

APPENDIX H

Existing Planning Tools

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AH.1 Monroe 2020

The County's comprehensive plan, Monroe 2020 provides the means for establishing the community's future that capitalizes on its natural assets and address existing problems. The existing Plan seeks to preserve and enhance the County's natural environment while providing for balanced economic growth. To achieve this goal, the plans encourages development of growth centers as a positive alternative to the continuation of sprawl development, integrating large areas of open space into the landscape, and minimize the need for public services. Monroe 2020 guides growth that will:

- Protect and enhance land and water resources
- Prompt economic development and fiscal responsibility;
- Enhance community character and community life; and
- Coordinate development of public facilities, infrastructure and services and compact patterns of land use.

A foundation for further implementation of Monroe 2020 already exists. During the past decade, implementation efforts of the comprehensive plan introduced many local officials to two Monroe 2020 programs, the County's Municipal Partnership Program (MPP) and the Financial Assistance Program (FAP). These programs when fully achieved can provide the basis for a sustainable future for the county.

AH.2 Municipal Partnership Program (MPP)

The MPP was established to promote cooperation between the local and county governments to help successfully implement the Monroe 2020 through a coordinated multi-municipal strategy to guide growth. The MPP provides municipalities and the county with a formal structure to coordinate planning activities and achieve consistency between and among the partners. The program advances communication between the county and municipal officials by focusing cooperative efforts between municipal planning commissions, municipal zoning hearing boards, advisory groups, and interested citizens. Advantages for Monroe County local governments participating in the Municipal Partnership Program include:

- **Coordination of County and local planning** for consistency between county and municipal plans.

- **Improvement of County-municipal/public-private sector communications** since implementing projects for shared goals requires cooperation and consent of by all partners.
- **Increased opportunities for county, state, and federal funding**, since government and philanthropic funding sources give preference to projects implementing regional projects consistent with local and County plans.
- **Improved planning of infrastructure** for transportation, recreation, and utilities done on a broader scale that links development needs with resource conservation.
- **Improves sustainable economic development planning** from a regional or multi-municipal or county-wide or public-private basis, to help balance the tax base and reduce inter-municipal competition through innovative approaches to watershed management.
- **Improves management of community resources** – natural, historic, and cultural resources, fiscal commitments for partnered communities are reduced when managed on a multi-municipal basis.
- **Coordinates open space resources** so that open space is linked into green infrastructure plans for sustainable growth.
- **Provides technical support** to participating municipalities for economic and resource planning and management.
- **Provides shared data-** all data used to perform the audits and all data developed as a result of the audits will be shared with the municipalities.
- **Coordinates efforts with the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC)** so that the PA MPC incentives for municipalities taking advantage of Acts 67 & 68 provisions that direct state agencies to “... consider and may rely upon comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances when reviewing applications for the funding and permitting of infrastructure or facilities.”
- **Provides consistency among municipal regulations and predictability for the development community.** Section 301.4 of the MPC states that guidelines shall be developed to promote uniformity with respect to local planning and zoning terminology and common types of municipal land use regulations.

AH.3 The Financial Assistance Program

(FAP) was established by the Board of County Commissioners and the Open Space Advisory Board (OSAB) to provide financial support to Monroe County municipalities for the development and adoption of resource protection ordinances. These ordinances can successfully implement Monroe 2020 goals, as well as advance the Commonwealth’s land use policies as promoted by the Governor’s Green Government Council, Keystone Principles and State Environmental Board.

AH.4 Brodhead/McMichaels Watersheds, Act 167 Plan

The updated Act 167 (Act 167) Stormwater Management Plan for the Brodhead and McMichaels Creek Watersheds requires that municipalities located within the Brodhead and McMichaels Creek watersheds stormwater ordinances that comply with the updated plan. The plan includes a model stormwater ordinance to help municipalities comply with Act 167.

Developed on a watershed scale, Act 167 Plan addresses the federal and state requirements that all stormwater regulation and management address all impacts from stormwater runoff and non-point source pollution and include provisions for controlling erosion and the rate, quality and volume of stormwater runoff. The DRBC Special Protection Waters regulations require municipalities to include non-point source (NPS) pollution control provisions in their stormwater ordinances. Federal and state National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits for stormwater discharges from construction sites require not only NPS control but also require that increases in stormwater volume be managed on site to recharge groundwater and comply with state water quality standards. (Todd)

When municipalities adopt the model ordinance and associated technical criteria, the opportunity for expedited permit review, project approval, sustainable water resource management and regulatory compliance exists. In order to ensure regulatory consistency, the model stormwater ordinance was reviewed by the DEP, the DRBC and the Department of Community and Economic Development. In a parallel effort, the conservation district has been working with all levels of government within the regulatory framework to allow municipal and conservation district review to act as a surrogate for the existing multi-agency review.

AH.5 State Water Plan

The State Water Plan asserts that “Protecting and enhancing Pennsylvania’s water resources is the overarching theme that resonates throughout the plan” (State Water Plan). “The Plan offers tools and guidance for decision makers for those who make decisions based upon the availability of water of adequate quantity and quality. The plan should be useful to those who wish to locate and design their projects so that the availability of water resources does not constrain them; those who wish to preserve high environmental quality where it exists and to achieve it where it does not; and local governments with planning, conservation and economic development responsibilities...” (State Water Plan)