil and supplements or adds to the existing ground water.

**Growing Greener** - (1) Governor Tom Ridge's recent legislative initiative (December 15, 1999) to invest nearly \$650 million to preserve open space and support farmland preservation in the Commonwealth. (2) Also refers to an initiative of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Natural Lands Trust, and others, to promulgate conservation design strategies, which allow a community to shape growth around special natural and cultural features found in each community.

**Growth Boundary** - A line delineated on the Official Map that indicates a growth area within which public infrastructure will be provided to serve future development.

**Growth management** - A system of land use regulations designed to influence the location, timing and character of development, instead of controlling the amount or rate of growth.

**Hedgerow** - Continuous planting used to separate agricultural fields.

**Historic district** - One or more historic sites and intervening or surrounding property united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district may also comprise individual elements separated geographically but linked by association or history.

**Historic site** - Any real property, man-made structure, natural object or configuration or any portion or group of the foregoing which has been formally designated by the state, county, or municipality as being of historical, archaeological, cultural, scenic or architectural significance.

**Homeowners association** - A community association, other than a condominium association, that is organized in a development in which individual owners share common interests and responsibilities for costs and upkeep of common open space or facilities.

**HOPE VI** - A. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development demonstration program that provides an alternative to traditional public housing complexes by developing scattered site assisted housing units with support services.

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

**Infill development** - The development of new housing or other buildings on scattered vacant sites in a built-up area.

**Infiltration basin** - Impoundment that stores runoff temporarily until it gradually infiltrates into the soil surrounding the basin.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation Act** - Also known as Act 180 of 1972, it permits two or more municipalities to cooperate jointly in the exercise of any governmental function and allows municipalities to delegate powers to other local units.

**Inter-jurisdictional** - An action or activity that involves the cooperative interaction between two or more political jurisdictions. It may include, but is not limited to, interacting among various political jurisdictions within a level of government, or among several levels of government.

**Intermodal or multi-modal transportation** - A transportation system that includes several types (modes) of conveyances such as automobile, rail, bus, pedestrian and bicycle.

**Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)** - The former federal transportation authorization legislation that governs all transportation planning and programming and rules that "must be conducted cooperatively and in such a way as to provide for continuous and substantive public participation." ISTEA has been replaced by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)

**Interparcel circulation** - Circulation and access between at least two points.

**Just Compensation** - Payment made to a property owner by a municipality or other entity with the power of eminent domain when the private property is taken for a public use.

**Key 93** - The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund distributed through the Department of Cultural and Natural Resources.

**Land development** - The improvement of one lot or two or more contiguous lots, tracts or parcels of land for any purpose.

**Land trusts** - Private, non-profit conservation organization whose principal purpose is to protect land under its stewardship and which is intended to exist indefinitely.

**Level of service** - A description of traffic conditions along a given roadway or at a particular intersection. Levels of service range from "A" (best) to "F" (worst).

**Light-rail** - Type of rail system that is electrically powered (an overhead catenary system); and has the versatility to operate with other traffic at street level, or run in subways or along elevated tracks.

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

**Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program** - Created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, developers of rental housing must meet certain affordability tests: 1) one-fifth of the units must rent at 50 percent of area median income or 2) two-fifths at 60 percent of area median income. If the standards are met and approval is granted in advance of the project, investors receive a ten-year stream of federal tax credits. The value of these credits is usually converted into equity in the project, thereby resulting in reduced debt and more affordable rents.

**Management Action Plan** - A guide to creating and managing a project. The plan may contain historic, economic, and development actions associated with a project and a vision towards its fulfillment.

**Market value** - The price a willing buyer will pay a willing seller for a piece of property. Estimated market value is used in determining the sales price in condemnation proceedings and in establishing property tax assessment roles.

**Memorandum of Understanding** - Consensus agreement between two or more parties. In terms of planning, there is an emphasis on coordination between parties and advanced planning to reduce conflicts and reach mutually agreed upon goals and their implementation.

**Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** - The MPO is the county or regional body which has the responsibility for the continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process required of urbanized areas to qualify for federal transportation funds.

**Mixed use development** - Comprehensively planned and designed development that contains at least three different but interdependent uses, including residential use unless otherwise specified. Mixed use development integrates its physical and functional components, is pedestrian oriented within its development, is connected to its surroundings by pedestrian or public transportation access, and is compatible in density, layout, and character with adjacent development.

