

# PLAN SLATE BELT



- Bangor • East Bangor • Lower Mount Bethel • Pen Argyl •  
• Plainfield • Portland • Roseto • Upper Mount Bethel •  
• Washington • Wind Gap •

## FIRST DRAFT: GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2022

# GOAL 1 | A BALANCE BETWEEN GROWTH AND PRESERVATION.

## Policy 1.1: Direct intense development towards boroughs, crossroads villages and surrounding areas.

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- Promote walkable and bikeable neighborhoods, commercial centers and industrial areas.
- Reduce parking minimums in downtowns to create better infill opportunities.
- Promote revitalization and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.
- Promote infill development and redevelopment in vacant or underutilized areas.
- Encourage mixed-use development in centers and along corridors.
- Encourage development that is connected and adjacent to existing boroughs.
- Discourage development in agricultural areas to maintain rural character.
- Encourage new development to be compatible with the style and scale of existing development.
- Promote compatibility between adjacent land uses and along municipal borders.
- Diversify allowed development types in downtowns and crossroads villages.
- Increase allowed densities in boroughs and crossroad villages.
- Rezone areas in townships around boroughs to allow for greater intensity and diversity of housing development.
- Increase the flexibility of zoning provisions in central locations to promote mixed uses.

## Policy 1.2: Promote the preservation of farmland.

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- Encourage farmers to participate in their municipality's Agricultural Security Area program to protect farming from non-farming activities.
- Encourage farmers to apply for agricultural easements through the Northampton County Farmland Preservation Program.
- Establish municipal financing tools for farmland preservation to leverage against funding available through various county, state and federal programs.
- Amend zoning ordinances and subdivision and land development ordinances to protect agricultural areas.
- Allow transfer of development rights from farmland to Development areas.
- Discourage the extension of water and sewer services and new roads into areas where farming is the recommended land use.
- Connect farmers to agricultural property owners to support agricultural-based land transfers and minimize the transition to non-farming uses.

- Encourage the implementation of best management practices and green infrastructure on farms.
- Evaluate existing zoning and subdivision and land development regulations to ensure current and future needs of the agriculture community are not inadvertently hindered.
- Minimize the subdivision of and distance between farms to maintain concentration of farmland.
- Educate non-farm landowners on the importance and value of retaining land in agricultural use.

### **Policy 1.3: Protect natural lands and water resources from development or disturbance.**

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- Adopt or amend an official map to preserve high and medium conservation priority natural resource areas.
- Preserve and restore woodlands to increase the amount of interior and quality of woodlands and habitat connectivity.
- Preserve Global or Regional Significant Natural Heritage Area core habitats.
- Prohibit new development except as regulated by Pennsylvania Code and control structure reuse, or improvement or redevelopment of vacant, formerly developed land in the 100-year floodplain.
- Preserve wetlands and provide a vegetated buffer (150 feet wide in Exceptional Value and High-Quality watersheds and 75 feet wide in all other watersheds).
- Preserve or restore surface water riparian buffers, where feasible, using a variety of native, climate-adaptive vegetation.
- Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater by monitoring withdrawals, defining groundwater protection zones for all public water supply wells, and implementing groundwater source protection programs.
- Support and promote educational programs on the importance of protecting groundwater resources.
- Manage development, grading and forestry on steep slopes by prohibiting development on grades over 25% and providing restrictions on grades over 15%.
- Collaborate with Lehigh Valley Greenways partners to conserve critical landscapes and restore stream corridors.
- Coordinate efforts with local land trusts, conservancies, school districts and the private sector to establish natural lands connectivity.
- Seek funding through federal, state, county and private grant programs for preservation and restoration of high conservation priority natural resource areas.
- Educate elected officials and the public on the benefits of conservation and preservation.
- Encourage private landowners to place conservation easements on portions of their property located in high conservation priority natural resource areas.
- Encourage public and private landowners to use best management practices in forestry, stewardship and lawn care activities.

- Use conservation design practices in the subdivision and development of land that involves natural resources recommended for conservation.
- Establish or use existing greenways to provide buffers between non-compatible land uses, where feasible.
- Adopt and enforce regulations to manage development in areas with carbonate bedrock.
- Protect and enhance scenic landscapes and scenic transportation corridors.

