

Appendix 4

Potential Greenway Funding Sources

The following provides information on the various funding sources that may be utilized to implement individual greenway projects. These funding sources are discussed below.



Township Funds

Whitmarsh Township voters recently approved a ballot question regarding a 0.25% increase in the existing earned income tax for open space, agriculture and heritage conservation and preservation projects. This new pool of funding can be used directly for projects or to meet grant matching funds requirements.

County Funding

Montgomery County's Green Fields/Green Towns Program

The Montgomery County Commissioners adopted the Green Fields/Green Towns Program on December 18, 2003. This ten-year \$150 million program, approved by voter referendum, is made up of three basic components: municipal grants (\$67 million), private organization grants (\$8 million), and county open space expenditures (\$75 million). The goals of this program include providing recreation opportunities, conserving natural features, preserving historic or cultural landscapes, maintaining scenic quality, protecting water resources, shaping the pattern of land use and development, and preserving agricultural land.²²

Under the program, each municipality received a base allocation of \$540,000 together with a population based per-capita allocation. Whitmarsh Township's per capita allocation is \$711,672. These funds, in addition to the \$25,000 provided to update the Township Open Space and Environmental Resource Protection Plan totals \$1,276,672 granted by the County for Whitmarsh Township to utilize for land acquisition, open space and heritage resource preservation, farmland protection, floodplain restoration, and trails and greenway development projects.

Montgomery County's County Farmland Preservation Program

The Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Program is a state program administered at the county level. Preserving farmland through this program is a two-step process. The first step is to join an Agricultural Security Area (ASA), and the second step is to submit an application for easement purchase. Joining an ASA does not obligate the landowner to apply for easement purchase, but any farm applying for the easement purchase program must first be in an ASA.

There is no fee to join an ASA, and there is no financial, zoning, or other such penalty for the change of land use in an ASA. Farms in ASAs are protected from new ordinances

²²Source: <http://www2.montcopa.org/planning/cwp/view,a,3,Q,1898.asp>

which would restrict normal farming operations or define farms as nuisances. In addition, an ASA farm receives another level of protection from taking by eminent domain, through additional approvals needed before condemnation. The process for forming ASAs begins with landowners. A landowner can apply to sell his development rights (establish a conservation easement) to the County and/or State Agricultural Land Preservation Boards. A municipality may also participate in the purchase of a farm's development rights. Landowners initiate the conservation easement process by filling out an application for the program. The County Agricultural Land Preservation Board must evaluate all applications which meet the program's minimum criteria. To evaluate and rank applications, the Agricultural Land Preservation Board uses a Numerical Ranking System. This system awards points to farms based on quality of the farmland, stewardship of the land, threat of development, and proximity to other preserved land.

The Agricultural Land Preservation Board will order real estate appraisals for the farms scoring highest in the ranking system each year. The purpose of the appraisal is to determine the value of the land and the value of the conservation easement. The Board votes on those farms to from which to purchase development rights and a real estate settlement is held to conclude the process.²³

State Funding

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources - Community Conservation Partnership Program

The Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) provides funding for acquisition, planning, development and technical assistance for open space, parks and recreation facilities. Several types of projects of importance to the Whitemarsh Greenway Network that are funded by C2P2 are described below.

- Conservation/Sound Land Use: Grants to encourage conservation planning and sound land use. Either as a stand alone product or as part of comprehensive recreation, park and open space or a municipal plan, the Department will fund studies that advance conservation or sound land use strategies or practices identified in existing plans.
- Master Site Plans: Grants to design the proposed development of a neighborhood, community, or regional park. Site control, either through ownership or a long-term lease, is required.
- Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance: Grants of up to 90 percent of eligible costs (\$7,500 maximum) to study problem-specific issues dealing with the administration of park and recreation facilities and/or services. These are short-term projects conducted primarily by experienced park and recreation professionals who work closely with community leaders.
- Acquisition - grants for the purchase of land for park, recreation and conservation purposes. Projects may include acquisition of land for new areas, in holdings or expansion of existing sites.

