



Bureau for Historic Preservation's

Guidance for Historic Preservation Planning

The Municipalities Planning Code was revised in 2000 and included a provision for historic preservation planning. The Bureau for Historic Preservation (BHP) has developed guidance for Historic Preservation Planning to provide a framework for what constitutes a comprehensive historic preservation plan.

Purpose: The Historic Preservation Plan provides local units of government a working document to identify historic and cultural resources in the county or municipality; to consider the issues, problems and opportunities associated with those resources; to explore the possibility of county-wide and regional approaches to management of important resources; and to develop goals, policies, and strategies for their appropriate use, conservation, preservation and protection that are consistent with those established for other comprehensive plan elements.

Planning Process:

The character and historic resources of each county varies, therefore the process in developing a Plan for Historic Preservation will depend upon the particular needs of the county or municipality. However there are some common steps that should be followed in the planning process:

- (A) evaluation of the county's or municipality's developmental history;
- (B) inventory of existing conditions;
- (C) assessment of current and future needs;
- (D) articulation of community goals, objectives, and strategies;
- (E) implementation program/action plan;
- (F) identified funding sources, tools, and methods to implement historic resources plan; and
- (G) establishing the legal basis for historic preservation.

The planning process should be guided by public participation that provides a forum for open discussion of preservation issues. Resources for incorporating public participation in the historic preservation planning process are listed in *Planning Resources*.

The planning process should result in the preparation of a Historic Preservation Plan. The plan should include the results of completing items A through F. The Bureau for Historic Preservation is available to review and comment on plans through the planning process.

A. Developmental History:

A narrative of the county's or municipality's development should be prepared. Historic atlases, maps, written histories, and other similar resources should be consulted. The developmental history should address natural resources and the evolution of transportation systems with respect to the role they played in developing the county and its communities. Extant resources associated with the area's development should be identified in the text.

B. Inventory of Existing Conditions:

Where applicable to the county or municipality, the items listed at (1) through (4) below should be identified and inventoried. Maps are strongly recommended for inclusion in the plan to indicate the locations of these resources.

- (1) National Register Listed and Eligible Properties: Any designated building, district, site, structure, or object located wholly or partially in the county or municipality that is listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- (2) Significant Historic and Cultural Resources: Any areas or any other resources that are of county-wide or local significance.
 - a. Residential Resources. Residential districts, neighborhoods, multifamily dwellings, individual homes, gardens, including examples of locally significant or distinctive building traditions and styles;
 - b. Commercial Resources. Commercial districts (e.g., crossroads, downtowns, etc.), marketplaces, and individual buildings (e.g., general stores, offices, etc.);
 - c. Industrial Resources. Mills, factories, industrial complexes, mines, etc., as well as locally significant industries and traditional occupations and skills;
 - d. Institutional Resources. Institutional districts and individual buildings (e.g., schools, military complexes, churches, etc.);
 - e. Transportation Resources. Roadways, bridges, pedestrian ways, footpaths and trails, railroad tracks, structures and buildings, trolleys, streetcars lines and cars or equipment, canals, waterways and landing areas, airports and airfields, gateways;
 - f. Rural Resources. Landscapes, farm complexes, crossroad communities, barns, etc., as well as locally significant agricultural practices and traditions; and
 - g. Other Historic, Archaeological and Cultural Resources. Community landmarks (natural or man-made), battlegrounds, gardens, parks, views, cemeteries, burial grounds, festival locations and gathering places, etc.). The inventory should also include generalized locations of any archaeological sites identified as significant by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.
- (3) Critical Areas: Identify any historic areas that are experiencing pressures related to economic decline, growth/sprawl, transportation projects, etc.
- (4) Local Programs and Ordinances: Identify any existing local programs or ordinances related to management of historic and cultural resources including: Main Street/Elm Street program, local historic district ordinance, preservation component to local zoning ordinance, redevelopment authority, Heritage Park Region, etc.

The level of the inventory should be based upon the county's or municipality's needs and may be conducted through such means as: windshield survey, professional or technical surveys, formal solicitation of community comment through written surveys and/or public meetings, and input from community groups (such as task forces; historical, archaeological and cultural societies; school groups; etc.).

The Bureau for Historic Preservation maintains CRGIS, a map-based inventory of the historic and archaeological sites and surveys stored in the files of the Bureau for Historic Preservation. Currently there are approximately 20,000 archaeological sites and 113,000 historic properties in the **Cultural Resources Geographic Information System**. The CRGIS should be consulted to provide a framework for future survey needs. Web access to all of the historic resource data is available to the public. Access to archaeological site locations and detailed site information is restricted and password protected and will be granted to qualified individuals on a need to know basis. CRGIS can be accessed by the link provided in the *Planning Resources* section.

