

Guidelines for Trail Development Within Montgomery County, Pennsylvania



Montgomery County Commissioners

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Trail Notes

Montgomery County's proposed primary trail network offers many potential benefits to county residents on a local, regional and even national level. Benefits of smart trail design and development range from preserved open space to the promotion of active, healthy lifestyles to the creation of an alternative source of transportation for commuters and recreation users alike. Additionally, the sixteen proposed interconnected county trails will establish connections to parklands, historic sites, natural areas and other points of interest through out the region. Through devoted trail planning, the county has constructed the Schuylkill River Trail and the Perkiomen Trail. These trails have set the foundation for the county's regional trail network while providing the framework for local trails and pathways to connect to the regional system.

The Open Space Program, Trails & You

The purpose of this document is to provide desirable and minimum trail design standards to municipalities applying for county open space funds to develop trail connections. The municipality's open space plan must indicate connections to existing or proposed county trails, and county parks and historic sites to be eligible for county trail funding.

If a municipality decides to pursue the design and construction of a regional county trail segment, the trail surface and width standards should reflect the preferred trail standards stated in the County's: *Open Space, Natural Features, and Cultural Resources Plan*, Montgomery County, 2004, Chap. 4, "Trails and Pathways," pp.131-141 (Summary excerpt of "Trails and Pathways" - see right sidebar column). Additionally, coordination with the county will be established regarding design and construction of a proposed county trail segment.

When a municipality enters the *Green Fields/Green Towns Program* and applies for the County Trail Connection Grant Option, the municipality will be required to meet county trail guidelines, and multiple requirements/conditions stated within the applications and grant agreement (see attached application packet). Furthermore, municipal trail design plans must be County approved.

<u>Montgomery County's Proposed Primary Trail Network Preferred Standards</u>	
<u>Chester Valley Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>Cresheim Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam or Hard Cinder Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>Cross County Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>Evansburg Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Hard Cinder Pavement with an 8-10 foot trail width.
<u>Liberty Bell Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam or Hard Cinder Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width. <i>Exceptions through boroughs, village areas and areas where on road facilities and sidewalks must be used.</i>
<u>Manatawny Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Hard Cinder Pavement with an 8-10 foot trail width.
<u>Pennypack Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam or Hard Cinder Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>Perkiomen Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam or Hard Cinder Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>Power Line Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam or Hard Cinder Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>Schuylkill East Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Hard Cinder Pavement with an 8-10 foot trail width.
<u>Schuylkill River Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>Stony Creek Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam or Hard Cinder Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>Sunrise Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam or Hard Cinder Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>West County Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam or Hard Cinder Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.
<u>Wissahickon Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam or Hard Cinder Pavement with an 8-12 foot trail width.
<u>202 Trail</u>	Preferred Trail Surface and Width Standards: Macadam Pavement with a 10-12 foot trail width.

In order to maintain consistency throughout the trail development process, the county has referenced and developed a trail and bicycle facilities design criteria to aid in the design and construction phases. The county has created four trail classification types providing a desirable and minimum standard range for each classification type. The four trail classification types are:

- *Multiuse
- *Retrofit Sidewalk
- *Pathway
- *On Road Improvements for Bicyclist

The trail classification type (or a related name/description) should be identified or noted within the municipality’s open space plan update. Through the initial planning process, the trail type should be determined and solidified. Once established, the municipality should adhere to the county’s applicable standards for that particular classification type. The criteria formulated in this document are characteristically universal standards derived from primary public and private publications noted at the end of this document.

The county acknowledges that unforeseen factors and environmental constraints may exist in the design and construction phase of trail development that may hinder the municipality from meeting certain standards. The county expects the municipality to research all possible trail realignments, remediation scenarios, land use impacts, negotiation strategies and community partnerships before determining that the minimum standards cannot be met.

Trail Terms and the Trail Ahead

To briefly elaborate, the county has described each trail classification type to allow the municipality to identify what type of trail they envisioned or would like to plan for.

Multiuse – A trail that permits more than one user group (jogger, bicyclist, hiker, etc.) at a time, creating a two-way shared use area. The trail is constructed of a hard paved surface or a hard compacted cinder to facilitate wheeled and pedestrian trail traffic.

Pathway – This is a temporary or permanent area that is normally dirt or cinder although some paths are asphalt or concrete. A path typically indicates the common route taken by pedestrians between two locations.

Retrofit Sidewalk – A widened and improved concrete pedestrian facility to allow more than one pedestrian user group (jogger, walker, hiker, etc.) at a time, creating a two-way shared use area (excludes wheeled trail traffic in most cases).

On Road Improvements for Bicyclist – Improvements consist of the creation or designation of the following: a) *Bike Lane* – A portion of a roadway that has been designated by striping, signing, and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists; b) *Bike Route* – A shared right-of-way (widened curb lane or shoulder or the creation of a shoulder) located on medium to lightly traveled streets and roadways designated with appropriate “bike route” directional and informational signs. These signs help encourage use and warn motorists that bicycles may be present; c) *Bicycle Friendly Areas (BFAs)* – An area that provides compatible and safe streets for bicyclists. Typically, BFAs are used in residential neighborhoods, although these areas could be used in any type of development where designated bike lanes are not required, but motorists should be aware of bicyclists using the roadways.

Terms may differ throughout the municipalities open space plans updates. The idea is that each municipality that applies for county open space funds can relate to one of our four trail classification types and set in motion their trail building process as soon as it’s identified.