**Moratorium** - A temporary freeze on new sanitary sewer connections imposed by the Department of Environmental Protection until additional sewer capacity is created. Also a concept established in Section 609.2 of the Municipalities Planning Code to permit a municipality to formally declare its zoning ordinance (or portions thereof) invalid and to prepare a curative amendment to overcome the invalidity. Municipalities generally have 180 days to cure the invalid portion of their zoning ordinance.

**Municipalities Planning Code (MPC)** - Also known as Act 247 of 1968, as amended, the MPC is the state law which governs zoning, subdivision and land

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

development, and other aspects of land use planning in all jurisdictions of the Commonwealth, with the exceptions of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** - The law that requires a federal agency to:

1. consider every significant aspect of the environmental impact of a proposed action
2. involve the public in its decision-making process when considering environmental concerns
3. use a systematic, interdisciplinary approach to decision-making, and
4. consider a reasonable range of alternatives in every recommendation or report on proposals for legislation and other major federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

**National Register of Historic Places** - The official list, established by the National Historic Preservation Act, of sites, districts, buildings, structures, and objects significant in the nation's history or whose artistic or architectural value is unique.

**Nonconforming use** - As defined in Section 107 of the Municipalities Planning Code, a use of land or a structure which does not comply with the applicable use provisions in a zoning ordinance, but which existed prior to adoption of the current ordinance. Nonconforming uses are permitted to continue, subject to reasonable conditions imposed in the zoning ordinance.

**Nonpoint source pollution** - Water pollution that is the result of surface water runoff (which comes from a variety of sources, not from a single discharge point). When it rains, water washes over driveways, roofs, agricultural lands, streets, lawns, construction sites, and logging operations picking up soil, waste and toxics. This runoff can cause damage to fish, wildlife, and their habitat, as well as, damage drinking water supplies and degradation to the natural environment.

**Open space** - Any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment or for the use and enjoyment of owners, occupants, and their guests of land adjoining or neighboring such open space.

**Open space ratio** - The proportion of a site consisting of open space compared to the entire site area.

**Ordinance** - A law enacted by a municipality at a public meeting, after proper advertisement. A land use ordinance, such as a zoning or subdivision and land development ordinance, or a Planned Residential Development provision, is subject to special provisions in the Municipalities Planning Code, Articles IV, V, VI, and VII.

**Overlay zoning district** - A special purpose zoning district that is superimposed over existing zoning jurisdictions. It is designated to provide additional standards

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

and regulations for specific areas based on special conditions such as environmental factors, historical features or neighborhood preservation.

**Paratransit** - Forms of passenger transportation which are available to the public, are distinct from conventional transit, and can operate over the highway and street system. Examples of paratransit include shared-ride taxis, carpools, rental cars, and subscription bus clubs.

**Performance standards** - Criteria that must be met by development to limit a particular defined impact.

**Permitted uses or uses by right** - Those uses that are allowed in a zoning ordinance without any further approvals, as opposed to conditional uses, special exceptions, or variances.

**Pervious pavement** - A thin layer of cement treated permeable material (CTPM) or asphalt treated permeable material (ATPM) on top of a deep-base filled with large-size crushed stone aggregate to serve as a reservoir to detain stormwater. Pervious pavements cannot be used for road surfaces, but can be used in special cases for parking lots, emergency access drives, and other low-traffic uses.

**Planned Residential Development (PRD)** - As defined in Section 107 of the Municipalities Planning Code, a PRD is "an area of land, controlled by a landowner, to be developed as a single entity for a number of dwelling units, or combination of residential and nonresidential uses, the development plan for which does not correspond in lot size, bulk, type of dwelling, or use, density, or intensity, lot coverage and required open space to the regulations established in any one district created from time to time, under the provisions of a municipal zoning ordinance."

**Planned Unit Development (PUD)** - A concept very similar to PRD, which is sometimes interchanged with PRD, the concept defined in the Municipalities Planning Code.

**Police power** - The power of a government to pass and enforce laws to protect the health, welfare, safety, convenience and comfort of the whole community. Land use regulations are expressions of the exercise of the police power (power of the people). They are lawful only to the extent they are consistent with and serve the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and welfare. Land use restrictions are a derogation of the common law; they must be reasonable and neither capricious, confiscatory nor arbitrary, they must also be strictly construed.

