





Pine Grove Furnace State Park, Cooke Township

### Land Partnerships Vision

The vision statement of Land Partnerships was developed to help the community visualize what successful plan implementation would look like and to articulate the values upon which the plan was developed. Additionally, the vision was intended to generate a call to action and inspire implementation.

#### Vision Statement

*The Cumberland County landscape...*

- *Supports diverse business opportunities and vibrant communities;*
- *Maintains natural resources and environmental quality;*
- *Includes working farms and a strong agricultural community;*
- *Demonstrates a visible connectedness of parks, trails and natural areas within and between County communities; and*
- *Retains its heritage, character and identity through its scenic, natural, and historic features.*

*Cumberland County and its partner agencies...*

- *Are committed to a balanced approach of conservation and development, and*
- *Are dedicated to maintaining the quality of life enjoyed by residents.*

### Elements of Land Partnerships

This vision for Cumberland County is translated into three plan elements. Each element is associated with a unique landscape and function in the County. Together they represent urban and rural landscapes, public and private ownership, and active and passive land uses. The three elements are:

- Agriculture Preservation
- Natural Resource Protection
- Parks, Trails & Greenways

The three elements of Land Partnerships reflect the diversity of the County. From the highly developed West Shore communities to the farmland of the Cumberland Valley, the three plan elements address the broad spectrum of the County's landscape. An implementation program based on these three elements will provide opportunities for everyone; from the developed boroughs to the rural countryside and everywhere in between.



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### Agriculture Preservation

The agriculture preservation element focuses on the Cumberland Valley as a region where abundant prime soils and soils of statewide importance produce sustained high agricultural yields when effectively managed.

Farmland is valued economically and culturally by County residents. For some residents, farming is an occupation. Whether full-time or part-time, farming activities provide income for farmers and their families. For others, farming is a way of life. They value homegrown produce and livestock, the interaction with the natural environment and the stewardship of natural resources—land, water, plants and animals. Still, for others, farmland simply represents the County’s heritage. They feel a sense of connection to the County’s history and appreciate the visible continuity with the past.

Cumberland County participates in the Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program to work with willing landowners to purchase agricultural conservation easements or development rights. This program pays the farmer to permanently preserve active, high quality farmland while placing restrictions on the property’s use. The farmland remains in private ownership but the easement restricts non-agricultural uses. This program preserves the farmland in perpetuity and the landowner retains all rights associated with the land except the development or transfer for non-agricultural purposes. The Cumberland County Agricultural Land Preservation Board has preserved over 15,000 acres of prime farmland since its inception in 1989.

The agriculture preservation element recommends continued emphasis on the farmland preservation program, but employs a variety of other strategies such as farm-friendly planning and zoning techniques and local food promotion to ensure the long term viability of the agricultural industry.

### Natural Resource Protection

The natural resource protection element focuses on the protection of the County’s natural resources. Cumberland County is blessed with abundant land and water resources such as woodlands on the ridge lines of Blue Mountain and South Mountain, the Susquehanna River, Yellow Breeches Creek, Conodoguinet Creek, natural springs, and other important natural areas. The conservation of these resources and maintaining their role in the environment is critical to healthy communities.



West Shore Farmers Market, Lemoyne



Mount Holly Marsh Preserve

Blue and South Mountains are important to residents for their ecological functions and their natural, scenic beauty, as well as their economic value. Natural springs on the mountain faces are the origin of the County's two major waterways. Their geologic formations and forested condition are critical to promoting steady water supply and maintaining water quality in the stream corridors. The forests purify the air, provide the necessary habitat for woodland wildlife, and create seasonal beauty enjoyed by all. Additionally, forests are a renewable resource for the forest industry.

The natural resource conservation element directs attention to the need to conserve the water resources, woodlands, steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, stream corridors and other sensitive natural communities of the County. Implementation of this element will be achieved through voluntary land acquisition and management, conservation easements and sound planning practices.

### Parks, Trails & Greenways

The parks, trails & greenways element focuses on the recreational and tourism aspects of the land and water resources found in the County. Access to these amenities is an important aspect to quality of life. Residents of Cumberland County are fortunate to have the Appalachian Trail, three state parks and numerous municipal parks and other recreation sites within the County, but the population is expanding around these areas.

Parks are the public sites where residents can relax, play, and spend quality time with family and friends. Parks are the places where good things happen: children burn off energy and learn skills in team sports, adults catch up on neighborhood news and squeeze in a few minutes of physical activity, families picnic together, and singles find a pick-up game of basketball or a new acquaintance.

