
Continuity Through Conservation II:

July 2000

**Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan
Phase II, The Plan**

RESOLUTION 900-01

ADOPTION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, Huntingdon County is experiencing heightened development pressures and population increases; and,

WHEREAS, the Huntingdon County Board of Commissioners is committed to fostering proper growth and development through effective planning to ensure the enjoyment of life by each citizen in a pleasant and harmonious environment; and,

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247) requires counties to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans; and,

WHEREAS, the Huntingdon County Planning Commission, under the direction of the Board of Commissioners, through careful study, community input and public discussion, has prepared a comprehensive plan to provide guidance in response to inevitable change; and,

WHEREAS, this draft Plan addresses many critical issues facing the County, including economic development, natural resources and conservation, housing, land use, community services and facilities, historical and cultural, and transportation issues; and,

WHEREAS, the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan is a tool to promote economic development; to revitalize communities; to protect farms, forests, and streams; to safeguard recreational and natural areas; and to sustain open space as well as the aesthetic and historic characteristics of the County; and,

WHEREAS, the Huntingdon County Planning Commission has recommended adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, consisting of maps, charts, tables and textual matter, and entitled "Continuity Through Conservation II" by the Huntingdon County Board of Commissioners; and,

WHEREAS, the required public meeting and public hearing have been held by the Planning Commission and County Commissioners.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Commissioners of Huntingdon County hereby adopts the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan, "Continuity Through Conservation II," dated July 2000, as the official Comprehensive Plan for the County.

Adopted this 11th day of July, 2000.

HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Alexa R. Cook
Alexa R. Cook, Chairman

Kent W. East
Kent W. East, Vice Chairman

Roy E. Thomas
Roy E. Thomas, Secretary

Attest:

Eydie S. Miller
Eydie S. Miller, Chief Clerk



**CONTINUITY THROUGH CONSERVATION II:
HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PHASE II, THE PLAN**

July 2000

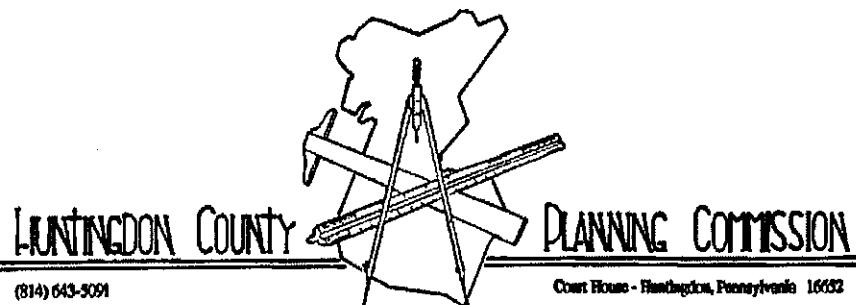
Prepared for:

**HUNTINGDON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
HUNTINGDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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This project was funded in part with a State Planning Assistance Grant (SPAG) from the State of Pennsylvania and Community Development Block Grant funds.



Citizens of Huntingdon County,

The Huntingdon County Planning Commission is pleased to present Phase II of *Continuity Through Conservation II*, the new Comprehensive Plan for Huntingdon County. This volume is the actual plan, detailing our vision for the next 20 years and including goals, objectives, policies, and detailed plans to make that vision come true.

This Plan was really the result of hundreds of citizens expressing their desires through public meetings, mini-conferences, and a community attitude survey. I encourage each and every interested person to take the time to review this document. It is our hope you will find it contains a blueprint for a very bright future for our County.

Sincerely,

Larry Mutti, Chairman

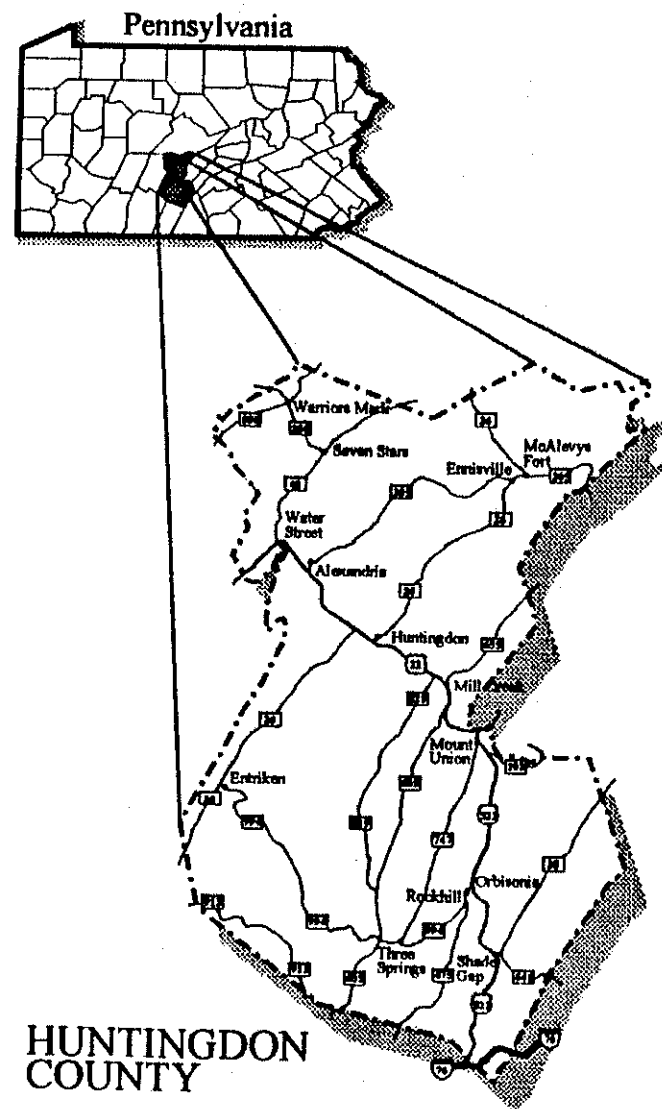


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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Alexa R. Cook, Vice Chairman
Lee R. Wilson, Secretary

Huntingdon County Planning Commission

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This project was funded in part with a State Planning Assistance Grant (SPAG) from the State of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Bureau of Planning; Community Development Block Grant funds, DCED; and local funds from the Huntingdon County Commissioners.

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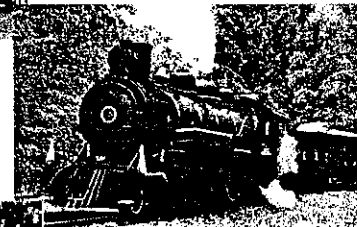
Geographic Information System

The Comprehensive Plan is based, in part, on data from the Huntingdon County Geographic Information System. The GIS has been developed with technical assistance of the Spatial Sciences Research Center of Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Additional GIS services were provided by Graney, Grossman, Ray and Associates.

Section I

Preface: The Vision of Continuity Through Conservation II

Background Studies and Citizen Involvement



PREFACE: THE VISION OF CONTINUITY THROUGH CONSERVATION II

Huntingdon County has experienced the paradoxes of economic growth and high unemployment, of abundant land and scarce developable land, of older declining communities and new residential developments, of numerous local governments but little local governmental management capability. An explanation of these paradoxes will provide significant insight in to the circumstances creating a critical need for an update of the County Comprehensive Plan.

Growth and Unemployment: Huntingdon County's population grew at the modest rate of 4.5 percent between 1980 and 1990, from 42,253 to 44,164. Housing, however, grew at the rate of 14 percent during the same period! Not only has the population and housing stock grown, but the economic base of the County has grown as well. Employment grew from 15,338 in 1980 to 17,482 in 1990, an increase of 14 percent as service businesses mushroomed. This was due, in part, to Raystown Lake and the growth of tourism in the County. Unfortunately, unemployment has persisted at record high levels throughout the post war period. In 1996, 2,400 workers were out of work. These workers constituted 12.8 percent of the County workforce, compared with a State unemployment rate of 6.7 percent. During the 1990s, two long-time County firms announced plans to close: Dalco Industries has closed its Mount Union plant (115 employees) after over 60 years of operation, and Elco has closed its Huntingdon plant (115 employees) which had been in operation for 35 years.

Declining Communities and New Development: Despite overall growth, 24 of the County's 48 municipalities suffered a loss of population during the 1930s. These 16 older boroughs and 8 rural townships face many of the same problems as our larger cities: declining tax base, a declining economic base, and substandard housing. Paradoxically, residential subdivisions are springing up all over the County. Huntingdon Borough added a new 255 lot subdivision in one year. Second-home developments litter the scenic hills surrounding Raystown Lake. In a typical year, 25 percent of all new housing consists of seasonal housing.

Interestingly, these seasonal homes are often unaffordable by many local residents. Major new development pressures will come from the development of the Riverview Business Center near Mount Union, the development of Prison Land near Huntingdon and, potentially, the redevelopment of the East Broad Top Railroad National Historic Landmark.

Numerous Governments with Little Management Capability: Huntingdon County has 48 units of local government for a population of 44,164, an average of 920 people per locality. These consist of 18 boroughs and 30 townships of the second class. The County's largest municipality, and county seat, is Huntingdon Borough with 6,854 people, and the smallest municipality is Coalmont Borough with 109 persons.

Huntingdon Borough is the only municipality in the County with full-time administrative staff. Few local municipalities have full-time management staff, relying on part-time staff, consultants, and volunteer boards to manage the municipalities, enforce ordinances, and provide services.

Transportation: Transportation throughout the County is dependent on private automobiles. Intercity commutes for County residents are difficult due to limited rail passenger service and a lack of scheduled air service in the County. County residents do not have a direct access to the Interstate Highway System but can access it within 30 to 60 minutes from all areas of the County. Most County roads operate at an acceptable level of service but require major maintenance. County roads do not meet modern design standards and are therefore inadequate. The County's ridge and valley topography makes travel (particularly east-west) difficult.

Land Use: The County has no countywide land development ordinances. While nearly all of the municipalities have a building permit ordinance, only 26 have a subdivision ordinance and only 9 have a local zoning ordinance. County Planning staff assists local municipalities on land use matters whenever possible. For example, in 1989, Walker Township adopted a zoning ordinance and, Oneida Township adopted a

comprehensive plan in 1994 and a zoning ordinance in 1999, both developed by the Huntingdon County Planning and Development Department.

While Huntingdon County will continue to change in the future, it is extremely important that the growth that will occur be directed in a way that preserves the qualities that make the County a desirable place to live.

Comprehensive Planning: One of the first steps taken by the Huntingdon County Planning Commission, upon its establishment on November 15, 1962, was the development of a comprehensive plan. Between 1967 and 1971, the first comprehensive plan was prepared by consultants Wilson, Polikowski, Heine and Simpson. It was titled *Continuity Through Conservation* and was produced in two volumes: *Volume I, Background for Planning* and *Volume II, Concept for Plan Development*.

The changes in Huntingdon County over the past 30 years, since the adoption of the first comprehensive plan, have not been sudden or dramatic, but they are substantial nonetheless. The County is now home to an expanded Raystown Lake and hundreds of new vacation homes. While maintaining its rural character, the County is plagued by some of the same problems identified in *Continuity Through Conservation*: high unemployment, loss of family farms, low household income, and outdated infrastructure.

In an effort to provide a framework for shaping the kind of future that Huntingdon County residents desire, Huntingdon has revised the County comprehensive plan.

Definition and Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan: The comprehensive plan has been the cornerstone of American planning theory and practice since the early 1900s. It is a document which contains the basic policies that will guide the future growth and development of the community. The plan is typically of a general nature, long-range in outlook, and includes all factors affecting growth and development.

The comprehensive plan serves three principal functions:

- The plan is a statement of goals, a listing of objectives, and a vision of what could be.
- The plan is an educational tool, helping everyone who uses it understand the conditions, problems, and opportunities of the community through the provision of factual information.
- The plan serves as a guide to public and private decision-making, thus, shaping the future of the community.

A comprehensive plan by itself is not a solution to all the problems and concerns of a community. The value of a well prepared plan, however, is derived from the *process* of preparing the plan and the *implementation* of the plan after it is prepared. The plan should focus attention on the major issues and concerns of a community and establish a basis for debate, discussion, and conflict resolution. The plan should never be regarded as a finished project, to be completed every ten years or so, but as a community-based planning process.

Legal Basis for Comprehensive Planning in Pennsylvania: In Pennsylvania, both county and local municipal governments have the authority to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans. This authority is contained in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act 247 of 1968, as amended. The MPC mandates that comprehensive plans contain certain basic elements. These elements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A statement of community development goals and objectives;
- A land use element;
- A transportation element;
- A community facilities element; and
- A statement of the relationship of the community's future development to adjacent areas.

Section 304 of the MPC specifies the legal status of the county comprehensive plan within municipalities. It provides for review of certain

municipal actions when the municipality is within a county that has an adopted comprehensive plan. The municipality's governing body (supervisors, commissioners or council) is required to submit proposed enumerated public improvement activities (e.g., erection of a new public structure) and land use regulations (e.g., adoption of a subdivision ordinance) to the county planning agency for review and recommendations.

Section 306 of the MPC addresses consistency among comprehensive plans. It states that municipalities that have their own comprehensive plans shall give consideration to other adopted municipal or county comprehensive plans in order to protect the objectives of each plan. The Act thus emphasizes coordination between municipal and county comprehensive planning.

It should also be noted that a comprehensive plan prepared in Pennsylvania is only an advisory document. It is not a development ordinance or a zoning map, and does not contain any rules and regulations. The plan, as an official document, however, does serve as a catalyst and guide for the development of various ordinances and other planning tools.

County and Local Plans: Huntingdon County and many of the County's constituent municipalities have prepared and adopted comprehensive plans. As mentioned previously, these plans, prepared under Pennsylvania enabling legislation, are only advisory in nature and are not development ordinances. The difference between the County and municipal comprehensive plans is one of detail. The County Plan is more general in nature, with land use being addressed on a regional basis and concerns of County importance addressed. Municipal-level plans address land use at a tax parcel level and address specific local concerns. Planning may be done at an even more detailed level, with functional plans such as transportation plans or Act 537 sewage facilities plans in this category.

It is important that the County Plan deal with issues of a regional nature, such as growth management, environmental quality, economic development and transportation. The municipal plans that have been prepared in Huntingdon County over the past decade have generally included only those issues specifically related to their own individual jurisdictions. In other words, a majority of local comprehensive planning

stopped at the municipal boundary unless a joint comprehensive plan was prepared.

Examples of some of the major issues and concerns that will be dealt with in the Plan include the location and extent of development, the location and timing of community infrastructure, environmental conservation, and economic development. The County Plan strongly emphasizes the need for an intergovernmental cooperation approach to solving regional problems and issues. Throughout the preparation of the Plan, the public, organizations, and municipalities have been strongly encouraged to participate and become involved in the total comprehensive planning process.

Past County Comprehensive Planning Efforts: The adoption of the Plan in 1971 was followed by the hiring of the first planning staff. Today, six full-time employees comprise the Huntingdon County Planning and Development Department staff: Planning Director, Planner/Grant Administrator, Planner/GIS Technician, Planning Technician, Bookkeeper, Secretary. The full-time staff is supplemented with planning consultants and planning interns. The staff is charged with advising the Huntingdon County Planning Commission and Huntingdon County Commissioners on a variety of planning issues, maintaining the comprehensive plan and implementing the comprehensive plan. The Planning and Development Department also administers various State and Federal grants related to community development.

Throughout the 1970s, the local planning staff prepared many planning studies in order to keep the comprehensive plan up to date. These technical reports were funded through the Federal 701 Planning Program. The Huntingdon County Planning Commission usually followed these technical reports with an update of one or more elements of the comprehensive plan. Several other important planning studies completed by the County in the past decade are also listed below. The last of the 701-funded planning studies was completed in 1982. Following are the most current updates of the comprehensive plan prior to this document. Adopted plan elements are marked with an asterisk (*).

- Continuity Through Conservation, Volume 1, Background for Planning, 1967 *
- Continuity Through Conservation, Volume 2, Concept for Plan Development, 1967 *
- 1978 Housing Policy and Plan*
- 1978 Community Facilities Plan*
- 1978 Sewer and Water Plan*
- 1978 Conservation Plan*
- 1979 Economic and Employment Plan*
- 1979 Open Space and Recreation Plan*
- 1979 Land Use Plan
- 1980 Transportation Plan*
- 1981 Energy Policy and Plan*
- 1982 Countywide Development Goals*
- 1991 Bedford, Fulton, Huntingdon Solid Waste Plan
- 1996 Huntingdon County Heritage Plan
- 1996 Huntingdon County Transportation Study

The Planning Commission has encouraged local municipalities to form planning commissions and to develop local and regional comprehensive plans. The County has supported local municipal planning through staff technical assistance and grant writing for local planning funds.

Since 1994, Huntingdon County has been developing a Geographic Information System (GIS). While this may not traditionally be considered a planning document, it is an integral part of the comprehensive plan. In 1994, the County entered into a contract with the Spatial Analysis Research Center at Indiana University of Pennsylvania for the development of a GIS. The present GIS is based on USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle maps which are available from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. This data, already available in GIS format, greatly facilitated the development of the comprehensive plan.

A New Comprehensive Plan for Huntingdon County: Change is inevitable! Planning is a systematic, creative approach to manage change in our communities. It is directed toward the future by analyzing trends in land use and community development. Communities who anticipate change and plan to address the opportunities presented by change will be

better communities. Through the planning process, the county can analyze problems, visualize futures, compare alternatives and describe the implications of various choices so that citizens and public officials can make knowledgeable choices. Through careful planning, our communities can make wise use of scarce resources - both natural and financial.

Background - Why a New Comprehensive Plan?

As discussed previously, the County's first comprehensive plan, *Continuity Through Conservation*, was a success in that it was the first effort to complete comprehensive planning on a Countywide scale. The plan did a good job of identifying problems and offering specific solutions. A comprehensive plan needs to be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure that its goals and recommendations are still relevant and realistic. From 1982 to 1997, the County did not have the staff or financial resources to keep the comprehensive plan current. In the thirty years since *Continuity Through Conservation* was adopted, the County has experienced many changes. Local citizens, elected officials, the Planning Commission and County Commissioners agree that it is now time to update County policies related to future development in the County, and to adopt a new plan to meet the changing needs of the County.

The Process for Developing a New Comprehensive Plan: The Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan was updated in three phases: Phase I includes what are commonly called background studies. Phase II encompasses the development of the Plan based on both the Background Studies and extensive public participation, and Phase III includes the adoption and implementation of the Plan. Phase I was carried out during 1997-1998, Phase II was prepared in 1999, and Phase III will be prepared in 2000.

Several major steps were taken to advance the comprehensive plan in 1996: The *Huntingdon County Heritage Plan* was published and distributed in the fall of the year. In cooperation with the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, a *Huntingdon County Transportation Study* was completed. The County also applied for and received a State Planning Assistance Grant to fund the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

The completion of the *Huntingdon County Heritage Plan* marked the end of a two-year planning process. Funded by a grant from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Preservation Commission, the Plan identifies significant historic preservation issues and proposes activities intended to conserve, market and develop the County's historic resources. The results of this planning effort have been incorporated into the new Comprehensive Plan.

The Huntingdon County Transportation Study marked an important milestone in transportation planning in Pennsylvania. It represents a cooperative effort among Bedford, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset Counties, the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to develop local transportation plans. This study is significant in that PennDOT allowed the downloading of several of its databases into a regional transportation information system. This information was then used, in conjunction with maps, to develop an analysis of the transportation system within Huntingdon County. This analysis was used to develop the transportation section of the Comprehensive Plan.

The development of the new comprehensive plan was a highly participatory process. The entire community, including individuals, organizations, and municipalities, was encouraged to participate and become part of the overall planning process. Following the publication of the draft Background Studies report, a series of public meetings were held at locations throughout the County. In addition, two topical mini-conferences were held, one on economic issues, and one to discuss land use and the environment. Finally, the work of the citizen members of the Planning Commission was augmented by a special Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee. This committee was comprised of local business leaders, government officials, and concerned members of the community. The committee met monthly during the process.

Continuity Through Conservation II: It has been decided to title this comprehensive plan *Continuity Through Conservation II*. This is because of the strong belief that our County and its communities can be better places to live only if we conserve the best from our past. While development is necessary to accommodate the growing number of persons

who live in Huntingdon County, this development needs to be shaped by our natural, historical, economical, social, and spiritual heritage.

Phase I, published in a separate report titled, *Continuity Through Conservation II, Phase I, Background Studies*, is comprised of numerous charts, text, tables, and maps on virtually every aspect of the County. Phase I was completed in 1997. It includes a study of the following elements: Land Use, Housing, Population and Demographics, Economy, Environmental Conservation, Infrastructure and Community Facilities, Transportation, Heritage and Cultural Resources, and Intergovernmental Cooperation. Further Background information can be found in *Continuity Through Conservation II, Supplement to Phase I Background Studies*, available from the Huntingdon County Planning Commission.

Phase II, the Comprehensive Plan, is published in this volume. Phase II addresses the following elements: Land Use, Economic Development, Natural Resources and Conservation, Historical and Cultural, Housing, Transportation and Community Services and Facilities. An Implementation Strategy was formulated which reviews specific strategies and ordinances and makes recommendations as to which are suited to Huntingdon County. To make its use easier, Phase II has been divided into sections. The current element is Section I. The sections are described as follows:

Section I describes the additional work, outreach and surveys needed to prepare a truly citizen-oriented Comprehensive Plan.

Section II contains the vision statement, goals and objectives for the Plan. The purpose of the vision statement is to express where, the residents of Huntingdon County, wish their community to be in ten years.

Section III contains specific Plans for Land Use, Housing, Environmental Conservation, Economic Development, Transportation, Historic Preservation, and Community Facilities. Again, an effort has been made to look ten years into the future. Within each of these separate plan chapters, the reader will find:

- ▶ A summary of findings, which explains the facts and opinions which contributed to the decision-making process.
- ▶ An analysis of what these facts mean for the future and detailed plans.
- ▶ Scenario 2020: This vision of the future of our community is written as if it were really 21 years in the future.

Finally, Section IV provides an Action Plan which recapitulates specific recommendations and then provides recommendations for translating the Plan from ideas into action.

For those with limited time, the summary pages contain virtually every major idea, activity, or project. For those with an interest in a particular recommendation, further material is provided in the detailed Plan.

BACKGROUND STUDIES AND CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Since the completion of Phase I, several activities have been initiated, which lead to Phase II of *Continuity Through Conservation II*. These activities were necessary to properly draft the Comprehensive Plan. They are described under one of the four headings listed below:

1. Additional Data: Phase I presented excellent background information on Huntingdon County. However, the consideration of specific policies, for this Plan, raised questions which required more information. To fill these informational gaps, further research was required. Such efforts included:

- **Housing:** Statistical housing data from Census Reports does provide a wide range of data, but, it does not include information on the quality of housing stock. Four recent municipal comprehensive plans did provide some housing condition profiles. But, even this was insufficient. They were supplemented by additional field work in six geographic areas during 1998. In all, using prior and current efforts, approximately 30 percent of the County's housing stock was viewed. Through these field observations, it was concluded that 1,600 to 1,700 dwelling units in Huntingdon County need rehabilitation.

