

5. Implementation Plan



State Route 31 Corridor
(Source: Mackin, 2008)

The Implementation Plan is the culmination of the SR 31 West Corridor Study and contains goals and strategies that should be taken by elected officials, businesses, and residents to realize the vision of the Corridor and answers the question “**How do we get there?**” The primary objective of the State Route 31 Corridor Study is to provide local elected officials with strategies that once implemented will direct development to appropriate locations while preserving the rural characteristics for future generations. The goals and strategies contained in the Implementation Plan were developed based on the input received from the public, Advisory Committee, and local elected officials. The following goals were developed to direct future development and improvements along the SR 31 Corridor:

- Goal 1: Provide a safe and efficient transportation network.
- Goal 2: Provide land use controls to regulate development practices and protect the rural character.
- Goal 3: Encourage the protection of prime agricultural land from development.
- Goal 4: Improve aesthetics to assist in attracting new business and industry.
- Goal 5: Protect the environmental assets of the Corridor.
- Goal 6: Preserve local historic resources.
- Goal 7: Address water and sewerage needs in the Corridor.
- Goal 8: Explore opportunities to work cooperatively with neighboring communities.
- Goal 9: Promote local economic development opportunities.

In addition to the Implementation Plan, a Design Guide was also prepared to assist Jefferson Township and Somerset Township with promoting good development. The Route 31 Corridor Design Guide includes illustrations of the type and character of development desired along the State Route 31 Corridor. It is essential that Somerset County ensure the application of the Design Guide and institute an official process for the Design Guide’s administration and use.

The Design Guide should be provided to local elected officials, residents, business owners, property owners, developers, investors, design professionals, and others to be used as a tool to influence the character of growth and change within the Corridor. Somerset County should also consider the feasibility of engaging professional design services and establishing a mini-grant program for private property owners that utilize the Design Guide.



Future Land Use Plan

As part of the visioning process for the SR 31 Corridor, a Future Land Use Plan was developed for the parcels within 1,000 feet of SR 31. The plan was developed utilizing public input; specifically information gathered at the first public meeting through the Land Use Identification station. Residents placed colored dots on a map of the Corridor to indicate where and what type of development they would most want to see along SR 31. The purpose of the Future Land Use Plan is to identify specific areas that are best suited for conservation, residential, commercial, or industrial development, and agricultural preservation. As neither Jefferson nor Somerset Townships have a local comprehensive plan, the Future Land Use Plan is intended to help guide the local elected officials in any future planning and zoning efforts.

The Future Land Use Plan is depicted on **Map 5.1: Priority Projects** and includes the following classifications:

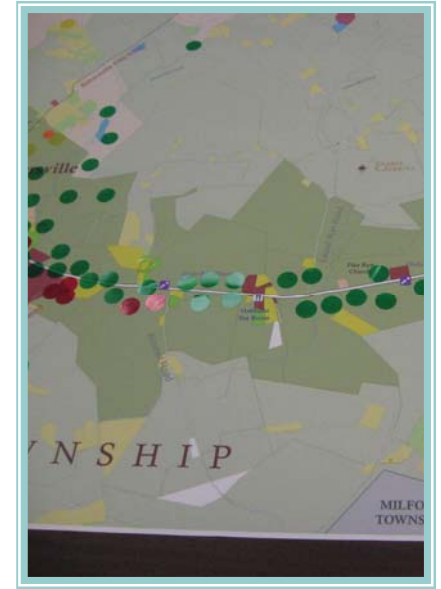
Conservation

The conservation classification supports the preservation and conservation of specific sites within the State Route 31 West Corridor and only encompasses lands currently under some type of conservation. Protected lands include Kooser State Park, Forbes State Forest, and other properties that contain conservation easements.

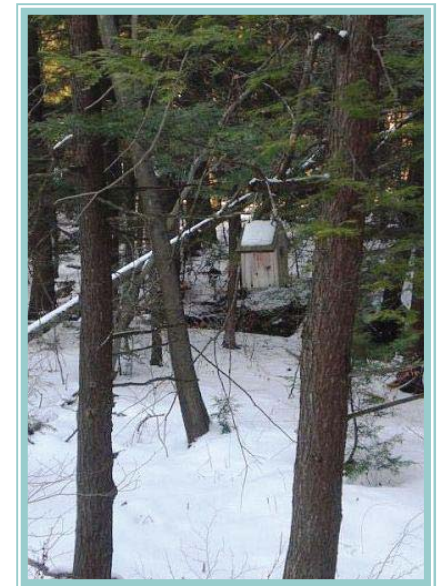
Agricultural

During the public participation process, residents overwhelming wanted the State Route 31 West Corridor to stay agriculture. Therefore, this classification includes Agricultural Security Areas, land enrolled in the Clean and Green Program, active farms and forest land. The goal of this classification is to promote agricultural uses and open space. Residential uses would be permitted in this classification but only at low densities and in a manner that is consistent with the style of existing residential areas.

