

1st Inning: Introduction

What Is Comprehensive Planning and Why Is It important?

Communities are constantly changing. They grow, age, develop and redevelop. Sometimes physical changes are subtle and barely perceptible; other times they are dramatic, as large development projects are completed. Unrelated to the speed or magnitude of change is the more important question as to whether any changes, planned or unplanned, are making the community as a whole more livable, economically stable, sustainable, attractive, and desirable.

Given the environment of inevitable change, whether or not it is desired, it is not unusual for community leaders to question the overall direction of community development and seek to develop a sense of direction and overall vision for the entire community. The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to provide that vision, capturing and articulating desired community goals based on community conditions, attitudes and preferences. Effective comprehensive plans serve as a guide for day-to-day decisions by elected officials and administrative staff, so that such decisions can be made with the confidence that they are in accord with long-term goals and objectives of the overall community.

Comprehensive plans are necessarily communicated using written words, graphics and maps, to describe a desired future for a community. As working documents, they provide both a general, long-term vision and detailed implementation steps necessary to make the desired vision a reality. Successful planning recognizes all of the interrelated elements that combine to make up the fabric of any community, including how the land is used, how people move from place to place, and what public infrastructure should be available to support the needs of its residents – both families and businesses. All of this planning is of course done within the context of the natural, cultural, historic, and societal aspects of the community.

There is an old saying, “If you don’t know where you want to go, any road you take will get you there.” A comprehensive plan that defines issues based on a variety of public input, and then develops strategies to deal with each issue, as is the case with the BAMB Plan, is a true reflection of a community’s needs and desires. Consequently, it provides an invaluable framework for decision-making at all levels with regard to future development, including taking the steps necessary to make the community’s vision for the future a reality.

On the other hand, while a comprehensive plan focuses on the future, it is also a reflection of the point in time at which it was created. As circumstances change and new opportunities arise, it may become necessary to rethink portions of the plan and develop new goals and implementation strategies. Therefore, it is important that community leaders put a mechanism in place for a periodic review of the comprehensive plan’s goals, objectives and implementation strategies, so that it remains a living document and meaningful guide for decision making within the community.

Pennsylvania’s Keystone Principles

The Keystone Principles were adopted by the Economic Development Cabinet on May 31, 2005. They were developed by the Interagency Land Use Team, a working group of the Cabinet, over a two-year period. The Principles, and associated Criteria for Growth, “are designed as an interagency approach to fostering sustainable economic development and

conservation of resources through the State's investments in Pennsylvania's diverse communities." (www.newPA.com)

The Principles provide general goals and objectives for economic development and resource conservation, as agreed upon by the agencies that participated in their development. Although they do not replace agency program guidelines, they will be integrated into existing program criteria or used as additional (favorable) considerations in the scoring of applications and/or funding or approval decisions. These Principles were incorporated into the planning process for the BAMB Plan Area, and are presented on the State's website. They include:

1. REDEVELOP FIRST. Support revitalization of Pennsylvania's many cities and towns. Give funding preference to reuse and redevelopment of "brownfield" and previously developed sites in urban, suburban, and rural communities for economic activity that creates jobs, housing, mixed use development, and recreational assets. Conserve Pennsylvania's exceptional heritage resources. Support rehabilitation of historic buildings and neighborhoods for compatible contemporary uses.

2. PROVIDE EFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE. Fix it first: Use and improve existing infrastructure. Make highway and public transportation investments that use context sensitive design to improve existing developed areas and attract residents and visitors to these places. Provide transportation choice and intermodal connections for air travel, driving, public transit, bicycling and walking. Increase rail freight. Provide public water and sewer service for dense development in designated growth areas. Use on-lot and community systems in rural areas. Require private and public expansions of service to be consistent with approved comprehensive plans and consistent implementing ordinances.

3. CONCENTRATE DEVELOPMENT. Support infill and "greenfield" development that is compact, conserves land, and is integrated with existing or planned transportation, water and sewer services, and schools. Foster creation of well-designed developments and walkable, bikeable neighborhoods that offer healthy lifestyle opportunities for Pennsylvania residents. Recognize the importance of projects that can document measurable impacts and are deemed "most ready" to move to successful completion.

4. INCREASE JOB OPPORTUNITIES. Retain and attract a diverse, educated workforce through the quality of economic opportunity and quality of life offered in Pennsylvania's varied communities. Integrate educational and job training opportunities for workers of all ages with the workforce needs of businesses. Invest in businesses that offer good paying, high quality jobs, and that are located near existing or planned water and sewer infrastructure, housing, existing workforce, and transportation access (highway or transit).