A second element of additional housing research and analysis related to home ownership profiles. Due to the age characteristics of the owners of homes in the County it was concluded that there would be a steady supply of used homes coming onto the market in Huntingdon County. This will occur as older residents opt for other living arrangements. The pattern suggests that the demand for apartment and townhouse units, either rental or "condo," should increase.

- **Public Utilities:** An essential consideration for development is public water and sewer connections. Due to ever-increasing environmental regulations, intense development requires these services. Also, they can be essential for Huntingdon County's

economic well-being. For example, new manufacturing plants which create new jobs often require the extension of water and sewer services. Data contained in the Background Report had to be expanded as the issues of current and future service areas needed to be addressed. The current capacity of these utilities and their condition must be a concern for any Plan of the County's future. Consequently, this element deserved additional attention.

- **Other Concerns:** In addition to housing and utilities, a number of other elements needed to be examined. Included were recent development patterns, land characteristics, important scenic areas, and related items. The importance of some of these concerns was highlighted by public input into the planning process. A final aspect was a brief analysis of municipal capacity. Every Plan recommends projects and programs. Typically, such activities fall on local government for implementation. If some of these recommendations are beyond the capacity of existing institutions, new approaches may be required.

To truly be successful, a Plan must reflect more than the ideas of technicians and political leaders. It truly must be a reflection of the priorities, ideas, and aspirations of the public.

- 2. The Quality of Life Survey:** To truly be successful, a Plan must reflect more than the ideas of technicians and political leaders. It must be an accurate reflection of the priorities, ideas, and aspirations of the public. A random survey is the best way to obtain such views. To perform this survey, a questionnaire was prepared covering many areas of interest to community development and preservation. The challenge was to prepare a survey form that covered a variety of points — yet was brief enough to encourage a good response rate. Next, a random sample

of County residents was drawn, some 1,760 names. The final element was to elicit enough responses to provide valid results on both a Countywide and regional basis. This effort was completed in the summer and fall of 1998.

Survey results proved of such interest, a separate report was generated on this element entitled *Charting a Course for the Next Century: Huntingdon County Quality of Life Survey*. However, most important, the survey achieved its goal. It gave those involved in the Plan an accurate insight into the views of County residents on key planning issues.

3. **Visioning:** Visioning has become an increasingly important element of planning over the past decade. It is a clear recognition that citizens must "buy into" comprehensive plans. Too often, citizens believe all decisions are made at the Courthouse, Township Building, or Borough Hall. Through visioning, individuals can directly relate their ideals, recommendations, and concerns. What is their vision of Huntingdon County's future?

In Huntingdon County, new approaches for citizen input were explored. This involved listening; listing strengths, problems, and proposals; as well as asking participants to jointly rank expressed ideas. At some meetings, these ideas were expressed graphically on County maps to better connect concepts to places. A policy of outreach was followed. To go to the citizens, six locations were chosen - Warrior's Mark, Petersburg, Huntingdon Borough, Mount Union, Orbisonia, and Robertsdale. This strategy allowed Countywide participation. All meetings were held at 7:30 p.m. to further enhance participation. However, these sessions could be described as only a modest success. Attendance was best in areas where some types of local development issues were present. In other regions, participation was limited. Yet, these six meetings did give planners a good range of the ideas and insights in the concerns of citizens across Huntingdon County.

4. **Mini-Conferences:** To supplement visioning, two mini-conferences were also held. Both were structured around key issues. One was

convened on Economic Concerns, the other highlighted Land Use and the Environment. Sessions for the mini-conferences were held on April 30, 1998 and January 21, 1999. Each were very well attended, with the January Land Use meeting seeing the room filled to capacity. By focusing on specific topics in these sessions, greater public interest was achieved.

Participants included a variety of political, business, and community leaders. Divided into groups, they were given some general information about the areas of concern. As most participants were not professional planners, a brief overview on possible "tools" was presented which could help to achieve goals. Finally, each participant team was given time to prepare a list of priorities. In one session, maps were used so written goals could be related to specific areas of Huntingdon County.

In combination, the mini-conferences served to involve the participants in the planning process as well as eliciting excellent ideas for Huntingdon's future.

Overall, the work since Phase I of *Continuity Through Conservation II* has focused on two primary issues. First, to fill factual gaps and, second, to encourage public input for the new Comprehensive Plan.

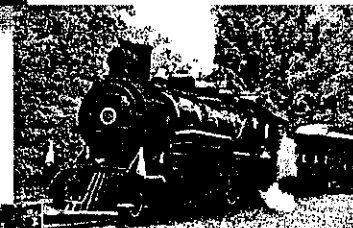
Summary: Overall, the work since Phase I of *Continuity Through Conservation II* has focused on two primary issues. First, to fill factual gaps and, second, to encourage public input for the new Comprehensive Plan. These efforts have

certainly been more extensive than expected at the outset — but, have proved invaluable. No plan can succeed unless it has, as its foundation, a solid basis in facts. Just as important, no plan can succeed unless it enjoys citizen support. Through the work of the past months, these goals have been reached.

This Plan, *Continuity Through Conservation II*, is an update of the County's first Comprehensive Plan completed in 1971. Appropriate to the Plan name, the Goals of that original document have been "conserved" where possible. Consequently, this Plan can be said to rest on a foundation laid down a generation ago.

Section II

Vision Statement
Community Development Goals and Objectives



A VISION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Elements of the Vision:

Economic prosperity, evidenced by an increase in median-family income, and a reduction in unemployment.

Maintain and enhance rural and small-town atmosphere.

Protect farmland, forest land, natural resources, and the environment.

Focus new development in and around existing boroughs and villages, the "Centers" concept.

Develop greenways along rivers and ridges.

Emphasize excellence in both personal and community development.

Access to the rest of Pennsylvania and the world.

Vision Statement:

It is our goal that Huntingdon County achieve economic prosperity while retaining the qualities of rural and small-town living.

It is our goal that Huntingdon County achieves economic prosperity while retaining the qualities of rural and small-town living.*

It is our vision that future development be focused on existing boroughs and villages to take advantage of the existing public investment in utilities and services. The vast majority of land in the County will remain in productive private rural land uses such as agriculture, forestry, and recreation. A system of "Greenways" will be established along mountain

ridges, streams, and rivers to protect water quality, to provide habitat for wildlife, to enhance recreational opportunities, and to protect scenic beauty.

Excellence will be the theme for both personal and community development in Huntingdon County. With the rise of the information/service economy, many economic activities are no longer site-specific. Entrepreneurs and employees are no longer restricted to a particular place, as even the shipping of goods is not a barrier to locational decisions. It is to be expected that people and capital will gravitate to the communities with the best jobs, educational/cultural opportunities, and high environmental quality. Huntingdon County's vision for itself is to be one of those communities.

Excellence will be the theme for both personal and community development in Huntingdon County.

While retaining its rural and small-town atmosphere, Huntingdon County will remain accessible to Pennsylvania and the rest of the world. Information, goods, and services will travel to and from Huntingdon County by a complete network of highway, rail, and electronic modes.

*This prosperity requires stable or growing employment, a reduction in average unemployment by 25 percent, and an increase in local median-household income, to be within 90 percent of the State median-household income by the year 2010. It is anticipated that future employment will be balanced among the farm-forest-resource, retail, service, manufacturing and public sectors.

LAND USE PLAN

ELEMENTS OF THE VISION (GOALS)

Maintain and Enhance Rural and Small Town Atmosphere
Focus New Development in and Around Existing Boroughs and Villages, the Centers Concept

To Provide for the Development, Use and Protection of Land in Huntingdon County in a Manner which
is Sensitive to the Needs of both Present and Future Generations.

OBJECTIVE: *Promote development of various types of land uses to support the needs of the present and future County population.*

POLICIES:

Encourage all municipalities to become municipal partners by adopting the County Comprehensive Plan by reference.

Encourage the development of municipal and regional Comprehensive Plans in all areas of Huntingdon County.

Move towards complete coverage of Huntingdon by Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

Encourage inter-municipal compatibility analysis as part of the review standard of municipal comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.

Continue the County Planning Commissions' role as a detailed and professional reviewer of subdivision and land development and zoning and local planning activity.

OBJECTIVE: *Inform the citizens of Huntingdon County of the benefits of "quality community development" to create an expectation of excellence.*

POLICY:

Educate communities on "a sense of place" and the benefit of clearly defined boundaries and "green belts."

Educate the public as to the benefits of creating "human scale" communities rather than "car-scale" communities.

OBJECTIVE: *Develop a planning education program to promote best practices in planning and land use regulation techniques and professional administration of land use ordinances.*

POLICIES:

Work with developers and public officials so that they can see how development choices affect the aesthetic quality and economic value of development projects.

Work with local developers and officials to recognize the benefits of "self-contained neighborhoods."

Stress the importance of "Diversity" (all ages and races) in developing neighborhoods and main streets.

Educate the public as to the benefits of trees and the positive effects they have on communities.

Educate and stress to builders the importance of "humane architecture," architecture that is beautiful, hospitable, and harmonizes with the surroundings.

Educate local officials about land use issues and trends.

Develop a model subdivision and zoning ordinance which incorporates "best management principles" such as neo-traditional development and conservation subdivisions.

Educate the public as to the benefits of "outdoor rooms/living spaces" (park spaces) that gives a person the feeling of enclosure and security.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage the reinvestment of both public and private dollars in urban Centers (whether boroughs or villages) to support revitalization through the use of land for medium density residential use, high density residential use, commercial uses, and good public-semi-public uses.

POLICIES:

Encourage dense commercial development nodes located close to existing urban Centers separated by lower density development.

Promote zoning coverage of all boroughs in Huntingdon County, and high growth, select townships.

Support upgrading zoning and codes administration in Huntingdon County.

New housing should be encouraged as a form of revitalization in areas of existing development, especially where it provides an integrated high quality neighborhood setting.

Support the use of site-specific real estate tax abatements as a tool of redevelopment in urban areas. Educate local officials about the use of such abatements.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage the targeted development of suburban areas of the County where infrastructure is present and environmental conditions lend to the sound development of land for commercial, industrial, and medium to low density residential uses.

POLICIES:

Concentrate public support to provide major high quality development sites at the Huntingdon Industrial Park, Riverview Business Center, and prison land.

Support the transfer and development of all land owned by the State Department of Corrections, south of Route 22 for planned community purposes.

Examine the potential use of impact fees for large-scale development.

Use real estate tax abatements as a bargaining tool to assure quality development in suburban areas. Provide education to local officials on how to use the abatement tool effectively.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage the preservation and conservation of rural areas of the County for use as farmland, private forest land, public lands, and various compatible low intensity uses.

POLICIES:

Discourage construction of public utilities in areas of low density development, except where part of the County or municipal land use plan.

Encourage Agricultural Security Areas (ASA) in those municipalities with substantial agricultural acreage not currently enrolled.

Provide guidance to local officials to ensure that land use regulations in rural areas do not restrict traditional rural activities.

Include deed notations for lands abutting Agricultural Security Areas through subdivision and land development ordinances.

Develop standards to regulate large-scale, confined animal operations separately from traditional family farm agriculture in local land use ordinances.

Encourage limited public acquisition of land or development rights (less than fee simple) to implement the greenway concept.

Develop and encourage a process whereby land purchases by State and Federal agencies can be part of, or linked to, a cohesive greenway network.

Promote a strategy for the preservation of agricultural land which includes the addition of new Agricultural Security Areas, purchase of agricultural easements, agricultural zoning, and other techniques.

Integrate the protection of environmentally sensitive areas (steep slope, riparian, floodplain, wetland) into local zoning and subdivision ordinances.

Ensure that land use regulations in rural areas do not restrict traditional rural activities, such as the keeping of livestock or home-based businesses.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN ELEMENTS OF THE VISION (GOALS)

Economic Prosperity - An Increase in Median Family Income, and a Reduction in Unemployment

*It is Our Goal that Huntingdon County Achieves Economic Prosperity while Retaining the
Qualities of Rural and Small Town Living*

*. . . . Future Employment will be Balanced Between the Farm-Forest, Resource Extraction, Retail, Service,
Manufacturing and Public Sectors.*

*To Encourage the Development of a Healthy and Diversified Economic Base Capable of Providing Employment
and Goods and Services to the Residents of Huntingdon County.*

OBJECTIVE: *Support and foster economic development activities which will continue the sustainable use of farm and forest resources. Support sound resource extraction policies.*

POLICIES:

Form a Huntingdon County Agriculture Development Council to become a full partner in local economic development efforts.

Support the development of new agriculture-related support businesses.

Support the direct sale of farm products to County institutions.

Support and encourage developing value-added forest products business in the County.

Encourage re-mining of areas already mined in Huntingdon County to maximize efficient use of limited resources and to assure sound reclamation.

OBJECTIVE: *Support and foster efforts to expand the breadth of tourism attractions and tourism-related business in Huntingdon County.*

POLICIES:

Support and encourage the development of a year-round, full-service resort at Raystown Lake.

Encourage the preservation, reconstruction, and interpretation of the East Broad Top Railroad to become a major tourist resource. Implement the Full-Steam Ahead report.

Support the expansion of new tourist-driven businesses (lodging, dining, retail), especially where they create new entrepreneurial opportunities for County residents.

Promote existing heritage festivals and events in the Raystown Country Guide.

Provide financial incentive grants for cultural activities at local festivals and events (festival fund).

Continue to distribute heritage promotional literature through Raystown Country Visitors Bureau.

Maintain the local satellite/tourist information Centers.

Develop signage for visitor information locations.

Provide for the recruitment and training of volunteers to guide visitors through Huntingdon county (step-on-guides for motor coach tours).

Continue to publish and distribute the Huntingdon County Heritage Guide.

Coordinate the promotion of local heritage activities with regional events such as Heritage Holidays.

Continue to publicize local heritage initiatives and events through local media articles, quarterly inserts, radio and TV coverage.

Support Path of Progress tour route and regional heritage partnerships.

Support the ongoing efforts of the Huntingdon County Visitor's Bureau in marketing, professional support, and scheduling efforts.

Support the development of a full-service amphitheater at Raystown Lake.

Examine the feasibility of a living outdoor farm museum at Raystown Lake.

OBJECTIVE: Reduce the flow of retail dollars from Huntingdon County by developing a stronger, more diverse retail service base.

Encourage retail development in both downtowns and planned commercial Centers.

Develop a retail market analysis to identify needed retail and services businesses.

Improve access to capital by developing a Countywide, two-tiered, subsidized loan program for both micro businesses and small businesses through the auspices of HCBI.

Market select high-quality sites for commercial development which will lead to net job and sales increases.

Develop prison land currently being released as a high-quality multi-use commercial Center.

Encourage the re-use and re-occupation of existing vacant industrial buildings throughout the County.

OBJECTIVE: Continue successful efforts to expand the industrial sector of the economy and attract new industry in sectors which match the County's resources.

Target major industrial-commercial development into 2-3 high-quality sites to be developed as true public-private partnerships.

Establish a Pennsylvania Enterprise Zone in the Mount Union area. Examine a feasibility of an inter-County Enterprise Zone in the Broad Top area.

Pursue the redevelopment and revitalization of the Huntingdon County Industrial Park and surrounding neighborhood.

Share local economic development success stories with the general public.

Encourage targeted marketing to small to medium industrial firms (roughly 40-70 employee size range) to fit local resources and reduce dependence on a few large employers.

Support the development of services to serve local business.

Support efforts at labor force training and development as a means to meet the needs of County employees.

Discourage large-scale industrial development outside already existing industrial areas or planned business parks.

Survey to determine if business service needs (accounting, computer services, communication) are being met for County enterprises.

Encourage and support local access to high-speed communications networks (fiber optics, et. al.).

OBJECTIVE: Support the development and maintenance of organizational strategies and tools to meet economic development goals.

POLICIES:

Develop a Huntingdon County presence on the world wide web which provides a positive identity, rich information and is searchable through the use of key words.

Determine the need for and support the provision of short-term and longer-term housing for the lead personnel of area businesses.

Perform a net-jobs realization general study to apply to specific future developments.

Continue the present professional business support and recruitment efforts of HCB&I and local Chambers of Commerce.

Examine local economic revitalization tax assistance at all levels of local government.

Investigate the use of tax increment financing and impact fees to guide economic development.

Support cooperation and coordination between all development organizations.

Offer revolving loan funds to ensure access to capital for all types and sizes of businesses.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION PLAN

ELEMENTS OF THE VISION (GOALS)

Protect Farmland, Forest Land, Natural Resources and the Environment

Develop Greenways Along Rivers and Ridges to Protect Water Quality, to Provide Habitat for Wildlife, to Enhance Recreational Opportunities, and to Protect Scenic Beauty

To Provide for the Preservation, Protection, Management, and Enhancement of Huntingdon County's Natural Resources and Environmental Quality for Present and Future Generations.

OBJECTIVE: *Maintain and enhance the use and quality of surface and subsurface water to meet individual and community needs and maintain those natural systems upon which man depends.*

POLICIES:

Nominate eligible local rivers as Pennsylvania Scenic Rivers.

Protect floodplains and wetlands from development through enforcement of local floodplain management ordinances.

Develop a Countywide Wellhead Protection Plan for Huntingdon County to protect public water supplies.

Work with the Conservation agencies to encourage proper management of agricultural waste.

Promote better enforcement of nutrient management regulations and development of other regulations dealing with Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations.

Support the application of sound erosion and sedimentation standards to all development, including forestry.

Protect water quality through the development of public sewer and water facilities in areas of population density.

Encourage the development of natural vegetative stream buffers to prevent sedimentation and erosion and to serve as greenways.

Develop County Storm Water Management Plans for each of the County's 19 drainage areas.

OBJECTIVE: *To develop and protect land use patterns that are in accordance with natural resource capabilities and that preserve the land for all living organisms, while simultaneously achieving high visual and scenic qualities.*

POLICIES:

Encourage forest landowners to participate in the Stewardship Forestry Program or Tree Farm Program.

Where mining does occur, support the efficient re-mining of areas mined in the past to promote full reclamation.

Encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) by communities, agriculture, forestry, and land developers.

Integrate the protection of environmentally sensitive areas (steep, riparian, floodplain, wetland) into local zoning and subdivision ordinances.

Ensure that land use regulations in rural areas do not restrict traditional rural activities such as keeping livestock, or home-based businesses.

Encourage the donation of scenic easements to the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy to preserve environmentally sensitive areas.

Develop a process whereby land purchases by State and Federal agencies can be part of, or linked to, a cohesive greenway network.

Encourage and develop standards for land development that are consistent with the land's capacity.

Encourage local governments to financially support existing conservancies.

Develop a model sign ordinance to protect the visual qualities of communities and the natural environment.

Pursue the policy of linking public lands along the summit and slope of ridges in the County. Promote the physical connection of greenways where natural trails exist by conservation agencies.

Encourage the sound use of energy in all municipal and County buildings. Educate the public on sound energy use. Conduct an energy audit of municipal and County buildings.

Develop standards for alternative development in rural areas, such as conservation subdivisions.

Promote a strategy for the preservation of agricultural land which includes the addition of new Agricultural Security Areas, purchase of agricultural easements, agricultural zoning and other techniques.

OBJECTIVE: Provide for the protection of plant and animal habitats to assure the health and diversity of wildlife species.

POLICIES:

Cooperate in the development of a Natural Heritage Inventory for Huntingdon County.

Encourage implementation of greenways to provide diverse habitat for wildlife and plant communities.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PLAN ELEMENTS OF THE VISION (GOALS)

Emphasize Excellence in Both Personal and Community Development, Maintain and Enhance Small Town Atmosphere

Preserve the Historic Resources of Huntingdon County for Their Education, Patriotic, Economic, and Quality of Life Values.

OBJECTIVE: *Coordinate local heritage activities with the Huntingdon County Heritage Committee and Huntingdon County Planning Commission.*

POLICIES:

Develop a publication on the significant historic architecture of Huntingdon County.

Adopt and enforce local codes and ordinances to protect historic sites and districts.

Implement the Heritage Resource Management Plan

Draft a model historic preservation ordinance.

Review local zoning ordinances to ensure compatibility with historic town planning and to encourage the reuse of historic structures.

Encourage the use of Historic Architectural Review Board Districts and Historic Overlay Zoning in the protection of historic districts and sites.

Encourage the conservation of existing neighborhoods through appropriate regulations and financial incentives.

OBJECTIVE: *Focus heritage activities on Huntingdon County's National Register Districts, Landmarks, and Sites:*

Huntingdon Borough National Register Historic District

POLICIES:

Support the adaptive reuse of Huntingdon's Union Depot.

Coordinate heritage activities with the HCHC.

Extend the Historic District boundaries.

Mount Union National Register Historic District

POLICIES:

Develop a campaign for the awareness of Mount Union's ethnic cultures.

Implement the Linear Park concept along Pennsylvania Avenue.

Develop Brick Industry Interpretive Programs (slide show, movies, museum).

Develop a transportation link between EBT Railroad and Downtown Mount Union.

Develop an interpretive display of the Pennsylvania Canal housed in the Sharrar House Museum.

Robertsdale/Woodvale National Register Historic District

POLICIES:

Preserve and restore the former EBT Post Office and train Station.

Expand the exhibits at the Reality Theater-Coal Miners Historical Society.

Restore a company house as a museum.

Develop a transportation link from Robertsdale to Woodvale to interpret coal mining/train.

Greenwood Furnace National Register Historic District

POLICIES:

Implement the Greenwood Furnace State Park Interpretive Plan.

Continue to present and develop first-person interpretive programs.

Establish additional lodging facilities, including the existing Iron Masters Mansion.

Establish a "Friends of the Park" group.

Whipple Dam State Park Day Use National Historic District

POLICY:

Implement the Whipple Dam State Park Interpretive Plan.

Pennsylvania Railroad National Historic District

POLICIES:

Include information on the engineering feat represented by this district in publications or museum exhibit possibly in the HUNT Tower.

Place markers along the rail lines to interpret the 11 bridges found along the five-mile stretch.

National Register Historic Sites

POLICIES:

Investigate the development and interpretation of Brumbaugh Homestead as a potential site for heritage and environmental activities.

Interpret and link the Minersville coke ovens to the historic site in Dudley.

East Broad Top National Historic Landmark

POLICIES:

Support the redevelopment of the EBT as recommended in the "Study of Alternatives" and "Full Steam Ahead" reports.

Incorporate the EBT Trust and convey the EBT to the Trust.

Incorporate an EBT/Tourism Authority or similar public financing agency.

Restore service from Rockhill to Robertsdale and Mount Union.

Support the recommendation in "Full Steam Ahead" that the EBT be designated as a partner in the Allegheny Ridge State Heritage Park.

Provide interpretive material and signage for the EBT.

Potential National Register Districts and Sites

POLICIES:

Prepare National Register of Historic Places applications for selected resources.