The Trail Ahead...Access & Ownership

Another major component to a trail development project is the process of the municipality acquiring access and/or ownership to the corridor for the proposed trail alignment. **The County requires a 75' (foot) trail corridor-width minimum for all proposed trail projects.** If the minimum cannot be met, the municipality must demonstrate why its partial or entire corridor is below the minimum. The 75' minimum is required to ensure proper buffering, landscaping, aesthetic viewsheds and greenway preservation throughout the county.

There are a variety of acquisition and access methods a municipality may use to fulfill this component of trail development. Montgomery County's three acceptable standards are as follows:

a) *Fee Simple Acquisition:* A complete transfer of land ownership from one landowner to another party, usually by purchase.

b) *Easement:* Grants the right to use a specific portion of land for a specific purpose or purposes. Easements may be limited to a specific period of time or may be granted in perpetuity; or the termination of the easement may be predicated upon the occurrence of a specific event. An easement agreement survives transfer of landownership and is generally binding upon future owners until it expires on its own terms.

c) *License/Lease Agreement:* The temporary grant of an interest in land upon payment of a determined fee. The fee does not have to be monetary, but some consideration must be given for the right to use the land, or the lease will not be legally binding.

License/lease agreements (between public utility agencies) will only be recognized and accepted by the Green Fields/Green Towns Program if the agreement is for 25 years or longer (with renewal options) and the municipality agrees to maintain and police the trail segment for that time span. The above stated condition of approval is to ensure that the municipality is 100% committed to planning, designing, building and maintaining their public asset and recreational amenity.

Montgomery County prefers the municipality to either acquire the land or right-of-way through fee simple or obtain an easement in perpetuity throughout the trail corridor.

Design Standards

The heart of this document is the chart below. The chart contains tangible trail design standards that will provide direction and support behind a tremendous regional trail network.

TRAIL NOTE: Please note the term 'Cinder' used in the Trail Surface Type description applies to a variation of cinder/granular type surface applications. The most common cinders used include limestone (limestone dust), sandstone and crushed native rock. The stones' diameter should be less than 3/8 inch and the surface depth should be at least 4 inches thick (compacted) to accommodate mostly every multi-use trail user.

Montgomery County Trail Design Standards

<u>Standard Description</u>		<u>Trail Classification Type</u>			
Criteria Outline		Multiuse	Pathway	Retrofit Sidewalk	On Road Improvements for Bicyclist
Trail Width (75' trail corridor width minimum)	Desirable	12'	6'	10'-12' (multi-use w/o bike lane: two-way shared use)*	Bike Lane: 6'-5'
	Minimum	8'-10'	4'	6'-8' (multi-use with bike lane: two-way shared use)**	Bike Lane: 4'
Trail Shoulder Width	Desirable	4-5'	2'	4' (multi-use w/o bike lane: two-way shared use)	Road Shoulder: 8'-6'
	Minimum	2'	2'	2' (multi-use with bike lane: two-way shared use)	Road Shoulder: 4'
Trail Surface Type***	Desirable	Macadam	Cinder/Macadam	Concrete	Macadam
	Acceptable	Cinder	Cinder	Macadam (if acceptable by local zoning regulations)	Macadam
Trail Grade (longitudinal slope)	Desirable	1%-3%	1%-3%	1%-2%	--
	Maximum	5%	5%	5%	--
Trail Surface Grade (cross slope)	Desirable	1%	1%	1%	--
	Maximum	2%	2%	2%	--
Vertical Clearance	Desirable	10'	10'	10'	--
	Minimum	8'	8'	8'	--
Horizontal Clearance (edge of trail vegetation clearance)	Desirable	4-5'	2'	4'	--
	Minimum	2'	2'	2'	--
Design Speed (mph)	Desirable Grades	20	3-7	8-15	25-30
Viewshed (linear feet) {line of sight within a corridor}	Desirable	200'-175'	75'	200'-175'	--
	Minimum	150'	50'	150'	--
Signage	Trail	See 'Sign Dimensions for Trail & Bicycle Facilities' for chart and sign examples			
	Roadway				
* 6' (typical ped. sidewalk) ** 4' (typical ped. sidewalk) *** Macadam should be considered for trail grades over 2%				All Trail Surface Depths are assumed @ 2-4" and Trail Sub-base Depths are assumed @ 4-8".	

Note: Montgomery County Trail Design Standards were derived from multiple sources cited on the ' Trail & Bicycle Facilities Resource References' page located on page 15 of this document.

The remaining sections of this document contain the estimated construction costs, cross section illustrations of each classification type, signage dimensions and examples, and a trail and bicycle resource reference page.

TRAIL NOTE: In addition to county open space funds, municipalities are encouraged to seek and apply for other trail funding sources in conjunction with the subdivision and land development process to facilitate their trail development goals. See [Appendix A](#) for a detailed list of other potential trail funding sources for municipalities to seek out and utilize.

Estimated Trail Construction Costs

Baseline Estimates for Constructing Trail Type Surfaces*

12' Multiuse Wide Trail - Cost Range Per Linear Foot			
Macadam	Concrete	Cinder	Road Improvements (Macadam)
\$43.00	\$77.00	\$21.00	Variable dependent on scope and design of improvements.
\$26.00	\$53.00	\$11.00	
6' Multiuse Wide Trail - Cost Range Per Linear Foot			
Macadam	Concrete	Cinder	Road Improvements (Macadam)
\$21.50	\$38.50	\$10.50	Variable dependent on scope and design of improvements.
\$13.00	\$26.50	\$5.50	

- All estimated figures were calculated in 2005 dollar amounts -

* The above stated estimates were derived from Montgomery County's experience in developing the Schuylkill River and Perkiomen trails using force account labor (materials, trucks and equipment rentals included), utilizing regional and local engineering cost estimates and a national trail estimate. The estimated cost ranges calculated in the table above, represent a high (virgin territory) and low (existing rail/utility corridor) cost construction scenario for municipalities to consider when planning a future trail.

