

Chapter 6

Greenway Planning and Management

Greenways are a public resource. Like public parks, roads or buildings, they require ongoing monitoring, management, and funding for both development and operations. Such factors should be principal considerations in a study for establishing any public facility, including greenways. Having identified potential greenway locations and positive public support for greenways, Cumberland County can now target the steps necessary to make the greenways a reality. While lines on maps indicate that the prospects of establishing greenways are favorable, the feasibility of implementing a Countywide greenway system requires an orchestrated course of action. This includes more detailed planning, participation by a host of players from the public and private sectors, greenway management, funding, public education, and outreach.

Greenway Planning

Consideration of greenways needs to be institutionalized as part of routine governmental planning in Cumberland County. Both County and local governments should address greenways in comprehensive and open space plans. As part of the overall planning agenda, governmental units can identify ways to establish greenways through ordinances and regulations as well as through acquisition, easements, and rights of way.

Like roads and highways, greenways should be part of the county's infrastructure and thus part of the everyday planning process. Land use decisions should include:

- greenway connections that preserve critical resources throughout the County
- connections to key destinations within Cumberland County as well as to greenways outside of the County
- mechanisms for setting aside land
- trail development in all forms: sidewalks, shared pathways, dedicated pathways, multi-use trails
- appropriate greenway ownership
- management and planning for a Countywide system of greenways

The preservation and protection of natural resources and providing recreation/transportation opportunities for a growing population are top priorities for Cumberland County. As found in the resource analysis and the public participation process, it is important for Cumberland County to develop an open space plan which would incorporate greenways as a component. This study has dealt with one specific type of open space: corridors and segments of open space that would be interconnected throughout Cumberland County. By undertaking a holistic study of resource protection, the County would be in a better position to achieve its desired conservation goals. An open space plan would look at the bigger picture of land preservation all types of open space, including farmland and natural and cultural resources, and the mechanisms for preserving them. This could be considered as part of the County's Comprehensive Plan now underway.

Local Greenway Planning

Municipalities need to be involved in greenway planning, especially for greenways that may be within their jurisdictions. Greenway plans can be done as single purpose municipal efforts, as part of a larger municipal comprehensive plan, or as a parks, recreation, and open space plan.

For greenways that may traverse several jurisdictions, several municipalities could collaborate as a region for planning purposes. They could use the opportunity to define how they may be able to work together on greenway development and management.

Greenway Master Plans

In addition to general greenway planning, master plans need to be developed for individual greenways. The general configuration for Cumberland County's greenway network was established in this study based on the County's array of resources. The next step in establishing particular greenways requires the detailed alignment of each greenway. This is usually undertaken as part of a separate master plan for a specific greenway based upon the priorities set forth in the study. The components of a master plan include determining its beginning and end points, boundaries, resources, property ownership, costs, purpose, theme, facilities, management, and funding.

Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout the planning process, it was clear that the County could not undertake greenway development on its own. Partnerships with municipalities, the private sector, and non-profit organizations would be essential in achieving a Countywide system of greenways.

Cumberland County Role

Cumberland County is already playing the pivotal role in the Cumberland Valley in greenway development by undertaking this greenway study. Through the collaborative planning process instituted in this study, the County is defining the common vision towards which all of the different municipalities, conservation organizations, the private sector, and landowners can work. In its roles and responsibilities, the County can:

1. Provide the common framework for greenway planning Countywide
2. Provide technical assistance and support for municipalities and organizations attempting to establish greenways
3. Potentially provide financial assistance in local planning
4. Spearhead efforts for regional collaboration in greenway planning
5. Assess the potential for providing funding for greenway planning, development, and management
6. Potentially provide oversight for monitoring greenways
7. Collaborate with a local conservancy in greenway development, management, and monitoring.

County Staffing - Cumberland County planning staff is small and already at full capacity with their current workload. Additional planning efforts would require more staff. Other counties working on land preservation have hired at least two additional planners. Additional staff could include community planners, transportation planners, landscape architects, park and recreation specialists, or other professionals as deemed appropriate. Their responsibilities would include:

- Countywide greenway planning
- greenway master plan oversight
- working with technical professionals such as real estate specialists in negotiating land transactions

- helping the local communities and organizations in planning
- developing outreach efforts and coordination with various partners
- developing guidelines for the implementation of a formal County greenway or open space program that may be set up to establish greenways or undertake further open space studies. While volunteers are important in greenway work, dedicated, paid people are needed to advance the plans and greenway programs in a focused way.