²³ Source: <http://www.montcopa.org/plancom/PDF%20Files/AgPresBookwhole.pdf>

- Park Rehabilitation and Development - grants for the rehabilitation of existing parks, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and development of new park and recreation areas.

An additional program under C2P2 is the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program (PRTP), which provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. Federal funding for the program is through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21).

Match requirements for Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program Grants are 80% grant money, up to a maximum of \$100,000, and 20% project applicant money. "Soft match" (credit for donations of funds, materials, services, or new right-of-way) is permitted from any project sponsor, whether a private organization or public agency.²⁴

Another program through DCNR is the Heritage Parks Program. Whitemarsh Township is within the Schuylkill River Heritage area and can work with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association to acquire funding through this program. Municipalities are not permitted to apply for funding from this program, but non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations may apply.

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources - Community Forests Program

DCNR's Community Forests Program provides grant funding for tree planting, tree inventories, tree maintenance, and similar projects. Although the program is currently providing funds for mini-grants due to budget shortages, DCNR hopes to provide additional funding in 2007. The various grants available under the Community Forests Program are described below.

Municipal Challenge Grant

- Funding from \$1000 – \$5,000, matches may be in-kind services.
- Geared to projects in public spaces and right-of-ways.
- Aimed at supporting municipal tree inventories, tree planting, and tree care.
- Available to municipalities or municipal tree commissions for the planting of trees in public places (streets, parks, and other public lands such as municipal parking lots, riparian areas, roadside gateways).

Community Improvement Grants

- Funding from \$500 – \$3,000, matches may be in-kind services.
- Support "greening" partnerships linking grassroots organizations, local community groups and natural resource experts in support of community management of natural resources.
- Encourage partnerships with and between diverse organizations and groups.
- Support local improvement projects in parks, greenbelts, schools, and community public spaces.

²⁴ Source: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/rectrails.aspx>

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- Funding for education and skill-based training, which increases people's natural resource awareness and expertise.
- Grants that entail strong partnerships and educational components (training workshop, interpretive signage, exhibits, or community events) are favored.

Tree Improvement Grants

- Funding from \$1000–\$5000, requires a cash match.
- Aids municipalities in implementing a tree care program for street trees and trees in public right-of-ways.
- Funds can be used for pruning and tree care.
- Requires an official tree body.
- Requires a current inventory.
- All tree work must adhere to American National Standards Institute (or ANSI) – A300 Tree Care Standards and ANSI-Z133 Safety Standards for Tree Work.
- Work should be contracted to qualified tree services or arborists that are ISA Certified in order to assure that tree work is performed properly and municipal trees are not damaged by practices such as topping, flush cuts, over-thinning, or climbing with spikes.

Mini Grants

- Funding amount is \$100, no match required.
- Serves as seed money or start-up funds for inventories, training materials, printing costs, ceremonial tree planting, books or publications, small pruning tools, postage for a mailing.
- Volunteer groups, shade tree commissions, communities, civic groups, and others can apply for this grant.²⁵

Department of Environmental Protection - Growing Greener I and II

PADEP's Growing Greener I and II programs provide funding for open space preservation, watershed planning, and recreational trails and parks. The program requires a 15% match. Plan recommendations involving stream restoration or trail construction may potentially be eligible for Growing Greener grants.

