

Hailstone
ECONOMIC



Columbia County

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge

Sustainable and Equitable Land Use Strategies



Rural Development
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agenda

1. Introduction and Land Use Basics
2. Land Use Planning In Pennsylvania
3. Impacts of Land Use Decisions
4. Current Trends in Planning & Zoning
5. Land Use Strategies for Sustainability
6. Land Use Strategies for Equity
7. Summary & More Resources

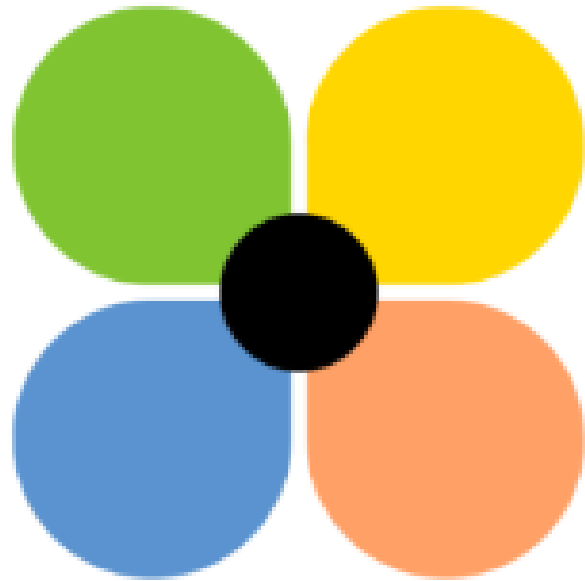


What will you learn?

- What is land use and land use planning, and how is it regulated in Pennsylvania.
- How to create an environment that allows for housing and job opportunities for all.
- How land use decisions impact your community.
- Strategies for Balancing Community Needs, Smart Growth, Sustainability, and Equity.



***Introduction
and
Land Use
Basics***



Columbia County

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

Sustainable and Equitable Land Use Strategies



What is Rural Placemaking?



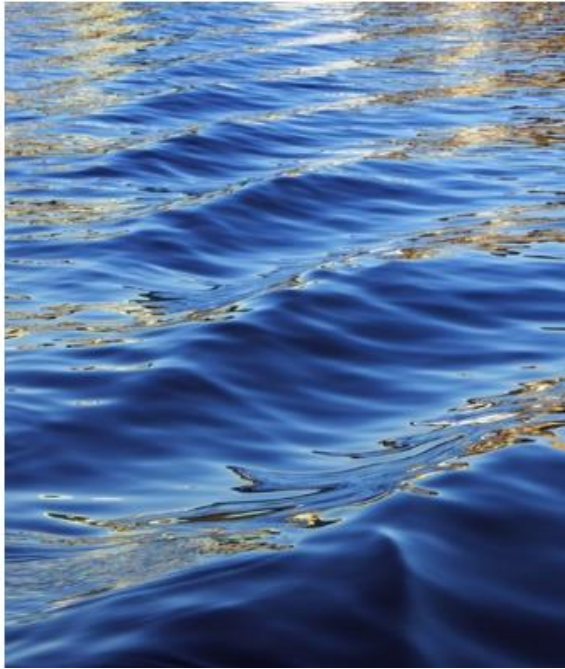
Placemaking is a collaborative engagement process that helps leaders from rural communities create quality places where people will want to live, work, play and learn.

By bringing together partners from public, private, Tribal, philanthropic communities, and technology sectors, placemaking is a wrap-around approach to community and economic development that incorporates creativity, infrastructure initiatives, and vibrant public spaces.



-U.S. Department of Agriculture

What is Land Use?



The human utilization of land for:

Housing: residential uses including houses, apartments, and other types of dwellings.

Commerce: business, office, shopping center and other facilities for economic activity.

Farming: cultivation, crop production, and livestock to meet food, fiber, and fuel needs.

Industry: factories, warehouses and other facilities used in the production, processing, and distribution of goods and services.

Recreation: parks, playgrounds, sports fields, hiking trails, and other outdoor spaces.

Conservation: preserve natural habitats, farmland, ecosystems, and cultural heritage.



What is Land Use Planning?



The use of tools such as comprehensive planning, subdivision and land development ordinances and zoning regulations to promote community well-being, economic prosperity, and environmental sustainability while mitigating land use conflicts.

