

Opening Day (Executive Summary)

Vision for the BAMM Plan Area

The sky is a clear blue, the air is crisp and cool on this early Spring day, and the fans have been arriving at Pullman Park in droves for Opening Day. The smell of popcorn and grilled hot dogs fills the air as the teams warm up and the fans find their seats. A trio of youngsters eagerly leads the stands in a tribute to the United States of America, and everyone is anticipating the umpire's call to "Play Ball...."

The City of Butler, East Butler Borough, and Butler, Penn and Summit Townships are **ready to play ball!** They have created a **collective vision for the greater Butler area** which is embodied in the Butler Area Multi-Municipal (BAMM) Plan. Central to this vision is a revitalized downtown that is the cultural, social and historic commercial hub for all five municipalities. Just as importantly, this vision embodies a new "team" spirit of cooperation among the five municipalities on a variety of issues, to the collective and individual benefit of BAMM area residents, businesses and municipalities.

If the major recommendations of the BAMM Plan are indeed being implemented within the next 10 to 15 years, then *just maybe* you could be attending a ball game at Pullman Park in the Spring of 2025 and overhear a conversation similar to the following:

"Hey Bob, can you believe how much easier it is to get to the ball park now that the connector road between the downtown and this part of the City has been completed? No more having to guess which streets are the least congested, or where you're going to park."

"Yeah Tim, but the thing that really surprised me about that connector is the difference it made to both the downtown and the West End. I've forgotten which came first, the new City Center project or the connector, but it's amazing how much things have changed downtown with the new hotel, all of the new condos and apartments, and the new restaurants and shops. Pretty obvious that even the BC3 students like being in the downtown now, given how many of them are living there."

"But don't forget what this West End used to look like – empty store fronts, large undeveloped areas, and empty parking lots. Now it's often hard to find a parking place near the store or restaurant you want to go to, and the number of choices we have for shopping or eating out is incredible. Who'd have believed it 10 or 15 years ago? By the way, have you been in the new sports bar upstairs in the old Pullman headquarters building?"

"I certainly have; what a great use for part of that neat old building. Those high ceilings and big windows really make it a great place to be day or night, and the micro-brewery there makes it even more unique. But personally, I like the one over on 422 in Summit Township just as much. Not sure where all those people come from that go there, maybe from that new housing development in Summit Township that also has those shops that my wife loves to visit."

"Yeah, mine too, and with the park and playground right there, she doesn't have to worry about the kids getting bored while she's shopping." "OUT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN OUT? HE WAS SAFE BY A MILE!" "Boy, some things never change."

"Speaking of things changing, have you noticed how well some of our communities are working together these days? I know it was a big part of that BAMM Plan a few years back, but I never thought we'd see this kind of cooperation in my life time."

“A few years back? That was 15 years ago! I know because I was on a couple of the working groups that helped put all of that together back in 2008 and 2009. Actually, I was on the ones for economic development and transportation and infrastructure.”

“Wow! That must have kept you really busy, eh?”

“Actually it wasn’t too bad at all, and the best part was I got to meet and work with a really nice bunch of people that I had never met before. In fact, I still stay in touch with several of them. While all those committees had some pretty tough issues to deal with, I think we had some of the most frustrating ones. BASA was having some major issues at the time, and the Saxonburg system was still expanding. Most of the people in Summit and Penn Township were still on wells, and trying get to Cranberry or Pittsburgh was a real hassle no matter what time of day or night you tried.”

“Man, I sure remember those days. Hard to believe that they finally improved 228. It was like pulling teeth to get Harrisburg to quit focusing on Philly and Pittsburgh long enough to pay attention to us here in Butler County. Once that happened though, the housing market in the townships, and even in the City sure took off, didn’t it?”

“Sure did. They even had to add more busses on the routes to Cranberry and Pittsburgh, to accommodate all of the folks who live here and work there. I guess a lot of the families that moved here were accustomed to using public transportation, biking, and walking as opposed to driving everywhere. It was good that the Butler transit folks had been working toward that for quite some time.”

“WOW, talk about being good at something. That sure was a great double play! These kids are really good! Nice when you get the chance to do something you’re really good at.”

“Well, that was one of the really exciting things that came out in our discussions in the economic development group. It was obvious that having a well-trained workforce was going to be really critical when it came to attracting new businesses to the area. So, with the CDC, we started making plans with the schools, BC3 and area employers to move in that direction, and here we are – lots of good jobs right in our own backyard, and more are still coming.”

