

ACTION PROGRAM

The following table summarizes the major recommendations of this Plan. Certain items are recommended as high priorities. The timing of each recommendation is listed, as well as which agencies should have the primary responsibility to carry out the recommendation.

AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION

Recommended Action:	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	High Priority?
In agricultural areas, permit a range of activities that allow opportunities for supplemental income for farmers on larger tracts of land.	Governing Bodies, PCs, Property-owners	Ongoing	X
Consider proper controls on very intense Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations.	Governing Bodies, PCs	Ongoing	
To protect water quality and fish habitats, carefully enforce State regulations on erosion control through on-site inspections.	Governing Bodies, PCs	Short-term	
Minimize unnecessary removal of trees during construction, and make sure temporary fencing is used to avoid damage to tree trunks and root systems. Prohibit clearcut forestry in most cases, and control forestry near creeks and on very steep slopes.	Governing Bodies, PCs, Property-owners	Ongoing	
Use mandatory dedication provisions in subdivision ordinances to require dedication of open space or payment of recreation fees as part of major new residential developments.	Governing Bodies, PCs, property-owners	Short-term	
Protect important natural features, with a special emphasis upon the creeks, steep slopes and mature woods.	Governing Bodies, PCs, Property-owners	Ongoing	X
• Carefully regulate development of steeply sloped lands, with standards to increase lot sizes if buildings are proposed on steep slopes.			
• Maintain and plant thick vegetation along streams to protect water quality and fishing habitats, including carrying out the Best Management Practices recommendations in the regional stormwater management plans.			
• Encourage No-Till farming	Governing Bodies	Ongoing	

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Recommended Action:	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	High Priority?
Consider alternative ways to preserve important historic buildings, such as requiring special zoning approval by the governing body or zoning hearing board before demolition is allowed. This alternative would not regulate architecture or routine changes to buildings.	Governing Bodies, PCs Historic organizations	Ongoing	X
Seek cost-effective ways of preserving historic buildings, including providing information, guidelines and advice to property-owners. Promote greater interest in the region's history and historic buildings.	Municipal Staff, Historic organizations	Ongoing	
Consider zoning incentives to promote the preservation of historic buildings. This could include allowing certain uses within restored historic buildings that otherwise would not be allowed in the zoning district. For example, a restored historic building in a residential district might be allowed to be used as an office or bed and breakfast inn.	Governing Bodies, PCs	Ongoing	

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Recommended Action:	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	High Priority?
Improve existing parks and playgrounds to meet a wide variety of recreational needs.	Governing Bodies, Municipal Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	
Emphasize high-quality police, emergency medical and fire protection services. Promote continued cooperation between providers, including those in adjacent municipalities.	Emergency providers, Governing Bodies, Adj. Mun.	Ongoing	X
Continually explore ways to minimize local government expenses and increase revenues, including use of grants.	Governing Bodies, Borough Staff	Ongoing	
Continue to provide excellent water and sewage services, with regular investments to provide reliable services.	Municipal Authorities and water companies	Ongoing	

TRANSPORTATION

Recommended Action:	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	High Priority?
Work with PennDOT to resolve traffic congestion bottlenecks and traffic safety problems. Seek funding through the 12 Year Plan and the County Transportation Improvement Program to resolve traffic problems in the region.	PennDOT, BCPC, Governing Bodies, Adj. Mun.	Ongoing	
Design residential streets (in new developments) to discourage use by through-traffic, limit truck traffic on residential streets where feasible, and improve major roads to relieve congestion so traffic will not be diverted to residential streets.	PennDOT, BCPC, PCs, Governing Bodies, Adj. Mun.	Ongoing	
Consider adopting an “Official Map” to design locations where additional land will be needed to improve existing roads or to build new road connections. This type of Official Map allows a municipality to reserve land for improvements for a limited period of time.	Governing Bodies, PC	Ongoing	
Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and access, especially in downtown areas. Encourage greater use of public transit, including providing additional park and ride lots. Study the feasibility of expanded public transit to link with new employers.	PennDOT, SCTA, BCPC, Governing Bodies, Adj. Mun.	Ongoing	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Recommended Action:	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	High Priority?
Update zoning ordinances to make sure that all desirable types of businesses are allowed in appropriate business zoning districts. Hold requirements for special zoning approvals to a reasonable minimum and minimize setbacks between adjacent businesses. These steps are important to promote economic development and a wider choice of employment opportunities.	Governing bodies, PCs	Short-term	X
Utilize the County’s Economic Development Web Mapping Tool to identify appropriate sites to locate industrial and commercial development.	Governing bodies, PCs, EDs, BCIDA, BCPC	Short-term	X

