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PennState Extension

Partnering to Create Pennsylvania Municipal Active Transportation Plans

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Extension Program Specialist and Educators

Today's Presenters



John Turack

Extension Program Specialist

Community Economic
Development,
Planning,
Placemaking



Neal Fogle

Extension Educator
LCV Program Leader

Leadership,
Community Vitality,
and Land Use Planning

Why Partnerships?

Changing Extension Landscape

- Reduction in funds
- Reduction in staff
- Changing mindsets

Why Partner?

- Value that Extension (and the partner) bring to the project
- Leverage they bring (funding, audience, marketing, stakeholders, etc.)
- They can make a difference

Things to Consider

Expectations &
Formality
Needed

Consistency of
Organizational
Mission & Goals

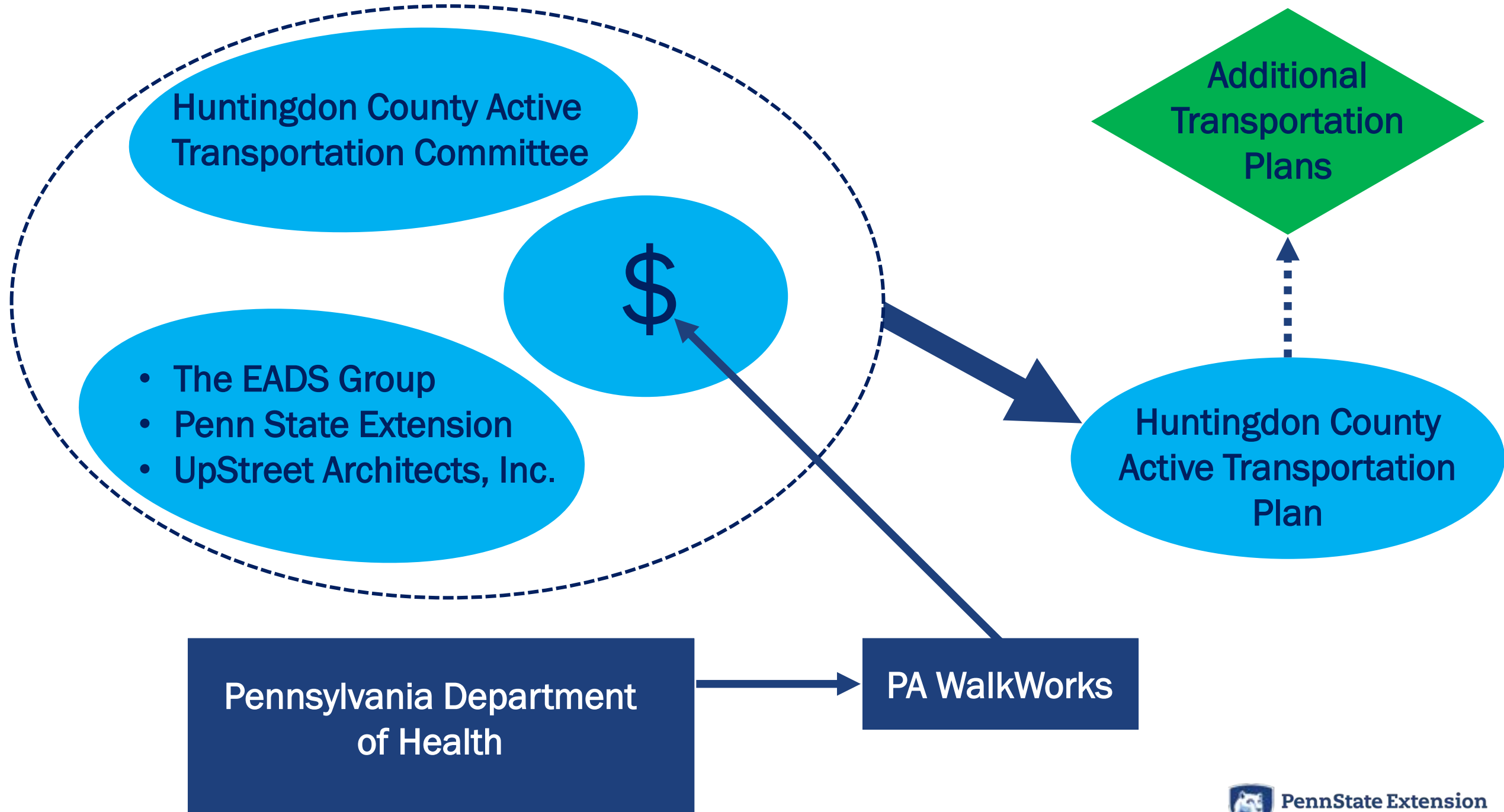
History & Track
Record

Stakeholder
Perceptions

Collision of the
Extension & Non-
Extension Worlds

Private versus
Public Good

Reporting
Requirements



Need for the Program?

- **Making walking and biking safer and more convenient can help residents interact socially, improve local economies and public health, and reduce air pollution (WalkWorks(pa.gov))**
- **Identified need for improved non-motorized transportation options; formed Active Transportation Committee (ATC)**
- **ATC fosters healthier communities and improves the health of all residents and visitors, while also creating a Unified Vision**

Purpose:

The purpose of the Active Transportation Committee (ATC) and the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) is to enhance the safety, accessibility, and ease of active transportation modes in Huntingdon County, promoting healthier communities and increasing residents' overall health. By raising awareness, evaluating conditions, and advocating locally, the ATC and ATP seek to expand access and opportunities for walking, biking, wheeling, and paddling sports, encouraging community involvement in the planning process.

Inputs

- 1) Early capacity-building and assistance in grant seeking for creating plans
- 2) Funding through a [PA WalkWorks](#) grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Health acquired
- 3) Stakeholder and shareholder identification, engagement and co-creation networks
- 4) Collaboration between Huntingdon County Commissioners, Huntingdon County Active Transportation Committee, Penn State Extension, and consultants The EADS Group and UpStreet Architects, Inc.

Inputs

- 5) Penn State Extension online survey and interactive map data collection guidance and platform(s)
- 6) Assistance with data analysis
- 7) Penn State Extension public meeting facilitation and Planners Charette curriculum

Outputs

- 1) Seek adoption of the Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan
 - a. Directly addresses transportation equity
 - b. Structured to support health improvement
 - c. May support economic mobility

- 2) Provide a framework for supporting the co-construction of at least two additional transportation plans for other communities

Intended Outcomes

- **The Huntingdon County Commissioners adopt the Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan** by resolution by September 12, 2023 -- https://www.huntingdoncounty.net/getmedia/809d0c6f-8988-411b-b400-0f983f66fe9e/Huntingdon-County-Active-Transportation-Plan_Final_Adopted-9_12_23.pdf .
- **The Plan provides transportation equity** by considering the needs and impacts of projects in low-income census tract and block groups, **connects** walking and bicycling **networks**, **leverages partnerships** by engaging key stakeholders in the process, **improves public health** through education **and increases economic mobility** by allowing for non-motorized transportation enhancements throughout the County's boroughs and townships.
- **The Plan will support the development of land use plans and policies** at the County level that will allow for the development of activity-friendly, non-motorized routes connecting to everyday destinations.

Actual Outcomes (so far)

Huntingdon County – [Active Transportation Plan](#)

- Following its adoption as a stand-alone plan, the **Huntingdon County Commissioners took the additional steps** - including legal advertisements and a **public hearing and comment period** - to **officially adopt the Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan as part of the County's Comprehensive Plan**. The distinction **elevates the recommendations of the plan to being considered in all subdivision, land-use, development and transportation plan reviews** by the Huntingdon County Planning Commission. The **County Commissioners adopted a resolution** adding the plan to the County Comprehensive Plan on January 16, 2024.
- **Multiple municipal governments in the county have also adopted the plan as part of their own comprehensive plans.**
- Also, at the same Commissioners' meeting, where the plan was added to the Comprehensive Plan, **the County Government adopted an official charter for the Active Transportation Committee**. Since the plan's adoption, **county residents have been more engaged in the work of the Active Transportation Committee**, with multiple members of the general public attending meetings and providing valuable comments on the committee's work.

Actual Outcomes (so far)

Huntingdon County – [Active Transportation Plan](#)

- The Huntingdon County Planning Commission reviewed a residential subdivision plan in a targeted ***Lifeways Corridor*** area, aiming to connect residents to essential services. The proposed subdivision was overlaid on a legacy trail used by locals to access nearby stores.
- Despite the developer not being required to provide sidewalks per municipal regulations, the Commission recommended adding sidewalks and a pedestrian right-of-way to preserve neighborhood access to commercial areas, pointing to that need as identified in the ATP.

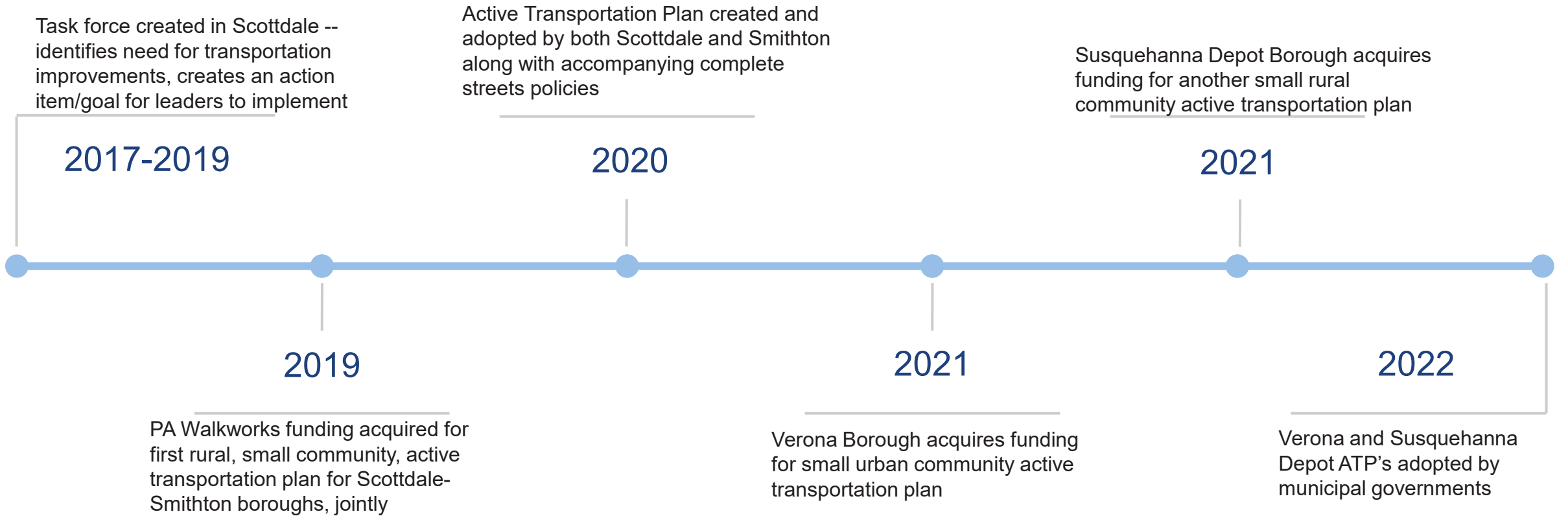
Why this program demonstrates uniqueness and innovation:

- **Co-creative outcomes with resident and citizen involvement**
- **Penn State Extension's facilitation and engagement with shareholders and wider stakeholder populations**
- **The interdependence of research-based design and practice-based experience-- the goal being to plan and implement projects and practices *with* communities, not just *for* them.**

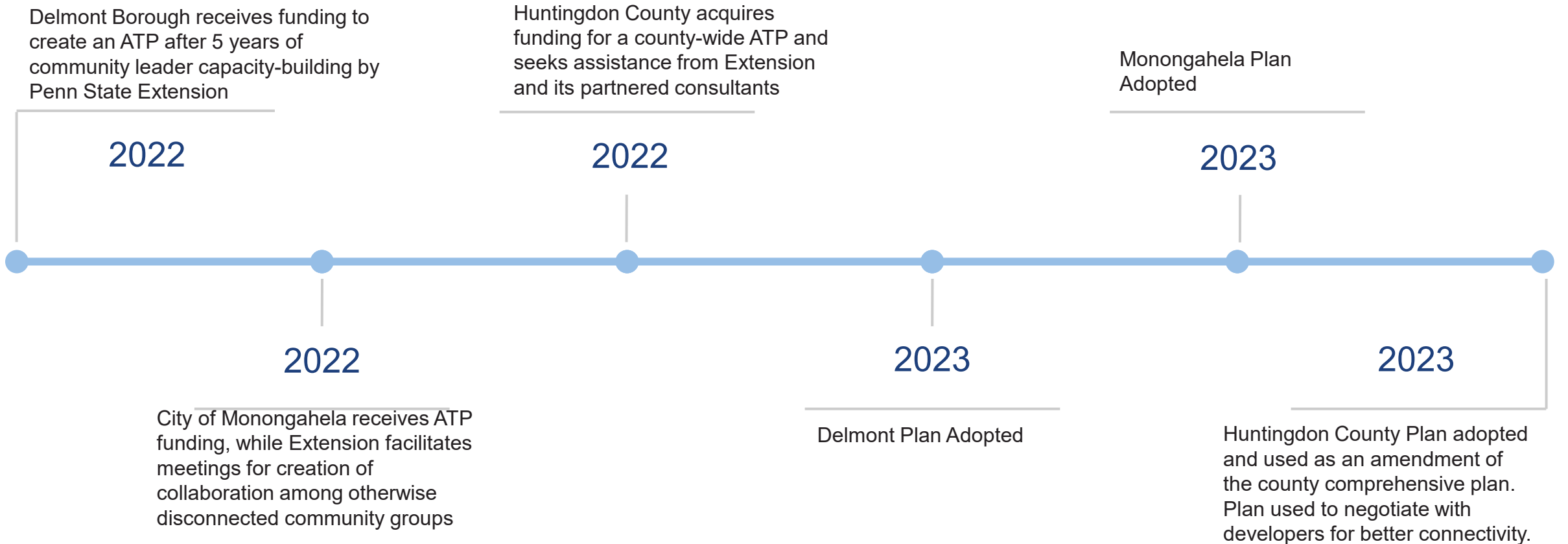
Why this program demonstrates uniqueness and innovation:

- Penn State Extension's engagement and partnering to create these sorts of plans has *generated over \$50,000 in cost recovery funds* for Extension during the past five years and relationship-building for additional programming in the future.

Extension involvement with ATP creation



Extension involvement with PA ATP creation

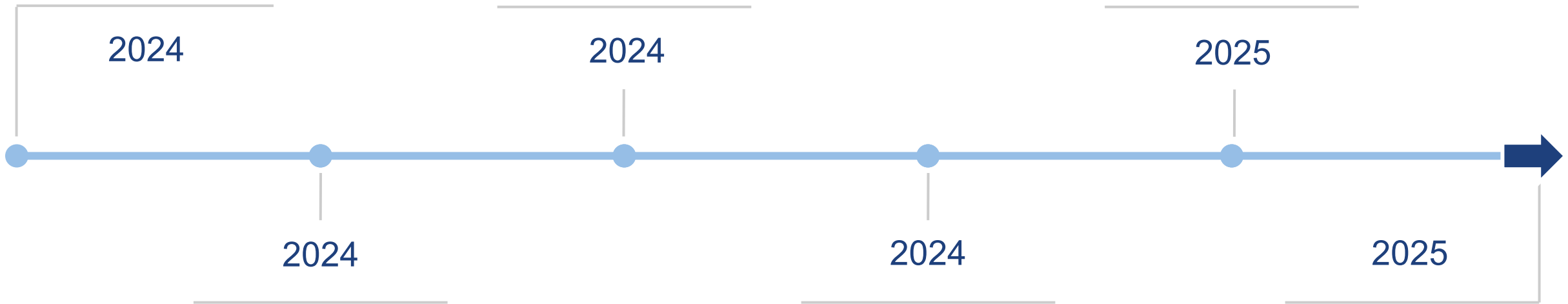


Extension involvement with ATP creation

Monongahela uses the plan as a tool to foster discussion and renewed collaboration among community groups; completes new sidewalks connecting a school with neighborhoods

Huntingdon County engages/partners with local municipalities to take implementation steps

Historic Vandergrift Borough seeks grant funding in 2024 with Extension assistance and is awarded \$33,000 in funding for the creation of its own active transportation plan



Delmont uses plan to acquire a donation of land for trail connection and parklet by its historic 1818 watering trough and Northern Turnpike stagecoach stop. Seeks and is awarded additional \$20,000 funding to connect with an adjacent regional trail, using private land donation as match funding.

Westmoreland County seat, City of Greensburg, creates an active transportation plan and seeks Extension service on the planning steering committee.

Verona Borough councilwoman receives national recognition from Smart Growth America for implementing her community's 2022 plan. Borough receives federal funding for implementation. This community initiative is selected for presentation at the 2025 national *Main Street Now* conference.

IAP2's PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

Public has increasing impact on decision

Inform

Consult

Involve

Collaborate

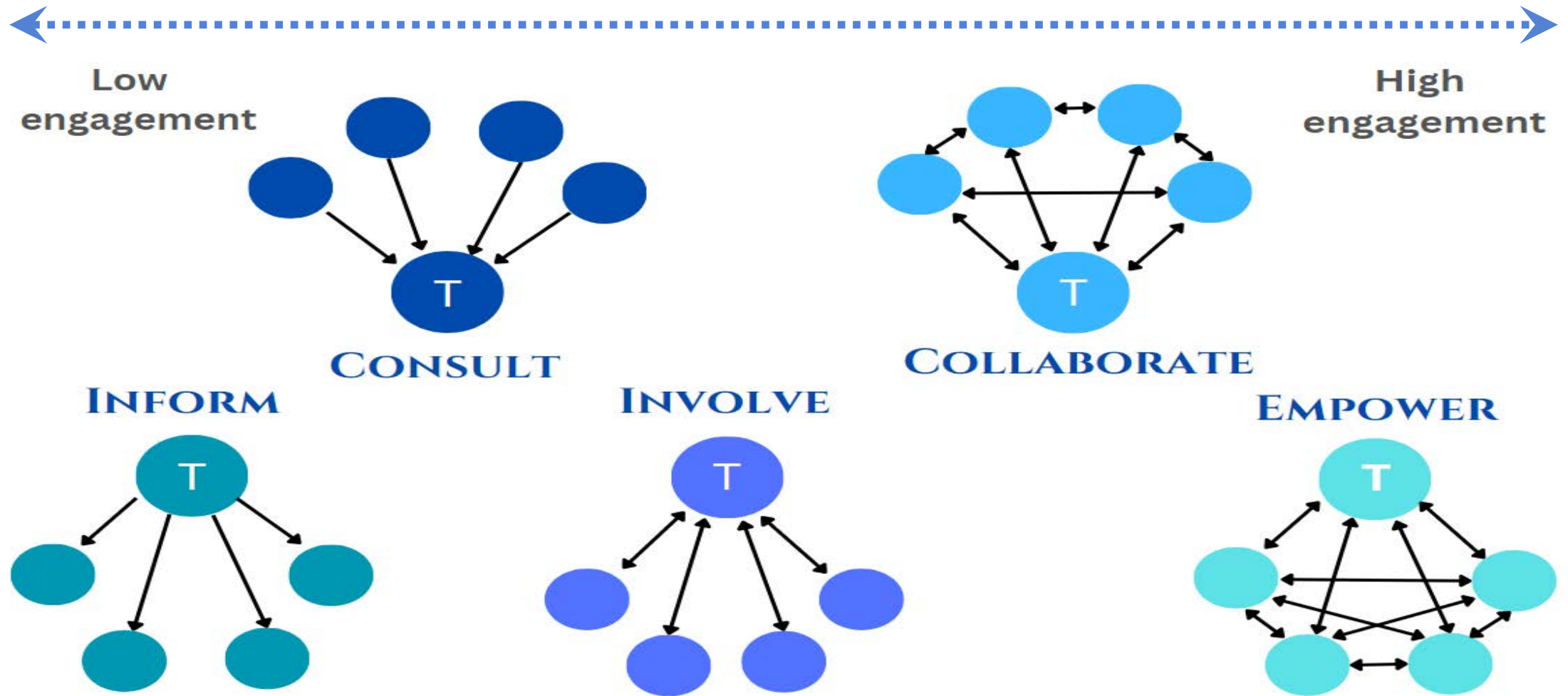
Empower

Source: <https://www.iap2.org/page/pillars>
https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf

Engagement Goals



Establishing Your Engagement Goals



Which parts of the IAP2 Spectrum do you see demonstrated in the catalyzation and creation of these active transportation plans?

