



PASSAGES

SPECIAL
LAND USE INFORMATION
EDITION

News About the PA Route 23 Environmental Impact Statement

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What is Land Use and...

Three centuries ago the first settlers moved to the area now known as Lancaster County and established farms along the banks of the Little Beaver Creek. Some of the earliest groups to settle in the area were Anabaptists of Swiss-Germanic descent. These groups selected the area for its rich limestone soils and its climate, which was similar to that of their homeland. The first permanent settlement was established just after 1700 by a group of Swiss Mennonites led by Hans Herr, whose Germanic-style home still stands just south of Lancaster City.

The settlers found relatively flat land that was easy to clear, some of the most fertile farmland in the world, good water and several large markets nearby where they could sell their goods. That unique blend of natural resources and commercial opportunity that made the area so attractive in the 18th century continues to make Lancaster County a desirable place to live and work.

Lancaster County is growing. As its population increases, communities are becoming concerned that uncontrolled growth will change their quality of life. Concerns include traffic congestion, loss of prime farmland, open spaces and natural areas. Growth management has become even more important.

In Pennsylvania, municipalities are responsible for managing their own growth. Ultimately, each citizen also shares that responsibility by voting for their municipal representatives. Local municipal leaders are working together, with assistance from the Lancaster County Planning Commission, to preserve cultural and agricultural-based resources while continuing to invest in future growth and development.

...Why do we need to study it?

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PENNDOT) is looking for a solution that will meet the transportation needs in the PA Route 23 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) study area. This study area includes all or a portion of seven municipalities (New Holland Borough, East Earl, Earl, West Earl, Upper Leacock, East Lampeter and Manheim Townships). PENNDOT strongly believes in helping these communities maintain their way of life.

Growth is coming to these communities even if no transportation improvement is built. PENNDOT and the County of Lancaster have agreed to include land use planning in the environmental and engineering studies currently underway for the PA 23 EIS study. The PA 23 EIS Land Use study team is working with local municipalities to figure out how future growth can be managed.



Members of the PA 23 EIS Team are working with municipal officials and the public to identify appropriate land use planning measures.

Planning Basics Every Person Should Know

Growth Areas

Growth areas are a critical part of Lancaster County's Growth Management strategy. The basic idea is to encourage future growth in or near areas that are already developed. This will help preserve valuable areas, including productive farmlands and other natural resources. All of the municipalities in the study area have designated or are considering growth areas. Since growth areas were established, municipalities have been directing an increasing amount of growth to these areas, but more work remains to be done.

Comprehensive Plan

Learn about your community's comprehensive plan. It shows how a community sees itself twenty years into the future. Where will new residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and institutional development happen? What new roads and public facilities will be needed? This plan is not law, but a community can use it as a guide for its future growth and development. Many municipalities update their comprehensive plans every 10 years.

Capital Improvement Plan

A Capital Improvement Plan is a schedule for public improvement projects, including transportation facilities. The projects are listed by importance and funding sources are identified. This plan is important because it attempts to coordinate roadway, trail, and other infrastructure projects with land development.

Zoning

Zoning uses a map and ordinances. The map shows zones or districts where land uses (i.e. residential, commercial, industrial) are allowed. Ordinances describe what kind of development is allowed in that zone or district. They should support the existing and future needs that are listed in the comprehensive plan.

Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances

Subdivision and land development ordinances guide how land can be divided and how land can be developed for residential, commercial or industrial use. The ordinances guarantee that new roads, water and sewer lines, and drainage systems are well designed and constructed.

Multi-municipal Comprehensive Plans

Changes in Pennsylvania law allow municipalities to plan together. Planning together gives them more control where development happens since they can plan for all zoning types (a zoning requirement) over a larger geographic area instead of within each municipality. This lets municipalities designate growth areas and rural resource areas. All of the municipalities located in the study area are part of a multi-municipal planning effort.

Official Map

The official map and ordinance identifies and reserves public land for future projects such as new parks or transportation facilities. This map is useful because it shows the planned changes in a community and ties the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning, and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances to the Capital Improvement Plan.

What has happened with the Land Use Study so far?

