

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

The implementation of proposed improvements will be largely contingent upon Pottstown Borough and North Coventry Township continuing, expanding and strengthening the partnership that they have initiated with this study. Funding agencies of all types value projects that involve multiple committed stakeholders. The following entities are likely local partners toward implementation of the recommended “Reconnections” improvements.

- Borough of Pottstown
- North Coventry Township
- Chester County
- Montgomery County
- PennDOT District 6-0
- SEPTA
- Pottstown Urban Transit
- Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area
- Montgomery County Community College
- Coventry Mall
- Developer John Wolfington
- Laurel Locks Farm & Brandywine Conservancy
- Bellwood Golf Club
- Pottstown and Owen Roberts School Districts
- Preservation Pottstown / Pottstown Historical Society
- Tri-County Chamber of Commerce
- Pottstown Downtown Improvement District Authority (PDIDA)
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

1. Phased Implementation Plan

Under the most favorable of conditions, it will require perseverance and time to accomplish the ambitious recommendations contained in this study. However, many of the plan’s recommendations can be pursued concurrently, since funding for various projects will be from different funding sources.

To enhance the planning basis for moving forward with the Reconnections recommendations both municipalities should adopt the final version of the plan and incorporate it into their respective comprehensive plans. While this is somewhat unusual (to adopt recommendations for an adjoining municipality), as the local area Council of Governments continues work on its joint comprehensive plan, the Reconnections Study will set a precedent for inter-municipal cooperation.

It is recommended that as one of the first priorities in moving ahead the Reconnections agenda forward, the two municipalities develop a three to five year funding plan for short term improvements that identifies potential sources, amounts, application deadlines, etc. This should be coordinated with Pottstown’s and North Coventry’s individual funding and grants program in order to avoid any conflicts in funding initiatives in each community.

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

a. Short Term Projects

The Reconnection Committee has established Short Term Priorities for a select number of recommended projects. The basis for selecting these short term project priorities include:

- Project size and cost
- Inter-municipal participation
- Likelihood of funding partners
- Relationship to interconnectivity between the two communities

Based on those and other criteria, the following recommendations were designated as Short Term Projects / Priorities:

Hanover Street Bridge Improvements – A highly visible and symbolic project, the bridge improvements can be accomplished in phases. As a gateway to both communities, the bridge presents the opportunity to celebrate the river and each community in a highly obvious and literal manner.

Potential Funding Partners:

- PennDOT
- Montgomery County
- Chester County
- DCED
- William Penn Foundation
- Schuylkill River Heritage Park (DCNR)

Railroad Trestle Pedestrian Bridge – A discreet connection that can be pursued as an important link to the Schuylkill River Trail and between local recreational resources.

Potential Funding Partners:

- Montgomery County
- Chester County
- Schuylkill River Heritage Park (DCNR)
- TEA-3 Enhancements (PennDOT)
- SRGA

River Road Trail – Creation of a waterfront trail will create an entirely new understanding of the riverfront in the Township. Initially this project can be implemented on a test basis to determine how the one way traffic system on River Road functions. This project can attract a variety of funding sources.

Potential Funding Partners:

- DEP Growing Greener
- Chester County
- Schuylkill River Heritage Park (DCNR)
- SRGA
- Coventry Mall

Laurelwood Road Improvements – Continuation of pedestrian access along River Road en route to the Coventry Mall.

Potential Funding Partners:

- DCED
- Chester County
- Coventry Mall

Hanover Street Streetscape Improvements – This large project can most likely be undertaken in phases. Street tree planting may be an initial phase. Create a much more attractive and pedestrian friendly roadway. Initial emphasis should be placed between River Road and the Rt. 422 Interchange.

Potential Funding Partners:

- PennDOT
- Chester County
- DCED

Rt. 724 Bikeway Improvements – A relatively simple project despite its length. Initial emphasis should be for roadway shoulder improvements and/or bike lanes through PennDOT's "Betterment" program which uses district maintenance funds. Later initiatives would be sidewalks and street trees.

Potential Funding Partners:

- PennDOT
- Chester County

Scenic Overlay Protection – A no cost to either municipality (except for consultant and staff time,) ordinance revision for both municipalities to afford areas along the river additional protection for the river areas scenic areas.