\$230 million has been allocated to DEP as a result of the Growing Greener II (GGII) Bond Initiative for watershed protection, mine and acid mine drainage remediation, and plugging of abandoned oil and gas wells. Projects funded under this initiative must be for capital improvement, and be a physical improvement to land with a reasonable expectation that the improvement will last for 20-25 years. Projects that meet these criteria will be considered for funding. Examples include projects that would incorporate the following elements:

- construction of natural stream channel and bank restoration
- construction of stormwater management practices
- installation of certain agricultural best management practices including:

²⁵ Source: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/pucfc/grants.html#mcg>

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- fencing, riparian forested buffers, wetlands
- construction of abandoned mine drainage treatment systems
- construction of mine reclamation projects that will result in significant
- improvement in water resources
- construction of a mine treatment facility
- plugging of orphan or abandoned oil and gas wells

Environmental Education

This program is to support the environmental education programs of non-profit organizations, schools, and conservation districts. The awards range from \$1,500 to \$20,000, with most requiring a 20% match. There are several different grant tracks, with the focus being education of teachers, other informal educators, and the public.

Additional information on DEP grant programs is available at www.dep.state.pa.us.

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation - Transportation Enhancements and Hometown Streets/Safe Routes to School

Transportation Enhancements

This program is a cost-reimbursement program, rather than a grant program. The Transportation Enhancements program provides funding for construction costs, and potentially acquisition costs, for projects that are selected. There are 12 categories of potentially eligible projects. Projects must relate to surface transportation and address a transportation need, use, or benefit. For example, creation of a pedestrian or bike path adjacent to an existing roadway addresses a transportation need. Restoration of a historic building may be eligible for funding if it is a historic transportation facility, or if there is a transportation use, need, or benefit. Additional information on the Transportation Enhancements program is available at www.dot.state.pa.us.

Hometown Streets/Safe Routes to School

The Home Town Streets program will include a variety of streetscape improvements that are vital to reestablishing our downtown and commercial centers. These projects will include activities undertaken within a defined "downtown" area that collectively enhance that environment and promote positive interactions with people in the area. Projects may include sidewalk improvements, planters, benches, street lighting, pedestrian crossings, transit bus shelters, traffic calming, bicycle amenities, kiosks, signage and other visual elements. This program will not fund costs related to buildings or their facades or personnel costs related to a Main Street manager.

The Safe Routes to School program is designed to work with both school districts and pedestrian and bicycle safety advocates to make physical improvements that promote safe walking and biking passages to our schools. Collectively, these efforts would save on school busing costs and promote a healthy lifestyle for our children. In addition, some funding may be used for pedestrian education efforts. Examples of these types of improvements include: sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes or trails, traffic diversion improvements, curb extensions, traffic circles and raised median islands.

The Home Town Streets/Safe Routes to School program encompasses \$200 million over four years. Projects will be awarded up to \$1,000,000 in federal transportation funds. Funding for this program from PennDOT will not be grant money. PennDOT will reimburse project sponsors for eligible activities upon receipt of invoices for services performed. Selection preference may be given to projects that are physically ready to immediately advance to the construction phase or that are located within areas with approved funding under the Main Street or Elm Street programs.²⁶

Federal Funding

Community Development Block Grant

Administered by Berks County, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is funded through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, and administered at the County level. The program is made of two parts: an entitlement program and a competitive program. The Competitive Program is available to all non-federal entitlement municipalities. Projects that may be funded under this program include Housing rehabilitation, public services, community facilities, infrastructure improvement, development and planning. Grant amounts under the Competitive Program can be a maximum of \$500,000.

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users

In 2005, President Bush signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The SAFETEA-LU program guarantees funding for highways, highway safety, and public transportation totaling \$244.1 billion, an amount which represents the largest surface transportation investment in U.S. history. The two bills that brought surface transportation into the 21st century, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)—shaped the highway program to meet the Nation's changing transportation needs. SAFETEA-LU builds on this foundation, supplying the funds and refining the programmatic framework for investments needed to maintain and grow our vital transportation infrastructure.