The PA 23 EIS Project Team planners looked at how land is being used today. What are communities like? How has development occurred? This information helped identify land that is more suitable for development (i.e. land zoned for development, or within growth areas) and land that is less suitable for development (i.e. floodplains and agricultural easements).

The project team also studied Lancaster County's projections to see how many new people and jobs are expected to be in the area by the year 2030 (the project's design year) without the influence of a transportation improvement. Then they calculated how many acres of land it might take to provide houses and jobs for these new people. This information is shown on project mapping below.

Will the Land Use Study be effective?

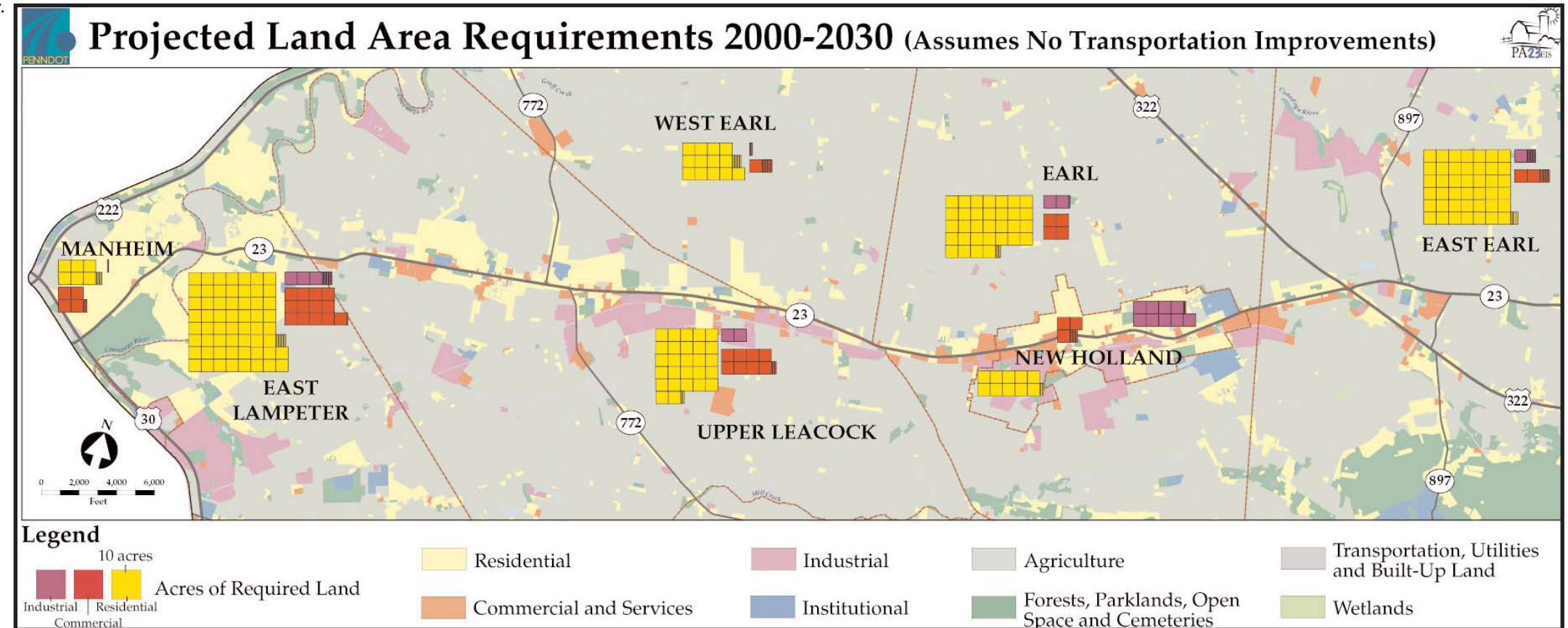
Through this study, PENNDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have provided tools to help municipalities within the study area plan for future growth. However, PENNDOT and FHWA do not have authority to implement or enforce land use plans. Municipal leaders, with help from Lancaster County, are responsible for implementing growth management plans.

