

LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE
COME, SHAPE THE FUTURE



CHAPTER 3

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



Introduction

The *Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan* is a blueprint for the future of the two counties, showing how development and redevelopment may be directed to provide new economic opportunities, revitalize existing communities, preserve natural features, conserve open space, and protect historic and cultural resources throughout the 1,375-square-mile two-county area.

The *Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan* is a call to action. This chapter describes the Regional Plan implementation strategy. It includes a specific sequence of steps for the two counties, municipalities, local agencies, the state, and others to create a positive future for the two counties.

Benefits of the Plan

The *Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan* offers significant benefits to everyone. The Regional Plan benefits the two counties in the following ways:

- Sets the vision and direction for the coming decades;
- Provides a framework for decision-making;
- Identifies new opportunities for residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, cultural, and recreational activity;
- Provides implementation strategies for a more vigorous approach to land development and economic initiatives and to conservation;
- Assists in developing partnerships with residents, business operators, property owners, investors, public officials, local organizations, and public and private agency personnel for Plan implementation;
- Guides the counties' capital budget process to focus financial resources.

The Regional Plan benefits municipalities in the following ways:

- Summarizes the issues facing municipalities;
- Contains usable data, including mapping, to support a variety of local initiatives;
- Identifies areas for targeted development, consolidation and stabilization, and conservation;
- Outlines a framework for intergovernmental cooperation and action to achieve goals;
- Provides tools, models, and best practices;
- Sets the stage and strengthens opportunities for applications for government grants, loans, and permits (a proposed local action or initiative that is consistent with the Regional Plan will be more likely to gain a favorable review).

The Regional Plan benefits private developers in the following ways:

- Explains the counties' policies and strategies on growth, development, redevelopment, and conservation;
- Highlights development opportunities;
- Contains usable data, including mapping, to support development initiatives;

- Sets the stage and strengthens opportunities for applications for government grants, loans, and permits;
- Markets the area generally and specific locations for development and redevelopment.

The Regional Plan benefits local nonprofit and civic organizations in the following ways:

- Offers a cohesive vision for enhancing quality of life in the two counties;
- Provides direction as to where and how organizations can focus their efforts.

The benefits of guided growth and community revitalization may be realized only if the two counties are joined in action by local municipalities, public agencies, private organizations, developers, investors, and others. Timely, coordinated planning efforts to direct development, investment, and activity to specific areas are needed to ensure that initiatives occur in ways that will benefit residents and be sustainable over the long term. Deliberate, cooperative steps to implement the Regional Plan's goals, objectives, and policies are required in order to create a bright future for the two counties.

The Counties' Role

Each county will mobilize its resources and bring them to bear on the issues and opportunities raised by the *Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan*. The Implementation Strategy outlined in this chapter calls for a higher county profile in planning over the coming years. The Implementation Strategy also calls for a higher profile for local planning as well, with municipalities looking to the counties for assistance to help them fulfill that role. County governments will be the lead agencies in the implementation of the Regional Plan.

Municipalities need to be able to receive county assistance in preparing local plans and ordinances. Other technical planning assistance may be required. The counties will need to develop a formal planning assistance program with local governments and other planning partners. The program will include the delivery of specialized professional planning services to local governments under contractual terms and/or the distribution of small grants to municipalities to assist them in engaging their own professional planning expertise.

There is plenty of work to be done to implement the Regional Plan. Actions are required by all those influencing the future direction of the two counties, but the respective County Commissioners and planning staffs will begin the process.

County Commitment and Leadership

Following adoption, the *Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan* becomes the day-to-day policy document of each county regarding development and redevelopment. The decisions of the two counties and their agencies and authorities need to be consistent with the Regional Plan, including capital budget expenditures. Capital improvements need to be consistent with the policies of the Plan. Unequivocal support from county-

level public officials will make it easier to persuade local officials, developers, and others to take the Regional Plan seriously.

Similarly, all departments within the two counties should integrate the Regional Plan into their day-to-day work. Staff support of the Regional Plan should be a basic obligation of employment, as should the dissemination of the Regional Plan's policies.

County Planning Resources

Each county must strengthen and mobilize its resources in order to be able to make use of the Regional Plan. When the Plan is put into effect, outreach to municipalities will commence immediately upon Plan adoption and be sustained for the foreseeable future. Substantive planning issues raised by the Regional Plan will need to be followed up with further studies, research, model ordinance preparation, and other professional planning activities. Plan amendments and updates will be ongoing to ensure that the Regional Plan remains timely.

Plan implementation depends upon a much more prominent county planning role in the coming years. Each county will need a planning staff that is comparable in size and capabilities to other counties in Pennsylvania that are populous, diverse, and committed to planning as a means to achieve economic growth and a high quality of life. Within a year of adoption of the Regional Plan, there should be in place at each county a substantial planning staff, of professional planners with an adequate budget to cover the work program. Within five years of Plan adoption, each county should have a staff of at least ten planning professionals, with a corresponding commitment to an adequate budget in payroll support.

County Outreach to Municipalities

The centerpiece of the *Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan* is its Priority Areas, which are the focus of the implementation program for the Plan. This message will be conveyed in discussions with municipalities and others that are the counties' partners in Regional Plan implementation. The discussion below describes how each county will work with municipalities and other planning partners. Examining existing and proposed local land use policies, regulations, and other initiatives to ensure consistency with the Plan will be a common element of each partnership.

Each county will publicize the Regional Plan and provide information to its public and private planning partners so they can take actions necessary to support Plan implementation. The single most important group targeted for education and outreach is the two counties' municipalities. Each county will also work closely with its other partners, which will include federal, state, county, and local agencies, authorities, institutions, and the private sector, to ensure their awareness and participation.

Each county will be looking to its constituent municipalities to take actions in support of the Regional Plan's policies. Actions include adopting local comprehensive plans and ordinances that are generally consistent with the Plan and providing planning and design support for the development of designated Priority Areas in the Plan. It is critical that the

counties achieve a high degree of cooperation from local municipalities, especially their acceptance of the basic principles of the Plan.

Cooperation, cross-acceptance, and consistency are the key guidelines toward establishing a solid relationship between municipalities and the Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan. There are two major challenges, however, which are as follows:

- Each county has a large number of municipalities. Outreach, interaction, and agreement can be slowed to an ineffective pace when the number of jurisdictions is so great.
- Many local elected and appointed officials are volunteers and may not have had the opportunity to become well versed in the latest planning concepts and tools. The two counties will need to help local officials obtain a working knowledge of the Plan. Doing so will show the many advantages and opportunities that working with the counties and neighboring municipalities can provide. It will also allow discussions about planning resources, tools and programs to occur from a common basis of knowledge.

There are some possible methods that can be used to help overcome these shortcomings. Each county should identify groupings of municipalities that could function as a set for planning outreach, communication, and education and organize certain Plan implementation activities around those groupings.

Cooperation

Each county will work within each planning group of municipalities to provide initial outreach and education about the Regional Plan to local municipalities. County staff will provide planning outreach, communication, and education germane to each planning group, promote the policies of the Plan, work with local municipalities on achieving consistency with the Plan, and facilitate the establishment of an Intercounty Priority Areas Task Force, and targeted Priority Area Task Forces (See **Table 3.1**).

As Plan implementation proceeds, each county will customize its messages about planning for each planning group. Many of the Priority Areas identified in the Regional Plan cross municipal boundaries. Among other things, the outreach provided to planning groups can help to promote the cooperation of local municipalities with the county and with one another in order to make Priority Areas achieve their potential. Each county will work to promote and support inter-municipal planning, cooperative zoning, and area master planning and design guidelines consistent with the Priority Areas defined in the Regional Plan.

Cross-Acceptance and Consistency

Outreach and education is vital to help municipalities understand the potential that is expressed in the Regional Plan and to explain local roles in Plan implementation. Advancing the policies of the Regional Plan will require that local comprehensive plans

and ordinances be generally consistent with the Plan, and support the creation of new and revitalization of existing Priority Areas as directed in the Plan.

A first step will be to prepare the groundwork for a formal review of current (in general, those not more than ten years old) local plans and ordinances for their consistency with the Regional Plan. “Cross-acceptance” will be established in the form of a memorandum of understanding (MOU), in which municipalities agree to work with their county to implement the Plan. The MOU will outline the municipality’s agreement in regard to the following points:

- Municipal support for the implementation of the Regional Plan;
- Willingness to work with the county and municipal partners to implement the Regional Plan;
- Authorization for consistency reviews that will identify the manner in which local plans can be made generally consistent with the Regional Plan.

In addition to a formal letter prepared by county technical staff, consistency reviews will include roundtable discussions among local and county representatives. The letter will summarize potential inconsistencies and/or shortcomings of current plans and ordinances, outline steps that municipalities can use to achieve consistency, and identify appropriate resources.

If the comprehensive plan and implementing ordinances of a municipality are found to be generally consistent with the Regional Plan, the letter will summarize the points of consistency, and outline steps that the county and municipality may take to further support and implement the Plan.