#### **Policy 1.4: Encourage the reclamation and safety of mining sites and inactive quarries.**

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- Expand open space programs to include former or abandoned quarries.
- Establish design guidelines for quarry reclamation that creates naturalization of these sites.
- Require green infrastructure in the reclamation process to manage or assist in stormwater runoff.
- Create guidance for property owners to secure inactive quarries.
- Create or update local property maintenance to include properly securing inactive or abandoned quarries.
- Encourage property owners of inactive quarries to follow guidance to discourage trespassing.

# GOAL 2 | A HIGH REGIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE.

## Policy 2.1: Provide economic revitalization through support of redevelopment opportunities in downtowns and along main corridors.

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- Encourage small and medium businesses for downtowns and along main corridors by creating incentive programs for business start-ups.
- Utilizing design strategies to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Identify projects to improve walkability and accessibility.
- Encourage narrow store fronts.
- Maintain, expand and promote Façade Improvement Programs.
- Encourage reuse and redevelopment of strip-commercial developments by expanding diversity of uses allowed.
- Connect strip-commercial areas to crossroads villages, residential neighborhoods and regional trails by requiring sidewalks and bike routes as part of any improvement/redevelopment proposal.
- Identify local tax-incentive programs and funding that apply to redevelopment and reuse projects.
- Prioritize former industrial sites to accommodate new growth.
- Study the redevelopment potential of key sites in the communities.
- Rezone vacant and underutilized industrial properties to allow for expanded reuse/redevelopment, but limit the land uses to those that the site can safely accommodate.
- Establish a coordinated Main Street Program between the Slate Belt municipalities.

## Policy 2.2: Strengthen the economy of the Slate Belt with a focus on the evolving needs of business and community.

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- Allow for light/small scale manufacturing in mixed-use districts.
- Allow for live/work spaces for creative or production-oriented businesses.
- Support small-scale shipping and distribution systems that assist small on-line businesses.
- Encourage business owners to participate in local and regional chambers of commerce to discuss and address current challenges.
- Cooperate with economic development entities in promoting the retention, recruitment and expansion of employers providing above-average wages and local first-hiring practices.

### Policy 2.3: Improve and maintain the condition of existing development in the Slate Belt area.

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- Create and implement rental housing registration, licensing and/or inspection programs to enable tenant assistance services and landlord/tenant education opportunities.
- Review and adopt new or updated property maintenance codes to ensure existing buildings, housing stock and associated lands meet minimum public health and welfare standards.
- Explore establishing shared code enforcement for the Slate Belt area to provide safe building and healthy housing conditions.
- Provide information to landlords to correct building code violations.
- Inform homeowners about available resources to assist with home repair and maintenance needs.
- Review and implement strategies identified in the Northampton County Blight Plan to assess blighted properties and revitalize distressed properties.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Create a registration and inventory of vacant and foreclosed properties.
    - Establish pre-sale inspection ordinances that require sellers to pay for an inspection prior to the transfer of property to stop the cycle of blight.
    - Establish a doors and windows ordinance that levies fines for missing doors and windows on vacant properties and increases fines over time.
    - Deny municipal building, zoning and occupancy permits to owners of delinquent properties.

### Policy 2.4: Maintain the existing character of Slate Belt neighborhoods while increasing attainable housing opportunities for all residents.

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- Promote the development and redevelopment of diverse housing types within designated growth areas in proximity to job centers and public transit.
- Update zoning ordinances to permit diverse housing types at higher residential densities in designated growth areas.
- Increase the flexibility of zoning provisions in downtowns to promote mixed uses.
- Ensure that design standards in ordinances reflect the existing character of development.
- Limit residential development in exurban areas.
- Promote neighborhood design that provides both market rate and affordable housing options in locations with convenient access to community facilities and services.
- Protect the character of existing urban neighborhoods through appropriate standards for the redevelopment or reuse of infill properties for residential purposes.
- Provide development incentives to non-profit and for-profit housing providers and developers to create new or redeveloped housing, with an emphasis on multi-family housing, in locations that are connected to public transit, trails or sidewalks.