TRAIL NOTE: The above stated cost estimates throughout this memo do not include preliminary and/or final engineering design costs. Only after a careful review on a case-by-case basis of each project, can a reliable and accurate cost be calculated. The above stated cost estimates within this trail guideline document could increase due to many variables and unforeseen factors in the construction phase.

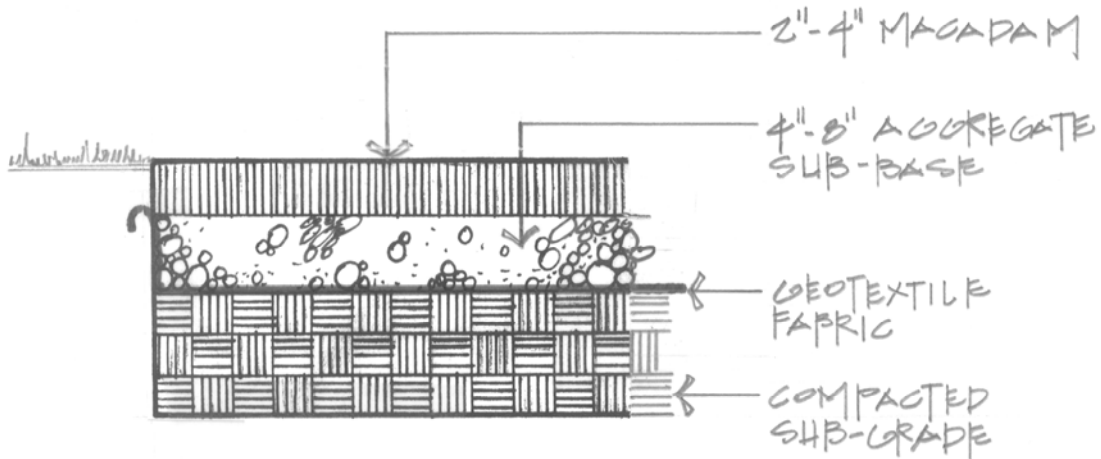
The cost of constructing a paved, concrete or cinder (gravel-surfaced) trail varies depending on whether the trail is built where there already exists a suitable base. For example, trail construction along an abandoned railroad corridor or a former roadway typically requires less site preparation work because a base already exists upon which the trail surface can be applied. If, however, a new trail is being blazed through virgin territory or where a dirt footpath is being upgraded to a more formalized trail, then the trail route must also be cleared, excavated and provided with an adequate sub-base prior to application of the actual trail surface. This extra work adds time and expense to the overall project cost (fuel cost should also be estimated for all power equipment and vehicles used for trail development).

Secondly, the expense of design engineering (i.e., the preparation of line and grade drawings; details/specifications; erosion and sedimentation control plans; applications to regulatory agencies for environmental clearance and approvals; etc.) must also be factored into a trail's overall development cost. Other qualifiers that could fluctuate the overall cost are: base thickness; surface thickness; motorized vehicle weight consideration; direction of alignment; curb cuts; access/driveway aprons; signage/signals; landscaping; and other amenities related to trail development. This component of cost is perhaps most difficult to accurately build into a typical cost estimate because each trail project is unique and will have its own set of design and engineering requirements. Generally, design costs will be higher for a trail that is being built through virgin territory because it will likely involve a greater degree of environmental impact versus a trail that takes advantage of an existing man-made corridor.

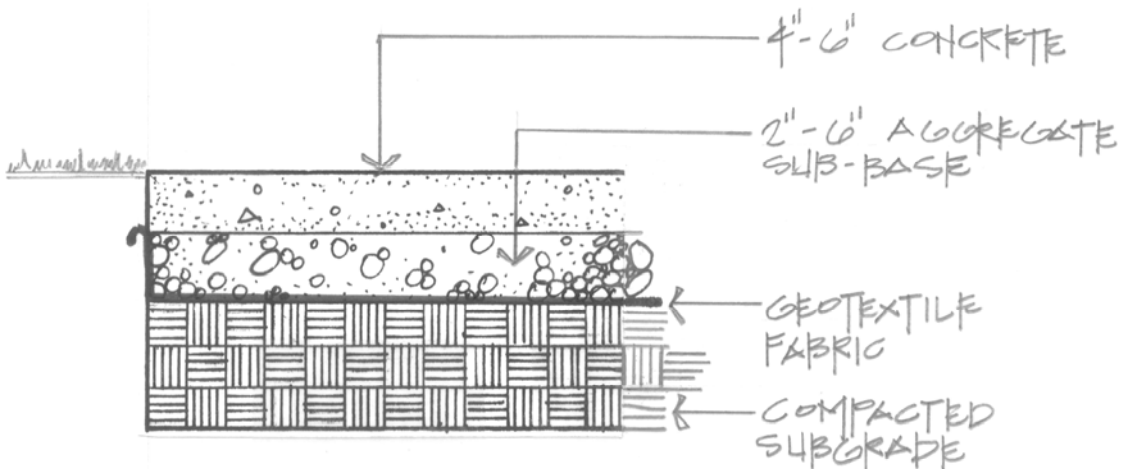
Lastly, a final variable that will affect typical trail development costs is labor. If an outside contractor is used, then local prevailing rates for construction crews can make the project more expensive than if public employees were to be used to perform the construction work. For example, a government-sponsored trail project can often be implemented using its force account labor (i.e., crews from its parks department, public works, or roads and bridges departments) to cut down on expenses since its employees' salaries are already paid for in the agency's regular payroll system. This approach assumes that departmental employees have time available to spend on the trail project without sacrificing other essential duties of their positions. It also assumes that the governing body has reviewed and approved of the approach to devote staff resources to the construction effort.

