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Bloomsburg as a Place

Bloomsburg’s location is defined by the confluence of Fishing Creek with the Susquehanna River and Route 11. But its experiential and memorable qualities as a unique place relate to its uses, patterns and activities; its accessibility and linkages; its comfort and image; and its ability to support social interactions. Were it not for unique combination of these elements, Bloomsburg would not have the distinct character and name recognition that it does. This section of the comprehensive plan addresses the issues and opportunities relative to the geography of its riverside and Route 11 location, and the structure and pattern of the Town of Bloomsburg.



Summary of Public Input on Current Conditions

Positives

- The Town retains much of its historic character, though it is threatened by a lack of appreciation and contemporary styles of development.
- The Town is very “walkable”.
- The Town’s physical development pattern—a dense, mixed use, gridded pattern—is sustainable in terms of energy efficiency for heating, suitable for a variety of transportation options, and promotes the social interaction that shapes individuals into a community.

Negatives

- Due to its early settlement, much of Town lies in the path of severe flooding from the Susquehanna River and Fishing Creek.
- Traffic is often heavy, especially through downtown, and parking in downtown is too limited.
- While there is intercity transit, there is no public transportation within Bloomsburg to serve its major destinations.

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Figure 4-1. What Makes a Great Place? (diagram), Project for Public Spaces. Used with permission.

While the Town has many of the key elements of a distinct place, it has not experienced all of the benefits of true placemaking. Placemaking encompasses a wide series of improvements that restore a community by enhancing vitality in downtowns, parks, waterfronts, local businesses, public markets, civic institutions, campuses, schoolyards, and the streets themselves—any location where people can gather as friends, neighbors and citizens.¹

¹ TOWN SQUARE: Getting Unstuck in the Middle, Making Places (the Project for Public Spaces blog), <http://www.pps.org>, accessed January 20, 2009.

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Figure 4-2. Benefits of Place (diagram), Project for Public Spaces. Used with permission.

The goals of this section address the physical elements of placemaking.

Goal: Bloomsburg is known as a community where...

- redevelopment maintains vibrant activity and distinct architecture through sustainable techniques.
- citizens and public services are prepared to respond to emergencies and hazards.

We will achieve our goals if we...

1. Sustain Bloomsburg's small town character.
2. Preserve, interpret and apply the patterns of the most significant historic resources; use other techniques to recognize and appreciate other historic resources, as appropriate.
3. Provide safe travel options for citizens and visitors moving within and through the Town.
4. Continue to foster redevelopment.
5. Redefine Bloomsburg's connection with the Susquehanna River.
6. Embrace Bloomsburg University as a community and economic development partner.

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Sustain Small Town Character



Bloomsburg’s small town character results from a multitude of individual design elements. Its fine-grained land use pattern, its walkable sidewalk system, its historic architecture, its tree-lined main streets and its lively street life contribute to its identity and charm. New development throughout the Town should “fit” into this pattern. Conventional development practices should be questioned, even challenged, to design the site and structure as an integral element of the neighborhood or district.

Recommendations

- P.1. Review and revise zoning districts and regulations.** Consider adopting performance-based and form-based codes to regulate new development. Both use innovative approaches to regulating development and land use that emphasize benefits and impacts to the community.
- P.2. Continue to permit mixed use structures in the downtown.** Consider permitting mixed use structures in the commercial highway district as well, enabling the long term redevelopment of this area as a multi-story mixed use district.
- P.3. Maintain and create new places for people to meet.** The courthouse plaza project is an excellent example of a public place project.
- P.4. Convert select side streets with potential for increased retail/office use into pedestrian streets.**
- P.5. Republish the design guidelines for the historic district online; consider an additional publication to conserve the Town’s character outside the historic district through voluntary compliance.** Guidelines may address the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing buildings as well as the design and construction of new buildings. Design features that may be addressed include: architectural style, architectural features (doors, windows, roofs, cornices, porches, and fences, walls, etc.), building mass and form, scale, texture and pattern of exterior materials, proportion of walls to opening, placement of opening, etc. Design guidelines may be applicable to the entire Town or applicable to specific districts. They may also be applicable to the entire building or to the façade (front and side if property is a corner lot). Include visual examples

to show exactly what the regulations mean and stimulate creative solutions.

Pottstown's Maintenance and Renovation Guidelines for its historic district are available on its website, <http://pottstown.org>.

P.6. Enforce requirements for sidewalk installation and maintenance.

Consider alternatives, such as a walking path, that might better suit the topography, prior to granting a waiver for sidewalk installation.

P.7. Explore the relocation of overhead utilities to underground locations,

particularly in coordination with streetscape and other public improvement projects. Such has already been done on Main Street and would enhance the streetscape of other corridors and neighborhoods of the Town.

Lead Partners: Town of Bloomsburg

Support Partners: Area businesses, Residents

Funding Sources: Elm Street Program (Bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure) (PA DCED), Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA)(US EPA), Hometown Streets and Safe Routes to School Program (PennDOT)

Foster Sustainable (Re)Development

Sustainable development refers to development that meets the needs of present residents without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It seeks to accomplish this goal by balancing environmental concerns with social equity and economics. The underlying premise is that the overall quality of life of a community is highest where these concerns are balanced.

The fact is Bloomsburg will continue to develop, redevelop and change as it does.

The Town may not expand outward much farther, but it will grow and change in other ways, including the composition and needs of its citizens. Redevelopment initiatives can help a community take advantage of important assets while encouraging a compact development pattern. Ensuring that development and change occur in environmentally friendly ways will ensure the long term health of the Town as a social community and the surrounding environment.



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Sustainability also involves creating a place that can sustain a healthy population into the future. Bloomsburg already has some of the most important components, such as housing, employment, and community destinations in walkable patterns, public water and sewer utilities serving most properties, a strong recycling program, and large open spaces along its waterways. The Town should build upon this solid base toward becoming more self sufficient and environmentally conscious.

Sustainable development considers environmental effects in every choice from site and structural design to construction and waste disposal to occupancy and operations. Nationwide, there is rising demand for walkable, green communities that encourage a healthy lifestyle while supporting a healthy planet. The U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) initiative combines the principles of smart growth, new urbanism, and green design. The LEED for Neighborhood Development program focuses on housing diversity, storm water management, energy production, and transit accessibility. An elevated emphasis on green building practices could distinguish Bloomsburg from other communities in the region and the state.



Sustainable development can also focus on economic efficiency and prosperity. Investment in the downtown reinforces the downtown as the community core. Maintaining this core is important for area businesses, residents and the cultural base of the community. This keeps people in the downtown and brings in tax revenues for local government. By promoting compact development and discouraging sprawl, the downtown is kept healthy

and vibrant. It creates a healthy active lifestyle that allows people to walk and bike around Town instead of driving. This reduces automobile use, fuel consumption and vehicle emission. Fewer automobiles translates to a reduced demand for parking, leaving more land for tax generating development. More money can then be invested in creating bike paths and protecting open space and natural areas

Recommendations:

- P.8. Continue to encourage compact, walkable, mixed-use development.** Site public uses in proximity to residents to facilitate walking, bicycling and transit use and to reduce fuel consumption and associated pollution.
- P.9. Support redevelopment efforts by investing in public improvements, programs and initiatives** such as, traffic circulation/parking efficiencies, pedestrian improvements, streetscaping, façade improvement programs, and streamlining the development review process.
- P.10. Maintain and expand bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure** to link residential areas, the downtown, the University, the Hospital, and other activity centers in the Town. Expanded availability and use of bicycle and foot traffic will reduce fuel consumption and improve citizens' health. (See also Walkability recommendations in Chapter 4 Living in Bloomsburg)
- P.11. Revise zoning regulations to allow increased density, i.e. taller buildings.** This may require a block by block analysis of maximum building height permitted by the airport hazard zone that overlays the Town.
- P.12. Promote green building practices in the construction and operation of new development.** These practices apply to both building design and site design. Building design techniques include reduced electric demand (by lighting rooms and offices as needed rather than entire floors), while green site design practices can reuse stormwater for watering vegetation, use landscaping to shade buildings, and orient buildings to maximize the winter solar gain.
- P.13. Establish financial and other incentives to encourage redevelopment.** For instance, the Town could establish a Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) program in the established core to reduce the cost of development there. This program would provide property owners with a temporary property tax abatement on the value of improvements to their property. Tax increment financing for redevelopment of housing might also be applicable.
- P.14. Prepare redevelopment plans to guide redevelopment activities in designated areas.** Focus this effort on areas where strong community anchors are needed. Involve partners with land acquisition authority to

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assist in land acquisition and assembly, if needed. Having a plan in place or in preparation may help stimulate private investment.

- P.15. Adopt a “green infrastructure” approach to stormwater management; permit best management practices that manage and treat stormwater on-site.** A green infrastructure approach, retaining open space on-site to reduce the amount of stormwater, has been applied in new and existing developments in communities large and small across the country. In intensively developed areas, soft engineering structures such as rain gardens, native vegetation gardens, curb cuts, and flat curbs allow stormwater to infiltrate instead of directing it to an off-site management facility. These methods can decrease the amount of stormwater by 30-90% while costing only 25% as much as off-site management methods. With minor training, many sites can be retrofitted others are more appropriately incorporated into larger public works projects, e.g. street resurfacing. Local regulations accompanied by design specifications are needed to ensure hydrological effectiveness.²
- P.16. Expand municipal and commercial recycling programs.** Advertise expanded programs to ensure that services are known by Town residents. Ensure that there are recycling bins at all community events.
- P.17. Conserve resources in municipal operations.** Town departments should be directed to find ways to reduce their use of energy, water, paper and other materials and resources, and to recycle materials through municipal or commercial operations.
- P.18. Identify and preserve/restore critical environmental areas.** Riparian zones along the river and creeks, wetland areas, and wildlife habitat areas can become part of an open space and greenways system that helps to maintain physical linkages among land and water resources.
- P.19. Continue to identify locations appropriate for off-campus student housing.**
- P.20. Review both the zoning and SALDO regulations to note where water resource protection provisions, including stormwater management, can be enhanced to reduce off-site flow and improve water quality.**

² “Planning” from the American Planning Association, Aug./Sept. 2008 issue, Green Infrastructure Rising.

- P.21. Develop a list of sustainability indicators and periodically measure the Town's carbon footprint.** Acknowledge quality compliance and give annual awards for innovative environmental achievements. Involve the University in developing sustainability indicators and calculating the Town's carbon footprint, as students and faculty may be aware of emerging analysis concerning the environment and sustainability.

Lead Partners: Town of Bloomsburg

Support Partners: Area businesses, Residents, PennDOT, Recycling facility

Funding Sources:

PA DCNR: Rivers Conservation Program

Greenways technical assistance grant

Land and Water Conservation Fund Program

PA DEP: Stormwater Management Planning and Implementation

Enactment and Implementation of Storm Water Ordinances

Floodplain Land Use Assistance Program

Small Business Pollution Prevention Assistance Account (PPAA)

Loan Program

Resource Recovery Demonstration (Act 198)

Recycling Performance

Recycling Markets Infrastructure Development Grant

Pennsylvania Energy Harvest Grant

Local Government Greenhouse Gas Pilot Grant Program

Growing Greener Watershed Grants

Flood Protection Grants Program

Environmental Education Grants Program

Composting Infrastructure Development Grant

PennDOT: Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) (Bicycle/ pedestrian infrastructure)

Other: Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank (Bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure)

Housing and Redevelopment Assistance Program

Urban Development Program (Business/economic development)

Technical Assistance:

Sustainable Communities Network - <http://www.sustainable.org>

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Congress for the New Urbanism - <http://www.cnu.org>

Green Values Stormwater Toolbox - <http://greenvalues.cnt.org>

American Planning Association - www.planning.org

Preserve Historic Treasures, Conserve Historic Resources



The Historic District in downtown Bloomsburg was designated a National Historic District in 1983 under the Pennsylvania Historic District Act. The area is roughly bounded by Penn, Chestnut and East Streets on the east, Fishing Creek, Iron Street and Lightstreet Road on the north, West Street on the west, and 5th and 6th Streets on the south. It includes roughly 30 blocks of historic buildings built primarily between

1845 and 1930. The significance of Bloomsburg's Historic District results from the overall density and collective value rather than from each individual structure. For this reason, the District is pivotal to the identity of the Town.

According to Town regulations set forth in Chapter 27 Part 13 of the Zoning Code, historic property owners are required to maintain their properties and any changes they wish to make must first be reviewed for their historic appropriateness. The regulations set forth in Appendix A of the Code address the materials, style, proportion, location of openings, details of the façade and historic integrity and compatibility of each component in relation to the structure. Through these regulations, efforts are made to maintain the original character of the building.

The Historic Architectural Review Board, or HARB, is an advisory board that reviews these requests and advises Town Council on issuing certificates for changes to be made to properties within the District. They also advise property owners in the historic district on the physical and financial aspects of preservation, rehabilitation and reuse. The HARB is made up of one registered architect, one licensed real estate broker, two resident property owners in the historic district, two members with knowledge of and interest in preservation of historical structures and the Code Enforcement Officer. These members must be appointed by Town Council and have term limits. Town Council makes the final

decision regarding to grant or reject the proposed change based on its historic appropriateness.

Property owners are aware of both the regulations and the review procedure when they purchase a property in the District. Recognizing the importance of maintaining historic validity should always be considered when planning to update a historic property. The Bloomsburg Chamber of Commerce annually recognizes outstanding developers and their projects with quality awards (example).

Many Town residents recognize the value of the historic district. Yet the community has concerns about the regulations, their administration, and the review process. Some residents feel that the buildings in the Bloomsburg historic district are costly to maintain per the regulations, resulting in the perception of a barrier to home ownership and redevelopment. Others note the shortage of willing, qualified volunteers for the HARB in recent years. And some indicate that Town Council has not followed the advice of the appointed Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB). These issues can be resolved by following the recommendations below.

Recommendations:

- P.22. Review the regulations and boundaries of the historic district.** Consider revising the boundary to include only the most significant properties. Consider the use of design guidelines to conserve the character of properties removed from the historic district.
- P.23. Review the roles and responsibilities of the HARB and Town Council annually and when new members are appointed.** Roles and responsibilities are spelled out in the ordinance. The HARB should strive for sound, yet reasonable enforcement of the regulations. Town Council should thoroughly consider the recommendations of the HARB, as the appointed experts.
- P.24. Promote HARB membership, including through professional organizations for the required registered architect and realtor.**



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P.25. Create annual quality awards for historic district maintenance and for historic district renovation/rehabilitation.

Lead Partners: Town Council, HARB

Support Partners: Property owners, Chamber of Commerce

Funding Sources:

PHMC: Certified Local Government Grant Program
Pennsylvania Historical Marker Program
Historic Preservation Project Grants
Educational, Public & Local History Grants

Other: Private funds

Provide Safe Travel Options

Bloomsburg’s transportation system is a multi-modal system for pedestrian, bicycle, freight, aviation, and vehicular travel. But there are conditions in each mode of travel that limit the full potential of travel options:



- Some areas at the perimeter of Town lack sidewalks—more so than central areas. Some gaps are due to steep slopes or to complex municipal boundaries.
- Most streets provide suitable conditions for bicyclists but many are too narrow for occasional and recreational riders who are not comfortable riding with motorized vehicle traffic.
- Public transportation is limited to Susquehanna Trailways service between Lock Haven and New York and the Bloomsburg University campus shuttle, available to students for travel between the campus and downtown.
- Route 11/Main Street, Route 487/Lightstreet Road/Ferry Road, and Market Street are the busiest state roads in Town, and anecdotally have high pedestrian volumes. Traffic on US 11 moves efficiently through Town as a result of recent PennDOT improvements, however, some citizens feel that the improvements have made it more dangerous to walk or bike in Town with traffic flowing more freely.
- There are concerns that if I-80 were tolled, even more truck traffic would be forced onto US 11 in the Town.

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- There are many people who work in Bloomsburg but live in the surrounding townships, generating local congestion on a daily basis.
- Deliveries are an issue for some downtown businesses, as some delivery trucks have difficulty navigating the alleys to reach the rear entrances.
- Some businesses have left downtown, citing a lack of parking. Some believe it is time to think more radically about how to deal with parking in Town.

Finding of the 2008/2009 Parking Study

In 2008, Town Council determined that parking concerns warranted a new study on parking conditions in downtown since the last study had been completed in 1992. The study effort conducted a inventory of parking spaces of all types generally bounded by 1st Street, West street, 3rd Street and East Street; an analysis of space utilization within this area; and a survey of parking perceptions and use by citizens. The data collection for the 2008/2009 parking study was conducted using similar methods used in 1992 for comparison purposes.

The parking study found that 1) the parking supply in downtown Bloomsburg exceeds current demand; 2) although the demand for parking in downtown Bloomsburg decreased by approximately 20 percent since 1992, the perception of poor parking conditions has increased by approximately the same percentage; and 3) the over-utilized parking spaces and areas identified in both the 1977 and 1992 studies are still over-utilized in 2009. The study concluded that the existing parking system is not meeting the local needs, especially the business-related needs of customers and employees. In fact, businesses in downtown Bloomsburg are losing commerce to other area businesses due to the perception of a lack of available parking spaces.



The study recommended eight strategies for better accommodating the primary user, which in the downtown should be defined as the business customers, as well as secondary users, namely residents, employees and students:

1. A Color-Coded “Assigned Parking” System
2. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliancy
3. Ordinance Amendments
4. Enhanced Parking Regulation Signs, Brochures, etc.
5. Expanded Hours/Days of Parking Enforcement

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6. Parking Lot Expansion
7. New Pine Ave. Lot Layout
8. New Parking Facility

If implemented, these strategies will change the rate at which customers and businesses were deterred from downtown Bloomsburg because of the poorly perceived parking conditions. The recommendations accomplish this primarily through “assigned seating” or assigned parking areas. The most convenient, high demand parking spaces should be reserved for customers or those that exhibit high turnover rates, typically 2 hours or less. Enforcement of these spaces should be consistent and continuous throughout the hours of business. Parking areas of town that are not, in general, desired by the business customers should be utilized by the residents, students and employees. This arrangement may require people to walk a block or two further from their destination but will better balance the needs of all users. The overall outcome will eventually bring additional business and commerce to downtown Bloomsburg.

Recommendations

P.26. Continue to explore mass transit options for the Bloomsburg area. The Town has had recent discussions with SEDA-COG and area partners on transit service and financing options. Transit service from Bloomsburg along the Route 11 corridor was suggested by citizens. Transit service between the region’s college communities may be another route for potential study. Expansion of the University’s campus shuttle service has been suggested but insurance policy provisions make this alternative unsuitable.

- P.27. Implement the recommendations of the 2008/2009 parking study:**
- a. Create a color-coded parking system.
 - b. Remove parking for employers/ employees, students, and residents from Main St. by ordinance amendment.
 - c. Remove meters from handicap parking throughout Town.
 - d. Develop and distribute new parking regulation signs and brochures.
 - e. Build a new parking facility.
 - f. Revise the Pine Ave Lot layout.
 - g. Require off-street parking by ordinance.
 - h. Acquire land for lot expansion.

- i. Expand parking enforcement.
- P.28. Adopt design guidelines for parking structures.** Key points from Scottsdale, Arizona’s Parking Structure Design Guidelines include:
- a. Clearly delineate a distinct base, middle, and top for the parking structures.
 - b. Where parking structures and pedestrian areas adjoin, the exterior edge of the parking structure should exhibit a high level of architecture detail and the application of materials and textures that establish a comfortable and well proportioned human scale.
 - c. Strive to eliminate glare and visibility of pole mounted light fixtures on upper decks of parking structures by employing full cut-off fixtures and minimizing pole heights.
 - d. Design above grade parking structures to reduce their apparent mass.
 - e. The exterior design of a structure should minimize its visual identity as through wall mass and window openings and through variations in color, material, and/or texture.

Spokane, WA specifies parking structure requirements in its guidelines for public projects: Parking structures should incorporate foundation landscaping and decorative solid screening at street level. Decorative metal grillwork, vertical trellis, glass block, architectural treatment, planters, artwork, etc should be incorporated at upper parking level openings. Vehicle entries should be recessed from the sidewalk to reduce their prominence and impact.

Lead Partners: Town Council, Planning Commission

Support Partners: SEDA-COG, Bloomsburg University, Central PA communities interested in regional transit services

Funding Sources: SEDA-COG Rural Planning Organization

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Redefine the Town’s Connection to the Susquehanna River

Due to its location at the confluence of Fishing Creek with the Susquehanna River, flooding is a significant natural hazard to the Town of Bloomsburg. The flood that has a 1% chance of occurring each year is called the “base” flood. When water reaches the base flood elevation, 1,421 acres of the Town lie under water.

The Town has experienced three floods higher than the base flood: in 1904; Hurricane Agnes in 1972; and in 2006. The Town has also experienced other floods that came within a foot of the base flood level in 1936 and 2004. Five floods since 1972 were within five feet of the base flood stage: in 1979, 1984, 1993, 1996 and 2005.

Past flood events have resulted in extensive damages to structures and their contents and have threatened public safety. In addition, floods have disrupted major transportation systems, requiring closure of roads, railroads, and the municipal airport. Flood damages are attributable to overbank flooding from the Susquehanna River and to flooding along Fishing Creek, which is exacerbated by backwater flooding from the Susquehanna River. When the Susquehanna River and Fishing Creek simultaneously rise above flood stage, overbank flooding can cover up to 33 percent of the landmass within the Town of Bloomsburg’s boundaries.

Bloomsburg was well established as a riverside community long before formal floodplain delineation and land use and development regulations were put in place. Therefore, most properties are not subject to current floodplain zoning regulations unless they are substantially improved and zoning cannot be considered independently as a long-term mitigation solution for flood damage reduction to existing structures.³

The Town’s efforts to reduce damage from flood hazards include:

³ Ibid.

1. Floodplain management - Bloomsburg manages land use and development regulations for flood hazard areas. In 1974, Bloomsburg enacted its floodplain management ordinance to restrict intensive development from the floodplain.
2. Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program in order to make flood insurance available
3. Inspection and cleaning of the streets, channels and drainageways to reduce the chances that blockages will cause flooding
4. Acquisition of properties that are repeatedly flooded
5. Maintenance of a flood warning and response program
6. Implementation of a Hazard Mitigation Plan (2005).

The Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement analyzed the potential environmental consequences of implementing a flood damage reduction project in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. It investigates the feasibility of alternative plans to address problems and opportunities associated with flood damage reduction along the Susquehanna River and Fishing Creek in the Town of Bloomsburg. The recommended flood damage reduction plan is intended to provide an Agnes (440-year) level of protection from Susquehanna River flooding, and 100-year level of protection from Fishing Creek flooding. The proposed action, Alternative 4, would provide approximately 17,000 linear feet of earthen levee, and mechanically stabilized earth flood walls (14 feet above the existing ground surface), concrete floodwalls, railroad and road closure structures and roadway relocation to provide ramps over the line of protection, was identified as the preferred alternative.

The fully-funded cost for design and construction of the flood protection system is \$46,239,000 (in 2005 dollars). The Town intends to use local funds, private contributions and state assistance to fund the non-federal project cost. The proposed flood mitigation project is discussed in Chapter 2.

Floodplain management including forested vegetation and stream bank stabilization, where needed, would minimize flood damage, reduce water pollution by filtering runoff, and protect stream bank and wetland habitat. These

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techniques may be interrupted by the construction of the flood protection system but offer benefits worth short term and post-construction efforts. Waterways currently designated as flood control corridors, e.g. Kinney Run, may need special consideration under the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System. The requirements to keep such drainageways clear and free flowing have traditionally been interpreted as a requirement for short-



cut lawn even on steep embankments. With citizens' expressed interest in both flood protection, riparian buffer, and ecological sustainability, alternatives to the type and management of vegetation in and along these corridors, specifically the reestablishment of native species and management of invasive species, e.g. Japanese knotweed, should be explored. The designation of Kinney Run as a local greenway may provide the foundation for seeking funding and technical assistance from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. DCNR's designation of the Susquehanna River corridor as a greenway already provides rationale for floodplain conservation measures along the riverfront.

Special consideration will also need to be given to the floodplain area in the airport hazard mitigation zone. While the height of potential obstructions, including vegetation, is limited by the Town's airport hazard provisions, this provision does not exclude trees and shrubs per se. In fact, after the recent timber harvest to comply with the regulations, the airport planted dozens of small willow trees. Over the long term, another harvest may be needed, but until they reach the height limit, willows and other native species are appropriately grown in the floodplain.

Lititz Borough and Warwick Township partnered to create a linear park system along Santa Domingo Run in Lancaster County. The linear park includes narrow trail segments conserved as riparian buffers and interpreted with educational signage and wider segments with athletic fields and passive recreation areas adjacent to the buffer; a constructed wetland that acts slows and filters floodwaters from the upstream farms. The Linear Park was funded by a wide

group of community partners: Warwick Township, Lititz Borough, Lancaster County Community Parks Initiative Grant Program, Lititz Springs VFW Post 1463, American Legion Post 56, AMBUCS Lititz Chapter, Lititz Run Watershed Alliance and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Funding Assistance was also provided by the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund which is administered by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. Additional information can be found at www.warwicktownship.org.

Recommendations

- P.29. Continue support of the Joint Flood Control Authority.**
- a. Continue political support.
 - b. Continue to pursue funding for the design and construction of the flood protection system, as the Authority has no revenue source to guarantee borrowed bond monies.
- P.30. Create a climate supportive of flood protection that sustains public support between flood events.** Communicate regularly with the public on the status and continued need for the flood protection system. Reach out to area municipalities to advocate for area-wide flood protection.
- P.31. Improve/enhance access to the river and creek; interpret riparian and aquatic habitat and ecological functions.**
- P.32. Revise regulations to permit multi-story development that places parking on the ground floor, where floodwaters, can flow through, with living space above.** This approach was used to revitalize the Shipoke area of Harrisburg after Hurricane Agnes. It has also been used in Lewisburg.

Lead Partners: Town of Bloomsburg/Town Council

Support Partners: Columbia County, area riverside communities

Funding Sources: PA DCED - Floodplain Land Use Assistance Program, Flood Protection Grants Program

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Embrace Bloomsburg University as a Community and Economic Development Partner

Bloomsburg University's total enrollment grew by 16.6 percent from 1997 to 2007. This growth represented extensive development on the upper campus, off-campus housing, namely Honeysuckle Student Holdings (apartments), as well as increased diversity among the student population. Growth is expected to continue to levels near 10,000 students.

Growth of the student population at the University could be an opportunity for redevelopment in the Town of Bloomsburg. First, demand for student housing could be directed to renovate existing vacant and underutilized structures. Guidance should address student housing needs, design within the structures, and affordability. Building codes and education programs should address nuisance issues that would deter community residents from wanting to allow university students in certain neighborhoods. Finally, as redevelopment takes place, the Town's historic buildings, structures, and sites should be protected to maintain the Town's character.

In addition, this future demand could create new housing and related assets that would benefit the Town and University students. Such projects should integrate new construction within the community fabric and complement the existing urban design. Where possible, new projects should seize the opportunity to integrate greener passive and recreation open spaces within housing plans. In the most intensive areas, redevelopment could create live-work spaces - within structures, as in downtown, or within units - that benefit both the university and the Town. The convenient mixed use patterns will also help to attract new entrepreneurs, grow new small businesses, and create new jobs. All new development should continue to integrate pedestrian friendly plans into new and renovated housing plans to encourage walkability.

Even before student housing demand increases, the Town should anticipate the impacts of additional student housing. The Town may need to expand community facilities and services, such as public safety (police, fire, emergency response),

medical, and public and quasi-public utilities, to accommodate the increasing student and faculty population.

The University's growth will require improvements to the current transportation infrastructure to minimize congestion delays. In addition, as new student housing is constructed and the university campus expands, the Town will need to focus on maintaining and enhancing connectivity between student housing and the downtown business district through



pedestrian and bicycle linkages as well as increased motor vehicle access and parking. The University would be responsible for evaluating and enhancing shuttle campus service.

Recommendations

P.33. Explore expanded use of payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) to benefit both the Town and the University.

P.34. Explore opportunities to partner with the University in redevelopment initiatives. The University has resources, an interest in the health and vitality of the community, and a need to periodically expand its facilities. It may be possible to locate certain University facilities with a potential public use and/or benefit off-campus and thereby strengthen the Town's traditional core. Examples of this include:

- Bucknell's partnership with Barnes & Noble to develop a downtown bookstore.
- Seton Hill's partnership with Greensburg to build a performing arts center to anchor the downtown.
- Virginia Tech's lease of a former movie theatre as large group instruction space and its lease of second floor space for two of its landscape architecture studios.

Lead Partners: Town Council

Support Partners: Bloomsburg University

Funding Sources: Shared Services grants (PA DCED)

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A Note on Sustainable Water Supply

The continued redevelopment of the Town of Bloomsburg in its small town pattern would not be possible without the provision of public water and wastewater utilities. Due to its location at the confluence of Fishing Creek and the Susquehanna River, the Town anticipates that an adequate supply of water will be available to its residents via the public water provided by United American Pennsylvania. Similarly, adequate wastewater treatment capacity is available to Bloomsburg property owners at the soon to be upgraded wastewater treatment plant operated by the Bloomsburg Municipal Authority. Neither the supply or quality of service of these utilities is expected to be a barrier to the vitality and continued community and economic development of the Town. In addition, property owners of the few parcels that are not served by these utilities did not raise the lack of service as a concern during any of the outreach activities or the public review process.