Partnerships and Coordination

As the inventory and assessment of County resources and the public participation process have shown, Cumberland County cannot plan and develop a Countywide greenway system alone. The involvement of local municipalities and the private sector such as conservation organizations and land conservancies is essential.

With the greenways prioritized through this study, the municipalities, conservation organizations, and private landowners need to be involved with the implementation process of greenway development. Options for protection of designated corridors would be identified and actions determined for land protection.

Municipal Roles - Greenways will pass across many jurisdictions. Municipal involvement in planning and management is crucial. Some municipalities such as South Middleton Township are already heavily involved with greenway planning, development, and management. It will be important for municipalities to become involved with greenways, especially if a particular greenway is mainly within their own jurisdiction. Municipalities may become part of a regional or County greenway that traverses several communities. Local greenway and open space plans would be important in developing a Countywide greenway/open space system. Municipal greenway responsibilities can include:

- Adoption of resolutions supporting the County greenway plan
- Coordination with Cumberland County on common greenway issues
- Development of local greenway plans
- Inclusion of greenway planning in broader land use planning and decision making on the local level
- Participation with other municipalities on regional greenway planning
- Public education and outreach efforts in their own communities with the general citizenry, as well as with local landowners
- Development of action plans and funding sources for greenway development

Conservancy Roles - A local conservancy could provide invaluable support for a greenways initiative. The Central Pennsylvania Conservancy appears to be the logical organization that would serve as the local County conservancy. A relatively new organization with a successful track record, it offers the potential to become the major private land conservancy in Cumberland County. The Central Pennsylvania Conservancy has been contacted during this study and expressed the desire to have further discussions about its potential role regarding greenways in Cumberland County. The discussions would need to address roles, responsibilities, organizational development, staffing, and funding. A private, non-profit agency such as a conservancy could pursue grants and fund-raising to support staffing for greenway-related efforts such as landowner education and outreach. Several models exist, such as the Natural Lands Trust, the Heritage Conservancy in Bucks County, the Montgomery County Lands Trust, and the Back Mountain Lands Trust in Luzerne County, on which the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy could pattern itself. Interviews have shown that an organization from within Cumberland County would have more trust and support than outside conservation organizations.

Role of Volunteers and Private Organizations - Because of the extensive time required for greenway planning and outreach, volunteers are important. As the County moves ahead with greenways, the need for various skills and expertise will emerge. This could include marketing, WEB experts, fund-raising, and knowledge of personal contacts. Volunteers could include the following mix:

1. **Greenway Task Force** should continue to operate and provide assistance and support. The planning process for the study showed that the Task Force was made up of knowledgeable, committed people. Such a group could move the greenways towards fruition. The extent of their involvement and ability to commit time to greenways would need to be defined.
2. **Local Municipal Volunteers** could be established as local Task Forces. Clusters of municipalities could establish regional Task Forces for areas within Cumberland County. These groups would be instrumental in establishing, maintaining, and monitoring the greenways Countywide according to jurisdiction or region in the County. They would also coordinate with Cumberland County.
3. **“Foot-soldiers”** was a concept generated by the Greenways Task Force. The idea is to identify one person for each of the 33 municipalities. The person’s role would be to keep greenways in the eyes of the elected officials. They would also be at hand to help shepherd initiatives through municipal channels. Local voters in municipalities would be influential in achieving greenway goals within their respective communities.
4. **General volunteers** could work with the local conservancy on identified tasks. Since volunteers require supervision, training, and coordination, the local conservancy may be able to fill this role. Public education and outreach are important in managing volunteers.
5. **Conservation organizations** could play a role in planning, developing, and managing greenways. They should continue to be involved as the study is implemented.

A word of caution about the use of volunteers: *They are not free.* Volunteers require recruitment, training, supervision, monitoring, recognition, and support. Volunteer management is a job that should contain specific guidelines for which County staff or another designated group such as a conservancy would be responsible. This job requires paid staff. For example, in hospitals or park systems paid staff direct volunteer programs. Without a comprehensive volunteer program, the volunteers will cease to function.