Smithton-Scottdale Active Transportation Plan

Smithton-Scottdale Active Transportation Plan

Adopted December 2020



<https://smartgrowthpa.org/scottdale/>

Funding to prepare this Active Transportation Plan was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant and Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Smithton-Scottdale Active Transportation Plan

Smithton-Scottdale Active Transportation Plan

APPENDIX

Adopted December 2020



Funding to prepare this Active Transportation Plan was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant and Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Scottdale Borough
Complete Streets Policy
Adopted December 14, 2020

Funding to prepare this Complete Streets Policy was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant and Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

1.0 VISION

Complete Streets are defined by this Policy as enabling a transportation network that is designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Scottdale Borough will develop and maintain safe, accessible streets, sidewalks and other transportation facilities that support all modes of transportation, all potential users including vulnerable and underserved populations. Scottdale Borough will require other publicly or privately developed transportation enhancement projects within the Borough to be designed, operated and maintained to achieve this Vision. This Complete Streets Policy will help Scottdale be more livable and attractive for visitors, business owners, families and people with disabilities.

This Complete Streets Policy shows Scottdale's commitment to enable safe and convenient travel for all persons by all modes of transportation. It also shows its commitment to improve the health and quality of life of Borough residents and its commitment to facilitate ongoing and proposed walking and biking enhancement projects within the Borough.

The Complete Streets Policy will guide decision-making during the planning and design of future transportation enhancement projects, capital improvement projects and other related road infrastructure maintenance projects. The Policy will serve as a reference for projects and initiatives developed and implemented by Borough partners. This will ensure that Scottdale's transportation system is planned, designed, operated and maintained to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for all users and that it serves vulnerable and underserved populations within Scottdale.

Verona Active Transportation Plan - Verona on the Move


VERONA ON THE MOVE

Verona Borough Active Transportation Plan


Adopted September 2022



Funding to prepare this Active Transportation Plan was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant and Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



ADOPTED 3/8/2023



<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/programs/WalkWorks/Pages/Locations.aspx>





<https://smartgrowthpa.org/scottdale-smithton-smithton-scottdale-active-transportation-plan-and-complete-streets-policy/>

Community Connections at the Crossroads - the Delmont Borough Active Transportation Plan

Community Connections at the Crossroads

Delmont Borough Active Transportation Plan

Adopted September 2023

Funding to prepare this Active Transportation Plan was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant and Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

Adopted September 2023
Adopted by Resolution 6-2023 on September 12, 2023





<https://www.huntingdoncounty.net/departments/planning-and-development/transportation/trails-and-planning-efforts>

Funding to prepare this Active Transportation Plan was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant and Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

City of Monongahela Active Transportation Plan

City of Monongahela Active Transportation Plan

Adopted October 2023
Adopted by the City of Monongahela Council on October 11, 2023






Funding to prepare this Active Transportation Plan was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant and Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

- <https://padowntown.sharefile.com/share/view/sf8d7c23198e14cd1b9c9295802515770> Delmont
- <https://padowntown.sharefile.com/share/view/s2dc350106f3e4f8aa3a1a2b318027a32> Monongahela
- <https://padowntown.sharefile.com/public/share/web-s8ac1413106424df09a05ab89706f7de0> Huntingdon
- <https://smartgrowthpa.org/delmont/> Delmont Plan History

Leadership and Community Vitality



Active Transportation Planning (ATP) Continues to Bear Fruit

Extension's [Smart Growth](#) partnered program has been leading efforts to improve active transportation networks throughout Westmoreland County in sync with [Reimagining Our Westmoreland](#) core objectives:

- [Vandergrift](#) capacity-building technical assistance yields \$33,000 awarded in 2024 for new ATP creation
- Fayette County planners utilize the [Smithton-Scottdale ATP](#) to further GAP connector plans linking a new placemaking, visitor-destination bridge project in Connellsville to Southern Westmoreland County communities via a federal RAISE grant application
- [Friends of Norwin Trails](#) has begun visioning for making Irwin the hub of a new local connector trail network among 3 municipalities
- [Delmont Visionary Committee](#) acquires trail easement donation and \$10,000 ATP implementation/construction plus \$40,000 planning grants
- [Latrobe Community Revitalization](#) seeks Extension assistance to improve the community sidewalks network
- [City of Greensburg](#) adds Extension staff to its Active Transportation Plan creation steering committee as technical assistance

Leadership and Community Vitality



Delmont completes first phase of many envisioned ATP* connection projects

Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority & Land Bank (RA/LB) is poised to demolish nearly 600 blighted properties across the county over the coming years. While this presents a tremendous opportunity for redevelopment, it also creates a critical need for responsible and sustainable future planning -- followed by skilled project management.

In collaboration with **Penn State Extension**, the RA/LB is planning a one-day, intensive workshop designed to be a hands-on learning experience that will provide attendees with the skills needed to envision and successfully manage community-focused development projects. The program will empower residents to take ownership of their communities, foster collaboration and ultimately ensure that the removal of blight leads to lasting positive change.

During the workshop -- and every day throughout the year -- facilitators and experts from Penn State Extension's *Leadership and Community Vitality Team* offer valuable guidance on project planning, fundraising, volunteer recruitment/retainment, and project management fundamentals.

Leadership and Community Vitality



“I want to attend additional grant writing trainings that Penn State Extension offers!”

*Aleesha Kelly,
Project Leader*

McKinley Avenue Improvement Project -- Grant Writing Technical Assistance

As follow-up to the Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority and Land Bank's *Successfully Managing Community Development Projects* workshop on October 25, instructed by Penn State Extension, the Vandergrift Improvement Program has submitted application for a Revitalizing Westmoreland \$30,000 grant leveraging the creation of a \$30,000 Active Transportation Plan (ATP), also in progress.

Vandergrift Improvement Program's *McKinley Avenue Improvement Project*, in conjunction with the ATP, will enhance the quality of life for residents, support local businesses, and foster a sense of pride in the community. The revitalization of this connecting thoroughway is a key part of Vandergrift's future ATP, strengthening community connectivity to other public spaces and making the town more walkable and accessible. The synergy between the ATP and this McKinley Avenue project reinforces the importance of sustainable, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure throughout Vandergrift. The positive impact extends beyond just the avenue, motivating future projects focused on walkability, safety, and community engagement.



What are Community Capitals?

- ❖ An approach to analyze communities and community development efforts from a systems perspective.



Community Capitals Framework for Planning

Natural

Cultural

Human

Social

Political

Financial

Built

How many community capitals can you identify as having been improved because of Extension's engagement during the catalyzing and creation of these Active Transportation Plans?

Engagement (Plan Outcomes Reporting)

John Turack worked with Verona Councilwoman Trish-Hredzak-Showalter to create a PA WalkWorks application for the Active Transportation Plan funding that Extension-partnered Active Transportation Plan consultants then created for/with Extension educators and Verona leaders in 2021-2022:

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/programs/WalkWorks/Pages/Locations.aspx> Verona Borough Active Transportation Plan

Trish's recent Facebook post demonstrates some of the ripples of outcomes from Extension work in 2021 with community leaders and professionals in building Verona's capacity to not only plan, but also to take steps to implement the plan that was created.

https://www.facebook.com/trish.hredzakshowalter/posts/pfbid02N47e6S2jKp7fDo9oeifR88adyJyYJJmd32o6rWRgCkaLJ89iiWZxQFEQKqQu3T53I?comment_id=1189066009122721¬if_id=1717004782798150¬if_t=feedback_reaction_generic&ref=notif

What Community Capitals do you see improved below?

Engagement (Plan Outcomes Reporting)

Verona

Trish Hredzak-Showalter is at National Association of Realtors Building. Washington D.C.

· “Probably no one is born an active transportation enthusiast, but once you see it, you just can't unsee it. It merges so many of my interests, so just humor me as I geek out about my untraditional hobby for a minute ... Last week I was honored & thrilled to represent Verona Borough at Smart Growth America's Alumni Champions Convening in Washington, DC. ("CD" - as Winnie originally called it!) I was awarded a stipend to attend (so no taxpayer dollars were used), and **it was the culmination of my proud participation in the 3rd of 4, or the 2022 - 2023 class of the Champions Institute.** During the Institute 15 of us locally elected officials from various sized communities across the nation were brought together to envision better connected, economically vibrant, more equitable, and healthier communities based on "Smart Growth" - the encompassing and implementation of Complete Streets/multi-modal projects <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/the-champions-institute.../>. Last week in two full days not only did we get to connect in person with our cohort, but we had the opportunity to meet with members of the cohorts from all 4 years, which was expanded to include state representatives! (Hi, State Representative Kate Farrar!) Along the way we also heard from the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) staff, traffic engineers, grassroots activists, the CDC, Congressional Rep. Jake Auchincloss, placemaking consultants and more! I soaked up the ideas like a sponge, and am excited to apply my newfound knowledge and heightened enthusiasm for active transportation back home. We were furthermore delighted that our Congressional Rep Chris Deluzio was available to meet with us while we were there, so our family came to his office and also to a tour of the Capitol building (Daniel Showalter's suggestion). **We planted the seeds for help with our active transportation projects, rebuilding our police department, improving our riverfront and access, and making an even bigger playground at Verner** (Winnie). Winnie also put a pin on his office map for Verona, and gave a report on her visit to DC to her first grade class which also included some of the Smithsonians. We were home in time to mark Memorial Day in Verona which always includes a very special annual parade and traditional ceremony to honor our country and all that have served and whom we have lost. I am so very grateful for this past week, and also happy to go on on about this to anyone who is interested in hearing more, just message me! What a week!!!”

*Detailed sections of two of the plans
follow for reference.*

Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

About Huntingdon County

- Huntingdon County is in the south-central part of Pennsylvania. It is a rural County with a population of 45,145 and 51.6 persons per square mile. The County has a median household income of \$53,597 and an unemployment rate of 5.4%. (American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020).
- Huntingdon County has several DEP Environmental Justice Areas (2022) including Franklin, Porter, Logan, Juniata, Shirley, Walker, Todd, Smithfield, West, Cromwell and Tell Townships, and Alexandria, Huntingdon, Mount Union, Mapleton Petersburg, Rockhill and Orbisonia Boroughs.
- The County has a minority population of approximately 4,294 (9.46%) and a low-income population of approximately 4,917 (10.84%).
- The median age of County residents is 43.4. Approximately 18% are under 18 years of age and 20% are over 65 years of age.
- From 2015-2019, Huntingdon County had seven (7) people on bicycles involved in crashes with motor vehicles; one (1) of those bike riders was killed. There were also 17 pedestrians involved in crashes with motor vehicles; three (3) of those pedestrians had serious injuries.