Land in this classification is a high priority for future conservation, specifically conservation easements. Also to protect agricultural land it is recommended that any future zoning ordinance require either large minimum lot size zoning or area-based allocation requirements.



*Land Use Identification Station at First Public Meeting
(Source: Mackin, 2008)*



*Kooser State Park
(Source: Mackin, 2009)*

Large minimum lot-size zoning limits the number of dwelling units that can be constructed in an agriculture zone by requiring a very large minimum lot size. No parcel may be subdivided from an existing farm unless it is larger than the required minimum lot size.

Area-based allocation zoning determines the number of non-farm dwelling units that may be subdivided from an agricultural parcel by basing that number on the size of the original parcel. Area-based zoning establishes a formula that calculates the permitted number of non-farm dwellings. In general, a larger agricultural parcel will yield more permitted non-farm dwelling units. Area-based allocation zoning requires that the non-farm dwelling units be built on small lots (e.g. two acres or less). By requiring small lots for the non-farm dwelling units, large areas are left intact for agricultural uses.

Rural Residential

Rural Residential is reserved for locations of existing low-density single family units and farmsteads where development already exists. This area is located between the village of Bakersville and Kooser State Park. There is a potential for future residential development in this area due to the proposed extensions of public sewerage. It is recommended that any future residential development that would occur in this area be either in the form of low-density single family units (two or more acres) or potential developments that can only be built through a conservation subdivision option. Conservation subdivisions are a technique where half or more of the developable land is designated as permanent open space. This makes the residential subdivision more compact, with smaller lots for single-family homes.

Medium Density Residential

The intent of the Medium Density Residential classification is to accommodate areas where residential development has been expanding at a higher density than what is traditionally found in a rural area. Medium-density residential development should be directed to the existing villages of Lavansville and Bakersville and near Kooser State Park in a pre-existing development.



*Barn along State Route 31
(Source: Mackin, 2008)*



*Rural Residential along State Route 31
(Source: Mackin, 2009)*



Resort

The Recreational Resort classification is designed to accommodate specialty development such as tourist lodging facilities and associated resort and recreation activities. Any residential, commercial, or recreational development should be accommodated through Planned Residential Development (PRD) regulations. This classification can be found near the village of Bakersville where the proposed Paradise Springs development is to occur and also the existing Hidden Valley Resort development in Segment 1A.

Village

The Village classification provides for traditional town centers that offer a mix of local service commercial businesses, single and multi-family homes; small, light industrial businesses and civic and social uses at densities befitting the character of existing development. This classification is located in Bakersville and Lavansville.

Commercial

The Commercial classification is intended to meet the needs of growing development within the State Route 31 West Corridor and allow for larger-scale commercial establishments. Desired uses within this classification include hotels, motels, retail supply stores, and service businesses geared towards the traveling public. This classification is located within Segment 3 near the Somerset Township/Somerset Borough municipal boundary and also near the intersection of State Route 31 and Trent Road.

New development should be complimentary of the pastoral character of the State Route 31 Corridor. Future zoning regulations should include setbacks, landscaping requirements, building height requirements, sign regulations, access management plans and shared driveways to limit the amount of new driveways onto the corridors, and requirements for controlling light pollution.

Industrial

The Industrial classification is intended to support large-scale developments such as industrial / business parks as well as high intensity industrial uses such as quarries, junkyards, heavy manufacturing, etc. Design concepts such as landscaping and sign consistency should be encouraged. The industrial classification is located in Segment One, near the Somerset County/Westmoreland County boundary.



Hidden Valley
(Source: Hidden Valley, 2009)



Village of Bakersville
(Source: Mackin, 2008)

Implementation Matrix

The following tables consist of the implementation matrix which portrays the issues and recommendations for the State Route 31 Corridor as deemed by the Citizens Advisory Committee members, residents at public meetings, local elected officials, and by Mackin Engineering during field views. The matrix is organized as follows:

Goal: the general goal which serves to assist the townships in realizing their overall vision.

Issue: issues that were identified throughout the planning process.

Location: each issue is identified by Segment or State/Township Road Name.

Recommendation: the specific project or strategy that the municipality needs to undertake in order to accomplish the goal.

Responsible Party: the organization or group that should lead efforts and take action to begin the projects/strategies.

Potential Partners and Funders: possible organizations, groups, other municipalities or County who can partner to pool resources to accomplish each recommendation. The potential partner can be a grant or funding source in which the responsible party can apply for assistance to help with implementation.

Timeframe: each recommendation is categorized based on the focus on implementation. First Year projects would be those that need to be the focus and priority within the first year after the Corridor Study is completed. First 3 Year projects are those that should be a focus after the First Year projects are underway. Long Range projects are those, that while a priority for the municipality, are more long-range projects due to funding constraints, lack of capacity, or other reasons.

Priority: each recommendation is either a High, Medium, or Low priority. High priority projects should be those that are completed first, however it should be noted that while some projects are High priority they may take longer to complete due funding and construction constraints therefore they are classified within the Long Range timeframe. High priority projects are identified on **Map 5.1: Priority Projects**.