

PUBLIC COMMENTS & RESPONSES

Provided at the April 12, 2017 Strawberry Square outreach event:

Message: Interested in learning more about the plan. He believes regional bike/pedestrian is an important transportation and quality of life component for the region as a whole. He suggested reaching out to Lancaster County in their biking / pedestrian to learn more and improve the regional connections.

Response: *Tri-County Regional Planning Commission staff regularly coordinate with Lancaster County Planning Commission Staff on a wide range of transportation issues, including biking/pedestrian facilities and activities. This coordination will continue throughout the planning period.*

Sent via E-mail transmittal: Wed 4/12/2017 1:26 PM:

Message: I appreciate the progress you made. I worked on the Harrisburg Comprehensive Plan so I understand the amount of time spent on this. Here are my two cents: consider using the Cumberland valley bridge for pedestrian uses, particularly bikers who could travel from S.3rd St in Lemoyne to S.3rd St in Harrisburg. Also, perhaps reconsider the pathing of the bike trail that forms the greenbelt. I tried to get from the riverwalk to Wildwood by following the bike trail signs. Once the trail left the city boundaries, not only were there depressions and sinkholes in the road, but there was no way to cross the two-way front street (Front and Vaughn). There were no ramps to leave the river path, and the two way traffic was impassable, even if there was a crosswalk.

Response: *We have shared the suggestions with Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's bicycle/pedestrian coordinator for consideration in future planning efforts.*

Sent via E-Mail transmittal: Mon 4/24/2017 9:22 AM:

Message: A past President and current Board Member of Hershey Area Art Association, I was interested in inquiring about opportunities that our Nonprofit Art Association might be able to become involved in opportunities that the county might offer our group. Please check out our website, www.hersheyareaartassociation.com, for the organizations history in the community. Giving back through scholarship, art shows, community projects, such as HAAA Hats for Hope, 10th anniversary project at the Hershey Historical Society, 20th year project, "Shine a Light on Art" at the Hershey Library and other community involvement. Please let me know if any meetings might be planned that I may attend to find out more about the county's comprehensive plans.

Response: *We have added the Hershey Area Art Association to our database used for notifications of upcoming events and plan-related activities.*

Sent via E-Mail transmittal: Mon 4/24/2017 9:48 AM:

Message: I am very glad to see the draft of the comprehensive plan in Dauphin County. As a former Refugee from Bhutan, and a new citizen of this country, I would like to represent my community to give back to this county. I was the founding President of "Bhutanese Community in Harrisburg" and have been involved in the advocacy, and resource broker for our community since 2010. Please give me an opportunity to be a part of this comprehensive planning for implementing them in effective ways. Thank you

Response: *We have added the Bhutanese Community in Harrisburg to our database used for notifications of upcoming events and plan-related activities.*

Sent via letter/email transmittal: Mon 4/24/2017 3:30 PM:

Message: Dear Mr. Duke,
Thank you for picking me as a Nonprofit Partner to review your draft of the new Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan.

Let me give you some background. Now a senior citizen, I was born, raised and educated in Susquehanna Township. I raised a family that has started three of their own families here in the township. I am still living in the township and serving as a volunteer in the fire service (46 years) and Emergency Management (40 years). I was a member that helped draft the 2000 Comprehensive Plan, and just retired after serving 12 years on the Planning Commission.

I remember spending a year on a committee of nine township citizens, meeting two and three times a month with engineering staff drafting our township's comprehensive plan. After all that I think it sat on the shelf more than it was opened. As a planning commissioner, I can't say that a developer referenced the plan two or three times as a tool to convince the planners to move his or her plan forward. As a young child visiting my grandparents in the northern part of the county, we drove through farm land that is now housing developments. The county is growing and we need a good look into the next ten-plus years as how to meet the needs of this growth. The sale and development of 130 acres of the state hospital grounds is one of the bigger land-development challenges that will affect us. Whatever it comes to be, whether housing, offices or mixed use, service areas and recreation will be needed. Take any center point and look: there's no gas station or convenience store for miles for the current office workers to use.

As a founding member of 20 years and current first vice president of the Pennsylvania National Fire Museum, I have been pleased to be part of the Harrisburg Hershey Visitors Bureau and the Discover Lancaster tourism activities. As a tour guide at the museum I have seen our visitation increase in the past year. With our efforts and grants from Dauphin County we have increased visitation by 50 percent. These visitors come from outside the county, outside of the state and outside of the country just to see the fire museum. The museum may be the number-one factor they come to Dauphin County. And while they pass through the county they visit other venues, eat, and maybe spend the night. It is our job as planners to give them the best experience possible here in Dauphin County. Thank you.

Response: *Comment noted and appreciated*

Sent via E-mail transmittal: Tue 4/25/2017 9:11 AM:

Message: Thank you for the email note alerting me to the latest draft of the Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan "Growing Together." I was extraordinarily pleased with the stated goals of improving multi-modal transportation connections, preserving our natural resources, and developing better resources for affordable housing and economic advancement in areas of Dauphin County which are disadvantaged at present.

Please continue the good work you are doing with your partners (especially Capital Region Water, DCNR, DEP, and Harrisburg Young Professionals) and continue to keep me updated of future press releases/neighborhood outreach events.

Response: Comment noted and appreciated

Sent via E-Mail transmittal: Sat 5/20/2017 1:42 PM:

Message: Dauphin County is a great place to live. In your comprehensive plan for our future, please make green spaces such as parks, fields, and undeveloped woodlands a priority for maintaining the livability of our community. When these places are torn down for "progress" and new "development" it can make living here more stressful and less enjoyable. We need these open spaces for our sanity in an ever-hurried and stressful world. Encouraging new businesses to purchase existing empty buildings and containing them in a commercial area helps to contain the sprawl. When county government stands up for quality-of-life, it pays back in myriad ways.

I'd love to see our county become a forward-thinking leader by making the environment a priority because it is the right thing to do, not just because it is mandated. Water conservation, renewable energy, pervious surfaces, wildlife preservation (plant milkweed for monarchs, for example), bikes lanes, etc. would benefit all of our residents.

And lastly, implementing a litter clean-up system, by providing incentives to citizens or arranging community service days (mandated for people who have violations or well-advertised Earth Day Cleanups) would help to make our community cleaner and healthier.

I'd like to feel like I live in a place where these things are a priority. Thank you!

Response: Environmental protection is a major focus of the plan, as many of our residents share your concern. In terms of a litter clean-up system, such initiatives will be brought to the attention of the environmental implementation committee for consideration.

ADJACENT COUNTY COMMENTS & RESPONSES

York County Planning Commission:

Comment: Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan, “Growing Together” sets the direction and identifies the goals for the County’s community, environmental, and economic initiatives. These goals and the action items outlined to meet them are consistent with the York County Comprehensive Plan.

The Susquehanna River forms York County’s boundary with Dauphin County. Looking beyond the River, specifically at the Planned Growth Areas and Community Service Area Map, most of the land adjacent to the River on the Dauphin County side is designated as Urban Core, with a small portion as Rural Reserve. This future land use pattern is generally consistent with the York County Growth Management Plan.

Response: *Comment noted and appreciated*

Cumberland County Planning Commission:

Comment: It appears that some of the Goals and Key Action Items would have to be implemented by the identified “Implementation Partners” (page 3) or other agencies. It may be helpful to identify the partner agencies responsible for implementing the Key Action Items and the County Planning Commission’s role.

Response: *The County Planning Commission will provide oversight for the three implementation committees. Specific participants for each action item are to be identified by the committees as they are recommended to move forward.*

Comment: General land use types or categories such as residential, commercial, industrial, etc. are not specified in the Plan regarding their proposed locations or intensities. If there is mapping related to countywide existing land use and future land use, a link should be provided to access the data. This would be helpful in assessing land use consistency at the local level and along county borders.

Response: *A decision was made to focus the section on Sustainable Development on consistency with the Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP) which emphasizes the adoption of Community Service Area boundaries to ensure that future growth, regardless of land use type, takes place where existing facilities and services are most available. One of the plan’s key action items is for at least 75% of new development to occur within the CSA boundaries. Municipalities, who bear the primary responsibility for specific land use decisions, where this goal is not met are to be given priority for Regional Connections planning funds or other available funding for the development of a new comprehensive plan that seeks to improve the consistency with the Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan. Similar priority is given to municipalities without CSA lands, but with comprehensive plans greater than 10 years old or where significant development is anticipated. The CSA boundaries have not changed since the 2008 Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan was developed, thereby helping to ensure that cross-county consistency is maintained.*

Perry County Planning Commission:

Comment: Suggest evaluating the Future Land Use Plan against the plans of surrounding counties (PA MPC 301(a)(5))

Response: *A decision was made to focus the section on Sustainable Development on consistency with the Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP) which emphasizes the adoption of Community Service Area boundaries to ensure that future growth, regardless of land use type, takes place where existing facilities and services are most available. One of the plan's key action items is for at least 75% of new development to occur within the CSA boundaries. Municipalities, who bear the primary responsibility for specific land use decisions, where this goal is not met are to be given priority for Regional Connections planning funds or other available funding for the development of a new comprehensive plan that seeks to improve the consistency with the Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan. Similar priority is given to municipalities without CSA lands, but with comprehensive plans greater than 10 years old or where significant development is anticipated. The CSA boundaries have not changed since the 2008 Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan was developed, thereby helping to ensure that cross-county consistency is maintained.*

Comment: May want to mention the County's position as it relates to the plan being "generally consistent." (See PA MPC 301(c)). Also, any known inconsistencies between this plan and the municipal and multi-municipal plans it intends to guide?

Response: *One of the key action items in the plan involves the identification of localized development that may not be consistent with the County plan and giving priority for Regional Connections or other available funding for the development of a new comprehensive plan that seeks to improve the consistency with the Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan. Similar priority is also to be given to municipalities without CSA lands, but with comprehensive plans greater than 10 years old or where significant development is anticipated.*

Comment: The plan is required to provide a statement regarding mineral extraction/mining and the extent the activity is allowed to commence with the understanding that water supplies impacted by such activities specify replacement and restoration of water supplies (PA MPC 301(b)(1)).

Response: *The Water Quality and Stormwater Management section of the plan calls for the development of a countywide strategy for addressing surface and ground water quality and quantity issues. This work is to be done in partnership with DCCD, municipalities, environmental organizations, Dauphin County Parks and Recreation, the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC), PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). This plan will take into account all known sources of water quality degradation, including those relating to mining activity.*

Comment: While not required, the plan could mention something about the County's Solid Waste Management Plan.

Response: *A reference and hyperlink to the Dauphin County Solid Waste Management Plan will be added to the "Other Key Planning Efforts" portion of the Plan's Introduction.*

Comment: The plan can simply mention the short and long-term implementation will be carried out in three individual documents by the subcommittees on page 25.

Response: *Both short and long-term implementation measures will be documented in the “Tracking Our Progress” section of the Comprehensive Plan website as they are undertaken. Interested parties can also contact Mr. Jerry Duke at (717) 234-2639 or gduke@tcrpc-pa.org to obtain information on ongoing or planned implementation activities.*

Comment: The plan mentions residents frequently when speaking of the community survey. How were responses of others outside the county factored into this process?

Response: *The input of all respondents to the survey were included in the analysis of the survey, regardless of location. Also, this document provides documentation of all comments received on the draft plan, including those received from Cumberland, Perry, and York Counties.*

Comment: From our perspective, the proposed plan text appears to cover all the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requirements specified in Section 301 (a). We commend you on your efforts and thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft plan.

Response: *Comment noted and appreciated*

STEERING COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Comment: Public Facilities – Most of the points in this section deal with services or with parks and educational facilities. But when I think of community facilities, I think of spaces for community meetings, events, and activities. They might be municipal buildings, schools, and properties managed by nonprofit partners, including theaters and churches. The PHMC has funded plenty of good projects that rehabilitated historic buildings for these sorts of functions. (There’s a short list of examples below.) I recommend adding a goal that relates specifically to the role of the county and its municipalities in promoting and facilitating the development and sustainable operation of these kinds of facilities, particularly when there is a clearly defined need in the community.