**Public facilities** - Streets, utility and service corridors, utility lines, sites for schools, parks, parking garage, sidewalks, pedestrianways, community

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

facilities, public highways, storm drainage systems, water systems, street lighting systems, off-street parking facilities and sanitary sewerage systems, etc..

**Public open space** - An open space area conveyed or otherwise dedicated to a municipality, municipal agency, board of education, state or county agency, or other public body for recreational or conservation uses.

**Public open space ratio** - The proportion of a site consisting of public open space compared to the entire site area.

**Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs)** - The acquisition of the specific right to develop a property while still permitting allowable uses, such as farming. The ownership or possession of the land is not affected.

**Rails to Trails Act** - 1990 act established to facilitate the conversion of abandoned railroads into public recreational trails. The act requires the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to maintain an inventory of the railroad abandonments in Pennsylvania and make the inventory available to the public.

**Recreational open space** - Open space, whether publicly or privately owned, improved or unimproved, set aside, dedicated, designated or reserved for recreational use and enjoyment.

**Recreational Use of Land and Water Act** - 1966 act amended in 1992 to encourage owners of land to make land and water areas available to the public for recreational purposes by limiting their liability. The Act protects public and private landowners from liability for simple negligence for injuries arising out of the free recreational use of land and waters.

**Retention basin** - A pond, pool, or basin used for the permanent storage of water runoff.

**Right-of-way** - 1. A strip of land acquired by reservation, dedication, forced dedication, prescription, or condemnation and intended to be occupied by a road, railroad, electric transmission lines, oil or gas pipeline, water line, sanitary storm sewer, and other similar uses;  
2. generally, the right of one to pass over the property of another.

**Riparian buffers** - An area or band of vegetation on and near the shore of a body of water. Because vegetation uses water and nutrients, puts down roots, and provides cover, it functions to slow down surface water, catch and hold sediments, absorb nutrients, and help regulate the temperature of water. Additionally, riparian vegetation can serve as important habitat to plants and wildlife.

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

**Scattered site housing** - New or rehabilitated subsidized dwellings spread throughout a community rather than concentrated in a single area.

**Scenic corridor** - An area associated with a highway, waterway, or major hiking, biking, or equestrian trail of significant scenic value.

**Second-Class City** - As defined by Pennsylvania Act 188 (The City Classification Law), any municipality with a population between 250,000 and 999,999 persons. There is an additional tier, Second-Class A cities, that contain between 80,000 and 249,000 persons. Pittsburgh is the only Second-Class City and Scranton is the only Second-Class A City in the Commonwealth.

**Sedimentation** - The action or process of forming or depositing sediment, especially in waterways.

**Setback** - A minimum distance required by zoning to be maintained between two structures or between a structure and property lines.

**Spot zoning** - Rezoning a small parcel of property to a classification that is incompatible with the comprehensive plan and the zoning of surrounding property.

**Stewardship** - The careful and responsible conducting, supervising, or managing of something (in this case Pennsylvania's abundance of developable land).

**Stream corridor** - Any river, stream, pond, lake, or wetland, together with adjacent upland areas, that supports protective bands of vegetation that line the waters' edge.

**Stream corridor buffer area** - An area of undisturbed vegetation, except in the case of agricultural areas utilizing Best Management Practices, maintained along the bank of any surface water body to protect stream corridors from impacts of development.

**Street** - Any alley, street, avenue, boulevard, road, parkway, viaduct, drive or other roadway and its associated right-of-way, whether, existing or planned, and whether publicly or privately owned.

**Streetscape** - A design term referring to all the elements that constitute the physical makeup of a street and that, as a group, define its character, including building frontage, street paving, street furniture, landscaping, including trees and other plantings, awnings and marquees, signs, and lighting.

**Strip development** - A mixed commercial/retail zone, usually only one lot deep, that occurs along one or both sides of a main street or road.

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

**Subdivision** - The division or re-division of a lot, tract or other parcel of land into two or more lots, tracts or parcels. The term includes changes in existing lot lines. A municipal ordinance that regulates how this may occur, including, but not limited to, the provision of public streets, parks, utilities and stormwater management .

**Taking** - A government action that results in the public acquisition of property, or a severe decline in the value of the property. A taking typically results when land use regulations are so severe that they substantially or entirely eliminate a property owner's profit, use and enjoyment of his or her land.

**Third-Class City** - As defined by Pennsylvania Act 188 (The City Classification Law), any municipality with a population between 10,000 and 79,000 persons. Currently, there are 53 Third-Class Cities in the Commonwealth.