It evaluates environmental, economic, social, and cultural factors to allocate land efficiently and sustainably, aiming to preserve the environment, control urban sprawl, reduce transportation costs, and minimize pollution. Ultimately, it plays a vital role in building resilient, cohesive communities for the future.



Rural Land Use Planning

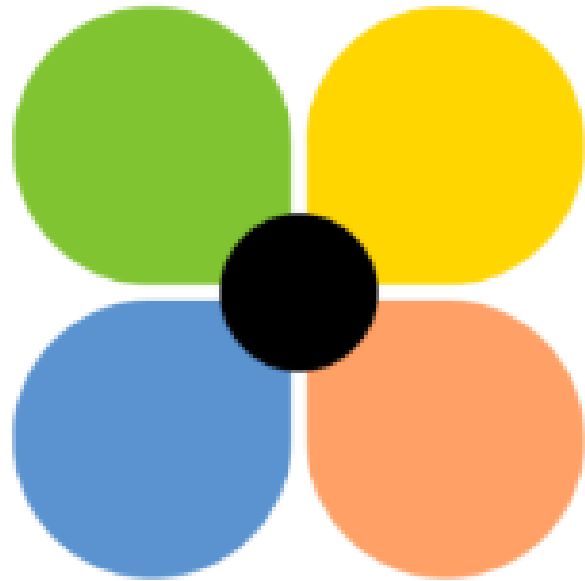


Rural land use planning encompasses a spectrum of activities vital to rural areas, spanning from residential development to agriculture, pastoralism, forestry, wildlife conservation, and tourism.

It not only evaluates the potential of these diverse activities but also aids in mediating conflicts.

Land conservation is important. Land is a limited resource, and it is imperative to conserve it for future generations through sustainable land use practices.





Columbia County

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

***Land Use
Planning***

In

Pennsylvania

Sustainable and Equitable Land Use Strategies

Who Regulates Land Use?



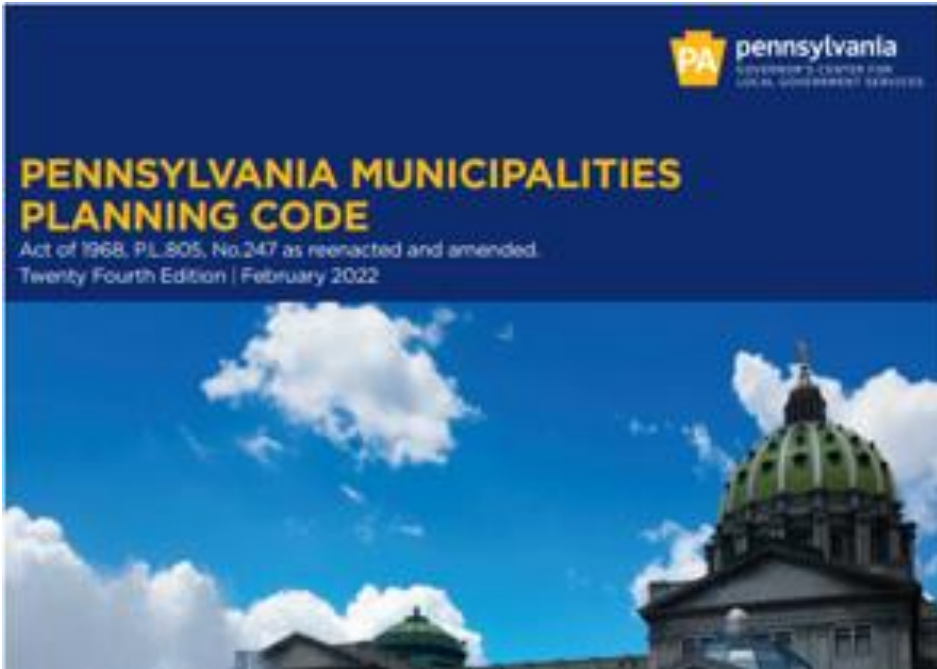
In Pennsylvania, land use management falls primarily under the jurisdiction of local municipalities, typically overseen by Planning Commissions and Zoning Boards of Appeals.

They enact zoning ordinances, subdivision and land development ordinances, and comprehensive plans to shape land use within their areas.

Despite their authority, municipalities must adhere to state law, including environmental protection regulations and planning standards outlined in the Municipalities Planning Code.



