

Appendix C

Municipal Comprehensive Plans Minimum Requirements

1. Introduction

The intent of this Appendix is to assist in preparing an update to a municipal comprehensive plan (Plan) that is both customized to the needs of the municipality and achieves greater consistency with *Landscapes*. The Plan must meet the following minimum requirements to be eligible for funding under the Vision Partnership Program (VPP). Municipalities are encouraged to include innovation in their Plan updates.

2. General Requirements

All applications for a Plan update shall meet the following general requirements:

- A. Comply with all required plan elements under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Article III, Section 301 – Preparation of Comprehensive Plan.
- B. Demonstrate how the proposed Plan achieves general consistency with *Landscapes*, by addressing the following specific requirements:
 1. Goals, objectives, and recommendations must reflect the applicable language in Part Four of *Landscapes* - Goals, Objectives, and Policies.
 2. Land use plan categories and map must be generally consistent with the boundaries of the *Livable Landscapes* map.
 3. Plan recommendations must demonstrate how proposed municipal programs will implement the County's vision statement, including:
 - a. Concentration of development and density to designated growth areas; and
 - b. Preservation of natural and cultural resources that form the unique character of the municipality.
- C. Implement applicable provisions of *Linking Landscapes*, the County's open space plan and *Open Space Planning: A Guide for Municipalities*, the County's guidebook to open space planning.
- D. Implement applicable provisions of *Watersheds*, the County's water supply plan.
- E. Implement applicable provisions of *Connecting Landscapes* – Technical Memorandums, the County's transportation plan element.
- F. Implement applicable provisions of *Preserving Our Places*, the County's historic preservation technical guide.
- G. Demonstrate how the proposed plan has addressed the Planning Trends, Issues and Implications, as listed below.
- H. Prepare a detailed analysis of planning programs and their implications of surrounding municipalities, where a municipality has elected not to prepare a multi-municipal Plan.

3. Required Plan Components

To achieve the general requirements listed above, every plan or update funded through the VPP shall include the following information and analysis within the proposed scope of work. These requirements are intended to ensure that the Plan update is customized to a municipality.

A. Community Policy and Vision

The scope of work shall include a process for defining community policy as a first step in the update process. This process will include a vision statement and a set of goals and objectives that address each of the functional areas of the Plan. These policies will guide the update process and assist in achieving consistency between local and county plans. The development of this policy requires a consensus building exercise involving a public process that engages residents of the municipality.

The tools a municipality will use to define community policy must be identified in the scope of work. Tools eligible for funding include visioning sessions, community meetings and public opinion surveys.

B. Planning Trends and Issues Analysis, and Implications

The scope of work shall include the identification of the factors that have influenced the character and development of the municipality(ies). This information shall include an analysis of planning trends, issues and implications that have a direct bearing on planning the future of the municipality(ies). Analysis should be provided for each topical area of the plan including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Population and housing trends, including a “fair share” housing analysis.
2. Economic development trends.
3. Land use patterns and development trends.
4. Natural, historic, and cultural resources protection measures.
5. Circulation and transportation trends.
6. Community facilities and services trends.
7. Municipal administration and budget trends.

The scope of work should isolate those trends and issues germane to the planning process. Superfluous data should not be included.

C. Plan Recommendations

The scope of work shall include specific recommendations for each topical area of the Plan, as required by the MPC. Recommendations shall be presented in a clear and detailed manner in order to facilitate implementation. This section shall demonstrate a clear link to the applicable policies of *Landscapes*, and to the planning implications identified in subsection B, above.

This information can be presented in a separate section of the plan or incorporated into the planning trends, issues, and implications section.

D. Action Plan

A detailed action plan shall be created that summarizes the recommendations identified throughout the Plan and shall include the following items:

1. A description of the action.
2. A prioritization of actions.
3. An estimated timeframe for completion.
4. An assignment of which group will serve as the primary agent for its implementation.
5. The methods of implementation to best achieve the action.

E. Plan Structure

The Plan shall be structured to facilitate its use by the municipality(ies). The final document shall be designed to facilitate access to recommendations and actions by municipal officials and volunteers. In addition, mapping shall be produced using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology.

The plan structure shall be described within the scope of work submitted as part of the VPP grant application, including all deliverables, text, graphic, and mapping components.