

ACTION PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Introduction

In order for Hereford-Washington to achieve the vision of continued rural character, growth and development in targeted locations, and a balanced, small scale economy for its residents, a number of policy changes must occur. These changes are outlined in the following action plans. Each action plan corresponds to specific municipal policy topics and planning activities (e.g. land use, transportation, housing, etc.).

These action plans provide a functional approach for achieving the community vision. However, many of the action items are interrelated and coordination among these will produce the most efficient results.

A capital improvements program (CIP) has been developed to outline the order and timing of physical improvements, as well as policy changes. The CIP will provide the Supervisors with immediate guidance for decision-making in Hereford-Washington.



Action Plans

Action Plans answer the question “How can we change what we do today in order to become the community we want to be?” The Action Plans build on the goals developed earlier in the planning process to identify objectives and recommend policies for decision making and tasks for making change. There are six Action Plans (and the Future Land Use Map) that each address a particular component of community planning. In these Action Plans, the goals for each planning category are followed by policy statements (objectives) and action strategies for the Townships to implement, jointly or in coordination, as well as other resources to assist in making the recommended changes.

Land Use Action Plan and Future Land Use Designations

The Land Use Action Plan and Future Land Use Map work together to concentrate new development within existing service areas and work with other Action Plans to promote neighborhood connectivity, employment and recreation opportunities, and resource conservation. The intent is to respond to the community’s preference for rural township landscapes with small town neighbors. This is achieved by

- focusing potential development around the boroughs and villages in both Townships, essentially expanding these towns and their development patterns and densities,
- filling in pockets of undeveloped land within utility service areas, and
- limiting sprawl in the rural landscape.

GOAL: To guide development to areas with available infrastructure and reduce development pressure on the rural landscape.

OBJECTIVES:

- Guide growth and development to areas along the SR 100 corridor, particularly those areas where the infrastructure exists to support proposed development.
- Require/Encourage new development to conserve rural character.
- Encourage re-use/re-development of existing developed sites, especially in desired growth areas.

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

- Coordinate land development with transportation planning and improvements.
- Reduce the potential for suburban sprawl and rural sprawl.
- Protect open spaces that are key to local character and heritage.
- Continue to enforce zoning codes.

Strategic Actions - How to Accomplish Objectives

1. Regularly review zoning and subdivision and land development regulations with enforcement staff to identify problematic codes. Address enforcement issues with public education regarding the code and/or revise the code, as appropriate.
2. Develop guidelines for new building construction based on historic architectural patterns and materials.

Future Land Use Map

The Land Use Action Plan and Maps (found in the Future Land Use Analysis: Chapter 11) promote additional residential capacity in Low Density Residential, High Density Residential, and Mixed Use areas. The Land Use Action Plan and Map also expand areas designated for commercial services, both within Mixed Use areas and in separate Commercial areas. Finally, the Land Use Action Plan and Map designate areas for resource conservation (agricultural soils, woodlands, water quality protection) and for very low density residential development.

The following Future Land Use categories, as defined below, are used on the Hereford-Washington Townships' Joint Future Land Use Map. These recommendations would best be implemented by a joint zoning ordinance and coordinated subdivision and land development ordinance(s). Each category's purpose or uses would be addressed by the zoning ordinance, while the lot size and site improvements would be regulated through the subdivision and land development ordinance(s).

Future land use densities as shown may require public utilities, specifically for Planned Residential Development and village areas. Hereford Township will need to evaluate the need for public water and sewer in these areas through the development of an Act 537 Sewages Facilities plan and water studies. Washington Township will need to guide the extension of public water throughout its High Density Residential, Industrial and Commercial areas. Where these utilities are established or extended by an agency other than the Township, the Township should support system expansion that is consistent with the Future Land Use Map, i.e. within the areas shown for intensive development.

Low Density Residential

Primary Purpose: to accommodate residential uses, and associated facilities, in suburban-style patterns and densities

Application: lots would range in size from 43,560 sf – 217,800 sf.

High Density Residential

Primary Purpose: to accommodate residential uses, and associated facilities. Permitted unit types would include detached-single family, semi-detached, row homes/duplex, townhouse, apartments, and mobile homes within parks.

Application: Dwellings would be built at densities that exceed one unit per acre; public water and sewer service would be required; streets and sidewalks would be encouraged to interconnect with the existing roadway network to a reasonable extent; street trees would be required.

Mixed Use

Primary Purpose: to accommodate residential, small-scale commercial uses, and other compatible uses in patterns and densities typical of rural villages

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

Application: lot sizes would range from 10,000 sf to 20,000 sf, maximum lot width would be 90 ft; non-residential building size provisions could manage building scale; public water and sewer would be required; shared parking would be encouraged or required; street trees, sidewalks (or other hard surface paths) and street lighting would be encouraged.

Agriculture

Primary Purpose: to accommodate agricultural uses and directly-related residential and commercial uses.

Application: Lot sizes would be multi-acre and determined by large lot, fixed area, sliding scale or other effective agricultural zoning techniques; public water and sewer extension into agricultural/open space districts would be discouraged, except to address public health and welfare issues; agricultural/open space preservation easements would be encouraged.

Rural Conservation

Primary Purpose: to conserve woodlands, prime agricultural soils, and open space for the protection of water quality, wildlife habitat, and rural character, while allowing for some single-family residential and in-home business development. Development should be subject to flexible siting standards, conservation design standards, and disturbance limitations designed to avoid the most critical environmental constraints.