Once an initial inventory has been completed, a determination should be made as to whether further documentation or study of historic, archeological, or cultural resources is appropriate.

C. Assessment of Current and Future Needs:

Once the inventory of existing conditions is complete, an analysis should be conducted to determine:

- (1) the likelihood that the identified historic/cultural properties are currently, or will be in the future, affected by inappropriate land uses or other human activities and, if so, whether measures already being carried out by local governments or other parties in the county and/or state are adequate to manage or protect the resources;
- (2) any historic/cultural resources that are in need of attention by the local government due to encroachment of human activities, unintended land use conflicts or physical disturbance, or rapid physical deterioration;
- (3) whether policies or activities recommended in other parts of the county or municipal comprehensive plan will adversely impact the historic/cultural resources;
- (4) whether any conflicts, inconsistencies, competing priorities, or opportunities for coordination are evident in the resource management plans of the various local governments in the county.

The results of this analysis should be considered in the identification goals and strategies as well as the development of an implementation program that sets forth an agenda for management of these resources over the planning period.

D. Articulation of Community Goals, Objectives, and Strategies:

This step should include public involvement and coordination with other elements of the comprehensive plan. The intent of this section is to identify goals, objectives, and specific municipal strategies. Recommended goals:

Historic Preservation Goal
Heritage Education Goal
Economic Development Goal
Cultural/Historic Resource Survey Goal
Local Historic Resource Protection Goal
Sustainable Development Goal

E. Implementation Program/Action Plan:

The implementation program should prioritize stated strategies within each goal and set forth projected timeframes for completing projects. This step should also identify responsible parties for accomplishing strategies.

F. Funding Sources, Tools, and Methods to Implement Historic Resources Plan:

A variety of agencies, organizations, foundations, and private funding sources should be identified and consulted to accomplish goals and priority projects to aid in the implementation of the historic preservation plan. The Bureau for Historic Preservation can assist municipalities in identifying appropriate resources to implement comprehensive historic preservation plans.

G. Establishing the Legal Basis for Historic Preservation:

The Historic Preservation Plan should include citations for applicable federal, state, and local laws governing your community's character.

Planning Resources: The following is a partial list of publications and online resources that can assist municipalities with the historic preservation planning process:

Historic Preservation Law

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

<http://www.achp.gov/nhpa.html>

Pennsylvania History Code

<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/History%20Code%20Title37.pdf>

Pennsylvania Historic District Act

http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bhp/Community/Historic_District_Act.pdf

Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code

<http://mpc.landuselawinpa.com/>

Public Participation

Public Participation in Historic Preservation Planning

<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/pad/plancompan/PublicPartic/index.html>

Historic Preservation Planning

Historic Preservation Planning Program. National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/pad/>

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Preservation Planning.
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/pad/PlngStds/index.htm>

Preservation Planning: Ensuring a Future for Our Past. Cultural Resource Management, Vol. 23, No. 7.
<http://crm.cr.nps.gov/issue.cfm?volume=23&number=07>

Preparing a Historic Preservation Plan. Bradford J. White & Richard J. Roddewig. American Planning Association, Planning Advisory Service, Report Number 450.

Historic Resource Surveys

Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning.
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb24/>

Cultural Resources Geographic Information System
<http://crgis.state.pa.us>

Local Historic Resource Protection

Historic District Designation in Pennsylvania. Michel R. Lefevre, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.
<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bhp/community/07hist-designation.pdf>

Smart Growth Tools for Main Streets. National Trust for Historic Preservation.
<http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/smart-growth/>

Pennsylvania Planning and Programs

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
<http://www.newpa.com/index.aspx>

The Pennsylvania Greenways Clearinghouse
<http://www.pagreenways.org>

DCED – Land Use, News and Highlights
<http://www.landuseinpa.com/>

The Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program
<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/heritageparks/>

Guidance for Historic Preservation Planning

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission – Bureau for Historic Preservation
 Contacts: Andrea L. MacDonald, Michel Lefevre, Bryan Van Sweden, Bill Callahan
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 Updated 4/16/2009



Planning Guidance for Archaeological Sites

The purpose of this guidance is to encourage planners to incorporate archaeology into county and municipal comprehensive plans. The document also provides basic language that may be incorporated into planning documents and guidance on identifying areas with a high probability of containing archaeological sites.