About the PA WalkWorks Program

WalkWorks is an initiative between the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Downtown Center that supports the development and adoption of active transportation plans or related policies. Its mission is to improve public health by increasing access and opportunities for physical activities, such as walking, biking, wheeling, and using public transit to improve public health. WalkWorks provides the following to its partners:

- Funding to develop Active Transportation Plans to guide the establishment of safe, accessible, active routes connecting everyday destinations.
- Encouragement to develop Complete Streets and Vision Zero policies to make walking and biking safer.
- Technical assistance for the development of said plans and policies.
- Education and Guidance on the relevance and benefits of safe and accessible walking, biking, transit, and all forms of active mobility for people throughout the commonwealth, no matter their zip code, income, or skin color.
- Support to Counties and communities that encourage walking, biking, transit, wheeling, etc., through events, routes, programs, and groups.

About the Plan

- The Plan provides transportation equity by considering the needs and impacts of projects in low-income census tract and block groups, connects walking and bicycling networks, leverages partnerships by engaging key stakeholders in the process, improves public health through education and increases economic mobility by allowing for non-motorized transportation enhancements throughout the County's boroughs and townships.
- The Plan will support the development of land use plans and policies at the County level that will allow for the development of activity-friendly, non-motorized routes connecting to everyday destinations.
- The Plan incorporated information from the Southern Alleghenies Greenways and Open Space Plan (2007), September 11 National Memorial Trail - Northern Pilgrimage Trail Alignment Study (2015), Alleghenies Ahead: Comprehensive Plan for the Southern Alleghenies (2018), Main Line Canal Greenway Feasibility Study (2019), Southern Alleghenies Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2021), Penn Highlands Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) (2021), data from the Pennsylvania County Health profiles, the United States Census Bureau, PennDOT and various other sources.



Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

Huntingdon County's Active Transportation Vision

To improve walking, bicycling, wheeling and paddling connections to favorable destinations and to increase safe and accessible opportunities for Huntingdon County residents so they can be more physically active.

Project Approach

An asset-based and issues-oriented planning approach was followed to create an implementable Active Transportation Plan. The approach relied on the input and guidance provided by the County, Active Transportation Committee, local officials and residents. The community engagement process made it possible to identify implementable solutions to real transportation system issues that exist within the County. A simple set of three (3) principles underlies the methodologies and the planning approach conducted for this Project.

- 1. A Focus on Issues, Assets and Solutions** – The planning approach relied heavily on public engagement and collaboration to identify issues, assets and achievable solutions for Huntingdon County. The approach included fieldwork by the Planning Consultants, a Community Survey and Interactive Comment Map, direct input from Active Transportation Committee, local officials, residents and key person interviews. Results of the community engagement process were considered to identify core issues, assets and solutions. These results were refined during in-depth Committee meetings and at a Planning Charrette that further developed several specific priorities.
- 2. Organization of the Plan to Reflect Local Thinking** – The Plan consists of five (5) major sections, including:
 - This Introduction section provides background on the development of the Plan and summarizes its vision, purpose and goals.
 - A Community Engagement section highlights the public involvement efforts completed and summarizes the input received.
 - An Existing Conditions section highlights current transportation system and health related conditions in Huntingdon County.
 - A Priorities section that clearly describes the top walking, biking and paddling related priorities.
 - An Implementation section that ties the priorities and recommendations with potential timelines, funding sources and potential partners.
- 3. Identify a Structure and Capacity to Implement the Plan** – This is an implementable Plan, meaning that completion of this document is not the ending point of the planning process but rather the beginning of the 'doing' part of the planning process. Huntingdon County staff, elected officials, and members of the Active Transportation Committee are critical to the coordination of follow-up activities and will be critical for the implementation efforts.



Mark Lazzari, AICP of the EADS Group and Matt Price at the Huntingdon ATP Planning Charrette

More about the Project

Penn State Extension's Leadership and Community Vitality Team provided community engagement and leader/volunteer/stakeholder/shareholder capacity-building assistance throughout the creation of this Plan. Cooperative Extension academic research has shown that deep engagement with the following leads to plans that are most effectively implemented after adoption by any leaders that have infrastructure provision responsibility and authority.

- Community Members – the people who live, work and play in Huntingdon County. These include newer residents and those who have lived in the County for a long time.
- Stakeholders – those with a stake in the outcomes of any planning effort, and
- Shareholders – individuals, associations, and institutions that not only have a stake in the outcomes of a plan but also have the ability and willingness to provide resources for implementation

In other words, applying Cooperative Extension research, this Plan has been created *with* the community, and not simply *for* the community.

Another outcome of the approach was the formation and strengthening of a network of community leader relationships that blossomed throughout the process and during the Active Transportation Plan Public Meeting and subsequent Planning Charrette.

Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

The Community Engagement process provided Huntingdon County representatives and members of the Active Transportation Plan Committee an opportunity to guide and shape the future of active transportation in their county. Residents, organizations, local officials, and other stakeholders were given multiple opportunities and options to participate and to provide input. Information obtained during the process was used to develop an inventory of potential active transportation improvements and action items. The following section describes the Community Engagement process and highlights the results.

Active Transportation Committee (ATC) meetings

The Huntingdon County Commissioners authorized the creation of the Active Transportation Committee (ATC) in November 2017. Committee members were strategically selected to provide input and guidance on walking and biking opportunities, trail development and to communicate with municipalities about the Plan's development. Committee members assisted with critical sharing of information directly related to developing the list of Priorities included in the Plan. In total, eight (8) hybrid (in-person and on-line options) Steering Committee meetings were held.

- Meeting 1 January 27, 2023
- Meeting 2 February 24, 2023
- Meeting 3 March 31, 2023
- Meeting 4 April 28, 2023
- Meeting 5 May 25, 2023
- Meeting 6 June 30, 2023
- Meeting 7 August 4, 2023
- Meeting 8 August 25, 2023

The Committee updated the consultant group at the first meeting on the progress they had made over the past years. Maps, historic plans and trail gap information were shared. The meetings were highly organized and productive.

Field Tour

The Consultant Team conducted an initial driving tour of the County on March 9, 2023. The Field Tour focused on evaluating existing conditions in many communities and on identifying walking and biking impediments and opportunities. The Tour was also used to identify key County Trail destinations such as the Lower Trail Alfarata trailhead, Thousand Steps parking area, Raystown Lake and the East Broad Top Railroad.

Huntingdon County Planning Commission – Annual Award Dinner

Members of the Project Team attended the Huntingdon County Planning Commission's Annual Awards Dinner on March 9, 2023. The Team was able to meet and socialize with each other as well as residents and business owners. The Team learned firsthand of both the active transportation challenges and the good work being accomplished in Huntingdon County.

Public Outreach Meeting

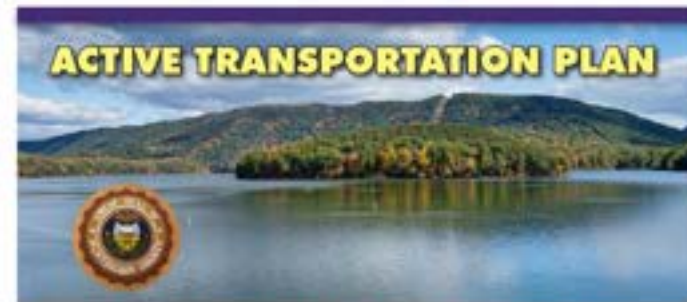
A Community Engagement Event was held in the Huntingdon Borough Council Chambers on June 8, 2023. The flyer circulated in print and electronically for the Event is shown to the right. The Event included a general presentation from 3-4 pm and a Public Engagement session from 4-6 pm. The Event was promoted using direct invitations, poster displays and posting via social media. The Event attracted over 30 participants including residents, business owners, elected officials and former Juniata College graduates who moved back to Huntingdon.

Key Person Interviews

Eight (8) Key Person Interviews were conducted during the planning process. The interviews were an important method to engage different segments of the community to involve them in the development of this Plan. Interviews were conducted with Commissioners, the business sector, local elected officials, local/regional agency representatives, Juniata College representative and residents.

Huntingdon County Planning Commission

The Draft Plan was presented to the Planning Commission at their August 17, 2023 meeting. The Planning Commission endorsed the Plan and approved sending it to the County Commissioners for adoption.



HUNTINGDON COUNTY



Provide your input...

PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETING

WHERE **WHAT**

Huntingdon Borough
Municipal Building
Borough Council Chambers
530 Washington Street
Huntingdon, PA

Huntingdon County is developing an Active Transportation Plan to make walking, biking and other modes of active transportation safer, easier and more accessible for everyone. Active transportation is any self-propelled mode of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, e-biked bicycling, wheelchairs, mobility scooters and podding. The Plan is also aimed at creating healthier communities and increasing the health of Huntingdon County residents. The Plan will create a Unified Vision for increasing access, corridors and opportunities for walking, biking, wheelchair and podding sports in Huntingdon County.

WHEN

Thursday, June 8, 2023
3:00PM-6:00PM

TOPICS

The Huntingdon County Active Transportation Committee is hosting a Public Outreach Meeting to collect ideas for improving active transportation in Huntingdon County. The meeting will be interactive and opportunities for one-on-one and group discussions will be provided.

Your suggestions and
comments will greatly help in
this planning process!

County residents, including municipal officials, health care providers, local organizations and those who walk/bike/pod or use mobility devices, are encouraged to attend.

Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

Public Outreach Meeting – June 8, 2023



Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

Huntingdon County Steering Committee Planning Charrette

Members of the Project Team met at The We Gather Building in Huntingdon Borough on Washington Street on Monday, June 12, 2023 for day long Planning Charette. In the morning the Team reviewed existing input – survey, comment map, Key Stakeholder Interviews, Steering Committee meeting and Public Meeting. In the afternoon the Team discussed the top priorities for the Plan. The Team also discussed actions items and suggested implementation approaches. The Charrette included great discussions for improving walking, biking, wheeling and paddling connections in Huntingdon County.



Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan Planning Charrette Agenda June 12, 2023

The purpose of this meeting session is to gain consensus on the active transportation priorities (municipal, county, regional) that will be promoted in the Plan and to identify targeted improvement areas in the County. The Strategic Plan Worksheet will guide us through the meeting. Results of the session will define 'what we want to do', 'what we will do'; and 'how we will do it' in terms of improving active transportation in Huntingdon County.