Recommendations for Coordination

Once Cumberland County adopts the greenway plan, the greenways as prioritized will serve as the basis for related planning efforts. Further greenway planning would be undertaken by municipalities addressing greenways within their jurisdictions. Municipalities would be encouraged to work regionally to plan for a

greenway system that goes beyond jurisdictional boundaries. The coordination could be based upon the following steps:

1. **Municipal endorsement of the County greenway plan.** This endorsement would establish eligibility for each endorsing municipality to participate in the County greenway/open space program with its planning and financial assistance.
2. **Development of local/regional greenway plans.** Municipalities could organize as subregions of the county for greenway planning to facilitate broader thinking about greenways.
3. **County provision of technical support and grant assistance for local greenway planning.** This would include technical support to municipalities regarding land use and zoning regulations for greenway development and protection.
4. **Coordination with a local conservancy** to develop a program to inform and stimulate participation in greenway development among local landowners. The Natural Lands Trust has done very good work in Cumberland County and could be brought in for further assistance in developing outreach and education programs for private landowners and for working to build and strengthen a Cumberland County conservancy such as the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Management

Each greenway that is established will present different legal and management requirements for the protection of the land, landowners, and the safety of potential users. Decisions about ownership, maintenance, risk management, and resource protection need to be made. Experts in resource management, legal matters, insurance, park and recreation planning, and transportation planners need to be involved where appropriate for the different types of greenways.

Ownership

Greenways are usually under a variety of ownership types. The form of ownership determines the responsibilities of the property owners and the rights of potential users. These include:

1. **Fee simple** - The owner has all the rights to this land. The owner can use and develop the property as he/she wishes. The owner has the right to grant the use of the property to others. An example of fee simple ownership would be a municipality owning a park.
2. **Easement** - A fee simple property owner can grant designated property rights to a second party for the property. The party receiving the easement can get shared or exclusive use of the property. The easement identifies in writing the terms and conditions of use for the property. Easements are commonly used for trails and greenways.
3. **License** - A landowner can provide permission to another party to use the property. It can be written or verbal and is revocable at will.

Management Organization

At present Cumberland County does not have an organization to manage greenways. Typically, the management of a greenway and trail network depend on where the trail is, who owns it, and the number of jurisdictions responsible for the land involved. In many counties in Pennsylvania, greenway development

and management falls under the purview of the county parks and recreation department. In Cumberland County, there are several options for greenway and trail management. They are identified in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1 Greenway Management Options			
Lead Organization	Responsibility	Benefits	Considerations
County	Greenways that traverse multiple jurisdictions.	County would be the unifying organization for projects that cover several jurisdictions. Case studies show that this works successfully in other counties. CVRTC has already asked for County support.	County does not have the staff or a department with a greenway or park mission at present. Consideration should be given to establishing a department with greenway responsibility or vesting the responsibility in an existing department.
Municipalities	Greenways within their jurisdictions	Would be responsible for greenway planning, development, monitoring, and maintenance on the local level.	Not all municipalities may be able to assume such a responsibility, resulting in a patchwork of greenways rather than a network and corridors in Cumberland County
Private Organizations	Management of designated greenways	Often operate more quickly than government. Possibility of a regional trail authority.	May not have the staff and resources to guarantee long-term commitment

Table 6-1 (Continued) Greenway Management Options			
Lead Organization	Responsibility	Benefits	Considerations
Regional Greenway/Trail Authority	Management of greenways and trails throughout the region, perhaps extending beyond Cumberland County	Could establish an effective operational base covering a broad geographic area.	May be more appropriate to consider this in the future as more greenways and trails are established and strong proponents of this concept emerge. Difficult to establish regional functions in Pennsylvania.
Combination	Network of greenways throughout County	Partnerships add strength, economy, and effective use of resources.	An organization such as the County would still have to take the lead.

The configuration of the organizational structure for greenway development and management depends upon the host of factors identified in Table 6-1. A final organizational structure would depend upon the decisions made by the County regarding the establishment of the Countywide greenway network.

Incorporating Greenway and Open Space Planning

As the findings of the resource analysis and the public participation process demonstrated, greenway planning is important and publicly supported; however it may be too narrowly focused for Cumberland County's needs. For Cumberland County to retain its rural agrarian character, open space planning needs to be undertaken that would address all aspects of resource protection including greenways, natural resource protection, farmland preservation, and open space protection. Based upon the research conducted as part of the inventory and assessment for this study, the planning team developed the following strategy for Cumberland County for a broader purpose of resource conservation than greenways could provide alone:

1. Planning should include the following steps:

- Adoption of the greenway study by Cumberland County.
- Incorporation of the Greenway Study into the County's ongoing and future planning. This includes the comprehensive plan that is underway.
- Consideration of undertaking an open space plan as a component of the County's comprehensive plan.
- Municipal endorsement of the County greenway study and its recommendations through a resolution. Cumberland County should reach out to the municipalities to inform them about the plan, its benefits, and the mechanisms to be established to assist and support local planning and resource protection. This would be necessary in order to gain their resolutions supporting the County plan.
- Establishment of a local planning program that would also address greenways and resource protection. The County should develop the scope of local plans in partnership with the municipalities to attain consensus about local plans regarding greenways and open space. The county and local plans should be coordinated and work towards a common vision for Cumberland County. Local plans should include greenways identified in the County study. The idea is not that the County dictate policy to the municipalities, but that the County help to establish a foundation for future collaborative planning. As with all plans, they should be living documents that change in response to need and opportunity.
- Encourage regional planning within the County. Assist municipalities in forming regional groups who would work together.

2. Partnerships - Establish partnerships with municipalities, private organizations, and land conservancies to advance the recommendations of this study.

- Continue to use the Greenways Task Force as an advisory committee.
- Form Municipal Partnerships.
 - Undertake three pilot projects for municipal plan development with jurisdictions representing rural, suburban, and rural communities, and/or three geographic regions in the County.
 - Organize a regional planning group to undertake a regional greenway or open space plan in Cumberland County as a demonstration project.
- Continue discussion with Central Pennsylvania Conservancy about how the County and the Conservancy could build an alliance for the common purpose of greenway establishment and more broadly open space and resource protection.
- Approach the Natural Lands Trust to assess potential technical support and other mechanisms for land conservation in Cumberland County.
- Begin discussions with County non-profit organizations including authorities such as the LeTort to determine their levels of interest and potential partnership roles.

- Arrange consultations with other counties that have undertaken similar efforts. Options include field trips by County officials to other counties or trying to orchestrate a round table discussion in Cumberland County by inviting officials from other areas to Cumberland County. Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources may be able to provide assistance in making such arrangements.

3. **Funding** - Without funding, it will be most difficult to implement a greenways or open space preservation program in Cumberland County. The County could float a bond to provide funds that would be matched by local government and possibly private, nonprofit land trusts. Regional planning efforts should be encouraged. Based upon the open space programs in other counties, the following components could be included:

- A County bond issue for planning and land preservation. Bonds in other counties have ranged from \$25 million to \$100 million.
- Designation of some County projects that would be significant regionally.
- Grants to municipalities would be based upon approved criteria and a formula for funding. This would include designated amounts to each municipality, plus additional funds based upon established criteria such as population and development pressure.
- Funds to add a Countywide open space component of the Comprehensive Plan. The County could apply to Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for a Keystone planning grant for the open space plan.
- Funding for planning staff in the Planning Commission for the greenway/open space planning
- Funding for local greenway planning. Local plans funded by other counties that have floated bonds are in the range of \$10,000-15,000 per community for the purpose of open space planning. Often, a community will match a county planning grant with a state grant under the Keystone Community Grant Program.
- County bond funds would be used for County, local, and regional planning; land acquisition; purchase of easements and rights-of-way; administration and County staffing; a public education program; and possibly for legal assistance regarding land issues.

While a County bond issue would have the most impact on resource protection in Cumberland County (including greenways, open space and farmland protection, and natural resource conservation), other funding sources are available. These are included in Appendix F.

4. **Outreach** - Building public awareness and recognition of the importance of the open space program and its benefits to the citizens and quality of life is the key to this plan's success. Since the Countywide survey for the study demonstrates public support, it would be wise to capitalize on this. Outreach will be one of the most challenging parts of greenway planning. The general public must be informed about the meaning and benefits of greenways. Building public awareness and understanding about greenways should include:

- Promotion - Develop a marketing and promotional program for the greenway/open space plan
- Education - need to develop strategy for telling people what greenways are along with the benefits; work with local conservancy
- Develop a program to work with landowners via conservancies with grant funding.

