

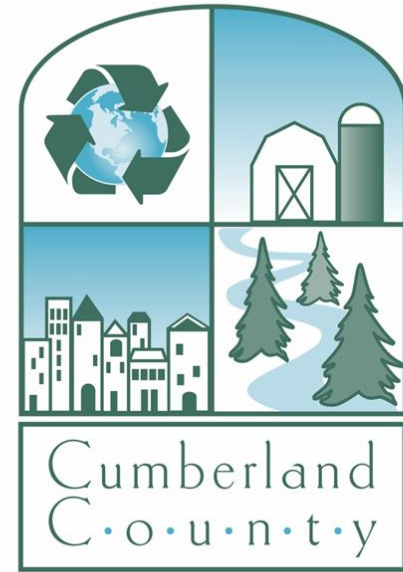
Land Partnerships 3.0

A countywide strategy for farmland preservation, natural resource protection and parks, trails & greenways



30+ years of Conservation!

- 1995 Conservation & Open Space Task Force
- 2000 Countywide Greenway Study
- 2006 1st Open Space & Greenway Plan, Land Partnerships
- 2013 Land Partnerships 2.0
- 2024 Land Partnerships 3.0



Farmland Preservation Success

- 7th in PA
- ~220 Farms Preserved
- ~24,000 Acres Preserved
- \$65M Investment
- 2004 Bond Issue - \$3.6M for Farmland Preservation
- 2019 - Budgetary Policy/Goal 30,000 Acres X 2030



Land Partnership Grant Program

- 2006 Bond Issue - \$1M to create Pilot Grant Program for conservation and recreation projects
- \$2+ M in County Act 13 fees
- Total Investment = \$15.6 M
- Each county dollar leverages \$6 in federal, state, local or private funds
- 103 Projects Completed

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Awards

- In 2021, County received \$49.2 M ARP funds
- **Nearly \$3 M** allocated to projects consistent with the goals of Land Partnerships
- 8 major conservation and recreation projects totaling \$14.8 million



Camp Tuckahoe

2023-2024 Land Partnerships Plan Process

- Data Analysis/Needs Assessment
- Stakeholder Engagement
 - Study Committee
 - Public Forums
 - Key Person Interviews
 - Municipal/NGO Survey
 - Community Survey
- Implementation Actions/Funding Strategy



Community Survey

- Funding Priorities by Program Areas (Conservation/Recreation, Transportation, Water Quality)
- Open Ended Questions
- Familiarity with Planning Tools
- Participation in Public Meetings
- Communication Preferences

Farmland Preservation Feedback

- **Agricultural land is facing pressure from new development.**
- **Money offered for preservation easements is perceived to not be keeping pace with land values.**
- It is increasingly challenging for farmers to make a living and they need to be supported.
- There are major obstacles to getting young people into farming.
- There is a lack of awareness from the general public about the importance of farming.
- There is a need to connect with and educate farmers on the value of preserving farmland.

Correlation between Farmland Preservation and Agriculture Production

County	Number of Preserved Farms*	Number of Acres Preserved	Land in Farms (acres)**	% of Land in Farms Preserved	State Rank, Farmland Preservation***	State Rank, Value of Ag Products Sold**
Lancaster	949	78,933	378,574	21%	2	1
Chester	420	33,444	143,442	23%	4	2
Berks	829	79,011	208,478	38%	1	3
Lebanon	184	20,690	110,248	19%	8	4
Franklin	150	18,846	263,611	7%	11	5
York	328	47,541	243,980	19%	3	6
Adams	195	24,783	183,184	14%	6	7
Cumberland	210	23,515	146,389	16%	7	8
Perry	66	10,047	116,001	9%	20	9
Snyder	26	2,819	85,547	3%	42	10

Finding From - *An analysis of the Economic Impact of PA's Farmland Preservation Program - 2019* by Professor Tom Daniels

Open Space and Natural Lands Feedback

- Preservation efforts lack effective coordination and leadership.
- There is a need to create a more interconnected system of preserved lands.
- There is a need for additional funding to support acquisition and maintenance.
- A low or minimal-impact park system has potential in Cumberland County.
- There is a strong need to control and direct development away from natural lands.

Priority Conservation Areas Analysis



Parks, Trails & Greenways Feedback

- Grants from the current LP program are used by municipalities to fund smaller scale parks and trail projects. This fills a niche not addressed by other funding sources. LP grants help leverage additional grant money. The cost of park and trail development has escalated significantly.
- There is a need to better manage and coordinate mapping of existing trails, greenspaces, and greenways. A central database would make it easier to identify needs and gaps.
- There is a need to develop better connections between existing trails. Regional trails should connect major destination, and smaller bike/ped facilities should act as “feeders.”
- This is a need for County-wide leadership to coordinate trail development efforts.
- Parks and trails should serve all ages, abilities and cultures.
- Development of parks and trails and preservation of greenways and open space need to be a recognized as part of our economic development strategy.

DCNR/Trust for Public Land/We Conserve PA Outdoor Recreation Access Statistics

- Parks/Trails/Open Spaces: 10 min walk
 - Statewide - 53%
 - **Cumberland - 43%** 😞
- Trails: 10 min drive
 - Statewide - 82%
 - **Cumberland - 95%** 😊
- Fishing & Boating - 10 min drive
 - Statewide - 61%
 - **Cumberland - 84%** 😊



Next Steps

- Finalizing Goals & Actions with Committee - Spring
- Developing Funding Strategy with Commissioners - Summer/Fall
- Building Support for Implementation - Ongoing
- Adoption by end of 2024!