The first portion of the session will focus on reviewing all input received and collaborating on identifying the top priorities/actions. The second half will focus on us making decisions about the 'who, what, when, why and how' regarding each priority.

Since the Plan will guide the Committee over the next several years, we need to continually think about what is achievable and realistic. Trying to address 50 priorities and actions is not achievable and realistic for the Committee. Working on and achieving success on 5-10 priorities (including the three (3) 9/11 trail segments) directly or in a support/technical assistance role is more achievable and realistic goal for the Committee.



10:00 - 10:30	Review Existing Input – Survey, Comment Map, Key Stakeholder Interviews, Steering Committee and Public Meeting What Input have we missed?
10:30 - 11:30	Begin to Identify/Discuss Top Priorities
11:30 - 12:00	Lunch
12:00 – 12:30	Consensus on Top Priorities
1:00 - 3:00	Work on Strategic Plan Worksheet

Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

Interactive Comment Mapping and Community Survey

A web-based comment mapping application and community survey were prepared by the Huntingdon County Planning & Development Department to connect residents, organizations, and officials with the Active Transportation planning effort and to give them a voice in the planning process. The map and survey were open between May 1 and June 30, 2023 enabling users to add general and site-specific comments about walking, biking wheelchair use and paddling in Huntingdon County.

The ability to locate assets and areas of community concern; identify infrastructure issues; and provide insights, ideas and suggested fixes and recommendations was also available. Links to the survey and map were provided on Huntingdon County's website (see below) and on a flyer with QR codes (see flyer to the right). The flyer was displayed and distributed throughout the County. Information on the survey and map were also distributed through press releases, social media platforms, in

newspaper articles and in news outlet postings. The survey and comment mapping were linked but could be accessed independently to allow for flexibility in providing input. Over 100 survey responses were collected and over 50 comments/pins were provided on the comment map. The comment map is a legacy project for Huntingdon County. Future needs for community engagement can use this platform to gather input on Active Transportation planning initiatives.



Active Transportation Plan Interactive Map

News Date: Thursday, May 11, 2023

Huntingdon County is developing an Active Transportation Plan for safer, easier and more accessible modes of active transportation.

[Click for Interactive Map](#)

Active Transportation Plan Community Survey

News Date: Thursday, May 11, 2023

Huntingdon County is developing an Active Transportation Plan for safer, easier and more accessible modes of active transportation.

[Click for Community Survey](#)

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

HUNTINGDON COUNTY

Provide your input...

COMMUNITY SURVEY AND INTERACTIVE MAP

WHERE
You can access the **Survey** and **Map** from your Smartphone using these QR codes:

WHAT
Huntingdon County is developing an Active Transportation Plan to make walking, biking and other modes of active transportation safer, easier and more accessible for everyone. Active transportation is city self-provided mode of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, scooters, boarding wheelchair, mobility scooters and paddling. The Plan is also aimed at creating healthier communities and increasing the health of Huntingdon County residents.

The Plan will create a Unified Vision for increasing access, connections and opportunities for Walking, Biking, Wheeling and Paddling Sports in Huntingdon County.

TOPICS
We want everyone to share their voice in this process.

An online Community Survey and Interactive Map Program have been created to collect everyone's ideas for improving active transportation in Huntingdon County. Your suggestions and comments will greatly help in this planning process.

Links to the Survey and Map are also provided on the County's Website: www.huntingdoncounty.net

We thank you for your input!

Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

The following section highlights results of the [Active Transportation Plan Community Survey](#). The results provide insights on Walking/Running/Hiking, Bicycling, Using Wheelchairs and Paddling Improvements wanted in Huntingdon County. A copy of the Community Survey is provided in the Appendix.

Barriers/Impediments that residents from being active more often:

- Traffic on rural roads makes walking and biking very difficult
- Lack of paved trails/pathways
- Lack of safe and smooth areas for running and cycling opportunities
- Lack of immediate access to trailheads – need to put the kids in the car and drive
- Sidewalk conditions in towns
- Unaware of walk/bike trails opportunities

Projects, Improvements and Plans:

- Extension of H&BT rails to trails and adding the branch line up to Dudley - completion of the H&BT between Riddlesburg and Saxton. The old railbed from Huntingdon to Saxton.
- Working to connect Lower Trail with downtown Alexandria
- Friends of Raystown Improvements to Terrace Mountain Trail, Friends of Rothrock State Forest connection Musser Gap to Whipple Dam
- Blair County (ABCD) is looking to connect existing trails together

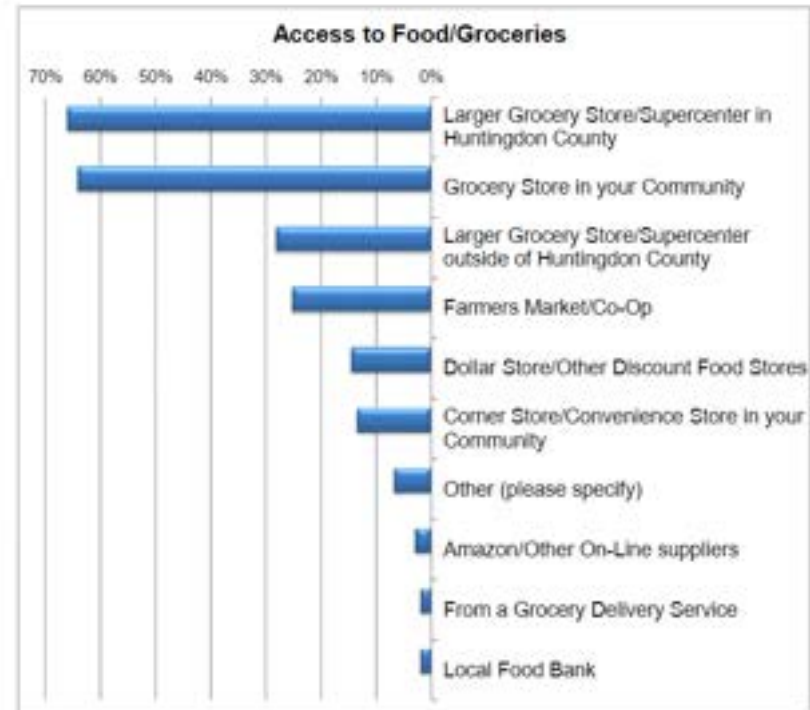
Additional comments on Active Transportation Improvements:

- I would love to see a multiuse path connecting Detwiler Park and Grugan Field, so that children from Huntingdon could safely bike/walk to soccer practice and not need to rely on being driven.
- I roller skate or in-line skate on trails. Would also be nice to have a better/updated skate park because roller & in-line skaters use them too. Paved trails and skate parks can also be used by some in wheelchairs.
- Better advertising/brochure – locations/directions of trailheads and trails
- Sidewalk maintenance is important to making more areas walkable
- Each May, Huntingdon County declares it as Motorcycle Safety and Awareness month. County should do the same thing to raise public awareness of non-motorized users – bike/walk/paddle safety month - education
- Local walking areas – need solid surfaced looped walking pathways.
- Add amenities like benches, trees, water stations and restrooms to the trails.

Where/how do you, or your household, primarily get food/groceries:

The Community Survey provided a glimpse where and how residents get or have access to food/groceries. The following lists the top responses. The graphic below provides the complete results.

- | | | |
|--|---|-----|
| 1. Larger Grocery Store/Supercenter in the County | – | 66% |
| 2. Local Community Grocery Store | – | 64% |
| 3. Larger Grocery Store/Supercenter outside the County | – | 28% |
| 4. Farmers Market/Co-Op | – | 25% |



Active Transportation Program Themes (Key Stakeholder Summary)

The Community Engagement process was one of, if not the most, important outcomes of the Plan. Engaging the public invigorated the community, revitalized members of the Steering Committee and raised the collective awareness of walking, biking, wheelchair use and paddling needs, issues, and opportunities across the community. It built capacity among the Active Transportation Committee, and it empowered new community leaders to take more active roles in improving Huntingdon County. The following summarizes some of Huntingdon County's Active Transportation Program Themes that were cultivated out of the Key Person Interviews.

County has great momentum:

- Cool things are happening in Huntingdon County. There are lots of recreation options. There is momentum and a feeling of being on the verge of great things.
- The communities are working together. There is support for trail development through making connections, prioritizing better connections in populated areas (Downtown Huntingdon, Mount Union and other communities), and supporting existing assets like Raystown Lake, 9-11 Memorial Trail, and East Broad Top Railroad.
- There are good relationships at the county level. Communication is critical at all levels to include partners – Juniata College and all the communities.
- Local, bottom-up support for any project is critical. East Broad Top Railroad is a great example of a catalyst by working through issues with communities for better solutions.
- Attracting tourists can be a major economic driver and are opportunities for businesses and residents. More people in the county increases the economy/tourism/people spending money.
- Pandemic showed that passive recreation is also very important.

“Projects must be prioritized, fiscally responsible, and sustainable for the long term given the highly competitive and limited public funding available.”

Connecting Communities:

Participants identified adjacent communities, and their associated trail systems as links in, and partners for, resolving the larger system puzzle. When communities work together it helps with funding. These communities need assistance to create and extend their trail systems.

- 9-11 Trail
- Lower Trail to Alexandria Borough
- Huntingdon Borough and Alexandria Borough
- Saltillo and Three Springs
- Focus on connections to downtowns and recreation assets
- Evaluate recreation needs in southern end of the County.
- Through Scotia Barrens State Game Lands 176 to State College
- Create greater ability to move around.

“Build in the most populated areas first.”

Connecting Public Transit to Regional Assets:

- Participants discussed how public transit amenities could play a role in connecting Huntingdon County to State College and Lewistown. Possible bus/van routes, commuter lots (along Charter Oak Road near PennDOT?), and para transit are options worth considering but determine the need before moving forward. Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission have a transit survey underway that would be good to assist with determining need.

Huntingdon County's Role:

- Participants recognized both the physical limitations and local resource constraints affecting Huntingdon County's ability to undertake new projects but making connections is a priority. It is critical that the county provide leadership and good communication with communities and other partners – providing letters of support, planning, and helping to define/understand the desired outcomes for all residents. More funding available when working together.
- Having a plan of action and funding. Educate people and assist with grant writing. Communicate the types of grants available.
- As an enabler so everyone is working on one plan and gets groups working together.

Challenges:

- Huntingdon County is one of poorest counties in PA.
- Many of the roads in the county belong to PennDOT and are narrow, winding, rural roads.
- Participants discussed that many of the trails and biking enhancements right now in the populated areas are for transportation and recreation whereas in the less populated areas the trails are used solely for recreation. The Future connections of the county will develop between people and places within/between Huntingdon County and her neighbors.
- Many of the roads don't have shoulders, need to expand shoulders where it makes sense for connections but don't ignore possible water connections.
- Restroom facilities at Rothrock State Park and at playground areas (ARPA funding?).
- Safety is critical – biking needs to happen safely.
- Be sure to include handicapped accessibility especially with the aging communities.
- USDA funding limits changed. Need to expand access to this funding.
- Many county residents live 45 minutes away from services. Support their needs.
- Challenge getting volunteers but good to be part of the community not just living there.
- Juniata College is the 2nd largest employer in the county. Keep them engaged.
- On-going maintenance is important to consider. Maintain what we have.

Supporting Users:

- Making connections easier, safer and makes sense/intuitive. Feels safe. Amenities like better lighting and cameras may help to connect Juniata College to places on Huntingdon Borough.
- Local elected officials play a supportive role in advancing the priorities, provide letters of support, promote and encourage public involvement and connect various stakeholders.
- Trust that being open and honest is the best way to work in communities.

Engaging the Process:

- Holding in-person events is best with some on-line opportunities.
- If you engage the Juniata College Student Senate you get 35-40 active participants.



Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan

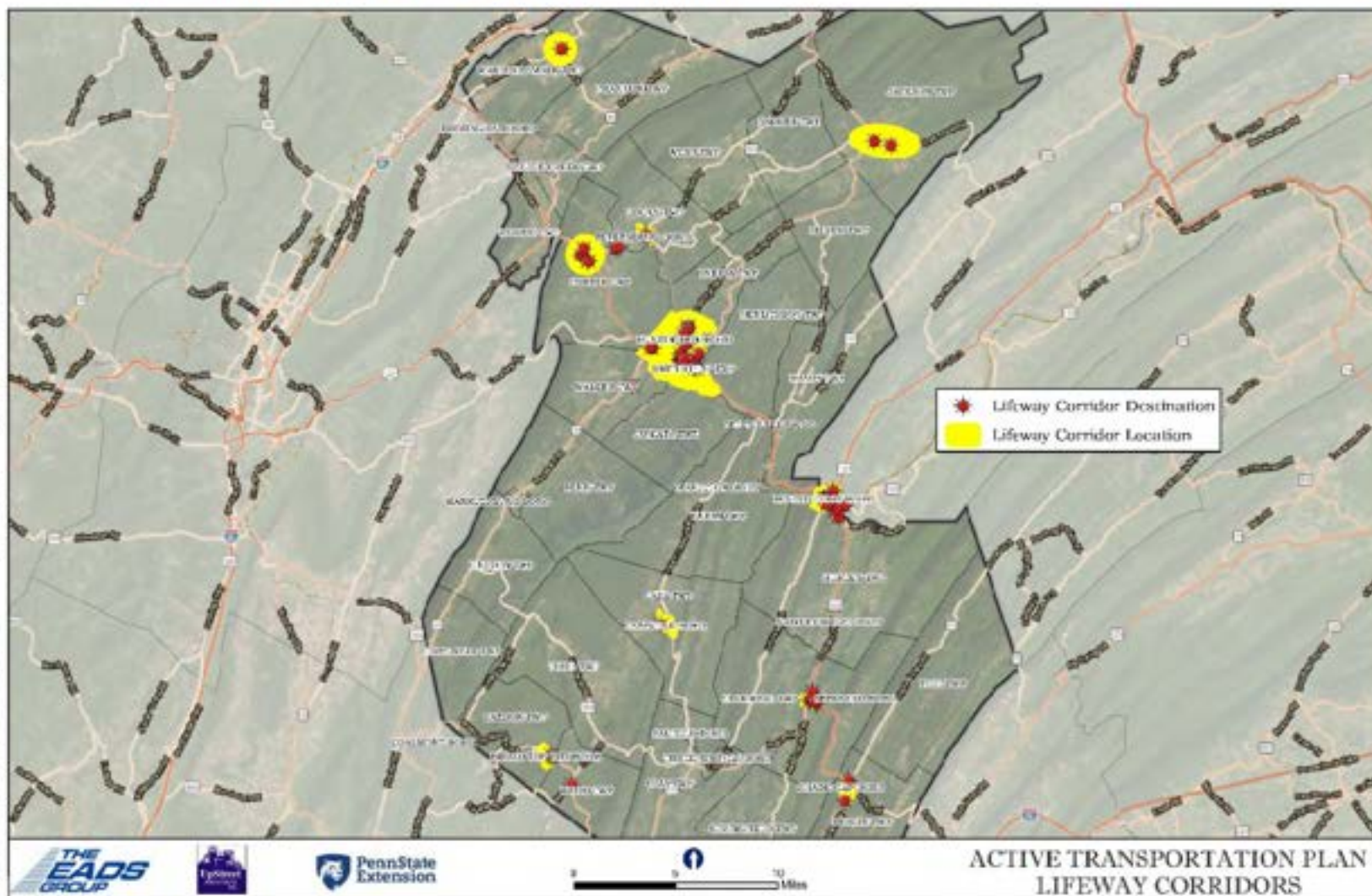
Establish Lifeway Corridors –

Create pathways to Local Food Sources, Health Care and Medical Providers, Schools, Public Services and Community Amenities.

The concept and terming of the Lifeway Corridor theme developed out of the Planning Charrette. It represents the cumulative effort of establishing purpose-focused safe and reliable pathways within communities. The Active Transportation Committee believed that simply stating that communities should 'randomly' begin working on connections was too broad of an action. Many believe that implementation would be stalled on the municipal level trying to answer 'from where?' and 'to where?' The Committee wanted this Priority to guide communities to focus efforts on connecting residents to essential services and resources.

The map to the right shows the locations of the identified Lifeway Corridors within the County and the essential destination(s) within each community. The following sections further identify each Lifeway Corridor and their destinations in greater detail.

Huntingdon County will support Municipal level implementation of community connectivity improvements. Borough Councils and Township Supervisors will likely be the project sponsors and funding applicants. Huntingdon County, municipal engineering firm(s), and others can support grant writing/application preparation and can help prepare project descriptions. Municipalities will be responsible for project maintenance. Huntingdon County and municipalities will identify non-traditional project partners and grant administrators such as Housing Authorities, Conservation District, Health and Human Services organizations, Health Care providers, Juniata College (Student Senate at Juniata College), etc. to assist in the project funding/completion process.



The priorities included in this Plan are oriented towards developing and maintaining safe, accessible streets, sidewalks and other transportation facilities that support all modes of transportation, all potential users including vulnerable and underserved populations, such as low-income residents, people of color, children, persons with disabilities and older adults. The priorities are also oriented towards making Huntingdon County more livable and attractive for residents of all ages and abilities, families, visitors, and business owners. Developing this Active Transportation Plan shows Huntingdon County's commitment to improve the health and quality of life of their residents and their commitment to facilitate ongoing and proposed walking and biking enhancement projects within the County and its communities.

County Support

Representatives from Huntingdon County were a critical part of this active transportation planning process. Successfully implementing the County's Active Transportation Plan Priorities will involve many different participants and steps and will rely on obtaining public, private and local funding and various forms of support. In some cases, Huntingdon County will need to execute maintenance agreements or will need to provide documentation of their acknowledgement and support of the projects completed by County municipalities and other entities and agencies. Continuing support by Huntingdon County Commissioners, the Active Transportation Committee, municipalities, organizations and residents will be necessary for implementation efforts to be successful. Huntingdon County is prepared to support its municipalities' and partner organizations' implementation efforts by providing Letters of Support for grant applications, committing to have regular discussions regarding active transportation efforts, and jointly advocating for transportation improvement projects. Huntingdon County will also work with neighboring Counties to support regional active transportation connections.

An intended outcome of this Plan is to identify some projects and initiatives that can be completed 'in-house' and without the need for grant funding. For instance, one of the top Priorities includes actively meeting with the Planning Commission, municipalities and others to educate them on the value and benefits of the Plan and to entice them into moving forward with improvement projects. Another top Priority includes local promotion of walking, biking (mountain, on-road, gravel) and paddling resources through preparation and presentation of mapping and other products that showcase County resources. The County will also demonstrate the value and benefits of active transportation improvements by working with partners to host walking, biking and paddling programs, activities and events and by featuring active transportation amenities identified in this Plan. Another Priority involves collaboration and communication with trail groups and organizations operating in the County.

Other Implementation Partners

Huntingdon County Commissioners, Planning Department and the Active Transportation Committee will not be able to implement the priorities alone. Many local partners and community organizations, healthcare related service providers and residents will need to take ownership of projects and will need to carry the momentum forward towards implementation. In addition, state and regional agencies, including the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission; PennDOT and others must also have a significant role in implementing the priorities. In addition, favorable grant funding consideration from the DCED, DCNR, USDA/Rural Development, HUD, Pennsylvania Downtown Center, Private Foundations, PennDOT, Regional Tourism Promotion entities, and others will be vital to successful implementation. Huntingdon County will also rely on non-traditional project partners and grant administrators such as Housing Authorities, Conservation District, Businesses/Employers, School Districts, Health and Human Services organizations, Healthcare providers, etc. to assist in the project funding/completion process.

The Plan Development Team Consultants who prepared this Active Transportation Plan and members of the Active Transportation Committee will need to work with Huntingdon County to support, facilitate and coordinate implementation efforts. [Penn State Extension](#) has additional training resources to improve the capacity of local leaders to [acquire grants](#), [hone leadership skills](#), [engage and enhance community resources](#), and otherwise grow volunteers' and staff capabilities. Huntingdon County can rely on the expertise and capacity of all the Plan Development Team Consultants to help keep things moving and to encourage implementation actions.

Penn State Extension also periodically provides in-person [grant writing training](#) to build the capacity of grant writers in the community, whether they be volunteers, paid consultants, or municipal staff and committee members. An online version of Penn State Extension's training is also available: [grant-writing-how-to-find-funds-and-write-a-winning-proposal](#).

Local Match Sources

Common among most funding sources is the requirement of a local cash or in-kind service match. In most cases, a contribution of local funding or contribution of in-kind services will need to be documented prior to submitting grant applications. The responsibility for providing local match funding will most often fall to Huntingdon County or a municipality if other sources are not readily available. Local organizations, groups and health care providers must be prepared to contribute financially and/or with in-kind services to cover match requirements. It will take the creativity of County leaders and their local partners to identify, secure, and document sources of local match funding. Each grant source may have different match requirements and allowances. Huntingdon County leaders will need to carefully interpret those requirements and, when appropriate, coordinate multiple grant applications and matching funds documentation to take advantage of opportunities where one grant can be matched with the award of another. As noted, in some cases, in-kind services can also be used as part of the matching funds. Huntingdon County and others capable of providing this level of support must be aware that documentation and tracking of the services provided will need to be kept current as the project progresses to claim in-kind services as match. Appropriate documentation is typically submitted to the granting agency for their approval. As suggested in the beginning of this section, Huntingdon County leaders can call upon the Planning Development Team Consultants to help support, facilitate and coordinate project funding efforts.



Official Map

Huntingdon County municipalities are encouraged to move forward with preparing and adopting an **Official Map** ordinance as an early action implementation step. An Official Map is a planning tool that is an effective way for designating needed trail connections through private property routes. The Official Map tool allows a community to identify needed easements prior to private property being developed. In developing an Official Map, municipalities will effectively prioritize its acquisition needs, enabling it to focus its resources on properties that are most important to the community, or on properties that are most quickly available for making needed community amenity or destination connections.

Municipalities can use an Official Map to pre-express an interest in acquiring specific land (or easements thereon) for community route connections and trails. Essentially, a municipality would be “reserving” certain land for future public use. If a landowner seeks to develop reserved land, the municipality has a year to pursue acquisition of the land from the owner before the owner may freely build or subdivide. Based on experience in other Pennsylvania communities with adopted Official Maps, developers often study the Official Map and incorporate any needed connections into their initial development plans to avoid delays, so the municipality does not then need to go through a full year-long property acquisition process.

Benefits of adopting an Official Map include the following:

- The Official Map greatly increases the likelihood that land will be available for trail connections if and when private land is developed.
- When the private property is developed, a municipality would have up to one (1) year to pursue acquisition of the trail easement before the owner may freely build or subdivide over the reserved land.
- In developing an Official Map, a municipality would effectively prioritize its acquisition needs, enabling it to focus its resources on properties that are most important to the community.

To implement an Official Map, a municipality can do the following:

- Complete a planning process that identifies community-wanted trail connections, walking/biking routes and community connection priorities. Adopting the Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan may satisfy this step.
- Cultivate a willing and committed Borough Council/Supervisors, planning commission and legal counsel that will work together to lead development of the Official Map.
- Identify implementation funding. Official maps are commonly backed by a funding mechanism whereby a municipality has the financial wherewithal to support its map designations when the time comes. Leaders should explore the regional foundations, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and other state and federal agencies identified in this Funding and Implementation Section to fund implementation components of the Official Map ordinance.

The following links provide additional information on the Official Map and resources for developing and adopting an Official Map.

- [Official Map Tip Sheet](#)
- [The PennDOT Official Map Handbook](#)

The Official Map

FACT SHEET

for Local Officials

What is an Official Map?

An “official map” is a combined map and ordinance designed to implement the goals and community vision set forth in the comprehensive plan. The official map shows the locations of planned future public lands and facilities such as transportation, recreational parks and trails, and open space. The official map expresses a municipality’s interest in acquiring these lands for public purposes sometime in the future. Official maps can be used by townships, boroughs, cities, and counties. The official map is not to be mistaken for the official zoning map of a municipality.

What are the Benefits?

- The official map can help focus limited financial resources on projects that meet and advance community goals.
- The official map helps municipalities make improvements such as connecting and improving the local street network, intersection improvements, protecting important natural areas, and providing more green space, recreation facilities, trails, and sidewalks.
- The official map saves time and money by informing property owners and developers of municipal goals and intentions in advance of development plans.
- The official map is an effective negotiation tool for municipalities, helping to ensure that development is compatible with and supportive of public goals.
- The official map supports other land use management tools (zoning, subdivision/land development, etc.) by advancing the implementation of infrastructure and public spaces.
- The official map gives municipalities a competitive advantage in securing grants.

What are the Basics of Official Maps?

- A municipality should have an adopted comprehensive plan if they choose to adopt an official map.
- Official maps can cover the entire municipality or only a portion.
- The typical cost to develop an official map and ordinance is \$5,000-\$6,000.
- The governing body is required to provide a 45-day review period and one public hearing (at minimum) prior to adoption.
- Once a property owner or developer notifies a municipality of their intention to build, subdivide, or perform other work on land that is located on an official map, the municipality has up to a year to confirm its acquisition interest and negotiate to acquire the land.
- Acquisition can take the form of dedication by owner, purchase of land or easement by the municipality, negotiations with owner/developer to make desired improvements, or eminent domain (although rare), if the municipality chooses.
- Approximately 64 of Pennsylvania’s municipalities, and one county, have an official map. This handbook aims to reduce misunderstandings and misinformation that may have deterred others from achieving the successes made possible by the official map.
- Public outreach and education is key to a successful official map development, adoption, and implementation process.

Municipalities and counties are authorized by Article IV of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) to develop and implement official maps. Official maps may include, but are not limited to:

- Existing and proposed public streets, watercourses, and public grounds, including widening, narrowing, stations, dimensions, openings, or closings.
- Existing and proposed public parks, playgrounds, and open space reservations.
- Pedestrian ways and easements.
- Railroad and transit right-of-way and easements.
- Flood control basins, floodways and flood plans, storm water management areas, and drainage easements.
- Support facilities, easements, and other properties held by public bodies undertaking the elements of a comprehensive plan.

June 2011 • PennDOT • PA DCNR • PA DCED • PALTA Fact Sheet 1

Community Engagement Event - Historic District Walking Tour - June 24, 2023

A Community Engagement Event was also held as a Walking Tour of Historic Delmont. The Tour was conducted on Saturday, June 24 from 10-11:30am by Vicki Walters, President of the Delmont Historical Preservation Society.

The Walking Tour was promoted using direct invitations, public advertising, poster displays and posting via social media. The Event attracted over 20 participants including residents, business owners, council persons and guests.

It was a tremendous tour that touched on the reason that Delmont is on the National Historic Record of Historic Places. Participants learned about Delmont's beginning as an important intersection of critical Stagecoach routes and the ever-flowing spring which was a watering place for the stagecoach horses. The tour began at the Delmont Presbyterian Church and ended at the Bush Log House. After the tour there was a gathering of everyone for lunch at Ianni's Pizza with lively conversations.



**DELMONT BOROUGH
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

A Walking Tour

of Historic Delmont

Delmont, PA
A Valley in the Hills

Saturday, June 24 - 10:00-11:30am

WHERE

Meet/Park at the
Delmont Presbyterian Church
101 Church Street
Delmont, PA 15626

The Tour will be fun,
informative and interactive

Join us and bring a friend!

WHAT

Delmont Borough is developing an Active Transportation Plan to make walking, biking, rolling and riding in Delmont safer, easier and more accessible for everyone. Active transportation is any self-propelled mode of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, e-assisted bicycling, scooters, roller blades, skateboards, wheelchairs and even kayaks/ canoes. The Plan will create a Unified Vision for Walking, Biking, Rolling and Riding in Delmont.

TOPICS

As part of the planning process, the Delmont Historical Society will be leading a Walking Tour of Historic Delmont. Buildings and locations important to the history of Delmont will be visited. As part of the Tour, the consultant Team for the Active Transportation Plan, will be discussing ways to improve walking, wheelchair use and biking in the Historic District.

Walking Tour in Delmont as Public Engagement

<https://padowntown.sharefile.com/share/view/sf8d7c23198e14cd1b9c9295802515770>

Interactive Comment Mapping and Community Survey

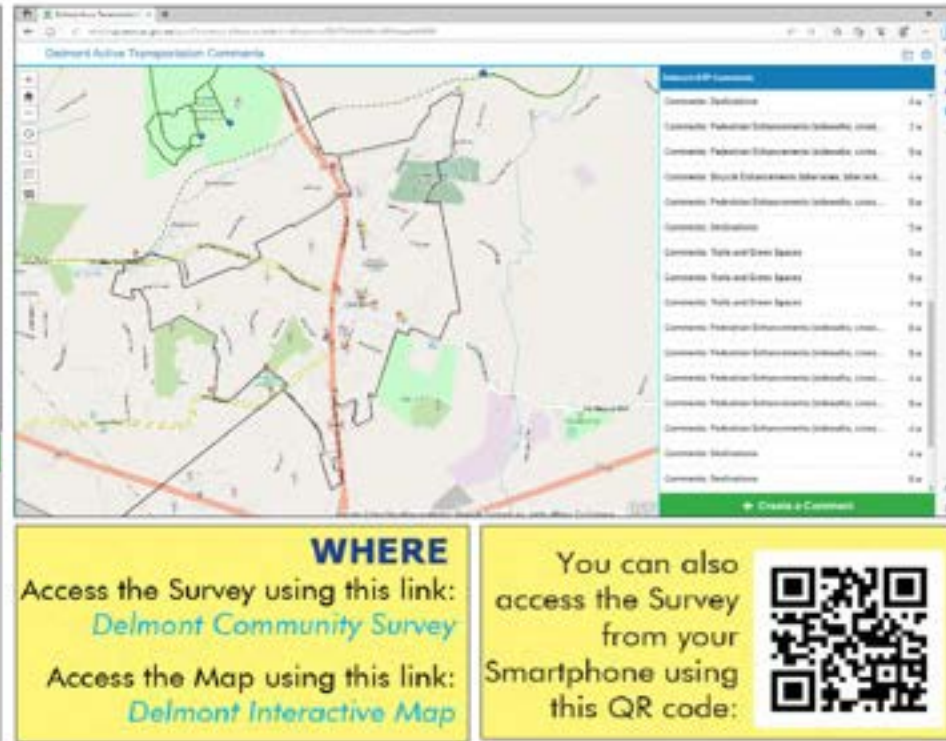
A web-based comment mapping application and community survey was prepared by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) to connect residents, organizations, and officials with the Active Transportation planning effort and to give them a voice in the planning process. The map and survey were open between April – July 30, 2023. The map and survey enabled users to add general and site-specific comments about

walking, biking and transit use in Delmont; locate assets and areas of community concern; identify infrastructure issues; and provide insights, ideas and suggested fixes and recommendations. Links to the survey and map were provided on Delmont's website and posters with QR codes were displayed and distributed throughout the Borough. Information on the survey and map were also distributed through press

releases, social media platforms and in news articles. The survey and comment mapping were linked but could be accessed independently to allow for flexibility in providing input. Over 80 survey responses were collected and over 200 comments/pins were provided on the comment map.