- Utilize Lehigh Valley Planning Commission guidance documents to promote sustainable housing methods, such as Traditional Neighborhood Development, Cottage Housing and Inclusionary Zoning.
- Permit and promote quality multi-family housing development that meets low-to moderate-income affordability standards and incorporates long-term energy efficiency features.
- Incentivize providing a minimum percentage of moderately-priced units in residential development projects through density bonuses and streamlined approvals.
- Review ordinances and amend as needed to support opportunities for congregate living situations for people with special needs.
- Promote universal design standards that allow seniors to age in place.
- Share information about fair housing and fair lending practices through municipal websites, newsletters and other outreach materials.
- Allow for accessory dwelling units.
- Pursue grants, loans and other housing assistance programs to improve quality of housing and homeownership.

### **Policy 2.5: Establish and maintain an accessible, interconnected Slate Belt area park, trail and recreation network.**

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- Prepare and/or update park, recreation and open space plans.
- Adopt or amend municipal official maps to incorporate planned parks and trails identified in Parks, Recreation and Open Space plans.
- Require or update the dedication of land or money for parks as a condition for subdivision or land development approval as provided in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.
- Prioritize park, trail and recreational improvements.
- Implement the recommendations from the *Northern Tier Trail – A Trail Feasibility Study*.
- Utilize former railroad rights-of-way as links between villages, parks, public areas
- Prepare or update master site plans for priority parks and trails.
- Ensure existing and new outdoor recreation facilities meet Universal Design standards.
- Take advantage of local, regional, state and federal funding sources for park and trail improvements.
- Improve access to existing park, trail and recreation opportunities.
- Expand parks and recreation programming to meet the needs of all community members.
- Connect existing parks and trails to create a recreation network.
- Protect lands along the Appalachian Trail corridor.
- Support outdoor recreational activities or attractions at an individual or small group scale.

## Policy 2.6: Expand and diversify businesses associated with outdoor recreation and tourism in downtowns, crossroad villages and along regional trails.

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- Update land use regulations to direct lodging to appropriate areas that support local businesses and connect to regional assets.
- Encourage diverse dining options.
- Expand services in downtowns and near regional assets that meet the needs of hikers, bicyclists and other outdoor activity enthusiasts.

## Policy 2.7: Support investment in cultural institutions in downtowns, main streets, crossroads villages and along regional trails.

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- Improve downtown parks and plazas.
- Restore historic theaters.
- Promote museums and education centers.
- Expand venues for music and visual art.
- Develop/expand events that celebrate the history, culture, community and environment of the Slate Belt.
- Establish programs that encourage community art in mixed-use districts.
- Develop rules and regulations guiding placement of public art.

## Policy 2.8: Protect historic and cultural resources.

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- Prioritize locally identified resources that can be used as educational or tourist attractions.
- Identify historic resources in hazard prone areas.
- Prepare a Slate Belt multi-municipal inventory of historic buildings, areas, and neighborhoods that document the history of resources.
- Increase available funding for historic preservation planning.
- Utilize the Northampton County Department of Community and Economic Development grant programs to revitalize and enhance historic communities and rehabilitate historic sites.
- Establish a Slate Belt multi-municipal historic commission and preservation program.
- Participate in the PA State Historic Preservation Office's Certified Local Government program through which municipalities receive grants, training, and technical assistance for preservation programming.
- Apply for state and federal recognition of historic and cultural resources.
- Establish guidelines for the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
- Incorporate historic districts into zoning ordinances and subdivision and land development ordinances.



- Implementation Ideas:
  - Establish historic overlay districts in downtown cores, neighborhoods and crossroads villages to address strategies for the protection of historic resources and appropriate new development in their vicinity.
  - Promote context-sensitive design regulations.
  - Establish demolition-by-neglect ordinances.
  - Require developers to identify and preserve remaining historic buildings and landscape resources in new development proposals as part of the subdivision and land development process.
- Support Slate Belt Rising initiatives that capitalize on the shared heritage and culture of the region to increase economic opportunity.
- Support the Quarry Heritage Park & Trail Network's efforts to transform the American Bangor Quarry into a unique, heritage-based regional park and trail destination.
- Educate property owners on the value of historic resources and opportunities for preservation.
- Coordinate and integrate cultural resource management activities related to transportation planning with historic preservation strategies.

# GOAL 3 | EFFICIENT LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS.

## Policy 3.1: Strengthen municipal fiscal stability.

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- Utilize cost/benefit analyses when evaluating development proposals.
- Update zoning ordinances and subdivision and land development ordinances to promote a stable tax base.
- Carefully consider the fiscal impact of any incentive program.
- Evaluate alternative funding sources to support municipal services and goals.
- Increase communication efforts with the county, state and other appropriate entities to identify opportunities for collaboration and funding.

## Policy 3.2: Provide sustainable and efficient community services.

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- Identify and evaluate opportunities to increase shared public works, emergency response and community services through intermunicipal agreements.
- Explore and monitor funding opportunities from county, state and federal programs to implement and sustain intermunicipal services.
- Consider adopting a dedicated emergency services fee in communities that do not collect funds for emergency services.
- Increase municipal cooperation through consistent communication, information sharing and conflict resolution within and across municipal boundaries.
- Identify police, fire and ambulance equipment and personnel needs.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Analyze needs to ensure that service is properly allocated.
    - Study and establish volunteer recruitment and retention incentives.
    - Inventory Slate Belt emergency service equipment to encourage future equipment purchases that deploy equipment that is needed and not duplicative.
- Enhance community awareness of volunteer-provided services in the Slate Belt.
  - Implementation Idea:
    - Promote all community-based entities in which volunteers are the main provider to recruit and expand upon the current volunteer base.

### Policy 3.3: Reduce the impacts of natural/non-natural hazards and climate change.

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- Continue to participate in updates to the Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Coordinate with local, state and federal emergency management agencies to identify potential funding sources for mitigation actions.
- Prioritize and implement mitigation actions as funding becomes available.
- Participate in the federal Community Rating System program.
- Provide education/outreach on climate change and hazard impacts and actions to reduce those impacts.
- Support regional climate action planning efforts.
- Integrate hazard mitigation planning into municipal plans, programs and ordinances.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Strengthen regulations to reduce climate change and hazard impacts.
    - Preserve and enhance the effectiveness of natural resources to provide resiliency benefits.
    - Incorporate mitigation actions into capital improvement plans.
- Encourage utility companies to perform annual tree and vegetation management activities.
  - Implementation Idea:
    - Conduct municipal and utility company meetings to discuss areas of concern along utility rights-of-way to eliminate weather event downed trees across vital infrastructure connections for electricity, internet and communications.
- Implement and maintain flood control measures on roadways in flood prone areas.
- Strengthen existing infrastructure to be more disaster resilient.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Coordinate with fire department personnel and public works officials to evaluate infrastructure requirements to meet fire flow needs and assess adequate fire hydrant placement in locations with insufficient fire-fighting infrastructure.
- Coordinate with emergency management providers, PennDOT and Northampton County on best approaches to mitigate impacts of traffic disruption.

### Policy 3.4: Promote energy conservation and efficiency awareness.

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- Incorporate green building and development requirements in subdivision and zoning ordinances.
- Conduct an energy audit of municipal facilities to identify opportunities for increased energy efficiency.
- Incorporate energy efficiency practices in municipal buildings and facilities.
- Educate the public on the importance and benefits of energy conservation and efficiency.

### Policy 3.5: Promote environmentally sound and economical solid waste disposal and recycling.

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- Reduce municipal waste generation by reducing paper usage and buying products with less packaging and in bulk, where feasible.
- Implement the use of recycled products whenever possible.
- Encourage increased participation in residential and commercial/industrial recycling and reuse of materials.
- Coordinate with Northampton County and promote County household hazardous waste drop-off events.

# GOAL 4 | A RESILIENT TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK.

Policy 4.1: Provide a safe, well-maintained transportation network for the efficient circulation of people, services and goods.

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- Identify areas of safety and congestion concern for existing transportation infrastructure.
- Study locations for potential traffic calming implementation measures to reduce speed and aggressive driving to increase safety.
- Create and maintain a transportation infrastructure database for an inventory of bridges, roads and multimodal amenities.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Include the infrastructure database on an official map.
    - Document and continually update inspection and maintenance records and plan for replacement or rehabilitation of bridges, streets, sidewalks, trails and bicycle facilities.
- Reconstruct or rehabilitate roads that are prone to accidents due to deteriorated road surfaces or antiquated road design standards.
- Promote safe driving and traffic law compliance through signage and community publications and events.
- Require connectivity of streets in land developments to facilitate better emergency response times.
- Plan for implementation of modern intelligent traffic signals and infrastructure to support their installation and performance.
- Explore the use of roundabouts to reduce the severity of accidents at intersections of concern.
- Identify and prioritize structurally deficient bridges for repair, replacement or rehabilitation.
- Advocate for improvements to state owned bridges and roadways through long-range transportation plans.
- Pursue multimodal amenities and sidewalks for planned new, reconstructed or rehabilitated bridges.
- Identify deficient roads to be improved or reconstructed to meet modern design standards for the types of traffic they are experiencing.
- Integrate developments or redevelopments into existing street grid networks to ensure continuity and seamless connectivity of the transportation infrastructure.
- Coordinate with other transportation agencies and adjacent communities and counties for the extension, enhancement or creation of existing and planned streets for connectivity.