Outreach to Other Groups

While the municipalities will be critical to the Plan’s ultimate implementation, there are many other groups that will be equally important partners in Plan implementation. The counties will provide outreach and education about the Regional Plan to key groups for all levels of government and other institutions that have an interest in the Plan, and/or are important for implementation. How each county would like to work with a group or institution to implement the Regional Plan will be central to the message. Follow up information and strategy sessions will be arranged with these groups and institutions to review the Plan and discuss how best to work together in the future.

The private sector can be a key partner and key beneficiary in the effort to address municipal planning. Creation of an Economic Alliance and Region Governmental Partnership could strengthen the working relationship between private sector leaders and public sector leaders in the two-county region. Enlisting the support of corporations and business leaders in addressing, as appropriate, those recommendations of the Plan for which the business community could provide meaningful support is essential.

Yearly Activities and Plan Updates

The chief mechanism for updating the *Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan* will be the Annual Review. County planning staff will prepare an annual report to their respective County Commissioners summarizing development activities in the county and progress on Plan implementation. If there are any amendments to the Plan to be considered for adoption, county planning staff will prepare these for consideration as part of the annual report.

The Annual Review will, as an annual agenda item, include an Annual Plan, which outlines cross-acceptance agreements to be obtained, consistency reviews to be completed, studies to be undertaken, and other initiatives to be made over the coming year. The Annual Plan will also contain a two-, three-, and five-year Action Plan.

Capital Budget Review

The approved Annual Plan will be completed in time to be considered in the preparation of the county capital budget. Proposed capital budget items will be reviewed by county staff for consistency with the Plan. Inconsistencies may indicate either the need for a change in the focus of expenditures, or an update to the *Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan*.

Potential Tools for Implementation



The major planning recommendations of the Regional Plan are summarized in Chapter 2 – *The Vision*. There are a wide variety of potential tools available to help implement these recommendations, some directly applicable to Land Use recommendations, and others more relevant to the other elements, such as Transportation, Housing, Community Facilities, Agricultural Resources, Utilities, Environmental Protection, Resources Extraction, Energy Conservation, Historic and Cultural Resources, and Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways.

To help understand which potential tools may be most applicable to which areas of the region, the tools are presented beginning on page 3-8 under headings for the Regional Plan's elements, with color-coded boxes in the left-hand margin indicating to which of the Land Use Plan major future land use designations (*Priority Areas, Mixed Density Infill Areas, Low Density Infill Areas, and Conservation Areas*) these tools apply. (Note that for the purpose of this section the four Conservation Area categories from the Land Use Plan have been consolidated into one color.)





Priority Areas:

- **City Centers**, such as downtown Scranton and Wilkes-Barre;
- **Selected Borough and Township Centers**, such as Kingston, Archbald or Clarks Summit; and
- **Transit Villages**, including the vicinity of the Viewmont Mall in Dickson City Borough and Scranton, or Shavertown Station in Kingston Township.

Infill Areas:







-  **Mixed Density Infill Areas** are located along the valleys of the Susquehanna and Lackawanna River basins between Newport Township and City of Carbondale, as well as in adjacent lands outside of the valleys surrounding Priority Areas.
-  **Low Density Infill Areas** include existing residential development in many townships as well as smaller boroughs outside of proposed rapid transit service areas. Such areas may also abut Mixed Density Infill Areas such as in the case of Lehman or Fell Townships.

Conservation Areas:

-  **Public Parks and Conserved Lands** identifies all State and County Parks as well as public and private conservation areas.
-  **Game Lands**, including all hunting and fishing areas under the Pennsylvania State Game Commission's jurisdiction.
-  **2004 Open Space Plan Conservation Areas**, determined based on conservation area attributes and the project's ability to create a connected network of open spaces and greenways as recommended in the 2004 Open Space, Greenways & Outdoor Recreation Master Plan for Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties.
-  **Additional Conservation Areas** include agricultural and wooded areas where development is generally discouraged, coupled with incentives to develop within areas designated for urban and suburban activity.

1. Potential Tools for Land Use Implementation


The Regional Plan promotes a more sustainable development pattern by encouraging infill development and redevelopment in areas with existing infrastructure and by endorsing compact, center-based development to strengthen local communities and reduce sprawl. Local governments can lead the way to a more sustainable future by ensuring their ordinances promote compact, center-based, mixed-use development. Although each community is unique, certain tools, including zoning, can help municipalities address many land use and development issues.

-  **Brownfields Redevelopment** involves the remediation and redevelopment of former industrial or contaminated sites. Such projects can revitalize urban areas and improve the quality of the environment.
-  **Business Improvement Districts** (and similar tools such as Special Improvement Districts and Neighborhood Improvement Districts) allow the coordination of business improvement activities, usually by levying a special tax on businesses in the area that will be applied directly back into the district. These activities often include maintenance agreements, façade and streetscape improvements, and security provision.
-  **Compatible Residential Infill Ordinances or Infill Design Guidelines** can guide the process of integrating new development carefully into the existing neighborhood fabric with respect to block patterns, scale, building features, landscaping, and other characteristics of the neighborhood.
-  **Conservation Area Protection Plans** take the natural resources documented in a Natural Resources Inventory and/or Open Space Plan and identify more specific plans and policies for protection and enhancement.
-  **Conservation Design Ordinances** preserve open space on a parcel by concentrating housing units on those portions of the parcel most appropriate for development. The practice arranges homes on a site in a manner such that 50 percent or more of a parcel's total land area can be set aside as common open space. This technique, also commonly known as "clustering," should be employed so that lands of the highest environmental value are preserved and connected with adjacent open spaces to reduce fragmentation. Conservation design ordinances permanently preserve natural areas, farmland, and scenic views, and result in lower environmental impacts and infrastructure requirements.
-  **Conservation Easements** are legal documents by which landowners maintain ownership but sell or donate the right to develop their property in order to conserve natural resources, viewsheds, habitat, or farmland. The organization to which the land is eased, whether a private land trust or government agency, is responsible for monitoring deed restriction compliance with current and future property owners.

-  **Dedicated Open Space Funding** programs can be set up by local governments through voter-approved ballot referendums. These programs are validated by direct voter support and raise funds through local real estate taxes, income taxes, and bonding for the express purpose of land preservation. These funds can be used to leverage other funds from county, state, or federal sources. Dedicated local funding programs are a proven method for driving successful land preservation efforts at the municipal level.

-  **Enterprise Zones** are intended to be in areas that are economically disadvantaged, and involve the receipt of state grants to undertake business development activities. Businesses located in a designated Enterprise Zone may receive tax credits, loans, or other incentives. In Pennsylvania, Keystone Opportunity Zones serve a similar function.


-  **Fee-Simple Acquisition** is the purchase of land in order to take ownership of it. A government or land preservation nonprofit may purchase undeveloped land for conservation, recreation, and/or redevelopment purposes.


-  **Form-Based Zoning** has become popular due to perceived shortcomings of traditional zoning, and is a way to regulate development to achieve specific physical design standards instead of relying solely on use and bulk standards. They allow a community to establish upfront what type and form of development they want rather than waiting to react to development proposals.


-  **Greyfields Redevelopment** involves the redevelopment of abandoned or underutilized shopping centers or strip malls. This redevelopment can often take the form of mixed-use centers and can provide the opportunity to create town centers in communities formerly lacking them.


-  **Growth Areas** can be designated by municipalities through the provision of necessary infrastructure and by zoning for higher densities. Promoting and incentivizing compact development within growth areas reduces development pressure on surrounding rural lands.


-  **Higher density development** – more people less land – can effectively protect water resources if it occurs within the framework of a more encompassing watershed strategy that considers other factors, such as the location of old and new development, preservation of critical natural lands and the use of site-specific stormwater management practices. Low Density Development when used alone consumes more land and generates more stormwater runoff than the same number of homes accommodated under a higher density scenario in a given watershed. In other words, when measured by the house, higher densities produce less stormwater runoff. When runoff is measured by the acre, limiting density does minimize water quality impacts compared to higher-density scenarios. However, when measured by the house, higher densities produce less stormwater runoff.


-  **Incentive Zoning** encourages developers to provide amenities, such as open space, recreational areas, or affordable housing, in exchange for allowing a higher density of development.


-  **Land Value Taxation** (also called two-tier or two rate taxation) increases taxes on the value of land, while reducing taxes on the value of buildings and improvements. This can encourage reinvestment in urban areas by lowering the relative cost of improving a property and raising the relative cost of allowing it to remain vacant.


-  **Live/Work Zoning** allows for structures that combine a significant amount of floor space for both residential and business use.


-  **Main Street Programs** help communities revitalize their downtowns by organizing redevelopment activities, improving design standards, and through promoting or marketing efforts.


-  **Official Maps** are ordinances, in map form, that designate existing and proposed areas for public use, such as streets, schools, parks, trails, and greenways. By identifying these areas on an official map, the municipality is announcing its intentions for these areas. When a subdivision or land development is proposed, the municipality has the option, for up to one year after final plan approval, to negotiate various ways to acquire the designated land for the intended use. Unless otherwise agreed upon, the law specifically states that the property owner is entitled to full market compensation.