SAFETEA-LU addresses the challenges facing today's transportation system, including improving safety, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency in freight movement, increasing intermodal connectivity, and protecting the environment. SAFETEA-LU promotes more efficient and effective Federal surface transportation programs by focusing on transportation issues of national significance, while giving State and local transportation decision makers more flexibility for solving transportation problems in their communities. SAFETEA-LU continues a strong fundamental core formula program emphasis coupled with targeted investment, featuring:

Safety: SAFETEA-LU establishes a new core Highway Safety Improvement Program that is structured and funded to make significant progress in reducing highway fatalities. It creates a positive agenda for increased safety on our highways by almost doubling the

²⁶ Source: www.dvrpc.org

funds for infrastructure safety and requiring strategic highway safety planning, focusing on results. Other programs target specific areas of concern, such as work zones, older drivers, and pedestrians, including children walking to school, further reflect SAFETEA-LU's focus on safety.

Equity: The new Equity Bonus Program has three features, one tied to Highway Trust Fund contributions and two that are independent. First, building on TEA-21's Minimum Guarantee concept, the Equity Bonus program ensures that each State's return on its share of contributions to the Highway Trust Fund (in the form of gas and other highway taxes) is at least 90.5 percent in 2005 building toward a minimum 92 percent relative rate of return by 2008. In addition, every State is guaranteed a specified rate of growth over its average annual TEA-21 funding level, regardless of its Trust Fund contributions. Selected States are guaranteed a share of apportionments and High Priority Projects not less than the State's average annual share under TEA-21.

Innovative finance: SAFETEA-LU makes it easier for the private sector to participate in highway infrastructure projects, bringing new ideas and resources to the table. Innovative changes such as eligibility for private activity bonds, additional flexibility to use tolling to finance infrastructure improvements, and broader TIFIA and SIB loan policies, will all stimulate needed private investment.

Congestion Relief: SAFETEA-LU gives states more flexibility to use road pricing to manage congestion, and promotes real-time traffic management in all states to help improve transportation security and provide better information to travelers and emergency responders.

Mobility & Productivity: SAFETEA-LU provides a substantial investment in core Federal-aid programs, as well as programs to improve interregional and international transportation, address regional needs, and fund critical high-cost transportation infrastructure projects of national and regional significance. Improved freight transportation is addressed in a number of planning, financing, and infrastructure improvement provisions throughout the Act.

Efficiency: The Highways for LIFE pilot program in SAFETEA-LU will advance longer-lasting highways using innovative technologies and practices to speed up the construction of efficient and safe highways and bridges.

Environmental Stewardship: SAFETEA-LU retains and increases funding for environmental programs of TEA-21, and adds new programs focused on the environment, including a pilot program for non-motorized transportation and Safe Routes to School. SAFETEA-LU also includes significant new environmental requirements for the Statewide and Metropolitan Planning process.

Environmental Streamlining: SAFETEA-LU incorporates changes aimed at improving and streamlining the environmental process for transportation projects. These changes, however, come with some additional steps and requirements on transportation agencies.

The provisions include a new environmental review process for highways, transit, and multimodal projects, with increased authority for transportation agencies, but also increased responsibilities (e.g., a new category of "participating agencies" and notice and comment related to defining project purpose and need and determining the alternatives).²⁷

Private Funding

PECO Energy's Green Region Program

The Natural Lands Trust (NLT) is facilitating [PECO Energy's "Green Region" Open Space Grant Program](#). PECO Energy developed the Green Region grant program to assist municipalities in southeastern Pennsylvania with their on-going efforts to protect, acquire and improve open land. This program can be used in combination with other funding sources to cover a portion of the expenses associated with open space programs. Underlying the program parameters is PECO's endorsement of deliberate planning for open space protection by municipalities as a means to encourage the wisest use of scarce resources. Eligible Applicants include any Township, Borough or City incorporated within Bucks, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Delaware or Chester Counties. ²⁸

Partnerships

Certain grant funding is available only to non-profit and other private organizations. By working collaboratively with these organizations (such as the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association and the Schuylkill River Greenway Association) on mutually beneficial projects, the Township can maximize its funding options and expedite implementation of projects.

²⁷ Source: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/summary.htm>

²⁸ Source: www.natlands.org/categories/article.asp?fldArticleId=113