5. FOSTER SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES. Strengthen natural resource-based businesses that use sustainable practices in energy production and use, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, recreation and tourism. Increase our supply of renewable energy. Reduce consumption of water, energy and materials to reduce foreign energy dependence and address climate change. Lead by example: support conservation strategies, clean power and innovative industries. Construct and promote green buildings and infrastructure that use land, energy, water and materials efficiently. Support economic development that increases or replenishes knowledge-based employment, or builds on existing industry clusters.

6. RESTORE AND ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT. Maintain and expand our land, air and water protection and conservation programs. Conserve and restore environmentally sensitive lands and natural areas for ecological health, biodiversity and wildlife habitat. Promote development that respects and enhances the state's natural lands and resources.

7. ENHANCE RECREATIONAL AND HERITAGE RESOURCES. Maintain and improve recreational and heritage assets and infrastructure throughout the Commonwealth, including parks and forests, greenways

and trails, heritage parks, historic sites and resources, fishing and boating areas and game lands offering recreational and cultural opportunities to Pennsylvanians and visitors.

8. EXPAND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES. Support the construction and rehabilitation of housing of all types to meet the needs of people of all incomes and abilities. Support local projects that are based on a comprehensive vision or plan, have significant potential impact (e.g., increased tax base, private investment), and demonstrate local capacity, technical ability and leadership to implement the project. Coordinate the provision of housing with the location of jobs, public transit, services, schools and other existing infrastructure. Foster the development of housing, home partnerships, and rental housing opportunities that are compatible with county and local plans and community character.

9. PLAN REGIONALLY; IMPLEMENT LOCALLY. Support multi-municipal, county and local government planning and implementation that has broad public input and support and is consistent with these principles. Provide education, training, technical assistance, and funding for such planning and for transportation, infrastructure, economic development, housing, mixed use and conservation projects that implement such plans.

10. BE FAIR. Support equitable sharing of the benefits and burdens of development. Provide technical and strategic support for inclusive community planning to ensure social, economic, and environmental goals are met. Ensure that in applying the principles and criteria, fair consideration is given to rural projects that may have less existing infrastructure, workforce, and jobs than urban and suburban areas, but that offer sustainable development benefits to a defined rural community.

Guidance was also provided by the Team regarding “Core Criteria” that should be given primary consideration in all investment decisions made by agencies when deciding on grants or loans to public or private projects; as well as “Preferential Criteria” that should be used to evaluate projects and make decisions on grants or loans using agency funds. These criteria are:

I. Core Criteria

1. Project/infrastructure does not adversely impact environmentally sensitive areas, productive agricultural lands, or significant historic resources.
2. Project in suburban or rural area: Project and supporting infrastructure are consistent with multi-municipal or county & local comprehensive plans and implementing ordinances, and there is local public/private capacity, technical ability, and leadership to implement project.
3. Project in “core community” (city, borough or developed area of township): Project is supported by local comprehensive vision & plan, and there is local public/private capacity, technical ability, and leadership to implement project.
4. Project supports other state investments and community partnerships.

II. Preferential Criteria

1. Development/Site Location

- Brownfield or previously developed site.
- Rehabilitation or reuse of existing buildings (including schools and historic buildings).
- Infill in or around city, borough, or developed area of township.
- If greenfield site, located in or adjacent to developed area with infrastructure.
- Located in distressed city, borough or township.

2. Efficient Infrastructure

- Use of existing highway capacity and/or public transit access available.

- *Within ½ mile of existing or planned public transit access (rail, bus, shared ride or welfare to work services).*
- *Use of context sensitive design for transportation improvements.*
- *Use/improvement of existing public or private water and sewer capacity and services.*

3. Density, design, and diversity of uses.

- *Mixed residential, commercial & institutional uses within development or area adjacent by walking.*
- *Sidewalks, street trees, connected walkways and bikeways, greenways, parks, or open space amenities included or nearby.*
- *Interconnected project streets connected to public streets.*
- *Design of new water, sewer and storm water facilities follows Best Management Practices, including emphasizing groundwater recharge and infiltration, and use of permeable surfaces for parking and community areas.*

4. Expand Housing Opportunities

- *Adopted county and multi-municipal or local municipal plans include a plan for affordable housing; and implementing zoning provides for such housing through measures such as inclusion of affordable housing in developments over a certain number of units (e.g., 50), provision for accessory units, and zoning by right for multifamily units.*
- *Project provides affordable housing located near jobs (extra weight for employer assisted housing).*
- *Project adds to supply of affordable rental housing in areas of demonstrated need.*