Archaeological Sites

Humans first arrived in what is now Pennsylvania approximately 16,000 years ago. Europeans began settling in what would become Pennsylvania in the 17th century; by 1682, William Penn had arrived and established the colony of Pennsylvania. During the 1730s, settlers began entering the Ohio River Valley. Over these thousands of years, humans have left a substantial material record of their lives. The study of this material record forms the basis of **archaeology**, the basic unit of which is the **archaeological site**. The number of archaeological sites identified in Pennsylvania's counties and municipalities varies; however, this variation likely reflects a lack of archaeological research, not a lack of sites. Archaeological sites in Pennsylvania include but are not limited to, locations where prehistoric hunters manufactured stone tools, prehistoric encampments, late prehistoric villages, prehistoric burial mounds, historic iron furnaces, historic taverns, historic fortifications and other military sites, and small late nineteenth/early twentieth century farmsteads.

Archaeological sites, like historic buildings, are considered **cultural resources** and, if they meet eligibility requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), they are **historic properties**. Unlike historic buildings, however, archaeological sites are not always evident to the untrained eye. While some archaeological sites have obvious above ground indicators such as earth mounds, or chimney remnants, most consist of **artifacts** (objects made or modified by humans such as stone tools, pottery, bottle glass) and **features** (post holes, trash pits, stone hearths, human burials, etc.) that are **underground**. There are two types of archaeological sites: prehistoric sites and historic period sites. These different types of sites require different techniques for discovery and treatment.

How do you know if an area contains an archaeological site? The only sure way to know is to have a professional archaeologist **survey**, or sample, the area. In many cases, local archaeological societies or amateur/avocational archaeologists may have information, as well. There are some general criteria you can apply to determine the probability if a location may contain an archaeological site(s) and thus, plan accordingly. Prehistoric (Native American) sites are most commonly located near water sources such as streams, springs, or marshes. Historic (European/African-American) sites are commonly located close to old/historic roads and often are associated with above-ground resources. Both prehistoric and historic sites are generally located on level to gently sloping ground and on well-drained soils. Previous disturbance can also affect a location's potential to contain archaeological sites. For example, road/utility rights-of-way have usually been subjected to heavy disturbance and are not likely to contain intact archaeological deposits. Cultivation, however, does not necessarily destroy archaeological sites and does not, by itself, indicate a low potential area. These criteria, along with others, are often used by archaeologists to create a "predictive model." A predictive model organizes areas by the probability that they will contain archaeological sites. Hiring a professional archaeologist/consultant is an effective way "to foster conditions under which our modern society and our prehistoric and historic resources can exist in productive harmony and fulfill the social, economic,

and other requirements of present and future generations” (NHPA 1966 Section 2(1)]. Hiring a professional may also assist in streamlining the compliance process and ensuring that archaeological resources are being treated according to federal and state laws.

Please note that Pennsylvania’s Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS) has a planner level access. With this level of access, planners may register for a password that allows them to receive information concerning archaeological sites within specified project areas. This information does not give specific site locations, but informs if there is a previously-recorded site within the project area. Visit <http://crgis.state.pa.us> to learn of the necessary qualifications and to apply for a username and password.

While cultural resources work is often completed in response to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, meaning that there is some federal involvement (i.e., federal funds, permits, etc.), it is important to remember that there are also state laws that may need to be complied with in project planning, such as the Pennsylvania History Code (<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/History%20Code%20Title37.pdf>).

Key points to remember when considering archaeology in development projects and to ensure compliance with federal and state laws:

- Humans have been in the area now known as Pennsylvania for at least 16,000 years, so the potential for finding evidence of past human activity (i.e., archaeological sites) is generally high.
- Unlike historic buildings, prehistoric archaeological sites often have no above ground components that would indicate their presence; however, historical archaeological sites are often associated with aboveground resources or ruins.
- While factors such as distance to water and/or old roads, slope, soil drainage, and previous disturbance can help prioritize areas of archaeological concern, the only sure way to know whether an area contains archaeological sites is to conduct an archaeological survey.
- To see if a project area contains previously identified site(s), see Pennsylvania’s Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS): (<http://crgis.state.pa.us>). This resource’s Planner Level access gives planners the ability to draw a project area and find out if there is an archaeological site within it; however, the precise locational information is restricted.
- If you know or suspect that there is an archaeological site in a project area, or if there is a high probability for an archaeological site in your project area, the most desirable way to preserve it is to avoid it. Full excavation is a last resort because it results in the destruction of the site.
- The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission restricts access to archaeological site locational information, due to the very real danger of looting, trespassing, and vandalism.
- Most archaeology is done in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and regulations implementing that act (36 CFR Part 800). These laws ensure that projects receiving federal funds (CDBG/EIP grants, FDIC loans, etc) or requiring federal permits (e.g., Section 404 of Clean Water Act) take into account effects on archaeological resources.
- In addition to federal laws, there are state laws to consider as well, such as the Pennsylvania History Code.
- If you have any questions please contact the BHP at (717) 787-4363 or (717) 783-8946.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS:
AN INTRODUCTION

