

## ***Monroe County's Commitment to Implement The Comprehensive Plan***

Task forces agree that this plan must be implemented, and that strong support by individual municipalities is essential. Monroe County, as the sponsor, will undertake the following measures to foster implementation. They will consist of direct actions initiated by the County and carried forward by County agencies and personnel and Community Partnership Incentives for municipalities which formally endorse the Plan and guarantee to take their own implementing actions.

### ***Direct Actions***

- Initiatives with PennDOT:

Joint preparation of a county-wide transportation plan to increase the capacity of the existing road network through retrofitting and corridor preservation; to link together the rail system, inter-city transportation (e.g. Martz), and Monroe County public transit; to establish more extensive and frequent MCTA service. A citizens advisory committee or task force should be created for this work.

A signage and roadway access enforcement program to work with the County's Litter Control and Beautification Program should be established.

- Initiatives with Pennsylvania DEP:

One or more pilot programs should be undertaken to research, plan, and establish watershed-wide sanitary disposal approaches. Appropriate County or multi-jurisdictional entities should manage them.

- Initiatives with DCNR:

Close liaison with DCNR should be initiated to identify maximum leveraging of the open space bond issue funds and to obtain DCNR support for open space "enhancements" of arterial roads and other transportation corridors as administered by PennDOT and USDOT.

- Executing the Open Space purchase and preservation program. The County will determine the extent to which bond funds will be transferred to municipalities (including the criteria for allocation) and the extent to which the County itself will undertake purchase of easements and fee simple land. County actions will include initiatives with federal, and private organizations (as well as DCNR) for matching funds to leverage the acquisitions.
- Making the Geographic Information System available to municipalities, community groups, and institutions, for assistance in siting facilities, analyzing impacts of proposed zoning and development projects, designing service systems, providing information, etc.
- Educating municipal staff in the use, updating, and maintenance of the GIS.
- Plan review for subdivisions and other projects referred from municipalities. In addition to the fiscal impact evaluations currently being made, the Planning Commission will indicate

whether the submissions conform with or deviate from the Comprehensive Plan and Monroe 2020 goals. Given the need to avert further sprawl and tax deficits, the County will widely publicize results of these individual project fiscal impact and plan compliance analyses.

- Providing a “tool kit” of model ordinances similar to those provided with the Solid Waste, Wellhead Protection and other functional plans. At least two such models (i.e. conservation zoning and retrofitting commercial zones to establish landscape and parking standards) will be included with the plan itself.
- Through successors to Monroe 2020 task forces or direct county presentations, lobbying the Commonwealth Legislature to adopt the legislative changes requested by Monroe 2020.
- Preparing, on a biennial basis, a “state of the plan” report indicating progress made toward achieving Monroe 2020 goals and implementing the Comprehensive Plan. This will include a status report on municipal actions to revise zoning and other regulatory ordinances.
- Undertaking a detailed study of permit review and issuing processes by each of the 20 municipalities to determine whether efforts to streamline could function as an important economic development incentive.
- Acting as a catalyst for inter-municipal cooperation by sponsoring periodic planning conferences and workshops, and by serving as a mediator between municipalities on issues that might arise. Especially important will be to utilize these conferences and workshops to reinforce the idea of the school district boundaries as defining viable sub-county planning areas and to build on the cooperative relationships between municipalities in individual school districts that emerged through the Monroe 2020 task forces.
- Establishing close, participatory relationships with such major Pennsylvania organizations as the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, and the Association of Township Supervisors to lobby for funding and for growth management reform.

### ***Community Partnership Incentives***

For municipalities which endorse the Plan and agree to establish an open space policy and plan, to revise ordinances, to adopt/adapt the model ordinances in the tool kit, and to enter into multi-municipal planning, zoning, or service agreements:

- **Financing**

The County will establish a priority for planning funds from the Open Space bond issue. For example, out of a \$1 million allocation for open space and recreation planning, education, and partnering incentives from the bond issue, the County will fund a higher percentage of the planning costs if a municipality chooses to plan jointly. For example, a municipality preparing an independent plan would receive no more than 75% funding, while each municipality participating in a multi-municipal plan would receive 100% funding. Additionally, municipalities having prepared a County approved multi-municipal open space and recreation plan will receive a \$100,000 increase in their base allocation amount for municipal initiatives.

## Part I . . . Overview

The open space and recreation plans prepared for multi-municipalities will include regional policies and methods which are recommended for protecting open space. Synthesis of regional policies and methods may include recommended revisions for zoning ordinances and municipal subdivision and land development ordinances.

- Grant Application Processing and Support

The County will enhance the ability of its Grants Office to assist municipalities and help write and lobby for the grant applications seeking federal, state, or foundation funding for development and service projects. Potential state grant sources are identified below. In addition, it is necessary to cite the Center for Local Government Services which Governor Ridge has charged with providing financial assistance to communities addressing sprawl. Monroe 2020 would be the first Comprehensive County Plan enacted since announcement of this initiative to address what the Governor terms as Pennsylvania's most significant land use issue.

Budget allocation for municipal grant support would also include funds for outside (i.e. non-staff) professional services to assist in addressing technical requirements and to provide expert insights.

- Technical Assistance

The County will provide experts or assist in compensating experts in such skills as land use law to help municipalities adapt model ordinances and landscape architecture and other design professions to review project proposals. Subdivision redesign to Comprehensive Plan standards, using the GIS to assist in facilities siting or other studies, and the planning and engineering of interconnected water or sewer systems are all examples of services that would merit technical assistance to partnering municipalities.

The County could also consider making challenge grants of technical expertise for innovative projects. For example, if one or more developers of large sites commit to creating a moderate density conservation subdivision, the County could offer to help the sponsor engage high quality designers to prepare the site plan.

### ***Pennsylvania State Programs Assisting Municipalities for Which Monroe County will Provide Grant Writing and Processing Support to Cooperating Jurisdictions***

1. Planning assistance grants under the act of June 27, 1996 (P.L. 403, No. 58) known as the Community and Economic Development Enhancement Act.
2. Economic development loans and grants under the act of June 27, 1996 (P.L. 403, No. 58) known as the Community and Economic Development Enhancement Act.
3. Grants for shared municipal services under the Community and Economic Development Enhancement Act.
4. Housing finance loans and grants under the act of December 3, 1959 (P.L. 1688, No. 6210), known as the Housing Finance Agency Law, and the act of May 20, 1949 (P.L. 1633, No. 493) known as the Housing and Redevelopment Assistance Law.

## D. Commitment

5. PENNVEST loans and grants under the act of March 1, 1988 (P.L. 82, No. 16) known as the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority Act.
6. Transportation funding under 74 Pa.C.S. Part II (relating to public transportation) and the act of July 9, 1985 (P.L. 187, No 47) known as the Transportation Partnership Act.
7. Parks and open space funding under the act of July 2, 1993 (P.L. 359, No. 50) known as the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Act.
8. Funding for heritage park programs under the act of June 28, 1995 (P.L. 89, No. 18), known as the Conservation and Natural Resources Act.
9. Purchase of development rights for farmland preservation under the act of June 30, 1981 (P.L. 128, No. 43) known as the Agricultural Area Security Law.
10. Grants and assistance under the act of October 4, 1978 (P.L. 851, No. 166), known as the Flood Plain Management Act.
11. Grants and assistance under the act of October 4, 1978 (P.L. 864, No. 167), known as the Stormwater Management Act.
12. Grants and loans to municipalities under the act of May 19, 1995 (P.L. 4, No. 2) known as the Land Recycling and Environmental Remediation Act.
13. Grants to municipalities for “Enhancements” related to the transportation system and attendant land use authorized under the Transportation Equity Act of 1998 (TEA 21) and administered by PennDOT.



# **Notes**