“Not only that, but more and more of our kids are opting to learn a trade, instead of trying to go to a four-year college that probably wasn’t right for them anyway. And those that are good at it are making a decent living almost as soon as they get out of school.”

“Including the one my daughter just got at the hi-tech operation that moved into part of one of those big industrial buildings in East Butler. After she finished her technical training in computers, she got an associate degree in communications at BC3. I don’t even understand what she’s doing at that company, but she said the main reason they located in East Butler was that they needed direct access to that huge power grid that has been there for years.”

“You know, one of the other things that amazes me is that even with all of the new population growth and commercial and industrial development, we don’t seem to have anywhere near as many traffic bottlenecks as we used to.”

“Well, you can thank me and the transportation working group for that – or at least some of it. We spent quite a bit of time identifying potential growth areas and planning for a reasonable and safe traffic flow in those areas for if and when development occurred. I think they called them access management areas. Anyway, we thought it would be easier for a developer to work closely with the State and County when the zoning and development regulations clearly spelled out what

would be required. As a matter of fact, we made sure the developments would be more walkable, and even have bike trail links to other developments close by.”

“It sure helps that the zoning codes in the five municipalities are now state-of-the-art, support the strategies in the BAMB Plan, are easier to understand and administer, and are consistent among are municipalities, making development much easier for everyone.”

“You remember what a nightmare that intersection at Whitestown Road and Hansen Avenue used to be? Well, I think you can thank the BAMB Plan for helping to get that fixed too.”

“I suppose you guys also had something to do with all of the trails and bike paths in the area?”

“As a matter of fact we did, but that was mostly handled in the parks and rec working group, so I can’t personally take the credit for any of that. And, if I remember correctly, one of the Butler Downtown committees did a lot of work on the Rails to Trails effort, and the parks and rec working group built upon that foundation to help get us to where we are today. It was also one of their ideas to create the new Butler Area Recreation Director position, and that has certainly worked out nicely for the whole area.”

“Yep. That’s just another one of those areas where cooperation among the municipalities made a lot of sense, but was going to take some time to develop. Sure glad it did, though, as it’s hard to beat the kinds of recreation facilities and programs we have now, and with less local bureaucracy – and cost.”

“Speaking of trails, do you know that I can now ride my bike on trails and bike lanes from the northern part of Butler Township all the way to the airport? Even beyond that down to the Penn Township Park if I want to. Great place to take the family, by the way.”

“I know, we’ve been there a lot, especially when all the relatives come to town, plenty of room for a family reunion, and a really safe place for young kids. And how about that airport? Have you tried the new restaurant there yet?”

“As a matter of fact, we had dinner there the other night, when some people from our company headquarters flew in for some meetings. Nice to see the airport getting really busy. I guess finally getting water and sewer down Route 8 and to the airport opened the door to bringing those new businesses in there; and I’m sure the widening of 228 helped as well. All of that has sure been a nice boost to the local economy.”

“Another thing that’s been a big boost to the area economy has to be our close association with the Butler County Tourism & Convention Bureau. The new hotel in the downtown is always full, and this ball park seems to be getting utilized more and more each year. I’ve been noticing that even visitors who are here for some County Tourism-sponsored events outside the Butler area are coming here to dine, shop, be entertained, or just relax. I’ve heard that some of the businesses moved here because their owners had been here for some special event and were really impressed with all that is going on.”

“Not all that surprising when you look at how things have changed since we got out of school twenty-some years ago. But speaking of change – I think it’s your turn to buy the hot dogs!”

“Hey, how about that? BAMB – A HOME RUN!”

Innings

Every baseball game includes at least nine innings. The BAMB Plan also includes nine innings, one for each critical chapter of this document, and one for supporting

documentation. The development of the BAMM Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan required special innings (to meet DCNR requirements), and is presented in a separate document--our "double header".

The First Inning introduces the concept of municipal planning and why it is important. The State's Keystone Principles are included as the overriding factors that influenced the entire planning process. The evolution of the BAMM Plan, the Steering Committee and Working Groups, and the planning process are also explained in the First Inning.

The Second Inning really got the crowd involved! A variety of techniques were used to hear the input provided by residents, key people, and each of the municipalities. Past plans were reviewed so as not to be repeated. Public sessions were held and presentations were made. A work session/retreat with municipal representatives (a practice game) ended the planning process, and initiated the implementation process.

