

Dear Citizen,

Thank you for your interest and participation in Pennsylvania Land Choices. Whether you are a civic leader, an educator or a planner, this program will provide a model for educating others about the places we live and the choices we make.

Pennsylvania communities are changing. Each person has an opportunity to help shape the future of their community, a responsibility in shaping the characteristics and features that make their community a special place to live. Perhaps you would like to protect a local woodlot, provide safe biking paths, improve a dangerous intersection or advance statewide land conservation. As a citizen, we have the power to direct change. By understanding the system, the process and the tools, we become empowered to make changes and influence the direction of community growth.

PA Land Choices has been developed to provide participants with a basic understanding of community government and the powerful role of citizens who work toward common goals. The engaging activities in the manual provide opportunities to work collectively in teams, gaining knowledge and skills that will be useful for a lifetime. Workshops involve professional planners and other experts to help participants create, sustain and protect the special character of their neighborhoods. It is a lesson on citizenship and the democratic process practiced at one of the most important levels...right in your home town.

Take the challenge and get involved in your local communities. Attend municipal meetings. Join a conservation organization or land trust. Coordinate a community project such as a citizen awareness day or develop a walking trail. We hope PA Land Choices will provide background information and valuable skills to engage participants of all ages to become involved in shaping the future of their community.

Please share this information with others. When using the materials, we ask that you provide us with your feedback. Your input is very valuable and appreciated. Thank you for thinking and acting not only for yourself and your grandchildren but for all the future generations who will look back with appreciation to those who protected this Pennsylvania heritage, grateful for enabling them to share in the dreams of the future.

Sincerely,



Estelle Ruppert, *PA Land Choices Coordinator*

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