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

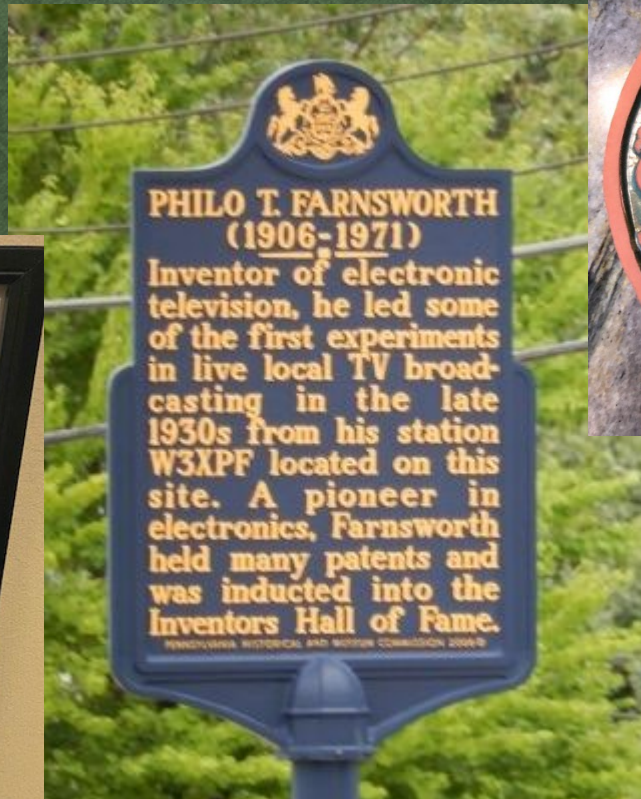
- “An important way for us to transmit our understanding of the past to future generations.” (National Park Service)
- A planning process: “the rational, systematic process by which a community develops a vision, goals, and priorities for the preservation of its historic and cultural resources.” (National Park Service)
 - Goals for preservation of historic resources are found in the state and county comprehensive master plans



- Historic preservation work seeks to identify, document, conserve, and share the resources of the past with people in the present

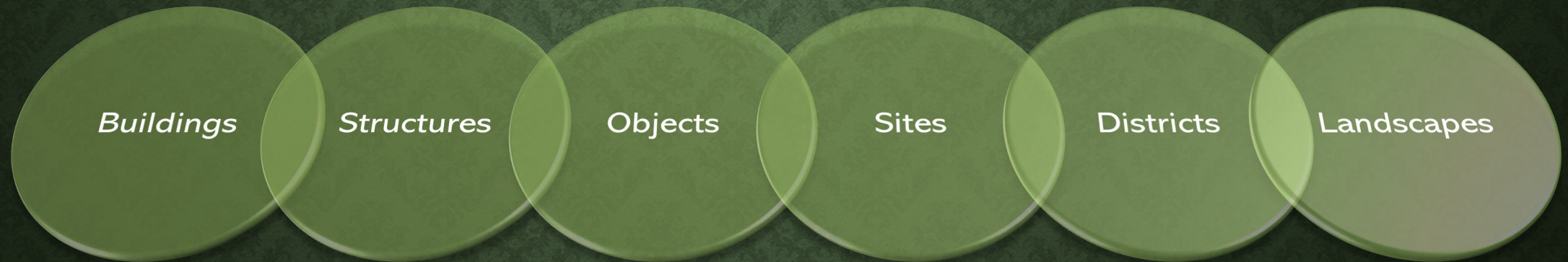
RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

- Ways to encourage the public to celebrate and engage in/with the history of a place
 - Plaque Programs
 - Historical Markers
 - Registration



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

- America's list ("register") of historic places important to American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and/or culture at the local, state, or national levels
 - Resource types include:



- Honorary! Comes with no *inherent* protections for the resource
- Enables federal, state, and/or local (where available) tax credits for rehabilitation work aimed at preserving the **historic character**