The Third Inning discusses future land uses, access management areas (how to control the crowds), and development regulations; the Fourth Inning addresses transportation and infrastructure issues.

Economic development initiatives are the focus of the Fifth Inning, with the Sixth Inning focusing on downtown Butler. A summary of the Parks and Recreation Plan comprises the Seventh Inning.

A good bit of time was spent during the "Seventh Inning Stretch" to determine if the five municipalities could actually work together to lead the team down the home stretch. There were a lot of nay-sayers, but the people working on the BAMM Plan for the past two years feel strongly that many steps can be taken together to improve the standard of living, level and cost of services, and quality of life for BAMM Plan area residents...the real winner in this game.

The Eighth Inning identifies the many ways that the five municipalities can work together in the future, and presents a draft Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement for consideration. It won't be easy, but the opportunities are plentiful and the rewards amazing. A Home Run here would definitely win the game for the home team.

The Ninth Inning provides the supporting documentation for various aspects of the BAMM Plan, wrapping up the finer details that actually won the game for the BAMM Plan area.

The Final Score Card

The results of the past two+ year planning process are summarized on the following pages. Four baseballs indicate a definite home run--a critical effort--a high priority for implementation within the first two years. Fewer baseballs indicate a lesser priority (a triple, a double, or a single). Although still very important, these activities should be implemented in 3-5 years (a triple), 6-8 years (a double) and 9-15 years (a single). All recommendations contained in the BAMM Plan are important. However, the BAMM Plan Oversight Committee needs to start with the home runs (4 baseballs) to assure that implementation has the greatest chance of success.

RECOMMENDATIONS	PRIORITY	PLAYERS	\$ SOURCES
LAND USE & ZONING			
Preserve prime ag land in ASAs or easements	oo	Farmers, County Conservation District	New program @ County (thru PA Agriculture)
Develop long-term plan for Renfrew village	ooo	County, Residents, Penn Township	LUPTAP, CDBG, FEMA
Continue Downtown Butler revitalization	oooo	Butler Downtown, City, BAMM	Butler Downtown, City, RACB, CDBG, TEP, Private, DCED
Target commercial/industrial development @ 422/EB Rd./Mitchell Rd. triangle	o	Summit Twp., CDC	Private
Target commercial development @ Herman/Bonniebrook Roads	o	Summit Twp., CDC, Herman	Private, Summit Twp.
Enhance perimeters of industrial land	oo	Municipalities/property owners	Private, local, TEP
Complete Pullman Center Redevelopment	oooo	City, CDC, RACB	
Update zoning codes & development regs. & accommodate land uses across boundaries	oooo	All 5 municipalities, County Planning	LUPTAP, Local, LGA
ACCESS MANAGEMENT AREAS (AMAs)			
Adopt draft AMA legislation	oooo	Townships	Local
Create AMA for US 422	ooo	Summit Twp., PennDOT, Property owners	Summit Twp., TEP, Private
Target east 422 for mixed-use development	oooo	Summit Twp.	Summit Twp., private
Investigate SW extension of 422/interchange road/New Castle Rd. to connect with Eberhart Rd.	oooo	Butler Twp., County, PennDOT, PPP	Local, Private, PennDOT
Align intersection of Greenwood/Heintz Rds. @ 422	oo	Butler Twp., PennDOT	Local, PennDOT
Properly plan development between Keck Rd. & 422.	oo	Summit Twp., PPP, County	Summit Twp., Private
Explore new interchange @ 422 & Duffy	o	BAMM, PennDOT	Local, PennDOT
Improve 422/Bonniebrook/RR/Grant intersection	oo	Summit Twp.	Local, Penn DOT
Create AMA on New Castle Rd.	ooo	Butler Twp., County, PennDOT, PPP	Local, PennDOT
Align intersections of Campus Lane & Barracks Rd.	ooo	Butler Twp., County, PennDOT, PPP	Local, Penn DOT
Properly plan in-fill development along New Castle Rd.	ooo	Butler Twp., Property owners	Butler Twp., private, PennDOT
Create AMA on SR 8, south of City	ooo	Penn/Butler Twps., PennDOT	Local, PennDOT
Improve SR 8/ Hicks/Oak Ridge intersection	oo	Penn Twp., PennDOT	Local, PennDOT
Improve SR 8/Old Plank/ Renfrew/	oo	Penn Twp.,	Local, PennDOT

