

# Creating Healthy & Sustainable Communities

## River Towns Challenge



### SUCCESS STORIES

The Susquehanna Greenway is an evolving corridor of interconnected parks, trails, river access points, conserved areas and river communities, linking people to the natural and cultural treasures of the Susquehanna River and its West Branch. It is nearly 500 miles in length, making it our state's largest greenway.

The Susquehanna Greenway balances the needs of generations today and tomorrow; conserves the environment for all living things; and creates healthy and successful communities, wide-ranging recreation, and economic prosperity. The Greenway celebrates the Susquehanna River as a place of timeless value, shared memories and experiences – a place to use and enjoy and to treasure always.

### BACKGROUND

The Susquehanna River and its towns are the foundation of our regional economy and played a significant role in building our nation as centers of manufacturing, industry, and commerce. Today, however, many of our river towns are not as vibrant as they once were due to loss of industry and jobs as businesses migrated to suburban or offshore locations. To revitalize our river towns and save our farms and forests from sprawl development, we need to attract people and business back into our core communities. The Susquehanna Greenway Partnership has developed the River Towns Technical Assistance Program to help communities embrace the Susquehanna River and their historic downtowns as assets for sustainable economic development and healthy living.

### GOALS

1. Create parks, bike and pedestrian trails, river access and green infrastructure projects that make river towns healthier, more attractive places to live, work and explore.
2. Attract investment to river towns and promote sustainable economic development.
3. Protect water quality, and enhance our natural and cultural resources.
4. Lessen flood damage with innovative uses of green infrastructure.

### BENEFITS

- Attracting Business and Jobs – communities that have riverfront parks, trails, street trees, and green infrastructure are the types of places where businesses want to locate.
- Tourism - Tourists are drawn to areas that have a mix of amenities to enjoy. Greenway systems can return \$3 in revenue for every \$1 in expenditure invested.
- Increased Property Values and Tax Revenues – Residential properties on average, realize a 10 to 20% gain in value the closer they are located to greenways, parks and trails.
- Improved Water Quality – Greenways purify runoff by trapping sediment, fertilizers, pathogens, and chemicals before they reach the nearest waterway.
- Wildlife Habitat – Wetlands, forests and riparian buffers provide critical wildlife habitat.
- Health Benefits - Lack of exercise has created an obesity epidemic. Parks, trails and greenways encourage a way of life that integrates physical activity





## TYPES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

One of the hardest jobs in the world is running a city or town – whether as mayor, a city councilperson, borough manager or township supervisor. Every day they must meet constituent needs, provide basic services, maintain aging infrastructure and, on top of that, find the resources to attract new investment and growth to reinvigorate their community. Amazingly, many do this as a part-time job. The purpose of the Susquehanna Greenway River Towns Program is to build the capacity of municipalities to envision projects like parks, bike and pedestrian trails, river accesses and greenways, and develop the resources needed to construct and maintain them. To do this we offer a variety of technical assistance programs including:

- Organizing and guiding the work of community revitalization teams
- Community visioning and goal setting
- River Town assessments
- Conceptual planning for park, trail, river access and green infrastructure projects
- Fundraising assistance for greenway projects
- Interpretive and way-finding signage design services

The Susquehanna Greenway Partnership is a leading champion for the Susquehanna River Watershed. We advocate for public and private efforts to connect people with our natural and cultural resources, and promote a sustainable and healthy environment.

## RIVER TOWNS CHALLENGE

Imagine Pennsylvania's largest greenway, a 500-mile corridor of interconnected trails, parks and river towns. Now image creating those trails and parks one community at a time. That's the challenge we face. SGP needs your financial support to continue our work of community capacity building to create parks, bike and pedestrian trails, river accesses, and greenways. We have established the River Towns Challenge with a goal of raising \$60,000 so that we can help mobilize these greenway projects. Please consider becoming a sponsor of this important program.



## SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS

Contributors to the River Towns Challenge will be recognized according to the level of their gift in press releases, community workshops, SGP newsletter, website and printed materials.

We are glad to talk with you about a sponsorship package that is right for your organization.

For more information or to become a sponsor contact:

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