The poster features the Delmont, PA logo at the top left. Below it is the title "DELMONT BOROUGH ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN" in large, bold, yellow letters. Underneath the title are silhouettes of a person walking, a person running, a person on a bicycle, and a person pushing a stroller. Below these silhouettes is a blue banner with the text "Promote Your Local COMMUNITY SURVEY AND INTERACTIVE MAP". Underneath the banner are icons for walking, running, cycling, and pushing a stroller. At the bottom of the poster, there is a green box with the text "Delmont Active Transportation Survey". Below this box is a paragraph of text explaining the survey and its purpose. At the bottom of the poster, there is a QR code.



The image shows a screenshot of a web browser displaying a map of Delmont, PA. The map is titled "Delmont Active Transportation Comments" and shows various streets and areas. A sidebar on the right side of the map lists "Selected Comments" with categories such as "Comments: Pedestrian Enhancements (sidewalk, curb...", "Comments: Street Enhancements (lanes, bike...", "Comments: Pedestrian Enhancements (sidewalk, curb...", "Comments: Sidewalks", "Comments: Trails and Green Spaces", "Comments: Trails and Green Spaces", "Comments: Pedestrian Enhancements (sidewalk, curb...", "Comments: Pedestrian Enhancements (sidewalk, curb...", "Comments: Pedestrian Enhancements (sidewalk, curb...", "Comments: Pedestrian Enhancements (sidewalk, curb...", "Comments: Sidewalks", and "Comments: Sidewalks". At the bottom of the map interface, there is a yellow box with the text "WHERE Access the Survey using this link: Delmont Community Survey Access the Map using this link: Delmont Interactive Map". To the right of this box is another yellow box with the text "You can also access the Survey from your Smartphone using this QR code:" and a QR code.

Delmont Survey and Interactive Map as Engagement in collaboration with MPO/LDD

<https://padowntown.sharefile.com/share/view/sf8d7c23198e14cd1b9c9295802515770>

Active Transportation Problem Areas

The following highlights some of the walking, biking and wheeling impediments and problem areas currently in Delmont. These areas collectively highlight the need for- and value of- active transportation planning and walking, biking and wheeling improvements in Delmont.

Sidewalk Conditions, Access and Connectivity Issues – In the Historic District and Downtown area - walkers and bikers, and especially those with disabilities, have their mobility challenged by uneven and poorly maintained sidewalks, lack of ADA curb cuts, unmarked crossing points and crossing points that connect to barriers and obstacles.



Sidewalk Conditions, Access and Connectivity Issues – Rt 66 and adjacent areas - walkers and bikers, and especially those with disabilities, have their mobility challenged by outdated signalization (lack of audible beacons and visual walking cues), lack of ADA curb cuts, sidewalks to nowhere, lack of connecting sidewalks to Rt 66 crossing points and missing painted crosswalks



Delmont Walking tour to Identify Challenges

<https://padowntown.sharefile.com/share/view/sf8d7c23198e14cd1b9c9295802515770>

Community Connections and Routes

A grouped set of important community destinations was identified as part of this Active Transportation Plan. These are not meant to represent the entirety of places where residents and visitors walk and bike, rather they represent important community assets, places where residents can find health related food and wellness products and places where resident can further engage in outdoor recreation activities. They also represent places where safe and reliable pedestrian and bike access should be provided and maintained. This Plan designates these as important Community Destinations:

- Delmont Parklet
- Twin Valley Memorial Park (Cemetery)
- The Olde Log House
- Shields Farm
- Westmoreland Transit - Park 'n Ride
- The Historic District
- The Tollhouse
- Rose Wigfield Parklet
- Rt. 66 – Pittsburgh St
- Rt. 66 – Greensburg St
- Newhouse Park
- Apple Hill Field
- Red Barn Winery
- Kovalczik Park
- Valley Stream Apartments
- Commercial Properties



Delmont Product – Prioritized Routes for Enhancements

<https://padowntown.sharefile.com/share/view/sf8d7c23198e14cd1b9c9295802515770>

Connections to the Westmoreland Heritage Trail (WHT)

The existing alignment of the Westmoreland Heritage Trail (WHT) and the Rangos Trailhead are within 150 yards of Delmont Borough's northeastern border. These resources present Delmont with an amazing opportunity to become a destination Trail Town along the Trail. In addition, portions (if not all) of an extension of the WHT is anticipated to be completed within the next 5-10 years. The proposed alignment will run near Delmont's entire northern boundary.

The Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation recently completed a DCNR-funded Feasibility Study to evaluate the various potential trail alignments for the planned WHT across its "Middle Gap", which is a 4-mile trail gap located between Rangos Trailhead northeast of Delmont and Lincoln Avenue in Export. Delmont is in proximity to a good portion of the planned route for the WHT; see "Middle Gap Feasibility Study" Report, December, 2021: <https://www.co.westmoreland.pa.us/1200/Westmoreland-Heritage-Trail>

Capitalizing on connecting the Trail to Delmont (and Delmont to the Trail) was a major topic of discussion throughout this planning process. The anticipated alignment of the Trail's extension creates several different opportunities to establish multiple access points to the Trail. As shown on the map to the right, the Active Transportation Plan promotes (six 6) connection points to the Trail.



- The connection points to the existing Trail (Pump Station Connection) and the Rangos Trailhead Connections are possible options and should be evaluated and realized as Early Action Items of the Plan.
- Extension of the Westmoreland Heritage Trail is most likely to begin at the Rangos Trailhead towards Route 65. Westmoreland Parks & Recreation recently was awarded funding to advance this extension section. It is anticipated that this section will take approximately 3-5 years to fully complete. When completed, this extension will provide another connection point close to Delmont. Therefore, it is recommended that actions be taken to ensure that the Delmont Brinker Connection and the Delmont Central Connection can be realized within five (5) years.
- The Moroski Connection and the Delmont West Connection are very important to connect residential areas in the western edge of the Borough to the trail. It is recommended that actions be taken to ensure that these Connections can be realized in a 5+ year period.

The Connectivity Map designates the alignment(s) of each connection route. The Map also breaks down sections of each route that can be created on Delmont owned land or as on-road segments and sections that will require acquiring easements on privately owned land. As an Early Action item of this Plan, Delmont Borough will apply to DCNR for funding to complete a feasibility study(s) to further evaluate alignments, determine private property owner willingness to provide a trail easement(s), prepare preliminary engineering designs and to determine costs for constructing the connection routes.

Delmont Product – Prioritized Routes for Enhancements

<https://padowntown.sharefile.com/share/view/sf8d7c23198e14cd1b9c9295802515770>

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

- The benefits of resident and citizen engagement in planning processes are well documented but not widely accepted among all community leaders and all accredited trade/industry professionals.
- Penn State Extension's work as embedded partners in Pennsylvania's active transportation planned communities -- using tools of deep engagement that Extension professionals and its partners co-create -- serves as a demonstration of the effectiveness of engaging all stakeholders and shareholders for collective impact and solid, lasting results.
- The demonstration is now being replicated. Pennsylvania Department of Health subsequently awarded another community, Vandergrift, funding and capacity-building technical assistance of \$33,000 in 2024 for the creation of that community's ATP.

“My heartfelt thanks... it has been a fulfilling experience working with the group to pull this together.” - Cindi Conti, Vandergrift project leader.

The implication is clear -- Extension research and education programs are best applied with communities, not simply for or to communities.

Learn more about the implementation of active transportation plans in Pennsylvania

Recorded Penn State Extension webinar session. November 20, 2024 –

Local Community Implementation of Active Transportation Plans

<https://extension.psu.edu/land-use-webinar>

- **Recording:**

https://psu.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/Implementation+of+Active+Transportation+Plans+land+use+webinar+/1_fyw11h9x

- **Presentation PDF's:**

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:26858512-e15c-49bc-9640-b3567c841074> Verona

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:9717d764-794a-4f90-94bd-ace29c14b2fd> Huntingdon County



Engagement -- Plan Outcomes Reporting

Links to the plans and their stories:

- <https://smartgrowthpa.org/scottdale/>
- <https://smartgrowthpa.org/scottdale-smithton-smithton-scottdale-active-transportation-plan-and-complete-streets-policy/>
- [Verona Borough Active Transportation Plan](#)
- [Susquehanna Depot Borough Active Transportation Plan](#)
- <https://smartgrowthpa.org/delmont/>
- <https://www.huntingdoncounty.net/departments/planning-and-development/transportation/trails-and-planning-efforts>

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- [Community Capitals Framework, Washington State University Extension, 2011](#)
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- University of Kansas Community Toolbox Chapter 3: Section 8. Identifying Community Assets and Resources
- Washington State University (2011). *Community Capitals Framework*. <https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2063/2015/07/REM.CommCaps.pdf>

Resources, Worksheets, and Additional Information

- Community Engagement for Collective Action: A Handbook for Practitioners (Print version)
<https://aese.psu.edu/research/centers/cecd/engagement-toolbox/about/community-engagement-for-collective-action>
- [Community Toolbox- The University of Kansas](#)
- [Engagement Toolbox — Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education \(psu.edu\)](#)
- [Resource Guide on Public Engagement \(NCDD\) NCDD2010 Resource Guide - Web Distributable Version.indd](#)
- [Stakeholder Engagement Guidebook | Learn stakeholder engagement | Penn State University \(psu.edu\)](#)
Also includes downloadable print version

Sources –

- Community Engagement For Taking Action - A Handbook for Practitioners;
 - Penn State College of Agriculture - <https://aese.psu.edu/research/centers/cecd/engagement-toolbox/facilitation/facilitation-tools/tools-and-strategies>
 - <https://aese.psu.edu/research/centers/cecd/engagement-toolbox/about/community-engagement-for-collective-action>
- Source: Bassler, Brasier, Fogle and Taverno (2008) 'Developing Effective Citizen Engagement: A How-to Guide for Community Leaders .' Center for Rural America, 2008 . http://www.rural.palegislature.us/Effective_Citizen_Engagement.pdf Source: National Coalition for
- Dialogue and Deliberation (NCD), International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), and the Co-Intelligence Institute, 2009 . "Core Principles for Public Engagement ." <http://ncdd.org/rc/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/PEPfinal-expanded.pdf>

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