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

- All registered places must have:



Age

- 50+ years old

Significance

- A: made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- B: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past
- C: characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent work of a master
- D: yielded/may yield information important in prehistory or history

Integrity

- Extant characteristics that tell the story of the past: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association
- Not related to *condition* of the property

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

- “In common parlance... a neighborhood.” (Murtaugh)
- A group of historic resources (buildings, structures, objects, sites, districts, and/or landscapes) that tell a collective story about the past in a place



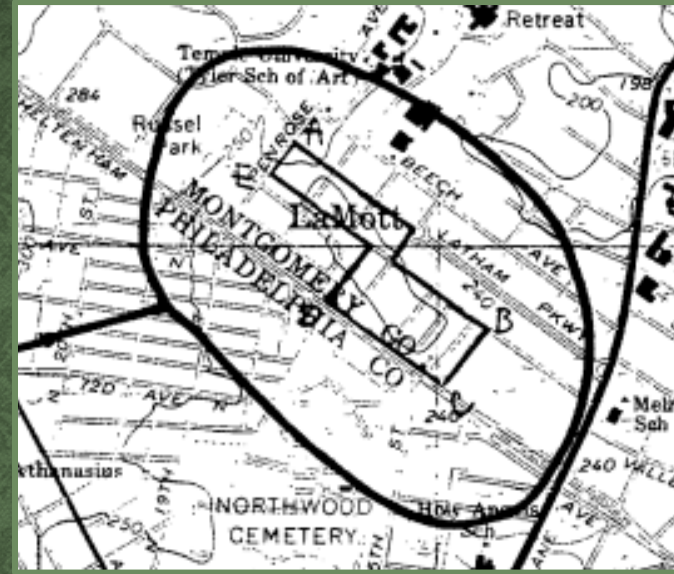
Geographically-definable

Possessing significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of properties

“United by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.”
(National Park Service)

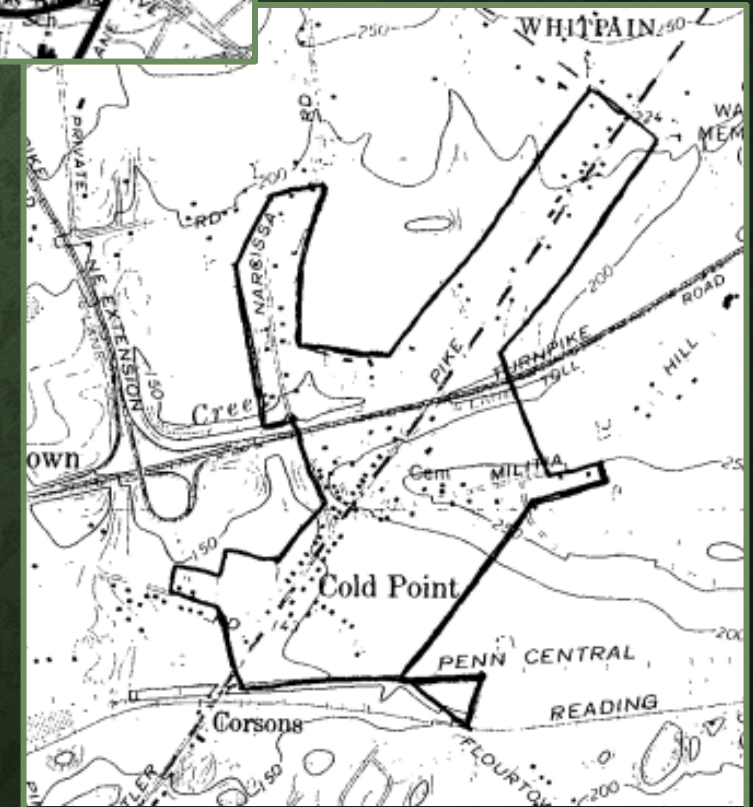
HISTORIC DISTRICTS

- Two different types:
 - Local Historic District
 - regulatory
 - a zoning “overlay”
 - design review
 - enabled by local ordinances
 - National Register District
 - honorary
 - encourages commemoration and additional research
 - tax incentives for rehabilitation



The Camptown/LaMott National Register District recognizes one of the first communities in the country to embrace racially-integrated (Cheltenham Township)

The Cold Point National Register District recognizes a historic agricultural community (Plymouth & Whitemarsh Townships)