Municipalities Planning Code



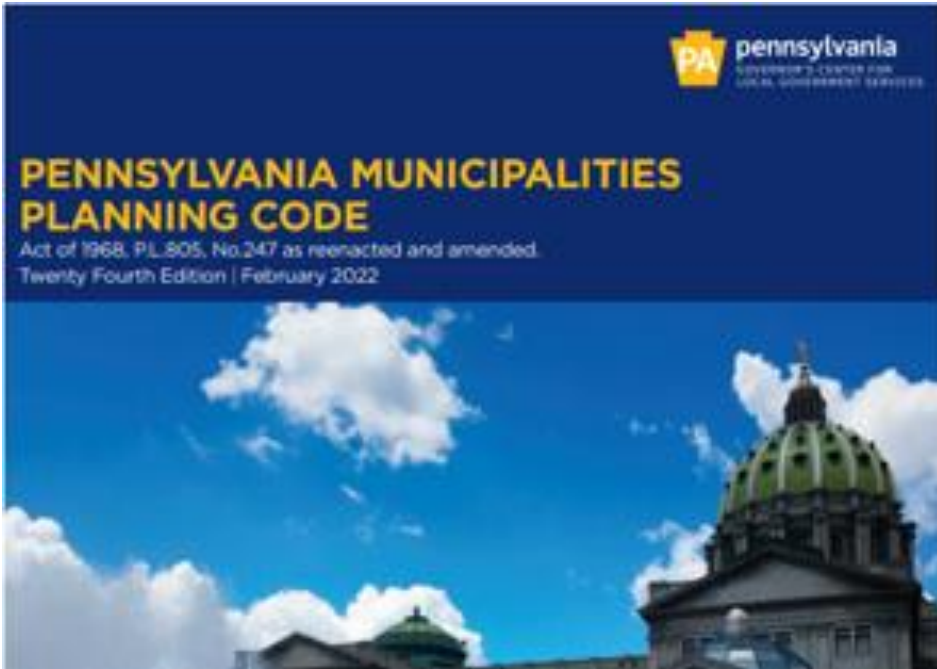
The Pennsylvania MPC is a legislative framework enacted in 1968 to guide land use planning and regulation at the local level.

It provides guidelines to create zoning & subdivision and land development ordinances, and comprehensive plans, while also outlining the powers and duties of local planning commissions and zoning boards.

It sets standards for environmental protection and public participation, aiming to promote orderly growth and development while protecting the welfare of residents.



What are the tools?

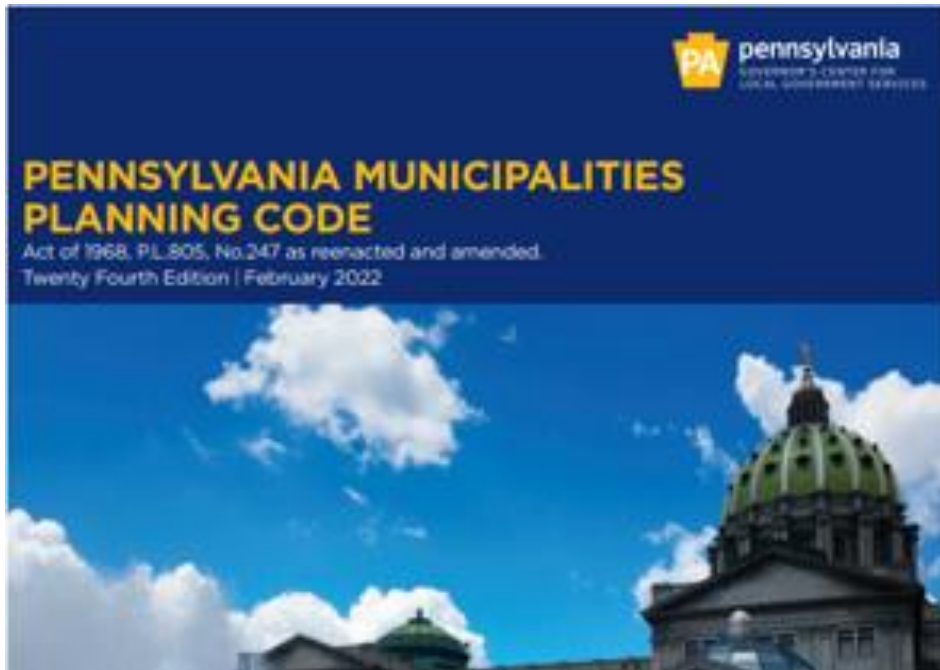


A **Comprehensive Plan** is a community's long-term vision for growth and development, covering land use, transportation, housing, and conservation. It guides decision-making for smart development while preserving the community's character and quality of life.