5. Increase Job Opportunities

- *Number of permanent jobs created and impact on local labor market.*
- *Number of temporary jobs created and impact on local labor market.*
- *Number of jobs paying family sustaining wages.*
- *Increased job training coordinated with business needs and locations.*

6. Foster Sustainable Businesses

- *Sustainable natural resource industry improvement or expansion: agriculture, forestry, recreation (fisheries, game lands, boating), tourism.*
- *Business or project is energy efficient; uses energy conservation standards; produces, sells or uses renewable energy; expands energy recovery; promotes innovation in energy production and use; or expands renewable energy sources, clean power, or use of Pennsylvania resources to produce such energy.*
- *Project meets green building standards.*
- *Project supports identified regional industry cluster(s).*

7. Restore/Enhance Environment

- *Cleans up/ reclaims polluted lands and/or waters.*
- *Protects environmentally sensitive lands for health, habitat, and biodiversity through acquisition, conservation easements, planning and zoning, or other conservation measures.*
- *Development incorporates natural resource features and protection of wetlands, surface and groundwater resources, and air quality.*

8. Enhance Recreational/Heritage Resources

- *Improves parks, forests, heritage parks, greenways, trails, fisheries, boating areas, game lands and/or infrastructure to increase recreational potential for residents and visitors.*
- *Historic, cultural, greenways and/or opens space resources incorporated in municipal plans and project plan.*
- *Makes adaptive reuse of significant architectural or historic resources or buildings.*

9. Plan regionally; Implement Locally

- *Consistent county and multi-municipal plan (or county and local municipal plan) adopted and implemented by county and local governments with consistent ordinances.*
- *County or multi-municipal plan addresses regional issues and needs to achieve participating municipalities' economic, social, and environmental goals. All plans (county, multi-municipal, and local) follow standards for good planning, including:*
 - *Is up-to-date.*
 - *Plans for designated growth and rural resource areas, and developments of regional impact.*
 - *Plans for infrastructure, community facilities, and services, including transportation, water and sewer, storm water, schools.*
 - *Plans for tax base and fair share needs for housing, commercial, institutional, and industrial development.*
 - *Identification of high hazard areas where development is to be avoided.*
 - *Identification of and plans for prime agricultural land, natural areas, historic resources, and appropriate mineral resource areas to be conserved.*
 - *Open space plan for parks, greenways, important natural and scenic areas and connected recreational resources.*
- *County and local ordinances implement the governing plans and use innovative techniques, such as mixed use zoning districts, allowable densities of six or more units per acre in growth areas, and/or clustered development by right, transfer of development rights, specific plans, and tax and revenue sharing.*

The Evolution of the BAMB Plan

In February 2007, the City of Butler, Butler Township, and Penn Township jointly issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for professional services to assist with the development of a multi-municipal comprehensive plan. The Local Government Academy (LGA) in Pittsburgh had already committed to providing partial funding for the planning project, and additional grant funding would be sought (and later received) from both the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR).

As stated in the RFQ, the new Plan must meet the requirements of Articles III and XI of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), and that it "...will be a key component providing direction for the many planning, environmental, community development, and revitalization initiatives underway or to be taken in the participating communities." Further, the Plan is to include data collection and analysis, issue identification, public and community participation, and the development of long- and short-range implementation strategies, with an emphasis on goals, objectives, actions and strategies, and a minimal focus on existing data.

In the RFQ, the three municipalities also provided background information that identified events and issues impacting each of them individually and collectively, including the following RFQ excerpts:

In the City of Butler: With the loss of primary employers and jobs in the early 1980's, there are declining neighborhoods, absentee property owners, a struggling downtown business area, and an aging infrastructure. Due largely to overflows during wet weather, the City, and the Butler Area Sewer Authority (BASA), are under a Consent Order and Agreement which severely restricts new sewer taps for development. There are numerous government and other untaxed properties in the City. Even with the significant socioeconomic problems, the City remains the principal administrative, legal and social seat of the County. The City boasts many active community organizations, but there is a need for enhanced cooperation and communication among the groups. There is a strong interest in preserving and renovating historic areas.

The Community Development Corporation (CDC) of Butler County has received funding for the revitalization of a 60+ acre brownfield property within the City. The State provided \$1.86 million for the renovation of the historic Pullman Park Ballpark. Funds are being pursued for the restoration of the historic Penn Theater downtown. The City views the multi-municipal comprehensive plan as critical to upcoming decisions by residents and elected officials regarding the future of the City, and should therefore include the exploration of the impact of shared services among the municipalities.