Cross Section Illustrations of Trail Classification Types

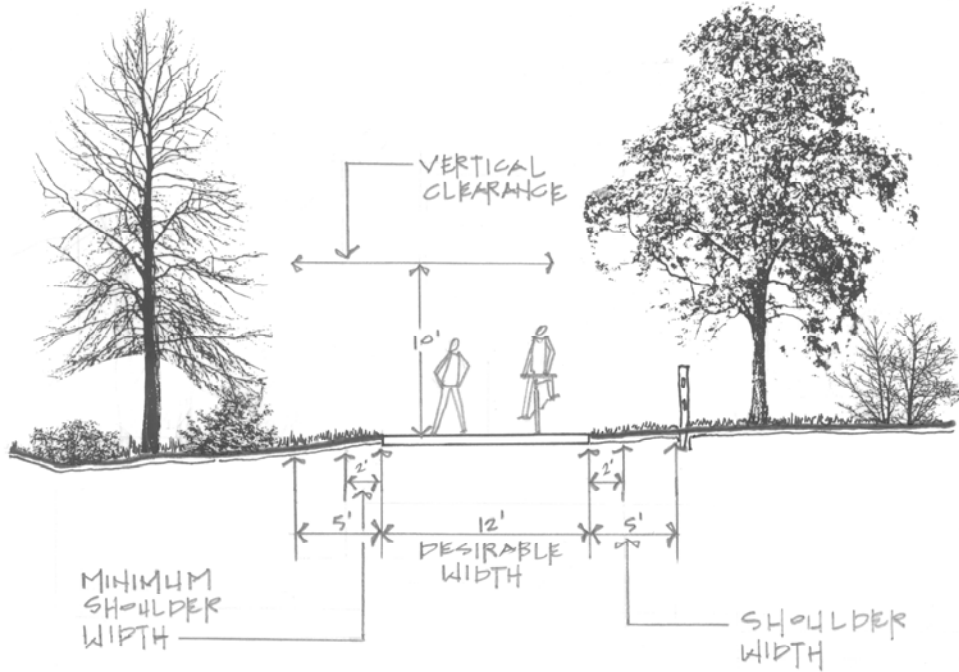
The trail cross sections and detail illustrations (pages 7-9) are visual examples of the County's recommended desirable and minimum principle standards which correspond with the trail design chart on page 5 of this document. Each trail classification illustration may depict multiple scenarios between desirable and minimum standards.



