MONTCO 2040: A SHARED VISION
The Comprehensive Plan for Montgomery County

# Proposed Text Changes to Montco 2040

Along with the proposed map changes to Montco 2040, the below are proposed text changes to Montgomery County's comprehensive plan.  Along with fixing some typos and inconsistencies, the plan is being updated to include some fo the work that's been done over the last five years to implement the goals of this plan.

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| *Insert updated timeline information to reflect this is an edited plan* | P. 2 | N/A | |
| The county works closely with PennDOT on its PennDOT Connects initiative, which coordinates PennDOT projects with local planning goals. | P. 16 | CONNECTED COMMUNITIES: Improve transportation quality and expand options for county residents and workers | PennDOT Connects has become a great way for the county to partner with PennDOT to gain bike lanes and on-road traffic calming in places where local or county planning initiatives may have already sought improvements. |
| Since this plan was initially completed in 2015, the county has gone on to publish "Walk Montco" – a sidewalk plan and pedestrian policy guide.  The planning commission also partners with the county's Department of Health and Human Services to conduct walk audits as part of Safe Routes to School projects. | P. 18 | | Updated to include this policy program – which took inspiration from Montco 2040 |
| In addition, the county's Bike Montco policy document lays out a bike plan for the county.  Bike tourism routes and a low stress streets app have followed to help implement this plan. | P. 19 | | Updated to include this policy program – which took inspiration from Montco 2040 |

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| New trail map inserted; update the number of miles of trails in the county to "more than 90 miles of trails maintained by the county's Parks, Trails, and Historic Sites office | P. 20-21 | CONNECTED COMMUNITIES: Expand and connect county trails, local trails, greenways, natural areas, and parks | Updated to include our progress in planning for and completing construction of trails |
| To make more users feel at home on the county's trail system, the planning commission recently completed a "Trail Access, Diversity, and Awareness Study" to find ways of encouraging a more diverse set of people to use the county's trail system. Recommendations included both physical improvements to the trail system and programmatic changes to encourage different types of trail-related activities. | P. 22 | | This equity-focused project will become an important benchmark for MCPC moving forward |
| The Montco 2040 grant program, established the original adoption of this plan, has funded many local trail projects from Limerick to Marlborough and in between. Many of these projects tie into the county's larger trail network. | | | This program has been a major focus of the implementation of Montco 2040 |
| The county's *Sunrise Trail & Swamp Creek Greenway Study* helped to determine the feasibility and recommended alignment of the Sunrise Trail and identified recreational access opportunities along Swamp Creek. The Sunrise Trail is identified within this plan as part of the planned trail system. | P. 23 | | Updated to include our progress in planning for and completing construction of trails and planning for open space preservation |

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| The county's Motor Vehicle Registration Fee provides a dedicated source of funding to continue improvements to the county's roads, bridges, and intersections. Since 2012, the county has completed 29 bridge projects. There are currently 20 active bridge projects in design, three underway in construction, and another 10 bridges about to begin construction. | P. 30 | SUSTAINABLE PLACES: Support a modern resilient, green, and energy-efficient infrastructure network | Fixing the county's existing infrastructure was a major theme of the feedback we received during the preparation of Montco 2040. |
| The county adopted a complete streets policy in 2019 to address all modes of transportation during county road and facility improvement projects. | P. 32 | | It is important to highlight the county's commitment to all forms of transportation. |
| New sewer service area map inserted | P. 33 | | Updated to include changes in local land use and development |
| New water service area map inserted | P. 34 | | Updated to include changes in local land use and development |
| *Add mention of the county's ongoing hazardous waste collection programs* | P. 36 | | This is an important ongoing initiative of the county (and greater region). |
| Edit last paragraph, last sentence: In addition, the county planning commission will continue to offer to prepare sustainability plans for local municipalities. | P. 36 | | Wording change. |
| Edit top of page, 1st sentence: replace *Montgomery County Waste to Energy Plant* with the Covanta Plymouth Renewable Energy Facility (a waste-to-energy facility) | P. 37 | | Wording change. |
| Edit end of this page to make clear that broadband communication needs are more than just good siting, but that the equity of access to high speed internet is a crucial infrastructure need as well. | P. 37 | | The difficulties of working and schooling from home without reliable internet access is an issue for urban and rural communities in the Commonwealth. |