Greenways and trails are the linear corridors that connect parks with neighborhoods, and provide safe bicycle and pedestrian travel for residents of all ages. Greenways serve important water quality functions by filtering pollutants from stormwater runoff, before it is discharged to the County's surface waters. Greenways also shade streams from the sun, keeping waters cool for aquatic life, and contribute vegetative matter to the aquatic food chain. Finally, in the form of continuous lines of vegetation, buffers provide travel corridors and habitat for wildlife.



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Geographically, the parks, trails & greenways element overlays the agriculture preservation and natural resource elements as a network of recreational destinations and ecological corridors. This plan directs the County's attention to the need to maintain a diverse network of park and recreation facilities. Both parcel-size parks and community trail connectors are necessary to meet contemporary recreation needs. Implementation of this element will entail voluntary parkland acquisition, conservation easements, and planning practices that facilitate development of parks, greenways and recreation facilities.

### Goals and Objectives

The Plan establishes the following goals and desired outcomes as specific objectives:

Goal: Preserve the agricultural lands of Cumberland County.

Desired Outcomes:

- Farmland is protected through a combination of agricultural easements and municipal ordinance provisions that promote agriculture.
- Agricultural preservation programs include creative initiatives to promote and sustain the agriculture industry and responds to trends in local sustainable food production.
- Farms are managed utilizing best management practices emphasizing water quality improvements.

Goal: Conserve the significant natural resources of Cumberland County.

Desired Outcomes:

- The ridges, streams and important natural areas of Cumberland County are protected.
- Municipalities integrate natural resource protection ordinance provisions for woodlands, steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, wellhead and drinking water sources.
- Land owners utilize conservation techniques (e.g., best management practices) to manage their properties for personal property goals and community values.



Opossum Lake, Lower Frankford Township

Goal: Provide parkland for the recreation needs of County residents.

Desired Outcomes:

- A diverse system of parks is in place that includes federal, state, county, municipal and non-profit organization parkland.
- Countywide, the amount of parkland seeks to achieve the goal of 15 acres of land per 1,000 citizens in 10 years.
- Municipal parks are provided within 1 to 2 miles of each resident in the eastern part of the county as well as population centers countywide. Regional parks are located within 15 miles of each resident.
- Parkland demonstrates the importance of conserving and protecting agricultural and natural resources through environmental education and interpretation.



Cumberland Valley Rail Trail,  
Shippensburg Township Park Trailhead

Goal: Provide trails to connect citizens with destinations throughout the County.

Desired Outcomes:

- Each municipality or planning region of the County has a trail plan that includes connections to neighboring and regional trail systems.
- There is a main trail corridor within 5-7 miles of each citizen.
- Local trails connect residential areas, park, schools, and community destinations.

Goal: Create a comprehensive greenways system throughout Cumberland County.

Desired Outcomes:

- Green corridors of open space create connections between communities, allowing residents to travel as bicyclists and pedestrians from one community to another.
- Greenways protect natural resources, such as the mountain ridgelines and riparian corridors of the Susquehanna River and streams.
- Greenways conserve the cultural resources and their surroundings throughout Cumberland County.
- Greenways nominated in the 2000 Cumberland County-wide Greenway Study are fully established and there are municipal connections.
- Greenways in rural areas reduce agricultural runoff and limit livestock stream access.
- The public understands the benefits of greenways through informational signage, interpretive nature trails and greenway tours.



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Goal: Cumberland County's developed communities actively implement the principles of Land Partnerships.

Desired Outcomes:

- Agriculture is promoted via farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture programs, and community gardens.
- Natural resources are protected through stormwater management and investments in existing public infrastructure.
- Park and recreation amenities are well-maintained and expanded when appropriate.
- Greenway and trails connect the county's developed communities to surrounding areas, providing opportunities for recreation and non-motorized transportation.

Goal: Cumberland County landowners, municipalities, and non-profit organizations have a clear understanding of land conservation and preservation options and opportunities.

Desired Outcomes:

- The County is a point of contact and clearinghouse for land conservation questions and information.
- The County institutes education programs and initiatives targeted at specific needs of County landowners.
- The County actively promotes agriculture preservation, natural resource protection and parks, trails & greenways strategies to municipalities, landowners, and private non-profit organizations.
- The County works in partnership with conservation organizations on education and outreach.
- Private volunteers assist with the upkeep of trails, parks and natural areas to maintain and build community investment in the County.



Appalachian Trail Conservancy Regional Office,  
Boiling Springs