-  **Overlay Zones** provide additional regulations or guidelines via a zoning ordinance on land use within their coverage areas. Overlay zones do not replace existing zones and are often used to protect natural resources, historic areas, and control access along major highways, and offer additional development opportunities.


-  **Performance Zoning** regulates development based on the specific impacts of the development on the site instead of on the specific types of uses. For example, performance zoning for an industrial development might consider vehicle traffic, air pollution, noise, and lot coverage, but not regulate what types of industry could locate in the development. Performance zoning provides municipalities with more control over the impacts of development, while giving developers more flexibility in types of permitted uses.


-  **Retail Caps** protect the economic vitality of the downtown in many communities by limiting the size of superstores. These limits may apply to the overall square footage of the store, or just to the “footprint,” which would require the store to build up rather than out.


-  **Revitalization Element or Plan** contains specific recommendations for brownfield, infill, and redevelopment sites. A targeted Priority Area Plan would be a good example (see Table 3.1).

-  **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** allows public improvement projects to be financed by future tax revenues within a designated area. These future tax revenues are derived from the anticipated increase in land value that these improvements will create.

 **Traditional Neighborhood Development** applies historic development patterns to new development, encouraging compact, center-based development with a mix of uses in a pedestrian-friendly, village-type setting. Important features of traditional neighborhood development include a connected street grid, the use of back alleys to access garages, shallow setbacks, and front porches.


 **Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)**, direct growth into designated areas called “receiving areas,” and direct growth away from rural areas targeted for preservation, called “sending areas.” TDRs accomplish this by setting up a market for development rights, which can be bought and sold. Rural landowners can profit by selling their right to develop their land in the future, while still maintaining ownership of their land. Landowners who purchase development rights can develop their properties in the receiving area at higher densities than would otherwise be allowed. TDRs enable municipalities to create center-based, compact development that is more efficient to service and maintain.


 **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)** encourages compact, mixed-use development near transit stations. TOD is pedestrian friendly and encourages the use of public transit. These areas may become or reinforce existing town centers. TOD zoning districts are often adopted as overlay zones; they do not replace the original zoning. In Pennsylvania, a municipality may also adopt a Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID), which enables communities to designate a TRID district and set up “value capture” provisions, whereby increases in land values generated by new public investment in the district are then “captured” in a manner similar to TIF to pay for that investment or other public improvements in the district.


 **Water Supply Planning** – The Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) was amended in 2000 to require the inclusion of a plan for the reliable supply of water in the preparation of local comprehensive plans. Planning for adequate supplies of clean water is just as important as planning for roads, businesses, and schools.


2. Potential Tools for Transportation Implementation


Compact development patterns, particularly transit-oriented and mixed-use development, increase accessibility between origins and destinations. Providing facilities such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and multiuse trails, as well as improving transit service, can help to encourage the use of these more sustainable modes. Widening crosswalks, retiming traffic signals, and providing wider sidewalks, benches, and lighting will benefit residents of all ages.

 **Access Management** provisions improve safety and efficiency on roadways by limiting and controlling access points. By linking land use and transportation planning strategies, access management can reduce congestion and accidents without major capital improvements. Access management tools may involve shared driveways for local businesses, improved signage, parallel access roads, or similar techniques. Access management can often be accomplished in conjunction with the state department of transportation's Highway Occupancy Permit process. County and local governments can issue Highway Occupancy Permits as well.


 **Complete Streets** design standards make roads safer and more user friendly for bicyclists, pedestrians, the disabled, the elderly, and drivers by including wide sidewalks, bicycle lanes, raised crosswalks and medians, audible traffic signals, bus pullouts, and other design elements that support safe, alternative transportation.


 **Context-Sensitive Design/ Context-Sensitive Solutions** recognize that roadway improvements should not incorporate a one-size-fits-all approach, but should instead reflect their surrounding land use. Depending on whether the roadway is in an urban, suburban, or rural area affects the roadway width, presence of parking, and appropriate speed limit.


 **Green Fleet and Commute** programs call for the purchase of fuel-efficient and alternative fuel vehicles and encourage employees to use public transportation or carpool to work.


 **(Parking) Pricing or Metering Strategies** in locations where the amount of available parking is scarce and/or parking turnover is encouraged.


 **(Parking) Dedicated and/or Preferred Parking** for bicycles, vanpools, carpools, car-sharing, and low-emitting and fuel-efficient vehicles.


 **(Parking) Alternative Parking Standards** include flexible parking provisions such as Shared Parking, Reserve Parking, and Fee-in-Lieu of Parking.


 **(Parking) Sustainable Practices in Parking Design** include the use of recycled concrete and asphalt, pervious paving, stormwater best practices, and heat island preventing treatments.

 **(Parking) Revisit Minimum Parking Standards** to ensure that required parking supply does not exceed demand and is sensitive to the local context. In some cases, such as in TODs or historic villages, Parking Maximums may be appropriate.

 **Roundabouts** are circular intersections with specific design and traffic control features. Key features include yield control of entering traffic, channelized approaches, and appropriate geometric curvature to slow speeds. Roundabouts provide substantially better operational and safety characteristics than older traffic circles and rotaries and are safer than comparable signalized intersections.

 **Sidewalk Standards** in a municipal subdivision and land development ordinance require sidewalks be included on all subdivision and site development plans.

 **Traffic Calming** techniques can reduce traffic speeds by incorporating physical elements, such as speed humps, narrow lanes, wide sidewalks, diagonal or parallel street parking, and central medians with landscaping, into roadway design to modify driver behavior.

 **Traffic Signal Systems** use timing and signal coordination to manage the flow of traffic volumes along a corridor. In municipalities where congestion is a serious concern, the possibility of implementing closed-loop traffic signal systems should be explored in coordination with the state department of transportation.

The transportation plan that is required to implement the combined two-county vision requires an investment plan that is focused on asset management and multimodal improvement. The projects listed in the tables below focus on the primary program areas of asset management.

The plan focuses on education and involvement to allow the transportation system stakeholders to understand and craft a program of projects.

- Closer linkage between the TIP and the Long Range Transportation Plan(LRTP)
- Implementation of current statewide priorities such as the accelerated bridge program and focus on asset management
- Focus on critical asset and performance measurement
- Better focus on existing plans and tools and making sure they are used to feed all planning efforts (GIS tools, CMS studies, bridge risk assessment)
- Identifying projects that may be able to serve/address multiple issues/ modes
- Prioritize projects that support the plan goals
- Prioritize projects that have private and local funding
- Develop strategies for assisting communities with roadway rehabilitation to make urban areas more attractive for investment and residential living
- Enhanced communication and coordination among state, county, and local municipalities regarding highway/bridge needs and funding assistance.

Project Listing

The complete list of highway, bridge and transit projects prioritized for implementation of this long range plan has been included in the Appendices at the end of this document and has been provided to the two counties and to PennDOT in a program development manual for their continuous use and adjustment. The projects were prioritized using the process described in Chapter 4 of this document and have been fiscally constrained using the analysis described in Chapter 4. The list includes all projects currently on the TIP and long range plan. **Figure 3.1** illustrates these projects and allows the reader to see the spatial relation of the types of projects being proposed in the plan.