HISTORIC DISTRICTS: BENEFITS

- National Register Districts: honorary!
- Recognizes and respects the character and history of a place
- Creates pride in place (neighborhood and community)
- Encourages preservation through documentation and research
- Most places see stabilization or increase in property values
- Redevelopment/rehabilitation tax incentives
- Provides opportunity for neighbors to have a voice in the event of government-funded projects that could adversely impact area
- Heritage tourism

MONTCO

2040



MONTCO 2040: A SHARED VISION

The Comprehensive Plan for Montgomery County





MONTCO 2040: A SHARED VISION

The Comprehensive Plan for Montgomery County

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan is a long-range plan required by state law for guiding the growth and physical development of a place. The Philadelphia region as a whole has a comprehensive plan, as do most of the 62 municipalities in Montgomery County. So, with all these comprehensive plans, what is the role of a county plan?

The county plan provides an overall land use and growth management framework for local municipal plans and provides guidance on issues that transcend local boundaries, such as highways, public transportation, flooding, trails, growth trends, redevelopment trends, shopping needs, impact of large developments, overall housing needs, natural systems, economic growth, etc. The county plan is an advisory document used to guide county and local municipal policies.

WHAT IS IN MONTCO 2040: A SHARED VISION?

Montco 2040: A Shared Vision is Montgomery County's new comprehensive plan, providing an overview of the county's vision and objectives. It reflects the input of thousands of citizens, county officials, and a steering committee made up of many diverse stakeholders. The plan was prepared by the county planning commission and adopted by the County Commissioners.

This plan provides goals and implementation steps for managing the county's built environment. It is structured around three themes:

- **Connected Communities**
- **Sustainable Places**
- **Vibrant Economy**

The plan's concluding chapter provides a vision for the future of the county and includes an overall transportation vision, a land use vision, and a concluding vision.



Comprehensive plans guide improvements to the built environment, ranging from highways and trails...



... to growth trends, housing needs, economic growth, flooding, and redevelopment.

PLAN THEMES

Montco 2040: A Shared Vision is designed around three interrelated themes.



Connected Communities

People want to be connected and part of a broader community. A key role for the county is to help these connections occur beyond local municipal boundaries.

Connected Communities involve:

- Collaboration among stakeholders
- Improved transportation choices
- Trails and greenways connecting multiple places
- Vibrant downtowns and destinations accessible by everyone

Sustainable Places

The county is full of wonderful neighborhoods and communities. These places need to be sustained and enhanced in a long-lasting and effective way.

Sustainable Places involve:

- Modernized infrastructure network
- Improved stormwater management
- Protected natural resources
- Opportunities for healthy lifestyles
- Diverse housing choices
- Enhanced community character

Vibrant Economy

A strong economy is critical for all places. With a vibrant economy, residents can earn and spend more, governments can make needed infrastructure improvements, and businesses can grow.

A Vibrant Economy involves:

- Improved transportation access
- Focused development
- Attraction and retention of businesses
- Flexibly adapting to changing market conditions
- Marketing of assets

Partnerships - Diversity - Growth - Quality Public Services - Community - Changing Demographics

THEMES AND GOALS

SUSTAINABLE PLACES

GOAL Support a modern, resilient, green, and energy-efficient infrastructure network

Why this goal is important:

- Safe and clean sewer, water, and stormwater systems and well-maintained roads and bridges protect the health and safety of county residents and provide a foundation for economic development.
- Many sewer and water systems are aging and need to be upgraded.
- Communication, energy, and other infrastructure is rapidly changing and a critical concern for modern business.



How this goal will be implemented:

- By improving county roads and bridges.
- With right-sized roads, traffic calming, green streets, and sidewalks.
- Through advocacy for environmentally-friendly upgrades to municipal sewage systems.
- By working with others to match water supply areas, sewer service areas, and growth areas.
- With water source protection and water conservation.
- By encouraging recycling.
- By adapting to new energy and communication needs.

GOAL Improve stormwater management and reduce the impact of flooding

Why this goal is important:

- Over the past 30 years, flooding, which is the number one natural hazard in the county, has resulted in several fatalities and more than \$120 million in property damage.
- There are 2,600 structures, as well as much important infrastructure, located within floodplains.
- Impervious coverage and resulting stormwater runoff continues to increase.



How this goal will be implemented:

- By implementing required stormwater improvements.
- By completing watershed stormwater management plans.
- Through advocacy for best stormwater management practices.
- By working with others to limit development in the floodplain.