Application: lot size minimums would be 3-5 acres; development would be permitted only in areas free of prime agricultural soils and other specific conservation features (existing vegetation, topography, etc.) as defined by Hereford-Washington; cluster techniques would be encouraged to retain the overall development density, with possible density bonuses; estate lots (10+ acres) could be permitted. Ultimately the density of development depends on the environmental constraints present.

Commercial

Primary Purpose: to accommodate commercial sales and service uses in proximity to existing roadway and utility infrastructure.

Application: no specific minimum lot size is recommended, though building size provisions could manage building scale; public water and sewer would be required; shared access and parking would be encouraged or required; access from streets other than SR 100 would be encouraged; street trees, sidewalks, and street lighting would be encouraged, based on site context.

Industrial

Primary Purpose: to accommodate manufacturing and other industrial uses in proximity to existing roadway and utility infrastructure.

Application: minimum lot size would be 2 acres; building size provisions could manage building scale; public water and sewer would be required; shared parking would be encouraged or required; street trees, sidewalks, and street lighting would be encouraged, based on site context.

Recreation

Primary Purpose: to provide space and facilities for people to engage in active and passive recreation activities.

Application: continue to provide recreational opportunities for the residents of the Townships. Locating recreational opportunities in the most appropriate locations maintains their usefulness and they are much less likely to fall into disrepair and be obsolete.

Conforming and non-conforming uses will need to be defined during any future zoning ordinance update(s). The locations of existing agricultural uses should be carefully considered at that time. Agricultural uses can be permitted by right in more intensively developed districts, and need not be restricted exclusively to the “agricultural district.”

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

This Future Land Use Plan can guide the immediate and short term future of the Townships. The rate of development over the next few years will be one factor in determining how long the plan can truly be effective. The comprehensive plan should be reviewed in five years with particular attention given to land use, namely the location, intensity (density), timing, and character of development since the plan's adoption.

Land Uses of Regional Impact

Uses of regional impact in the Hereford-Washington Planning Area are agriculture and open space. As stated in Chapter 2, Hereford-Washington has been and remains predominantly rural. Nearly 70 percent of the total land in the planning area lands is used for agricultural and open space. These uses are integral to the community's quality and character and should not be sacrificed simply to accommodate growth pressures. These uses promote groundwater infiltration, clean air and water when properly managed, and passive outdoor recreation. They create minimal demands on the traffic system and community services.

Housing Plan

The Housing Action Plan emphasizes increased housing alternatives in Hereford-Washington for residents of all ages, income levels, and household types. The existing housing stock is primarily comprised of single-family homes, which are the preferred housing unit type and appropriate to rural communities. However, portions of Hereford-Washington are developing in urban and suburban patterns, and therefore housing options appropriate to these environments are needed. While single-family homes may continue to be the predominant new housing type, new development should expand housing options by permitting and enabling more than one housing size, type, and cost in a given subdivision. Such integration of housing sizes, types, and costs is particularly encouraged in the Traditional Neighborhood areas, which would include planned residential developments (PRD) and/or traditional neighborhood developments (TND).

GOAL: To provide housing options for residents of all ages and income levels.

OBJECTIVES:

- Continue to support the development of single-family housing units.
- Increase housing options for seniors (type, size, value, etc.).
- Increase housing options for singles and small families (type, size, value, etc.).
- Reduce the potential for a significant increase in mobile home development.
- Continue to enforce building codes.

Strategic Actions - How to Accomplish Objectives

1. Consideration should be given regarding the pursuit of a joint zoning ordinance between the Townships to centralize the impacts of potential future mobile home development. This is one approach to addressing the desire for minimal additional mobile home park development. In addition, continual code enforcement of mobile home properties is critical to maintaining a positive community perception of mobile home neighborhoods. Any consideration to revise zoning should include research on existing housing unit types and their patterns in rural and small town communities like the Hereford/Washington region.

Economic Action Plan

The Economic Action Plan focuses efforts on the vitality of the existing small business and agribusiness communities, as well as other resource based economic sectors. Rather than trying to import large business and industry operations, which could dramatically impact transportation demand, Hereford-Washington should capitalize on the growth of its current businesses and supplement this with additional commercial services to serve the growing population. The Economic Action Plan recommends that Hereford-Washington work with local

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

and regional economic development organizations to draw corporate interest and employment opportunities to the region, though not necessarily to these townships.

GOAL: To provide local employment, goods and services for residents and to supplement municipal revenue.

OBJECTIVES:

- Retain the existing small business community.
- Support the continued participation of the agricultural community in the local economy.
- Determine the level of community support for agricultural preservation.
- Promote sustainable forestry.
- Promote the development of natural resource and tourism-based small businesses in the Townships.
- Support expansion of office and light industrial sectors in Eastern Berks County.

Strategic Actions - How to Accomplish Objectives

1. Continue/establish regular dialogue with the small business community, regarding local challenges to business operations and expansion.
2. Identify key persons/organizations that can provide insight on business trends and offer advice on business planning in small, growing communities.
3. Work with the County to assist in finding capital for small business expansion.
4. Encourage development and expansion of business that promote the unique heritage of the Hereford/Washington community.
5. Encourage rehabilitation rather than demolition of historic buildings and properties for commercial uses.
6. Encourage locally owned and operated retail services where appropriate.
7. Continue on-going dialogue with the agricultural community regarding local challenges to farming operations and to the future of farming in the community. Focus attention on farming after current farmers retire – in terms of 10, 20, and 30 year timeframes.
8. Provide new residents with information on agriculture in the Townships and how farming activities could potentially impact residential properties.
9. Continuously review ordinance regulations to ensure that farmers have flexibility in the types of agricultural operations and farm related income.
10. Work with the County to assist in finding capital for agricultural expansion/diversification and preservation
11. Consider the development of a joint farmer’s market to sell and promote local agricultural products.

