

THE ACTION PROGRAM

ACTION PROGRAM

IMPLEMENTING THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This comprehensive plan identifies strategies the Borough should pursue and actions the Borough should take in five specific areas;

- Future Land Use and Housing
- Downtown and Economic Development
- Transportation
- Parks, Recreation and Conservation
- Community Facilities and Services

While the plan includes many good ideas, direction is needed to focus Borough officials on what should be done first and what can come later. The following table summarizes the recommendations identified in each chapter. For each recommendation, a priority is assigned.

All strategies are classified into one of three priority types:

Short Range – Recommendations designated as “Short Range” are initiatives the Borough should undertake or address immediately – between 2010 and 2012. In some cases, these are new courses of action. In other cases, Short Range initiatives are activities now underway that the Borough should focus on completing promptly.

Long Range – Recommendations designated as “Long Range” should follow Short Range projects but these Long Range recommendations can be started in the same time-frame as a Short Range recommendation.

Ongoing – Recommendations designated as “Ongoing” are policies or actions the Borough should continue carrying out.

Implementing several of these recommendations will involve costly physical improvements. Other recommendations will require only administrative actions. Where significant costs are involved, a wide variety of funding sources should be considered. Frequently used sources of funding are highlighted in this chapter following the Action Program table.

Table 12
Action Program

Recommendation	Priority
<i>Future Land Use and Housing</i>	
1. Use the accompanying Future Land Use Map as the basis for updating the Coplay Borough Zoning Ordinance	Short Range
2. Thoroughly update the regulatory techniques and standards contained in the current Coplay Borough Zoning Ordinance.	Short Range
3. Create incentives for rehabilitating residential building facades.	Short Range
5. Look for opportunities to encourage senior housing in the Borough.	Long Range
<i>Downtown and Economic Development</i>	
1. Establish a civic plaza in the downtown business area.	Short Range
2. Begin a phased streetscape improvement program in the downtown area.	Long Range
3. Reconfigure the Intermediate Unit parking lot	Short Range
4. Create an inventory of existing buildings within the downtown.	Short Range
<i>Transportation</i>	
1. Continue coordinating with PennDOT and Lehigh County on the reconstruction of the Chestnut Street Bridge.	Ongoing
2. Improve the safety and appearance of South Second Street, South Third Street, Schreiber Avenue and Lehigh Street intersection.	Long Range
3. Ensure that Coplay remains a pedestrian-friendly and bicycle-friendly town.	Ongoing
4. Create a wayfinding signage system for the entire Borough.	Long Range
<i>Parks, Recreation and Conservation</i>	
1. Begin a multi-year program to improve Coplay Parkway in phases.	Short Range
2. Investigate options for improving and enhancing Balliet Fields complex.	Long Range
3. Continue participating in planning and implementing new trail improvements.	Ongoing
4. Stay involved in discussions about the future of the Coplay Cement Company Kilns.	Ongoing
5. Enhance recreational opportunities at Borough Hall.	Long Range
6. Conserve land located near and along the Lehigh River.	Long Range
7. Provide public access to the Lehigh River for recreational opportunities.	Long Range
<i>Community Facilities and Services</i>	
1. Examine the feasibility of establishing a Borough compost and recycling transfer station.	Short Range
2. Continue to monitor Coplay's participation in regional water and sewer entities.	Ongoing
3. Continue cooperating with Whitehall Township on storm water collection problems.	Ongoing
4. Implement a coordinated strategy for addressing the Borough's municipal facilities needs.	Long Range

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING & FINANCING

State, Federal and county governments, public and private organizations/entities, and foundations provide various opportunities for funding assistance. Some of the most commonly used funding sources, including grants and loans, can help fund revitalization activities and related projects. Since funding sources are always changing, with new programs being added and older programs being revised or deleted, it will be important to continually update the following table as funding sources change. Many funding providers post their grant program offerings on the Internet.