GOAL Conserve natural resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and farmland

Why this goal is important:

- Wetlands, woodlands, trees, and natural areas reduce flooding, protect water quality, improve air quality, and increase property values.
- Climate change and more variable weather will impact the county in many ways that can be ameliorated by conservation.
- Homes near open space have higher values, which is estimated at \$16.3 billion in additional value for Southeastern Pennsylvania's housing stock.



How this goal will be implemented:

- With permanent protection of natural resources, open space, and rural areas.
- By adding environmentally-sensitive land to parkland while improving county parks.
- By preserving farmland.

GOAL Provide more opportunities for residents to exercise and have healthy lifestyles

Why this goal is important:

- Health is impacted by the built environment and the ability to walk and exercise conveniently.
- Diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and other chronic health concerns have increased over the past decade.
- Many county residents are disconnected from fresh, local food grown or raised in the county.



How this goal will be implemented:

- By expanding opportunities to exercise in county parks.
- Through advocacy to make communities more walkable while coordinating recreation planning efforts.
- By working with others to increase the supply of fresh local food.

GOAL Support housing choices and opportunities to meet the needs of all people

Why this goal is important:

- There are increasing numbers of smaller households, those living alone, and others who prefer to live in an apartment or townhouse.
- The senior population is expected to grow 58% between 2010 and 2040.
- The percent of households spending more than 35% of their income on housing increased from 16% in 1999 to 25% in 2009.



How this goal will be implemented:

- By supporting construction of additional affordable, permanent housing for the disabled, families, and seniors.
- With advocacy for workforce housing, walkable housing, accessory apartments, and accessible special needs housing.
- By encouraging renovation or replacement of aging public housing.
- By encouraging continued deconcentration of housing voucher use.

GOAL Enhance community character and protect neighborhoods

Why this goal is important:

- Typically, a home is a family's largest investment.
- Many historic homes, downtown buildings, and institutional structures have been demolished over the past decade.
- Fire, police, and ambulance services are critical for protecting neighborhoods.



How this goal will be implemented:

- Through support for investment in existing neighborhoods.
- With advocacy for appropriate land uses, infill, and public improvements.
- By enhancing 911 communication, upgrading emergency response times, and continuing training.
- By working with others to preserve important historic properties.
- Through cooperation to reinvigorate the tree canopy in communities.



SUSTAINABLE PLACES

Modernized Infrastructure Network

Improved Stormwater Management

Conserved Natural Resources

Opportunities for Healthy Lifestyles

Diverse Housing Choices

Enhanced Community Character



ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND PROTECT NEIGHBORHOODS

Most of Montgomery County is now developed, and many of the county’s neighborhoods are quite old - even post war neighborhoods are now 60 years old. These places need to remain appealing places, to be true neighborhoods where residents can interact while going for a walk or visiting a park. To enhance and protect its existing neighborhoods, **the county will...**

...through Community Development Block Grants, other government funding, and advocacy, support investment in existing neighborhoods

The county’s neighborhoods run the gamut, from brand new subdivisions to older places needing reinvestment. The county Planning Commission will support efforts of municipalities to find additional state and federal funding for infrastructure improvements, such as the Transportation Alternatives Program, Community Conservation Partnership Program, Local Share Gaming Funds, or Act 13 Greenways Fund.

In addition, except for Abington, Conshohocken, Limerick, Lower Merion, and Norristown, which apply for money on their own, the county Department of Housing and Community Development runs the federal Community Development Block Grant program, which provides grants to eligible municipalities for community improvements. In 2013, the county had \$3 million available. Moving forward, these funds will be targeted at supporting public facilities, infrastructure, public services, and economic development.

Measuring success

- Increase in residential property values
- New investment in existing neighborhoods



Investment in older communities is critical.

...advocate with local municipalities and developers for appropriate land uses, infill development, maintenance, and public improvements

As the county has become more developed and as interest in more urban or mature suburban locations has increased, infill development and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods has increased. This infill development should respect the character of existing residential communities and minimize the impact of new development on neighboring developed properties.