Transportation Plan

The Transportation Action Plan focuses on improvements to and access management of the SR 100 corridor, funding for transportation improvements from private and public sources and improved connectivity in the rural community for non-motorists.

GOAL: To provide an efficient, well-maintained transportation network to ensure the safe mobility of all users.

OBJECTIVES:

- Facilitate safe, efficient travel movement along SR 100 as well as other important routes throughout the area.
- Provide transportation alternatives within the Townships and connections to regional transportation alternatives.

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

- Continue to improve local roadways.
- Coordinate land use planning and economic development with transportation.

Strategic Actions - How to Accomplish Objectives

1. Establish a traffic impact fee program in Hereford Township to fund future transportation improvements and for greater consistency in public policy with Washington Township.
2. Utilize impact fees to fund roadway and intersection improvements.
3. Communicate regularly with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS), to prioritize SR 100 as a candidate for future corridor studies.
4. Consider developing bicycle/pedestrian trail(s) for non-motorists and increased recreational opportunities.
5. Work with BARTA/SCTA on exploring service options or need in the community with regards to mass transit availability.

Community Facilities, Services, and Utilities Plan

The Community Facilities and Services Action Plan focuses on effective public safety services and utilities, and expanding recreational and educational opportunities. As the population of Hereford-Washington grows, service areas and quality will need to be monitored and evaluated in conjunction with land use planning that enables such growth. Facility, service, and utility upgrades will come at a cost to all residents and should be carefully considered.

Hereford-Washington may want to look beyond their borders for cost-effective means of providing high quality community facilities, services, and utilities to residents. Many regional partnerships exist in Pennsylvania to provide recreation, public safety, and utilities services, as well as other local government services, e.g. code administration and enforcement, that exceed what each municipality could provide independently. These partnerships can take many forms, such as informal arrangements or formal intergovernmental agreements. These forms of cooperation maintain the municipalities' autonomy in working toward common goals. Where goals for local government are shared more broadly, municipal mergers or consolidation may be considered.

GOAL: To provide services, facilities, and utility networks that ensure an enriched quality of life to meet the needs of a growing population.

OBJECTIVES:

- Ensure efficient, effective safety services in the planning area.
- Maintain efficient, effective utility services.
- Expand upon existing recreation resources, both public and private, to create a comprehensive recreation network.
- Continue support for public access to the Hereford Elementary School Library and the Bookmobile. Continually assess the need for local public library facilities.

Strategic Actions - How to Accomplish Objectives

1. Periodically evaluate response times of emergency service providers and overall quality of services provided.
2. Consider regional police services, if state police services are determined to be inadequate. Work with adjacent municipalities in Eastern Berks County to explore regional police service options.
3. Continue to support volunteerism and community support of the local fire companies.
4. Evaluate the need for paid staff or regional fire protection services, if local volunteer services are

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

determined to be inadequate. Work with adjacent municipalities in Eastern Berks County to explore options for fire protection services.

5. Continue to explore preparation of an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan for Hereford Township.
6. Consider consolidation of various water suppliers, where quality of service, and administrative and cost efficiency can be improved.
7. Encourage water suppliers to develop wellhead protection areas. Direct water suppliers to program information available from DEP. Coordinate the development of well head protection areas with land use planning.
8. Coordinate land use planning to maximize existing utility capacity.
9. Regulate the development of further cellular/telecommunications infrastructure.
10. Consider developing a bicycle-pedestrian network to interconnect existing recreational sites and neighborhoods. Consider off-road and on-road (shoulder) routes.
11. Work with the Upper Perkiomen and Boyertown Area School Districts to establish and promote the use of the Hereford Elementary School and Washington Township Elementary School libraries for possible public access.

Natural and Cultural Resources Plan

The Natural and Cultural Resources Action Plan focuses on public and private efforts that preserve and conserve natural and cultural resources through regulations and incentives. Stream and woodland conservation are key to retaining the remaining rural character of the Township, as well as the water quality of the watershed. Finally, efforts to explore and celebrate local heritage should be supported to enhance Hereford-Washington's contemporary and historic identity.

GOAL: To protect and enhance open space and natural and cultural resources.

OBJECTIVES:

- Protect sensitive natural resources through regulations.
- Conserve woodlands and open fields.
- Encourage the use of conservation design principles in new development.
- Protect surface water features.
- Protect groundwater resources, coordinate with land use development and planning.
- Support historic resource conservation and preservation, as appropriate for each resource.

Strategic Actions - How to Accomplish Objectives

1. Continue to enforce steep slope regulations to limit soil erosion and protect stream quality.
2. Reference state permitting requirements for streams and wetlands as a pre-qualification for municipal building/zoning permits.
3. Support participation in forest conservation programs, such as the Forest Legacy Program (USDA). Educate land owners on the tools available for woodland and open field (meadow) conservation.
4. Encourage active forest management through forest stewardship planning.
5. Provide information on and encourage the creation of new woodland and natural meadows over traditional lawn and landscaping management practices typical of today's suburban developments.
6. Work with County and local environmental organizations on establishing forested riparian buffers along stream corridors for the movement of species and enhanced water quality.
7. Support the development of riparian corridors within new subdivisions for the movement of wildlife and encourage existing private land owners to establish forested riparian buffers on private lands.