**Traffic-calming** - Techniques intended to slow traffic by altering the street design to encourage safer driving speeds in residential or commercial neighborhoods.

**Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)** - A zoning option that allows conservation and development to coexist within a municipality, by shifting development rights away from agricultural lands or sensitive natural areas.

**Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21)** - Federal legislation that authorizes Federal highway, highway safety, transit and other surface transportation programs. TEA-21 is the successor legislation to the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), and builds on the initiatives established by ISTEA.

**Turbidity** - Turbidity measures the scattering effect that suspended solids have on light: the higher the intensity of scattered light, the higher the turbidity. Primary contributors to turbidity include clay, silt, finely divided organic and inorganic matter, soluble colored organic compounds, plankton, and microscopic organisms. Determination of turbidity is a common component of water-quality assessments.

**Variance** - Permission granted by a Board of Adjustment or Zoning Hearing Board after a public hearing which lawfully authorizes a use or structure that violates the specific terms of the zoning ordinance. Variances may be granted only upon proof that the terms of the ordinance create a unique hardship to the property owner that prevents a reasonable use of the property and the variances are granted to provide relief in such instances.

**Vest-pocket park** - A small land area, usually in a built-up neighborhood, developed for active or passive recreation.

**Viewshed** - The area that is visible from a specific location, e.g. a ridge top or building location, considering obstructions to sight caused by terrain and other physical features. Viewshed or visible area analysis is useful for planning locations

*(Glossary, Cont'd)*

of unsightly facilities such as smokestacks, or surveillance facilities such as fire towers, or transmission facilities.

**Water quality inlets** - Underground retention systems designed to remove solids. A basin is constructed two to four feet deep below an outlet pipe to collect sediment.

**Watershed** - Land area from which water drains toward a common watercourse in a natural basin.

**Wet pond** - Permanent pool of water that temporarily stores runoff and allows particulate pollutants to settle out and dissolved pollutants to be removed by biological uptake or other decay processes. Stormwater is released at a controlled rate. More commonly called a stormwater detention basin.

**Wetland** - The land transition between water and land systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water, including swamps, marshes, bogs, riparian areas, salt flats and vernal pools.

**Yield plans** - An illustration of the legal development potential of a site.

**Zoning** - The delineation of districts and the establishment of regulations governing the use, placement, spacing, and size of land and buildings.

**Zoning Hearing Board** - A quasi-judicial board appointed by the municipal elected officials to conduct hearings and make decisions on challenges and appeals from land use ordinances under the Municipalities Planning Code.

**Zoning ordinance** - Municipal regulations that may permit, prohibit, regulate, restrict and determine:

1. Use of land, water courses and other bodies of water.
2. Size, height, bulk, location, construction, repair, maintenance, alteration, razing, removal and use of structures.
3. Areas and dimensions of land and bodies of water to be occupied by uses and structures, as well as areas, courts, yards and other open spaces and distances to be left unoccupied by uses and structures.
4. Density of population and intensity of fundamental rights provided for citizens in the Constitution which should be protected at all costs.
5. Protection and preservation of natural resources and agricultural land and activities.



## Resources

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**A Handbook on Community Visioning,**

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**Acknowledgements:**

**Picture and Figure Resources**

The pictures and figures in the document are taken from a number of sources. They include:

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**The Practice of Local Government Planning,**

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## Additional Resource and Contact Information

