2017 IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE
MONTCO 2040: A SHARED VISION
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Montco 2040, the comprehensive plan for Montgomery County was adopted in January 2015. This report is an update on implementation actions. It highlights major achievements in implementing the plan that took place in 2016, and provides a number of implementation actions that will take place in 2017. Many goals will be implemented directly by the county, but many are implemented by the county’s partners, such as local municipalities, PennDOT, the Turnpike Commission, SEPTA, and other government agencies.
Montco 2040: A Shared Vision is designed around three interrelated themes.

**Connected Communities**
People want to be connected and part of a broader community. A key role for the county is to help these connections occur beyond local municipal boundaries.

**Sustainable Places**
The county is full of wonderful neighborhoods and communities. These places need to be sustained and enhanced in a long-lasting and effective way.

**Vibrant Economy**
A strong economy is critical for all places. With a vibrant economy, residents can earn and spend more, governments can make needed infrastructure improvements, and businesses can grow.
**GOAL** Encourage collaboration and partnerships among governments, businesses, institutions, schools, higher education, and other stakeholders

**2016 ACHIEVEMENTS**
- Completed 5 school district enrollment projection studies.
- Maintained 35 municipal planning and 4 regional planning contracts.
- Completed year one of the Montco 2040 Implementation Grant program, which funded 14 local projects.
- The community college’s award-winning Sustainability Innovation Center opened.
- The county approved an increase in funding to the community college.
- Embarked on a 5-year GIS strategic plan.
- Supported and contributed to the HHS Collaborative Network, a consortium of human services providers.

**2017 IMPLEMENTATION**
- Complete a pioneering partnership with the county, Natural Lands Trust and 26 municipalities for a regional greenway study.
- Conduct an additional 5 school district enrollment studies.
- Assist the county’s municipalities with their planning work - with 34 municipal and 4 regional planning contracts.

**GOAL** Improve transportation quality and expand options for county residents and workers

**2016 ACHIEVEMENTS**
- Completed Phase 2 of the Lafayette Street Project.
- Pottstown’s walking school bus and Abington’s bike plan are important steps toward making the county more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
- PennDOT announced a multimodal long range plan to enhance travel along I-76.
- Health Department and Planning Commission staff continued outreach on pedestrian and bike safety at elementary schools.

**2017 IMPLEMENTATION**
- Begin Phase 3 of the Lafayette Street project.
- Update the county’s bicycle plan.
- Advocate for a complete streets policy on county roads.
- Hold listening sessions about senior transportation services - to improve the future provision of services.
- Enter into a contract for the county bus shelter pilot project.
- Continue the design of Ridge Pike Improvement Project in Whitemarsh, Springfield, and Plymouth.
GOAL: Expand and connect county trails, local trails, greenways, natural areas, and parks

2016 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Worked with DVRPC to award grant funding to complete sections of the Power Line and Cross County Trails.
- The Crossways Trail opened, connecting the community college’s Main Campus with Penllyn Woods.
- New bridge over the Perkiomen Creek at Route 73 connects trail users to Pennypacker Mills.
- Expanded the bikeshare program on county trails.
- Completed a plan for the Stony Creek/Saw Mill Run greenway.
- Design of the Wissahickon and Cross County Trails through Erdenheim Farm is 60% complete.
- Sullivan Bridge opened, bringing trail users from the Schuylkill River Trail to Valley Forge National Historical Park.

2017 IMPLEMENTATION

- Add 4 miles of trails to the Circuit.
- Begin Riverfront Access Plan for Norristown.
- Complete the first phase of the Schuylkill River Trail construction at Pottstown.
- Continue to expand park and open space areas identified in the open space priorities report.

GOAL: Support strong downtowns and community destinations, including mixed use areas, arts and culture focal points, libraries, and other gathering places

2016 ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Pottstown library successfully undertook a $775,000 library renovation project.
- A new seasonal farmers market in the middle of Pottstown’s downtown had a great first year. And down the road, Pottstown’s carousel opened to the public after a decade of steady fundraising and hard work.
- Continued to partner with Creative MontCo to bring artwork to the county’s trail system.
- Both Royersford and Lansdale continued ongoing streetscape improvement projects along their respective main streets. Streetscape improvements also began along City Avenue, which runs between Lower Merion and Philadelphia.

