

# 15

## Implementation

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Once the comprehensive plan is adopted, the real work of turning the plan into action begins. Lebanon County will need to establish both short and long term priorities from among the many worthwhile recommendations. These priorities will need to be advanced over several years for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, extensive human and financial resources will be needed to accomplish the goals of this plan – more resources than can feasibly be allocated within one fiscal year or even within a governing body’s term. Some recommendations will require further detailed study and planning, such as land use planning prior to the ordinance updates. Others will benefit from advance outreach and education; contemporary best practices and model ordinances may require an introduction and examples before local officials are ready to incorporate them into their regulations. Still other recommendations will need investments of time in terms of partnership building and program coordination to prepare for the action to occur successfully.



**MPC Requirement:** *A discussion of short- and long-range plan implementation strategies, which may include implications for capital improvements programming, new or updated development regulations, and identification of public funds potentially available.*

MPC Article III, Section 301(a)(4.2)

## *Capital Improvements Program*

A traditional capital improvements program contains the schedule and costs of the recommended bricks-and-mortar projects, usually over a five year period. Due to the broad range of community development issues raised through the planning process, the comprehensive plan emphasizes the need for a wider array of planning investments. These investments include physical infrastructure projects but also local land use and resource planning, regulatory revisions, and educational and outreach initiatives on environmental and energy conservation topics, among others. Therefore, Lebanon County’s capital improvements program addresses this inclusive and long term view of community development and resource conservation investment.



The programming of recommendations is detailed within the action plans and summarized below. Two year periods beginning in 2008-2009 are used to program the

recommendations over a ten year planning horizon, structuring recommendations sequentially where needed. The two year periods are intended to distribute the demand for staff and funding over the planning horizon. However, they are not intended to exclude opportunities that arise out of public interest, specialized funding streams, or other unforeseen catalysts to plan implementation. In fact, many recommendations are made in support of the ongoing activities of the county, its departments and existing partners.

The 2008-2009 period focuses on:

- Local land use, infrastructure and resource planning, including education on contemporary development techniques and best practices for conservation,
- Implementation of the hazard mitigation plan,
- Renewed dialogue with the agriculture and food products industry and the wood products industry on the economic development potential of these industries,
- Initiation of an agricultural sustainability strategy,
- Support mechanisms for small business and entrepreneurs and promotion of currently available workforce development tools,
- Expansion of tourism marketing,
- Detailed inventory of select resources, e.g. groundwater recharge areas, historic resources, and infrastructure, e.g. water and sewer systems and recycling centers,
- Promotion of walking and biking for recreation and daily travel,
- Building capacity (developing partnerships and adding staff) for economic development coordination and recreation and open space investment,
- Promotion of community and site design tools for energy efficiency,
- Initiation or expansion of programs and projects to mitigate stream impairments,
- Creation of an aggressive, comprehensive recreation and open space program with county leadership and municipal and school district partnerships, and
- Initiation of environmental mitigation programs, e.g. a wetlands banking program.



Recommendations in the 2010-2011 period emphasize:

- Regulatory updates consistent with county and local planning, including development of stormwater management, riparian buffer and wellhead protection provisions, and expanded public information on the status of planning,
- Countywide water resource study (availability and use of water from supply to discharge/recharge),
- Historic preservation planning,
- Organization of marketable agri-tourism, and
- Promotion of green design techniques for and operations of public facilities.

The 2012-2013 period includes recommendations for:

- The use of additional planning tools, such as the official map,
- Clean-up of brownfield sites,
- Use of on-lot management practices,
- Traffic safety and access studies,
- Economic development planning for the City of Lebanon and other community downtown areas,
- Technical assistance and educational/workforce programs for the agriculture and food products industry and wood products industry,
- Local open space, greenways and recreation planning,
- The structure and cost-effectiveness of public safety services,
- Assessment of telecommunications infrastructure and municipal facilities for adequacy and efficiency, and
- Historic recognition programs.