Financing and Implementation Recommendations

The Greenway Task Force recommends that Cumberland County explore financing greenway planning and development through a bond issue. Consideration should be given to extending the purpose of the bond issue beyond greenways alone to also support open space protection, farmland protection, land conservation, watershed protection, and natural resource conservation. Bond funds would also be used to support the planning, administration, and education for this purpose. The County needs to undertake a financial analysis to determine the appropriate level of funding. Formulas for distribution of the bond funds among the County and the municipalities need to be worked out. The amount of the County bond would need to be determined based upon the advice of financial experts. Without financing, the local communities could not afford to do this on their own. Local matching requirements would be developed as part of the financing study. The steps could include the following:

1. Establish a finance committee composed of members representing the County commissioners, businesses, municipalities, landowners, and conservation organizations. The committee's mission should be designed to make effective and expedient decisions.
2. Arrange fact-finding meetings with other counties with similar bond issues, including Chester, Bucks, Montgomery, and Monroe Counties. We have found in this study that these counties are most willing to help others based upon their own experience in learning from others.
3. Appoint financial advisors and community planners to determine bond amount, impact on taxes, and cost savings as a result of saving land instead of paying for added services required by land developments.
4. Develop the greenway educational program to build understanding and support for the program. Advocate cost savings in promotional materials about the cost of land preservation versus development. Use survey results from this study in materials.
5. Determine strategy about a public referendum for a bond issue for greenways/open space.
6. Establish the requirements for a local greenway planning program including planning guidelines, funding amounts, and sources. Provide incentives for regional planning.
7. Hire additional staff to work on the greenway/open space planning efforts. Since the planning staff is limited and there is no parks and recreation department, additional planners will be needed. The new planning positions should be funded as part of the bond issue. If there are concerns about adding permanent staff, the planners could contract employees for designated project responsibilities. In this way, the County could buy expertise in certain areas such as transportation, natural resource management, or other specialties.
8. Develop a Countywide open space plan as a component of the Comprehensive Plan.
9. Set a time table for the program with the above components.
10. Explore issues that may affect land preservation in Cumberland County. In some areas, land is sold before government agencies can respond because of bureaucratic requirements. Working with a land trust to enable the County/municipality to secure a crucial property before it is sold would be important in creating greenways and preserving open space.

The cost of acquiring land and securing easements on properties is so variable that a cost projection for a Countywide greenway system is not possible. Detailed legal work on ownership, market value, and ownership options is required for each specific greenway. As with all real estate, location of the land is the biggest factor. Acreage can range from a few thousand dollars to the millions. The Rail Trail Conservancy cites examples of rail trail corridors ranging from \$1,000 per mile to \$300,000 per mile. Easements greatly lower costs and are often even donated.

Revenue Sources

The counties in Pennsylvania that are now heavily involved with greenway and open space planning have floated bonds all approved by voters. In many counties, county bond issues have sparked local bond issues such as in Bucks County, where over 20 local bond issues have been passed in amounts ranging from \$4 million to \$20 million. These counties have been able to demonstrate to the voters that while open space costs money, development costs more. The other revenue sources shown in Appendix F could also be considered. For the first time in decades, federal money may be available for parks, recreation, greenways, and trails through reauthorization of the Land & Water Conservation Fund. Cumberland County should track this authorization in Congress and communicate with County representatives about the importance of the passage of this funding.

Private fund-raising represents another option. Private investment in land preservation is typically related to saving a particular property of special significance in the community. Land trusts can assist in these efforts. Should Cumberland County decide to undertake a fund-raising campaign, it would be important to organize the effort in a professional way. The error most frequently made in capital fund-raising is deciding to have a campaign before the organization is ready. Some of the things that must be considered for a fund-raising campaign include:

1. Staff capability
2. Budget
3. Quality of data available on prospective donors
4. Volunteer base
5. Potential of getting major donors on the fund-raising advisory board
6. Board strength
7. Gift management
8. Gift recognition
9. Consensus on fund-raising direction
10. Availability and skill of leadership and staff to commit to the project
11. Materials and publications to explain the case for support

For a successful campaign, a master plan is essential. It should include campaign objectives, policies, an organizational chart, campaign job descriptions, a campaign strategy, printed materials, cultivation plans, and a prospective pool analysis. In conducting successful campaign programs, many organizations find that they cannot take on additional tasks when they already have too much to do in daily operations. To undertake a fund-raising campaign, Cumberland County should:

1. Consider hiring a professional fund-raising consultant. Good fund-raising consultants can cover their fees through the fund-raising. Even if a professional fund raiser were to be retained, Cumberland County would need to designate a staff person with the capability to work with the fund raiser throughout the campaign as well as in managing the pledges over time when the fund raiser is gone.
2. Determine the purpose of fund-raising. The County needs to be able to develop *a case of compelling need* that requires private funds. Preparedness underlies all successful campaigns.
3. Consider developing a gift catalog for designated purposes.
4. Insure that the fund-raising is strategic, well orchestrated, and for popular projects that clearly benefit the public.