2017 IMPLEMENTATION

- Emphasize and award projects that support downtowns and community destinations through the Montco 2040 Implementation Grant Program.
Sustainable Places

GOAL  Support a modern, resilient, green, and energy-efficient infrastructure network

2016 ACHIEVEMENTS

✓ Replacement of the Knight Road Bridge completed.
✓ Commissioners approved a $5 vehicle registration fee, which is estimated to raise $3.5 million a year for fixes to county-owned roads and bridges.
✓ Planning Smarter event on implementing sustainable energy.
✓ Replacement of the Arcola Road bridge completed.
✓ A county feasibility study for hydroelectric power at the dam on the Schuylkill River in Norristown began.
✓ Municipal waste management plan was completed.
✓ Updated the sewage facilities database.
✓ County held 6 hazardous waste events in addition to 2 tire collection, 3 paper shredding events, and one electronic waste event.
✓ Montco 2040 Implementation grants were given to 3 municipalities to retrofit parking lots with sustainability features.

2017 IMPLEMENTATION

■ Explore new technologies and the use of the shoulders for travel on I-76.
■ Utilizing funding from the new $5 fee, launch a new grant program for municipalities to improve traffic operations and safety.
■ Continue to design, rehabilitate or replace more county-owned bridges.
■ Like Pottstown and its sustainability plan, assist municipalities with sustainability and/or renewable energy planning and zoning.
■ Continue contract to shred and compost county documents.
■ Four communities will begin the DOE SolSmart Program: Lower Merion, Pottstown, Upper Merion, and Cheltenham.
### GOAL  Improve stormwater management and reduce the impact of flooding

#### 2016 ACHIEVEMENTS
- ✓ 13 municipalities and 3 treatment plants signed an intermunicipal agreement to implement an alternative TMDL plan in the Wissahickon watershed. $1 million from the William Penn Foundation has been granted for implementation of this project.
- ✓ The county once again received its MS4 permit and implementation is underway.
- ✓ Completed an online TDR map for the Fort Washington area.
- ✓ All municipal floodplain ordinances that were out of compliance have been reviewed and approved by FEMA.

#### 2017 IMPLEMENTATION
- Author a county-wide stormwater management plan.
- Promote stormwater best management practices in county facilities.
- Work with the 13 municipalities and 3 wastewater treatment plants to develop the alternative TMDL plan in the Wissahickon
- Assist local municipalities in obtaining hazard mitigation grant funding to reduce flood vulnerability.

### GOAL  Conserve natural resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and farmland

#### 2016 ACHIEVEMENTS
- ✓ A draft Lorimer Park Master Plan was completed.
- ✓ Restoration of the mansion and barn at the John James Audubon Center is nearly complete.
- ✓ New pavilion at Peter Wentz Farmstead is finished.
- ✓ Canoe launch and fishing piers at Upper Schuylkill Valley Park are complete.
- ✓ Preserved 4 farms under the county’s Farmland Preservation Program. The county has preserved more than 9,200 acres of farmland.
- ✓ The county issued an RFP for a new CSA, and granted this to Sweet Fields, to operate on part of the Norristown Farm Park.

#### 2017 IMPLEMENTATION
- Leverage state funding to triple the county’s investment in Farmland Preservation.
- Utilize additional county funding to preserve more farms.
- Complete a park master plan for the Peter Wentz farmstead.
- Create a long-term maintenance plan for Lock 60 and this unique canal stretch.
- Improve access to Sunrise Mill and start feasibility plan to reopen the site.
- Add eco-friendly restrooms to the Norristown Farm Park and Green Lane Park.
- Break ground on new visitor’s center at the John James Audubon Center.
- Enhance visitor experiences at Peter Wentz Farmstead and Pennypacker Mills.
**GOAL**  Provide more opportunities for residents to exercise and have healthy lifestyles

**2016 ACHIEVEMENTS**

- The county sponsored a trail challenge along its county trails to encourage everyone to walk along each of them.
- Banned smoking in all county parks and on all county trails.
- The county’s local food guide, Direct from the Farm, was updated and published.
- New sports fields constructed at Conshohocken’s Proving Grounds, home to local lacrosse, field hockey, and soccer.
- Drop boxes for unwanted prescriptions have been located across the county.
- All Housing Authority properties went smoke free, in advance of HUD’s directive, while bringing smoking cessation programs to their residents.
- County’s awareness of substance abuse issues led to new naloxone distribution as well as staff training.
- Montgomery and Upper Merion Township community centers opened, giving the chance to stay active while close to home.