### I. COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSIONS

<u>County</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Adams County Planning Commission	(717) 334-6781
Allegheny County Department of Economic Development	(412) 350-1000
Armstrong County Department of Planning and Development	(724) 548-3223
Beaver County Planning Commission	(724) 728-5700
Bedford County Planning Commission	(814) 623-4827
Berks County Planning Commission	(610) 478-6300
Blair County Planning Commission	(814) 940-5978
Bradford County Planning Commission	(570) 265-1715
Bucks County Planning Commission	(215) 345-3400
Butler County Planning Commission	(724) 285-4731
Cambria County Planning Commission	(814) 472-2106
Cameron County Planning Commission	(814) 486-2315
Carbon County Office of Planning and Development	(570) 325-3671
Centre County Planning Commission	(814) 355-6791
Centre Regional Planning Commission	(814) 231-3050
Chester County Planning Commission	(610) 344-6285
Clarion County Department of Planning and Development	(814) 226-4000
Clearfield County Planning Commission	(814) 765-2633
Clinton County Planning Commission	(570) 893-4080
Columbia County Planning Commission	(570) 389-9146
Crawford County Planning Commission	(814) 336-1151
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (Cumberland-Dauphin-Perry Counties)	(717) 234-2639
Delaware County Planning Department	(610) 891-5200
Elk County Planning Commission	(814) 776-1161
Erie County Department of Planning	(814) 451-6336
Fayette County Planning Commission	(724) 430-1210
Forest County Planning Commission	(814) 755-3450
Franklin County Planning Commission	(717) 264-4125
Fulton County Planning Commission	(717) 485-3717
Greene County Planning Commission	(724) 852-5236
Huntingdon County Planning and Development Department	(814) 643-5091
Indiana County Planning Commission	(724) 465-3870
Jefferson County Department of Development	(814) 849-3047
Juniata County Planning Commission	(717) 436-8991
Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission	(570) 963-6826
Lancaster County Planning Commission	(717) 299-8333
Lawrence County Planning Commission	(724) 658-2541
Lebanon County Planning Commission	(717) 274-2801
Lehigh Valley Planning Commission	(610) 264-4544
Luzerne County Planning Commission	(717) 825-1560
Lycoming County Economic and Community Development Services	(570) 320-2130
McKean County Planning Commission	(814) 887-5571
Mercer County Regional Planning Commission	(724) 962-5787
Mifflin County Planning Commission	(717) 242-0887
Monroe County Planning Commission	(570) 420-3400

*(County Planning Commissions, Cont'd)*

Montgomery County Planning Commission	(610) 278-3730
Montour County Planning Commission	(570) 271-3028
Northumberland County Planning Commission	(570) 988-4219
Pike County Community Planning and Human Development	(570) 296-3440
Potter County Planning Commission	(814) 274-8254
Schuylkill County Planning and Zoning Commission	(570) 622-5570
Snyder County Planning Commission	(570) 837-4257
Somerset County Planning Commission	(814) 443-1431
Sullivan County Planning Commission	(570) 946-5207
Susquehanna County Department of Planning	(570) 278-4600
Tioga County Planning Commission	(570) 723-8251
Union County Planning Commission	(570) 522-1370
Venango County Planning Commission	(814) 432-9531
Warren County Planning and Zoning Commission	(814) 726-3861
Washington County Planning Commission	(724) 228-6811
Wayne County Planning Commission	(570) 253-5970
Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development	(724) 830-3600
Wyoming County Planning Commission	(570) 836-3200
York County Planning Commission	(717) 771-9870

**II. REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES**

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania	(717) 655-5581
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission	(215) 592-1800
North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission	(814) 773-3162
Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission	(717) 265-9103
Northwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission	(814) 437-3024
SEDA Council of Governments	(717) 524-4491
Southern Alleghenies Regional Planning and Development Commission	(814) 949-6500
Southwestern Pennsylvania Economic Development District	(412) 391-1240
Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission	(412) 391-5590

**III. PennDOT ENGINEERING DISTRICTS**

<u>District</u>	<u>Phone</u>
District 1-0	(814) 678-5000
District 2-0	(814) 765-0400
District 3-0	(570) 368-8686
District 4-0	(570) 963-4061
District 5-0	(610) 798-4200
District 6-0	(610) 205-6700
District 8-0	(717) 787-6653

*(PennDOT Engineering Districts, Cont'd)*

District 9-0	(814) 696-7250
District 10-0	(724) 357-2800
District 11-0	(412) 429-5000
District 12-0	(724) 439-7315

**IV. METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS**

<u>Commission</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Blair County Planning Commission Metropolitan Planning Organization	(814) 940-5980
Centre Region Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CRMPO)	(814) 231-3050
Erie Area Transportation Study	(814) 451-6012
Hagerstown-Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization	(301) 791-3065
Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS)	(717) 234-2639
Johnstown Area Transportation Study	(814) 472-2108
Lancaster County Transportation Coordinating Committee (LATS)	(717) 299-8333
Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study	(570) 963-6826
	(570) 825-1564
Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVTS)	(610) 264-4544
New Castle-Lawrence County Transportation Study (small study area – not an MPO)	(724) 656-2144
Philadelphia Area	(215) 238-2898
	(215) 238-2863
Pittsburgh Area	(412) 391-5590 –ext. 310
Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS)	(610) 478-6300
Shenango Valley Transportation Study	(724) 962-5787
Williamsport Area Transportation Study	(570) 320-2138
York Area Transportation Study (YATS)	(717) 771-9870