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| Edit 2nd paragraph: Because of its limited environmental impact, small scale renewable energy, such as solar, wind, geothermal, and hydroelectric facilities should be installed around the county in appropriate locations. For example, the county in pursuing a permit for a small-scale hydroelectric facility on the Norristown Dam.  Local municipalities should adopt ordinances allowing renewable energy and can use guiding ordinances prepared by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission in cooperation with the county. | P. 37 | SUSTAINABLE PLACES: Support a modern resilient, green, and energy-efficient infrastructure network | Wording change. |
| Edit to say: The county proposes to continue: ■ Installing Green Stormwater Infrastructure at county sites wherever practicable. ■ Expanding education on stormwater issues for county employees, contractors on county projects, and visitors to county facilities. ■ Training its departments on methods they can use to reduce pollution in stormwater. ■ Maintaining the database and website to provide information to the public and municipalities on stormwater systems. ■ Adopting procedures for properly controlling construction site stormwater runoff on county properties. ■ Updating procedures for preventing pollution, particularly for vehicle maintenance, fueling and washing, stormwater facility maintenance, and storage of materials. | P. 38 | SUSTAINABLE PLACES: Improve stormwater management and reduce the impact of flooding | Wording change. |

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| The planning commission's popular Sustainable Green Parking Lots Guidebook, published in 2016, has helped municipalities incorporate BMPs into parking lot retrofits. The county's Montco 2040 grant program has funded some parking lot retrofits as well.<br><br>*Edit third paragraph to say:*<br>The county will continue encouraging installation of stormwater BMPs in both new and existing developments, including retrofits of existing facilities. , and will create a hands on BMP education project, The County should continue to maintains a database of stormwater BMP projects and green developments, and develop and disseminate new educational information on stormwater authoritiesBMPs. In addition, the county will continue to advocate for adoption of its model Riparian Corridor ordinance, which requires a protected vegetated buffer next to streams. | P. 40 | SUSTAINABLE PLACES: Improve stormwater management and reduce the impact of flooding | Wording change. |
| Recognizing that flooding does not affect all populations equally, the county should work to identify disadvantaged populations that may be disproportionately affected by flooding.  The county should assist these populations in understanding the magnitude of the threat, and identifying how these populations can become more resilient to floods. Strategies to address the threat of flooding, and additional hazards such as heat island effect and climate change, should be addressed in the county's Hazard Mitigation Plan. | P. 41 | | Updated to highlight the importance of planning for the unknown. |

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| The county has worked hard to call attention to its natural resource areas. A recently launched "Return on the Environment" project looks to highlight the ways that the county's open spaces add economic value to many aspects of our lives. In addition, the planning commission is undertaking a strategic planning initiative to focus our open space planning and land acquisition efforts. | P. 42 | SUSTAINABLE PLACES: Conserve natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and farmland | Open space planning efforts are a major piece of MCPC's work |
| Preserving land highlighted in the Natural Areas Inventory preserves the county's ecological resources. Public access should be carefully considered and managed to avoid detrimental impacts to these sensitive areas. | P. 45 | | Open space planning efforts are a major piece of MCPC's work. |
| In 2020, Montgomery County reached a major milestone when it surpassed 10,000 acres of preserved farmland. Although the COVID-19 pandemic prevented an in-person celebration, a video highlighting the reasons why farmland preservation matters to the county was released by the county commissioners. | p. 51 | | Preserving land for farming is an important initiative at the state level – Pennsylvania is one of the national leaders in farmland preservation. |
| The demand for outdoor recreation surged in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Trail use increased greatly and visits to parks and other natural areas became an outlet for many county residents looking for ways to stay healthy. | P. 52 | SUSTAINABLE PLACES: Provide more opportunities to exercise and have healthy lifestyles | COVID-19 necessitated a major pivot in the way the county does business – it is important to highlight this change. |
| Since this plan's adoption in 2015, municipalities have worked to make walking and biking easier. Pottstown's Walk Bike Pottstown initiative added improved crosswalks and targeted bike lanes that crisscross the borough. Hatboro Borough and Upper Moreland Township partnered on a joint recreation plan. | P. 53 | | Municipal efforts to improve the environment for walking and biking are worth highlighting. |

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| In conjunction with DVRPC, the planning commission completed Eat Local Montco, a policy guide to assist in promoting and elevating the county's farmers and local food producers. | P. 53 | SUSTAINABLE PLACES: Provide more opportunities to exercise and have healthy lifestyles | The county's farmers continue to bring quality products to market and MCPC works to help support that. |
| The county's planning commission, in cooperation with the Commerce Department and Office of Housing and Community Development, recently completed *Homes For All*. This report presents recommendations for the county commissioners on ways the county can support the construction of more homes – at all price points – to give residents more options when it comes to finding a home.  This comes after the county's very successful Your Way Home initiative, which has made great progress in reducing chronic homelessness in the county. | P. 55 | SUSTAINABLE PLACES: Support housing choices and opportunities to meet the needs of all people | MCPC supports the ongoing efforts of the county to provide more opportunities for the construction of affordably-priced homes. |
| The Montgomery County Housing Authority has renovated and reconstructed both its Crest Manor and North Hills developments, gaining additional housing units in the process. | P. 55 | | MCPC supports the ongoing efforts of the county to provide more opportunities for the construction of affordably-priced homes. |

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| Since the adoption of Montco 2040, the county has done a number of things to advocate for good development.  Our annual Montgomery Awards have spotlighted projects such as Bridgeport's Zero Energy Ready Homes, Station Row at Station Square in Lower Merion, Lions Gate at Penn State Abington, and the new SEPTA garage in Lansdale.  Staff have contributed to form based zoning codes for Narberth, Norristown, and Lower Merion.  Planning commission staff have also authored a guide to the adaptive reuse of institutional properties. | P. 57 | SUSTAINABLE PLACES: Enhance community character and protect neighborhoods | MCPC continues to advocate for good development through this initiatives in this plan. |
| The county began work on an update to its hazard mitigation plan, which was written in 2017.  This plan addresses weather and other natural hazards, as well as human-made hazards like dam failures or transportation accidents. | P. 58 | | Updated to highlight the importance of planning for the unknown. |
| The county is committed to transportation improvements throughout the county.  Major projects (both recently completed and ongoing) include an extension and reconstruction of Lafayette Street in Norristown, the Ridge Pike Corridor reconstruction project (multi-municipal), and progress on furthering the King of Prussia Rail Project. | P. 62 | VIBRANT ECONOMY: Improve transportation access to businesses | Updated to show the importance of some of the recent transit and transportation projects the county supports |

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| The county's Commerce Department has long advised and attracted businesses and entrepreneurs to the county.  The COVID-19 pandemic heightened the need for business support, with financial assistance programs put in place for small business owners, restaurants, and others. The county's Restart Montco initiative aimed to get resources into the hands of municipalities that needed to restructure the way that people socialized, shopped, and exercised in our downtowns and other open spaces. | P. 73 | VIBRANT ECONOMY: Facilitate the marketing of the county and its assets | COVID-19 necessitated a major pivot in the way the county does business – it is important to highlight this change. |
| Updated Development Potential map inserted | P. 79 | 2040 VISION | Updated to include changes in local land use and development |
| Updated Future Land Use map inserted | P. 81 | | Updated to include changes in local land use and development |
| Updated Programmed Roadway Projects map inserted | P. 95 | | Updated to show completion of projects |
| Updated Vision Roadway Projects map inserted | P. 97 | | Updated to show completion of projects |
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