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

8. Revise the subdivision and land development process to require a site inventory of natural and cultural resources, including in hedgerows, vegetative clusters, roadway viewsheds, historic features, etc., during sketch plan development. Exclude these areas from developable land.
9. Document local architectural patterns and materials usage. Provide documentation as preferred patterns for future development.
10. Encourage local organizations to pursue private sources for historical preservation.

Interrelationship of Plan Components

Each of the planning components of the Comprehensive Plan—Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, Community Facilities, Services, and Utilities, and Natural and Cultural Resources—has been developed with consideration of the interrelationships among them. Each Action Plan includes a number of strategies that implement the goals and objectives established for that particular planning component, and many of these strategies directly or indirectly support strategies in other interrelated Action Plans. Several examples are explained here.

The Land Use Action Plan clearly impacts other planning efforts. Land use decisions imply the need for vehicular access, utilities service, and natural resource protection, at a minimum. Future Land Use recommendations considered the relevant availability of infrastructure and sensitivity of resources in making these decisions. Locating the majority of developed uses along the SR 100 corridor will minimize development impacts on natural and cultural resources located in the Rural Conservation area. Concentrating development within existing service areas or in proximity to them will result in greater efficiency of water and sewer service systems.

The Land Use Plan complements the Housing Action Plan, as it recommends a variety of lots sizes (to be implemented through subdivision and land development regulations) that would encourage a greater variety of housing sizes, types, and values.

The Economic Development Action Plan works with the Land Use Action Plan to encourage the continued presence of the agricultural industry. The Economic Development Plan strives to understand how the industry functions and can continue to function in the Planning Area, in ways that maximize agricultural viability and minimize land use conflict. The Economic Development Plan also supports the existence and growth of small, locally owned businesses, primarily within areas served by existing infrastructure.

The Transportation Action Plan supplements the Land Use Plan and the Economic Development Plan by focusing investment in the SR 100 corridor, particularly in already developed areas where improvements would benefit the greatest proportion of residents and thru-travelers.

Community Facilities, Services and Utilities Action Plan recommends coordination of utility expansion with land use planning to provide public utilities only in areas where development densities can help to support the cost of these services.

The Natural and Cultural Resources Plan aims to protect these resources from development that would render them unusable in the future. The Plan recommends protection of prime agricultural soils in order to enable continued and future farming activities—be it at a large or small scale. The Plan's emphasis on woodland conservation promotes groundwater recharge and filtration that will help to maintain high-quality public water supply as well as stream quality for wildlife.

Each Action Plan could be implemented independently. However, the Action Plans are purposefully interrelated to create the greatest benefit for the Township communities. A coordinated implementation effort will be needed to achieve the vision and goals established by and for the Planning Area in this Comprehensive Plan—to support appropriate new development, provide services and infrastructure, as needed, and protect sensitive resources.

Plan Compatibility with Adjacent Municipalities

Extensive effort was made to ensure that the Hereford-Washington Joint Comprehensive Plan is compatible with adjacent municipal and County planning.