In Butler Township: Butler Township encompasses an area of approximately 22 square miles that completely surrounds the City of Butler. Consequently, areas of the Township range from older, high-density neighborhoods, industrial sites and developed commercial areas to suburban residential developments and undeveloped agricultural areas. While the Township does have zoning, zoning districts have not changed much over the last several decades. This has resulted in, among other things, limited available housing types in part due to the "one size fits all" regulations regarding setbacks regardless of location or the type of neighborhood. In the agricultural areas of the Township, there are property owners that want to prohibit future development and others that would support and encourage development. The Township would like to explore the possibility of an "agribusiness" area, which may appeal to both sides. Tools available through the MPC that would provide more flexibility and encourage the preservation of green space could be utilized if based on a multi-municipal plan. Serviced by the same sewer authority as the City, Butler Township is also under the Consent Order and Agreement with DEP severely restricting sewer taps for development. The possibility of looking at new uses for different areas in the Township with an eye on future trends, and on controlled, extended growth, should be explored.

In Penn Township: Immediately south of, and sharing its entire northern border with Butler Township, Penn Township has a more rural character, encompassing approximately 25 square miles, with about 54 miles of public roads. SR 8, which is part of the link between the greater Butler area and Cranberry Township (one of the fastest growing municipalities in the State) and Pittsburgh, runs north and south through the middle of Penn Township. The Township is part of a \$64 million expansion of the Saxonburg Sewer Authority system which will significantly influence future development in Penn Township. With Cranberry Township only ten miles away, Penn Township expects to see a significant demand for middle-income housing, as more and more jobs are created in Cranberry Township and property values there rise.

While Penn Township has been proactive in addressing land use issues, and has an existing Comprehensive Plan, concerns remain about identifying large-tract growth areas, limiting

commercial development to high-traffic corridors where adequate roads and infrastructure are already in place, ensuring that its current traffic impact fee ordinance is compatible with future, and, most importantly, maintaining the rural character of the Township while still allowing for economic growth. Although primarily a rural area, Penn Township is also home to the Butler County Airport, Butler Country Club, several public golf courses, The Succop Conservancy, upscale housing and subdivisions, and a variety of commercial activity primarily adjacent to SR 8. Penn Township is interested in using this multi-municipal planning process to update its existing comprehensive plan and focusing on the preservation of historic and natural resources.

Regarding transportation: All three municipalities would benefit from a focus on transportation issues related to connectivity to the Cranberry area and access to Pittsburgh. Planned improvements to SR 228 have been bogged down by lack of planning, consensus, and funding. Pressure needs to be exerted on Cranberry Township to be more aggressive regarding the SR 228 corridor, and better leveraging private investments with associated improvements to the transportation routes impacted by those private projects.

The SR 68 corridor from Butler to I-79 is already experiencing some of the same traffic congestion and encroaching growth problems as SR 228. Meanwhile, the Butler Transit Authority continues with efforts to increase public transportation to Cranberry and Pittsburgh. Planning and lobbying jointly for improvements now could greatly reduce future problems.

Anticipated Benefits: Providing an inclusive, cohesive plan for the entire area, that would allow for cross-boundary focus and development. Social, economic, and environmental concerns will be addressed and the assets of each municipality used in a symbiotic relationship, generating a ripple effect that does not stop at municipal boundaries. It is hoped that by recognizing the interdependency of the municipalities, future generations will benefit by having a community where there is a vital urban core, with well-planned industrial, commercial, residential and agricultural areas, and where all ages will be able to enjoy the lifestyle(s) best suited to them; where they can take advantage of the professional, cultural, academic, recreational and/or agricultural opportunities that either drew or kept them here.

Between March and October of 2007, a series of events occurred that eventually led to holding the official Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee kick-off meeting on October 23, 2007 at the Butler Township Park Building. Briefly, this series of events included:

- The team of Poggemeyer Design Group Inc. (PDG) and Herbert, Rowland and Grubic, Inc. (HRG) was hired following an extensive review and interview process.
- **Summit Township and East Butler Borough** joined the group, for a total of five Butler-area municipalities uniting to develop this comprehensive plan.

Summit Township is a mostly rural area of approximately 25 square miles. Major issues identified early on by members of the Steering Committee included: the need to update the Township's zoning code and zoning maps, heavy commuter traffic and safety issues on several Township roads such as Bonniebrook and Keck, the lack of commercial development largely due to lack of public water and sewer in most of the Township, no public parks, the need for increased revenues, poor communications between elected officials and residents, ag land preservation, and the immediate, critical need for water and sewer to Herman Village.