Acquire Bellwood Golf Club Floodplain Site – Afford permanent protection to the wetland habitat areas along the river. Opportunity for construction of the Riverside Trail.

Potential Funding Partners:

- DEP (Growing Greener)
- Chester County
- DCNR

b. Long Term Projects / Priorities are all other proposed improvements projects.

Some initial strategies for moving forward (now) with the long term projects (with the anticipation that these projects will take more time to fund), include the following actions:

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Keim Street Bridge Replacement & Improvements - Initiate discussion with PennDOT, Montgomery County and Chester County and local and regional legislators now to position this project for placement on PennDOT's twelve year plan.

Periodic Flooding in South Pottstown – Initiate a dialogue with the US Army Corps of Engineers to determine if flooding along this section of the river can be mitigated.

Utility Easement Right of Way Trail – Make a formal contact with PECO to discuss the township's interest in utilizing this right of way for a trail connection. This will allow the township to ascertain issues and plan for trail implementation.

2. Potential Funding Sources

Schuylkill Heritage Area Grants

DCNR makes grants available to promote public-private partnerships that preserve and enhance natural, cultural, historic and recreation resources to stimulate economic development through heritage tourism. Grants are available to municipalities, nonprofit organizations or federally designated commissions acting on behalf of the municipalities in heritage park areas. Grants are awarded for a variety of purposes including feasibility studies; specialized studies; and implementation projects. Planning Grants require a 25 percent local match and Implementation Grants require a 50-50 or equal match. This program is administered through the Schuylkill River Greenway Association.

Urban and Community Forestry Grants

Can be used to encourage the planting of trees in Pennsylvania communities. Small municipal challenge grants provide 50 percent of the cost of the purchase and delivery of trees. Special grants are available for local volunteer groups, civic clubs, and municipalities to train and use volunteers for street tree inventories, and other projects in urban and community forestry. The Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council administers the program.

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/pucfc/grants.html>

Legislative Funding

State and federal elected officials can often include items into legislation for worthy projects in their districts. A conversation between county and municipal officials and legislators is the way to begin this process. This should be a well-coordinated effort between the Borough of Pottstown and North Coventry Township and their respective counties. This type of funding should be targeted toward capital improvement projects.

DCED Community Revitalization Funds

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Community Revitalization Fund is a state program that supports local initiatives that improve the stability of communities and enhance local economies. The grant program covers a wide range of eligible uses including: acquisition of land, buildings, and right-of-ways; recreation projects; programs and developments that build capacity of the local community and relevant local organizations to better serve the needs of the community, and other reasonable and necessary expenses related to community-based activities. Active support of the district's state senator and / or state representative is critical in a successful grant application. Each of DCED's funding programs is

listed and described below.

Community Revitalization Program

This funding source, which ranges from \$5,000 to \$50,000, supports local initiatives aimed at improving a community's quality of life and improving business conditions.

State Planning Assistance Grant

This program provides funding to municipalities for preparation and maintenance of community development plans, policies, and implementation measures. The grant requires a 50% match and priority is given to projects with regional participation.

Small Communities Planning Assistance

This grant is awarded to municipalities having a population of 10,000 people or less. The grant offers a no-match funding source that can be used to support neighborhood revitalization, economic development, community conservation and housing plans. Regardless of the project type, the grantee must demonstrate the project benefits for low to moderate-income residents.

Community Development Block Grants

This program provides financial and technical assistance to communities for infrastructure improvements, housing rehabilitation, public services, and community facilities. The program targets local governments and 70% of each grant must be used for activities or projects that benefit low to moderate-income people.

PennDOT

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation may provide assistance with any on-road cycling route that is proposed. PennDOT may provide signs and installation of "share the road" markings and, if any shoulder widening is necessary, the local district may provide these improvements through their "betterment" maintenance funds. This source might be applicable to the bike lanes proposed on Route 724.

Montgomery County

Montgomery County may be able to provide matching funds (50/50) to state, federal or local funds through the Municipal Open Space Grant Program. This program will fund both land acquisition and development of trail and park facilities. Eligible applicants are municipalities and non-profit organizations. The recently approved County Open Space Bond Issue will make Pottstown eligible for funding for park, open space, trail and historic sites funding. Many of the linkage components of the Reconnections plan may make good candidates for this funding.

