

For Immediate Release – County of Berks – Press Release

Four Berks County Municipal Plans Receive Funding Awards from PA DCED

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) announced last week that four Berks County 2023-2024 municipal plans will receive Municipal Assistance Program (MAP) funding. According to the DCED, MAP provides funding to assist local governments to plan for and efficiently implement a variety of services and improvements, and soundly manage development with an emphasis on intergovernmental approaches.

MAP Funding is available for two groups of activities: Shared Services, and Community Planning. Shared Services includes regional police and fire services, boundary change services and more. Community Planning supports community and economic development through comprehensive community plans, land use ordinances, and Transit Revitalization Investment District studies.

“As part of the Imagine Berks Strategic Economic Development Action Plan process, the County has recognized significant benefits of multi-municipal planning, unlocking shared benefits such as regional land uses, extended services and facilities across municipal lines, and increased coordination among neighboring communities. With these plans, the municipalities will be able to target the most appropriate areas for development and redevelopment to accommodate the growing needs of their residents while continuing to make land preservation and conservation a priority within their communities,” said Laura Mursch, Intergovernmental Affairs Planner of the Berks County Planning Commission.

MAP funding was awarded for the following projects:

- Berks County: Northeastern Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan - \$26,777

This multi-municipal comprehensive plan will be prepared by professional planners at the Berks County Planning Commission to guide future land use policies particularly focusing on shared development pressures for Albany Township, Greenwich Township, Kutztown Borough, Lenhartsville Borough, and Maxatawny Township. This includes increased warehouse and solar development proposals, lack of available housing, potential growth at I-78 access points and SR222 corridor, a collective desire to maintain a rural character, mitigating growth impacts to the Kutztown Area School District, and the continual evolution of Kutztown University.

- Berks County: St. Lawrence-Exeter-Amity-Douglass Joint Comprehensive Plan - \$22,357

This multi-municipal comprehensive plan will be prepared by professional planners at the Berks County Planning Commission to guide future land use policies particularly focusing on shared development pressures. This includes increasing industrial and solar developments, lack of available housing, redevelopment along the SR422 corridor, passenger rail restoration, farmland preservation, school district impacts, and master planning for the Daniel Boone Homestead.

- Berks County: Fleetwood-Maidencreek-Richmond Joint Comprehensive Plan - \$19,378

This multi-municipal comprehensive plan will be prepared by professional planners at the Berks County Planning Commission to guide future land use policies particularly focusing on shared development pressures. This includes housing demand, increasing logistics centers and solar farming in the Townships, expansion and rehabilitation of US 222, and the redevelopment of Fleetwood's downtown. This plan will also prioritize a growth strategy that focuses on infill while limiting development in ecologically sensitive areas.

- Berks County: Eastern Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan - \$17,371

This ten-year update of a multi-municipal comprehensive plan will be prepared by professional planners at the Berks County Planning Commission to guide future land use policies particularly focusing on shared development pressures for District Township, Rockland Township, and Tipton Borough. This includes include concerns for logistics, solar development, a declining student population, and lack of available housing.

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