Nominate the following districts:

Alexandria - currently in preparation
Shirleysburg - declared eligible
McAlevy's Fort
Petersburg - interest expressed
Rockhill - interested
Orbisonia - currently in preparation
Spruce Creek
McConnellstown
Brumbaugh Homestead, St. Matthew's Stone Church, Brumbaugh Cemetery and adjacent Schoolhouse and farmstead buildings
Three Springs
Saltillo

Nominate the following sites:

Dudley H&BT water tower should be considered for nomination.

The Palace Hotel (Ethnic Hotel), in Dudley to be preserved and considered for nomination.

Monroe Furnace heritage "Discovery" site

OBJECTIVE: Encourage the preservation, restoration, and adaptive reuse of the built environment.

POLICIES:

Identify historic resources which are threatened by neglect or demolition.

Provide technical assistance and preservation guidelines to residents interested in preserving and/or rehabilitating their historic property.

Identify canal remains for preservation.

Stabilize and protect significant historic sites and structures: iron furnace, coke ovens, 1850 Pennsylvania railroad bridge, Pennsylvania canal artifacts.

Create an upper Stone Valley Preservation Plan.

Develop and maintain scenic overlooks and tour routes with interpretive exhibits.

Improve interpretive facilities at the Rockhill Trolley Museum.

OBJECTIVE: Provide interpretive publications for Huntingdon County.

POLICIES:

Create a fun map/poster of Huntingdon County identifying where the significant heritage sites and transportation routes are located.

Publish a map and brochure to coal sites and stories in the Broad Top area.

Reprint, update if necessary, and distribute walking tour brochures for historic districts.

Continue to develop additional walking tour brochures for new historic districts: Marklesburg, Petersburg, etc.

Publish material on Native American history in Huntingdon County (Sheep Rock).

Develop workshops for local historical societies and museums on historic interpretation and presentation.

OBJECTIVE: Provide high-quality interpretation at heritage sites and events.

POLICIES:

Work with local historical organizations to interpret the link between various heritage themes and stories (coal, iron, and railroad).

Coordinate interpretive materials with the development of trails and tour routes.

Encourage the creation and development of first-person interpretive programs at sites like Trough Creek State Park and Broad Top and Coal Miners Museum.

Implement the Trough Creek State Park Interpretive Plan.

Provide exhibits or develop brochure on the historic transportation routes (Indian paths, canal paths, old rail lines) through Huntingdon County: ex: HUNT Tower revolving exhibits.

Work with Mifflin and Juniata Counties to update the regional Juniata River Guide and incorporate canal and other histories into it.

Periodically republish the Huntingdon County Heritage Guide.

Publish a simple guide and a comprehensive book on Juniata iron resources in Huntingdon County.

Implement the Canal/Rail Public Park outlined in the Alexandria Area Preservation Plan, to provide visitor information and small trail head for Lower Trail Extension.

Develop canal and railroad interpretive exhibit at the Hartslog Museum.

Develop a virtual reality exhibit on coal mining: ex., room in the Coal Miners Museum that looks, smells, feels, and sounds like you're in a coal mine - movie to follow or precede.

HOUSING PLAN

ELEMENTS OF THE VISION (GOALS)

*Excellence Will be the Theme for Both Personal and Community Development in Huntingdon County.
This Will be Necessary as Citizens Demand Better Housing, Better Shopping, and Better Education*

*To Encourage the Provision of Decent, Safe, and Sanitary Housing for All the Residents of Huntingdon County,
Regardless of Age, Race, Sex, Income, Religious, or Ethnic Background*

OBJECTIVE: *Develop an adequate number of housing units of appropriate types to meet the needs of present and future households.*

POLICIES:

Ensure that local land use regulations do not unnecessarily increase the cost of housing.

Communities should analyze demographic trends as they set aside areas for future low, medium, or high density housing.

Encourage and support private investors who wish to build housing for all housing types, particularly rental housing.

Provide adequate infrastructure for high density housing in appropriate locations.

Discourage intensive development of housing where infrastructure is lacking.

Local zoning should designate adequate land resources to provide for a full range of housing types within the community.

Encourage planned residential development with a mixture of housing types as well as appropriate non-residential uses.

Encourage the use of residential tax abatements to promote infill housing in Centers.

Encourage infill development that is compatible with its surroundings.

Plan for mobile homes and manufactured homes by providing suitable zoned areas, while requiring high-quality design standards.

Encourage and support private investors who wish to explore market opportunities for new housing types in Huntingdon County.

OBJECTIVE: *Reinvest in Huntingdon County's present housing stock to provide safe, decent housing for all residents.*

Encourage and cooperate with providers of housing to special needs populations in the County (the elderly, handicapped, developmentally disabled, and others).

Examine regional enforcement of codes to improve the administrative capacity of small communities.

Continue present public-supported, need-based housing rehabilitation efforts.

Encourage private and non-profit rehabilitation of existing housing, through individual and community-based initiatives.

Establish standards to prevent the utilization of inappropriate structures as seasonal dwellings.

Encourage the adoption of the BOCA Property Maintenance Code in urban municipalities.

Support adequate local ordinances to assure a high-quality residential environment.

Establish standards for the conversion of single-family dwellings into multi-family dwellings to assure reasonable health and safety standards are met.

Where rehabilitation is not a realistic option, support the spot clearance of dilapidated structures.

Develop a first-time home buyers program for Huntingdon County and support adequate leadership for the program.

Support new avenues for affordable housing in cooperation with the Huntingdon County Housing Authority, and other entities.

Encourage the modernization and reconfiguration of public housing in Huntingdon County.

Update the Huntingdon County Fair Housing Study on a regular basis.

Use an interagency housing roundtable to discuss means to meet housing needs.

Target residential tax abatement programs toward affordable neighborhoods.

Facilitate housing replacements with compatibly designed units.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN ELEMENTS OF THE VISION (GOALS)

While Retaining Its Rural and Small-Town Atmosphere, Huntingdon County Will Remain Accessible to Pennsylvania and the Rest of the World. Information, Goods, and Services Will Travel to and Within Huntingdon County by a Complete Network of Highway, Rail, and Electronic Modes.

To Connect Huntingdon County to the Rest of the World Through a Wide Variety of Modes for Communication and Commerce.

OBJECTIVE: *Plan for a high-quality arterial highway system which serves to connect Huntingdon County with the rest of the world.*

POLICIES:

Promote free-flowing traffic on arterials by promoting sound design standards and avoiding excessive strip development.

Support limiting new access onto arterial roads through the PennDOT driveway permit process.

Focus State and Federal financial assistance on arterial highway needs.

Support the development of secondary (marginal) access roads to minimize entrance to arterial roads.

Encourage a key rural access management concept for Routes 26, 22, and 522, including the purchase of scenic easements and limited frontage access.

OBJECTIVE: *Participate fully in the highway planning process, as a part of the Southern Alleghenies Rural Planning Organization (RPO), to make highway improvements for safety and economic development.*

POLICIES:

Coordinate transportation and land use planning to protect against unintended development impacts.

Develop information on the transportation planning process for dissemination to local officials and citizens, in cooperation with PA DOT and Southern Alleghenies.

Coordinate both public and private actions in support of transportation improvements, including participation in the transportation planning process.

Continue offering testimony to PennDOT and the regional planning agency to support the decision-making process.

Develop a County-level Transportation Information System.

OBJECTIVE: Support the design of collector and local streets consistent with the nature and future land use of the community.

POLICIES:

Encourage an appropriate standard for new rural roads in low-intensity areas through subdivision and land development ordinances. At the same time, discourage excessive highway standards (excessive street widths, unnecessary curbing, overuse of cul-de-sacs, etc.).

Discourage strip commercial development in local zoning.

Support intersection improvements and realignments for traffic safety.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage the development of sustainable alternatives to auto travel throughout Huntingdon County.

POLICIES:

Support continued and improved rail passenger service to Huntingdon.

Support improved rail freight service.

Encourage the restoration of the EBT for rail passenger and freight service.

Examine the need for regular bus service to neighboring counties and taxi service.

Encourage paved shoulders where appropriate as lanes for pedestrian non-motorized traffic.

Encourage the requirement of sidewalks for new development in designated urban or suburban areas.

Promote and coordinate the creation of a technology "backbone" and electronic community network throughout Huntingdon County.

Support the continued development of improved facilities at the Huntingdon County Airport to become an adequate facility for general aviation and local business use.

Promote mass transit rail and para-transit.

OBJECTIVE: Improve access to Raystown Lake and associated recreation areas.

POLICIES:

Support better access to the Raystown Lake area through upgrading State and local highways.

Assist local municipalities in obtaining funding to upgrade Raystown access roads.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES PLAN ELEMENTS OF THE VISION (GOALS)

*It is Our Vision that Future Development is Focused on Existing Boroughs and Villages
to Take Advantage of Existing Public Investment in Utilities and Services.*

OBJECTIVE: *Develop as complete a network of public facilities and services, as possible in designated Centers.*

POLICIES:

Support adequate water and sewer in Centers to encourage development, eliminate water pollution, and promote the health and safety of residents.

Encourage the development of community parks and play fields in designated urban Centers.

Assure all Centers have adequate public buildings.

Support the J. C. Blair Community Hospital to retain it as a valuable local resource.

Encourage the placement of new public school facilities in Centers.

Analyze local police, ambulance, and fire protection and fill any service gaps.

Develop a partnership approach for the delivery of health and social services.

Expand local cultural opportunities by expanding schools into multi-use community Centers.

Solidify liaisons between institutions of higher learning and the County community.

Develop a Countywide cultural Center building for art/cultural events.

OBJECTIVE: *Protect water quality and guide development through the provision of public water and sewer.*

POLICIES:

All municipalities should have updated Act 537 Plans.

Prepare a County Water Supply Plan and investigate implementation of wellhead protection measures.

Support intergovernmental cooperation in both planning and delivery of services.

Create a Countywide Municipal Authority to provide operator/billing, financing, and services to small water or sewer systems.

Establish new public sewer facilities in Centers which lack them.

Establish new public water facilities in Centers which lack them.

Ensure that municipal sewage facility plans (Act 537) are compatible with local and County land use plans.

Assist those urban areas which need public water or sewer to implement the centers concept.

OBJECTIVE: *Provide appropriate level of services to all areas of the County.*

POLICIES:

Support the development and maintenance of trails, including:

Lower Trail Extension

Investigate Huntingdon/Smithfield to Mount Union trail

Continue to provide social services to meet the needs of those citizens who require them.

Develop EBT right-of-way as temporary trail between Rockhill and Robertsdale

Implementation of a hiking/biking trail around the lake as outlined in the Raystown Lake Master Plan.

Support development of municipal conservation parks which would link into a greenway system.

Support and encourage construction of municipal buildings in every township in Huntingdon County.

Strengthen the provision of library and information services to all County residents through the public library system and the use of the internet.

OBJECTIVE: *Continue the County's provision of planning, educational, technical, facilitation, and grant management services to municipalities in support of the goals of this Plan.*

POLICIES:

Encourage formation of multi-municipal recreation commissions as a partnership of boroughs, townships, and school districts.

Promote leadership development throughout Huntingdon County, focusing on municipal, municipal authority, and County-elected and appointed officials.

Continue County support for municipal and multi-municipal planning efforts in Huntingdon County.

Support the continuation of the Huntingdon County Public Library System on a Countywide basis.

Support and strengthen the Huntingdon County Planning and Development Department.

Review County government space needs.

Complete 911 addressing to develop a fully integrated emergency response system.

Build municipal administrative capacity through a continuing support and educational role.

Develop "Know Huntingdon County" material for school systems.

Prepare a Huntingdon County Historic profile.

Prepare a Huntingdon County Natural Resources profile.

Prepare a Huntingdon County Governmental profile.

Develop a county park and recreation plan.

Prepare a Huntingdon County Economic profile.

Section III

Land Use Plan

Economic Development Plan

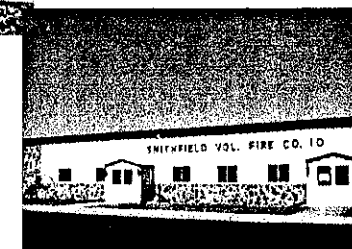
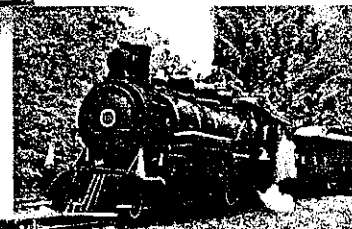
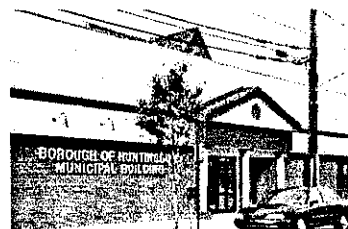
Natural Resources and Conservation Plan

Historical and Cultural Plan

Housing Plan

Transportation Plan

Community Services and Facilities Plan



LAND USE PLAN



The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code states that a comprehensive plan shall include a plan for land use "which may include provisions for the amount, intensity, character, and timing of land use proposed for residence, industry, business, agriculture, major traffic and transit facilities, utilities, community facilities, public grounds, parks and recreation, preservation of prime agricultural lands, floodplains, and other areas of special hazards and other similar uses." The framers of the Code had a concept of land use planning which included the interrelationship of housing, economic development, the conservation of natural resources, and public investment in transportation and utility infrastructure. Consistent with that, the Huntingdon County Land Use Plan is the centerpiece of the entire County Comprehensive Plan. All of the subsequent Plan chapters are a product of the policies contained in this Plan chapter. If the reader wants to understand the basics of County policy over the next decade, it is all contained in the Vision Statement and this chapter.

I. Summary of Findings: A plan for the future must be solidly based in both the trends which a place has experienced and the desires of the citizens. During the course of preparing this Plan, a number of citizen attitudes related to key trends were obtained.

From the Visioning session and the Community Attitude Survey:

1. Residents of the County community find the overall pattern of land use to be attractive, and rate it as very important to their quality of life.
2. Residents of the County community see two primary threats to the land use patterns they prefer:

A. A growing pattern of underutilization and deterioration in some of the older established communities and selected rural areas.

B. The emergence of some new patterns which are less efficient, more costly to the community and which degrade the quality of the living environment (sprawl) .

3. Residents of the County community will support land use regulations which:

A. Protect pre-existing uses from new uses which would threaten existing use rights and property values.

B. Permit full use of property for low-impact, traditional, or community-based activities or purposes

From the analysis of *Continuity Through Conservation II* (Volume 1):

1. In the last few decades, rural townships have been Huntingdon County's primary growth areas.
2. Since 1976, 10,000 new lots have been subdivided, representing 13 square miles.
3. For these past 20 years, the trend has been toward low-density development (2 dwelling units per acre to 2 acres per dwelling unit).
4. While development is presently focused in and around the County's 18 boroughs and along the U.S. 22 corridor, residential and commercial growth is increasing in the U.S. 522 and PA 26 corridors.
5. Like other rural areas, only a small percentage of the County's total land area is developed (3.45%, not including agriculture).

6. Approximately 24 percent of the County is State or Federally owned: State Game Lands, State Forest, State Parks, and the Raystown Lake project are primary examples.
7. The predominant land use is forest, at 71 percent.
8. Agriculture constitutes 22 percent of the County's land area, a figure which has remained fairly constant over the past decade.
9. Growth and development have not occurred in even distribution throughout the County.
10. There are many places in Huntingdon County with natural conditions which significantly limit growth and development.
11. Few municipalities have local comprehensive plans or zoning ordinances and the County does not have land development regulations.

From the analysis since *Continuity Through Conservation II* (Volume 1) was published:

1. Many of the boroughs and villages, where development was traditionally concentrated, are beginning to see deterioration and abandonment.
2. Huntingdon County is expected to gain 3,991 persons by 2010 and 4,681 by 2020. This will combine with an anticipated shrinking average household size (1990 average - 2.58 persons per household; 2020 average - 2.35 persons per household) to create about 3,950 new households in the County by 2020. This will include 3,200 new households through growth and about 750 households created through structural changes in the current population.

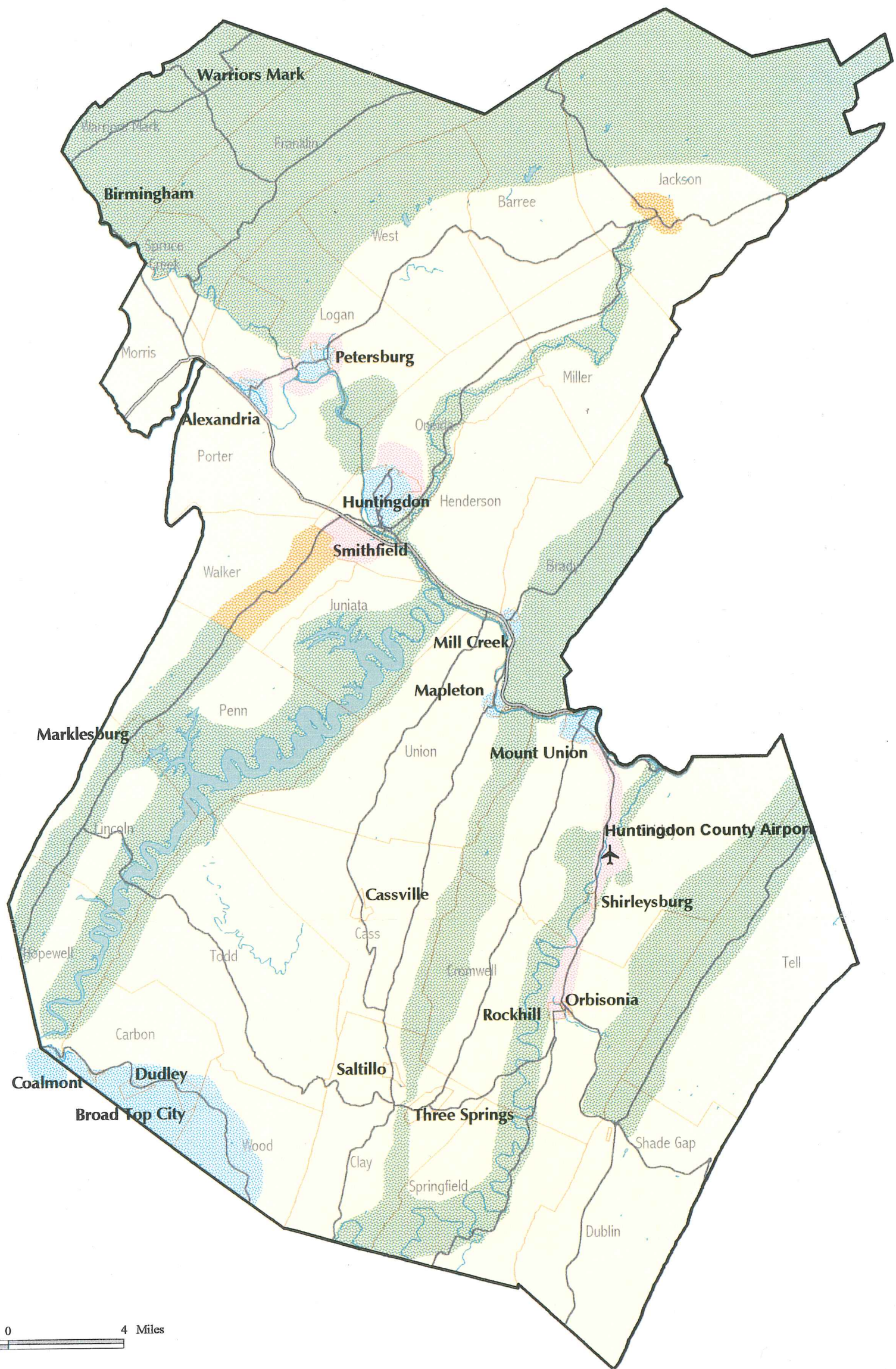
ANALYSIS AND PLAN

The Role of the County and the County Land Use Plan: Huntingdon County has municipalities within its borders. These municipalities are the foundation of government in the County, with the ability to provide citizens with basic public services and protection of public health, safety, and general welfare as necessary. Huntingdon County does not envision itself as the usurper of these local rights and responsibilities. Rather, the County, through this Plan, defines a role for itself as a partner which helps townships and boroughs meet the needs of citizens. This role has four parts: the County as technician, the County as educator, the County as grantsman, and the County as facilitator.

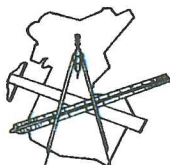
The role of the County Planning Commission as technician is based upon the fact that it is unrealistic to expect the County's small municipalities to hire professional staff planners. For some, it will even be difficult to undertake a single community comprehensive plan or administer a land use ordinance. It is not unreasonable to believe that over the next ten years, the County Planning Commission will be the only planning entity with significant resources in the County. The County is therefore prepared to make its resources available locally in the following ways:

First, any municipality in Huntingdon County is encouraged to adopt the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan by reference. This can be done by municipal resolution following a public hearing. The adoption will give the municipality an official Statement of Development Objectives which gives them official right of comment on actions by other public entities, such as municipal authorities or school districts, related to the extension, demolition, construction, sale, or purchase of public property and facilities. As an alternative, communities may also pass a resolution of support which states their support of the County Plan and general agreement with its policies. In either case, these municipal partnerships can form a basis for further planning.

It may be recognized by some municipal partners that the County Plan does not address a local data need or future issue in sufficient detail. In such cases, the County Plan can be used as a starting point to develop a municipal comprehensive plan. For communities in which single



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HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CITIZEN VISIONING

HUNTINGDON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

HUNTINGDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

- Revitalization
- Development
- Preservation - Conservation
- Conflict

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This project was funded, in part, with a State Planning Assistance Grant (SPAG) from the Department of Community and Economic Development.

municipal plans are infeasible, the County can provide a facilitator toward developing multi-municipal or regional partnerships.

This level of services can extend past the point of plan preparation into the area of implementation. Recognizing that the preparation of zoning or subdivision and land development ordinances is time-consuming, expensive, and often unnecessarily repetitive, the Plan recommends partnerships be developed to prepare model approaches and draft model text for such ordinances. Such ordinances and approaches will result in practical, locally oriented means to provide needed universal subdivision coverage and zoning protection for high-growth townships and boroughs (all boroughs are at greater risk due to a higher density of development).

The County also has a role as an educator. Choices about land use decisions, now, will affect many aspects of the community over the next thirty to forty years.

The role of educator by the County Planning Commission is recommended to include specific initiatives directed toward local governments, developers, and other real estate professionals and citizens.

The County can also utilize its financial resources to implement planning at the local level. For example, Community Development Block Grant funding is distributed by the County to 3-5 municipalities each year. This funding has made a major difference in infrastructure and housing at the local level.

As resources are available, the County also provides services preparing competitive grant applications. This has been the only means of funding some large-scale infrastructure projects.

As a facilitator, the County can take advantage of its position as a neutral entity among Huntingdon County's municipalities. For example, if two or more communities choose to submit a grant application for a single joint project, some mistrust or rivalry could be created by one community taking the lead on behalf of the others. The County is not a "competing" level of government. This makes it a natural entity to host or facilitate any project or idea which involves more than one township or borough. The municipal

participants can place more trust that a county effort will not favor a single participant at another's expense.

As mentioned before, the Land Use Plan is the centerpiece of the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan, where all of the divergent policies relative to the environment, economy, housing, and public utilities come together. The Land Use Plan is also the initial embodiment of the Vision for the 21st Century by explaining how Huntingdon County can achieve its vision.

Citizens' Vision: The vision for Huntingdon County was also graphically expressed by the citizens of the County (see Citizens' Vision Map). This Citizen Vision Map was the work of the more than three dozen persons who attended the Huntingdon County mini-conference on land use and environment. The citizens were asked to identify areas of Huntingdon County where the following activities would be appropriate:

Revitalization - These were defined as areas where development had occurred but which had seen deterioration, abandonment, or disinvestment. Citizens were asked to identify areas where such circumstances had occurred and it would be appropriate for public and community action to spur reinvestment and rebuilding.

Growth - These were areas which are not developed or sparsely developed where it would be appropriate for public and community action to support and encourage development.

Preservation-Conservation - These were two separate categories during the mini-conference. Preservation was defined as areas which should remain exactly as they are. Conservation was defined as undeveloped or sparsely developed areas which could be developed if consideration was taken to be careful of the natural surroundings. During the mini-conference, it was obvious that these two terms were very close in meaning and that in Huntingdon County, the difference was one of degrees. Therefore, the final map combines them into a single category, which might be thought of as areas where the natural systems must be considered as a primary part of the planning and development process.

To construct this map, the citizens were split into eight groups of 4 to 5 persons each. Each group prepared a map based upon the previous criteria. These maps were then merged into a single map by staff and consultants. Where two or more groups agreed, the concept was added to the map. If two or more groups disagreed, the area was simply identified as one where there were conflicting visions.

It then became the responsibility of the professional planners to convert this broad graphic vision into an achievable plan for future land use.

Concept Plan: The Concept Plan (see the Conceptual Land Use Map) was the first and most basic visualization of future land use. It divided all of Huntingdon County into rural, urban, suburban areas, or greenways, defined as follows:

Rural: This is the largest geographical designation on the Huntingdon County Concept Land Use Plan. It is reflective of the current reality of Huntingdon County and the desires of County residents. Rural areas are defined by the low density of people and buildings per acre, the presence of significantly less infrastructure, and large areas of natural landscapes and farmlands.

In counties such as Huntingdon County, rural areas have been a traditional source of wealth by providing food, timber, and minerals. This land-based wealth has produced a number of working landscapes, and it is the vision of the Land Use Plan that these continue.

The key threat to these areas is that development more appropriate to urban or suburban areas locate here. This creates a number of problems. First, pressure begins to extend urban typic public facilities and services to the newer, more intensive development. There can also be conflicts, particularly between higher density residential development and agricultural or mining uses. In either case, the typical result is that the traditional rural uses are unable to continue. Either the conflict or the cost of new services create an unviable situation.

The policy solution to this is to protect rural uses. Public money should not be used to subsidize the extension of urban services and

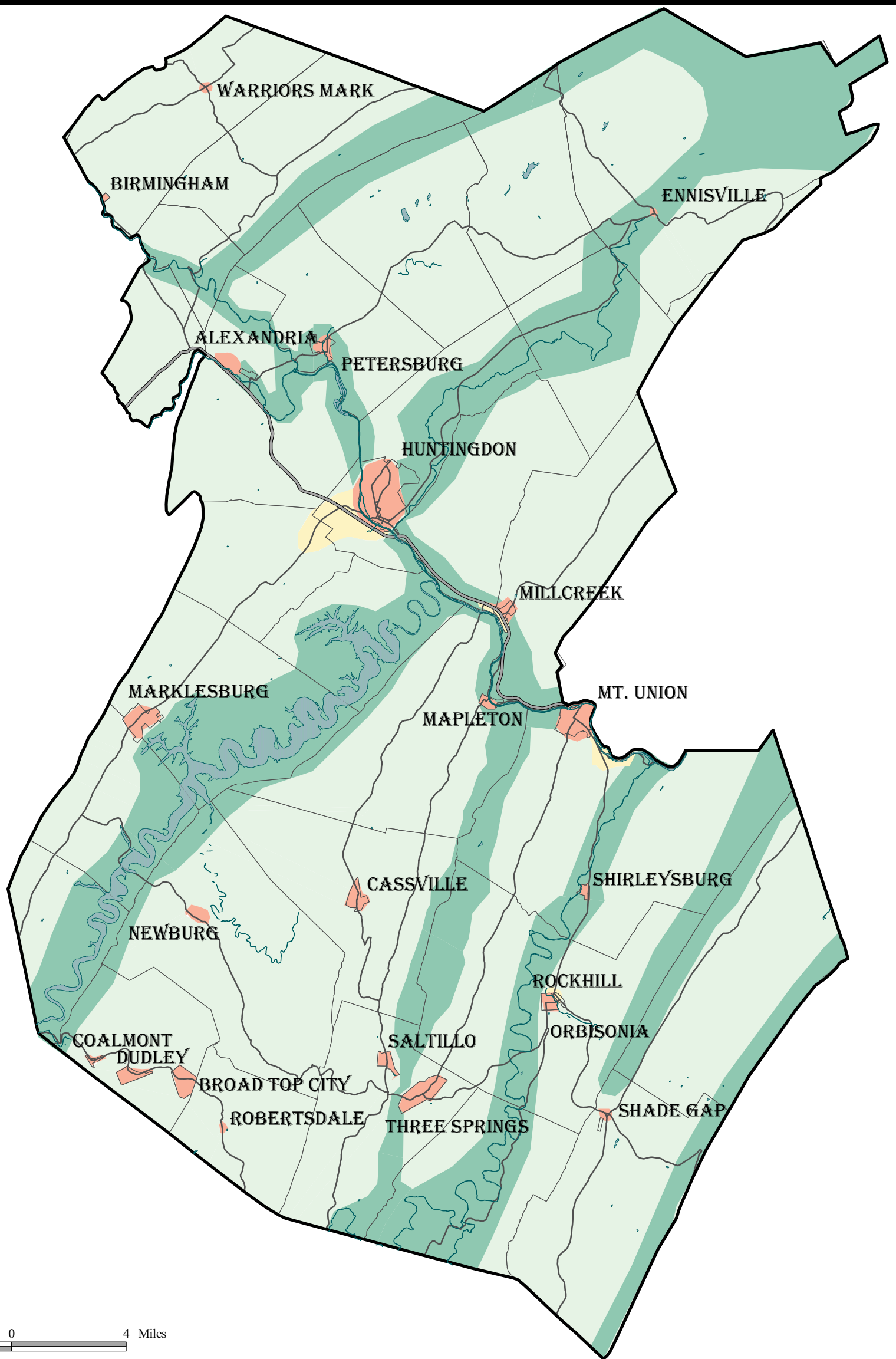
facilities into rural areas. Rural municipalities must also have tools to protect themselves from the type of high-intensity development which would necessitate the provision of such facilities or services.

The paradox in such a situation is that, as working landscapes, there has always been a diversity of development and multiple uses of properties in rural areas of Huntingdon County. It is the vision of this Plan that communities should not restrict the mixture of very low-density homes, scattered small businesses, farms, and woodlands which characterize rural Huntingdon County. The key to protecting this freedom and diversity is that densities remain low and development remains small scale.

To implement such protection, rural townships should examine covenants such as Agricultural Security Areas, purchase of development rights, and conservation or open space subdivisions. If zoning is pursued, it should be based on rural models, which allow farming, small-scale manufacturing, home occupations, and housing to coexist. It should not be based on more restrictive urban or suburban standards.

Urban: Urban areas will be those places characterized by complete infrastructure — public water, public sewer, paved street systems, sidewalks, and higher levels of municipal services. Because of the high level of public expense, urban areas will be normally characterized by a higher density of development (more buildings per acre). Twenty urban areas have been identified in Huntingdon County. Most of these are characterized historically by a greater density of development than the surrounding countryside. While some lack complete infrastructure, most have a density which makes provision of infrastructure financially possible.

Consistent with the citizen vision, the urban areas are envisioned as the centers of community and economic life for Huntingdon County. Where public dollars are available, the maintenance and revitalization of those areas is a major Plan priority. Visually and physically, these areas will be characterized by pedestrian orientation, pleasant traditional small-town appearance (tree-lined streets, human scale



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HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CONCEPTUAL LANDUSE PLAN

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- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural
- Greenways

buildings), a variety of housing opportunities, retail/service business areas within or adjacent to residential areas, and a diversity of residents.

Long-time residents will recognize that the previously mentioned characteristics define what many of their communities were meant to be. In some cases, these characteristics are being lost through a variety of factors, including:

- ▶ Disinvestment in private property, such as deterioration and abandonment of buildings.
- ▶ Aging infrastructure, such as cracked, missing sidewalks and antiquated sewer lines.

Why should public and private dollars reinvest in places with such problems? Quite simply, because it makes good economic sense. For 200 years, the people of Huntingdon County have spent countless millions of dollars on sewer, water, streets, sidewalks, landscaping, and buildings. A few dollars spent in the maintenance of this infrastructure (which is necessary to our civilization) is better spent than attempting to replace it elsewhere.

The Plan recommends an emphasis on public investment as a top priority in these areas, especially where it can attract private reinvestment.

This can be accomplished by a number of specific policies in land use regulations, property maintenance/health and safety ordinances, tax incentives, and prioritization for public spending.

Land use regulations are important as both active and passive features in urban centers. Passively, it is important that they do not create unnecessary impediments to the higher density mixed-use development which makes urban areas special. Some of the loss of pedestrian accessibility and community character in centers is actually a result of the type of zoning which rigorously separates various kinds of land uses and requires provision of on-site parking. This type of zoning can

prevent the mix of small-scale neighborhood commercial uses and homes, which makes neighborhoods living entities. It can also make it preferable for businesses to demolish older buildings and replace them with a mixture of new buildings and parking lots which make centers less pleasant. To prevent this, urban communities in Huntingdon County should review their zoning ordinances with an eye toward whether the ordinance would allow the replication of their favorite community features. Amendments should be made to assure that the ordinances contain common-sense standards for nonconforming buildings, setbacks, and yard sizes which reflect historic densities, and allowing on-street or off-site parking. In general, zoning should never keep the good things that have already occurred in development from being repeated.

The model for such an approach is available from a number of sources. There is a school of thought in planning known as "new urbanism," "neo-traditionalism," or "traditional neighborhood development." These various buzz words are simply expressions to describe new development which retains the dimensions and spirit of the traditional American town. Several dozen models for such developments are available. At the present time, there are nine major projects in construction or advance planning in Pennsylvania which would create about 3,000 housing units in neighborhoods which are designed to neo-traditional standards. All are located in the greater Philadelphia or Pittsburgh areas. All are characterized as "infill" developments, using the existing street systems and acting as a natural extension of the surrounding urban area. Some of these approaches might be successfully adopted to the Huntingdon County setting.

Beyond the issue of zoning, many individual buildings in centers have suffered from deterioration and abandonment. At the least, in a high-density area, they devalue neighboring properties. At their worst, they directly threaten the health and safety of citizens. Unfortunately, many smaller urban areas either do not have ordinances to address this problem, have outdated, unenforceable ordinances, or lack an experienced official to enforce dangerous building ordinances.

Almost every expert in the area believes that the best standard for an urban area is the BOCA Property Maintenance Code. There are some good single-purpose, nuisance-type ordinances available. A good property maintenance ordinance is not concerned with aesthetics; its purpose is to protect the community from delinquent buildings destroying life and property by falling down, harboring rats, or burning. Most ordinances require either closing access to abandoned buildings, repairing problems, or demolition. This gives the owner a range of choices. Many such ordinances also address the associated issues of organic garbage and junk which harbor vermin.

The ideal for vacant buildings is that they not be demolished unless they are truly dilapidated. The preferred alternative is that they be reused and reoccupied.

Suburban: Since World War II, our civilization has become increasingly, dependent on motor vehicles for the movement of people and goods. This has a tremendous impact on land use patterns. As writer Tom Hilton has stated, "In accommodating the auto, we have also let it become our only transportation option. This requires that we take our 3,500-pound car everywhere we go. Bear in mind that while a person takes up only 2 square feet of space, a car hogs 70 to 100 square feet. To provide ample 'storage' at each potential destination, we build parking lots." While the negative affects of autos upon planning may be debated, they remain a current reality for which concessions must be made. Among those realities are that most Huntingdon County residents own one or two motor vehicles, many destinations are only accessible to them by auto, and virtually the entire American shipping system currently rests on trucking. Large parking lots and heavy truck traffic can have a very negative effect on residential quality of life in urban areas.

In rural areas, there is generally a lack of sufficient transportation infrastructure. Thus, it is appropriate and necessary for Huntingdon County to provide suburban areas for those essential land uses which are neither rural nor urban.

The implementation of such an objective rests on targeting suburban development to areas where there is appropriate land and presence or proximity to appropriate infrastructure, especially arterial highways, public sewer, and public water. Frankly, areas which meet these criteria are not common to Huntingdon County. Therefore, it is imperative that those qualified areas be on the market, be upgraded where necessary, and ready for quality development. This will require an active role for the County and municipalities.

First and foremost is the availability of developable land. The prime value intersection for the entire County is US 22 and PA 26. At present, the largest tract of developable land at this site is in the ownership of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC). This land is presently underutilized in respect to its potential for development. The Department recently transferred a tract of land to Smithfield Township. This Plan recommends a continuation of this policy toward the full transfer of all DOC land south of Route 22 to a local entity.

The limiting factor of suitable land also lends itself toward a policy of intensive public investment in a limited number of existing quality sites. At present, these would be the Huntingdon Industrial Park and the Riverview Business Center in the eastern portion of the County. Over time, this list will grow to include former prison lands. It is essential that the community approach these developments in a professional, planned manner. The first stage is ensuring adequate infrastructure. The second essential is an intimate understanding of market forces. All development is not equal. The County and communities should stand ready to subsidize the most beneficial development through such programs as the LERTA tax abatement, and begin examining impact fees for less beneficial development. Both of these are bargaining tools. It is recommended that Huntingdon County begin an educational process with local officials to learn about the negotiation process and the available local government tools.

The suburban areas of Huntingdon County are also the areas where traditional zoning and subdivision and land development regulations can be the most useful. Large-scale commercial/industrial

development and medium to low-density housing developments must be separated enough to prevent land use conflicts for the protection of all parties. Industrial developers want the security of some form of business zoning designation to protect them from nuisance lawsuits. Homeowners want the security of knowing that the land around them can only be developed for compatible uses. This is the proper role of a protective zoning ordinance. The subdivision and land development ordinance is also crucial in laying out common-sense residential street systems and managing the parking and traffic impacts of nonresidential development.

Greenways: The landscape of Huntingdon County includes some natural infrastructure. Wetlands purify water and hold back flood waters. Tree-clad hills absorb millions of gallons of rainwater and prevent both flooding and erosion. Streams feed between hills and wetlands. These natural systems provide these valuable services at little or no cost while still providing soil and water to grow crops, trees for timber and wildlife for food and recreation. The Concept Plan designation for these ridges and stream-side areas is greenways. The Commonwealth defined greenways in a recent publication as "corridors of open space. They often follow natural features such as rivers, streams, or ridgetops." In Huntingdon County, a network of greenways is envisioned which will include both public and private lands. The public lands might be State Game Lands, State forests, or other open-space uses. Private lands could be represented by farms, forestry, and various low-intensity uses. It is envisioned that the greenway concept could be implemented by a combination of fee-simple purchases (such as expanded Game Lands), purchase of conservation easements, and landowner initiatives (such as Agricultural Security Areas). It is also the policy of the Comprehensive Plan that private lands in greenways be valued for traditional rural uses, such as harvesting of timber, farming, and hunting or fishing. If these uses can retain an innate value, pressures for inappropriate development are lessened.

Future Land Use Plan: The conceptual plan represents a workable implementation of the vision, articulated by Huntingdon County's stakeholders. Yet, this conceptual map can only be implemented by

practical planning based upon real-world projections of what is likely to happen in Huntingdon County over the next 10 to 15 years. To articulate such a detailed plan, it is necessary to examine specific land use types (residential, commercial, etc.) and consider how much land they realistically need, what type of land, and where it will be available.

Residential needs will be based on new households and their needs. Over the next 10 to 20 years, Huntingdon County is expected to gain new households as follows:

- ▶ About 700 new households headed by persons age 40 to 54 by 2010, rising to 1,000 households by 2020.
 - These households are at peak income years
 - They have no small children
 - There is an average 2.3 persons per household ±
 - Their housing preferences range to larger lots, suburban or rural settings, and new homes.
- ▶ About 750 new households of persons 55 to 70 by 2010, rising to 1,100 by 2020. These households can be generalized as:
 - Early retirees
 - Empty nesters
 - They have less income than earlier cohorts
 - They have 1.8 persons per household ±
- ▶ About 400 new elderly households (age 70+) by 2010, rising to 1,100 by 2020.
 - Wide variety of housing/care needs, based on individual health.
 - More single-person households
 - 1.3 persons per household
 - Consistently lower incomes

- ▶ Finally, the County will have newly created households from the existing population. These will number about 750 households, largely headed by persons under the age of 40.
 - Great number of single-person/single-parent households
 - More likely to be renters than homeowners
 - Generally lower incomes
 - Will be drawn to affordable housing opportunities

Land Use Implications - 2010-2020

- A. The County should plan for 700 to 1,000 new low-density/intensity households. This will require an average of 2.84 acres per household, or 2,840 acres.

The County should plan for 750 to 1,100 new medium-density households. These will require about 368 acres, virtually all of which will need public sewer/water service.

The County should plan for 1,150 to 1,850 new, affordable or elderly households residing in various forms of specialty and conventional high-density housing. This may require about 255 acres. Virtually all of this population will need public water and sewer.

- B. Geographic Distribution of New Households.

It should not be assumed this growth will occur evenly throughout Huntingdon County. Each planning region might be affected differently. About one half of this growth will occur in the Huntingdon Area. Ten to fifteen percent each will occur in the Spruce Creek, North Huntingdon and South Huntingdon regions, with the rest scattered throughout the County.

Commercial Land Use Growth.

- ▶ Huntingdon County is currently understored and underserved by national "chain" retailers.

- ▶ If present trends continue, these national retailers are currently pursuing a policy of establishing facilities in what were once ignored as "minor markets" (places like Huntingdon County).

In such a scenario, Huntingdon might see two new superstore/plaza facilities at 15 acres each or a single regional commercial business complex of 30-40 acres. These 30-40 acres of anchor development could generate another 60 to 70 acres of retail development for smaller stores.

Thus, for planning purposes, 100 acres will be the assumed commercial acreage to be required over the next 15 to 20 years.

Industrial Land Use Growth

- ▶ Industrial park land in Huntingdon County historically developed at rates of 3-6 acres per year.
- ▶ Recent successful industrial development ventures will likely accelerate this. Thus, for primary purposes, 120 acres will be the assumed industrial acreage to be needed over the next 15 to 20 years.

Geographic Distribution of Industrial and Commercial Development

- ▶ Due to the principles of commercial location (primarily that greater concentrations increase the size of the total market area). Region 4 (the Huntingdon Area) will probably see the bulk of commercial development.
- ▶ In rural areas, industrial development is driven by public investment in sites (land acquisition, sewer, water, etc.). The most recent investment has been in the Mount Union area, which coincidentally has the best access from Route 22 (the County's most important highway) to I-76 (the nearest Interstate highway) in the County. Thus, the Mount Union Area will probably absorb the bulk of industrial growth with a secondary concentration in the Huntingdon Area.

Finally, it should be noted that significant amounts of land which were subdivided in the past for residential purposes were never developed. Huntingdon County may have a residue of more than 2,000 vacant lots.

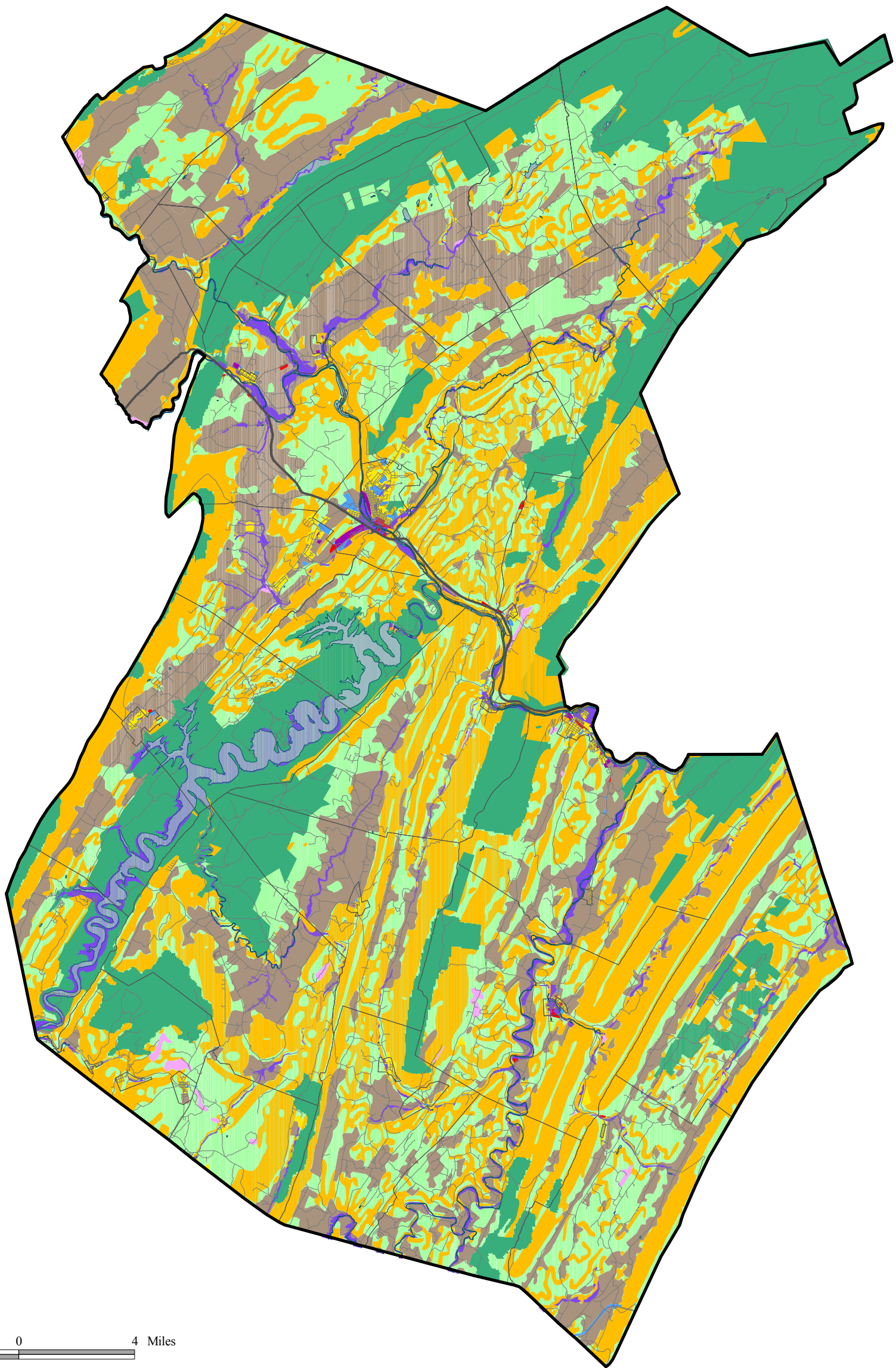
Agricultural Land - Agricultural land has been declining significantly in Huntingdon County. While a very important component in the County economy, agricultural land has been lost to development and to simple abandonment (smaller or less fertile farmland ceases to be tilled and returns to forest land). This trend is expected to continue, though it may be reduced in scale.