East Butler Borough is a small municipality in the NW portion of Summit Township with a population of less than 700. The East Butler Zoning Code, which was provided by Butler County, also needs to be updated. This mostly residential Borough has water and sewer, two small parks, a large

baseball complex, and a large industrial park with good highway and railroad access on the south end of the Borough. Revenues are a major concern for East Butler due, in large part, to the property tax abatements provided, and still in effect, for many of the companies located in the industrial park, the lack of commercial-use properties in the Borough, and the shrinking residential population.

- The **LGA** agreed to increase its funding to include planning support for Summit Township and East Butler.
- Planning assistance grants were applied for and subsequently received from the Department of Community and Economic Development (**DCED**) and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (**DCNR**), with official notification of the grant awards announced just prior to the October 23rd Kick-Off Meeting. Representatives from DCED and DCNR attended the kick-off meeting and outlined their desires and expectations for the ensuing planning process.

Also, at the request of DCED, Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) grant funding was to be divided into **two separate funding cycles**. Consequently, the BMM Plan process was interrupted for several months in early 2009, awaiting official DCED approval of the funding for Part 2 of the planning process.

The emphasis of this planning project, per DCED, was to identify a number of key issues facing the community and focus the planning process on those key issues. Thus, this Plan differs from a traditional comprehensive plan, as it takes a more strategic approach to addressing a specific number of issues. General information generally found in comprehensive plans can be accessed at many local web sites:

www.co.butler.pa.us; www.spcregion.org/data_datalib; www.visitbutlercounty.com;
www.riversofsteel.com; www.northcountrytrail.org; www.butlerdowntown.org;
www.butlertownship.org; www.penntownship.org; www.cityofbutler.org; www.butlereagle.com;
www.butlercountychamber.com; www.butlerk12.com; www.newPA.com;
www.southbutler.k12.pa.us; www.bcdt.tec.pa.us.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (SC) included representatives from each municipality based primarily on the share of non-grant funding for the project to be contributed by each. The municipalities agreed to divide the local share into four equal amounts, with Summit Township and East Butler Borough splitting a 25% share 75/25 respectively. Consequently the Steering Committee included eight residents each from the City of Butler, Butler Township and Penn Township, six from Summit Township and two from East Butler. Administrative personnel from each municipality also had an open invitation to participate in the Steering Committee meetings. Members of the SC and participating municipal personnel included:

Representing Butler Township:

Bruce Betty
Donna Druga
Brett Ligo
Jack Oris
Ben Simon
Daryl Patten
Dan Slomers
Heather Starcher
Mark Swift
Cindy Davis (Township Zoning Officer)

Ed Kirkwood (Township Manager)

Representing the City of Butler:

Joe Caparosa
Bernie P. Dowd
Kathy Kline
Jim Kraus
John Mossman
Leonard Pintell
Mike Preston
JoAnn Snyder

Representing East Butler:

Lana Dero
Louise Spohn

Representing Penn Township:

Nick Brunn
Mary Anne Hanchek
Dean Helfer
Cheryl Hughes
Charles McCall
Daniel Miller
Bert Mowry
Douglas Sober
Clinton Bonetti (Land Use Administrator)

Representing Summit Township:

Joe Canel
Daniel Hay
Cynthia Kramer
David Nini
Larry Osche
Leo Rosenbauer

The Steering Committee members met periodically throughout the planning process, providing overall guidance and participating in a variety of activities, both as a committee and individually, including:

- Developing and continually enhancing the list of major issues facing the BMM Area,
- Identifying the individuals to be interviewed as “key persons”,
- Reviewing the questions for the Resident Survey,
- Participating in the tours of each municipality and the public meeting following those tours,
- Participating in Working Group meetings from October 2008 through September 2009, together with other BMM Area residents and individuals with specific knowledge of the issues under consideration by one or more of the Working Groups,
- Reviewing the recommendations of each of the Working Groups,
- Participating in the DCED training session on November 18, 2009, regarding the implementation and benefits of Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreements (ICA’s) in Pennsylvania,
- Reviewing and approving the language of the proposed BMM ICA,
- Reviewing and approving the BMM Plan chapter drafts,
- Attending the BMM Plan Implementation/Training Retreat, together with officials from each of the five municipalities, and
- Formally recommending adoption of the BMM Plan to the officials of each of the five municipalities.