Additionally, under the County's Urban Area Revitalization Program, Pottstown qualifies for annual funds for improvements and programs related to the redevelopment of its urban core. Most of the recommendations proposed in this study would qualify under this funding program.

Chester County

Text to be added in final report.

North Coventry Township / Borough of Pottstown

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

Regardless of how successful funding applications are for the Reconnections improvements, some amount of local matching funds will be required. Occasionally, local funding of design and engineering will be required to move a project to a point where it can be successfully funded by an agency for construction. These design costs can be counted as a match with many funding sources.

Often, grant sources allow services “in-kind” in place of cash to count as a match. It is strongly suggested that both municipalities immediately begin and keep a detailed inventory of municipal staff and/or official time spent on the reconnections project. Occasionally, grantors may allow time spent to date to count as part of the in-kind match for funds. This record will also demonstrate a continued commitment on the part of the municipality to the successful implementation of the master plan.

Local Schools

Local schools may also be of assistance in several ways. The student body might get involved with clubs, fundraising events, and trail / Schuylkill River cleanup days, and other community programming. The faculty could incorporate the trail into various curricula with students helping to develop and possibly maintain the trail or a section of river as part of a classroom assignment or after school club. While the amounts of funds raised may be relatively small, this process builds constituents and support that is critical to the long-term success of a project.

The following grant information was taken from: [Living with the River - Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, 2003.](#)

Cultural Resources

- [Certified Local Government Funding](#)

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Certified Local Government Grants requiring a 60/40 match are available to support projects in six categories: Cultural Resource Surveys, National Register Nominations, Technical and Planning Assistance, Educational and Interpretative Programs, Staffing and Training, and Pooling and Third Party Administration. The grants are administered on a competitive basis, and the awards are made annually based on a peer review process. Funding under this program is limited to Certified Local Governments.

- [Keystone Historic Preservation Grants](#)

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Keystone Historic Preservation Grants requiring a 50/50 cash match are available for

the preservation, restoration and/or rehabilitation of historic resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The grants are administered on a competitive basis, and the awards are made annually based on a peer review process. Nonprofit organizations and public agencies that own or support a publicly accessible historic property listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places, or that own or support a contributing historic property in a National Register Historic District, may apply for grant assistance.

- PHMC Historic Preservation Grants

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

In 1999, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and Preservation Pennsylvania launched a campaign to gather information as the first step in developing a five-year historic preservation plan for Pennsylvania. The plan focuses on (1) educating Pennsylvanians about our heritage and its value, (2) building better communities through preservation, and (3) providing strong leadership at the state level. Historic Preservation Grants are available in two different amounts to support projects in the categories of Cultural Resource Surveys, National Register Nominations, Planning and Development Assistance, Educational and Interpretive Programs, and Archaeology.

- Local History Grants

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Local History Grants are available in two different amounts to support projects in the categories of Public Programs, Research and Writing, and Educational Programs. The following are a few of the types of organizations that are eligible to apply: colleges and universities, community groups, heritage organizations, historical societies, libraries (public and private), local governments, museums, schools and school districts, etc. Grant amounts up to and including \$5,000 require no matching funds, and grants in amounts of \$5,001 and up to and including \$15,000 require 50/50 matching funds.

- Historical Marker Grants

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Grants requiring a cash match (generally 50/50) are available to support the manufacture of approved state historical markers. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission approves historical marker nominations annually based upon the review of an independent panel of experts. Any nonprofit organization or public agency that wishes to support a state historical marker previously approved by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and that meets the eligibility requirements may apply for funding. Grants are generally awarded on a 50/50 cash matching basis. Grant awards for city and roadside markers generally will not exceed \$550 and \$650, respectively.

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- Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Pennsylvania Rehabilitation investment tax credits are the most widely used historic preservation incentive program. Certain expenses incurred in connection with the rehabilitation of an old building are eligible for a tax credit. Rehabilitation investment tax credits are available to owners and certain long-term leases of income producing properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are two rates: 20% for historic buildings and 10% for non-residential, non-historic buildings built before 1936.

- Charitable Contribution Deduction

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

The Pennsylvania charitable contribution deduction is taken in the form of a conservation easement and enables the owner of a "certified historic structure" to receive a one-time tax deduction. A conservation easement usually involves the preservation of a building's façade by restricting the right to alter its appearance.