Response: *The Plan does include a number of Key Action Items relating to the use of a variety of techniques to encourage in-fill and redevelopment opportunities. While the scale of the County Comprehensive Plan makes it infeasible to identify specific buildings, the resources available through the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission will be made available to facilitate the long-term use of the types of individual buildings referenced in the comment where there is a clearly defined need in the community.*

Comment: Sustainable Development Patterns – I think that one or more of the goals should specifically mention improved storm water management (or at least reducing the rate of increases in storm water runoff) as one of the key benefits of sustainable development. It not only saves on the costs of building and maintaining the infrastructure needed to handle the storm water, but it also has the potential to reduce the effects of downstream flooding. I realize that storm water management is discussed in a separate section, but the rationale of including it here is to think beyond designing bigger pipes and deeper swales and instead put a priority on reducing the “input” or “supply” side of the equation through creative planning and design:

- Reducing the area of roofs, parking lots, and hard-scaping in new developments
- Encouraging (or requiring) green infrastructure, green roofs (especially on large commercial or industrial developments), and permeable pavement in parking areas
- Incorporating on-site systems into large-scale development projects for capturing, filtering, and reusing rainwater runoff.

Response: *The Plan recognizes the many benefits of improved stormwater management as mentioned in the comment. Many of the issues and key action items listed throughout the plan will have likely impact beyond the specific section where they are mentioned. In an effort to keep the plan concise and easier follow for a wide range of users, these “crossover” initiatives are only listed once, but will be managed and coordinated throughout the Plan’s implementation by the Dauphin County Planning Commission and the Implementation Partners.*

Comment: Floodplain Risk Management – In the same way, this section could refer back to back to Sustainable Development Patterns as the sort of strategies that communities can take to reduce the risk of flooding in the county. Perhaps this can simply be incorporated into the fifth action (“Through education and model ordinance . . .”). The current text of that bullet seems to imply that these tools would only apply to “environmentally sensitive lands.” I would argue that traditional greenfield development almost always increases storm water runoff, regardless of the property’s environmental sensitivity.

Response: *As a point of clarification, the strategies identified in the fifth action item are to be applied throughout Dauphin County as a means of reducing impacts in areas prone to flooding and other “environmentally sensitive lands.” Therefore, the strategies would affect all new development in Dauphin County, including any that occurs in greenfield areas.*

Comment: Agriculture & Resource Protection – Should this section also mention significant *historic* resources? Most of the planning and zoning tools that are used to protect open space and natural lands can also be applied to preserving the setting and character of historic farmsteads and rural communities. Approaching all of these resources collectively would be consistent with the [National Disaster Recovery Support Function # 6](#), which combines natural and cultural resources, as well as addressing issues related to agriculture.

Response: *As indicated in the primary goal of this section, historic and cultural resources are intended to be included as important environmental resources. Minor edits have been made to several of the Key Action Items to clarify this fact.*

Comment: Transportation Network – I don’t know if it is appropriate to express here or not, but reliance on the automobile results in zoning ordinances that often have excessive requirements for on-site parking areas that contribute to rain water runoff, that make adaptive reuse and high-density development difficult, and that present design challenges in creating attractive commercial corridors and residential subdivisions.

Response: *There is a Key Action Item included that states: “Evaluate off-street parking requirements in an effort to reduce the areas needed for parking lots, thereby reducing stormwater impacts and potentially making retail, office, and industrial lands more transit and bicycle/pedestrian friendly.” This recommendation directly addresses the comment.*

Comment: Growing Our Economy: Programs & Policies – Under Issues & Direction, the second bullet reads “The downtowns of smaller boroughs and townships should be maintained or promoted as local economic centers and/or reinvented to meet current business opportunities.” As a minor edit, I would suggest that it say that the downtowns “should be maintained **and** promoted as local economic centers.” We should be encouraging both, not one **or** the other.

Response: *The suggested change has been made.*