Recommendations for the 2014-2015 period reflect investment in response to findings from the previous period:

- New access sites to public waterways,
- Trail expansion,
- Integration of recognized historic resources into a heritage tourism initiative,
- Upgrades to municipal facilities, and
- Assessment of energy goals for the future.

Finally, recommendations listed for 2016-2017 represent preparation for review and update of the comprehensive plan.

### ***Priorities for Implementation***

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To further focus attention on the need for immediate action, the Citizen Task Force and Planning Department compiled a list of priority actions with recognition for the fact that the ultimate selection, prioritization and assignment of leadership to the recommendations will be made by the Lebanon County Commissioners. Reviewing the more than 300 recommendations contained in the comprehensive plan, the Task Force and Planning Department considered which recommendations are most urgently needed and have the potential to demonstrate clear, short term progress for Lebanon County. In other words, these recommendations offer:

- **A Quick Completion**—an action that can be accomplished quickly in whole or in significant part.
- **Momentum**—an action that will build momentum for further implementation and progress.

- **High Impact**—an action that will result in a significant benefit or positive impact relative to the plan’s overall direction.
- **Available, Willing Champion(s)**—an action that has the support of those who will take leadership for advancing an action.

The collaborative effort of the Citizen Task Force and Planning Department staff resulted in a list of priorities for each plan element with Recreation (Greenscapes), Economic Development, Land Use, and Natural Resources receiving the highest number of candidate priorities. At first glance, the list appears ambitious; however, it contains many priorities that do not require major expenditures and totals less than 15% of the cost of all recommendations the Action Plans. Nonetheless, funds will need to be dedicated to these initiatives. Furthermore, when opportunities arise or partners come forward to facilitate cost effective implementation of non-priority recommendations, prompt action be undertaken. Finally, this list is not exhaustive, as there are many other important issues that the county needs to address. As these actions are completed, a new short list of priorities should be identified and programmed.

**Table 15-1 Priorities for Implementation**

<b>Land Use Priorities</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Support (and help fund) municipal and multi-municipal comprehensive planning efforts throughout the county.	1A1	4-29
Facilitate development and growth in desired areas by focusing transportation and utility investments there.	2A2	4-35
Work to sustain agriculture and forestry as viable industries by guiding residential development away from large, scattered developments that fragment productive agricultural and forest lands.	3A1	4-38
Continue farmland preservation efforts. Assess existing agricultural zoning ordinances in comparison to other model agricultural zoning ordinances.	3A4	4-39
Develop an annual report on the implementation progress of the comprehensive plan. This could be prepared as short as a one-page report card or longer multi-page report.	5B1	4-42
<b>Transportation Priorities</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Implement Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) projects via current and future Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs).	2A1	6-53
Implement the US Route 422 Congested Corridor Improvement Program (CCIP) Study short-term recommendations.	2A6	6-54
Conduct and/or participate in integrated planning activities and their implementation, including but not limited to congestion management processes, congested corridor improvement program, access management ordinance development, Traffic Impact Study/Highway Occupancy Permit training, airport hazard and clear zoning, scenic byways planning, etc.	3A1	6-57
Coordinate with municipalities and developers on major traffic impact studies and transportation projects.	3A2	6-57