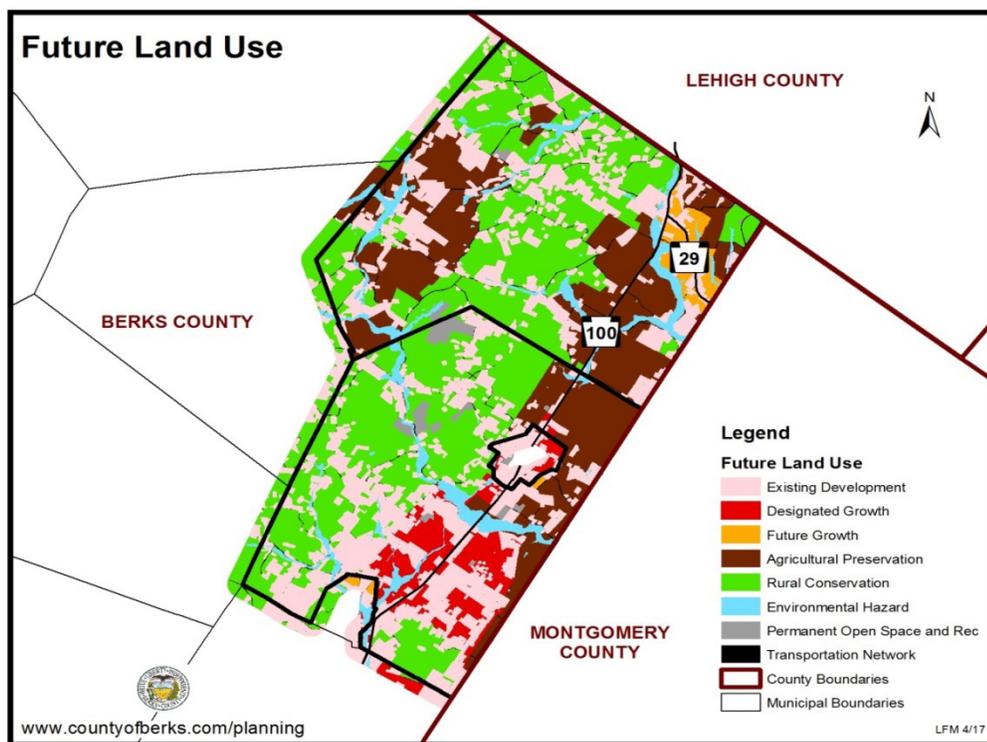
BERKS COUNTY

Berks County Comprehensive Plan 2030

Berks County Comprehensive Plan 2030, as the name implies, is the County's Comprehensive Plan. The plan aims to take advantage of economic activity moving into Berks county along its growth corridors, i.e. Route 422, I-78, and I-83/Route 222; to protect its agricultural land and open spaces; and to guide new development to create higher density, more intimate living environments in the boroughs and townships across the county. The Plan puts forth Smart Growth principles as the means to achieve these and other goals.

This Joint Comprehensive Plan for Hereford and Washington Townships is generally consistent with the vision and policies of Berks County Comprehensive Plan 2030, as characterized in the following examples:

- Like the County Plan, the Joint Plan supports the continuation of the agribusiness system and agricultural community through land use, economic and natural and cultural policies. Land use planning along the Montgomery County border, where agricultural preservation interest and efforts are prominent, is critical to consistency with Berks County and regional planning efforts.
- The Joint Plan directs and concentrates growth and investment in areas immediately surrounding existing developed areas, and more specifically to areas with sewer (expansion) capacity. Such areas are suitable for mixed- use development that helps to create a sense of place or community. The Plan also supports the use of innovative subdivision and development techniques for limited development in rural areas. These locations generally correspond with development/growth and conservation areas as portrayed on the County's Future Land Use Map.



- The Joint Plan recognizes the need to coordinate land use planning with transportation planning in order

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

to develop a network of travel routes and to manage access, safety, and mobility.

- The Joint Plan acknowledges the need to protect surface and ground water resources from pollutants through sound land use planning and riparian buffers, as does the County Plan.
- The Joint Plan recognizes the economic and cultural value of historic sites and features to the Townships. The County Plan references both preservation and patterning as means to retain such value.

Bally-Bechtelsville Planning Area

The Bally-Bechtelsville Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1994 and followed by an adopted Joint Zoning Ordinance and Map. Due to the fact that Washington Township surrounds Bally and nearly encircles Bechtelsville, nearly all land uses in the Bally-Bechtelsville Planning Area abut Washington Township in some location. Bally's future land use pattern is a linear one, focused on the Main Street town center/medium residential/general commercial corridor. Bechtelsville's future land use pattern is also linear in nature, based on the parallel routes of Main Street and the abandoned railroad.

Future land uses in Washington Township abut Bally-Bechtelsville in the following patterns:

- Agricultural– abutting Bally's low density residential area
- Commercial – abutting low density residential and mixed use in Bally on the north end of the SR 100 corridor. Abutting medium density residential in Bechtelsville at the southern end of the Township.
- Low Density Residential – abutting rural conservation in Bechtelsville
- Rural Conservation – abutting low density and high density residential in Bally
- Industrial – abutting industrial areas of Bally and abutting low density residential and industrial in Bechtelsville

Due to the fact that Bally and Bechtelsville represent the two historic community centers in the general Hereford-Washington Planning Area, the borders with these two communities are more complex and more readily defined than the shared borders with other municipalities.

Eastern Berks Planning Area

The Eastern Berks Comprehensive Plan is a regional plan prepared for District and Rockland Townships, and the Borough of Topton. This planning area lies west of the Hereford-Washington Planning Area. This Plan aggressively promotes growth control by focusing all future development toward the Borough of Topton. Future land uses along the shared borders are conservation related uses. Plan recommendations suggest very low density residential development. Future land use in Hereford-Washington for this area is shown as Rural Conservation, which allow for limited residential development.

The Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike Planning Area

A joint comprehensive plan was adopted in the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike Planning Area in 2005. This Planning Area is located south west of Hereford-Washington, but only Colebrookdale and Pike Townships lie adjacent to Washington Township. Development in Colebrookdale Township is generally characterized as medium density residential toward the east and low density residential toward the west. Geographically corresponding future land uses in Washington Township are Low Density Residential and Rural Conservation. Pike Township is woodland conservation along the border it shares with Washington Township, which complements the Rural Conservation category illustrated for Washington Township.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Pottstown Metropolitan Joint Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

The Pottstown Metropolitan Joint Comprehensive Plan provides planning guidance for Pottstown Borough, Douglass, Lower Pottsgrove, Upper Pottsgrove, West Pottsgrove and New Hanover Townships in Montgomery County and North Coventry and East Coventry Townships, Chester County. The plan was adopted in 2003 and updated in 2015. Of these municipalities, only Douglass Township adjoins Washington Township. This planning area focuses future development toward the urban center of Pottstown and various community centers, such as Gilbertsville. The planning area has the expressed support of the Pottstown Area School District in limiting growth and its impacts on community services, such as public education; however it recognizes that public sewer service is available along Hoffmansville Road and provides a localized incentive for growth.

Generally the western border of Douglass Township is a conservation area. This area has scattered preserved agricultural parcels, with numerous additional applicants awaiting approval.

The Upper Perkiomen Valley Planning Area

The Upper Perkiomen Valley Planning Area is comprised of Upper Hanover and Marlborough Townships and the Boroughs of East Greenville, Green Lane, Red Hill and Pennsburg. A joint comprehensive plan was adopted by the municipalities in 2001 and updated in 2011. Of these municipalities, only Upper Hanover Township adjoins the Hereford-Washington Planning Area. As a result of continued viable farming activity, the majority of Upper Hanover Township is zoned farmland conservation. Future land uses in adjoining Hereford Township include Agricultural/Open Space, Industrial, Solid Waste Management (deed restricted) and Village uses. The Agricultural/Open Space use is a wise complement to zoning in Upper Hanover Township. Industrial and Solid Waste Management uses are a continuation of existing zoning in Hereford Township, although the Industrial area was extended northward to improve access to SR 29. The Village use abuts similar development in the village of Chapel as it extends across the County line.

LEHIGH COUNTY

Southwestern Lehigh Joint Comprehensive Plan

The Southwestern Lehigh Joint Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Lower Macungie, Lower Milford and Upper Milford Townships and Alburtis, Emmaus and Macungie Boroughs in 2005. All three townships abut Hereford Township's northern border, with Upper Milford occupying the majority of this edge. Generally the Southwestern Lehigh Joint Comprehensive Plan recommends conservation areas in this area. Topography and lack of utilities naturally discourage intensive development, and some parcels have been permanently preserved from development. Implementation of the Southwestern Lehigh Plan could result in 2-3-acre zoning in Lower Macungie Township and 2-acres zoning with clustering options in Upper and Lower Milford Townships.

Future land uses in Hereford Township include Rural Conservation, and Agriculture, which are compatible with the conservation and low density development expected to result from the Southwestern Lehigh Joint Comprehensive Plan and its implementation.

Currently an update to the Southwest Lehigh Joint Comprehensive Plan is taking place. From initial review of the land uses along the border with Hereford Township this plan will remain consistent with the objectives outlined in this document.

Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Review

Hereford Township - Zoning Ordinance

Hereford Township adopted its original Zoning Ordinance in 1973. It has since been amended multiple times throughout the years. The Zoning Ordinance follows a conventional organization. Twenty articles address definitions, zoning districts, regulations, provisions for special exceptions, non-conformities, natural resource conservation and administration and enforcement, as well as subsequent amendments. In addition to regulations

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

addressing uses and performance and operational standards, the Ordinance also includes standards for parking and signage.

Article I – Title, Application, and Purpose

This article places the document in the context of public policy. It presents the community development objectives from Hereford Township’s Comprehensive Plan and outlines the authority to develop and enforce zoning regulations, as given by the Municipalities Planning Code.

Recommendation: None

Articles II and III – Definitions; and Zoning Districts and Zoning Map

Article II provides definitions for terms used repeatedly throughout the Ordinance. Article III identifies the zoning districts and overlay districts by name and provides clarification on how the district boundaries as shown on the zoning map relate to the physical landscape. There are seven zoning districts and two independent overlay districts designated in the Ordinance. These districts effectively result in one agricultural preservation district, two residential districts, one mixed-use district, one industrial district, one private airport district (Article XII) and one solid waste management district. The overlay districts provide for environmental protection for floodplains, wetlands, alluvial soils, and lands with a high water table or steep slopes and mobile home parks.

Recommendations: Article III may need minor revisions to implement the future land use plan and map, as presented in this comprehensive plan.

Articles IV-XIV – Zoning Districts

These articles individually define each district’s purpose, permitted uses, uses by special exception, and lot standards, e.g. size, setbacks, and coverages. The articles contain a number of development options, such as lot averaging and lot clustering.

Recommendations: None

Article XV and XVI – Administration and Enforcement; and Zoning Hearing Board

These articles address the implementation of the Ordinance.

Recommendation: None

Article XIX – Supplementary Regulations

Article XIII addresses additional regulations that are specific to individual and all uses, including landscaping and parking, signage, slope limitations, woodland conservation, barn conversions, and farms stands, as well as provisions for the overlay districts.

Recommendations: Parking requirements, i.e. number of spaces required, options for shared parking (particularly in the desired growth areas), and size of parking, should be reviewed in terms reducing the quantity of stormwater generated from these impervious surfaces.

Article XX – Non-conforming Lots, Uses, Structures, and Buildings

This article addresses how existing development that does not conform to the adopted Ordinance is to be regulated.

Recommendations: None

Hereford Township – Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

Hereford Township’s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance was adopted in 1970 and was most recently amended in 1998. The Ordinance currently includes eight articles regulating conventional subdivision and land development concerns and includes a table of contents for ease of use.

General Recommendations

The Ordinance is slightly dated in its use of state agency titles that have been renamed and/or reorganized since the Ordinance was adopted. In addition, several state agencies publish design, construction and performance standards intended to improve the quality of community development under state-funded projects. These publications can also serve as standards for private development, when referenced as specific or minimum standards. The Township should consider the application of these standards and, if appropriate, reference them by current title and publication number.

The Ordinance would be greatly enhanced by the addition of typical drawings to illustrate design standards.

In some ordinances, municipalities provide application or processing forms (e.g. submission checklist) to facilitate the submission process. The Township may want to consider such an addition to the Ordinance.

Article I – Title, Short Title and Purpose

This article simply outlines the purpose of the Ordinance and relates it purpose to community development objectives “to protect, promote and create conditions favorable to the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens” of Hereford Township.