Performance Measures

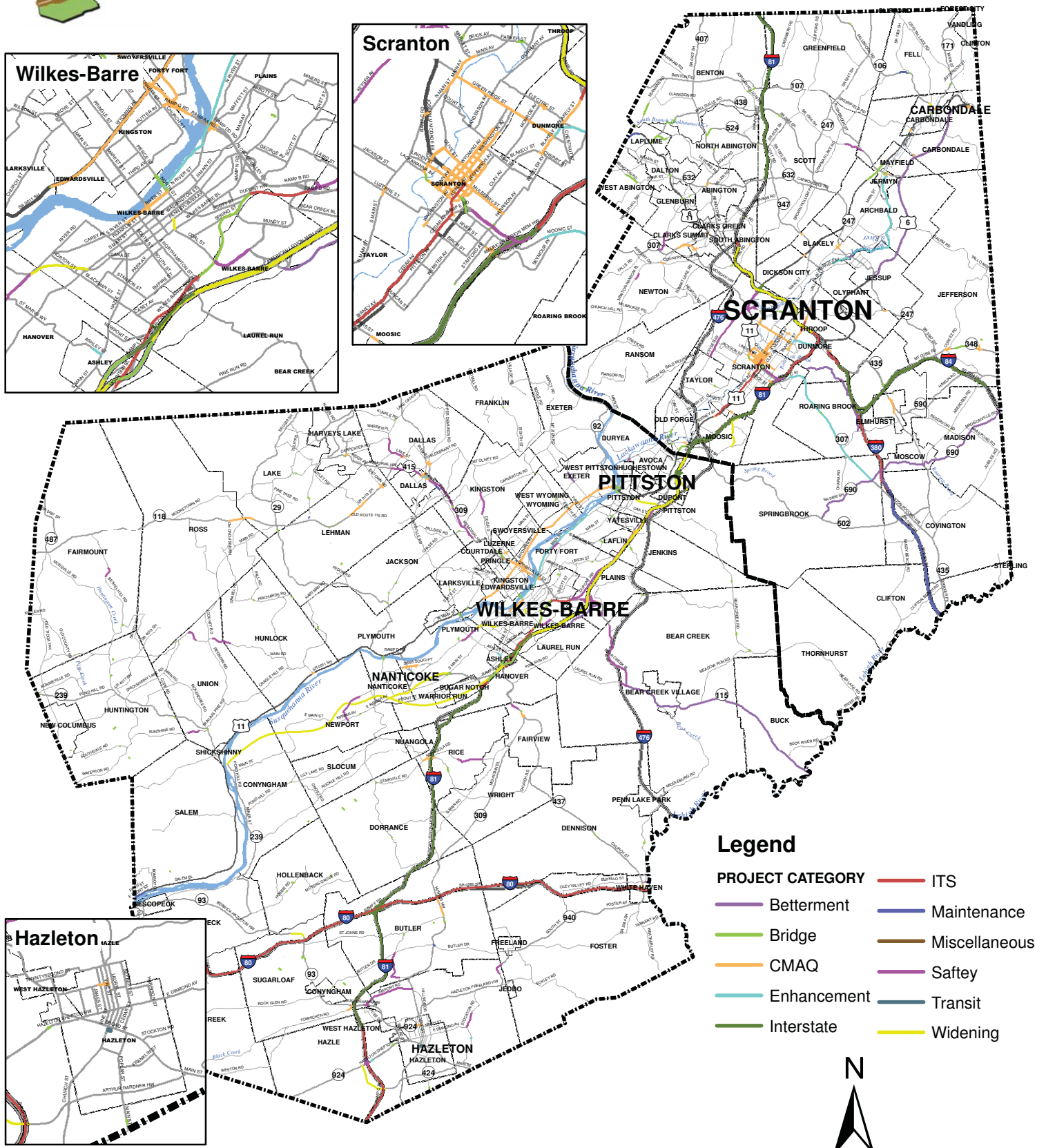
The key to making this plan successful and a starting point for the future and future compliance with the direction of the transportation system at the federal level will be measuring system performance. With the development of this plan, evaluation of system performance is a challenge without the travel demand modeling tool. Therefore, the first step for the region may be the development of a travel demand model tool that can be used for future updates and monitoring. Outside of this recommendation, this plan has identified several performance indicators that can be tracked every four years to give the stakeholders a better idea of if the plan is working or not. These metrics should be revisited every four years and prioritization criteria adjusted to assure the region is growing in a manner that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan and the long range transportation plan.

Several key transportation measures have been identified in Chapter 4 and should be used as a baseline in assessing the plan four years from now. The reader is encouraged to study those measures and the prioritization criteria to help focus the plan's energy in the future. Using the data and analysis in Chapter 4 as a baseline and the goals and objectives established in the plan as the tools for implementation will allow the two county region to measure the performance of the transportation system in four years. This plan has included a detailed analysis methodology that can be maintained and duplicated in future efforts. This information is a key to measuring how well the transportation system is improving be it transit level of service or number of structurally deficient bridges.




LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROJECTS


Figure 3.1





3. Potential Tools for Housing Implementation

Flexible housing types, sizes, and designs can provide housing opportunities for families and individuals with a range of incomes, help the region be less energy dependent, and provide housing choices. To help seniors, municipalities can adopt policies to support aging in place. Local codes that allow increased densities and integrated land uses, for example, can help improve access services.

-  **Housing Maintenance and Rehabilitation Programs** targeted to elderly or low-income homeowners can help preserve the existing housing stock, and modification programs that make units more accessible can help seniors stay in their homes longer.

-  **Housing Units above Commercial and Retail Spaces** can provide affordable housing opportunities and enhance the vitality of centers.

-  **Inclusionary Zoning** ordinances require either a mandatory or a voluntary (opt-in) percent of affordable units to be built in a development in exchange for nonmonetary entitlements from the municipality, such as density bonuses, fee waivers, or relaxed parking regulations.

-  **Universal Design Standards** are guidelines for the built environment and products that emphasize ease of use, accessibility, and attractiveness for people of all abilities.

4. Potential Tools for Community Facilities Implementation





Planned improvements/expansions in community facilities will allow residents' needs to be met over the course of the planning period. Facility demands range from health and public safety, to recreation, to education and workforce development. Benefits from investing in community facilities include diversifying employment opportunities and increasing entrepreneurial and workforce capacity.

The Bi-County Hazard Mitigation Plan for Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties recommends that public facilities not be located in unsafe areas, such as floodplains, steep slopes, etc.

- ■ **Smart Location of Public Facilities** situates universities, community colleges, high schools, libraries, senior centers, community centers, post offices, State and federal offices, municipal offices, and similar facilities in areas that are accessible by a variety of modes, and it integrates them into the fabric of the existing community. This increases the vibrancy of existing centers and developed areas and better serves the public.


5. Potential Tools for Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Implementation


Green infrastructure investments ensure the continual creation and maintenance of networks of greenspace and access to parklands.


-  **Greening Vacant Lots** transforms otherwise derelict parcels from sources of blight into valuable pieces of community green infrastructure.
-  **Neighborhood Parks** provide much-needed natural vegetation and trees in urban settings and provide all the environmental and aesthetic benefits inherent in community green infrastructure.
-  **Parkland Dedications** require developers to provide public open space within their developments, or to contribute a fee-in-lieu of dedicated land, to be used toward land preservation projects elsewhere.
-  **Trails** are a type of linear park that can be integrated into developed communities, thereby creating a linear green feature and providing alternative transportation.


6. Potential Tools for Historic and Cultural Resources Implementation


Historic preservation includes the protection and maintenance of important places from the past, including buildings, neighborhoods, sites, and landscapes. By protecting, preserving, and encouraging the use and reuse of their historic resources, municipalities can maximize efficient use of their existing infrastructure, curb sprawling development patterns, and enhance local identity and community character.


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Certified Local Governments are designated by federal or state preservation agencies and are then eligible for various forms of technical assistance, training, and participation in statewide preservation programs.
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Demolition Ordinances require that structures be examined for historical significance before their demolition is permitted.
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Historic Overlay Zones provide additional regulations for the development of land and modification of buildings in the area that they cover. Historic overlay zones are often applied to historic town centers to protect their unique architecture and character.
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Historic Preservation Planning allows municipalities to identify goals, inventory historic resources, and formulate and implement strategies for historic preservation.
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Historic Resources Design Standards help to ensure that the visual characteristics that make a historic district unique are preserved. They can be useful tools if adopted as part of a historic overlay zone or in a local historic district.
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Historical Commissions/Societies, or historic architectural review boards, are local government bodies that societies oversee historic preservation planning and decision making in their community. Establishing historical commissions is often necessary to implement other local historic preservation efforts.
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Local Historic Districts can be created by municipalities to preserve significant historic areas. Local historic district ordinances can preserve community character by regulating the erection, alteration, restoration, and demolition of buildings within the district.
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The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation. The list recognizes properties of national, state, or local significance, gives added consideration in the planning for federally assisted projects, and makes properties eligible for certain tax benefits and grant programs. Listing in the National Register does not prevent properties from being altered or demolished.
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Village Preservation Ordinances can serve to protect historic villages by ensuring that future development, as well as modifications to existing structures, is consistent with the historic context and form of the village.








7. Potential Tools for Agricultural Resources Implementation









Protecting farmland is necessary to maintain the viability of agriculture, to protect the cultural and physical fabric of rural areas, and to encourage sustainable growing practices while conserving natural resources.

- **Agricultural Conservation Easements** are the most effective measures for preventing the development of farmland. They are legally binding instruments which go with the deed and prevent development forever.
- **Agricultural Zoning** allows municipalities to protect rural and agricultural areas by encouraging agriculture as a primary use.
- ■ ■ **Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Ordinances** can set municipal policy and implementation to encourage more local food production and distribution through goal and vision statements, effective agricultural zoning, right-to-farm provisions, on-farm direct marketing provisions, provisions for healthy food retail, including farmers' markets and community gardens, urban/suburban livestock ordinances, and innovative agricultural districts.
- **No-Till Farming** is a farming practice introduced in the 1980s and is growing in popularity with environmentally savvy farmers. No-till farming cuts down on the amount of fertilizer and soil washed away in rainstorms and also reduces carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere by eliminating the entire plowing system commonly used by farmers. Lackawanna County's Conservation District provides a four row no-till corn planter and a no-till drill for rent. The equipment available for rent is part of Lackawanna County's no-till farming program. Luzerne County's Conservation District provides information on no-till farming to area farmers, and some farmers do use no-till farming in their operations.
- ■ ■ **Procurement Policy Preference for Local Food Businesses** can be established by local governments to support local farmers, processors, and food businesses, circulating money within the local economy. Municipalities can also sponsor farmers' markets and CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) pick-up sites, buy local food on an ad-hoc basis for special events, and make public land available for community gardens.
- **Right-to-Farm Provisions** protect farmers from nuisance complaints of odor, noise, and traffic, as long as the farm is in keeping with good management practices. These are protected by Agricultural Security Areas and Agricultural Communities and Rural Environment (ACRE) legislation in Pennsylvania.
- **Sliding Scale Zoning** is a type of agricultural preservation zoning that regulates the amount of nonfarm development by the size of an agricultural parcel. A greater density of development is permitted on small parcels with less potential for major agricultural uses, while such density is proportionally limited on large parcels that contain major active or commercial farms.