This can be done by:

- Adopting Traditional Neighborhood Development or Form Based Zoning.
- Incorporating standards that regulate the scale and design of infill development. These might include requirements on the footprint, height, and width of buildings; requirements for porches, roofs, windows, and doors that are similar to nearby homes; or requirements that garages be in the back of homes.
- Locating industrial, car-oriented, and heavy commercial uses away from residential neighborhoods.
- Encouraging adaptive reuse of old industrial and institutional buildings that add to the character of a community.
- Preserving historic properties and adaptively reusing these properties when they are no longer viable for their original use.
- Controlling the lighting, loading, outdoor storage, and trash areas of commercial uses and requiring buffer landscaping next to residential properties.
- Encouraging redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties with poor maintenance into new, compatible uses.
- Installing traffic calming, sidewalks, and crosswalks to improve walkability.
- Continuing to invest in local parks.
- Recognizing exemplary developments through awards programs, like the county’s Montgomery Awards. Recent awards have gone to projects such as Bridgeport’s Zero Energy Ready Homes, Station Row at Station Square in Lower Merion, Lions Gate at Penn State Abington and the new SEPTA garage in Lansdale.



New infill housing can match the character of existing neighborhoods.



Adaptive reuse of vacant buildings improves neighborhoods.

Measuring success

- Percent of new development occurring as infill

SUSTAINABLE PLACES

...organize and support emergency services by enhancing 911 communication, upgrading response systems, continuing strong training, and coordinating efforts

A key part of protecting communities and neighborhoods is making sure they are safe. The county, through its Department of Public Safety, operates the 9-1-1 system; coordinates public safety services among police, fire, and emergency medical responders; and provides public safety training.

A primary county goal is to upgrade the current emergency dispatch system, and the county has allocated \$29.9 million for this purpose. This will involve the installation of new equipment, on both new and existing towers.

Another goal is continued cooperation for emergency responders, and the county role in coordinating multi-jurisdictional emergency responses is expected to increase.

The county began work on an update to its Hazard Mitigation Plan, which was written in 2017. This plan identifies potential natural and man-made risks and includes four focus areas:

Understanding Potential Disasters—to better understand potential disasters, the county will improve information about past disasters, improve its mapping capabilities, and develop analytical capacity to better predict disaster impacts.

Improving Public Awareness of Potential Hazards—the county will improve education programming, ensure hazard warnings are clear and timely, and engage the public in hazard training.

Reduce the Negative Impact of Hazard Events—to reduce possible loss of life, injuries, economic costs, and destruction of natural and cultural resources, the county will advocate for hazard resilient infrastructure and buildings, minimize exposure of sensitive populations and facilities to hazards, and discourage development in high hazard areas.

Minimize the Impact of Floods—the county will advocate that development be prohibited in floodplains except for redevelopment areas; encourage use of effective stormwater management techniques; encourage removal of impediments to stormwater drainage; preserve floodplains as open space; and coordinate flood hazard responses.

Measuring success

- Reduced response times
- Increase in shared/consolidated services of organizations



Flooding, as seen here in Conshohocken, is the county's primary natural hazard.

...work with conservation groups, municipalities, historic preservation organizations, developers, and others to preserve important historic properties

Montgomery County owns four historic properties and, through its Assets and Infrastructure Department, will work to continue preserving historic landscapes around these properties while connecting them to the broader community with trails and sidewalks.

Local municipalities can help preserve historic properties by:

- Conducting historic resource surveys.
- Creating historic districts under the Pennsylvania Historic District Act.
- Adopting historic preservation ordinances that provide use and other bonuses for preserving historic properties.
- Adopting town center, village commercial, and traditional neighborhood design zoning ordinances that match zoning standards with the existing historic character.
- Enforcing building, fire, and safety codes in older buildings to avoid loss of historic properties through fire and neglect.
- Working with developers during the land development process to preserve historic building on properties.
- Promoting historic properties through tours and special events.

...cooperate with local municipalities, Tree Vitalize, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and others to reinvigorate the tree canopy in communities

The county’s urban tree canopy can be rejuvenated by:

- Properly maintaining existing trees with guidance from local shade tree commissions.
- Focusing planting of new trees in priority areas, including riparian corridors, stormwater control areas, parks, and streets. Trees should be planted away from overhead utility lines, and existing trees near these lines should be trimmed in a way that keeps the tree viable.
- Adopting local landscaping ordinances that require replacement of trees that are removed.
- Improving the viability of trees by reducing impervious coverage, providing adequate root growth areas, and planting appropriate trees for the specific conditions.
- Conducting surveys of current tree resources.



This historic home in Ambler has been reused as an architect's office.

Measuring success

- Increase in municipalities completing historic resource inventories
- More municipalities adopting historic preservation ordinances
- Additional properties eligible for or listed on the National Register



Trees improve air quality, improve water quality, save energy, improve health, increase property values, and increase worker productivity.

Measuring success

- More municipalities adopting tree replacement, planting, and maintenance ordinances
- Increase in tree canopy over time