A **Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance** is a local regulation governing the subdivision of land and the development of properties within a municipality. It sets standards and procedures for lot layout, infrastructure, stormwater management, and other aspects of development.



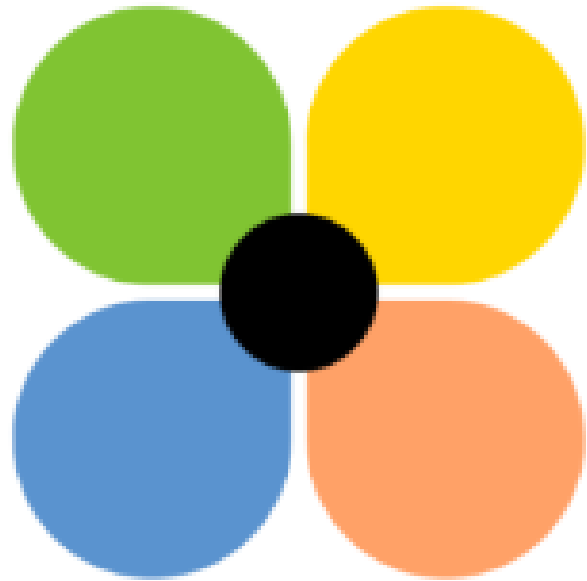
What is Land Use?



A **Zoning Ordinance** is a local regulation that divides land into different zones and controls what type of activities can occur in each zone, like residential, commercial, or industrial. It aims to organize development, protect property values, and ensure compatibility between land uses.

An **Official Map** designates areas for future public improvements, such as streets, parks, and utilities. It outlines planned developments and infrastructure projects, serving as a guide for future growth and development within the municipality.





Columbia County

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

Sustainable and Equitable Land Use Strategies

***Impacts
of
Land Use
Decisions***

Impacts of Land Use



Inadequate land use planning can lead to a variety of negative consequences for communities and their residents. Land is a finite resource, and the ramifications of poor planning can be enduring, as redevelopment or changing land uses often proves challenging and financially impractical.

Negative consequences include:

- 1. Environmental Degradation:** Inappropriate land use can lead to habitat destruction, loss of biodiversity, soil erosion, deforestation, and pollution of air, water, and soil.



Impacts of Land Use



2. Urban Sprawl: Unplanned or poorly managed development can result in urban sprawl, characterized by inefficient land use, rising real estate prices, increased traffic congestion, loss of agricultural land, and reduced access to open space.

3. Infrastructure Strain: Inadequate land use planning uses infrastructure inefficiently and can strain infrastructure such as roads, utilities, and public services, leading to increased maintenance costs, congestion, and reduced service quality.



Impacts of Land Use



4. Social Inequity: Poor land use decisions can worsen social inequalities by concentrating pollution, traffic, and other negative impacts in low-income or marginalized communities, while affluent areas enjoy better amenities and environmental quality.

5. Health Impacts: Inadequate land use planning can contribute to health problems such as respiratory diseases from air pollution, waterborne illnesses from contaminated water sources, and reduced physical activity due to limited access to parks and recreational areas.



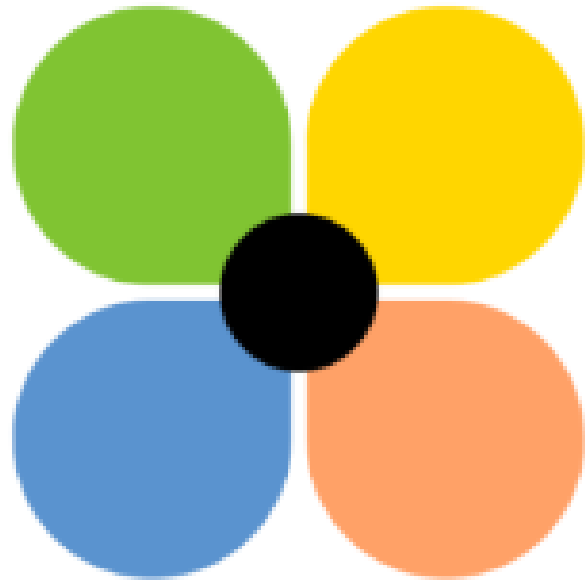
Impacts of Land Use



6. Economic Losses: Inefficient land use can result in economic losses due to reduced property values, increasing taxes to pay for for infrastructure and services, and lost opportunities for sustainable economic development.