<b>Community Facilities and Utilities Priorities</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Support planned modernization and expansion of facilities. Program facility renovation and/or expansion, replacement, or additions based on current projections. Develop siting criteria for new facilities that require land acquisition. Strive to site facilities in designated growth areas to maximize pedestrian access. Continue to renovate facilities for energy efficiency.	1A2	7-22
Continue public education programs to promote waste reduction and recycling, proper disposal of hazardous materials and municipal education regarding enforcement of waste management ordinances.	4A1	7-29
Update of water and sewer planning at the system or local level, specifically completion of water supply studies, small system regionalization, and updates to Act 537 sewage facilities plans.	5A2	7-32
<b>Economic Development Priorities</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Develop and implement a comprehensive agricultural sustainability strategy.	1A2	8-26
1. Coordinate municipal long range planning acknowledging farming as a developed land use.		
2. Establish a farmland preservation target, criteria for preservation and permanent funding to achieve target.		
3. Establish a program to educate farmers on financial matters, maintaining operation of existing farms and transitioning farms to new farmers.		
4. Evaluate the feasibility of a county or regional "brand" for products made in Lebanon County. The brand is a logical choice for marketing agricultural, food and wood products that are literally grown in the county but need not be limited to them.		
Increase agri-tourism within the county.	1A3	8-27
1. Identify farms using innovative farming practices.		
2. Establish a heritage farm recognition/certification program.		
3. Establish an historic barn recognition program.		
4. Develop a Blue Ribbon Passport Program for Lebanon County.		
5. Evaluate local designation of agri-tourism routes as scenic byways; consider nomination of appropriate route to the state scenic byways program to qualify for statewide promotion and additional transportation enhancements funding.		
Expand and diversify the promotion efforts of the Lebanon County Tourist Promotion Agency and the Lebanon Valley Expo Center to highlight niche tourism sectors such as heritage tourism, outdoor recreational tourism, agri-tourism and eco-tourism.	1A9	8-29
Develop a city-wide Strategic Economic Development Plan for the City of Lebanon to supplement the 2004 Comprehensive Plan.	1C1	8-32
Continue to foster and encourage public/private partnerships to invest in the City of Lebanon and throughout the county by using available public funding to further leverage private investments.	1D2	8-33

<b>Natural Resources Priorities</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Improve surface water quality in streams assessed as impaired to achieve state designated use water quality standards in all streams.	1A1	9-45
Improve aquifer recharge and groundwater quality by identifying significant aquifer recharge areas and developing overlay ordinances to protect and preserve those areas most critical to the groundwater supply.	1A2	9-45
Expand public water and sewer service only to designated growth areas.	1E1	9-49
Coordinate municipal long range planning acknowledging farming as a developed land use.	3A1	9-57
Establish a farmland preservation target, criteria for preservation, and permanent funding to achieve target.	3A2	9-57
<b>Greenscapes (Recreation and Open Space) Priorities</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
By adoption of this plan, establish a goal of a minimum of 15 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents of Lebanon County	1A1	10-24
Work in partnership with school districts to develop regional parks for active recreation in conjunction with school campuses.	1A3	10-25
Develop and distribute a model mandatory dedication of land ordinance that can be adopted into local and county subdivision and land development ordinances.	1B1	10-26
Consider applying for a block grant from PA DCNR to under-take multi-municipal park, recreation and open space plans.	2B2	10-31
Encourage municipalities to create community-wide greenway networks and connect to the county identified greenways and trails. Focus on encouraging multi-municipal greenway and trail planning.	2B4	10-32
Define and publicize the county's position, which is that the county will not directly provide recreation programs and services but will facilitate and support the efforts of other providers of services.	3A1	10-36
Facilitate close-to-home recreation opportunities by assisting municipalities and school districts in planning parks and recreation systems and services.	3B1	10-36
Provide technical assistance to municipalities regarding parks, recreation facilities, services and grants.	3B2	10-37
Create a program to provide outreach to municipalities and school districts regarding funding, grant rounds and development of grant applications to acquire parkland and develop recreation facilities to be used for close-to-home recreations.	3B3	10-37
Designate a county recreation planner. Designate that the chief role of the county recreation planner regarding county parks and recreation is planning, outreach and partnership development.	4A1	10-43
Create a Leb. Co. Trail Authority. Use the York County Rail Trail Authority as a model.	4B1	10-45