TYPICAL MACADAM TRAIL DETAIL

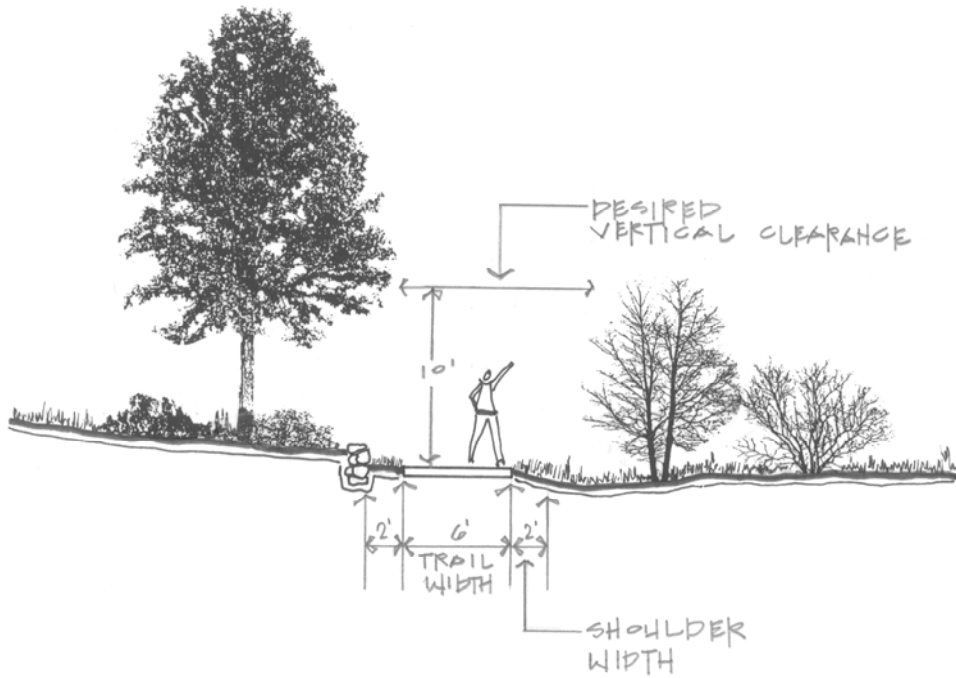


TYPICAL CONCRETE TRAIL DETAIL



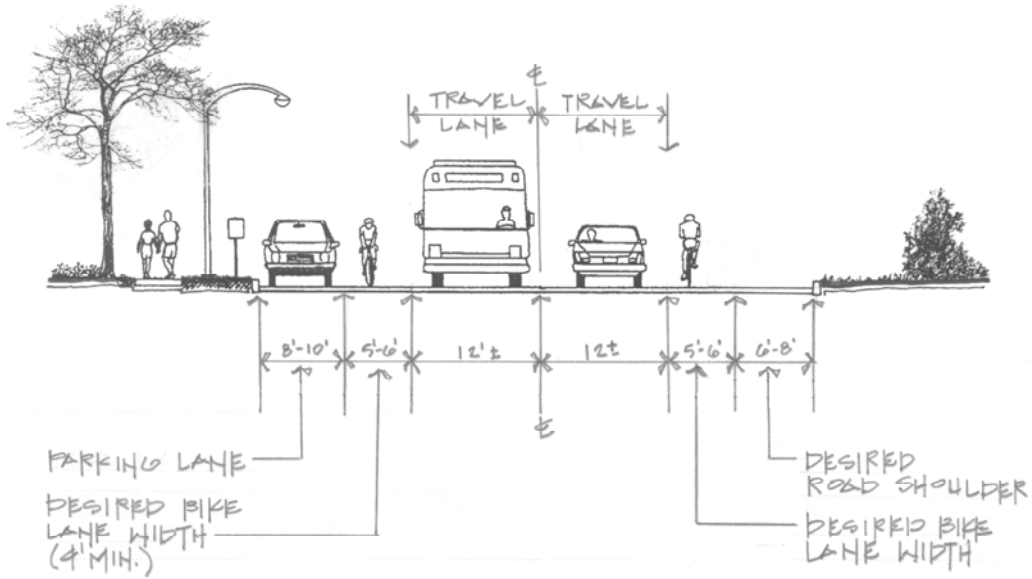
TYPICAL MULTIUSE TRAIL SECTION

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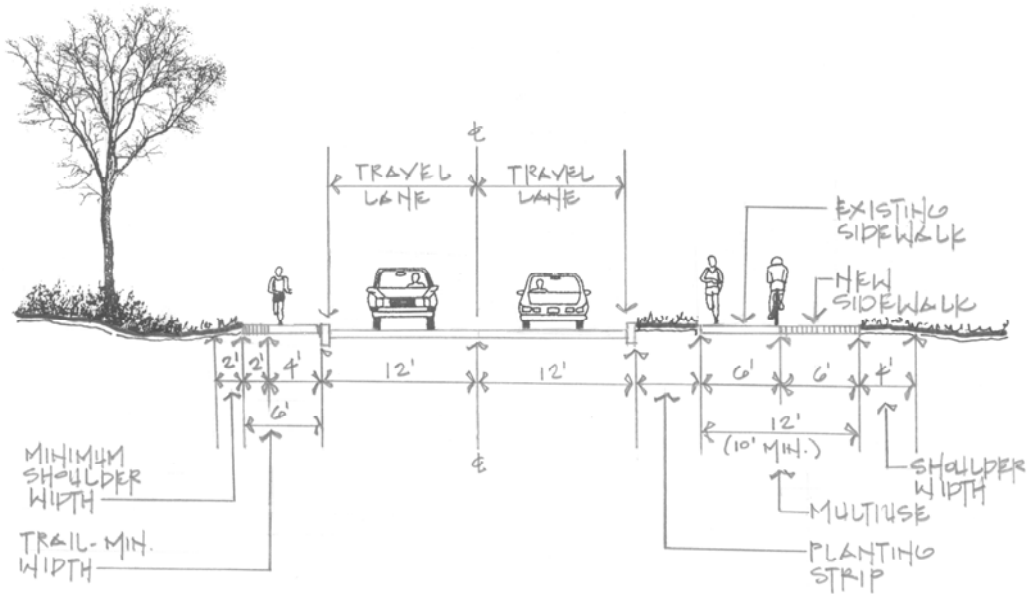
TYPICAL PATHWAY SECTION

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ON ROAD IMPROVEMENTS FOR BICYCLES

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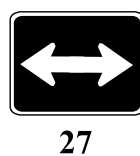
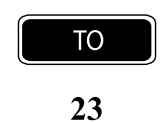
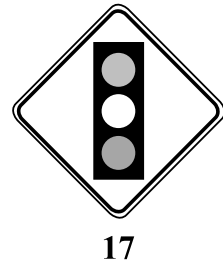
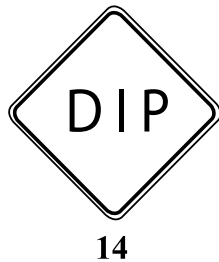
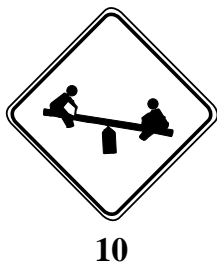
SIDEWALK RETROFIT