Recommendation: None

Articles II and III– Submission and Review Procedures; and Plan Requirements

These articles outline the submission, review, and approval procedures for subdivision and land development plans, as well as the required information for each stage of the process. The article also outlines procedures and requirements for developer performance.

Recommendation: Portions of this article have been rescinded, and should be removed from the text. The Township may want to specify what individual or body will address comments received from the County Planning Commission and/or PENNDOT. As recommended in the Future Land Use Action Plan, the Township should consider a pre-submission site visit requirement or option so that all plan reviewers can view the site (its location, adjacent properties, topography), see its natural and cultural features firsthand (vegetation, waterways), and express personal knowledge of site history that could enhance the site design.

Articles IV and V – Design Standards; and Improvement Specifications

These articles address the need to provide design and construction standards for streets and infrastructure, such as public use areas, public utilities and stormwater. The article contains access management guidance for collector roads, which supports the development of a more developed travel network. At the same time, the article currently seems to discourage thru-traffic movements in new development.

Recommendations: Guidance for streets and roads should be reviewed and revised to promote a connected travel network throughout designated development areas. Traffic calming components and pedestrian facilities should accompany this more intensively developed network. State and federal roadway design and construction standards could be referenced here. Recreational facilities standards should be evaluated and revised, as needed, with regards to current recreational trends.

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

Articles VI – Definitions

This article provides definitions for terms used repeatedly throughout the document. Typically, this section is placed earlier in the document—immediately following the title and purpose—to make the user aware of commonly used and specifically defined terms.

Recommendations: Article VI should be updated and expanded, as needed, to define terms used throughout the Ordinance. This would include definitions added in subsequent amendments. Definitions in this article should be reviewed with other definitions throughout the Township regulations for consistency.

Articles VII – Administration, Amendment, and Severability

This article authorizes the implementation, modification, and interpretation of the Ordinance.

Recommendation: None

Article VIII – Flood Hazard Area

This article specifies that certain areas of the Township have been established as flood hazard areas in the Township’s zoning ordinance and directs the user to particular maps that illustrate these areas.

Recommendation: The text of this very brief article could be incorporated into the design standards portion of the Ordinance.

Washington Township – Zoning Ordinance

Washington Township’s Zoning Ordinance is recorded as Chapter 131 of the Code of Washington Township. The Zoning Ordinance was originally adopted in 1982 and amended in its entirety in 1993. Subsequent amendments have been adopted since 1993.

The Zoning Ordinance follows a conventional organization. Twenty-four articles address definitions, zoning districts, regulations, provisions for special exceptions and non-conformities, and administration and enforcement, as well as subsequent amendments. In addition to regulations addressing uses and performance and operational standards, the Ordinance also includes standards for parking and signage.

The Ordinance is a bound chapter separate from other chapters of the Washington Township Code. Other chapters that are relevant to the Zoning Ordinance are listed under general references in the front of the document.

General Recommendations

The Ordinance should be periodically reviewed to ensure compliance with the current Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PA MPC).

Article I – General Provisions

This article places the document in the context of public policy. It presents the community development objectives from Washington Township’s Comprehensive Plan and outlines the authority to develop and enforce zoning regulations, as given by the Municipalities Planning Code.

Recommendation: Update the community development objectives with the goals and objectives of this comprehensive plan. Update the references to zoning authority with relevant changes to the MPC, e.g. enabling multi-municipal land use planning.

Articles II and III – Definitions, and Designation and Boundaries of Zoning Districts

Article II provides definitions for terms used repeatedly throughout the document. Article III simply identifies the zoning districts and overlay districts by name and provides clarification on how the district boundaries as shown on the zoning map relate to the physical landscape. There are nine zoning districts and two independent overlay districts designated in the Ordinance. These districts effectively result in one agricultural district, three residential districts, one mixed-use district, one commercial district, two industrial districts, and one extractive industry district. The overlay districts address properties in the vicinity of the floodplain and nearby Butter Valley Golf Port (airport). One additional overlay, the mobile home park overlay, is tied directly to the high density residential and village district.

Recommendations: Article II should be updated and expanded, as needed, to define terms used throughout the Ordinance. This would include definitions added in subsequent amendments. Definitions in this article should be with other definitions throughout the Code of Washington Township reviewed for consistency. Article III will need revisions to implement the future land use plan and map.

Article IV- XIV – Zoning Districts

These articles individually define each district's purpose, permitted uses, uses by special exception, and lot standards, e.g. size, setbacks, and coverages. The articles contain a number of conservation options and incentives.

Recommendations: Amendments to the MPC made in 2000 now require that forestry activities and group homes be permitted in all zoning districts. The Ordinance should be revised to fulfill this new requirement. Based upon the regulations for the watershed conservation district and the rural residential district, these two districts could be merged for stronger public policy in support of a distinct town and country landscape, as is preferred by planning area residents. Minimum lot sizes across the districts should be reviewed and revised to foster a small-scale, interconnected pattern of development in desired development areas and a dispersed pattern in desired conservation areas (the country). Expansion and interconnection of the road network should be encouraged to provide route alternatives to SR 100 for local trips.

Article XV – Supplementary Regulations

Article XV addresses additional regulations that are specific to individual and all uses, including access, barn conversion, parking, and signage. The barn conversion provisions support residents' desire to promote conservation of historic structures and building styles.