- Preservation Tax Incentives

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/brochure2.htm#Preservation%20Tax%20Incentives>

The Federal government encourages the preservation of historic buildings through various means. One of these is the program of Federal tax incentives to support the rehabilitation of historic and older buildings. The Preservation Tax Incentives reward private investment in rehabilitating historic properties such as offices, rental housing, and retail stores. Current tax incentives for preservation, established by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 (PL 99-514; Internal Revenue Code Section 47 [formerly Section 48(g)]) include: 1) a 20% tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of certified historic structures and 2) a 10% tax credit for the rehabilitation of non-historic, non-residential buildings built before 1936. For both credits, the rehabilitation must be a substantial one and must involve a depreciable building.

Economic Development and Community Revitalization

- Small Business First (SBF)

http://www.inventpa.com/docs/Business_Financing_Directory.pdf

Small Business First provides funding for small businesses, including: low-interest loan financing for land and building acquisition and construction; machinery and equipment purchases and working capital. Eligible small businesses (100 employees or less) may include: manufacturing, industrial, agricultural processors, mining enterprises, export-related, advanced technology and computer-related services, hotels, motels or restaurants, environmental compliance/pollution prevention, land and building acquisition and

construction, etc.

- Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority (PMBDA)

http://www.inventpa.com/docs/Business_Financing_Directory.pdf

The Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority provides low-interest loan financing to businesses owned and operated by ethnic minorities for land and building acquisition; building construction and renovation; machinery and equipment acquisition and installation; and working capital.

- Community Economic Development Loan Program (CED)

http://www.inventpa.com/docs/Business_Financing_Directory.pdf

The Community Economic Development Loan Program provides low-interest loans for projects in distressed communities, in an effort to stimulate self-help initiatives and help people build assets at the individual, family and community levels. Small businesses (100 employees or less) that are located in a DCED designated distressed community or Keystone Opportunity Zone are eligible to apply. Uses include: land and building acquisition; building, construction and renovation; machinery and equipment acquisition and installation, and working capital. Loans may be up to \$200,000 or 50% of total eligible project cost – whichever is less.

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

<http://www.hud.gov/progdesc/cdbgent.cfm>

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is federally funded through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The program awards grants in order to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services. CDBG funds are to be used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons, carry out activities which aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight, or address existing conditions that pose a serious and immediate threat to the welfare of the community where other financial resources are not available to meet these needs. CDBG funds may be used for activities that include, but are not limited to: acquisition of real property; relocation and demolition; rehabilitation of residential and non-residential structures; construction of public facilities and improvements, such as water and sewer facilities, streets, neighborhood centers; the conversion of schools for eligible purposes, as well as public services.

- Pennsylvania Land Recycling Program

<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/airwaste/wm/landrecy/default.htm>

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The Pennsylvania Land Recycling Program's goal is to help transform vacant brown-fields into job-producing sites while protecting the environment. Grant and low-interest loan financing is provided to perform environmental site assessment and remediation work at former industrial sites. Public and private nonprofit economic development entities and companies involved in reuse of former industrial land are eligible for financial assistance, which includes grants and loans up to \$200,000 for environmental assessment and \$1 million for remediation.

Environmental Resources – Watershed Protection and Restoration

- Growing Greener

<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/growgreen/>

Signed into law in 1999 and reauthorized in 2002, Growing Greener is the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania's history to address critical environmental concerns. Over the next 10 years, \$1.3 billion will be distributed among four state agencies to address a variety of projects. Included are funds available from the Department of Agriculture (farmland and open-space preservation), Department of Environmental Protection (watershed restoration & protection), and Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (water & sewer system upgrades).

- Environmental Stewardship And Watershed Protection Grants

<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/growgreen/watershedprotection/default.htm>

The Environmental Stewardship and Watershed Protection Act authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to allocate nearly \$547 million in grants for acid mine drainage abatement, mine cleanup efforts, abandoned oil and gas well plugging and local watershed-based conservation projects. These projects can include watershed assessments and development of watershed restoration or protection plans; implementation of watershed restoration or protection projects; construction of mine drainage remediation systems; reclamation of previously mined lands; and demonstration/education projects and outreach activities. Eligible applicants include: counties, authorities and other municipalities; county conservation districts; watershed organizations; and other organizations involved in the restoration and protection of Pennsylvania's environment.