7. Natural Disaster Vulnerability: Poor land use decisions can increase vulnerability to natural disasters such as floods, wildfires, and landslides by allowing development in hazard-prone areas or disrupting natural floodplains and drainage patterns.





Columbia County

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

Sustainable and Equitable Land Use Strategies

***Current
Trends in
Planning &
Zoning***

Planning & Zoning Trends



Current trends embrace more sustainable, equitable, and resilient approaches to development. This reflects a growing recognition of the interconnectedness between land use decisions, environmental health, social equity, and economic prosperity.

Some key trends include:

- 1. Smart Growth:** Emphasis on dense, mixed-use development patterns to minimize sprawl, preserve open space, and promote walkability, transit-oriented development, and access to amenities.



Planning & Zoning Trends



2. Density: Mixed-use zoning, allowing for compatible adjacent land uses to promote vibrant, diverse neighborhoods while reducing the tax burden and dependency on cars.

3. Inclusive Planning: Focus on community engagement and participatory planning to ensure diverse voices and perspectives are integrated into decision-making.

4. Climate Resilience: Integrate climate mitigation techniques into land use planning and zoning, including strategies to adapt to climate change and its impacts.



Planning & Zoning Trends



5. Green Infrastructure: Incorporate elements such as green roofs, rain gardens, and permeable pavement into SALDO and zoning regulations to manage stormwater and improve air quality and quality of life.

6. Affordable Housing: Policies and incentives to promote affordable housing development and address affordability challenges.

7. Complete Streets: Accommodate all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, promoting safety, accessibility, and multimodal transportation options.



Planning & Zoning Trends



8. Adaptive Reuse: Reuse existing buildings and infrastructure for new purposes to reduce waste, preserve historic structures, and promote sustainable redevelopment.

9. Health and Wellness: Consider health and wellness in land use planning, including access to healthy food, active transportation options, and recreational opportunities.

10. Technology Integration: Utilize technology such as GIS, data analytics, and digital planning tools to support evidence-based decision-making and streamline planning processes.





Columbia County

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

*Land Use
Strategies
for
Sustainability*

Sustainable and Equitable Land Use Strategies

Sustainability Strategies



Given that land is a finite and non-renewable resource, it's imperative to adopt sustainable land use practices to avoid overuse, contamination, and irreversible damage. Once land has been degraded, restoring it for productive use can be challenging and costly, underscoring the importance of proactive stewardship and responsible management.

Sustainable land use practices offer a twofold benefit: they can boost tax revenue and lower infrastructure expenses, all while preemptively averting the need for costly environmental remediation in the future.



Sustainability Strategies



Land Use Strategies for Sustainability include:

- 1. Increase Density:** Promotes sustainable, vibrant communities while boosting tax revenue while cutting infrastructure expenses.
- 2. Allow Mixed-Use Development:** Reduces reliance on cars, promotes walkability, and reduces carbon emissions.
- 3. Promote Transit-Oriented Development:** Focuses development around transit nodes encouraging public transportation; reducing traffic congestion and carbon footprint.



Sustainability Strategies



4. Lower Environmental Impact: In decision-making processes, it's crucial to consider the consequences of various choices. Modernizing stormwater regulations is imperative.

5. Economic Opportunities: Density drives economic growth by fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and collaboration among businesses and cultural institutions.

6. Social Connectivity: Higher density promotes social interaction, community engagement, and cultural exchange, fostering a sense of belonging and social cohesion.



Sustainability Strategies

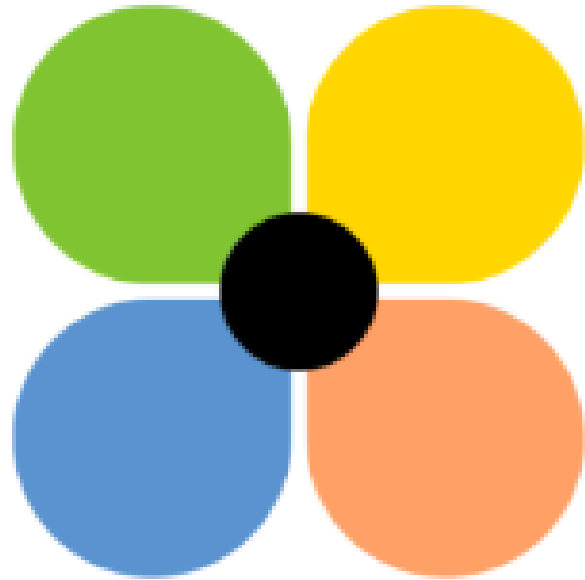


7. Renewable Energy Zoning: regulations that support renewable energy projects like solar and wind farms can foster clean energy generation and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

8. Climate Resilience Planning: Considering resilient design standards and sustainable infrastructure improvements in land use planning can prepare communities for change.