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Minimum Signage Dimensions

Sign Dimensions for Trail & Bicycle Facilities

Sign Type	Reference Code	Minimum Sign Size - inches	
		Multiuse	Roadway
Bike Route Ahead	1	18 x 18	30 x 30
Bike Route	2	24 x 18	24 x 18
Bike Lane	3	—	30 x 24
Share The Road	4	—	24 x 24
Bicycle Warning	5	18 x 18	24 x 24
Share The Road Plaque	5	—	18 x 24
Interstate Bicycle Route Sign	6	18 x 24	18 x 24
Bicycle Route Sign	7	12 x 18	12 x 18
Bicycle Parking	8	12 x 18	12 x 18
Bicycle Surface Condition	9	18 x 18	24 x 24
Bicycle Surface Condition Plaque	9	12 x 9	12 x 9
Playground	10	18 x 18	24 x 24
Hill	11	18 x 18	24 x 24
Bump	12	18 x 18	24 x 24
Pedestrian Crossing	13	18 x 18	24 x 24
Dip	14	18 x 18	24 x 24
Narrow Bridge	15	18 x 18	30 x 30
Bikeway Narrows	16	18 x 18	30 x 30
Signal Ahead (Same dimensions apply to Stop & Yield Ahead Signs)	17	18 x 18	30 x 30
Bicycle Guide Direction Signs	18,19	24 x 6	24 x 6
Street Name	20	18 x 6	18 x 6
Bicycle Route Supplemental Plaques	21,22,23	12 x 4	12 x 4
Route Sign Supplemental Plaques	24-29	12 x 9	12 x 9





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Sign Dimensions for Trail & Bicycle Facilities

Sign Type	Reference Code	Minimum Sign Size - inches	
		Multiuse	Roadway
Standard County Trail Sign	30	18 x 18	18 x 18
Stop	31	18 x 18	30 x 30
Yield	32	18 x 18 x 18	30 x 30 x 30
Bicycle Lane Supplemental Plaques	33	—	30 x 12
Movement Restriction	34-36, 38	12 x 18	18 x 24
Begin Right Turn Lane Yield to Bikes	37	—	36 x 30
Push Button for Green Light	39	9 x 12	9 x 12
Bicycle Wrong Way	40	12 x 18	12 x 18
Ride With Traffic Plaque	40	12 x 12	12 x 12
No Motor Vehicles	41	24 x 24	24 x 24
No Bicycles	42	24 x 24	24 x 24
No Parking Bike Lane	43,44	—	12 x 18
Pedestrians Prohibited	45	18 x 18	18 x 18
Bicycle Regulatory	46,47	12 x 18	12 x 18
Shared-Use Path Restriction	48	12 x 18	—
To Request Green Wait on Symbol	49	12 x 18	12 x 18
Railroad Crossbuck	50	24 x 4.5	48 x 9
Advance Grade Crossing	51	15 Dia.	15 Dia.

TRAIL NOTE: For additional design details, sign materials and further examples please reference the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways* written and published by the Federal Highway Administration.

These design standards will guide the county in future trail developments, as well as the municipalities applying for open space funds. Montgomery County and the 62 municipalities are pioneering ahead to develop a first-rate integrated trail system on a local and regional level, while creating an innovative recreational and preservation program for all others to accredit and pursue.

Trail & Bicycle Facilities Resource References

Bicycling Road Map, Montgomery County Planning Commission, Norristown, PA, 1999.

Community Trails Handbook, Brandywine Conservancy, Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, 1997.

Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Washington, D.C., 1999.

Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Washington, D.C., July 2004.

Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, 2003 ed., Federal Highway Administration, Washington, D.C., 2003.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, *Trails and Greenways Clearinghouse*, < <http://www.trailsandgreenways.org/resources/> >, accessed in 2005.

Ryan, Karen-Lee (ed), *Trails for the Twenty-First Century*, Island Press, Washington, D.C., 1993.



Appendix A – Potential Open Space Funding Sources

Potential Funding Sources from DCNR {Contact Info. Source– DCNR:
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants }

Six grant programs are administered by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation:

1. **Community Grant Program** – Grants require a 50 percent match except for Small Community Development type projects and certain technical assistance projects. Grants are awarded to municipalities for recreation, park and conservation projects. Projects types funded under the Community Grant Program include:

Rehabilitation and Development Projects - These projects involve the rehabilitation and development of public indoor and outdoor park, recreation and conservation areas and facilities; and renovation of existing parks and indoor/outdoor recreation facilities to improve safety and accessibility to individuals with disabilities and special populations such as minorities, low income and the elderly.

Acquisition Projects - These projects involve the acquisition of real property for park, recreation, conservation and open space purposes by fee simple title or other lesser interest that will insure the desired public benefit. Acquisition projects may be for the purchase of new park and recreation areas or expansion of existing sites.

The Small Community Development Projects - These projects provide a municipal applicant with a population of 5,000 or less with an alternative method of funding for rehabilitation and development of minor indoor and basic outdoor park, recreation and conservation areas and facilities. The maximum grant under this project type is \$40,000.

Planning and Technical Assistance Projects - These projects involve studies completed by professional consultants to help develop planning strategies and courses of action to address local park, recreation, and open space and conservation concerns. Long-range recreation plans, pre-studies, feasibility studies, and master site plans are eligible project types.

2. **Rails-to-Trails Grant Program** - This program provides 50/50 matching grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations for the planning, acquisition and development of rail-trail corridors. Eligible corridors include abandoned railroad rights-of-way or lands available for trail purposes under railbanking. Lands abutting rights-of-way which provide opportunities to form trail linkages and create trailheads and related support facilities are also eligible:

Rehabilitation and Development Projects - Eligible projects include the construction of trails and associated structures as well as support facilities.

Acquisition Projects - Land may be purchased through fee simple or a less than fee interest such as an easement.

Planning and Technical Assistance Projects - Rail-trail feasibility studies, rail-trail master plans and special purpose studies are eligible project types.