<b>Greenscapes (continued)</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Restructure the parks and recreation management study to pair the City of Lebanon with the Lebanon School District rather than Lebanon County.	4C1	10-47
Consider a Lebanon County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Program. Using a bond program, the county could provide financial support to match grants for multi-municipal parks, recreation and open space planning, land acquisition, conservation easements, and trails. For communities with enough parkland, funds could be used for facility development.	5B1	10-49
Explore the dedication of a portion of the hotel tax for parks and recreation efforts related to tourism. Consider developing a grant program through the hotel tax to municipalities and organizations that would create attractions or sites that foster tourism.	5B3	10-50
<b>Historic Resources Priorities</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Develop an historic resources inventory that includes recognized and potential historic resources as a foundation for an historic preservation plan.	1A1	11-12
Establish a County Historic Commission to advise the County Commissioners on historic preservation matters and to enable the county to apply for Certified Local Government Status.	1A2	11-12
Develop an historic preservation plan that prioritizes critical resources for immediate or near-term action and identifies protection measures or options for historic resources.	1B1	11-14
<b>Housing Priorities</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Establish the following density targets in conjunction with municipalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6.5 dwelling units per acre in areas served by public infrastructure</li> <li>• 1 dwelling unit per 1.5 acres in areas not served by public infrastructure.</li> </ul>	1A1	12-33
Meet with local builders' association, realtors, developers, etc. to gauge interest in various housing initiatives.	1A3	12-34
Revise regulations to encourage and require neighborhood amenities such as sidewalks, walking and biking trails, and streetscapes appropriate to urban, suburban, and rural areas.	1C3	12-38
<b>Energy Conservation Priorities</b>	<b>Action Item #</b>	<b>Page</b>
Revise regulations to encourage and require neighborhood amenities such as sidewalks, walking and biking trails, and streetscapes appropriate to urban, suburban, and rural areas.	1F1	13-22
Develop a best practice tipsheet for fleet management for local governments that includes guidelines for the purchase of hybrid or alternative fuel cars, increased preventative maintenance, and consolidation or elimination of use for certain trips.	1F5	13-24

## *County Leadership for Plan Implementation*

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As stated earlier, the Lebanon County Board of Commissioners ultimately direct implementation of the comprehensive plan. Yet, the range of recommendations and the need to address wide ranging policy, services, regulation, and volunteer practices in the county presents a formidable agenda. Therefore, the county will need to target its own investment and engage a variety of general and special interest partners in advancing this plan.



Lebanon County can direct implementation of portions of the comprehensive plan through the annual programming and budgeting of its various departments and agencies. For example, land use, open space, and recreation planning recommendations tend to align with the mission of the Planning Department and natural resource recommendations better align with the Conservation District. Data and trend monitoring, as well as educational initiatives, could be integrated within the existing responsibilities of these county departments.

The county can foster implementation of certain recommendations through financial incentives. Local comprehensive, infrastructure, and service planning could be encouraged by developing a pool of county funds designated for this purpose. Adams, Berks, and Cumberland Counties have incentivized local planning by providing all or a portion of the local match needed for state planning grants. Financial incentives can also be made available to the private sector, including individual property owners, through tax adjustments or simple payments. For example, Snyder County has developed a program to encourage creation of vegetated riparian buffers on farmlands by offering establishment and annual maintenance payments in return for minimal disturbance to these sensitive land areas.

The county should also seek implementation assistance from public and private sectors partners. Four state agencies have already been involved in the development of the comprehensive plan and are familiar with its recommendations.



Continued discussions of priorities and potential technical assistance and funding programs can lead to state investment in the county's envisioned future. Peer

counties across south central Pennsylvania can also offer policy coordination, previous experience and grant support, particularly when recommendations address natural resources and man-made systems that cross county boundaries. Public school districts are another public partner that can play a key role in the continued development of the

county and the values and ethics of development and conservation in future generations. Finally, local governments are essential partners for implementing the comprehensive plan. The foundation laid by the county's strong working relationship with many of its municipalities can be built upon and expanded. This relationship currently focuses on development review but is recommended to include greater coordination and consistency in local planning, ordinance administration and enforcement, and grant application and administration, even when duties are carried out by multiple agencies. Beyond the many public sector partners, the county can also engage local business and industry to provide private sector perspective and support, such as from private service providers, developers, etc.

Finally, progress can be made through education and outreach to the general public, for these are the property owners, business entrepreneurs and managers, travelers, residents and visitors that make Lebanon County a living community. Providing them with information on how they can make personal and business decisions to support and sustain the economy and the environment appeal to the citizen's sense of community and civic pride. Empowering citizens to take action for themselves and their communities in coordination with county leadership brings implementation back to the heart of the planning process – the public.