- Assess design standards for all classification of roads in the region to preserve or enhance the capability of a roadway to operate safely and efficiently while maintaining the character of the community.
- Coordinate educational opportunities for municipality staff and officials to learn the impacts of land use developments on the transportation network.
- Continually update plans as developments occur to raise awareness of potential traffic flow needs.
- Ensure road detour management plans are developed and updated to provide efficient traffic management strategies when road closures occur on critical roads in the area.

#### Policy 4.2: Provide a transportation network that safely and efficiently accommodates freight traffic while preserving community character.

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- Create designated truck routes, parking areas and associated signage in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT).
- Identify and provide signage for weight-restricted bridges and update signs as inspections occur.
- Plan for rehabilitation or replacement of bridges that have outlived their design life expectancy to meet the needs of community and freight movements.
- Expand on truck parking spaces and truck driver amenities with freight-centric developments and corridors.
- Coordinate with PennDOT, the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission, New Jersey Department of Transportation and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA) on the Pennsylvania State Route 611 connection to the Portland Columbia Bridge leading to Interstate 80 in New Jersey regarding the impacts of proposed developments and freight movements on the bridge.
- Monitor the impacts of freight movements through classification of vehicle traffic counts.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Inventory traffic impact studies from freight developments to monitor future build conditions to actual impacts generated as developments become active and in full operation.
    - Use the PennDOT Traffic Information Repository for traffic counts performed in the area.

#### Policy 4.3: Provide and promote walking and biking opportunities that offer safe and convenient routes to neighborhoods, popular destinations, trail networks and parks.

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- Identify pedestrian infrastructure for sidewalk gaps, missing connections, poor condition and non-compliant Americans with Disabilities Act design for prioritization for improvement.

- Improve connections between transit and bike/pedestrian infrastructure with existing or future dense developments, employment centers and cultural destinations.
- Establish or improve physical barriers between pedestrians and vehicles to improve safety.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Consider curb installation and separated shoulders.
    - Consider augmenting barriers with streetscape and street trees.
    - Plan for pedestrian scale lighting at critical crosswalks and pedestrian corridors.
- Inventory existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and identify gaps for potential dedicated bike routes.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Document on an official map.
    - Document and inventory in concurrence with WalkRollV: Active Transportation Plan and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission's Sidewalk Inventory.
    - Study micro-mobility recreation and commuter utilization and incorporate recommendations into project planning and active transportation initiatives.
- Promote awareness and educate the public on pedestrian and bicycle safety responsibilities and laws.
- Require curbs and sidewalks in new developments to facilitate safe pedestrian access and connectivity.
- Develop a strategy to identify and promote safe and efficient bike routes.
- Establish regulations to facilitate and allow parklets in desired locations.
- Develop a traffic calming initiative for areas of pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular interactions.

#### Policy 4.4: Improve transit service in the Slate Belt area.

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- Engage with LANTA on ways to increase the frequency of service along State Route 512.
- Work with municipal representatives to identify potential future LANTA routes and bus stop locations.
- Advocate for creation or enhancement of the multimodal route from East Bangor Borough to the southside of Bangor Borough along state Route 512 with corridor implantation, safety improvements and accommodations.
- Connect or provide wayfinding signage of LANTA stops to the regional multi-use trail network and cultural destinations.
- Coordinate with LANTA on upgrading current or future transit infrastructure needs, including modern bus shelters and amenities including bicycle racks, transit schedule and wayfinding signage.