Working Groups

In accordance with DCED's emphasis on a more strategic approach to the planning process, it was recommended that Working Groups (WGs) be assigned to undertake more thorough research and discussion into the identified key issues. Special efforts were encouraged to identify specific strategies and initiatives, and to recommend implementation steps to assure that the BAMB Area Plan would be implemented.

Thus, issue-oriented Working Groups were integral to the planning process. Based on the key issues facing the greater Butler area as identified by the Steering Committee, in the Key Person Interviews and Resident Survey, and during other public input sessions, six working groups were created:

1. Downtown Butler
2. Economic Development, Heritage Tourism, and Quality of Life
3. Infrastructure and Transportation
4. Intergovernmental Coordination and Cooperation
5. Land Use, Zoning, and Preservation
6. Parks and Recreation

Members of each WG included Steering Committee members and area residents with a particular interest and/or expertise in these specific areas, as well as individuals with a day-to-day working knowledge of the topics being discussed. WG members include the following. Those with (SC) after their name also participated on the Steering Committee.

Economic Development, Heritage Tourism, and Quality of Life:

Nick Brunn, Penn Township and Butler Area Sewer Authority (BASA) management (SC)
Cindy Davis, Butler Township Zoning Officer (SC)
Helen Eisler, Butler Township
Dan Focht, Summit Township Business Owner
Cynthia Kramer, Summit Township (SC)
Nancy Lawry, Director of The Succop Conservancy
John Mossman, City of Butler (SC)
Bert Mowry, Penn Township Supervisor (SC)
Perry O'Malley, Butler County Redevelopment Authority Executive Director
Leslie Osche, United Way
Chris Platt, II-VI Incorporated
Diane Sheets, Butler County Development Corporation Executive Director
JoAnn Snyder, City of Butler Planning and Zoning Department (SC)
Heather Starcher, Butler Township Business Owner (SC)

Infrastructure and Transportation:

Dennis Baglier, Butler Township Business Owner
Nick Brunn, Penn Township and Butler Area Sewer Authority (BASA) management (SC)
Joe Caparosa, City of Butler (SC)
Jennifer Carlberg, Butler Township Business Owner
Jim Dittmer, Summit Township
Tony Gagliardi, Summit Township
Russ Greer, II, Summit Township
Dan Hay, Summit Township Business Owner (SC)
Charles McCall, Penn Township (SC)
Patricia Mitts, Summit Township

Tom Lavorini, Butler Township
Jack Oris, Butler Township (SC)
John Paul, Butler Transit Authority Executive Director
Dennis (Doc) Steibel, Former PennDot Official

Intergovernmental Coordination and Cooperation

Carol Achezinski, City of Butler
Cindy Davis, Butler Township Zoning Officer (SC)
Benjamin Holland, Butler Area Schools Board Member
Dave Johnston, Butler County Planning Director
Kathy Kline, Butler City Council Member (SC)
Stan Kosciuszko, Butler County Chamber of Commerce President
Jim Kraus, City of Butler (SC), Former City Council Member
Bert Mowry, Penn Township Supervisor (SC)
Jack Oris, Butler Township (SC)
Leo Rosenbauer, Summit Township (SC)
Dan Slomers, Butler Township (SC)
Mark Swift, Butler Township (SC)
Dave Zarnick, Butler Township Commissioner

Land Use/Zoning and Preservation:

Jeff Acord, City of Butler, Business Owner
Clint Bonetti, Penn Township Land Use Administrator (SC)
Joe Canel, Summit Township (SC)
Jennifer Carlberg, Butler Township Business Owner
Jeff Cottage, Summit Township
Cindy Davis, Butler Township Zoning Officer (SC)
Jim Dittmer, Summit Township
Dan Focht, Summit Township Business Owner
Russ Greer, II, Summit Township
Dan Hay, Summit Township Business Owner (SC)
Cheryl Hughes, Penn Township (SC)
Flo Jaksec, Penn Township
Ed Kirkwood, Butler Township Manager
JoAnn Snyder, City of Butler Planning and Zoning Department (SC)

Parks & Recreation:

Bruce Betty, Butler Township (SC)
Clint Bonetti, Penn Township Land Use Administrator (SC)
Chuck Davey, Attorney
Cindy Davis, Butler Township Zoning Officer (SC)
Jonathon Dreher, City of Butler
Donna Druga, Butler Township Commissioner (SC)
Chris Ziegler, Butler Freeport Community Trail
Kelly English, Butler Eagle
Jennifer Friel, City of Butler
Larry Garvin, Butler YMCA Executive Director
Kathy Kline, Butler City Council Member (SC)
Jill Kraus, City of Butler, Shade Tree Commission
Audrey Moore, Summit Township
Daryl Patten, Butler Township (SC)
Gary Pinkerton, Butler County Parks & Recreation Director
Doug Sober, Penn Township (SC)
Louise Spohn, East Butler (SC)

