

TRAIL & SIDEWALK DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Trail and sidewalk development standards are typically established within a municipality's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). These provisions outline requirements such as location, surface materials, width, amenities (landscaping, lighting, trash receptacles, benches, etc.), permitted recreational uses (bicycling, equestrian activities, walking, e bikes, scooters, and more), and long term maintenance responsibilities. These regulations help ensure the safety of township residents and regional users while promoting multimodal transportation options throughout the municipality and surrounding areas.

During the Subdivision and Land Development review process, applicants are often required to incorporate proposed public improvements, including open space areas and sidewalks. Municipalities may require sidewalks on both sides of new streets within residential subdivisions or developments, as is the case in Upper Uwchlan Township. Similar provisions may apply to nonresidential development, requiring sidewalks along all proposed streets and parking areas to enhance pedestrian safety and reduce conflicts with vehicular traffic.



Sidewalk development along commercial development in Kennett Square Borough

APPLICABILITY

Trail development can be used to support the following Goals:

- 1. Transportation:** Additional sidewalk implementation or improvements provide a safe transportation alternative for accessing local commercial centers or amenities such as schools, places of worship, and public parks.
- 2. Closing Gaps:** Through the subdivision or land development processes municipalities can eliminate and close trail “gaps” on private property, expanding the existing network.
- 3. Recreation:** Establishes a connected network for pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians, encouraging outdoor activity and access to nature while offering transportation alternatives, where appropriate.

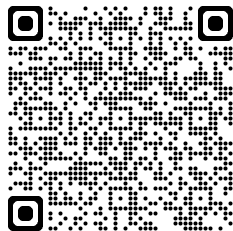


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CONSERVANCY**

IMPLEMENTATION

- **Subdivision and Land Development Application:** During the subdivision and land development process, municipalities may wish to consider seeking a permanent trail easement to help implement long-term connectivity goals of the community.
- **Trail Easement Agreement:** A legally binding agreement between two or more entities that outlines the responsibilities and expectations for all. Municipalities tend to be the best Holder or Grantee as they are best positioned, geographically, to regularly maintain the trail. Trail easements can also be granted as part of a broader conservation easement agreement with the private property owner. A higher easement purchase price may be offered if a trail easement is also conveyed. For additional information, check out our Trail Easement Toolkit.
- For amendments to the existing Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to include trail and sidewalk implementation, municipalities must:
 - Review of the municipal Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance
 - Develop draft Ordinance amendment
 - Provide for Public Input and Public Meeting
 - 30-Day review by Municipal and County Planning Commission, neighboring municipalities, and public
 - Public Hearing & Adoption

For more information, scan the QR code to find additional resources related to recreation and transportation infrastructure.



Sidewalk development in Upper Uwchlan Township



SUCCESSFUL CASE STUDIES

Municipalities have adopted trail and sidewalk development provisions in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Chester County, PA

- Tredyffrin Township
- Upper Uwchlan Township
- West Goshen Township

Delaware County, PA

- Chadds Ford Township
- Newtown Township
- Radnor Township

Montgomery County, PA

- Horsham Township
- Lower Merion Township

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