**2017 IMPLEMENTATION**

- Improve access around Green Lane Park to the reservoir trails.
- Connect county farmers with local restaurants, businesses, and consumers.
- Expand the Get Out and Go health and wellness initiative by holding more educational events, partnering with the Elmwood Park Zoo to encourage recreation, continuing the Mileage Club after school program, and creating an obesity prevention toolkit.
- Continue and expand the county’s trail challenge.
- Continue to distribute food from local farms to older or disabled adults living in Housing Authority homes while providing residents with nutritional, cooking, and food preservation training.

**GOAL**  Support housing choices and opportunities to meet the needs of all people

**2016 ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Extensive renovations to the Housing Authority’s North Hills and Crest Manor developments are underway.
- Grand opening of North Penn Commons, a development with new affordable senior housing units, a YMCA, and a future health clinic in Lansdale.
- Tax credits for Montgomery Park were secured, which will be a new senior housing development on the site of the former Montgomery Hospital in Norristown.

**2017 IMPLEMENTATION**

- Continue to implement Your Way Home.
- Complete a report on the impact that boomers and millennials have on the county.
- Support community development and affordable housing initiatives.

**GOAL**  Enhance community character and protect neighborhoods

**2016 ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Narberth form based code was adopted.
- Began distribution of radios to municipalities for new public communications system.
- Continued to support “Parking” Day with pop-up open spaces in Norristown and Narberth.
- Published a report (including case studies, such as Trappe Elementary School) on the adaptive reuse of institutional facilities in the county.
- Added Hatfield Borough Substation, Lockup and Firehouse to the National Register of Historic Places.

**2017 IMPLEMENTATION**

- Create a design guidebook for new townhouse communities.
- Activate new 911 communications system.
- Continue data sharing and mapping partnership with the county’s criminal justice system.
- Complete new hazard mitigation plan.
**GOAL** Improve transportation access to businesses

**2016 ACHIEVEMENTS**
- Completed Phase 2 of the Lafayette Street Extension project.
- PennDOT began construction to replace and widen the US 422 bridge over the Schuylkill River.
- Veterans Affairs began running a shuttle to local doctors appointments for county veterans.
- Secured a funding commitment from the Turnpike Commission for the Lafayette Street interchange.
- Upper Dublin Township received a multimodal fund grant for a slip ramp at the Fort Washington Interchange on the PA Turnpike.
- Lansdale slip ramps open on the PA Turnpike, utilizing all electronic tolling technology.

**2017 IMPLEMENTATION**
- Advocate for new and improved turnpike interchanges per the recommendations of the Turnpike Corridor Reinvestment Study.
- Work with SEPTA and local stakeholders to approve the locally preferred alternative for the Norristown High Speed Line extension to King of Prussia.
- Complete the construction of the new SEPTA station garage in Lansdale.

- Advance the design of the PA 309 Connector.
- Advance the Lafayette Street and Ridge Pike extension projects.
- Support the Greater Valley Forge TMA’s completion of a travel demand management (TDM) plan for the Fort Washington Office Park.

**GOAL** Encourage development and transformative investment where infrastructure already exists

**2016 ACHIEVEMENTS**
- Drafted the zoning language to implement the ideas contained in the Horsham Business Park Master Plan.
- Support new infill development proposals at places like the former Souderton High School, Ambler Yards, and Conshohocken.
- New mixed use zoning attracted residential development proposals in the King of Prussia Business Park and Lower Merion’s City Avenue District.