Downtown Butler:

Organization (Executive) Committee

Joe Gray, Gray Consulting
Brian McCafferty, Kenmac Rentals & Sales
Cathy Glasgow, Butler County Ford
Lara Wozniak, NexTier Bank
Anthony Closkey, Big Big Design
Stan Kosciuszko, Butler County Chamber of Commerce
Lisa Guard, Specialized Staffing, Inc.
Maggie Stock, City of Butler Mayor
Vince Tavorario, Natili's Restaurant
Ann Morrison, Citizen's Bank

Design Committee

Jonathan Dreher, Dreher Landscape Design
Rick Hardman, Olsen & Associates
Steve Newcaster, Burt Hill
Ian Thomas, Independent Artist, Slippery Rock University
Tom Schmitt, Burt Hill
Alva Hill, Retired - Burt Hill
Jill Kraus, City of Butler Shade Tree Commission
Kathy Kline, City of Butler Councilwoman
Ed Wadding, Wadding Enterprises
Bob Dandoy, Resident, Penn Theater Board Member
Chris Ziegler, Butler Freeport Community Trail

Economic Restructuring Committee

Jamie Goehring, New York Life Insurance Co.
Joe Gray, Gray Consulting
Brian McCafferty, Kenmac Rentals & Sales
John Ankney, The Grand Ballroom at Cornerstone Commons
Jim Taylor, Murrin, Taylor, Flach, Gallagher & May
John Gibson, Retired - AK Steel
Sheri Hershberger, Huntington Bank
Leonard Pintell, Former Mayor
Melody Kameron, Hudson Business Service
John Mossman, MK and Associates
David Herold, Real Estate
Tom Graham, Frames & Pixels

Promotions Committee

Cindy Closkey, Big Big Design
Daneen O'Donnell, Armstrong
Joey Hamilton, Butler County Tourism & Convention Bureau
John Righetti, Butler Health System
Kelly Dreher, Butler County Historical Society
Kris Callen, Prudential Preferred Realty
Chelynn Kramer, Armstrong
Mark Hughes, 1st Impressions Printing
Casey Foster, Student
Hope McCandless, Student
Dean Selfridge, City of Butler Fire Dept.
Jessica Taylor, Liz Plekker Photography
Ron Germani, PNC Bank
Tom Panei, T. Panei Galleries

Bob Moore, Retired, Main Street Property Owner

It should be noted that the initial meeting of the Downtown Butler WG included volunteers from all municipalities. After learning the status of the Main Street (or Butler Downtown) program which already had four committees in place, it was decided that the BAMB Plan committee would essentially be duplicating efforts. Therefore, the BAMB Plan WG was disbanded, with the people on that committee encouraged to participate in the process by joining one or more of the Butler Downtown committees. Consequently, the recommendations to the Steering Committee with regard to the Downtown Butler come directly from the four Main Street committees, as identified above. PDG attended several Butler Downtown Executive Committee meetings, as well as several committee meetings.

Each WG held a series of meetings between October 2008 and September 2009, to discuss specific issues in detail, prioritize them, develop strategies for dealing with each issue, and make specific recommendations to the Steering Committee regarding the implementation of the prioritized strategies.

On September 30, 2009, the recommendations from each Working Group were presented to the Steering Committee for its further deliberation and eventual inclusion in the BAMB Plan.

The Planning Process

Creating the BAMB Plan involved seven phases:

Phase I - Kick-off Meeting

The Kick-off Steering Committee Meeting was held on October 23, 2007 at the Butler Township Park Building to discuss the project scope, anticipated outcomes, citizen participation, the overall process, time frame, and deliverables. In addition to Steering Committee members from each municipality and representatives from PDG and HRG, representatives from DCED and DCNR attended and discussed the State's expectations for the planning process and the final Plan. The Summary of the 10/23/2007 Kick-Off Meeting is included in **Appendix 1-1**.

Phase II - Data Collection and Analysis

Information from a wide variety of sources, including substantial and on-going public input, was gathered and compiled over a nine-month period. In addition to key person interviews in April and May 2008, a residential survey in July 2008, and Steering Committee meetings in March and May 2008, PDG and HRG also reviewed and summarized 2000 census demographic data and several related plans, studies and surveys.