- PENNVEST

<http://www.pennvest.state.pa.us/pennvest/site/default.asp>

PENNVEST provides financial assistance and service to Pennsylvania communities and citizens by funding sewer, stormwater and water projects throughout the Commonwealth in an effort to improve Pennsylvania's environment and the health of its people. Its financial assistance program works to provide safe drinking water, restore and preserve the states rivers and streams, as well as protect natural resources while attempting to create new opportunities for economic development.

- The River Network

<http://www.rivernetwork.org/index.cfm>

The River Network's mission is to help people understand, protect and restore rivers and their watersheds. The River Network has a \$5-million budget, with 34 staff working in four offices across the United States, and provides personalized assistance, training, and information to more than 500 partner groups through its watershed programs. The River Network also makes grants available to local watershed partnerships to support their organizational development and long-term effectiveness.

Recreational Resources

- [The Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program \(PRTP\)](#)

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/recreation/grants/rectrails.htm>

The Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. Federal funding for the program is through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21). In Pennsylvania, the Recreational Trails Program is administered by the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Recreation & Conservation (BRC) in consultation with the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Advisory Board (PARTAB), which is composed of both motorized and non motorized recreational trail users.

- [Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century \(TEA 21\)](#)

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/index.htm>

On June 9, 1998, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) authorizing highway, highway safety, transit and other surface transportation programs for the next 6 years was signed into law. TEA-21 builds on the initiatives established in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). TEA-21 continues and expands provisions to improve facilities and safety for bicycles and pedestrians, as well as broaden and make eligible NHS funds to include pedestrian walkways, and safety and educational activities. Other changes ensure the consideration of bicyclists and pedestrians in the planning process and facility design. A total of \$270 million in contract authority was authorized for FYs 1998-2003 to provide and maintain recreational trails, while a total of \$148 million for technical assistance and grants has been allocated for the development of scenic byway programs and related projects along roads designated as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, or as State Scenic Byways.

- [Growing Greener](#)

<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/growgreen/>

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

Signed into law in 1999 and reauthorized in 2002, Growing Greener is the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania's history to address critical environmental concerns. Over the next 10 years, \$1.3 billion will be distributed among four state agencies to address a variety of projects. Included are funds available from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for state park renovations & improvements.

- Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2)

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/recreation/grants/keygrants02-03.htm>

Sponsored by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society the Community Conservation Partnerships Program has developed four grants to meet local recreation and conservation needs. Grants for Planning and Technical Assistance, Acquisition Projects, Development Projects and Federally Funded Projects can be used on a range of projects from rehabilitating a community athletic field, building a safer playground, preparing a watershed or greenways plan to developing an abandoned rail corridor or protecting a critical natural or open space areas.

Private Foundations

Private foundations are a potential source of funding for heritage resource preservation and funding. The State of Pennsylvania is blessed with a number of foundations that support activities such as arts and education, historic preservation and community development, recreational resources management, and environmental planning and design. The following are a few of the major foundations that provide support for such activities in Pennsylvania.

- Andrew W. Mellon Foundation – Grants for Museums and Art Conservation
<http://www.mellon.org/museumsandconservation.html>
- Bayer Foundation - Grants for Civic and Community Programs, as well as Arts Education and Culture
<http://www.bayerus.com/about/community/index.html>
- Heinz Endowments - Funding for Education, Community Development, and Culture
<http://www.heinz.org/index.asp?loc=J,J2>
- Hershey Foods Corporation - Grants for Education, Civic and Community Initiatives, Arts and Culture, and Environment
<http://www.hersheys.com/about/contributions.shtml>
- Land O' Lakes Foundation - Community Grants: Grants for Quality Art Endeavors and to Solve Community Problems in Rural Areas
<http://www.foundation.landolakes.com/CommGrants/progdesc.htm>

- The Ford Foundation -
Grants for Community Development, Education, Arts, and Culture
<http://www.fordfound.org/>
- The Pew Charitable Trusts -
Grants for Culture, Education, and Environment
<http://www.pewtrusts.com/grants/index.cfm?image=img3>
- Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds –
Funding to advance Parkland and Community Engagement with Parks and Open-Space.
<http://www.wallacefunds.org/>
- William Penn Foundation –
Grants for Art and Culture, as well as Environment and Communities
<http://www.wpenncfdn.org/>

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