There is no guarantee that the municipalities will follow this project's land use recommendations. However, municipal leaders and the public have supported managing growth since this project began in 1997. Putting the best growth management plan in place today sets an example. It provides guidance for future municipal leaders. With that in mind, the project team has been working with the municipalities to help make land use recommendations workable.

Who does the Planning where I live?

Elected officials (supervisors, council or commissioners) approve all ordinances and resolutions made by boards or commissions in the municipality. Each municipality in the PA 23 EIS study area also has a planning committee or a planning commission that handles planning issues. Some municipalities have full- or part-time zoning and planning staff that deals with planning administration and provides professional guidance.

What other municipal boards or commissions may be involved with planning? The Zoning Hearing Board, Historic Review Board, Recreation Board, or Sewer and Water Authority all deal with planning issues.



What is the Eastern Lancaster County Land Use Study?

The Eastern Lancaster County Land Use Study (ELCLUS) has been underway since the beginning of 2002. The purpose of the study is to develop a vision and strategies to guide future land use in the eastern portion of the County between US 222 and PA 340. The PA 23 EIS study and the ELCLUS both began as the PA23 Corridor Study. The EIS is now evaluating transportation alternatives and associated land use strategies for the EIS study corridor that extends approximately one mile north and south of existing PA 23 from US 30 to just east of US 322. The ELCLUS is developing land use strategies for the area outside the EIS study area but falling within the earlier PA 23 Corridor Study. This area includes all or parts of 14 municipalities.

The ELCLUS team has been working with local municipalities and other stakeholders to evaluate existing land use conditions and development trends in the area. They are currently developing a land use plan that incorporates tools that municipalities can use to manage future land use and address other transportation corridors of concern in the ELCLUS study area. The PA 23 EIS team and the ELCLUS team are coordinating their work so that the final result is a land use planning effort that supports municipalities vision of the future, land use goals, and is consistent with the county comprehensive plan.

What happens next?

The team will look at two different scenarios of future land use for each of the transportation alternatives. The first scenario will show how the communities might look in the year 2030 if a transportation alternative is built and the current pattern of development continues. It will also look at new patterns of development that might result from the transportation alternative. The second scenario will show future growth where communities want it to happen. It will be consistent with municipal plans and Lancaster County's growth management plan.

To make this second scenario a reality, strong growth management measures will be needed. These measures will both encourage growth to happen where communities want it and discourage new growth from happening in areas where it is not welcome. The project team will recommend for the PA 23 EIS study area, some of the tools developed by Lancaster County in the Eastern Lancaster County Land Use Study (also in progress).

These scenarios of the future and growth management measures will be shared with municipal officials and the Community Advisory Committee. The project team expects that these local experts will provide valuable insight that will be used as the plans move forward.

Anticipated PA 23 EIS Schedule

Summer 2001

Notice to Proceed

Fall 2001 to Spring 2002

Detailed Environmental Investigations and Transportation Alternative Development, Land Use Visioning Conference

Summer 2002

PUBLIC MEETING

Fall/Winter 2002/2003

Detailed Environmental Investigations and Transportation Alternative Refinement

Spring/Summer 2003

Preliminary Land Use Plan Development

Summer 2003

PUBLIC MEETING

Transportation Alternative Refinement

Fall/Winter 2003/2004

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Preparation

Winter /Spring 2004

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Circulation

PUBLIC HEARING

Summer 2004

Final Land Use Plan Development

Fall 2004

Final Environmental Impact Statement

Winter 2005

Record of Decision

How Can I Learn More About Land Use Planning?

- Learn about your local government.
- Learn about the views of your elected officials.
- Attend and participate in public meetings.
- Volunteer to serve on formal commissions or informal committees.

Check Out These Web Sites, too!

- Lancaster County Planning Commission:
www.co.lancaster.pa.us/planning
- State of Pennsylvania
Department of Community & Economic Development:
www.inventpa.com
- State of Pennsylvania "Growing Smarter" Initiative
(general land use reports and publications)
www.landuseinpa.com
- American Planning Association (APA):
www.planning.org
- Pennsylvania Planning Association (state chapter of APA):
www.planningpa.org
- Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Educational Institute:
cax.aers.psu.edu/pmpei/

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