8. Potential Tools for Environmental Protection Implementation


The protection of natural resources is fundamental to protecting water quality, air quality, soil health, biodiversity, and wildlife habitat, and for providing opportunities for outdoor recreation and environmental education.


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Buffer Zones require trees and vegetation between different uses, such as residential and commercial, or between roads and buildings.
- 
Environmental Resource Inventories (ERIs), that may include Natural Resource Inventory and/or Open Space Plans, are compilations of factual narrative and mapped information about the natural characteristics of a municipality. They identify critical natural resources and provide a policy basis for the establishment of resource protection ordinances.
- 
Floodplain Management Ordinances control the amount and type of development in the 100-year floodplain or designated flood hazard area to prevent property damage and loss of life from flooding.
- 
Impaired Waters are waterbodies that do not meet their designated uses – including aquatic life, recreation, and drinking water - and are identified on the Pennsylvania Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report. DEP and the EPA work in conjunction with other organizations to develop a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for each impaired waterbody. A TMDL defines the allowable pollutant loads a waterbody can receive from point and nonpoint sources and still be able to maintain its designated water quality standards.
- 
Landscape Ordinances promote site-appropriate native plants and set minimum thresholds for the use of naturalized landscaping in parking lots and other forms of new commercial and residential development.
- 
Source Water Protection is important because the Upper/Middle Susquehanna and Delaware Regions supply several large communities with drinking water. Groundwater, rivers, and lakes in the region face potential contamination from a number of sources, such as development, agriculture, old septic systems, waste disposal sites, and abandoned mines. Pennsylvania state agencies are working with organizations in the region to help assess the health of surface water and groundwater, identify point and nonpoint sources of pollution, prevent contamination, restore degraded waters, preserve pristine waters, increase public awareness of existing problems and help the public utilize best management practices.
- 
Special Protection Waters are water bodies designated special protection to prevent activities that could degrade water quality and therefore prevent these waters from meeting their uses. These special designations include federal or state Scenic/Recreational Rivers, High Quality and Exceptional Value Waters and Class A Wild Trout Streams.


-  **Specimen and Special Tree Protections** require developers to protect trees of a certain size, species, or other community value.
-  **Stream Corridor Protection Ordinances** require development to be set back from stream banks, floodplains, and wetlands, and require the maintenance of natural vegetation within the corridor. Buffer widths typically range from 25 to 300 feet, depending on the type and size of the stream and the community's goals.
-  **Street Tree Ordinances** identify municipal responsibilities for planting, maintaining, and removing trees, and establishes a tree commission with authority to guide the management of public street and park trees.
-  **A Tree Inventory** provides specific data on street and park tree location, species, condition, and maintenance needs to manage budgeting, staffing, and maintenance of trees.
-  **A Tree Management Plan** for street and park trees addresses species diversity, planting needs, hazardous trees, insect and disease problems, and delivery of regular care, such as pruning and watering.
-  **Tree Planting and Care Standards** requiring trees to be shown on subdivision and site development plans should be included in subdivision and land development ordinances. Requirements should contain strict design standards that require the protection of trees during the development process, replacement or mitigation, and maintenance after development.
-  **Wetlands Management Ordinances** protect environmentally sensitive wetland areas by prohibiting any disturbance of delineated wetlands from residential, commercial, or industrial development. Like stream corridor protection ordinances, wetlands management ordinances can require maintenance of vegetated riparian buffers around wetlands.
-  **Woodland Protection/Percent Tree Cover** requires a certain percentage of tree cover to be preserved, sometimes on a sliding scale, depending on the type of development and steepness of slope.


9. Potential Tools for Utilities & Energy Conservation Implementation


Implementing measures to reduce energy costs will lower local governments' operating costs, while creating a demand for workers and providers of energy efficiency and renewable energy products and services. Energy-efficiency improvements also present opportunities to improve air quality and modernize aging infrastructure. Cost-saving measures to reduce energy and greenhouse gas emissions have proven successful for local government operational sectors, and include buildings, fleets, outdoor lighting, and wastewater treatment facilities.


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Alternative Energy Ordinances ensure that alternative energy – wind, solar, geothermal, and biofuel – production is cost effective and compatible with existing land uses in a community.


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Baseline Energy Analysis of Municipal Operations enables local governments to determine the areas in which they are consuming the greatest amounts of energy at the greatest cost. By conducting a simple evaluation of operational sectors and individual buildings with easy-to-use tools, local governments can focus energy reduction efforts.


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Bioswales are long, naturally vegetated, shallow depressions designed to intercept sheet flow (runoff that flows over the ground as a thin, even layer rather than concentrating in a channel) from surrounding land.


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Community green infrastructure is a network of different types of greenspace and green features that provide natural ecosystem functions and enhance the livability of developed communities. For example, community green infrastructure in the form of trees and green streets can boost property values, support retail activity, improve health, protect water quality, reduce stormwater runoff, clean air, store and sequester carbon, provide wildlife habitat, and increase roadway safety.


- 
Energy Audits assess how much energy a building consumes, identify measures that can make a building more efficient, and provide information about potential energy cost savings. Even a simple no-cost audit of a building's plug load, which can account for over 20% of a building's electric energy usage, can identify low- or no-cost energy saving measures.


- 
Energy-Efficient Purchasing, standards, and specifications can ensure that appliances, information technology equipment, lighting, and control equipment have the greatest efficiency for their use; while reducing utility bills and lowering operation and maintenance costs.


- 
Energy-Efficient Traffic Signals and Streetlights are an opportunity for municipalities to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions with new lighting technologies, such as high pressure sodium, LED, or induction fluorescent.


-  **Energy Performance Contracting (EPC)** allows local governments to audit and retrofit several buildings and facilities for energy efficiency. The benefits of an energy performance contract may include limited upfront capital expenditures, and do lead to long-term energy cost savings. The EPC can be financed through a tax-exempt “municipal lease,” which is considered a non-balance sheet debt and can be paid back through savings in the operating budget.


-  **Green Building and Energy-Efficient Design Standards** for public and private buildings can be integrated into building and zoning codes as a way to demonstrate environmental leadership and reduce energy use in buildings. These practices can be encouraged in local communities through public sector leadership or through incentives. Incentives can take a variety of forms, either financial (such as tax rebates, fee waivers, or cash payments) or nonfinancial (such as development bonuses in terms of increased floor area ratio, building height, density, expedited permit processing, or fast track review).

-  **Green Roofs** utilize plant vegetation in the place of typical rooftop covers (shingles, tiles, membrane, tar, etc.). A green roof consists of several layers below the plants, including soil, drainage layer, a root inhibitor, and up to several layers of thick, waterproof materials making up the base of the surface. Green roofs provide cooling benefits to the building and help to counteract the urban heat island effect. Installation costs are competitive with traditional roofs and often require less maintenance.

-  **Green Streets** involve a range of techniques within and adjacent to the street right-of-way that serve to integrate stormwater runoff. Examples include tree trenches, naturalized retention basins, and rain gardens.


-  **Naturalized Retention Basins** create a natural flow channel for rainwater and use dense tree, shrub, wildflower, and tall meadow grass vegetation to slow down and filter runoff. Naturalized retention basins add aesthetic beauty, which increases property values, while recharging water tables, reducing erosion, and improving water quality.

-  **Rain Gardens** are small bioretention areas – shallow depressions made up of a mixture of sand and soils planted with native vegetation – that serve to filter stormwater runoff from their immediate surroundings.


-  **Stormwater Ordinances** set standards for the amount of impermeable pavement, peak flow runoff, and required landscaping for developments. Steep Slope Ordinances limit development on steep and moderate slopes to reduce erosion and prevent slope collapse.

10. Potential Tools for Resources Extraction Implementation

Opportunities for exploration of alternative energy sources and raw materials may continue to include resource extraction. It is becoming increasingly important that these future practices should include stricter safety measures, processes with fewer impacts, and reductions in carbon emissions. Protection of the natural ecosystem promotes safe drinking water and air quality.

 **Carbon Emission Rights Trading** can allow extraction operators to participate in emission reduction practices at market value through technology/product standards, production tax credits for non-fossil energy production, and tax credits for alternative energy use.

 **Marcellus Shale Gas Extraction** should be controlled to the degree possible, through zoning and land development regulations.

 **Mine Area Reclamation** should include a prioritization strategy based on the Regional Plan's Land Use Plan, beginning with Priority and Infill Areas located in areas that have been disturbed by mining activities.

An Implementation Strategy for the Regional Plan – Objectives, Actions, Responsible Parties, Timing & Costs

While there are many potential tools for implementing the Regional Plan (see above), there are a more limited number of essential actions that are required in order to advance the objectives of the Plan. These are listed in **Table 3.1**, along with the responsible parties for these actions, the timing of them, and the kinds of costs that may be associated with them.

An Action Plan for Implementation

Table 3.2 describes initial and subsequent critical actions needed to implement the Plan, including internal and external county coordination. Also included is enlisting the services of public and private agencies and organizations at all levels in order to coordinate policies and leverage available technical and financial resources.

Adoption of the Regional Plan implies a commitment to follow through with the establishment or revitalization of Priority Areas, as designated in the Plan. Through the Regional Plan, the counties have identified specific locations for investment, activity, development, and redevelopment. The establishment of an Inter-county Priority Areas Task Force to determine four Priority Areas that should be targeted in the short term for development and for which focused master/urban design plans need to be prepared, and the establishment of Targeted Priority Area Task Forces for each targeted Priority Area, to oversee the preparation of focused master/urban design plans, are two critical early-action items for the implementation of the Regional Plan.

Table 3.1
Implementation Strategy for the Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan

Land Use

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>A. Promote municipal consistency with the Lackawanna-Luzerne Regional Plan.</p>	<p>1. Plan together, with intermunicipal consultation, cooperation, and consensus-building, and with the involvement of the counties, State, and other planning partners, as appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • DCED • Other State Agencies • Other Planning Partners • Developers/Major Land Owners 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
	<p>2. Establish an Intercounty Priority Areas Task Force to determine the 4 Priority Areas that should be targeted in the short term for development and for which focused master/urban design plans need to be prepared.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies • Chambers of Commerce • Industrial Dvlpmnt. Agencies 	<p>Now + 1 yr.</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
	<p>3. Establish Targeted Priority Area Task Forces for each Targeted Priority Area, to oversee the preparation of focused master/urban design plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • Other County Agencies • Chambers of Commerce • Industrial Dvlpmnt. Agencies 	<p>Short-Term (1-2 years).</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
	<p>4. Limit the amount, extent, and intensity of new development outside designated Priority Areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • DCED, PennDOT, DEP • Other State Agencies 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>

Land Use (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>B. Direct development and redevelopment to Priority Areas as identified in the Land Use Plan.</p>	<p>5. Enact new county zoning and Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO) regulations (Luzerne County).</p> <p>1. Devise focused master/urban design plans and new zoning district regulations for Targeted Priority Areas in the short term and other Priority Areas in the medium and long term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luzerne County Planning • Economic Development Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Targeted Priority Areas Task Forces • Local Governing Bodies • Other County Agencies • DCED • Other State Agencies • Economic Development Partners 	<p>Targeted Priority Areas – Short-Term (1-2 years).</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p> <p>Consultant fees to prepare Priority Area plans and Priority Area regulations.</p>
<p>2. Produce and distribute marketing brochures to solicit private partners to participate in the development/redevelopment of Priority Areas.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Intercounty Priority Area Task Force • Targeted Priority Area Task Forces • Local Governing Bodies • Other County Agencies 	<p>When master/urban design plans are in final draft form.</p>	<p>Consultant fees to prepare brochures.</p>

Land Use (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
	<p>3. Review and approve land development plans for Priority Areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Priority Area Task Forces • Local Planning Commissions • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • PennDOT, DEP, other State Agencies 	<p>When final land development plans are ready.</p>	<p>Some review costs may be passed on to developers.</p>
	<p>4. Construct land developments in Priority Areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers • Local Municipalities • PennDOT • Permit Agencies 	<p>When final land development plans are approved.</p>	<p>Developers, possibly PennDOT and/or others.</p>
<p>C. Establish Priority Areas as compact, intensive mixed-use centers for living, working, and playing</p>	<p>1. Formulate master/urban design plans that incorporate mixed-use buildings, civic space, community facilities, and 'complete' streets, including sidewalks, crosswalks, landscaping, pedestrian-oriented lighting, transit stops, bicycle lanes, and on-street parking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Priority Area Task Forces • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • Chambers of Commerce • Economic Development Agencies 	<p>Targeted Priority Areas – Short-Term (1-2 years). Other Priority Areas – as set by schedule for Priority Areas development.</p>	<p>Consultant fees to prepare Priority Area plans and Priority Area regulations.</p>

Land Use (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
	<p>2. Adopt new development regulations for each Priority Area to achieve a mixing of uses and use tools such as form-based zoning and design controls to gain pedestrian-scaled settings and land development plans that follow through on the guidelines of the master/urban design plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Priority Area Task Forces • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Chambers of Commerce • Economic Development Agencies 	<p>When master/urban design plans are in final draft form.</p>	<p>Consultant fees to prepare Priority Area regulations.</p>

Transportation

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>A. Continue to promote an asset management focus and redevelopment of critical assets to promote beneficial land use densities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor the status of existing assets via data and information provided in the plan. Specifically track structurally deficient bridges and roadway International Roughness Index. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPO • PennDOT 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Provide new and/or upgraded transit service for Priority Areas, including internal circulation and connections to external destinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit Providers • TMAs • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • PennDOT • Destination Partners 	<p>In time for first new occupants and thereafter.</p>	<p>Developer or corporate entity may pay for internal service.</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Implement the recently-completed Route Analyses recommendations and promote the transit agencies' consolidation efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit Providers • TMAs • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • PennDOT • Destination Partners 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
<p>B. Consider new multimodal capacity that supports priority areas identified in the Plan as funds become available.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilize project prioritization criteria to prioritize projects for consideration on the next TIP update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPO 	<p>Within two years</p>	

Transportation (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
C. Adjust criteria for project prioritization as warranted, based on changing regulations and funding availability	1. Revise and modify the project prioritization criteria for use in the next Regional Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPO • PennDOT • Stakeholders • Chambers of Commerce • Industrial Development Agencies 	Now	
D. Promote the use of new GIS analysis tools developed as part of this Plan.	2. Encourage the use of GIS to complete new project screening forms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PennDOT District 4-0 • PennDOT Central Office • Lackawanna County • Luzerne County 	Within four years	
E. Promote a more performance based measurement and analysis of the transportation system.	1. Develop a travel demand model for the two county region that would allow better evaluation and tracking of transportation system performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PennDOT District 4-0 • PennDOT Central Office • Lackawanna County • Luzerne County 	Within four years	

Housing

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>A. Support a variety of housing opportunities, including affordable housing, in the Priority Areas identified in the Land Use Plan.</p>	<p>1. Encourage municipalities to develop provisions in their zoning ordinances and SALDOS to achieve a mixing of uses and the inclusion of multi-family, live-work, and accessible and visitable units.</p> <p>2. Except as noted below (Housing Objective B), direct all funding for new housing and supporting infrastructure to Priority Areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Priority Area Task Forces • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Institute for Public Policy 	<p>When master/urban design plans are in final draft form.</p>	<p>Consultant fees to prepare Priority Area regulations.</p>
<p>B. Encourage infill housing and improve the quality of the existing housing stock in established communities in Priority and Mixed Density Infill Areas.</p>	<p>1. Complete studies of vacant and abandoned properties in Priority and Mixed Density Infill Areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies • Local Governing Bodies • DCED • Other State Agencies 	<p>Now and thru planning period</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
	<p>1. Complete studies of vacant and abandoned properties in Priority and Mixed Density Infill Areas.</p> <p>2. Direct strategic rehabilitation of housing units to stabilize and revitalize established communities in Priority Areas and Mixed Density Infill Areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies • Local Governing Bodies • DCED • Other State Agencies • Institute for Public Policy 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time and/or consultant fees to conduct study.</p>
			<p>Now and thru planning period</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>

Housing (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
C. Promote the use of green building techniques and energy efficient housing design.	1. Provide information on county and municipal websites to encourage housing developers to use the LEED or a similar certification process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies • Local Governing Bodies 	Now and thru planning period	Agency staff time, for the most part.
	2. Adopt building Code and/or SALDO regulations and guidelines that provide incentives for green building techniques and energy efficient housing design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning 	Short-Term (1-2 years).	Possible consultant fees to prepare regulations and guidelines.

Community Facilities

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>A. Provide new and expanded public and private facilities close to transportation hubs to maximize accessibility for patrons by a variety of modes.</p>	<p>1. Construct new and upgraded facilities such as universities, community colleges, high schools, libraries, senior centers, community centers, post offices, State and federal offices, and municipal offices in concert with Priority Areas development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Priority Area Task Forces • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • Other County Agencies • School Districts • Community Colleges • Other Educational Institutions • State Agencies • Federal Agencies • Developers 	<p>Targeted Priority Areas – Short-Term</p> <p>Other Priority Areas – as set by schedule for Priority Areas development.</p>	<p>Agency staff time. Consultant fees. Developer may pay for facilities as part of Plan approvals.</p>
	<p>2. Develop public and private adult day care centers, senior centers, licensed personal care facilities, and any other age-related facilities to care for the counties' aging population in concert with Priority Areas development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Human Services Department • Luzerne County Human Services Division • Public and private providers 	<p>Start now, especially for Targeted Priority Areas.</p>	<p>Agency staff time. Developer may pay for facilities as part of Plan approvals.</p>
<p>B. Encourage inter-municipal cooperation in the provision of local services.</p>	<p>Provide workshops for local municipalities on regional servicing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • PA Local Government Academy • PSATS • DCED 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part. Possible consultant fees.</p>

Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>A. Conserve open space.</p>	<p>1. Set conservation priorities from Conservation Area identified in the Land Use Plan and the 2004 Open Space, Greenways, & Outdoor Recreation Master Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Lackawanna County Parks & Recreation • Local Governing Bodies • Land Trusts & Conservancies • DCNR, DEP 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
	<p>2. Provide a variety of incentives, regulations, and guidelines to ensure that development occurs in a manner that also results in open space being permanently protected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Luzerne County Planning 	<p>Short-Term (1-2 years).</p>	<p>Possible consultant fees to prepare incentives, regulations, & guidelines.</p>
<p>B. Establish trails & greenways that provide connections between people, recreational facilities, and cultural facilities and other significant public areas</p>	<p>1. Identify the trail and greenway network that will connect Priority Areas to one another.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Lackawanna County Parks & Recreation • Local Governing Bodies • Land Trusts & Conservancies • Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority 	<p>Short-Term (1-2 years).</p>	<p>Agency staff time and possible consultant fees.</p>

Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
	<p>2. Encourage the construction of the trail and greenway network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Parks & Recreation • Local Governing Bodies • Land Trusts & Conservancies • Foundations • DCNR, DEP • Developers • Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority 	<p>Thru the planning period</p>	<p>Mixture of public & private funding for land and/or easement acquisitions and physical construction.</p>
	<p>3. Facilitate public access to and along riverfronts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Lackawanna County Parks & Recreation • Local Governing Bodies • Land Trusts & Conservancies • Foundations • DCNR, DEP • Developers • Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority • Lackawanna River Corridor Association • Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority 	<p>Thru planning period</p>	<p>Mixture of public & private funding for land and/or easement acquisitions and physical construction.</p>

Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>C. Expand the parks system to serve existing and future populations, particularly in Priority Areas</p>	<p>Establish new local parks, including civic squares near transportation hubs, tot lots, and small green spaces in Priority Areas and Mixed Density Infill Areas, and larger parks toward the edge of Infill Areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Lackawanna County Parks & Recreation • Local Governing Bodies and Park & Recreation Depts. • Land Trusts & Conservancies • Foundations • DCNR, DEP • Developers 	<p>Thru planning period</p>	<p>Mixture of public & private funding for acquisition, construction, and operations.</p>
<p>D. Raise public awareness of the benefits of greenways and open space</p>	<p>Assist local environmental groups, chambers of commerce, and tourism promotion agencies in conducting marketing programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Lackawanna County Parks & Recreation • Local Governing Bodies and Park & Recreation Depts. • Land Trusts & Conservancies • Foundations • DCNR, DEP 	<p>Now and thru planning period</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>

Historic & Cultural Resources

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
A. Identify and promote historic and cultural resources.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a comprehensive survey of resources in all municipalities and prepare a searchable regional database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • Local Historical Societies • Local Foundations • PHMC 	Medium-Term (3-5 years)	PHMC grants, local volunteers, and agency staff time.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Coordinate with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) yearly to receive updated electronic versions of the National and State Register listed and eligible resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning 	Now and thru planning period.	Agency staff time, for the most part.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Prepare brochures describing historic resources, historic tour opportunities, and counties' websites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • Local Historical Societies • Local Foundations • PHMC 	Medium-Term (3-5 years)	\$10,000 to \$15,000 yearly
B. Protect historic and cultural resources.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide development incentives to preserve resources, including density bonuses, permitted uses relief, parking requirements relief, and tax abatements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies 	Targeted Priority Areas – Short-Term (1-2 years). Other areas – Med.-Term (3-5 years)	Dependent on the incentive
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Use historic overlay district zoning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning 	Now and as surveys are completed	Agency staff time, for the most part.

Historic & Cultural Resources (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
C. Utilize cultural resources as a tool to stimulate economic development.	1. Identify resources with characteristics likely to appeal to investors and tourism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies • Business Organizations 	Short-Term (1-2 years)	Agency staff time, for the most part.
	2. Market historic and cultural resources as a feature of Priority Areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Targeted Priority Areas Task Forces • Local Governing Bodies • Other County Agencies • Developers 	Targeted Priority Areas – Short-Term (1-2 years). Other areas – Medium-Term (3-5 years)	Agency staff time, for the most part.
D. Protect historic landscapes including viewsheds and corridors.	Identify Scenic Highway and Heritage Park opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning 	Short-Term (1-2 years)	Agency staff time, for the most part

Agriculture

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>A. Conserve land for agriculture through Zoning ordinances and SALDOs.</p>	<p>1. Direct all new urbanizing uses (residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional) to Priority Areas and Infill Areas, unless such uses are directly related to the practice of agriculture, outdoor recreation, or forestry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies • DCED, DEP • Other State Agencies 	<p>Now and thru planning period</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
	<p>2. Direct all new infrastructure to Priority Areas and Infill Areas, unless it is directly related to the practice of agriculture, outdoor recreation, or forestry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies • DCED, PennDOT, DEP • Other State Agencies 	<p>Now and thru planning period</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
<p>B. Within Conservation Areas, support agriculture as a viable land use.</p>	<p>1. Enact effective agricultural zoning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning 	<p>Short-Term (1-2 years).</p>	<p>Possible consultant fees to prepare regulations and guidelines.</p>

Agriculture (continued)

<p>C. Promote sustainable agricultural practices.</p>	<p>2. Acquire conservation easements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Agricultural Land Preservation Program • Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Program • Land trusts & conservancies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Agricultural Land Preservation Program • Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Program • Luzerne Conservation District • Natural Resource Conservation System • Land trusts & conservancies • Farm Services Agency 	<p>Thru planning period</p>	<p>Mixture of public & private funding.</p>
<p></p>	<p>Provide links on county and municipal websites to organizations and agencies active in these efforts.</p>	<p></p>	<p>Now and thru planning period</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>

Environmental Resources

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
A. Meet federal, state, and local air quality standards.	1. Direct development and redevelopment to Priority Areas as identified in the Land Use Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Targeted Priority Areas Task Forces • Local Governing Bodies • DCED • Other State Agencies 	Now and thru planning period.	Agency staff time, for the most part.
	2. Provide incentives for commuting by public transit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit Providers • TMAs • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • PennDOT • Local Governing Bodies • Local Businesses • MPO 	Now and thru planning period.	Agency staff time, for the most part.
	3. Develop programs and/or incentives to promote and attract green renewable power.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • Local Businesses • PADEP • USEPA 	Now and thru planning period.	Agency staff time, for the most part.

Environmental Resources (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>B. Improve quality of surface water and ground water resources.</p>	<p>1. Protect and restore critical stream valleys, floodplains, and wetlands to preserve their functions for flood water storage, water supply, and ground water recharge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Watershed Organizations • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Luzerne Conservation District • PADEP • USEPA • Developers 	<p>Now and thru planning period.</p>	<p>Mixture of public & private funding.</p>
	<p>2. Enact riparian buffer ordinances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
	<p>3. Enact green streets ordinances, including street tree, naturalized retention basins, and rain gardens provisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
<p>C. Protect and restore critical stream valleys, floodplains, and wetlands to preserve their functions for floodwater storage, water supply, and ground water recharge.</p>	<p>Enact new and updated local regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Lackawanna County Conservation District • Luzerne Conservation District • PADEP 	<p>Now and thru planning period.</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>

Environmental Resources (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>D. Identify and protect ecologically sensitive areas such as wooded steep slopes, stream headwaters, woodlands, and wildlife corridors.</p>	<p>Set conservation priorities from Conservation Area identified in the Land Use Plan and Hydrologic Features, Steep Slopes, Forested Areas, and Composite Constraints mapping, as well as the 2004 Open Space, Greenways, and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Land Conservancies • Pennsylvania Environmental Council • PADCNR 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
<p>E. Minimize impacts to greenfields.</p>	<p>Direct development and redevelopment to Priority Areas as identified in the Land Use Plan and strongly limit such activities in the Conservation Area identified in the Land Use Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • DCED • Other State Agencies 	<p>Now and thru planning period.</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
<p>F. Mitigate negative impacts from resource extraction.</p>	<p>Set priorities for remediation, particularly those related to natural gas drilling and development associated with the Marcellus shale deposit and acid mine drainage in areas that have been mined (surface and deep) or quarried.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PADEP • USDI-OSM • USEPA • Local Municipalities • Lackawanna County • Luzerne County • Other County Agencies 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>

Utilities

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>A. Coordinate the planning and funding for utility extensions and expansions so that they are consistent with the Land Use Plan.</p>	<p>1. Focus new, expanded, and upgraded infrastructure development on Priority Areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Targeted Priority Areas Task Forces • Local Governing Bodies • Local Authorities • DCED • Other State Agencies • Utilities 	<p>Targeted Priority Areas – Short-Term (1-2 years).</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
	<p>2. Use Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Planning Act (Act 537) planning process to anticipate and prepare for future development and to identify and address on-lot sewage disposal problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Municipalities/Authorities • PADEP • Lackawanna County Health Department • Luzerne County Health Department • Utilities 	<p>Now and thru planning period.</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
<p>B. Support regionalization and shared use of utility assets.</p>	<p>Facilitate and coordinate the actions of agencies and governments regarding stormwater management, stream maintenance, and flood mitigation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority • Local Municipalities • PADEP 	<p>Now and thru planning period.</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
<p>C. Protect and enhance the quality and quantity of water resources.</p>	<p>Utilize best management practices (BMPs) for new development through SALDOs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Municipalities • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Developers 	<p>Start now, especially for Targeted Priority Areas.</p>	<p>Agency staff time. Developer construction/installation expenses.</p>

Energy Conservation

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>A. Establish compact mixed-use centers that provide a dense population of potential transit users, both for trips within and between centers</p>	<p>1. Lay out new neighborhoods and districts with a grid or modified grid circulation systems and small blocks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Area Task Forces • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local Governing Bodies • Developers 	<p>Targeted Priority Areas – Short-Term (1-2 years).</p> <p>Other Priority Areas – as set by schedule for Priority Areas development.</p>	<p>Consultant fees to prepare Priority Area plans.</p>
<p>B. Make transportation corridors multi-modal, providing vehicular, transit, pedestrian and cycling options</p>	<p>2. Encourage municipalities to provide zoning districts that provide the necessary densities and intermingling of uses to achieve compact, mixed-use centers as well as permit live-work structures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Area Task Forces • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Local municipalities 	<p>When master/urban design plans are in final draft form.</p>	<p>Agency staff time. Potential consultant fees to prepare Priority Area regulations.</p>
<p>B. Make transportation corridors multi-modal, providing vehicular, transit, pedestrian and cycling options</p>	<p>Link new development to major educational, cultural, and recreational destinations via transit and trail connectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • PennDOT • Transit Providers • Priority Area Task Forces • Local Governing Bodies • MPO 	<p>Now and thru planning period.</p>	<p>Mixture of federal, state, and local funding.</p>

Energy Conservation (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
C. Provide incentives to develop certified 'green' buildings and use alternative fuels.	Encourage municipalities to amend local development regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning 	Now	Agency staff time, for the most part.
D. Lower county and municipal energy consumption.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to perform energy audits of county and municipal operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies • Local Governing Bodies 	Now	Agency staff time and consultant fees.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Engage in energy-efficient purchasing and operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other County Agencies • Local Governing Bodies • All County Agencies • Local Governing Bodies 	Now and thru planning period.	Varies

Resource Extraction

Objectives	Actions	Responsible Parties	Timing	Costs
<p>A. Mitigate the negative effects of resources extraction</p>	<p>Set priorities for remediation, particularly those related to natural gas drilling and development associated with the Marcellus shale deposit and acid mine drainage in areas that have been mined (surface and deep) or quarried. Such activities may include remediation for roadways damaged as part of resource extraction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PADEP • USDI-OSM • USEPA • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County • Luzerne County • Other County Agencies • Earth Conservancy 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>
<p>B. Identify areas of potential mine subsidence</p>	<p>Require mine subsidence information to be provided as part of any development approvals process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning • Other County Agencies • PADEP • Bureau of Mine Reclamation 	<p>Thru planning period</p>	<p>Developer approvals application expense. Also agency staff time for review.</p>
<p>C. Develop new or revised regulations regarding Marcellus Shale projects as allowed by PA Oil and Gas Act and related court decisions.</p>	<p>Develop and adopt controls through zoning and SALDO regulations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Bodies • Lackawanna County Planning • Luzerne County Planning 	<p>Now</p>	<p>Agency staff time, for the most part.</p>

Table 3.2: Action Plan for Implementation

	Action	Timing
1.	Adopt the Regional Plan	Immediate
2.	Identify staffing required for plan implementation (coordination, consistency reviews, technical assistance) & increase planning staff as appropriate	Immediate
3.	Coordinate with all County departments regarding plan policies and implementation steps	Within 1 yr.
4.	Coordinate with all regional, state and federal agencies regarding their roles in supporting plan implementation	Within 1 yr.
5.	Coordinate with all major foundations, non-profit organizations, and private sector leaders regarding their roles in supporting plan implementation	Within 1 yr.
6.	Determine budgetary requirements and establish capital budget funding for plan implementation (staffing, programs)	Within 1.5 yr.
7.	Develop and start delivery of outreach program to municipalities	Within 1.5 yr.
8.	Adopt new county zoning ordinance and SALDO (Luzerne)	Within 1.5 yr.
9.	Conduct focused outreach to selected municipalities and gain agreements for initial set of consistency reviews	Within 1.5 yr.
10.	Establish the Intercounty Priority Areas Task Force to determine the 4 targeted Priority Areas	Within 1.5 yr.
11.	Identify the 4 targeted Priority Areas	Within 2.5 yrs.
12.	Establish Targeted Priority Area Task Forces for each of the 4 targeted Priority Areas	Within 2 .5 yrs.
13.	Prepare master/urban design plans for each of the 4 targeted Priority Areas	Within 3.5 yrs.
14.	Conduct consistency reviews to identify planning and regulatory needs as well as infrastructure requirements for each of the 4 targeted Priority Areas	Within 3.5 yrs.
15.	Reach development agreements among public agencies and with private developers for the development/redevelopment of each of the 4 targeted Priority Areas	Within 4.5 yrs.
16.	Gain memorandums of understanding and perform consistency reviews for 20% of municipalities	Within 2.5 yrs.
17.	Gain memorandums of understanding and perform consistency reviews for 40% of municipalities	Within 4 yrs.
18.	Gain memorandums of understanding and perform consistency reviews for 60% of municipalities	Within 5 .5 yrs.
19.	Gain memorandums of understanding and perform consistency reviews for 80% of municipalities	Within 6.5 yrs.
20.	Gain memorandums of understanding and perform consistency reviews for 100% of municipalities	Within 7.5 yrs.

Other Initiatives

The counties' role in securing the commitment of each county administration to the principles and implementation timetable of the Regional Plan is paramount. County leadership in gaining cross-acceptance and consistency with the Regional Plan from local municipalities and cooperation from public and private sector planning partners is no less vital. The work to achieve what is set out in the Action Plan for Implementation, preceding, will be demanding. Nonetheless, there are some other initiatives that can complement the implementation of the core ingredients of the Regional Plan and offer support to its direction and vision. Some of these initiatives are described below.

Municipal Partnerships for Public Works and Public Safety Services

It has long been recognized that there is much potential to save taxpayers money by coordinating the delivery of public services among municipalities. Municipal governments are more likely to follow through in the pursuit of such prospects if the right kinds of incentives are made available. The counties will encourage partnerships among municipalities, first focusing on emergency response initiatives. Municipal policing partnerships, in particular, can address public safety issues well. The counties will pursue with the state more incentives for municipal partnerships, especially involving the major urban centers and surrounding communities and encourage and support legislation to enable municipalities and regions to enter cooperative ventures more easily.

State Funding for Implementation of Regional and Local Plans

Planning is often viewed as ineffective because state funding of projects tends to follow other agendas rather than regional and local plan recommendations. Legislators need to be educated on the value of adhering to plans and that greater efficiency in the allocation of resources and greater economic prosperity for constituents is linked to following through on plans. Funding and permitting of projects need to be tied to plans and such projects should get priority, since they have been endorsed in principle by county and municipal officials. The counties will press their case for plan-backed funding for implementation with legislators and state agencies.

Additional Opportunities for Homeownership in Urban Centers

Neighborhood stabilization and socioeconomic balance and basic municipal fiscal viability depend on middle income families and individuals being attracted to urban centers. The counties will make urban neighborhoods a top priority and look at a variety of different strategies to address housing needs, including providing more homeownership opportunities and more housing stock choices. Such strategies should include streamlining the site acquisition and housing production process, marketing housing to potential home buyers through employer incentives, and tax abatements for the construction and improvements of residential units.

Greater School Choices

Providing additional education options for families and continuing to strengthen urban schools is perhaps the most important element in addressing fiscal disparities between communities. Good schools are a key attribute in attracting middle income families and can help remove a significant obstacle to having newcomers to the county and longstanding residents locate in cities. The counties will make the case to the state and to other potential partners, such as employers and foundations, to direct funding to make up for shortfalls in settings where low tax revenues are hindering the efforts of urban school districts.