9. Incentive-Based Zoning: Density bonuses, tax credits, and expedited permitting for sustainable development projects encourages projects to include eco-friendly practices.





Columbia County

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

Sustainable and Equitable Land Use Strategies

***Land Use
Strategies
for
Equity***

Equity Strategies



Land use strategies for equity involve various approaches like affordable housing, mixed-use development, and ensuring access to essential services. Initiatives such as transit-oriented development and community land trusts also play key roles.

Urban renewal efforts, alongside community engagement, aim to revitalize neglected areas while involving residents in decision-making. By incorporating these approaches into planning and development, policymakers and stakeholders can create more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable communities.



Equity Strategies



Land Use Strategies for Equity include:

1. Affordable Housing Policies: Tools such as inclusionary zoning, rent control, or housing subsidies ensures people of diverse income levels can access safe and affordable housing.

2. Community Land Trusts: Collectively owning land can preserve affordable housing, green space, and community facilities.

3. Equal Access to Recreation: Parks are vital for well-being and community cohesion. Fair distribution ensures everyone, regardless of background or income, can access nature.



Equity Strategies



4. Equitable Access to Services: Essential services such as healthcare, education, groceries and amenities reduces disparities.

5. Urban Renewal and Revitalization: Targeted investments in infrastructure, public facilities, and development boost economic growth, create jobs, and enhance quality of life.

6. Community Engagement and Participation: Engaging residents in decision-making processes ensures their needs, preferences, and concerns are considered, leading to more inclusive and equitable outcomes.



Equity Strategies

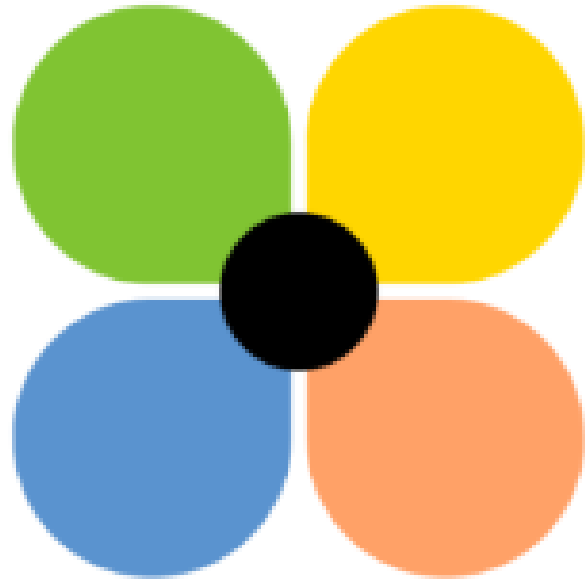


7. Land Banking: Banking and repurposing vacant land for housing, agriculture, gardens, or development rejuvenate neglected areas and create economic opportunities.

8. Equitable Access to Economic Opportunities: Boosting small businesses, entrepreneurship, and job training in underserved areas opens paths to economic mobility and lessens income gaps.

9. Equity Impact Assessments: Evaluating the potential impacts on marginalized communities to ensure equitable outcomes.





Columbia County

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

Sustainable and Equitable Land Use Strategies

*Summary
&
More
Resources*

Summary

1. Land is a finite resource.
2. Land use decisions can have long term and wide-ranging community, economic and equity impacts.
3. Once developed, changing existing land use can be expensive and challenging.
4. Communities can maximize benefits and mitigate drawbacks by updating land use tools like Comprehensive Plans, Zoning & Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances, and Official Maps.

Resources

- Penn State Extension – Planning and Land Use Resources <https://extension.psu.edu/community-development/land-use>
- United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development <https://www.rd.usda.gov>
- Pennsylvania Dept of Community & Economic Development <https://dced.pa.gov>
- Contact Hailstone Economic for further questions!
<http://www.hailstoneeconomic.com>



Hailstone
ECONOMIC



Columbia County

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge

Sustainable and Equitable Land Use Strategies



Rural Development
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE