

DCNR-2014-C2P2-11.4

Application Information (\*Indicates required information)

Applicant Legal Name:\* Lewisburg Borough

Web Application ID:\* 1008289

Project Title:\* 6<sup>th</sup> Street/Bull Run Greenway Plan

**To answer these questions properly and maximize the number of points you can earn:**

- open and refer to the [Project Narrative Instructions](#) as you complete this Form; and
- address each bullet/element within each question.

Please note that your application will be rated and ranked based on the responses you provide on your Project Narrative Form and should be supported by the supplemental documentation you submit with your application. It is expected that Budget Sheets and all documents will be consistent with your proposed project description and scope of work.

**Please answer all questions. \*Note responses cannot exceed 4 pages**

### **1. Project Needs and Benefits - (Points: Maximum 45)**

The 6th Street/Bull Run Greenway Planning Project will include both Master Site Development Planning and Greenway Planning for a continuous zone of public open space in downtown Lewisburg running along Bull Run Creek (also known as Limestone Run) from Danny Green Field, past Phase II of the Buffalo Valley Rail Trail, through Hufnagle Park and Kidsburg Playground, and extending south along 6th Street to meet the Bucknell University campus. The site includes playing fields, playgrounds, unstructured open space, a future rail trail segment, and formally organized park open space. There are no restroom facilities. In addition to reviewing the function and needs of the different components of the park, the proposed planning project will incorporate S 6th Street along with recently acquired floodway properties between the street and the creek into Hufnagle Park proper. It will compile pertinent background information from the community and assemble and analyze additional detailed site information to assess the public floodplain's potential to mitigate flood impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods even as it enhances water quality and improves habitat. Best management practices and green infrastructure opportunities will be sought throughout the site, with the many existing outfalls into the creek providing ample opportunities for infiltration-enhancing improvements.

The deliverables will include Site Development Drawings and a bound report with implementation recommendations and opinion of probable cost for construction as well as documentation of the public engagement process.

This plan will provide the community with the much needed opportunity to revisit planning for the 6th Street/Bull Run Greenway now that much of the initial visioning from the Lewisburg Neighborhood Project from 2004 has been realized. That project report, commissioned jointly by Lewisburg Borough and Bucknell University, called for streetscape/corridor improvements paralleling the greenway to the east and west and for a major public safety initiative to acquire and demolish a string of properties in the greenway, specifically in the floodway between Bull Run and S 6th St. It has taken a decade, but much of that plan has been realized. Now the early sketch of Bull Run from that report, which showed the potential major transformation of the park into a greenway, must be scrutinized and the community must weigh in once more on what this continuous corridor of open space can and should become.

The flood mitigation projects along the creek have now fallen into place. The Borough has purchased and removed three properties along the creek and has signed agreements of sale for 6 more which are scheduled to be down, graded, and seeded well before July 1, 2014. It is now time to answer the question of what happens next. It is time to revisit the potential of the greenway to become an "emerald necklace" for Lewisburg.

The plan will enhance the existing public park space of the Borough, propose upgrades to the formal community spaces, playgrounds and fields and establish a vision for the unprogrammed areas, providing a full range of outdoor active and passive recreation opportunities. It will integrate the north-south creek corridor with the expanding Buffalo Valley Rail Trail. And it will propose design solutions to improve water quality and restore habitat for native species both on land and in the creek.

The project will examine the demographics of the area and work to meet the needs of the community based on

the results. It will engage the general public not only through statistical analysis, but also through outreach to the wide range of current and potential park users both within the municipality and in the wider region. The Greenway Plan, Report, and Site Development Drawings will reflect input from people from all walks of life and will respond to the unique needs of various groups, including addressing ADA accessibility, routes and parking.

The 6th Street/Bull Run Greenway lies at the heart of Lewisburg's downtown, intersecting the Main Street Program area on Market Street. Creating a more functional, aesthetic, and sustainable pedestrian- and bike-friendly spine connecting downtown and the university campus will enhance visitor capacity, economic viability, and the overall liveability of the Borough. It will become another selling point for area employers looking to entice talent to relocate to Lewisburg. It will add to the tourist appeal of the downtown, helping to integrate the cultural heart of downtown into the river's hydrological network which provided the original impetus for settlement in the area. Work along the creek will also cultivate support for improved connections both physical and cultural to the Susquehanna River moving forward. Ultimately the Bull Run Greenway will be a key link in the chain between the statewide water trail along the river and the developing regional trail network.

The Greenway plan itself will set the stage for shoring up area property values and tax base in the face of mounting threats from flood insurance policy changes. The vision alone -- of a greenway with a purpose moving through a park-front neighborhood -- will go a long way toward economic stabilization for the neighborhood and the Borough. It will also eventually lead to a construction project which will bring jobs to the area. But even as a plan alone, the project will provide a regional model for how to contend with the challenges and opportunities occasioned by 100-year floodplains within our historic core communities.

While the project is not in either a designated Conservation Landscape or a PA State Heritage Area, the plan will examine the principles of those programs and apply them as appropriate.

The Borough is well-versed in the management of grants from a variety of agencies, including several different DCED programs, CDBG, FEMA/PEMA, PennDOT, and ISTEPA funding programs. It is accustomed to effectively and efficiently administering grants, complying with all terms and criteria, and completing the projects proposed.

The Borough currently maintains seven parks encompassing approximately 65 acres of recreation facilities and public open space, about half of it formally developed. This application demonstrates a will to proactively address the future recreation use of land as it is being acquired.

## **2. Relationship of your Project to State, Regional, County and/or Local Plans and Public Engagement – (Points: Maximum 20)**

The 6th Street/Bull Run Greenway Plan is consistent with the goals and recommendations of The Lewisburg Neighborhood Project: Findings and Recommendations of the Lewisburg Neighborhood Task Force from 2004, which first introduced the concept of the Greenway, featuring it as one of the fundamental development concepts of the report (pp. 32-33), including it under "Flood Mitigation, Stream and Habitat Restoration and Greenway Development Strategies" (p. 40), and depicting it in renderings and plan sketches (pp. 82-83, 95-98). It is also a significant component of the Lewisburg Downtown Partnership Strategic Plan 2014-2020, appearing in Actions 36 and 38 under Historic Preservation and Design (p. 6), where it supports the values of "increasing accessibility of and to downtown" and "encouraging the flow of foot traffic throughout the entire downtown area." It is in keeping with the Lewisburg Area Comprehensive Recreation, Park, Open Space and Greenway Plan completed in 2008, which identified "connecting parks, recreational resources, open spaces, and residential and commercial activity centers" as a planning priority (pp. 4, 29, 41-58), identified multi-use trails as the highest priority for area residents (pp. 23-24), and showed existing stream corridors as lending themselves to greenway development (p. 53). In addition, the Union County Comprehensive Plan entitled Cultivating Community: A Plan for Union County's Future from 2009, which is also referenced as the Borough Comprehensive Plan, calls for reinvestment in core communities, restoring riparian corridors, increasing greenway and open space access, enhancing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and incorporating green infrastructure. The Greenway Plan would be consistent with the following elements of the County and Multi-Municipal Plan: Land Use (II-17-18, 27), Natural Resources (II-1-2, 7, 11-12), Economic Development (II-42, 46), Transportation (II-50-51, 53, 58-61), and Cultural, Historic, and Recreational Resources (II-72-73, 80-83).

Beyond the local region, the plan is also in keeping with the goals of the Susquehanna Greenway Strategic Action Plan, in which Lewisburg is recognized as a Journey Point among Greenway Places and Destinations (p. 18). The 6th Street/Bull Run Greenway will support the SGP strategic initiatives of “Conserving and Enhancing Natural Resources,” “Revitalizing River Towns,” and “Improving Connectivity.”

These plans can be found online respectively at [www.lewisburgneighborhoods.org/gallery/documents](http://www.lewisburgneighborhoods.org/gallery/documents); [www.lewisburgpa.com/about-us/2014-2020-strategic-plan/](http://www.lewisburgpa.com/about-us/2014-2020-strategic-plan/); [www.cultivatingcommunity.net/draft-plan.html](http://www.cultivatingcommunity.net/draft-plan.html); and [www.susquehannagreenway.org/strategic-action-plan](http://www.susquehannagreenway.org/strategic-action-plan). (The BVRA/LARA plan is not online.)

Union County is currently working on a Greenway and Open Space Plan which will involve many of the same project partners as the 6th Street/Bull Run Greenway. The scope will be larger than that of the earlier Lewisburg Area Comprehensive Recreation, Park, Open Space and Greenway Plan but can be expected to also include an emphasis on connectivity, building outward from existing trails, addressing trail gaps, connecting to the river, and restoring and maximizing riparian corridors for both active and passive recreation.

The 6th Street/Bull Run Greenway Plan will implement the PA Outdoor Recreation Plan by making a strong connection between outdoor activity, liveability and economic vitality, by reconnecting residents and visitors to the outdoors and to the valley’s characteristic waterways, and by linking in to the statewide water trail network at arm’s reach along the Susquehanna. It will bring together the twin economic engines of the university campus and the downtown and connect both to active recreation opportunities for walking, jogging, and biking within the community. It will reconnect people to the waterways of this small river town that has all but forgotten the river from which it sprang. It will address one of two significant trail gaps in the Buffalo Valley Rail Trail, bringing trail users closer to the existing municipal boat ramp on the Susquehanna River at St George St (the other end of which intersects 6th Street). It will also integrate the trail further into the borough street network. It will tie into the growing system of transportation and recreation trails in the area both on land and eventually by water.

The Lewisburg Neighborhood Project report documented an extensive public process in the community ten years ago, including focus groups, key person interviews, as well as a public meeting organized around a community charrette. Since that time the Borough, in collaboration with Bucknell, established the Lewisburg Neighborhoods Corporation to promote civic engagement and pursue broader planning and preservation goals. The LNC has in turn supported the Bull Run Neighborhood Committee, a community group which arose from the Task Force process and has been meeting regularly since 2007. These organizations have established networks for communication and, more importantly, have cultivated connections within the municipality and region, including with local media. There is a strong network already in existence for both spreading the word about and participating in the proposed public process, which will include an advisory committee, three public meetings, and key person interviews.

### **3. Project Partners and Commitment - (Points: Maximum 15)**

The Borough has partners who have been involved in the overall Bull Run Neighborhood planning process for many years. Plus there are additional partners which the Greenway plan in specific will engage more directly. This project will leverage the ongoing engagement of Bucknell University, the Lewisburg Neighborhoods Corporation and the Bull Run Neighborhood Committee, which have all been intimately involved in the ongoing Elm Street Program activities in the Bull Run Neighborhood. They share board members and volunteers and have been consistently engaged in planning the future of the neighborhood, including the Greenway, since the LNC was formed in 2006 after the conclusion of the Task Force process.

In addition, the 6th Street/Bull Run Greenway Plan will further engage the Lewisburg Downtown Partnership, the County Planning Office, the County Conservation District, the Buffalo Valley Recreation Authority, and the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership. While the Recreation Authority is not contributing financially to this project, it is currently in the process of designing and building Phase II of the Buffalo Valley Rail Trail on a right-of-way and Borough-owned spur within the proposed project area. The investment in that project is effectively a direct investment in the greenway, just on a more aggressive schedule. Similarly, Bucknell is contributing financially to a contiguous construction project scheduled to happen on St Louis Street adjacent to the study area and is also in the process of extending their campus toward the river, thereby furthering the chain of linked open space this project seeks to capitalize on.

The Borough will provide the cash match. The Borough continues to work with local partners and will include representation from all of them on the project advisory committee.

#### **4. Sustainable and Green Practices – (Points: Maximum 20)**

The project will provide many opportunities for the Borough to incorporate more green practices and infrastructure into the existing street system and to restore the degraded conditions of the streambed, streambank and floodplain where possible. Transforming S 6th Street from a standard Borough street into a part of Hufnagle Park and the Bull Run Greenway will enable the introduction of porous paving materials and the implementation of stormwater best management practices at many of the numerous storm drain outfalls entering the creek within the project area, whether in the form of a rain garden and bioswales north of Market St or infiltration bays south of Market. Throughout the project area, the plan will enhance water quality and natural habitat with plans to reduce invasive species through both design and management and to introduce more native shrubs and trees in keeping with best practices for the establishment of riparian buffers. New opportunities will be developed for a range of different outdoor experiences, from passive, quiet appreciation of the natural setting to natural play areas and water encounter opportunities for children, incorporating local, natural materials to complement the plastic and powder-coated steel already so well represented in the area. The plan can also be greened in terms of materials and maintenance with recommendations outlining high efficiency facilities and fixtures, regionally sourced materials, and local contractors. Sustainability will also be emphasized in the form of environmental stewardship messaging, built on the template of the interpretive signage for the Rail Trail and at the Lewisburg Area Recreation Park. Seasonal volunteer clean-ups, which have recently been implemented by project partners, will also be encouraged to be adopted as formal maintenance and education policy.



**RAIL TRAIL PHASE II**

**DOWNTOWN LEWISBURG**

**6th ST/BULL RUN GREENWAY**

**BULL RUN NEIGHBORHOOD**

**BULL RUN CREEK**

**BUCKNELL CAMPUS**

**6th STREET/BULL RUN GREENWAY**

**Project Area Map**

- KEY**
- █ Project boundary
  - █ Bull Run Creek
  - █ Rail Trail - Phase II
  - █ Susquehanna River
  - █ Bull Run Neighborhood