Table 13
Potential Funding Sources

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Regional Partnership Grants	50% grants to a maximum of \$8,000 for zoning revisions, joint purchasing, fire services, police and land use activities.	Lehigh County Department of Community and Economic Development
Main Street Initiatives Streetscape Amenities Grants	50% grants up to \$8,000 for banners, benches, trash receptacles, planters, bike racks, signage, and street trees.	Lehigh County Department of Community and Economic Development
Tree Vitalize Metro Grants	A partnership involving Lehigh County, Pennsylvania DCNR and other state entities. A maximum grant of \$25,000 in state funds for acquiring and planting street trees.	Lehigh County Department of Community and Economic Development
Borough Business Revitalization Program	50% grants for facade renovations and other assistance for related revitalization projects.	Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce
Elm Street Program	Grant funds for planning, technical assistance and physical improvements to residential and mixed use areas in proximity to central business districts. Elm Street is a 5-year program. The Planning Grant (\$25,000) has already been used to fund this Plan. Operational grants (\$50,000 maximum per year), and Residential Reinvestment grants (\$250,000 maximum per year) should be pursued annually over the five years. Elm Street involves five specific program areas: 1) organization; 2) promotion; 3) design; 4) neighborhoods and economy; and 5: clean, safe and green activities.	PA Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED)

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Neighborhood Partnership Program (NAP/NPP)	<p>Corporate tax liability credit for businesses that sponsor a neighborhood organization to develop and implement a neighborhood revitalization plan by contributing a substantial amount of cash per year over an extended period of time.</p> <p>Programs must serve clients who are low-income and residents of economically distressed neighborhoods specified by the neighborhood organization. Projects must fall under one of the following categories: housing; education; health and social services; community development; job training; crime prevention; and community participation.</p>	PA DCED
PA Weed and Seed Program	<p>The Weed and Seed program, modeled after the federal program, is a two-pronged approach to addressing the negative, or criminal, elements of a targeted area while supporting and enhancing the positives, or available resources, through the introduction of programming and specialized initiatives. Through the Target Area Local Leadership (TALL) Team and the Assistance for Impact Delegation (AID) Team, efforts are focused on leadership training for the residents and varied programs to encourage economic and business development, improved housing, and enhanced health and human services programs within neighborhoods. Enrollment in Weed and Seed also allows DCED to waive the 10% match usually required for Elm Street Program funding.</p>	PA Commission of Crime & Delinquency, and the Office of the Governor
Urban Development Program (UDP)	<p>Provides grants for urban development and improvement projects. Funds may be used for: construction or rehab of infrastructure, building rehabilitation, acquisition and demolition of structures/land, revitalization or construction of community facilities, purchase of upgrade of machinery and equipment, planning of community assets, public safety, crime prevention, recreation, and training.</p>	PA DCED
Local Municipal Resources and Development Program (LMRDP)	<p>Grants to municipalities for improving quality of life within the community. Grants may be used for: construction or rehab of infrastructure, building rehabilitation, acquisition and demolition of structures/land, revitalization or construction of community facilities, purchase of upgrade of machinery and equipment, planning of community assets, public safety, crime prevention, recreation, and training.</p>	PA DCED
HOME	<p>PA DCED program that provides municipalities with funding and technical assistance to expand the supply of decent and affordable housing for low and very low moderate income persons. Uses may include: rehabilitation; new construction; acquisition of rental or sales housing and rental assistance.</p>	PA DCED
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	<p>Offers grants for a wide variety of activities, provided the applicant proves by survey or census that the project will benefit 51% low and moderate income persons or handicapped persons or eliminate "blighted" conditions in officially designated areas. For example, funds can be used for housing rehabilitation, handicapped accessibility, street and sidewalk improvements, parks / recreation / trail linkages, planning, and historic rehabilitation.</p>	PA DCED, Borough, SEDA COG

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Home Town Streets and Safe Routes to School	The Home Town Streets Program provides funding for a variety of streetscape improvements that are aimed at reestablishing downtown and commercial centers. The Safe Routes to School Program provides grants and is designed to work with both school districts and pedestrian and bicycle safety advocates to make physical improvements that promote safe walking and biking passages to schools. Both programs require a 20% local match.	PennDOT
Communities That Care (CTC)	Communities That Care (CTC) is a community empowerment strategy that emphasizes assessment and planning as the basis for program development and implementation. CTC is a violence and delinquency prevention program that provides communities with a process to mobilize the community, identify risk and preventive factors, and develop a comprehensive prevention plan.	PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency
Community Revitalization Program (CRP)	Very broad grant program. Officially intended to promote community stability, increase tax bases and improve quality of life. Applications may be made by municipalities, authorities, economic development organizations, and nonprofit corporations. Public/non-profit/profit partnerships are encouraged. Generally can be used for infrastructure, community revitalization, streetscape improvements, facade improvements, building rehabilitation, demolition of blighted structures, public safety, and park or trail projects.	PA DCED & Governor's Office
Community Cleanup Program	The community cleanup program is a partnership among community organizations, environmental groups, local business and industry, and local, county and state governments. The program brings together these partners to identify illegal dumps, prioritize cleanups, coordinate cleanups and provide surveillance and enforcement.	PA DCED
C2P2 - Community Conservation Partnerships Program	Provides 50% matching grants to municipalities to: develop plans for parks/recreation/trails; prepare park/greenway master plans; acquire parkland/nature preserves/greenways; and rehabilitate and improve public recreation areas/greenways.	PA DCNR
TEA-21 Transportation Enhancements Program (part of federal Transportation Efficiency Act)	The Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century (TEA-21) authorizes Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit.	U.S. DOT funds administered by PennDOT
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program	The National Parks service operates this program aimed at conserving land and water resources for communities. Eligible projects include conservation plans for protecting these resources, and trail development.	National Park Service
Historic Preservation Tax Credits	Offers federal income tax credits for a percentage of the qualified capital costs to rehabilitate a certified historic buildings, provided the exterior is restored. The program is generally limited to income-producing properties.	National Park Service

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Historic Preservation - Certified Local Government Grants	Provides modest-sized matching grants to provide technical assistance to municipalities that have official historic districts and meet other criteria to be "certified."	Federal, administered by PA Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)
Historic Preservation Survey and Planning Grants	Matching grants for historic surveys, historic preservation planning and National Register nominations. Available to municipalities and nonprofit organizations. Cannot be used for construction.	Federal, administered by PHMC
Heritage Parks Program	Provides grants up to 75% of costs for projects within state-designated "Heritage Parks" to preserve and interpret the significant contribution that certain areas made upon the industrial heritage of the state and nation. Funds four types of projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility studies • Special purpose studies • Management Action Plan • Implementation projects. Projects are intended to conserve natural, historic and recreational resources relating to industrial heritage to stimulate regional tourism.	PA DCNR
Industrial Sites Reuse Program, PA ("Brownfields")	Provides grants of up to 75% and low-interest loans for assessment of environmental contamination and remediation work at former industrial sites. Available to private companies, nonprofit economic development agencies, or authorities that own the land. Mainly targeted towards cities. Financing is not available to the company that caused the contamination.	PA DCED in cooperation with PA DEP
Intermunicipal Projects Grants	Promotes cooperation between neighboring municipalities so as to foster increased efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of municipal services at the local level.	PA DCED
Keystone Historic Preservation Funds	Provides 50% matching grants to fund analysis, acquisition, or rehabilitation of historic sites. The site must be on the National Register of Historic Places or officially determined to be eligible for listing. The site must be accessible to the public after funding. Grants can be made to public agencies or nonprofit organizations.	PHMC
Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP)	This program provides grant funds for the preparation of community comprehensive plans and the ordinances (e.g., zoning and SALDO) to implement them. It promotes cooperation between municipalities in making sound land use decisions that follow or adhere to the Governor's Executive Order on Land Use. Priority is given to any county government acting on behalf of its municipalities, any group of two or more municipalities, or a body authorized to act on behalf of two or more municipalities. Applicants are to provide a minimum of 50% match consisting of cash or in-kind services. There are no minimum or maximum amounts.	PA DCED
National Recreational Trails Funding (Symms NRTA)	Provides grants for the acquisition and development of recreation trails (which may include trails for motorized vehicles). A 50% local match is required. Applications may be made by federal, state or local government agencies or organizations.	Federal, administered by PA DCNR

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
PA Infrastructure Investment Authority (PennVest)	Offers low-interest loans for construction and improvement of drinking water and wastewater systems. 100% grants may be available for highly-distressed communities. Mainly intended for public systems, but some private systems may be approved. Water projects are funded through the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund. Sewage projects are funded through the Clean Water Revolving Fund. PennVest is also authorized to provide loans for projects to control existing stormwater problems, such as separating stormwater from sanitary sewage. The "Advance Funding Program" provides low-interest loans for feasibility studies and engineering of systems if the utility cannot fund such work itself.	PennVest PA DEP (Bureau of Water Supply Management) — Involves both U.S. EPA and state funds
Rails to Trails, PA	Provides grants for feasibility studies, master site plans, acquisition, and improvement of former railroad lines for recreation trails. A 50% local match is required. Open to municipalities, authorities, and non-profit.	DCNR
Land & Water Conservation Fund	The Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides matching grants to state and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	National Park Service in cooperation with PA DCNR
Urban Forestry Grants / Tree Improvement Program / Mini-Grant for Planting Trees/PA Community Forest Grants	Several DCNR grants provide funding for tree planting projects on public property or along streets. Is also a Federal "America the Beautiful" grant program for tree planting.	PA DCNR
Save America's Treasures	Save America's Treasures Grants are available for preservation and/or construction work on National significant artifacts and historic structures and sites. A dollar for dollar, non-federal match is required. The maximum grant request for all projects is \$700,000.	National Park Service
Local Banks	Local banks in the Lock Haven area can contribute funding and financing toward Plan implementation, including making donations for revitalization projects.	Local Banks

Sources: Publications and internet sites of various agencies; *Pennsylvanian* magazine; PA DCED, PA DCNR, PennDOT, PA Growing Greener Websites.

Other Techniques for Funding

Pay-As-You Go

“Pay-as-you-go” refers to the practice of financing capital projects with current revenues—paying cash instead of borrowing against future revenues. The amount available to spend is the difference between current revenue collected and expenditures required for operating cost and debt service payment. Pay-as-you-go financing works well where needs are steady and modest and financial capability is adequate.

Advantages of this method include the saving of interest costs on borrowed money and the protection of borrowing capacity for unforeseen major outlays that are beyond any current year’s capability. The major disadvantage is the need to have uncommitted cash available, which often precludes the use of this financing technique for extensive capital improvements in smaller municipalities. Another disadvantage is that those benefitting from the capital improvement in the future may not have helped pay for the improvement.

“Reserve fund financing” is a variation of the pay-as-you-go method in which funds are accumulated in advance for a capital project. The funds may accumulate from surplus revenues, “earmarked” or “set aside” revenues, or from the sale of capital assets.

Bond Issues

Different types of bonds are briefly described below:

- ***General Obligation Bonds*** are backed by a municipality’s full faith and credit. General obligation bonds (principal and interest) are payable from any and all revenue sources available to the municipality. Payment on general obligation bonds may come from the general fund. The primary advantage of general obligation bonds is a lower interest rate because the municipality’s credit is pledged.
- ***Revenue Bonds*** are obligations issued to finance a revenue-producing enterprise. Principal and interest of revenue bonds is payable exclusively from the earnings of the enterprise which is financed. Revenue bonds rely exclusively on the earnings of the project financed and have no claim on the general credit or taxing power of the issuing municipality.
- ***Special Assessment Bonds*** are obligations payable through assessments levied on property directly benefitted by the construction of the project for which the obligation is issued. Such bonds generally carry a higher rate of interest than general obligation bonds but have the advantage of not being charged against the municipal debt limit.

Short-Term Notes

Some capital projects may be financed by short-term notes issued by local banks or statewide banking establishments. The interest on notes is generally less than interest on bonds, and there are no marketing costs for bond counsel, printing, or paying agents. (Short-term note financing is not permitted in some states or municipal charters, so legal restrictions must be checked.)

Authorities and Special Districts

Authorities and special districts are created in most cases to manage facilities that are supported by user charges. Redevelopment authorities, and downtown and neighborhood improvement districts are some examples. Districts with the power to tax are sometimes created for the purpose of issuing bonds, constructing facilities and making improvements that may not be self-supporting. Authorities may offer advantages for project funding, packaging and implementation. Debt incurred by an authority or special district is still part of a community's total financial obligation, even where it is not counted in the debt limit of a municipal government.

Joint Financing

Joint financing between municipal and county governments can benefit both governments and can bring about projects that would otherwise have to be deferred for many years. Joint financing frequently results in better service and lower costs for the area.

Lease-Purchase

Local governments utilizing the lease-purchase method prepare specifications for a needed public facility and take steps to have it constructed by a private company or authority. The facility is then leased by the municipality at an annual or monthly rental. At the end of the lease period, the title to the facility can be conveyed to the municipality without any future payments. The rental over the years will have paid the total original costs plus interest.

Private Gifts/Donations

Private gifts and donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations can sometimes be obtained for certain projects, such as banners, streetscape and park improvements (brick pavers, park benches, etc.), community centers, and other neighborhood projects.

Foundation Grants

Various foundations, such as the Home Depot Foundation and Wachovia Regional Foundation provide grants can be used for neighborhood improvement projects. Typically, these grants are very competitive.