**V. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS**

<u>Commission</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Economic Development Council of Northeastern PA	(570) 655-5581
Southern Alleghenies Regional Planning and Development Commission	(814) 949-6511
SEDA-Council of Governments	(570) 524-4494
Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission	(570) 265-9103
Northwest PA Regional Planning and Development Commission	(814) 677-4800
North Central PA Regional Planning and Development Commission	(814) 773-3162
Adams County Commission	(717) 337-9824
Franklin County Planning Commission	(717) 261-3855
Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Development Council	(412) 391-5590

**VI. PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

<u>Regional Office</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Northwest Regional Office (Meadville)	(814) 332-6839
Northcentral Regional Office (Williamsport)	(570) 327-3564

*(Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Cont'd)*

Northeast Regional office (Wilkes-Barre)	(570) 820-4854
Southwest Regional Office (Pittsburgh)	(412) 442-4184
Southcentral Regional Office (Harrisburg)	(717) 705-4709
Southeast Regional Office (Conshohocken)	(610) 832-6014

**VII. PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

<u>Bureau of Recreation and Conservation</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Northcentral/Southcentral Office	(717) 772-4362
Northeast Office	(570) 963-4974
Northwest Office	(814) 871-4190
Southeast Office	(215) 560-1182
Southwest Office	(412) 880-0486

<u>State Parks</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Region 1	(814) 486-3365
Region 2	(724) 865-2131
Region 3	(814) 733-2202
Region 4	(215) 453-5000

<u>Bureau of Forestry</u>	<u>Phone</u>
District 1 (Counties: Adams, Cumberland, (E) Franklin and York)	(717) 352-2211
District 2 (Counties: Bedford, (W) Franklin and Fulton)	(717) 485-3148
District 3 (Counties: (N) Cumberland, (N) Franklin, (SE) Huntingdon, Juniata, (SE) Mifflin and Perry)	(717) 536-3191
District 4 (Counties: Allegheny, Fayette, Greene, Somerset, Washington and Westmoreland)	(724) 238-9533
District 5 (Counties: (S) Centre, Huntingdon, and (SW) Mifflin)	(814) 643-2340
District 6 (Counties: Blair, Cambria and Indiana)	(814) 472-1862
District 7 (Counties: (SE) Clinton, (E) Centre, (N) Mifflin, Snyder and Union)	(570) 922-3344
District 8 (Counties: Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Clarion, Jefferson, Lawrence, Mercer and (S) Venango)	(814) 226-1901
District 9 (Counties: (W) Centre, Clearfield and (SE) Elk)	(814) 765-0821
District 10 (Counties: (N) Centre and Clinton)	(570) 923-6011
District 11 (Counties: Lackawanna, (N) Luzerne, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming)	(570) 963-4561

*(Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Cont'd)*

District 12 (County: Lycoming)	(570) 327-3450
District 13 (Counties: Cameron and Elk)	(814) 486-3353
District 14 (Counties: Crawford, Erie, Forest, (N) Venango and Warren)	(814) 723-0262
District 15 (Counties: McKean and Potter)	(814) 274-3600
District 16 (Counties: Bradford and Tioga)	(570) 724-2868
District 17 (Counties: (S) Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, (S) Lehigh, Montgomery and Philadelphia)	(610) 582-9660
District 18 (Counties: (N) Berks, Carbon, Dauphin, Lebanon, (N) Lehigh and Schuylkill)	(570) 385-7800
District 19 (Counties: Monroe, Northampton and Pike)	(570) 695-4000
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**VIII. COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

<u>County</u>	<u>Phone</u>
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ARMSTRONG	(724) 548-3425
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CAMERON	(814) 486-2244
CARBON	(610) 377-4894
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CHESTER	(610) 696-5126
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COLUMBIA	(570) 784-1310
CRAWFORD	(814) 724-1793
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WESTMORELAND	(724) 837-5271
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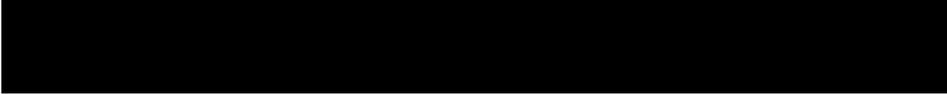
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