In Phase II, PDG and HRG also reviewed available maps and related data in the development of base maps and supporting information regarding:

- Land use and land use patterns,
- Transportation and infrastructure,
- Zoning,
- Historic and environmentally-sensitive areas,
- Existing and proposed development projects,
- Potential growth and redevelopment areas, and
- Agricultural, historic and natural resource preservation and conservation areas.

Phase III - Strategic Visioning with each of the five municipalities and the six issue-oriented Working Groups

Building upon the information gathered in Phase II involved: Steering Committee member guided tours of each of the five municipalities during the day, followed by public sessions each evening, between September 8-11, 2008; and a series of meetings with each of the Working Groups between October 2008 and September 2009.

With regard to each municipality, the objectives of the tour and public meeting included:

- A more in-depth discussion of key assets, liabilities, strengths, and weaknesses,
- Developing a vision for each municipality,
- Locations for desired future land uses and areas for development,
- Existing and needed policies to insure desired development and/or preservation or conservation,
- Transportation and infrastructure issues and needs,
- Identification of key corridors that could benefit from access management strategies, and
- Identification of services, public facilities and land uses that could be shared with other BAMM Plan municipalities.

The information garnered during this phase became the primary foundation for the entire BAMM Plan, including providing the topics for each chapter. Summaries of the municipal tours and public meetings are provided in **Appendix 1-2**.

Phase IV - Identification of Commonalities and Scenario Building

In this Phase, PDG and HRG developed detailed land use, growth and related scenarios based on all of the information gathered to date, melding the data from the five municipalities into an overall multi-municipal plan. These scenarios were then further refined within each of the Working Groups in order to provide **prioritized, issue-oriented recommendations, with specific implementation strategies** for each, to the Steering Committee for its consideration.

Major issues included:

- Downtown Butler revitalization.
- Agricultural land preservation.
- Tracts of land/areas for future development.
- Transportation issues, especially with regard to connections to Cranberry Twp. and Pittsburgh.
- Local roadway corridors and access management planning.
- Industrial and/or commercial development or redevelopment areas.
- Historic and environmental preservation areas.
- Housing issues and alternative housing opportunities.
- Improved communications within and among the municipalities.
- Promoting and capitalizing on tourism.
- Parks and Recreation.
- Economic Development strategies and opportunities.
- Infrastructure issues and needs especially water and sewer.
- Getting youth more involved in the community and organizing youth-oriented activities.
- Reducing redundancy in volunteer efforts to better utilize human resources.
- Opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation.

Phase V - Preparation of the Draft Plan and Focus Group Review

Drafts of each chapter in the BAMM Plan were developed and provided to the members of the Steering Committee and the Working Groups by email for review and comment. Based on comments received, chapters were revised and resubmitted and further refined.

A public forum was held on March 30, 2010 at the Grand Ballroom at Cornerstone Commons to present the Draft Plan to the residents of the BAMM Area and provide them with the opportunity to review and comment. After an introductory presentation including a review of the major recommendations in the Plan, meeting participants were invited to visit stations representing each topic of the Plan to ask questions and provide additional input. PDG, HRG, and SC

members facilitated the station discussions, utilizing maps and graphics to help communicate the recommended planning scenarios and implementation strategies.

Following the public forum, PDG and HRG reviewed and summarized the public comments and suggestions. These results were then discussed further by the Steering Committee and, as appropriate, were reflected in the Plan's final draft.

Phase VI - Drafting of the Final Plan, a Training Retreat, final revisions, and formal adoption of the Plan by each municipality

Preparing the Final Plan continued to be an iterative process right up until formal approval of the Plan by the governing bodies of all five municipalities. PDG and HRG hosted a 5-hour retreat for SC members and elected officials and staff. The main purpose of this highly-participatory retreat was to insure ownership of the Plan among those who participated in its development and those who will be involved directly in its implementation in the future. Highlights of the entire Plan were reviewed with a special focus on implementation.

After this retreat, changes were incorporated as appropriate and then, per the PA Municipal Planning Code, copies were provided to the County, adjoining municipalities, and the school district for their review and comment. Following the receipt, consideration, and/or incorporation of any comments from these entities, the Final Plan was presented to the officials of the BAMM Plan municipalities for formal adoption.

Phase VII - Roll-Out of the approved BAMM Plan

As the final step, PDG and HRG helped plan and participated in a festive public event to introduce the BAMM Plan to as broad a local audience as possible. Electronic and printed copies of the Plan were provided to each municipality for reproduction and distribution.