**2017 IMPLEMENTATION**
- Continue attracting new residents, workers, and businesses to our suburban centers.
- Adopt zoning standards for Horsham’s business park.
### GOAL: Attract and retain businesses and vital community assets

#### 2016 ACHIEVEMENTS
- Organizational restructuring of the Commerce Department, with key staff recruitment.
- Production of marketing materials on Commerce Department services and partnerships for chambers of commerce, municipalities, and elected officials.
- Marketing of state and county programs which provide loans and grants to the private sector.
- Integration of workforce development initiatives into economic development and business community objectives.
- The county approved two LERTA (Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance) incentives - one in Hatfield Township and one in Norristown.
- Local Share Account funding went to both the Redevelopment Authority and the Pottstown Area Industrial Development to fund three important projects.

#### 2017 IMPLEMENTATION
- Strengthen partnerships with municipalities through the Consortium of Communities.
- Engage chamber of commerce leadership to share county initiatives and resources.
- Provide assistance to the private sector to apply for various loan and grant programs.
- Continue to integrate and promote workforce development into traditional business and economic development initiatives.

### GOAL: Flexibly adapt to changing market conditions and demographics

#### 2016 ACHIEVEMENTS
- The 155,000 square foot expansion at the King of Prussia mall added 50 new retailers and connected the two halves of this premiere shopping center.
- 60% of new housing proposals are multifamily developments with amenities that appeal to millennials and empty nesters alike.
- The Pottstown Latino Festival and the Lansdale International Spring Festival support the increasingly diverse population of the county.

#### 2017 IMPLEMENTATION
- Continue to promote new transit-oriented development.
- Explore the changing needs of boomers and millennials and their impacts on the county’s built environment, economy, and transportation systems.

### GOAL: Facilitate the marketing of the county and its assets

#### 2016 ACHIEVEMENTS
- The 2016 Democratic National Convention attracted many delegations to hotels and destinations, with an estimated $17 million impact on local hotels, retail, and dining.
- Increased the county’s hotel tax from 2 percent to 4 percent to provide needed funding for the Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board to expand their marketing efforts in 2017.
- The Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board launched new initiatives - a Montco 360 virtual tour in partnership with Google, a “Never Stop Fighting” sports marketing campaign, and a meetings campaign called “Revolutionary Events - Forge the Extraordinary.”

#### 2017 IMPLEMENTATION
- Implement the findings, as appropriate, of the county’s sports facility needs study.
- Continue the ongoing partnership with the arts and culture community to improve promotions and marketing.
- Launch a new VFTCB branding campaign for cultural and art attractions in Montco, along with campaigns for food and dining, weddings, and shopping.
2040 VISION

Land Use Vision

The land use vision will be implemented by:

■ Updating the comprehensive plan advisory guidelines for local zoning.
■ Continuing to assist 15 to 20 municipalities in zoning and/or comprehensive plans through the community planning assistance program.
■ Implementing Year 2 of the Montco 2040 grant program.

Transportation Vision

The transportation vision will be implemented by:

■ Beginning US 202 reconstruction from Elm Street to Main Street in Norristown.
■ Continuing reconstruction and widening of the I-476 Northeast Extension.
■ Beginning widening of County Line Road from Stump Road to Kulp Road.
■ Continuing construction of the Route 422 improvements around Pottstown and Valley Forge.
■ Completing construction of the SEPTA garage in Lansdale, and adding high level platforms at the Noble, Jenkintown, and Ardmore stations.
■ Implementing new technologies and use of shoulders for travel on I-76.
■ Reconstructing Plank, Ott, Meyers, and Seitz Roads in the Central Perkiomen.
More details about upcoming initiatives can be found at county department websites and the websites of the county’s partners.

Aging and Adult Services

Assets and Infrastructure – Office of Parks, Trails and Historic Sites

Assets and Infrastructure – Office of Roads and Bridges

Commerce

Conservation District
http://montgomeryconservation.org/

Health Department

Housing Authority
http://www.montcoha.org/

Housing and Community Development

Montgomery County Planning Commission

PennDOT
http://www.dot.state.pa.us/

Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission
http://www.paturnpike.com/

Public Safety

SEPTA
http://www.septa.org/

Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board
http://www.valleyforge.org/

To learn more about the county comprehensive plan and its implementation, go to –
www.montcopa.org/Montco2040.