McHarg/RR intersection		PennDOT	
Improve SR 8/Airport Rd. intersection	00	Penn Twp., PennDOT	Local, PennDOT
Create AMA on Bonniebrook & implement safety controls	0000	Summit Twp., PennDOT, County	Local, PennDOT
Create AMA on Dinnerbell & consider using Old 8 as access road	00	Penn Twp, PennDOT, County	Local, PennDOT
Create an AMA on SR 68	0000	Butler Twp., PennDOT	Local, PennDOT
Improve intersection of 68 & Eberhart	000	Butler Twp., PennDOT	Local, PennDOT
Improve intersection of 68 & Duffy	000	Butler Twp., PennDOT	Local, PennDOT
TRANSPORTATION			
Promote & pursue SR 68 project	0000	BAMM, County, PennDOT, SWC, Blue Ribbon Com.	County, SWC, PennDOT
Pursue representation on SR 8/228 connector project	0000	BAMM, County, PennDOT, SWC, Blue Ribbon Com.	County, SWC, PennDOT
Improve Whitestown/Hansen intersection	000	City, County, BAMM	City, County, PennDOT, Butler Twp.
Create more direct truck route from 422 to 68	00	BAMM	Butler Twp., PennDOT, County
Support BTA & improve mass transit	0000	BTA, BAMM	BTA, PennDOT
Create a fund for local transportation projects	0000	BAMM	Municipalities
Capitalize on County Airport	00	BAMM, Airport Authority	Airport Authority, County
INFRASTRUCTURE			
Explore representation of all service areas on BASA Board	0000	Service Areas, BASA, BAMM, City	Local, BASA
Provide sewer to Herman	0000	Saxonburg, BASA, Summit Twp., DEP	Local, DEP
Extend sewer to SW Summit Twp.	0000	Saxonburg, BASA, Summit Twp., DEP	Local, DEP
Pursue issues with PA American Water	0000	BAMM, PA American Water	Local, Private, PA American Water
Address storm water issues	00	County, City, DEP	County, Local
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
Identify Economic Development Teams	0000	Municipalities, CDC	Local
Develop relationship with CDC	0000	BAMM, CDC	Local
Work on Workforce issues	000	BAMM, CDC, TriCounty WIB	Local, State, Federal
Help finance CDC	000	BAMM, CDC	Local
Create database of industrial bldgs./sites	0000	Municipalities, CDC	Local
ID specific sites for development	0000	Municipalities, CDC	Local, Private
Develop Revitalization Plan for EBB to	000	EBB, CDC, BAMM	LUPTAP, CDBG, Local

capitalize on industrial land/electric grid			
Diversify economic base	000	BAMM, CDC	Local
Pursue Marcellus Shale initiatives	000	BAMM, CDC	Local
Enhance tourism	000	BCTB, BAMM	Local, State
Address needs to support tourism	0000	BCTB, BAMM	Local, State
Undertake R&E efforts	000	BAMM, CDC	Local
Develop higher education programs	000	VO Tech, BC3, BAMM, CDC	Local, State, Federal
Review taxes , provide incentives/changes	0000	BAMM, Butler Downtown	Local
Become a launching spot for companies	00	BAMM, CDC	Local
Pursue employer-assisted housing	00	BAMM	Local, State, Federal, Private
Pursue Elm Street programs for West End, Lyndora	00	RACB, City	RACB, DCED
DOWNTOWN BUTLER			
Incorporate these Downtown recommendations with 5-Yr. Plan	0000	Butler Downtown- Organ. (BDT-O)	Local, DCED
Continue to build volunteer base	0000	BDT-O	Local
Pursue sustainable budget	000	BDT-O	Local, private, DCED
Establish a speakers bureau	000	BDT-O	Local, private
Strengthen organizational relationships	000	BCTB, RACB, CDC, PDC, BAMM, BDT- O	Local
Add a Safe, Clean & Green Committee	0000	BDT-O	Local
Expand façade program	0000	BDT-Design (D) RACB	CDBG, Butler Downtown, DCED
Coordinate TEP with PennDOT resurfacing project on Main Street	000	BDT-D, City, PennDOT	City, PennDOT
Compile Main Street District Plan	0000	BDT-D, City, property & business owners	Local, DCED
Landscape Monroe Street bridge	000	City, Shade Tree Commission, BDT-D	City, Private
Help plan for Butler Freeport Trail	0000	Butler Freeport Com. Trail, DCNR, BAMM, BDT-D	DCNR, Local
Develop a signage system for the Downtown, then expand to BAMM area	0000	BDT-D, BAMM	Local, State, Private
Expand the mural program	000	BDT-D, BAMM	Local, DCED, Private
Restart HARB	0	BDT-D, City	Local
Initiate a Butler in Bloom program	00	Succop, Shade Tree Com. master gardeners, local nurseries, BDT- SCG	Local, Private
Develop a Downtown Info Center	00	BDT-D	Local, Private
Initiate a Jeep Public Art project	00	BDT-D	Local, Private, Rivers of Steel Heritage Grants
Attract business entrepreneurs	00	BDT-Econ. Restructuring (ER),	Local