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Recommended Action:	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	High Priority?
Market high priority sites for economic development initiatives	Governing bodies, PCs, EDs, BCIDA, BCPC	Short-term	X
Prioritize infrastructure improvements associated with sites that are identified as potential locations for industrial development.	Governing bodies, PCs, EDs, BCIDA, BCPC	Short-term	X
Support entrepreneurship and small business development and partner with higher learning institutions and technical schools.	Governing bodies, PCs, EDs, Local colleges, School district, GRCCI	Short-term	
Strengthen business districts to maximize revenue, including pedestrian amenities and transportation systems. Support reuse of existing buildings and infill development.	Governing bodies, PCs, EDs	Short-term	
Strengthen the quality and competitiveness of the Region's workforce. Partner with higher learning and workforce institutions.	Governing bodies, PCs, Local Colleges, School district	Short-term	
Position the Governor Mifflin Region as a destination Region. Partner with Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chamber, and arts organizations to promote arts, culture and events.	Governing bodies, PCs, GRCVB	Short-term	

LAND USE

Recommended Action:	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	High Priority?
Update each municipality's development regulations to carry out the Future Land Use Plan.	PCs, Governing Bodies	Short-term	
Adopt and/or enforce existing municipal property maintenance codes to avoid blighted and unsafe conditions.	Governing bodies	Short-term	X
Utilize the County's Blighted Property Review Committee to review and eliminate blighted residential properties from neighborhoods so that they can be redeveloped into usable housing.	Governing Bodies, BCRA, BCPC	Ongoing	

Recommended Action:	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	High Priority?
Help to link residents that are in need of assistance with the resources that are available, including housing rehabilitation and job training programs.	Municipal staffs and non-profit organizations	Short-term	
Work to increase home ownership, including expanding programs to help persons afford closing costs of home purchases.	Co. agencies, financial institutions, PHFA	Ongoing	
Make sure that local regulations and permit processes are as streamlined as reasonable, to avoid unnecessary delays and higher housing costs. This is particularly important for routine changes to existing homes and for new and expanding employers.	Governing bodies, PCs, ZHBs, Municipal staffs	Short-term	
Use zoning regulations to direct most housing away from areas planned for agricultural preservation and important natural areas. Provide moderate densities on areas that can be served by existing public water and sewage services - to minimize the total amount of land consumed by development.	Twp. PCs, Property owners, Co. Conservation District	Ongoing	
Place an emphasis on zoning provisions that preserve farmland and natural areas, particularly through "Open Space Development" that involves clustering of homes in return for permanent preservation of a substantial part of the tract in open space. In the townships, promote the optional transfer of development rights that allows the number of homes that would have been allowed on an outlying tract to be developed on a more suitable tract, in return for preservation of the outlying tract.	PCs, Property-owners, Co. Conservation District	Ongoing	
Work with the County, the City of Reading, Exeter, Lower Alsace, Borough of Mount Penn, Saint Lawrence and Berks Nature to permanently protect the Neversink Mountain as passive public recreation land with nature trails connecting to other trails in the region.	Governing Bodies, PCs, property-owners	Ongoing	

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Recommended Action:	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	High Priority?
Update zoning ordinances to carefully control the types and locations of intense business uses near neighborhoods. This particularly includes gas stations, 24 hour stores, adult uses and similar uses that may cause nuisances for neighboring homes.	Governing Bodies, PCs	Short-term	
Provide density incentives for housing developments that are permanently limited to occupancy by older persons.	Governing Bodies, PCs, ZHBs	Ongoing	
Work with adjacent municipalities to ensure that compatible land uses and road patterns are in place.	Governing Bodies, PCs	Short-term	
Emphasize code enforcement to avoid blight in neighborhoods. Consider a systematic housing inspection program for older rental units in the boroughs.	Governing Bodies, PCs, Adj. Mun.	Short-term	X
Use this plan as a guide to direct development, both in terms of location and type, where and how you want it to occur.	Governing bodies, PCs	Ongoing	

Abbreviations of Responsible Agencies/Groups:

Governing Bodies = Borough Councils and Township Boards of Supervisors/Board of Commissioners
 PC = Municipal Planning Commissions
 ZHB = Zoning Hearing Boards
 Adj. Mun. = Adjacent Municipalities
 DA = Downtown Associations
 EDs = Berks County Economic Development Organizations
 BCPC = Berks County Planning Commission
 PennDOT = Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
 PHFA = Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency
 PHMC = Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
 SCTA = South Central Transit Authority
 BCRA = Berks County Redevelopment Authority
 BCIDA = Berks County Industrial Development Authority
 GRCVB = Greater Reading Convention and Visitors Bureau