## Policy 4.5: Identify and maximize transportation infrastructure funding opportunities.

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- Participate in Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVTS) and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania outreach and awareness meetings for funding opportunities.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Identify transportation improvements and advocate for them to be included in long-range transportation plans.
    - Explore and identify funding programs and grant opportunities to pursue for transportation projects.
    - Coordinate grant application writing best practices for the benefit of the region when applying for funding.
    - Perform an analysis to determine whether implementing a Transportation Impact Fee mechanism to facilitate funding transportation infrastructure improvements would be beneficial to the community.
- Advocate for long-term transportation funding solutions at the local, state and federal levels.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Explore establishment of a Slate Belt Regional Transportation advocacy group.
    - Determine the benefit for regional collaboration on transportation issues.
    - Provide information sharing on transportation impacts across the region and neighboring counties and communities.
- Prepare plans and a vision for projects using cost benefit or return on investment analysis to enhance funding opportunities and leverage for project funding and construction.
- Create capital improvement plans for budgeting for funding contributions for locally owned roads and bridges to advocate for improvements where funding matches help facilitate gaining funds for implementation.

## Policy 4.6: Provide safe and reliable sewage disposal and water supply for all persons.

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- Maintain Official Sewage Facilities Plans for each municipality, consistent with the requirements of the PA Sewage Facilities Act of 1966 (Act 537).
- Update Sewage Facilities Plans to be consistent with the land use recommendations of this plan as necessary.
- Require fully tested primary and replacement absorption areas for lots proposed for on-lot sewage disposal.
- Designate maximum development densities consistent with the long-term use of on-lot sewage disposal systems and wells.
- Educate users of on-lot sewage facilities on proper system maintenance procedures.



- Monitor the performance of all sewage facilities and take corrective measures as appropriate.
- Establish a sewage management program for inspection and maintenance of on-lot sewage systems.
- Provide adequate service to areas experiencing problems with existing on-lot or central sewer or water supply systems, implementing the most cost-effective solution to the problem after an evaluation of appropriate alternatives is completed.
- Define groundwater protection zones for all public water supply wells and implement groundwater source protection programs.
- Promote water conservation to all residents and businesses.
- Develop capital improvement programs to identify and prioritize public sewer and water system infrastructure replacement needs.
- Evaluate the feasibility of public/private partnerships for funding replacement needs.
- Pursue grant/loan programs, such as PennVEST, to fund infrastructure needs.

#### **Policy 4.7: Coordinate economical, efficient sewage disposal and water service with existing and future development.**

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- Coordinate sewage facilities and water resource planning with comprehensive planning and zoning.
- Coordinate with community water supply and public sewage disposal providers to accommodate future growth consistent with the land use recommendations of this plan.
- Prepare or update public sewage facility and community water supply agreements, where appropriate, with adjacent municipalities or authorities to provide service consistent with the Development recommendations of this plan.
- Direct intense development to areas where the public sewer and community water supply systems can accept additional growth, or through limited expansion or upgrading, as consistent with this comprehensive plan.
- Utilize on-lot sewer and water systems in rural and agricultural areas consistent with the recommendations of this plan.
- Discourage intense development in areas where it can only be served by on-lot sewage disposal or new or expanded privately-owned central sewage facilities.
- Identify and remove excess infiltration and inflow in a cost-effective manner to maximize available sewer capacity.
- Require assurances for proper long-term operation and maintenance of privately-owned central sewer and water systems.

#### Policy 4.8: Manage the rate, volume and quality of storm runoff.

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- Implement the provisions of approved stormwater management plans.
- Prepare capital improvement programs to solve existing drainage problems in accordance with Act 167 stormwater management plans.
- Explore alternative funding sources, including grant programs and implementing a stormwater fee, to fund needed stormwater improvements.
- Ensure the proper construction of storm drainage facilities.
- Ensure continued operation and maintenance of storm drainage facilities through regular inspections and enforcement of maintenance plans.
- Manage stormwater associated with municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4).
  - Implementation Idea:
    - Collaborate regarding MS4 implementation, especially best management practices for pollutant control.
- Incorporate green infrastructure techniques in stormwater management ordinances.