		CDC	
Support local incubator & start new one with BC3	oo	BDT-ER, BC3, CDC	Local, State, Federal
Recruit alumni back to Butler	oo	BDT-ER	Local
Improve coordination with RACB on DT projects	oooo	BDT-ER, RACB, CDC, City	Local
Promote DT housing opportunities	oo	BDT-ER, RACB, City, PA American Water	
Explore venues/opportunities to attract students to DT	ooo	BDT-ER, BC3, salon school	Local
Explore City Manager concept with City	ooo	BDT-ER, City	Local
Recruit film companies to DT	o	BDT-ER	State, Local
Continue to develop promotion/marketing plan for DT	oooo	BDT-Promotion (P)	Local
Create a “Downtown Business Brand”	oooo	BDT-P	Local, private
Strengthen existing retail	ooo	BDT-P, businesses	Local, private
Continue to promote Butler’s heritage & assets	ooo	BDT-P, BCTB	Local, private
Consider a “First Impressions Program”	oo	BDT-P	Local, private
Address safety in the DT	oooo	BDT-Safe, Clean & Green (SCG), City, Property owners, businesses	Local, private
Pursue green initiatives	ooo	BDT-SCG, Shade Tree Com., BAMM	Local, State, Federal, Private
Organize maintenance programs in DT	ooo	BDT-SCG, City	Private, Local
PARKS & RECREATION			
Develop a network of bicycle and pedestrian access routes in BAMM Plan area	oooo	BAMM, Parks partners, Butler Freeport Com. Trail	Local, DCNR, Federal, Private
Develop a method to publicize facilities, programs & opportunities	ooo	BAMM, Parks partners, County agencies	Local, private
Develop partnerships to foster open communication & collaboration	ooo	BAMM, County Parks & Rec Dept., BCTB	Local, County
Maintain all municipal park facilities at acceptable standards	ooo	Municipalities	Local, Volunteers
Ensure financial sustainability for operation, maintenance & development of parks, rec. facilities & programs	oooo	BAMM, County	Local, County, DCNR, Federal
Preserve open space areas of natural and/or cultural significance	ooo	BAMM, Succop, County, Property owners	Local, Private, Foundations
Develop & maintain facilities to meet needs of all users	ooo	Municipalities	Local, DCNR, Federal, CDBG
Maintain staff to support facilities and programs	ooo	BAMM, County, Volunteers	Local, Private, Volunteers
Build culture of sustainability in organization to promote green building practices & alternative methods for	oooo	BAMM, Private Sector	Local, State, Federal

development and maintenance			
Develop a well-rounded offering of programs for all age & user groups	000	BAMM, Existing programs, PA Game Commission, Butler Freeport Trail, Neighborhoods	Local, Private, Volunteers
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION & COOPERATION			
Adopt an ICA, as noted above:	0000	Municipalities	Local, Volunteers
Improve communications with the public	0000	BAMM	Local, Volunteers
Jointly undertake ED activities	000	BAMM	Local, CDC, RACB, BDT
Jointly achieve infrastructure improvements	000	BAMM, BASA, Saxonburg, PA Water	Local, DEP
Update & coordinate zoning & other codes	0000	Municipalities, County Planning	Local, LUPTAP
Pursue transportation projects	0000	BAMM	Local, PennDOT
Institute Access Management Areas	000	BAMM	Local, PennDOT
Pursue housing opportunities	000	BAMM, CDC, RACB	Local, DCED, CDBG, HOME, NSP
Jointly support BCTB & tourism	000	BAMM, BCTB	Local, State
Install a coordinated signage system , starting with the DT	00	BDT, BAMM	Local, State
Support BCTB's efforts to promote access	00	BAMM, BCTB	Local, State, PennDOT, DCNR
Implement a joint recreation and parks program	000	BAMM, County Parks, Private recreation providers	Local, private, DCNR