



NEWS

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Seven Projects Receive Montco 2040 Implementation Grants from Montgomery County

Norristown, PA (June 16, 2016) – The Montgomery County Commissioners today announced that seven projects in the county will receive Montco 2040 Implementation Grants. The grants are part of an exciting new program aimed at implementing the new county comprehensive plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*. The program is intended to assist municipalities in making targeted physical improvements that achieve real progress toward the goals of the plan and the plan’s themes of Connected Communities, Sustainable Places, and Vibrant Economy.

This is the first round of funding for the 2016 program cycle. Today’s grant awards will account for \$706,440 out of the available \$1 million program balance. The county received 15 applications from municipalities totaling over \$1.6 million in requests during the first round. Applicants that did not receive an award at this time will still be considered during the next round of funding. A committee made up of Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) Board Members and interdepartmental county staff will meet again next month to recommend additional grant awards with the remaining 2016 program balance.

“Montgomery County is pleased to award Montco 2040 Implementation Grants to seven excellent projects throughout the county,” said Montgomery County Commissioners Chair Josh Shapiro. “The grants will help advance these important local projects while realizing the goals of our county comprehensive plan and benefiting county residents and visitors.”

The seven projects that received grants are highlighted below:

Abington Township

Abington Township will install a bump-out curb extension for one of its most prominent intersections at Old York Road and The Fairway. Thousands of cars pass through this intersection daily and usually at high speeds. To improve pedestrian safety, the township is proposing a bump-out on the northeast corner to

shorten crossing time and force cars to slow down when turning. This project's issues and potential solutions were included in the *Walk Montco* plan, where it was suggested the township reduce the pedestrian crossing distance, curb radius, and existing amount of impervious surface. The Montco 2040 Grant Award is \$100,000.

Collegeville Borough

Collegeville Borough will install a new traffic signal at the corner of Main and Sixth Streets. A number of accidents occurring at this intersection over the years have had an impact on both Ursinus College and the Collegeville community, the most recent resulting in the death of a student. As nearly 25 percent of student housing for Ursinus is below Main Street, the college and town want to increase pedestrian safety at this intersection. Both the *Collegeville Borough Revitalization Plan* and the *Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan* call attention to the need for pedestrian safety enhancements along Main Street. The Montco 2040 Grant Award is \$75,000.

Douglass Township

Douglass Township will retrofit an existing municipal parking lot adjacent to the township building and Douglass Park to make the lot more green and sustainable. The parking lot will include a large rain garden, two new inlets along the realigned driveway, rain barrels, and porous pavement. It will also realign the entrance drive off of Route 73 and provide pedestrian connections from the roadway to the park. This phase seeks to leverage more funds through other grants to complete an adjacent lot in the near future. The *Douglass Township Revitalization Plan* of 2012 specifically recommends the green retrofit of the municipal parking lot. The Montco 2040 Grant Award is \$150,000.

Hatfield Township

Hatfield Township will build additional segments onto their existing trail system to connect township recreational facilities, a business park, residential areas, and the county's Liberty Bell Trail in Hatfield Borough. They will extend the Chestnut Street Trail out of Hatfield Community Park by installing sidewalks along Maple Street and a painted shoulder on Chestnut Street, which will connect to Hatfield Borough and the county trail. Also, they will extend the existing Frick's Trail to the residential areas along Route 309 to connect them with the Chestnut Street Trail. This project, identified in the *Walk Montco* plan, is also consistent with the goals of the *Hatfield Township-Hatfield Borough Greenway and Trails Network Master Plan* where both trail extensions were specifically recommended. The Montco 2040 Grant Award is \$100,000.

Lower Moreland Township

Lower Moreland Township will construct a sidewalk along the south side of Welsh Road between Lieberman Drive and Valley Road. The sidewalk will connect residents to the Pennypack Trail, SEPTA Bethayres

Station, and the Bethayres commercial district. Currently, there is no reasonable path for residents to traverse to make this connection. In 2009, in an effort to promote walkability, access to the county trail system, and commercial vitality, the township conducted *A Feasibility Study for the Greenway and Redevelopment Plan of the Philmont Avenue Corridor*, which highlighted improvements such as this project along Welsh Road. The Montco 2040 Grant Award is \$91,000.

Upper Moreland Township

Upper Moreland Township will construct a new pedestrian crossing at York and Davisville Roads in the Willow Grove Redevelopment Area. This project creates a better and safer connection between commercial areas and the SEPTA Willow Grove Station. The crossing will also be equipped with Accessible Pedestrian Signals (ACS) for the visually impaired, as the township has identified persons within Willow Grove needing this accommodation. This project is consistent with the *NAS-JRB Willow Grove Redevelopment Plan* where one focus is to improve the sidewalk network for pedestrians. The Montco 2040 Grant Award is \$95,065.

Upper Salford Township

Upper Salford Township will acquire a conservation and trail easement over the Shirk-Hutt woods area of the Hutt Farm. This area has been identified as a rich and diverse ecosystem in need of conservation. Also, the easement will allow for a trail from Upper Salford Park to the Spring Mount recreation area and will ultimately connect to the county's Perkiomen Trail. The parcel has been identified by numerous plans, such as the *Indian Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan* and the *Upper Salford Open Space Plan*, as a high-priority area for conservation and a "Key Greenway Connector." The grant will assist funding for the purchase of the easement with the trail to be built in the future with additional funding. The Montco 2040 Grant Award is \$95,375.

Visit www.montcopa.org/Montco2040GrantProgram for more on the Montco 2040 Implementation Grant Program. For questions, please contact Scott France, MCPC Section Chief for Planning, at 610-278-3747 or via email at sfrance@montcopa.org.