- 3. River Conservation Grant Program** - This program provides grants on a 50 percent matching basis to municipalities, counties, municipal and intermunicipal authorities, and river support groups to foster the conservation, restoration and enhancement of river resources:

Planning Projects - These projects involve the preparation of a river conservation plan which inventories the environmental, cultural and recreational values of a waterway or watershed; identifies potential threats or opportunities to the water resource; and defines the policies and actions necessary to conserve, restore, or enhance the resource. Once a plan is approved by DCNR, the waterway can be listed on the PA Rivers Conservation Registry to enable it to be eligible for implementation, acquisition and development funds.

Implementation Projects - These projects involve implementation of a non-development and non-acquisition type projects defined in a river conservation plan for a waterway that has been listed on the registry. Examples of eligible projects include investigations into river access, water quality monitoring and preparation of ordinances and zoning documents.

Development Projects - Grants are limited to a maximum of \$40,000 for development projects recommended in a river conservation plan for a registered waterway. Projects which involve river bank stabilization, riparian land improvement, stream improvement, and the provision of river access and recreation facility development (i.e., parking areas, restrooms, utilities, landscaping, etc.) are eligible.

Acquisition Projects - Grants are limited to a maximum of \$40,000 for the acquisition of land recommended in a river conservation plan for a registered waterway. Fee simple title or a less than fee interest such as an easement are eligible for purchase.

- 4. Heritage Parks Grant Program** - In April 1995, Governor Ridge designated the Schuylkill River Heritage Corridor a State Heritage Park. Grants require a 25-50 percent match, depending on project type.

Grants are available to municipalities, nonprofit organizations or federally designated commissions acting on behalf of the municipalities in a heritage park area. This designation allows grants to be awarded to further the objectives of the approved Management Action Plan for the heritage park area:

Special Purpose Study Projects - Grants awarded may be used to conduct feasibility studies, develop management action plans for heritage park areas, carry out specialized studies and the possible hiring of state heritage park managers.

Implementation Projects - Projects primarily include those related to acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and development of sites and buildings and interpretive/educational exhibits and materials.

5. **Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program** - Grants (range: \$2,500 to \$100,000) may range up to an 80/20 percent match except acquisition projects require a 50/50 match from the applicant. Eligible applicants include federal and state agencies, local governments and private organizations.

The grants provide funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for motorized and nonmotorized trail use. The wide array of projects eligible for funding includes:

TRAIL NOTE: Montgomery County will not fund trail development projects for motorized vehicles.

- ❑ redesigning, reconstructing, nonroutine maintenance, and relocating trails in order to mitigate and minimize the impact to the natural environment;
- ❑ developing urban trail linkages near homes and workplaces;
- ❑ maintaining existing recreational trails, including the grooming and maintenance of trails across snow;
- ❑ restoring areas damaged by usage of recreational trails and backcountry terrain;
- ❑ developing trail side and trail head facilities that meet goals identified by the National Recreational Trails Advisory Committee;
- ❑ providing features, which facilitate the access and use of trails by persons with disabilities;
- ❑ acquiring easements for trails or for trail corridors identified in the state trail plan;
- ❑ acquiring fee simple title to property from a willing seller, when the objective of the acquisition cannot be accomplished by acquisition of an easement or by other means;
- ❑ constructing new trails on state, county, municipal or private lands, where a recreational need for such construction is shown; and
- ❑ only as otherwise permissible while abiding to all restrictions and regulations, construction of new trails on federally owned land.

6. **Land Trust Grant Program** - This program is a source of funding for non-profit conservation or preservation organizations, conservancies and land trusts.

Grants provide 50 percent funding for acquisition and planning of open space and natural areas, which face imminent loss. Lands must be open to public use and priority is given to habitat for threatened species.

Acquisition Grants - Acquisition of lands which serve as critical habitat for rare, threatened or endangered plant or animal species or communities which are at risk of destruction or substantial degradation receive funding priority over other natural area acquisitions.

Planning Grants – Grants may be utilized for the preparation of documents useful in planning, developing, operating, protecting and managing natural areas and programs. Examples of eligible projects include: preservation and management plans for critical habitat, open space and natural areas; natural area inventories and studies; greenway and open space plans and feasibility studies.

Potential Funding Sources from PA DOT {Contact Info. Sources – DVRPC/PA DOT: www.dvrpc.org/transportation/capital / www.dot.state.pa.us }

Funds made available from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (DOT) are monies apportioned to the state from the federal government as a result of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). TEA-21 is the successor to the 1991 federal transportation bill commonly referred to as ISTEA. Projects which adhere to the following requirements are eligible for funding assistance on an 80/20 cost share basis, with 20% being the local share:

- ❑ Facilities must be located and designed pursuant to and incorporated within long range plans for the metropolitan planning area and the state.
- ❑ In general, no motorized vehicles shall be permitted to make use of the trails and pedestrian walkways.
- ❑ A bicycle project may only be carried out if it is determined that the project will be primarily for transportation purposes.

Below are three programs that relate to providing corridors for pedestrian and bicycle travel through surface transportation improvements:

1. **Surface Transportation (Transportation Enhancements: TE) Program** - The TE Program funds 'non-traditional' projects that enhance the transportation experience, mitigate the impacts of transportation facilities on communities and the environment, and enhance community character through transportation-related improvements.

Funding can be either 80/20 if the project entails design, engineering and construction or 100% for construction-only projects. Eligible applicants include any federal or state agency and county or municipal governments. Types of improvements eligible for funding include:

- ❑ provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists; familiar
- ❑ provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists;
- ❑ acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites;
- ❑ scenic or historic highway programs;
- ❑ landscaping or other scenic beautification;
- ❑ historic preservation;
- ❑ rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities;

- ▣ preservation of abandoned railway corridors, including the conversion and use thereof for trails;
- ▣ control and removal of outdoor advertising;
- ▣ archeological planning and research;
- ▣ mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff, or reduction of vehicle-caused wildlife mortality; and
- ▣ establishment of transportation museums.

2. **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program** - Projects providing facilities for pedestrians and bicycles may be funded under CMAQ if it is either determined to contribute to the attainment of a national ambient air quality standard or included in the states implementation plan designed to comply with the Clear Air Act.

Projects are selected for there ability to cost effectively reduce emissions from highway sources. CMAQ is an 80/20 reimbursement program open to public agencies, incorporated private firms and non-profit entities.

3. **Home Town Streets and Safe Routes to School (HTS & SRS) Program** – The overall program has two primary objectives: a) enhancing and improving streets that run through the centers of cities and towns to promote pedestrian circulation and safety; b) establishing safe pedestrian (student) routes and connections to and from schools.

HTS and SRS is an 80/20 reimbursement program open to any federal or state agency, county or municipal government, school district and non-profit organization. Improvements under the following programs may include:

HTS

Benches;
 Sidewalk improvements;
 Street Lighting;
 Transit bus shelter;
 Traffic calming;
 Crosswalks;
 Planter;
 Kiosks;
 Signage; and
 Bicycle amenities

SRS

Sidewalk construction;
 Crosswalks;
 Bike lanes;
 Trails;
 Traffic diversion improvements;
 Curb extensions;
 Traffic circles; and
 Raised median island

Potential Funding Source from the National Park Service (NPS)

{Contact Info. Source – NPS: www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca }

Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program – The program offers *technical assistance only* to nonprofit organizations, community groups, and local or state government agencies. Rivers and Trails technical staff offers the following types of assistance for recreation and conservation projects:

- Building partnerships to achieve community-set goals;
- Assessing resources;
- Developing concept plans;
- Engaging public participation;
- Identifying potential sources of funding;
- Creating public outreach;
- Organizational development; and
- Providing conservation and recreation information.

Examples of Rivers and Trails assisted community projects include trail and greenway planning, open space protection, river conservation, watershed planning, rail-trail conversions and urban greening.

National Park Service staff for the Rivers and Trails program are based in 30 field locations to make them more accessible to local governments and nonprofit organizations throughout the country.

Potential Funding Source from PECO Energy/National Lands Trust, Inc.

{Contact Info. Source - noted below}

Green Region – The PECO Energy Open Space Program {Contact Info. Source – Natural Lands Trust: www.natlands.org or PECO: www.peco.com }

Purpose/Program Guidelines

Recognizing that open space in our communities is a crucial piece of the quality of our lives, PECO Energy has committed itself to assisting municipalities in southeastern Pennsylvania with their on-going efforts to protect, acquire and improve open land.

PECO has, therefore, developed the Green Region grant program, which can be used in combination with other funding sources to cover a portion of the expenses associated with open space programs. Underlying the program parameters is PECO's endorsement of deliberate planning for open space protection by municipalities as a means to encourage the wisest use of scarce resources.

Eligible Applicants

Any Township, Borough or City incorporated within Bucks, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Delaware or Chester Counties.

Eligible Activities

- Up to 50% of the planning expenses associated with developing or updating municipal open space protection plans. Such expenses may include consultant fees, expenses associated with public input (hall rental, advertising, etc.), and publication.
- Staff time for municipal employees is not an eligible expense.
- Up to 75% of the direct and indirect expenses associated with the fee simple purchase (or receipt by donation) of open space properties identified in a municipal open space plan. Such expenses may include legal or consultant fees, survey, environmental assessments, appraisals, etc.
- The purchase price of the property and staff time for municipal employees are not considered eligible expenses.
- Relocation of owner/tenant, condemnation and building repair/demolition are not eligible.
- Up to 75% of the direct and indirect expenses associated with the purchase (or receipt by donation) of conservation easements (also known as “development rights”) on properties identified in a municipal open space plan. Such expenses may include legal or consultant fees, survey, environmental assessments, appraisals, etc.
- The purchase price of the easements and staff time for municipal employees is not considered an eligible expense.

Green Region Program Guidelines

- Up to 75% of the planning expenses to improve municipally-owned open spaces, or lands to be acquired by a municipality.
- These plans may be for habitat improvements such as installing or improving meadows, woodlands, and riparian buffers. On properties designated for passive recreation, the plans may also be for the installation of capital improvements, such as trails, boardwalks, kiosks and observation platforms. Such expenses may include consultant fees for landscape architects, park designers, botanists, engineers etc. Staff time for municipal employees is not an eligible expense.
- Up to 50% of the cost of materials and labor to install habitat improvements and capital improvements for passive recreation similar to those in item 4, above, on municipally-owned open space, when such improvements are identified in a municipal open space plan. Staff time for municipal employees is not an eligible expense.

Grant Amounts and Timing

- Grants will be for no less than \$5,000, and no more than \$10,000.
- The Grants shall be available twice a year, with application deadlines in the Fall and Spring.
- Award notices will be made within six weeks of each application deadline. All applicants will be notified in writing of PECO's decision on their applications.
- Any successful recipient will be expected to fully expend the grant award within eighteen months of receipt of the funds.
- Retroactive reimbursement for costs accrued between the application deadline and the grant award will be allowed, with cause, on a case-by-case basis. All requests for such reimbursement shall be made in writing to the project administrator.
- A grant recipient may not apply for an additional grant until the current grant is fully expended.
- Matching funds shall be in cash, not in-kind services.