

The Need to Plan:

Dallas Borough is considered the heart of the Back Mountain area of Luzerne County, with many large historical homes and structures and outdoor recreational opportunities. However, municipal officials and residents alike became concerned that if development were to continue at the pace of the last 10 years, the open space and scenic beauty of the region would become lost. In response, Dallas Borough and Lehman Township came together to complete the Back Mountain Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan and Open Space & Recreation Plan.

Recognizing that a comprehensive plan on its own would not protect Dallas Borough from development pressures nor would it revitalize the downtown, the Borough took steps to implement the plan through an updated zoning ordinance and downtown master plan.

The Funding:

Dallas Borough would not have been able to undertake such planning and implementation efforts without the assistance of the Pennsylvania Department of Economic Development (DCED) grant program.

- Dallas Borough received LUPTAP funds in the amount of \$101,000 for all three planning initiatives
- Dallas Borough matched the grant(s) with local funds totaling \$107,500

The Plan:

The Comprehensive Plan identified traffic congestion as a major issue, which led to PennDOT to include the identified priority improvement project on the TIP with a commitment from the District Engineer to solve the problem. Business growth in Dallas Borough was realized in the development of shopping centers along Routes 309 and 415. This business expansion however came at the expense of the traditional shopping district at the center of the Borough and the downtown revitalization master plan was developed to help restore the former luster the downtown once enjoyed.

The Bottom Line:

The Master Plan includes a Traditional Downtown Zoning District and incorporates adaptive re-use and new infill strategies, supporting pedestrian oriented uses, including the following:

- Preserve the significance of historic storefronts.
- Require parking to be located behind storefronts to protect the character of Main Street.
- Green Downtown—build pocket parks and rain gardens and develop a greenway along Toby Creek.

The Investment:

The success factors for this project are the strong support from Borough officials and residents, as well. The working relationship that was developed with Misericordia University and students has proven valuable.

- Establish University presence in downtown with the purchase of former Frontier Communications building for student housing.

This has created excitement and other businesses are now indicating an interest in moving into the downtown. This would have not been possible before the Zoning Ordinance revisions.



Dallas Borough Downtown Master Plan

Dallas Borough adopts the Back Mountain Area COG Comprehensive Plan

2009

Dallas Borough adopts the updated Zoning Ordinance

2010

2006

Dallas Borough adopts the Downtown Master Plan

2009

Misericordia University purchases building in Downtown to be converted into student housing for nursing.

Key Milestones in the Dallas Borough Planning Projects