Recommendations: Where this article addresses vehicular access, indeed access to SR 100 needs to be proactively managed. Mobility in adjacent areas should be encouraged to disperse local traffic. Following recommendations of the future land use plan and map, townhomes should be more widely permitted in high density residential and mixed use districts. Parking requirements, i.e. number of spaces required, options for shared parking, and size of parking, should be reviewed in terms reducing the quantity of stormwater generated from these impervious surfaces.

Article XVI – Transfer of Development Rights

This article has been repealed.

Recommendation: Remove references to the TDR provision throughout the Ordinance.

Article XVII – Nonconforming Lots, Uses, Structures, and Buildings

This article addresses how existing development that does not conform to the adopted Ordinance is to be regulated.

Recommendations: None

Articles XVII, XVIII, and XIX – Administration and Enforcement; Zoning Hearing Board; and Appeals, Remedies, and Penalties

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

These articles address the implementation of the Ordinance.

Recommendation: None

Article XX – Environmental Performance Standards

This article is intended to protect the Township’s natural features from direct and indirect development impacts.

Recommendation: These standards should be incorporated into the supplementary regulations of Article XV.

Article XXI – Communications Antennas, Communications Equipment Buildings, and Communications Towers

These provisions specifically address the establishment of communications infrastructure.

Recommendation: These standards should be incorporated into the supplementary regulations of Article XV.

Washington Township – Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

Washington Township’s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance is recorded as Chapter 107 of the Code of Washington Township. The Ordinance was adopted in 2003 and currently includes eleven articles. This Ordinance follows a conventional organization and includes a table of contents for ease of use.

General Recommendations

The Ordinance is slightly dated in its use of state agency titles that have been renamed and/or reorganized since adoption. In addition, agency publications should be periodically checked for current title and publication number.

Article I – General Provisions

This article simply outlines the purpose of the Ordinance and requirement for conformance.

Recommendation: None

Article II - Definitions and Word Usage

This article provides definitions for terms used repeatedly throughout the document.

Recommendations: Article II should be updated and expanded, as needed, to define terms used throughout the Ordinance. This would include definitions added in subsequent amendments. Definitions in this article should be with other definitions throughout the Code of Washington Township reviewed for consistency.

Articles III and IV – Required Plans and Processing Procedure; and Information to be Shown on Subdivision and Land Development Plans

These articles outline the data requirements and submission, review, and approval procedure for subdivision and land development plans.

Recommendation: None

Articles V – Design Standards and Improvement Requirements

This article addresses the need to provide location and construction standards for buildings, roads, and infrastructure, such as recreation facilities, utilities and stormwater.

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

Recommendations: The general standards promote the preservation and/or conservation of natural and cultural features. Wherever possible, this text should be more specific and reference feature inventories. Recreational facilities standards should be evaluated and revised, as needed, with regards to current recreational trends. Guidance for streets and roads should be reviewed and revised to promote connectivity and throughout desired development areas. Alleys and on-street parking should be considered for future residential areas. Parking standards should be reviewed, as mentioned in the Zoning Ordinance review.

Articles VII and VIII – Preventative Remedies and Enforcement; and Adoption and Modification of Provisions and Appeals

These articles address the implementation of the Ordinance.

Recommendation: None

Article IX – Planning Commission

This article addresses the role of the Planning Commission in implementing of the Ordinance.

Recommendation: None

Capital Improvements Program

The tasks listed in the Action Plans need further prioritization for timely and effective programming. The Capital Improvements Program (see table) suggests a schedule for initiation and completion of the most significant action items.

First and foremost, the Townships should prepare and adopt an intergovernmental agreement to implement the comprehensive plan. An intergovernmental agreement is an ordinance that outlines how the municipalities will work together to implement and update the plan. It states the responsibilities of the municipalities to the planning partnership, namely what activities should be reviewed by the partner municipality and which activities should be collaborative in nature. The intergovernmental agreement also states the limits to authority and liability of the partnership. Berks County has prepared a model intergovernmental agreement for its planning partnerships to use.

The responsibility for initiating these items lies with the Boards of Supervisors as they delegate tasks, compile annual initiatives and approve annual budgets.

Chapter 4 - Action Planning and Implementation Strategies

Capital Improvements Program					
	2017/2018	2019/2020	2021/2022	2023/2024	2025/2026
Action to be Taken	Short-term		Mid-term		Long-term
Prepare a Joint (or coordinated) Zoning Ordinance and Map		X			
Revise Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances			X		
Develop an Act 537 Plan for Hereford Township		X			
Develop a Traffic Impact Fee Program for Hereford Township		X			
Develop a Joint or Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan		X			
Promote the need for RATS Study of the SR 100 corridor	X	X	X	X	X
Promote private natural resource protection	X	X	X	X	X
Preserve Open Space	X	X	X	X	X

Conclusion

This Comprehensive Plan update is the product of a careful planning process. The Townships' staff, committee members, and others are able to begin using the Plan immediately. They will be able to apply the Capital Improvements Program to their annual agenda. When the task is scheduled, they can refer to the action plans for tasks and resources. They can refer to Chapter 3 to review the vision they are trying to accomplish.

This Comprehensive Plan is rich in information and illustration to provide the Hereford-Washington region with sound guidance for its future. It is intended to be used regularly, for the Plan can only accomplish the vision when it is applied. Regular review of the plan will enable the Townships to continue proactive community planning without starting from scratch. Amending the plan is possible, too, if the vision or the direction of the community changes. Regardless, the Plan is an investment in the community's future.