#### Policy 4.9: Support new energy and next generation communication technologies.

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- Coordinate with electric utility providers to upgrade utility infrastructure as needed.
- Support diversification of energy sources.
- Adopt or update policies, ordinances that ensure equitable access to modern and emerging technologies.
- Consider amending or implementing ordinances to locate small cell tower technology in areas of need for coverage and service.
- Work actively with technology service providers to identify gaps or reliability issues in technological access and improve quality of service through new or upgrades to infrastructure.
- Integrate new technological infrastructure upgrades or installations into improvement projects along rights-of-way during development projects.
- Adopt or modify ordinances that enable equitable technological infrastructure sites across the Slate Belt.
- Ensure technologies are integrated into historic, natural and farmland areas in ways that maintain or enhance service while not diminishing the community character.
- Prepare for electric vehicles with charging stations and supportive infrastructure at local cultural destinations, employment centers and key high traffic volume areas near retail or restaurant establishments that can be a destination during charging times.

# GOAL 5 | A STRONG FARMING COMMUNITY.

## Policy 5.1: Promote farming as a community-defining industry and component of the regional identity.

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- Adopt zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance amendments that support and expand agriculture as a business.
- Encourage farm-related businesses in areas recommended for farmland preservation.
- Strengthen regional food systems by linking food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management.
- Promote local farmers' markets.
- Encourage the production and purchase of locally grown products to grow the agricultural economy.
- Encourage education and training for existing and prospective farmers, such as apprenticeship programs.
- Support the retention and expansion of local family farms by promoting generational farm-land transfers.
- Protect new agricultural uses by encouraging creative new revenue streams that supplement traditional farm revenues.
- Consider the use of blighted or vacant Development areas for community gardens and educating children about farming.
- Develop strategies to market agricultural resources opportunities and events available in the Slate Belt area.
  - Implementation Idea:
    - Involve farms and farmers in Slate Belt area and regional events.
- Educate non-farming community members on the importance of farming and retaining land in agricultural use.
- Encourage business to be conducted in a manner consistent with the rural character of the region that enhances the agricultural economy.

## Policy 5.2: Expand agritourism to support agricultural businesses and retention of farms.

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- Establish clear rules and guidelines on the type, location and intensity of agritourism businesses.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Encourage agritourism to locate near major highways, crossroads villages, transit lines and regional multi-use trails.
    - Ensure the local transportation network can support increased traffic from agritourism.
    - Connect agritourism locations to the area multi-use trail network.
- Promote and encourage agritourism through municipal webpages, DiscoverLV and other avenues.

# GOAL 6 | A PREPARED STUDENT BODY AND WORKFORCE.

Policy 6.1 Coordinate and promote education and job training programs that improve social and economic opportunities and meet the needs of existing and emerging industries and technologies.

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- Support workforce development programs and technical education programs aimed at improving the skill level of individuals of all ages, incomes and abilities.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Facilitate communication between Slate Belt municipalities, Workforce Board Lehigh Valley, schools/colleges, business community and residents to identify and meet educational and job training needs.
    - Coordinate with the Workforce Board, schools/colleges and sewer/water providers to promote water and wastewater treatment job opportunities.
    - Strengthen connections with the Workforce Board to enhance the overall effectiveness of job training efforts.
- Support introduction of new programs into technical schools, community colleges and universities that address the changing needs of businesses.
- Coordinate with the Workforce Board to locate a training facility in the Slate Belt.
- Support efforts to provide adult education and re-training, vocational education and job training.
- Create a strategy to promote job opportunities in the region and the benefits of reducing commutes outside of the region.
- Support efforts to provide training and employment opportunities for special needs populations.

## Policy 6.2 Strengthen the Slate Belt communities' role in ensuring a high-quality education that prepares all students for the workforce of tomorrow.

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- Work cooperatively with the school districts to help maintain and enhance the quality of K-12 education.
- Coordinate with the Workforce Board, schools and businesses to provide students with exposure to a wide variety of employment and business opportunities through apprenticeship programs, job shadowing, internships.
- Support school programs that focus on educational enrichment and critical skills training, especially in science and technology.
- Support increased student exposure to the trades to provide awareness of technical career opportunities.
- Expand access to higher education opportunities.
  - Implementation Ideas:
    - Coordinate with LANTA to provide enhanced service to the Slate Belt area
    - Communicate with Northampton Community College about the potential for establishing a satellite campus in the Slate Belt.
    - Identify the technology needs in the Slate Belt and work with the private sector to identify possible solutions to providing enhanced access to technology.
- Support after school programs that focus on educational enrichment and skills training.