These market trends must be viewed against natural and human factors which will limit future development. Some factors, such as steep slopes or floodplains, represent a practical constraint on future development. Human factors such as the presence of public sewer or good highway access will attract development. To examine the variety of potential factors, the Huntingdon County Planning Commission staff created a matrix of land uses which could be applied uniformly in the County.

LAND USE PLAN MATRIX

Criteria	Commercial and Industrial	High- and Medium-Density Residential	Low-Density Residential	Low-Intensity Uses/ Conservation	Agriculture	Park and Open Space
Within ½ mile of Arterial Highway	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Within 1 mile of Arterial Highway	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Within ½ mile of Collector Highway	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Existing sewer and water service	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Within 2,000 feet of sewer and water service	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Within 2,000 feet of Act 43 area	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Class I - IV Soil	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Steep Slope	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
Floodplain	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Geologic Hazard	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Existing Ag Land	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Existing Low-Density Residential	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Existing Industrial and Commercial	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Existing High- and Medium-Density Residential	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Within developed areas having significant deterioration	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
Wellhead/Water Supply Area	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	YES

*Certain low-intensity forms of agriculture only.



HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Developmental Constraints

HUNTINGDON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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- Developmental Constraints:**
- Steep Slopes
 - Flood Plains
 - Public Open Space
- Existing Landuse:**
- Residential
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Strip Mines and Quarries
 - Public/Semi-Public
 - Forest
 - Agricultural

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Because of the geographic information systems (GIS) technology, it was possible to look at all of the various factors presented in the matrix on a map depicting all of Huntingdon County. This process was completed by consultant and staff in a series of discussion meetings.

The GIS system allowed planners to view a wide variety of what-if scenarios. For example, areas of gentle slope, which are developable, could be viewed in the context of the presence of public water or public sewer. Such areas did not abut previously developed residential areas, and there was nearby highway access as another layer. Such land could be considered suitable for commercial or industrial development.

First, however, it was essential to remove non-developable parcels from consideration. To do this, significant constraints were examined in the context of the existing land use base. The significant constraints were steep slopes, which are areas that have an elevation change of greater than 25 percent over 100 lineal feet. Floodplains were also considered, which are subject to significant inundation at least once per one hundred years. And then finally, land in public ownership for recreation, conservation, or open space purposes was identified.

The results of this mapping process are summarized in the Developmental Constraints Map. This map illustrates how little truly suitable land resources Huntingdon County has for intensive future development.

Future Land Use Plan: The GIS system allowed planners to focus upon those few areas, which are truly developable, with some degree of accuracy. Applying the matrix to Huntingdon County, the Future Land Use Plan was developed. This Plan defines future land use in the County as being one of eight future categories.

Urban Residential - Urban residential are residential uses at a density of 4 or more dwelling units per acre. All urban residential areas either have public water and sewer, or such infrastructure is recommended.

Low-Density Residential - These are lands recommended for residential uses at densities up to 4 units per acre or as low as 1 unit per 2 acres. It is anticipated that the higher densities would be served by

public water and sewer and the densities of 1 unit per acre or less would have on-lot sewer and water.

Commercial - Areas established for offices, retail businesses, and similar uses. These areas could be established at densities high enough to support either pedestrian or auto access. Full infrastructure is present or recommended.

Public/Semi-Public Uses - These are lands and buildings owned by government bodies or non-profits which provide community services. Examples include the State Correctional facilities and Juniata College.

Industrial/Commercial - These are lands currently used or recommended for use as manufacturing, warehousing, offices, business parks, and the commercial uses listed previously.

Public Open Space - These are lands owned by public entities for conservation or recreation purposes. Examples include Raystown Lake and State Game Lands.

Agricultural - Lands used for tillage, orchards, pasturage, forage, and similar food and fiber production (with the exception of major forest holdings).

Low Intensity - Rural areas which will be a mixture of very low-density housing (more than 2 acres per unit), scattered small businesses, farms, and private forest lands.

In the context of the future Land Use Plan, the roles of the County discussed previously should be kept in mind. The future Land Use Plan is a general plan for Huntingdon County. It is not a lot-by-lot depiction of the future, or an ordinance limiting future land use to those described. For example, the Plan makes reference to urban residential areas. It is conceived in the context of the general plan that the character of these areas would be urban residential, but every single development within that area would not need to be residential. It is entirely possible that such an area would have institutional or public uses (such as churches and schools) or

even neighborhood commercial businesses (such as a convenience store) within its limits.

In urban residential areas, the County should plan for new or expanded residential development of varying densities. It would be envisioned that significant amounts of these areas would be served by public water or public sewer in the future. This would accommodate a variety of residential settings to meet the needs of Huntingdon County citizens.

Commercial areas are those in which significant commercial development has already occurred. This includes many of the urban centers, commercial downtowns, and some highway or suburban-oriented "strip development" on such areas as Route 22. It is our vision for the Future Land Use Plan that these areas continue to provide opportunities for the County's citizens to purchase goods and services.

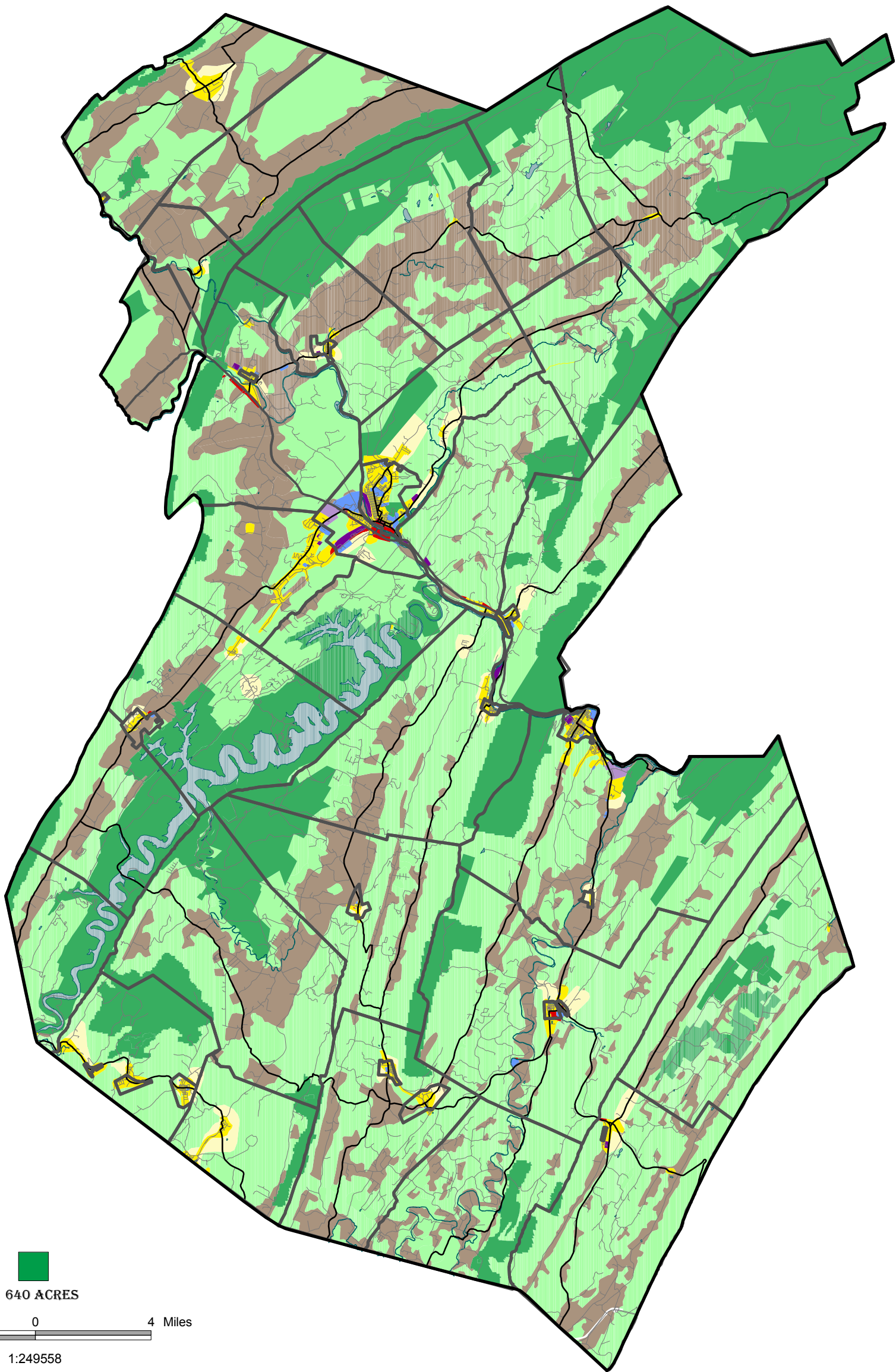
Industrial/Planned Business Parks: In a traditional land use plan or zoning ordinance, quite often commercial and industrial land uses were originally separated from one another. In an environment where much industrial growth is coming from light industry, with few problems of pollutants or noxious discharge, and commercial development is getting larger and more intensive, planning can be used to assure that both forms of development can take place in one single high-quality setting. An example of this integrated approach to development can be seen at the Riverview Business Park where such uses as a medical office, grocery store, and electronics manufacturer coexist in a single park-like setting, within short distances of each other. The recommendation of this Plan is that large-scale development be concentrated in a few high-quality sites, with access to utilities and major highways. This would facilitate the use of public funds to subsidize the quality sites which would make these types of developments successful. However, there also remain older industrial areas where the character is predominately industrial and retrofit to a mixed-use business park is less likely. These areas are designated industrial.

Public use includes the schools, post-secondary schools, and such institutions as the two State Correctional facilities in Huntingdon County. These are an important part of the local economy in these rural communities and the facilities should be given opportunity to continue,

expand, and thrive. It is the policy of the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan that as public facilities, these should be located in or adjacent to urban centers or where the infrastructure necessary to support them is readily available.

The agricultural lands illustrated on the map should be protected from land use conflicts which would devalue them from their current use and prevent them from being able to continue. There are also farms scattered throughout the various areas depicted on the map as low-intensity. It is the vision of the Future Land Use Plan that low-intensity areas not be served by public infrastructure, but be home to a wide variety of low-density and low-intensity developments. This might include rural homes on very large lots; small businesses, such as country stores; small manufacturing facilities; farms; or small institutional uses, such as churches. This is the mix of uses that makes the Huntingdon County countryside attractive now and which should be able to continue to thrive into the future.

It is necessary for the Future Land Use Plan to ensure that adequate room is provided for future development. For uses which are driven by private-sector new development (residential, commercial), there should be more acreage provided than is actually needed. This is simply because many tracts of land suitable for such purposes may not be truly available (they may not be for sale, may be priced too high, etc.). The following table is provided as a cross-check to illustrate the acreage used by various categories, their projected growth, and the provision made on the Future Land Use Plan for that growth.



HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- Urban Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Business Park
- Public Use
- Public Open Space
- Low Intensity
- Agriculture

Future Landuse Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

HUNTINGDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

GRANEY, GROSSMAN, RAY, AND ASSOCIATES
A Community Planning and Development Partnership
Harrisville, Pennsylvania

This project was funded, in part, with a State Planning Assistance Grant (SPAG) from the Department of Community and Economic Development.

	<u>Current Acreage</u>	<u>Estimated Future Acreage Needed</u>	<u>Total Needed Acreage</u>	<u>Total Future Land Use Plan Acreage</u>
Low-Density Residential	8,329	2,840	11,169	7,998**
Urban Residential	4,510	623	5,133	9,757***
Commercial	540	100	640	730
Industrial	496	120	616	906*

*Includes Planned Business Parks.

**For planning purposes, this does not include the low-intensity areas of the County, which will meet the needs of persons desiring larger lots (2+ acres) and more isolated settings. Because lot sizes can vary tremendously, this can be hard to predict. For planning purposes, 20 percent of future activity is projected in low-intensity areas (2,000 acres and 200 homes).

***Reflects the upgrade of current low-density residential land as future public services and associated infill become possible.

As the table shows, many hundreds of additional acres are provided to ensure the community can practically accommodate future growth and meet the needs of the private sector.

This does, however, represent a significant departure from the 1979 Comprehensive Plan, which had very different future growth projections.

<u>Land Use Categories</u>	<u>1999 Plan</u>	<u>1979 Plan</u>
Urban Residential	9,757	19,391
Low-Density Residential	7,998	33,969
Commercial	730	1,918
Industrial/Planned Business Parks	906	4,591
Public/Semi-Public	1,115	NC
Public Open Space	130,562	142,906
Agriculture	121,591	122,330
Low Intensity	286,055	244,259
Water	10,650	NC
Total County	569,364	569,364

NC - Not counted

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Encourage all municipalities to adopt the County Comprehensive Plan by reference, becoming municipal partners.
- ▶ Ensure complete coverage of Huntingdon County by Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.
- ▶ Ensure there is zoning ordinance coverage of all boroughs in Huntingdon County and select high-growth townships.
- ▶ Upgrade the level of zoning and codes administration in Huntingdon County.
- ▶ Encourage the preparation of municipal or multi-municipal/ regional Comprehensive Plans as a logical extension of the County Comprehensive Plan.
- ▶ Support the use of site-specific real estate tax abatements as a tool to revitalization in urban areas.

- ▶ Educate local leaders about land use issues and trends, including neo-traditional planning, conservation subdivisions, and other tools.
- ▶ Develop a model subdivision and zoning ordinance which incorporates "best management principles" such as neo-traditional development and conservation subdivisions.
- ▶ Make inter-municipal compatibility analysis a part of the review standard of municipal comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.
- ▶ Pursue a policy of linking existing lands into a cohesive greenway network through additional land acquisition by conservation agencies.
- ▶ Encourage the integration of steep slope protection standards into local zoning and subdivision regulations.
- ▶ Ensure that land use regulations in rural areas do not restrict traditional rural activities, such as keeping of livestock or home-based businesses.
- ▶ Continue the County Planning Commission's role as a detailed and professional reviewer for subdivision and land development and zoning and local planning activity.

SCENARIO 2020

Huntingdon County has thrived over the past few years through the implementation of its policy of *Continuity Through Conservation*. The one word which best characterizes Huntingdon County is "diversity." Because of the scenic atmosphere and rural quality of life, Huntingdon was able to capture some of the most desirable business investments of the early 21st century. It achieved this largely by not replicating the mistakes that had been made in other areas. During the late 20th century, development occurred in other places without adequate planning for traffic flow infrastructure and livability. However, in Huntingdon County, pleasant, high-quality corporate campuses, with a mix of small industries and retail businesses, are concentrated in the area to the east of Mount Union and to the west of Huntingdon Borough. Both of these sectors have

a green open atmosphere which blends well with the surrounding landscapes.

Because this development had been concentrated, it was easy to cost-effectively convey infrastructure and to make necessary highway improvements. Also, because large-scale development was largely concentrated in these two areas, many of the small-town areas of the County were able to recapture a strong retail base, while preserving community appearance and fabric. The boroughs of Huntingdon County were able to accomplish this by implementing zoning policies which facilitated small business development, but protected pre-existing development. Many residents flock to the small downtowns for shopping, office employment, or simply to dine out, walk, or enjoy nice days. Very targeted tax abatement policies also insure that some of the fine old buildings are preserved next to high-quality newer ones.

The diversity of the County continues in the area of residential opportunities. Many of the County's older citizens and young single persons are just starting to take advantage of housing within walking distance of the downtowns. However, there are also successful suburban housing developments from the Broad Top area to Warriors Mark. These areas were planned for water and sewer systems facilitating such medium-density residential neighborhoods in selected areas. Persons desiring greater isolation or very large lots for forestry, hunting, or horse keeping are purchasing 10- to 15-acre tracts in rural areas.

One unique characteristic of Huntingdon County is the high quality of its suburban development. The suburban development of the County is of such a manner that it ties those areas well into both the surrounding countryside and the older urban centers. Some suburban development even replicates and connects the street system of the adjoining boroughs, continuing the pleasant walkable small-town atmosphere. This success is due, in part, to development standards devised through model subdivision regulations, which include the input of developers, local officials, and the citizens who would live in the development.

Agriculture still flourishes in every section of Huntingdon County. Family dairy farms, cash grain operators, and part-time livestock farms are found

everywhere, well protected by Agricultural Security Areas. There are also growing numbers of stewardship forests, constituting a new form of agriculture in Huntingdon County's long tradition of land-based activities.

Outside the areas where there are substantial concentrations of farming, there is a pleasant mixture of farms, locally owned small businesses, and homes on large lots. This mix thrives because the rural areas do not have high-density development; consequently, the mix does not create conflict as they might in an urban or suburban area.

Finally, the County has a network of greenways which stretches across its bounds in virtually every direction. In some places, these greenways are small buffers, secured by conservation easements, while remaining in private hands. In other cases, they remain privately owned stewardship forests, where it is the owner's option to allow public access. In yet other places, public agencies purchased land. Where this occurred, they were careful to purchase in areas which met the overall greenway concept plan. Through targeted purchasing, it is possible for hikers, hunters, or boaters to cross the entire County while enjoying the variety of landscapes, animals, and plants. Coming full circle, many of the industrial and business developers acknowledge that the network of greenways and outdoor opportunities was a significant factor in their choosing Huntingdon County as a location. Quality of life has become a reality — not just a slogan locally.

In fairness to history, it should be noted it was not the County Comprehensive Plan which created this situation. What the Plan did do was initiate a process where citizens, local leaders, and the business community gathered together to implement a vision of quality and excellence. The Plan was followed by a number of local initiatives which led to some common-sense protective laws: universal subdivision coverage, protective zoning, and building/housing codes. One of the remarkable aspects of these regulations is that they were devised by all sectors of the community to meet local needs without being unduly restrictive. For example, rural residents were comfortable to live under regulations which protected them from large uses, such as landfills, but did not restrict their own small businesses or the keeping of livestock.

However, it would be a mistake to think that the major result of the Plan was new regulations. The major result of the Plan was that it educated the community about the range of future possibilities and initiated a "can-do" attitude. Because the Plan had been a public process from the beginning, it increased the affection of people for their communities and resulted in hundreds of individual actions which were invested in Huntingdon County.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Economic development is not a required part of a comprehensive plan for counties in Pennsylvania. However, for much of rural Pennsylvania, successful planning rests on the ability to sustain the community through a healthy local economy. Residents correctly perceive this as a key issue and consistently rate it among their highest priorities.

I. Summary of Findings:

From the Visioning Sessions and the Quality of Life Survey

A significant percentage of survey respondents (about 7 out of every 10) believe that job opportunities are poor in both the County and their community. A similar number rate high unemployment as the most severe problem in the County.

The attraction of new industry and the expansion of existing businesses were generally regarded as the highest economic development priorities in the survey.

From the Analysis in Continuity Through Conservation II, Phase I

Economy:

1. The County has a higher percentage of manufacturing workers (25%) than either Pennsylvania or the United States as a whole.

2. Similar to other rural counties, a higher than average percentage of workers (29.8%) commute out of the County for employment.
3. For the past several decades, unemployment in the County has been higher than the State average, and has often been the highest of any county in the State.
4. The County workforce is characterized as primarily blue collar.
5. Wages paid by area businesses are below average for the State.
6. The percentage of government employees (23%) is much higher than average, reflecting the presence of State prisons and several important State offices in the area.
2. Despite the consistent acreage of agricultural land over the past decade, the number of farms is decreasing; particularly significant is the loss in the dairy sector.

From the Analysis Since Continuity Through Conservation II, Phase I

Much of the business infrastructure that retains agricultural dollars in local communities (feed mills, livestock markets, processors, implement dealers) is located outside Huntingdon County.

Employment and Wages: 1988 to 1996: Total employment changed very little in Huntingdon County between 1988 and 1996. In 1988, the County had 11,948 employees covered by unemployment compensation; in 1996, the total was 11,884. Hence, there was a net loss of 64 employees, which was a decrease of about 0.5 percent. During the same period of time, employment in Pennsylvania grew by almost 6.0 percent. These numbers do not include self-employed persons, such as farmers or business owners.

The average wage in 1988 was \$16,059. By 1996, this had increased to \$22,286. However, the average wage in the Commonwealth in 1988 was \$21,325 and in 1996, it was \$28,717. In 1988, the average Huntingdon wage was only 75 percent of the State average. By 1996,

the Huntingdon wage had increased to almost 78 percent of the Pennsylvania average. Average wage was 55th among the 67 counties in Pennsylvania in 1988 but had climbed to 46th by 1996.

1. **Employment in Manufacturing** has declined very substantially in the past nine years in the County. In 1988, there were 3,598 manufacturing jobs in Huntingdon County. In 1996, there were only 2,402. This was a decrease of 1,196 jobs, or about 33 percent.

2. **Growth Sectors of the Economy** in the last nine years include:

- a. Transportation, Communications, and Public Utilities which grew from 294 to 326 employees (10.9%).
- b. Wholesale Trade which increased from 475 to 573 employees (20.6%).
- c. Retail Trade which grew from 1,874 to 1,922 (2.6%).
- d. Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate which saw employment increase from 483 to 504 (4.3%).
- e. Services which had the greatest private-sector increase in total employment; from 2,193 to 2,503 jobs (14.7%).
- f. Local Government which had an increase from 1,228 to 1,435 positions (16.9%).
- g. State Government which, fueled by the increases at the Correctional Institutions, grew from 981 to 1,423 jobs (45.1%).

Note that without the substantial employment gains in the government sector, Huntingdon County would have a very significant loss in total employment.

Agriculture continues to be a major economic activity in Huntingdon County. In 1993, total cash receipts from agriculture were \$46,011,000. This is about 1.2 percent of the Pennsylvania total and ranked the County 30th in the Commonwealth. However, the multiplier affect of agriculture is largely absent due to a lack of Ag-related businesses (implement dealers, feed mills, sale barns) within the County.

Tourism is also a contributor to the Huntingdon economy. In 1993, the County generated \$17,910,000 in tourism revenues and ranked 46th in the Commonwealth.

Labor Force Statistics: The following information is primarily derived from the 1990 Census of Population and Housing. The unemployment data have been updated through State sources to 1997.

Place of Employment and Journey to Work: There were 17,185 employed residents of the County in 1990. Of this total, 12,060 were employed in Huntingdon County. This was about 70 percent of the total. Huntingdon County is a net exporter of labor. Although there were 17,185 employed residents in Huntingdon County, only 14,531 total persons actually worked in the County, including those who commuted in from other counties. Hence, there was a net export of 2,654 workers.

Educational Attainment: There were 28,598 persons over the age of 25 in Huntingdon County at the time of the 1990 Census. Of this total, 20,362 had at least a high school diploma. This was 71.2 percent compared to over 74.6 percent of all Pennsylvanians over the age of 25. At the very bottom of the educational attainment ladder, 3,393 had less than a ninth grade education; this was 11.9 percent compared to 9.4 percent for the Commonwealth. At the other end of the attainment scale, only 9.4 percent of the relevant population have a college degree or better, compared to 17.4 percent Statewide.

Labor Force Participation: The reported statistic is that only 54.1 percent of persons over the age of 16 are either employed or

seeking employment. This figure is much lower than the 61.5 percent State labor force participation rate and the lowest in the labor shed. When the incarcerated population is removed from the calculations, however, the adjusted labor force participation rate is about 58.9 percent. This figure is much closer to the regional norm.

Unemployment: In 1990, there were 784 males and 667 females unemployed in Huntingdon according to the Census. This yielded an unemployment rate of 7.7 percent, which was well above the 5.9 percent reported Statewide. In recent years, the unemployment rate has tended to be among the ten highest in the State. In 1997, the unemployment rate in the County was 10.4 percent, which was the highest in the Commonwealth.

Retail Trade: Although data indicates an increase in retail employment, not all the news is good. Every five years the Census Bureau releases its "Economic Series." These examine state and county economies by sector, i.e., manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail trade, etc. The last two publications were 1987 and 1992. A traditional method of measuring the retail vigor of an area is to examine it on both an overall and a per capita basis. Such analysis reveals the following:

1. Between 1987 and 1992, County retail sales increased from \$15.5 million to \$17.9 million+ 15.5 percent.
2. Between 1987 and 1992, State retail sales increased from \$71,217 million to \$87,788 million+ 23.3 percent.
3. In 1992, per capita retail sales in Huntingdon County were \$4,054, up from \$3,509 in 1987.
4. In 1992, per capita retail sales in Pennsylvania were \$7,369, up from \$5,993 in 1987.

In 1987, Huntingdon County ranked 53rd of Pennsylvania's 67 counties for volume of retail sales. By 1992, it had fallen to 55th, being surpassed by Union and Green Counties.

The conclusion is that retail sales, in the County, are not keeping pace with Statewide growth and a significant portion of potential local retail sales (about \$3,000+ per capita annually) is being spent elsewhere. Unfortunately, this pattern is confirmed by sales tax receipts, which give more contemporary figures. County sales tax revenue dropped 18 percent from 1993 to 1997. In that same period, sales tax collections at the State level increased 17.8 percent.

Personal Income: There is a bright spot in Huntingdon's economic picture. Between the decennial Census reports, it is difficult to measure household income. However, the State does release Personal Income Tax Statistics. A brief comparison of recent statistics is of interest.

PERSONAL INCOME TAX STATISTICS MEDIAN TAXABLE INCOME				
	1994	1995	1996	% Change
State	17,677	18,657	18,874	+6.8%
Blair County	13,739	14,379	14,675	+6.9%
Huntingdon County	15,692	16,226	17,079	+8.9%
Mifflin County	14,709	15,425	15,294	+3.9%
Centre County	17,757	18,015	18,632	+5.0%
Source: Personal Income Tax Statistics, Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, 1994, 1995, and 1996				

Thus, it appears the County is enjoying some increase in income. It is also clear that the wages of those who do work are above average for the region and growing at an encouraging rate.

ANALYSIS AND PLAN

Huntingdon County has had some real successes in attracting industrial relocations, but the success stories are not well known to the public. Though manufacturing employment did decline, it remains a significant endeavor in the County (more so than some comparable counties).

The general public still defines economic development primarily as new jobs through industrial relocations. Tourism and retail are not regarded as "real" economic activities. Yet, much Statewide and national economic growth has come through such non-manufacturing sectors.

Much economic investment has been concentrated in the Route 22 and 522 corridors. This has been a natural relationship of the local economy to the existing highway system. However, areas to the extreme south and north of the County have seen little or no such development. These areas have remained dependent upon a greatly weakened extractive industry economy, agriculture, tourism or have developed into bedroom communities.

Retail sales are falling in proportion to the State, and much of the County's consumer spending is being done elsewhere.

Personal income, measured by the State, is relatively good compared to nearby counties. Its growth, over the past three years, has been vigorous.

Perhaps most important is that the economic policies of Huntingdon County be understood, examined, and pursued within the context of the County's land use situation. As illustrated in the map of Development Constraints, Huntingdon County simply does not have large areas eminently suitable for intensive job and wealth-creating development. This makes it absolutely imperative that what sites are available be secured for those forms of development which will bring high-quality impacts to the community. Whether for industrial, office, or retail development, sites in Huntingdon County should be the result of well-planned and intensive public/private partnerships.

Finally, the analysis illustrates that Huntingdon County's economy, like every local economy, is actually a complex web of many activities. The foremost aspect of such a Comprehensive Plan should be striving for balance. For example, a good and efficient transportation system is crucial to a community. However, if all roads in a community were four-lane limited access, it would have a negative affect on property values, quality of life, and safety. There must be a balance between all aspects of planning — the economic, the social, and the natural environment upon which we depend. The ideal in planning is that the community can have "it all"; good jobs, high quality of life, and safe, friendly, liveable communities.

The key to success for the County's future is understanding how different sectors of the economy interact, and "plugging the leaks" by ensuring that dollars that enter the County from the outside circulate within local communities as long as possible. There are four major sectors present in Huntingdon County:

- Natural Resource Sectors (agriculture/forest products/mining)
- The Manufacturing Sector
- The Retail/Service Sector
- Tourism

Each must be analyzed as a part of the greater whole.

1. The Natural Resource Sectors

- Agriculture

Agriculture is important to Huntingdon County in terms of the value of capital (over \$136 million), the spending of farmers in the County, and the fact that traditional farming creates landscapes which contribute to quality of life. However, this is a sector which is very vulnerable to economic cycles.

If agriculture is to be a favored land use in Huntingdon County over the next ten years, then family farms must be economically viable.

If agriculture is to be a favored land use in Huntingdon County over the next ten years, then family farms must be economically viable. It is recommended that agriculture be made a full player in Huntingdon County's economic policies. Central to this is the reactivation of some form of Countywide Agricultural Development Council, in concert with Huntingdon County Business and Industry. The priority of this initiative should be simply increasing the economic multiplier effect of local agriculture through development of value added, support, and Ag service businesses, thereby ensuring family farms will survive.

A problem in this process in the past has been low levels of interest by the farmers themselves. One factor which may change this would be the development of a purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements Program in the County. If this program is presented as a public initiative to help the farm community, the publicity can help raise awareness about the need for a more holistic approach to farm-based economic development.

This Council should investigate a number of initial projects:

- Finding ways for farmers to sell to Huntingdon County businesses, individuals, and institutions. Commodity prices are low, but this is seldom reflected in consumer food prices. If producers can sell directly, they can recoup at least some of the profits which normally go to shippers and wholesalers. The most immediate opportunity would lie in sales to local institutions, such as Juniata College and the two SCI facilities.

- Building up agricultural support businesses. Agriculture cannot thrive without access to implement dealers, feed mills, and livestock auctions. There currently seems to be few of these businesses within the community. Ways should be sought to meet these needs locally.
- Recruiting and supporting young farmers. The average age of farmers across Pennsylvania is alarmingly high. Yet, it is exceedingly difficult for young people to afford to enter agriculture. Solutions may range from loans to innovative solutions such as share milking, a New Zealand concept where employees of dairies gradually gain equity.

Beyond these three needs, the Council should continue to find real projects to keep local agriculture profitable at a family farm scale.

Other resource-based endeavors have and will continue to be an important part of Huntingdon's economy. The major activities include timber harvesting and mineral extraction. Historically, these activities have sometimes seen environmental conflict. But, in recent years, State regulations have minimized such problems. Given the importance of these activities, they must be protected.

New opportunities must also be found. One way to minimize conflict is to reopen places already mined. Very often, unrestored mines predate reclamation laws. In addition to being unreclaimed, they were not efficiently mined. The Commonwealth now encourages re-mining in its permitting process. It is a good policy for the County and municipalities as well.

Overall, mineral extraction is a very capital-intensive business. Entities are seldom locally owned, and are vulnerable to the machinations of global markets. Wood products, however, can be less capital-intensive and can provide more direct benefit to local landowners and small businesses.

The Commonwealth and many economic development agencies across Pennsylvania have attempted with varying success to target

forest products sectors for various economic initiatives. Rather than attempt to entice capital-intensive business relocation, Huntingdon County should attempt its program as a grassroots endeavor.

One aspect of local forests is the presence of many low-value softwoods. At present, the only major market for softwood conifers in Pennsylvania is pulpwood. However, much of the major softwood pulp milling infrastructure is located in other regions of the United States. For many forest landowners, timber cutters, and haulers, the cost of cutting and shipping to distant mills is simply not a paying proposition.

The second use for softwoods is in framing lumber. Again, the major milling facilities are located too distant for economical shipping of raw logs. However, framing lumber infrastructure is not as capital-intensive as pulp. It may be possible to develop framing lumber infrastructure to meet local builders' needs within the County.

II. Industrial Sector: Industrial development represents a real success story in Huntingdon County. However, the successes are not well known to the average citizen. It is recommended that a vigorous campaign be conducted cooperatively by the County and Huntingdon County Business and Industry to publicize data such as the following:

**Industrial development
represents a real success story
in Huntingdon County.**

- Personal income in Huntingdon County rose 8.9 percent from 1994 to 1996; a rate exceeding both neighboring counties and the Commonwealth as a whole.
- When compared to all counties for Pennsylvania, Huntingdon County's average wages rose from 55th in 1988 to 46th in 1996.

- The largest industrial relocation in Pennsylvania in 1996, Berg Electronics (now FCI Electronics), chose Huntingdon County. This industry now employs approximately 600 persons.
- Manufacturing employment (traditionally the source of the highest wages) remains a stronger part of the local economy than in either Pennsylvania or the United States.

The main recommendation for this sector is thus, to "stay the course." The County should continue to provide sites, market itself, and remain attentive to the needs of existing industries, which is what it has been doing. No major policy changes are recommended in this area.

The only change which will be significant to Huntingdon County in this sector will be the continuing rural rebound in demographics, as many entrepreneurs are consciously choosing rural and small-town locales for business locations, because of quality residential considerations. Two major factors seem to influence these locational decisions: reasonable proximity to metro areas and recreational opportunities, low crime, educational facilities, and attractive townscapes and landscapes.

Since this one major situational change is likely to be beneficial, Huntingdon County must analyze how it can continue to improve in the basic economic development activities of providing sites/ access to capital, marketing the communities and providing services to the existing business community.

As mentioned previously, sites will be a crucial element of economic development. If the few prime sites are occupied by secondary, low quality, or undesirable activities, the best development may bypass the County completely. Site control and site planning are essential. This was the main factor in the success of the Riverview Business Park. The same approach originally led to the development of the Huntingdon County Industrial Park years ago. While Riverview is very recent, it may be worthwhile to re-examine the Huntingdon site. There are presently vacant or underutilized buildings within the park. The area surrounding the park is a mixture of heavy commercial, residential, and other uses. Many of the residential units are showing signs of deterioration and disinvestment.

It is recommended that Huntingdon County pursue an aggressive policy to retrofit and rehabilitate the Huntingdon County Industrial Park. At present, the number of major plant closings and layoffs may make the County eligible for Federal funding to plan, market, and make physical improvements (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, Title IX, Sudden and Severe Economic Dislocation). Such a program should examine retrofit of existing buildings, purchase, and redevelopment of neighboring properties and a general "facelift" for the park.

After the Riverview Business Park, perhaps the best site for commercial and light industrial or office development in Huntingdon County is the land currently owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, south of Route 22 and west of Route 26. This land is currently underutilized, considering its strategic location. As mentioned in the Land Use Plan, it is recommended that this land be made available for community purposes through a request to the Commonwealth. Even before this is accomplished, an approach for attracting and negotiating with developers will be needed. Some of the issues which must be integrated into this process are an analysis of net jobs gained and impact fees versus tax abatements.

If the public is partially subsidizing new development through an entity such as Huntingdon County Business and Industry, Inc., or a township government, there is a responsibility to ensure that new development does not endanger the viability of an existing citizen or taxpayer. Net jobs gained is simply a tool to ensure that new development really grows the local economy, rather than shifting it. For example, if a local municipality buys land, improves it, and runs utilities to a site, it has subsidized new development. If the new development is a shoe store which causes a pre-existing shoe store to close, the new jobs and wealth created do not improve the overall economy. In fact, a dis-service has been done to the pre-existing business. This is not to say that competition should be prevented. A new shoe store should be free to buy and improve their own site without public subsidy.

Aggressive Use of Economic Development Tools: To date, most of the public subsidies in Huntingdon County have been through land acquisition and site improvements. Once a net jobs gained analysis is complete, the

community can decide whether to further subsidize the development or, if the development should pay for its impact upon the community. To pursue its economic policies, Huntingdon County should develop a full range of tools to link its future development to implement this. Pennsylvania has devised the legal mechanism for principal subsidy or impact assessment tools. Subsidies include tax incremental financing, Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA), and the Residential Encouragement Tax Assistance Program (RETAP). The impact assessment is officially known as Municipal Capital Improvements under the PaMPC.

Tax incremental financing, commonly known as TIF, is simply the pledging of future tax revenues to finance current capital development projects. An example can help illustrate this. A commercial development is expected to generate \$20,000 per year in tax revenues to the municipality, but in order to make road, water, and sewer improvements host that development, it will be necessary to spend \$100,000. The community can prepare TIF financing which applies the revenues from the new development directly to improvements necessary to support the tax base improvement. In Pennsylvania, tax incremental financing is most commonly utilized as a part of a negotiating process with individual developers.

Unlike TIF, local economic revitalization tax assistance, known commonly as LERTA, is typically a benefit which runs with a particular site. LERTA was begun in Pennsylvania in 1977 to allow communities which had significant deterioration or economic difficulties to abate taxes for new development, wholly or partially for a period of ten years. The amount and extent of this benefit is wholly a local decision. Some very deteriorated communities have enacted LERTA Ordinances which cover any commercial or industrial development for a period of five years for abatement of all county, municipal, and school taxes. Other communities apply it only to specific sites and provide abatement in year one, 90 percent abatement in year two, down through a ten-year period, after which all taxes would be paid.

The key to understanding LERTA is that the abatements only apply to improvements to the property. For example, if a commercial development purchased a site in which the annual taxes are \$1,000 a year and they put

a substantial improvement on that, the \$1,000 per year of taxes would still be paid. Only the taxes on the buildings and improvements would be subject to abatement. Thus, the community does not lose current revenue. They simply do not see immediate revenue from the improvements made. LERTA, in spite of its origin as a tool of distressed communities, has become something many developers simply expect. This does not mean that the community cannot use it as a negotiating point. A LERTA Ordinance could be passed by any of the three taxing bodies after arrangements have been made with the developer. However, such an approach would necessitate a real understanding of LERTA as a tool by a municipal government, county government, and school district government.

RETAP is simply a residential equivalent of the LERTA Program. Its precepts are virtually identical, with the exception that the maximum rather than the ten years is set at five years.

On the other side, impact fees are regulated by the Municipal Capital Improvements section of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The Code empowers communities to enact impact fee ordinances to recoup the cost of new development relative to such issues as road size incapacity and road wear. Very simply, the Code allows communities to require developers to pay for improvements which must be made to ensure that the township, borough, or city road system is safe and has sufficient capacity to carry the anticipated number of vehicles.

However, the Code also permits communities to provide credits for up to 100 percent of the applicable impact fees, where the community determines that the new development serves an overriding public interest or is defined as "de minimus" by the ordinance. There seems to be no reason an overriding public interest could not include the net growth of jobs, and there is no reason that the de minimus could not exclude small developments from paying impact fees.

The key to impact fees in Pennsylvania is understanding that there must be a direct relationship between the fees charged, the nature of the improvements, and the utilization of monies paid for those improvements. The pre-requisite for doing impact fees is sound planning. Prior to impact

fees, communities must conduct planning studies to show the anticipated growth and anticipated real impact of various forms of development.

This tool has not been commonly used in rural Pennsylvania, but should be understood within the context of those sites in Huntingdon County which could attract significant intense development.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the best form of site control is ownership. There are many limits upon the powers of municipalities to regulate land use. However, there are almost no limits on the ability of public or private individuals who actually own land from attaching deed covenants prior to selling. These covenants typically run in perpetuity unless they can be shown to have outlived their usefulness and no longer serve a legitimate purpose. Covenants could regulate the type of business, the physical appearance of the development, or elements of size and intensity far beyond what may be done through zoning and development regulation.

Just as a private developer may require all homes built in a development he has established to be built with brick veneer, so can a community, through deed covenants, regulate how land will be utilized within the said development. However, this is a function of ownership, not general government powers.

At this point in time, no one particular tool is recommended. What is recommended is that the County, its communities, and Huntingdon County Business and Industry begin a process to examine how these tools might best be applied and integrate it into a site planning process, which will benefit both new developers and Huntingdon County.

As unemployment continues to be low across much of Pennsylvania, Huntingdon County's labor surplus becomes an asset. This is especially true if labor skills are upgraded through training.

As mentioned in the Background Analysis, Huntingdon County has higher rates of non-high school graduates and few college graduates in its workforce. There can be little doubt that many of the underemployed and unemployed in the County lack the educational attainment which is a pre-

requisite for many jobs. In the current economic climate, these persons should be viewed as a significant asset — if their levels of job skills, technical training, and education can be upgraded. There are probably about 2,000 County residents who could significantly benefit from such an upgrade.

It is recommended that a partnership be explored locally to develop closer ties among HCB&I, Juniata College, DuBois Business College, and local employment and welfare agencies. The program should have these components:

1. Identifying candidates
2. Developing a training curriculum which meets real business needs.
3. Funding the training.

It must be emphasized that this must be a flexible program — not a replication of training already available.

As the skills of the local workforce are being built, Huntingdon County must also monitor the infrastructure which will be needed to support information-age businesses. As a part of its self-evaluation process, the County should develop a series of indicators to ensure that though rural, the technological infrastructure is sufficient.

A first step in this direction would be an in-depth analysis of the Technology Atlas for a New Pennsylvania, compiled by the Commonwealth. Some key indicators include: satellite connections, ISDN, cable data, and video conferencing; all of which are present in Huntingdon County. Huntingdon is also strategically located in reference to network transmission lines, as State College is the major hub in central Pennsylvania.

III. Retail-Service-Tourism: This represents an area where local performance has not kept pace with the Commonwealth or the nation. Such development may come over the next few years, but it must not be simply a “moving of the deck chairs,” where businesses coming into the

community only take a market share from those already here. A number of local initiatives can ensure that new businesses provide real development and real net gain.

- **Retail:**

- ▶ A quick analysis of the Census of Retail Trade, coupled with responses to the Quality of Life Survey, demonstrates many local residents are shopping outside Huntingdon County. This loss of retail trade is known as leakage. One possible answer is to make low-cost capital available to qualified entrepreneurs who wish to initiate feasible retail operations.
- ▶ Where there is fairly complete control of land, such as the HCB&I land or prison land being transferred to the community, local decision makers must be somewhat selective. As prospects or proposals are being evaluated, the process must include some form of economic impact analysis.
- ▶ As the area lacks “big-box” mega retailers, that arena must be considered locally. Given the market forces, one or more such businesses will select the County as a location. If such a development can be guided toward publically controlled lands or be enticed via financial incentives, it will be possible to capitalize and control such locations. The strategy should be one of complementary existing local business, and to minimize negative competition.
- ▶ Huntingdon County should undertake a significant “buy-local” campaign to support existing local businesses. This must be carefully constructed to first illustrate that there really is some local opportunity. This effort can include illustrations of local businesses who care about the community, with the real savings of time and money made by making purchases close to home.

Access to capital is a perennial need for retail and services businesses. The difference between new business success and development is often the local availability of below-market, community-based loans. Huntingdon County has a County-initiated program and a loan program through HCB&I. The County program should be transferred to HCB&I administration and be structured as two tiers of assistance.

1. A micro business program to loan money to retail/service businesses involving 1 or 2 employees. A typical loan might be in the \$5,000 to \$50,000 range.
2. A small business program to assist existing or partially capitalized small businesses with capital needs of more than \$50,000.

A key to this approach is that it invests in people who have already made a commitment to Huntingdon County. Building the economy internally is generally much more cost-effective than attempting to attract outside employers.

No where is this need for internal business development more pronounced than the Broad Top regions in southern Huntingdon County. Due almost wholly to its unique geography, the Broad Top region has a wealth of developable sites which are simply inaccessible from a commercial/industrial development standpoint. Perhaps through a keen recognition of its lack of opportunity through isolation, the human community of the Broad Top has responded with enthusiasm and action for community-based efforts which are unprecedented in rural Pennsylvania.

These vigorous steps should be assisted by the County through technical assistance to develop a stronger local economy. The best recommendation in this regard is an education process, such as the Rocky Mountain Institute's economic revitalization program. This program teaches communities with little hope of attracting significant outside development to close up gaps within their own small economy and create micro-opportunities to bring the largest degree of prosperity possible.

The County should implement this approach through sponsoring some local economic renewal efforts, based upon natural, inter-municipal market areas. The results of these should be processes — not documents.

It must, again, be emphasized that this process should not produce a planning document. It should capitalize on the enthusiasm of people and emphasize practical self-help activities. The strength of community on the Broad Top is such that with the additional help of outside resources, it would become a model for much of the rest of rural Huntingdon County and all of rural Pennsylvania.

- Tourism:

- ▶ Greater spinoff activity and further linkages must be established to capture a greater share of tourism dollars. This will entail a number of expanded facilities. The County should be an active partner in a number of projects, including:

- A full-service family resort at Raystown Lake
- Expanded attractions at the Broad Top Coal Miners' Museum
- A farm museum at Raystown
- Complete restoration of the EBT.

- Service:

- ▶ Health services are key to the Service sector. Continued liaison with the J. C. Blair Memorial Hospital is a must to keep that organization vigorous.
- ▶ The FIRE (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate) sector is another key player in the County's economy. Much of this sector is found in the Huntingdon Borough area. This is a particularly "foot-loose" sector; and, once more, continued liaison between it, the HCB&I, and the County is recommended.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Develop a special program to support the development of more agriculture-supported businesses.
- ▶ Create new farmer markets or target direct sell farm product outlets in Huntingdon County.
- ▶ Encourage re-mining of areas already mined in Huntingdon County to maximize efficient use of limited resources and to assure sound reclamation.
- ▶ Target major industrial-commercial development into 2-3 high-quality sites to be developed as true public-private partnerships.
- ▶ Establish a Pennsylvania Enterprise Zone in the Mount Union area. Examine feasibility of an inter-County Enterprise Zone in the Broad Top area.
- ▶ Lobby for the release of additional unused Department of Corrections land south of Route 22.
- ▶ Accelerate efforts to establish a full-service resort and conference center at Raystown Lake.
- ▶ Accelerate establishment of a historical living farm museum at Raystown Lake.
- ▶ Support implementing the EBT Full-Steam Ahead report.
- ▶ Educate local officials in urban areas about tax abatement ordinances to encourage redevelopment.
- ▶ Continue the present professional business support and recruitment efforts of HCB&I and local Chambers of Commerce.
- ▶ Pursue the redevelopment and revitalization of the Huntingdon County Industrial Park and surrounding neighborhood.

- ▶ Offer revolving loan funds to ensure access to capital for all types and sizes of businesses.

SCENARIO 2020

As Huntingdon Countians look back over the past decade, they fondly remember these recent years of prosperity. Unlike previous periods of boom and bust, this decade was one in which all economic sectors exhibited continuous high levels of economic activity. Seasonal fluctuations in unemployment also appear to be a thing of the past. According to a recent survey of local employers, the reasons for locating or expanding in the area are:

- The quality and training of the local workforce.
- To take advantage of local sector opportunities, such as agribusiness or the burgeoning dimension lumber industry.
- To enjoy the community's high quality of life, especially the small-town environment and abundant natural resources.
- The professionalism of the county's economic development team.

The big surprise to economic analysts is the farm sector. While levels of agricultural production were about the same, receipts per acre were among the highest in Pennsylvania. Net profits are also excellent. This may be attributable to the efforts of the Huntingdon County Agricultural Development Council. The Council has been able to sell milk, meat, and other products to major local institutions. The new milk plant and meat packing plant, which created 60 jobs in the Huntingdon Industrial Park, are largely supported by this marketing effort.

Recent business activity has been focused in three locations: the twenty-year old Riverview Business Center, the refurbished Huntingdon Industrial Park, and the new Smithfield Commons. Smithfield Commons is a high-quality campus-like business park located at the junction of U.S. 22 and PA 26. While Riverview Business Center and Huntingdon Industrial Park are

largely occupied by manufacturing business, Smithfield Commons contains retail shopping, service and wholesale businesses.

Retail business has regained some of the strength lost to urban centers of Altoona and State College in the 20th century. At that time only \$0.60 of every retail dollar was spent in the County. Now for every retail dollar spent by local residents, \$0.90 is spent in Huntingdon County. This resurgence has been spurred by the new 20-store Smithfield Commons Shopping Center. Tourism and strong local patronage have supported the small shops which have sprung up in downtown historic districts throughout the County.

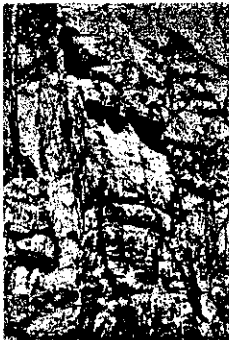
Heritage tourism, boating, fishing, hunting, camping, and hiking continue to draw visitors to the County. These visitors spend over \$10,000,000 each year on retail purchases in the County. New facilities such as the East Broad Top Railroad Visitors Center and the Raystown Lake Amphitheater draw new visitors to the area.

Key agents of change over the past twenty years have been the "big three" development agencies: Huntingdon County Tourist Bureau, The Huntingdon County Chamber of Commerce, and Huntingdon County Business and Industry. These private agencies, together with the County and local government, promote and market, sell and develop, and provide support services to business within the County. They offer low-interest loans and business planning services to expanding businesses.

As planners and economic analysts begin working on the next edition of the County Comprehensive Plan (*Continuity Through Conservation IV*), their preliminary analysis shows the diversity of the Huntingdon County economy makes it as recession proof as practically possible.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION PLAN

The Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan is actually titled *Continuity Through Conservation*. The definition of conservation in this case refers to the appropriate or measured use of all resources in the County (human, economic, and natural). Every resident of Huntingdon County is aware of the community's wealth of natural resources, which range from scenic views to silica. To assure the continuity of the human community, Huntingdon Countians must plan for the measured use and stewardship of these blessings.



I. Summary of Findings:

A. From the Analysis in *Continuity Through Conservation II*:

Environmental Conservation:

- a. *A large percentage of the County is environmentally sensitive by virtue of steep slope and floodplain areas (46.4%).*
- b. *The large forest acreage of the County, (71%) provides excellent watershed protection as well as habitat for wildlife.*
- c. *Air quality is within federal limits and qualifies as among the least polluted in the State, with the exception of acid rain.*
- d. *Large areas of the County contain valuable mineral resources such as limestone, coal, sandstone, and ganister.*
- e. *The County's groundwater resources are vulnerable to pollution, particularly in those areas with carbonate geology.*

f. *With few exceptions, stream water quality is good and improving.*

- B. **From Citizen and Local Leader Opinions Expressed in the Survey and Visioning Sessions:** A great majority of survey respondents (75+%) rate the natural environment of Huntingdon County as good to excellent. A similar percentage (73%) rated their own community's environment excellent as well.

Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents choose to live in Huntingdon County because of the outdoors.

Survey respondents listed stormwater runoff, illegal trash dumping, and loss of agricultural lands as their most significant environmental problems. However, environmental problems were not rated as serious as high unemployment and property taxes.

Generally, the survey respondents greatest environmental conservation concerns were related to the land use related issues of protecting open space, especially agricultural lands.

In open-ended visioning sessions, in various regions, comprised of a wide cross-section of people, the beauty and quality of that natural environment was uniformly the first strength mentioned, and consistently rated highly. Perhaps the most telling aspect of citizen concern about environmental conservation was in the interest and high attendance at the mini-conference on land use and the environment. This was the best attended meeting during the entire planning process.

The visioning sessions also identified a number specific environmental concerns:

- Possibility of pollution from new agricultural practices (such as confined feeding operations) or new industries, attracted perhaps by a lack of local controls.

- ▶ Lack of public water and especially sewer, particularly in small urban places, such as Birmingham, Coalmont, Dudley, and Shirleysburg.
- ▶ Loss of traditional family farms due to economic conditions.
- ▶ Illegal trash dumping.
- ▶ Flood control (along Shoup Run in the Broad Top area).

C. From the Analysis Since the Completion of *Continuity Through Conservation II*: Planners and local leaders are only now starting to understand the real economic value of wild lands, open space, and wildlife. It is now being recognized as a direct impact (through recreation and tourism dollars) and a significant factor in creating a quality business climate.

In simple terms, the forested hillsides, clean streams, and scenic vistas of Huntingdon County are more than window dressing — they have a measurable economic value. This can be seen through the example of local wildlife and its value. For example, about 9,200 deer are harvested in Huntingdon County each year. There are probably 36,000 hunters taking to the woods to hunt these deer. This is based upon the Game Commission's estimate of hunters in the woods per deer harvested. The total licenses sold in the County are 6,200 (but this may include non-County residents). However, it might be safe to assume that 25,000 hunters are coming to hunt from outside the County. Each year, these hunters are spending an estimated \$2,000,000 on lodging alone. Sportfishing, a beneficial result of clean water, also has a measurable impact. The Pennsylvania Fish Commission sells about 1,000 three-day tourist fishing licenses in Huntingdon County each year. Only four counties in Pennsylvania have higher sales of this license (Erie, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne). What is the economic impact of 1,000 anglers over three days? Probably about \$200,000 for food, bait, lodging, and gas alone. This does not include the impact of the other 7,000 license buyers in the County.

These rough estimates give some idea of the enormous impact of sportsman's spending. The major point is — without the natural resource (in this case wildlife), this impact would not occur.

Another example is found in the forests of Huntingdon County. The present value of all the forest trees in the County for timber, pulp, and firewood is probably about \$150,000,000. However, timber prices are expected to rise. When this is compared to the growth of the tree fiber, a tree growing in a managed forest is equal to, or better than, accrued interest in a savings account. This does not include the value of trees for air filtration, flood prevention, and erosion control. Dependent on the accounting system used, the value of local forests as natural infrastructure may exceed its value as timber.

It is clear from the analysis that humans in Huntingdon County are dependent upon the natural systems for their livelihood, safety, and quality of life. This Plan, thus, proposes ways in which human economic needs can be met while still protecting farmland, forest land, natural resources, and the environment. As Governor Ridge has often stated, it is not a question of jobs versus the environment, the right question is how to have a healthy economy and a healthy environment.

In this approach, where the needs of the economy and the environment receive equal priority, the Land Use Plan is the vehicle to assure such possibilities.

In its endorsement of the centers concept, the Land Use Plan allows the activation of the Conservation Plan. As discussed in the Land Use Plan, the centers concept is designed to encourage financial reinvestment in areas which have already seen historic investment. The reason for this is that it allows the infrastructure, which has already been built, to continue to serve the people of Huntingdon. This is simply much cheaper than attempting to replicate it elsewhere.

For the rural areas of Huntingdon outside those centers, the primary infrastructure is the natural systems (water flow, forests, etc.). A local example can help illustrate this. Due to the density of development and significant public investment in Huntingdon Borough, along the Juniata River in Huntingdon Borough are a number of manmade flood-control structures and manmade fill. This is an absolute necessity in the Borough to protect public safety and property. However, it is also a very expensive solution which only becomes feasible when high density of development is reached. In a rural area where such structures are simply unaffordable, natural systems of water retention, such as forested slopes, stream banks, and wetlands, must remain intact enough to protect public safety and property.

ANALYSIS AND PLAN

Thus, the Environmental Conservation Plan must be the vehicle to assure sound planning for areas of Huntingdon County which will lie outside the growth centers where "green infrastructure" remains. The attached Natural Resources Plan Map focuses on how activities outside the centers can best protect and wisely use land. The Plan envisions a continuation of private ownership in many of these areas, so public lands are not depicted. The objectives of the Natural Resources Plan are simply to assure that rural areas receive similar attention as urban ones and are simply not written off as vacant areas. This will require utilization of a wide range of tools, including:

- Education about the importance and value of local natural resources.
- Purchase of land, either through complete public ownership or purchase of conservation easements. (A purchase of partial property - i.e., the right to use the property in certain manner.)
- Regulation to prevent the misuse of land or resources to the extent that they would jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of neighboring properties or whole communities.

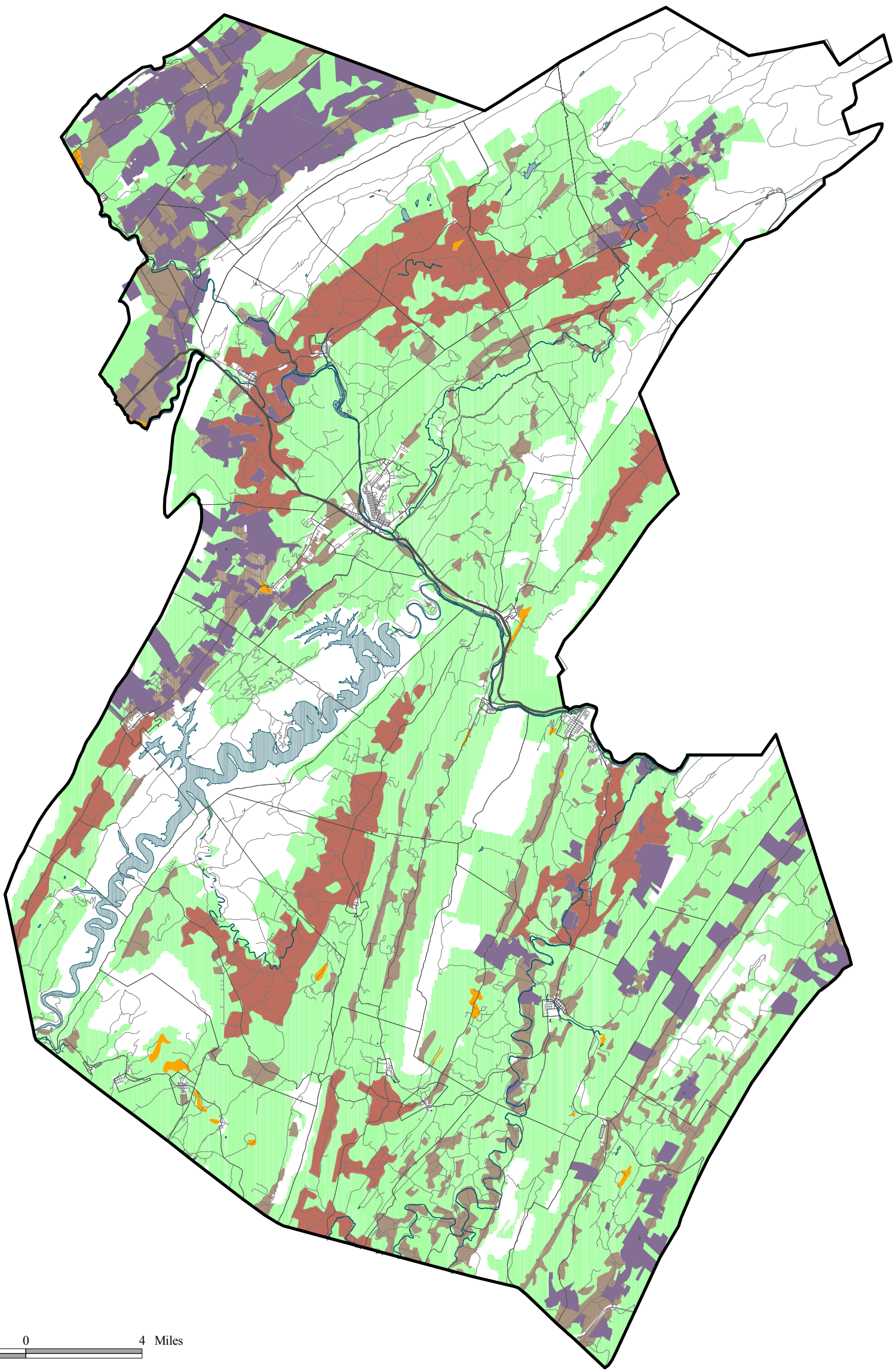
- Citizen involvement: This is simply the residents of a community working to correct problems or preserve assets. For example, many citizen groups have dealt with illegal trash dumping by cleaning up the dumps.
- Subsidy: A subsidy is a public payment to a property owner for a conservation practice. For example, there are reduced property taxes for conservation/agricultural uses.

I. Education cannot be overlooked as a tool. Huntingdon County should undertake a wide spectrum approach to conservation education which will reach rural landowners, the development community, municipal officials, and citizens.

The Environmental Advisory Board should become a partner in Plan implementation. Initially, this could be done by emphasizing open space in the potential DCNR-funded Plan (see Recreation - Community Facilities Summary). The Board should be given resources through technical assistance and some financing to conduct education on:

- Assisting landowners to realize financial benefits for conservation uses of their land, such as hunting leases, and the practice of sustainable forestry.
- Providing information to the general public on the multi-million dollar impact of wildlife and forests in the County.
- Building meaningful partnerships with businesses and organizations which have a substantial stake in environmental conservation (sporting goods businesses, sportsman's organizations).

Huntingdon County must provide developers and municipal governments with better models for conservation subdivisions and rural residential development which can meet both financial and environmental goals. The basic need is for integrating development into the existing environment.



HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Natural Resources Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

HUNTINGDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

- Agriculture
- Existing Agricultural Security Areas
- Recommended Agriculture Security Areas
- Forest / Low Intensity
- Strip Mines and Quarries

GRANEY, GROSSMAN, RAY, AND ASSOCIATES
A Community Planning and Development Partnership
Harrisville, Pennsylvania

- Sponsor a "Growing Greener" workshop, targeting significant participation by builders, realtors, and design professionals.
- Prepare a conservation subdivision model for inclusion in subdivision regulations.
- Prepare a similar model for zoning.
- Consider offering County real estate tax abatement to the first such development. (RETAP, Act 42 of 1977)

There is also a need to educate municipalities about the real cost benefit ratios of various forms of development.

Across Pennsylvania, the actual impacts of development in townships have been studied. For farm and woodland, the cost of community services is about 7½ cents to every tax dollar paid. Residential developments require \$1.27 worth of services per dollar generated. Commercial/industrial development cost 10 to 14 cents per dollar generated. The key for planning is to not allow intensive residential development too far from community facilities, and keep some open/farm land in every municipality.

Education can also include simply gathering more information about local resources and sharing that information. At present, there is no Countywide inventory of the area's natural heritage. This should be completed. There is also little concrete knowledge about the recharge areas of public water wellheads. For resources which are known, further education can be accomplished through progress such as the Scenic Rivers designation.

II. Regulation: Regulation is perhaps the most controversial area of conservation planning. In the case of Huntingdon County, regulations must be accompanied by education. Specifically, the entire community of citizens and property owners must see a direct correlation between the regulations and the protection of health, safety, and property. For example, a regulation to limit steep slope development could be misinterpreted as simply, keep pretty green hills. Until it is understood that those pretty green hills prevent property damage and loss of water quality by holding soil and

storm water, there is real potential that regulatory measures will be met with resistance by residents.

This relates again to the role of the County mentioned in the Land Use Plan. The County with its professionally trained staff is key in communicating the link between conservation regulations and the protection of the community. It is also the County's role to assist in reviewing and sometimes drafting regulations which will provide protection, still offer options to property owners, and be legally defensible.

Specific areas where model regulation text would be of assistance include:

- ▶ Tree preservation in the context of land development. In addition to the value of trees for conservation purposes and forestry, wooded lots and forested developments command premium prices. Inventories of trees can be a plan requirements in the review process and ordinances can either require minimum tree cover, remain on slopes, all non-buildable areas, as buffers, or grant density bonuses for preservation.
- ▶ Steep slope protection is an absolute necessity in Huntingdon County. This should address lot densities, road building, and all land development activities. This can, and should, be integrated into both subdivision and land development ordinances in the County. Related closely to the issue of steep slopes is the nature of other geologic limitations in Huntingdon County. For example, some ridge tops in the County have very limited groundwater resources. High densities of development will overtax this limited resource and pumping public water to a ridge top is an exorbitant expense. Unfortunately, the nature of groundwater resources is not as discernable as steep slopes. The County can be of service in this case by conducting a study of water supply and preparing a plan which would allow communities to make defensible decisions about the density of development where water supplies will be on-lot.
- ▶ The streams of Huntingdon County are fed by a mixture of stormwater and groundwater. If the streams are fed quickly,

flooding results, typically accompanied by sedimentation which can destroy valuable fisheries. The cheapest and easiest way to prevent this is by leaving stream-side buffers intact and allow the plants and trees to absorb and clarify the runoff. Model text should be prepared which integrates the size of such a buffer directly into the adjacent slope as a part of lot and yard regulations. While this can be done through zoning or subdivision regulations, it could also be integrated into existing floodplain ordinances.

- ▶ One area where purely scenic criteria might be defensible is the area of billboards or off-site signs. It is probably not defensible to ban this use, but off-site signs can be equally effective without marring the viewsheds which are a significant tourism resource.
- ▶ Finally, it must be recommended that the agricultural, forestry, and other low-intensity areas of Huntingdon County can only be retained if they are valuable for traditional rural uses (hunting, livestock keeping, forestry, etc.). The purpose of the regulations should be to protect rural areas from densities and intensities of development which would require expensive man-made infrastructure to replace the cheap green infrastructure. Regulations should never inhibit traditional activities which contribute to sustainable land-based wealth.

One way to ensure this type of protective regulation is through Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs). ASAs are covenants between the local government and farm or forest landowners. As their part of the covenant, the Township agrees not to pass regulations which would inhibit normal farming practices. There are a number of ASAs in Huntingdon County, but more participation in this program is recommended. The Natural Resource Plan Map depicts some areas where Agricultural Security Areas could be especially viable.

It should be the policy of the County to also examine existing regulations. Every flood-prone community in the County has adopted floodplain regulations. However, it is not known if they are actually implemented.

- ▶ In addition to suggested regulations, the County should consider a Storm Water Management Plan. Long required by the State, this approach would eventually provide for the regulation of storm-water runoff.

III. Purchase: There is no doubt that the best way to secure land for conservation purposes is to own it. However, this does not need to be complete fee-simple ownership. A number of approaches have been devised to permit the purchase of only an easement or the right to develop. This works in a similar fashion to selling a right-of-way or mineral rights. The advantage of this approach is that land can still be productive for its traditional purposes. For example, if a farmer sells his development rights to a county Agricultural Security Board, he can still use the land for its current use. He can even change the use, such as converting a field to a pasture, orchard, or woodlot. It simply cannot be developed for residential or commercial purposes. In the case of agricultural conservation easements, the County would need to form its own board to be eligible for State and Federal matching funds. In other cases, there is an existing network.

Huntingdon County and its communities must cooperate pro-actively with the existing local land trust entities (Southern Alleghenies Conservancy and Central Pennsylvania Conservancy). There is an active need to buy land for conservation. Acquisitions should be planned as followed:

- Assist smaller entities such as "Save Our Steps" in administration purposes for their acquisition projects.
- Receive donations to lease riparian buffer land at the prevailing rate of farmland rental (coupled with education on how this works).
- Accept donated conservation easements to ease the inheritance tax burden of rural landowners.
- In some cases, where public access is desired, fee-simple purchase can be a usable tool as well. This can be accomplished by the aforementioned non-profit entities, but can also be a part of

municipal and County policy. The County should work with municipalities to buy land for sustainable forestry as a long-term public investment. This is permitted by all municipal codes in Pennsylvania. Because municipalities exist for the long-term and pay no property tax, municipal forests are very profitable for small communities.

Work with State and Federal public agencies to develop land management plans which will result in the preservation of large corridors for wildlife habitat.

If Federal and State purchases can be made in a coordinated fashion, and combined with municipal and non-profit efforts, it will be possible to create the network of greenways, illustrated in the Concept Plan. The specific choice of easement versus fee-simple purchase should be based upon the purpose of the purchase. If the purchase is for public access, fee-simple should be used. If the purchase is for preventing erosion or preserving farmland, easements are more appropriate.

IV. Subsidy: The main subsidy essential to Plan implementation is the support of public infrastructure in the town areas of the County. If communities bear some of the cost of getting infrastructure to designated growth areas, it will choose those areas.

Subsidies can also fulfill an educational purpose. Many of Huntingdon County's woodlands are in private hands and will remain so. There is a real danger that owners will manage these resources without the assistance of professional foresters, losing both income and conservation values. Pennsylvania has a Stewardship Forestry Program and support is also available from the American Tree Farm system to subsidize the initial cost of a forester for private landowners. Local professionals believe participation in these programs is lower in Huntingdon County than many other places in Pennsylvania. This is something that County promotion could yield real conservation results. The presence of the Eden Hill Conservancy and the related Irish Pines Tree Farm is a good starting point for such efforts.

V. Direct Involvement: Citizens are actively becoming involved in a number of watershed organizations. These entities must become full Plan partners. The County should attempt to foster the creation of more watershed groups. A second area of direct involvement is linking sensible conservation to economies. Energy conservation is not a hot issue when fuel prices are low, but long-term management and good stewardship of public dollars warrants some attention before another inevitable price rise. Energy-efficient technology can save Huntingdon County money. The first step is a simple energy audit, followed by an action plan.

Other forms involve simply continuing current activities in a more conservation-oriented fashion. A major example of this is the promotion of re-mining in Huntingdon County. Mining has long been an important and essential part of the local economy. However, past mining practices were not conservation-oriented and affected landscapes, land values, and water quality. Due to technology, many past operations were also not as efficient at extracting all the salable minerals. Re-mining is the encouraging of mining companies to return to old sites, mine the resource with modern technology, and restore the area to modern specifications. The Commonwealth encourages this by streamlining the permit process. Communities can encourage this by examining their local regulations to remove hurdles which would make re-mining more difficult.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Conduct an energy audit of municipal and County buildings.
- ▶ Prepare a model sign ordinance for community use in protecting scenic corridors.
- ▶ Conduct a natural heritage inventory of Huntingdon County.
- ▶ Develop standards for alternative development in rural areas, such as conservation subdivisions.
- ▶ Promote a strategy for the preservation of agricultural land which includes the addition of new Agricultural Security Areas, purchase of agricultural easements, agricultural zoning and other techniques.

- ▶ Encourage municipal financial support of local land conservancies.
- ▶ Integrate the protection of environmentally sensitive areas (steep, riparian, floodplain, wetland) into local zoning and subdivision ordinances.
- ▶ Improve the level of enforcement of local floodplain regulations and development of riparian buffer zones.
- ▶ Ensure that land use regulations in rural areas do not restrict traditional rural activities, such as keeping livestock, or home-based businesses.
- ▶ Encourage forest land owners to participate in the Stewardship Forestry Program or Tree Farm Program.
- ▶ Pursue a policy of linking existing public lands into a cohesive greenway network through additional land acquisition by conservation agencies.
- ▶ Develop County Storm Water Management Plans for each of the County's 19 drainage areas.

SCENARIO 2020

Many older Huntingdon County residents remember the last decades of the 20th century where the national arena was filled with the debate between "jobs versus the environment." However, beginning in the late 1990s, people locally began to ask how they might have both (good jobs and a quality environment). Today, water, agricultural land, greenways, forest, and mineral resources support a high level of employment and enhance the quality of life.

Over 100,000 acres of farmland have been incorporated into Agricultural Security Areas. Ten thousand acres of this total have been permanently preserved through the purchase of conservation easements. This farmland represents the most at-risk and the most productive farmland in the county. The infusion of capital has allowed many to reinvest in their farms, while

others were able to keep farming in their family. The decline in farms and farmland experienced during the 1990s has been halted. This agricultural stability and the availability of good water supply have attracted food processors to area business parks.

Greenway corridors of public land and private land under conservation easements line the County's ridge tops and stream banks. In many areas, riparian buffers of native trees shade streambanks and filter storm water entering the stream. Fish habitat has been improved, and sport fishing is a popular pastime. Virtually all of the undevelopable land and much of the difficult to develop land along the county's mountain ridges have been incorporated into public forests and game lands, protecting the value of this wildlife habitat.

Forest land, which still covers 70 percent of the land area of the County, provides a sustainable resource. Almost two thirds of this resource continues to be privately owned and managed through forest stewardship and tree farm programs. This care for forest resources has incubated a vital wood products industry. Local hardwoods are processed locally into finished consumer products, including furniture and building materials.

Much of the progress in resource conservation has been made possible through a new partnership between state and local government. State agencies, such as the Bureau of Forestry and Fish Commission, have worked closely with the County Planning Commission and Conservation District to implement the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan's vision of resource conservation and economic development.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PLAN



The historic and cultural heritage of Huntingdon County should be respected, preserved, and interpreted. From the founding of Huntingdon in 1767 to the present day, people have raised families, built homes, blazed trails and transportation routes, and developed the economy of Huntingdon County. Knowledge of the past and living among vestiges of the community's history helps to place current residents' lives in context. It can also increase local patriotism and affection for the community. If love of community is promoted through the understanding its past, decisions about the future will be better informed and more carefully made.

Understanding the importance of heritage, Huntingdon County developed the Huntingdon County Heritage Plan in 1996. This chapter brings the major findings and recommendations of that plan into the County Comprehensive Plan. This is done to assist in integrating new development into the historic framework without destroying it. It will also assist in realizing economic goals by promoting history as a tourism theme.

I. Summary of Findings - The Resource: The Heritage Plan begins by offering a thumbnail sketch of the County's history along with related background data. Included in this latter element is a description of the County's Historic Districts, Landmarks, and Sites. The largest resources are its seven Historic Districts:

- Huntingdon Borough
- Mount Union Borough
- Robertsdale and Woodvale
- Greenwood Furnace
- Whipple Dam
- PRR (a lineal district)
- Marklesburg

The two Historic Landmarks also deserve specific mention. One, the East Broad Top Railroad (EBT) is one of the premier historic resources of the County. It is a 33-mile narrow gauge railroad. Originally built to haul coal from the Broad Top, it now functions as a tourist service. It is the only authentic steam-powered, narrow gauge railroad now operating in the eastern United States.

The second national historic landmark is Pulpit Rocks. Pulpit Rocks is a natural rock formation located along the historic Huntingdon County, Cambria, and Indiana Turnpike. It is historically significant due to its association with Pennsylvania's first geologic survey conducted in 1836.

In addition to the preceding, there are 31 National Historic Sites. In combination, these Districts, Landmarks, and Sites give Huntingdon County more formally identified historic resources than any of the other counties in Southwest Pennsylvania.

According to surveys and public meetings conducted during the preparation of the Heritage Plan, five "Top Sites" and six "Top Themes" were identified:

Top Sites

- East Broad Top Railroad
- Huntingdon County Courthouse
- Huntingdon Union Depot
- Pennsylvania Canal
- Company Square, Robertsdale

Top Historic Themes

- Railroad
- Canal
- Paths and Highways
- Native Americans
- Iron
- Coal

HERITAGE PLAN GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the historic background and the input from agencies and individuals, the Plan then devoted a section to the feasibility of heritage development. In summary, there are a number of pros and cons relative to the feasibility of heritage development. On the plus side, many of the sites are on public lands. Many are also well documented. The historic resources also lie in an area which is scenic and beautiful, enhancing tourism marketability. Perhaps most important, from local officials to everyday citizens, there is strong interest in heritage development.

The impediments to heritage development center around lack of knowledge about resources, lack of protection for resources, and lack of financial and management resources to better promote heritage. For example, there are no local ordinances to protect historic districts. Schools do not integrate local heritage and culture into the curriculum. Renovators are seldom aware of the Secretary of Interiors' standards for historic preservation or the tax credits available for consistent rehabilitation. Where there is interest and knowledge, such as among local historical societies, there are seldom adequate staff or financial resources.

Thus, armed with fact and analysis, the Plan moved to setting goals. Many goals have been achieved or are currently being implemented. This portion of the Plan will, thus, serve two purposes. First, it will attempt to highlight some of the Heritage Plan goals which have particular importance to all aspects of Huntingdon County. Second, it will examine the role of historic resources as a component of achieving the vision for the 21st century.

ANALYSIS AND PLAN

The key need is for greater coordination of activities to focus limited resources and make heritage development a possibility. The central entity for such coordination should be the Huntingdon County Heritage Committee, supported by the County Planning Commission. Recommendations fall into broad categories:

- ▶ Focused attention on National Historic Landmarks and National Register Districts or sites (including nomination of new listings).

- ▶ Encourage preservation restoration and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
- ▶ Interpretation of resources and local heritage.
- ▶ Focused attention on listed resources and nomination of new listings. Perhaps the highest priority is the County's most endangered National Historic Landmark.

Where properties are listed already, efforts must also be made to promote, interpret and protect the resource. Some specific needs are listed below by district:

Huntingdon Borough - Consideration should be given to extending the district boundaries and focusing on two features which could tie the district together: a centerpiece through restoration of Union Depot and a linear park along Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mount Union - Mount Union has a rich heritage of ethnic cultures which is largely unappreciated; promotion is necessary. Further interpretation of the brick industry could also tie into the EBT.

Broad Top Area - The existing district at Woodvale should become a focal point and be tied into greater EBT service. Resources in Dudley such as the Palace Hotel and Huntingdon and Broad Top Water Tower should be nominated for the National Register.

Reality Theatre - The current centerpiece of the Reality Theatre should be expanded to include a transportation link, a company house, and greater ability to convey the experience of this unique mining area.

Greenwood Furnace - The State Park is already interpreting the resource, and efforts to further this should be supported through implementation of the park's interpretive plan. From a tourism perspective, a lodging component should be considered, such as the existing Iron Master's Mansion.

Marklesburg/Pennsylvania Railroad/Wipple Dam - Greater interpretive efforts are needed, especially interpretive signage.

Finally, it should be noted that many of the focused resources center on Huntingdon County's industrial heritage. However, the County also has a rich agricultural heritage. The Brumbaugh Homestead should be considered as a centerpiece in efforts to share the area's agrarian history.

Encouraging preservation rehabilitation and adaptive reuse.

The East Broad Top Railroad is a recognized "world-class" historic resource, and generally regarded as endangered. Railroads top the heritage theme list and are proven tourism generators. This Plan can best reiterate a key recommendation — implement the Full Steam Ahead report.

Efforts must also be made to tie the EBT into other tourism resources. The Broad Top Coal Miners Historical Society has exhibited real enthusiasm and a "can-do" attitude. Efforts must be made to link the Coal Miners Museum and the railroad. This will involve both a marketing component, and new attractions for the Broad Top, perhaps the virtual reality exhibit or an alternate ride experience, such as mules pulling coal cars. This will benefit all of Huntingdon County by making the EBT day trip into an overnight experience to see and do more.

Additional components should further the service area of the EBT. In particular, the Conrail spur in Mount Union and service from Rockhill to Robertsdale and Rockhill to Mount Union should be sought. This may require creation of a rail authority or corporation to package financing. However, it is doable, as proven by the Oil Creek and Titusville (OC&T) Railroad in Northwest Pennsylvania. In fact, while primarily preserved for historic and tourism interest, the OC&T has actually filled a Conrail service gap and is hauling freight for small businesses in Titusville. Such a future is not inconceivable for the EBT (though gauge differences may make it more difficult).

The cornerstone of historic preservation policy in the United States is the National Register of Historic Places. The Register was established as a part of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Properties listed on the Register

may be listed for architectural or historic significance. That significance may be local, statewide, or national. As an administrative process, the National Register listings in Pennsylvania are administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, which is the official State Historical Preservation Office. The Museum Commission's policies have been to encourage the listing of districts in which a number of related structures can be honored and interpreted in their connection with one another. Once listed, the Register has three main benefits:

The first benefit is that the listed property receives some protection from any project utilizing Federal funds which would create an adverse impact upon it. It is important to note that this protection does not apply to any private activity. The property owner remains completely free to alter, expand, or demolish the structure in any way. However, government-funded projects, such as road-building activities or use of Community Development Block Grant funds, do not have the same freedom. At the very least, an extensive documentation process is required before demolition or significant alteration. Thus, the Register can protect private property from destruction by a public body.

The second benefit is that owners of income-producing property, who conduct restoration activities which meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation, can receive a significant 20 percent tax credit. For business owners, the tax credit, if pursued carefully, can result in significant profitability. The difficulty tends to be in working with a design and construction team that understands the standards and completing the necessary paper work. This is an area in Huntingdon County where additional education could be worthwhile.

The final benefit of the National Register is that it is simply an honor. Many property owners purchase plaques for their property, increasing interest in local and national history, and thereby increasing patriotism and love of place. With an understanding of the importance of the National Register as a tool, it is recommended that Huntingdon County:

- Utilize the National Register of Historic Sites process to protect resources from Federally funded adverse impacts and as an honor locally in these communities:

- ▶ Alexandria
- ▶ Shirleysburg
- ▶ McAlevys Fort
- ▶ Petersburg
- ▶ Rockhill
- ▶ Orbisonia
- ▶ Spruce Creek
- ▶ McConnelstown
- ▶ Three Springs
- ▶ Salttillo

Some scattered sites, including the Brumbaugh Homestead, Palace Hotel (Dudley), and Juniata College buildings, should also be combined for nomination.

The vision established in the 1996 Huntingdon County Heritage Plan outlines a path by which the celebration and preservation of the County's rich past can be maintained and strengthened. This recognition of local history is a key ingredient in feeding the love of place, upon which the Comprehensive Plan vision is based. There are a number of Heritage Plan projects which are particularly pertinent to the Comprehensive Plan and its vision. Of key importance are the urban "centers" communities. While these communities have historic resources, it must be remembered they are part of a living heritage. The downtowns and compact neighborhoods are not museums. They are homes and businesses laid out in a pleasing, efficient community which fulfills the ideal of the "centers" concept. Specific recommendations to fulfill this involve subsidy through rehabilitation, National Register Protection, and sympathetic zoning and codes.

There is little doubt that the quality of many of the older buildings in Huntingdon County's centers could not be replicated today, simply due to changing economics. In terms of long-term investment, it simply makes sense to foster a policy which reinvests in these private structures. Encouraging participation in housing rehabilitation programs can allow low-to-moderate-income homeowners to make in-kind replacements to the historic materials which comprise the components of their homes. Many could not otherwise afford the quality of materials inherent in in-kind material replacement. As a substitute, they would, thus, utilize inappropriate or inferior modern materials.

For communities with housing rehabilitation programs, the preservation ethic could be fostered by ensuring that the per house limits are sufficient to permit quality in-kind replacement. It might even be possible to develop a two-tiered system, in which historically significant homes are allowed a higher per home limit than others.

For commercial structures, the Commonwealth has periodically made cost-share programs available for facade restoration. Communities with significant downtowns, who plan to pursue this, should strive to develop a market study; then address physical revitalization needs through a partnership with downtown banks and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Facade programs tend to work best where the merchants are also building owners. In a situation where buildings are rented by absentee landlords, there is less financial incentive. One component of this partnership could be an effort to secure below-market capital for tenants to purchase the building. A second alternative is a form of conservation easements for centers in which the facade, after restoration, becomes public property through an easement. This can have some obvious tax benefits for even an absentee owner.

It must be recognized that at least some of the damage to historic resources was fostered by inappropriate suburban-style zoning. Some zoning ordinances have applied such standards as on-site parking and extensive yards which make it easier to build new buildings which destroy the urban fabric of density or even encourage demolition. Communities with both historic resources and zoning should review their ordinances for these unintended effects.

- ▶ At a minimum, ensure that the standards for on-street or off-street parking, and reuse of non-conforming buildings do not encourage the demolition of sound historic buildings in centers.
- ▶ Permit zero lot line and very minimal side yard requirements so that new buildings can be built at similar mass to preserve streetscapes.

- ▶ Use the sign section of zoning ordinances to preserve streetscapes while allowing advertising.
- ▶ For communities which really value their historic resources, land use regulations can do more than not encourage destruction; they can actively protect resources. There are two options for this in Pennsylvania. The first is the creation of a historic district under the provision of the Historic District Act of 1961. Not to be confused with a National Register Historic District, the State law is significantly more comprehensive. Under this approach, a majority of property owners in the proposed district must petition the local government. Upon passage of the ordinance, the local government must create a Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB). The composition of the HARB is defined by the law and must include an architect, code officer, and realtor. Subsequent to passing the ordinance and creating the HARB, all new construction, exterior renovations, and demolitions must be reviewed and approved. The HARB approach is used in a number of Pennsylvania communities, including Bellefonte in Center County, Mercersburg in Franklin County, and Hollidaysburg in Blair County.

The second option is to utilize zoning powers to protect historic resources. This power is specifically granted by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, but has not been as commonly used in Pennsylvania. The typical approach has been to create an Overlay Zoning District, which includes preservation standards. Where development is proposed in the Overlay District, a local historical commission acts as advisor to the Zoning Hearing Board.

- ▶ Finally, public health and safety in an environment of older buildings must still be protected. The basic tool for this is the BOCA Property Maintenance Code.

INTERPRETATION OF RESOURCES AND LOCAL HERITAGE

Heritage development as a component of tourism necessitates a linking of individual resources. It is here that coordination by the Heritage Committee can provide real assistance. An overall poster map is needed that ties all the County's resources together. Over time, similar flyers can be developed for specific themes. At this point, the coal heritage would be ready for such a brochure. An example of such an approach is the current series of walking tour guides which should be continued and expanded upon. Over time, efforts should be made to link other resources, including:

- Native American history around the Standing Stone and Sheep Rock.
- Agricultural resources around the Brumbaugh Homestead, Upper Store Valley, and the collection of implements owned by the County Fair Board.
- Canal Heritage from Mount Union to Alexandria.
- Juniata Iron around Greenwood Furnace.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Support implementing the Full-Steam Ahead report for the EBT Railroad.
- ▶ Prepare National Register of Historic Places applications for selected resources.
- ▶ Review local zoning ordinances to ensure compatibility with historic town planning and to encourage the reuse of historic structures.
- ▶ Encourage the use of Historic Architectural Review Board Districts and Historic Overlay Zoning in the protection of historic districts and sites.

- Encourage the conservation of existing neighborhoods through appropriate regulations and financial incentives.

SCENARIO 2020

As Huntingdon County looks back on the late 20th and early 21st centuries, one of the most intelligent initiatives was the preservation and celebration of culture and heritage. Today, the County's past is a meaningful part of the lives of County residents and the core of a vital economic sector. Heritage tourism now comprises 25 percent of the visitors to the County.

The East Broad Top Railroad is a world-class historic narrow gauge tourist railroad operating between Mount Union and Robertsdale. This year, ridership surpassed the 200,000 mark. Daily trips are offered between Mount Union and Rockhill, and weekend trips extend from Rockhill through restored tunnels and scenic hills to Robertsdale. New lodging and restaurants have sprung up in several communities along the route.

While the EBT is primarily a steam powered tourist railroad, it has had an impact on freight transportation too. The dual gauge track in Mount Union allows direct rail access to the Riverview Business Center. However, the narrow gauge section allows commodities such as timber, sandstone and limestone to be shipped to distant points directly from their source in southern Huntingdon County.

Historic districts have been created in Huntingdon, Mount Union, Robertsdale, Marklesburg, Greenwood Furnace, Alexandria, and Orbisonia. Each of these districts is protected by a Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB) and local zoning. Weekly guided tours of these and other historic sites have proven to be extremely popular. Local historical societies work with the Huntingdon County Historical Society and Heritage Committee in conducting these tours.

Visitor support has been vital in revitalizing downtown business districts as well as the surrounding residential areas. Property values in these areas have risen in response to consumer demand. Small shops and boutiques serve the needs of local residents as well as visitors.

In addition to the EBT, popular heritage sites include the Allegheny/Penn Street Area of Huntingdon Borough, Greenwood Furnace State Park, Mount Union Borough, Broad Top Coal Miners Museum, Friends of the East Broad Top Museum, and Swigart Museum. While not purely historical, the Living Farm Museum at Raystown Lake serves thousands of tourists and school groups each year.

The numerous heritage sites are tied together by a heritage and scenic tour route which extends over 180 miles throughout the County, and by the extensive system of greenways and trails.

HOUSING PLAN

The most common developed land use in Huntingdon County is housing. Housing is thus very important in terms of future land utilization. However, the importance of a housing plan exceeds this. Housing is really about homes and all that the image of home conveys. The home is the environment where the County's future citizens are reared and shaped. If the physical conditions are substandard in any way, it has the potential of compromising the generation for whom the County is planning.



I. Summary of Findings: These findings are based upon the Phase I Plan, an analysis of recent plans, additional field work, and a projection of housing needs to the year 2020.

- No major Fair Housing problems were identified.
- Housing in Huntingdon County is predominately single family (83%).
- Multi-family (rental) units are concentrated in Huntingdon and Mount Union Boroughs.
- About 16 percent of all rentals are assisted by government subsidies.
- Based upon recent municipal planning studies and field surveys, there is an estimated 1,600 to 1,700 deteriorated or dilapidated housing units in the County. At least two thirds of these are probably "income-eligible" under existing programs (CDBG, HOME).

- The County, through the Planning Office, has taken the lead locally in housing rehabilitation.
- Due to the demographic patterns of the County and the relative age of homeowners:
 - A steady and increasing demand for rental housing is expected. That demand will be met primarily through the private market, with only some renters needing governmental assistance.
 - A need for "high-end" rental/condo housing has been identified.
 - A steady stream of existing homes can be anticipated in the sale market as current owners retire and look for smaller accommodations.
 - Structural changes to households (size decrease) along with in-migration will create a need for 3,500 to 4,000 additional housing units by 2020 (just 20 years away).
 - Second homes traditionally make up a sizeable portion of new housing starts in the County (15% to 20%).
 - New housing needs can only be partially satisfied by traditional single-family homes.
 - There is no new comprehensive construction building code program in the County.
 - There is no property maintenance code in the County.

GOALS

As a basis for this update of the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan, *Continuity Through Conservation II*, the Goals and Policies of the 1978 Comprehensive Plan are considered as a starting point. If these are still

applicable; they are retained. However, if they appeared dated or inappropriate, they were deleted. For housing, the following goals were set forth in that document:

The provision of adequate housing for all residents of Huntingdon County. What we are seeking is as listed below:

- 1. Improvements of the present housing stock, when and where it is warranted.*
- 2. The encouragement of new housing construction.*
- 3. The development and preservation of a high quality residential environment.*
- 4. The assurance of an adequate choice of housing that fits the needs of the consumer.*
- 5. The availability of housing that is within the means of the consumer.*
- 6. Development of a coordinated County housing policy.*

The retention of these goals is warranted by current housing conditions.

From Citizen and Local Leader Opinions Expressed in the Survey and Visioning Sessions

Citizen Input Relative to Housing: To determine contemporary views on planning issues, both citizen meetings and a survey of Huntingdon County's residents were used. The results pertinent to housing are included in this section. It must be noted that participation in the citizen meetings was limited, while the Countywide survey garnered a high response rate.

In the spring of 1998, there were six regional meetings conducted to develop citizen priorities for this Plan. There was only a limited priority given to housing by participants. Identified problems and priorities included:

- Problems with rental housing
- A need for elderly housing
- A need for lifelong retirement (Continuing Care Retirement Communities) projects

Generally, even these issues were ranked below other concerns. The only time that housing was enthusiastically discussed was at the Economic "Mini-Conference," held in Huntingdon Borough. At least one major employer identified a lack of "up-market" rental units as a serious recruitment problem. It was a limiting factor to the qualified young professionals the firm was trying to bring into the County.

Housing did elicit greater interest on a Countywide basis. In the Quality of Life Survey, there were five questions about housing. Poor quality housing was perceived as a "minor" problem (53% of all respondents). Conversely, there was widespread support for various housing programs. Those ranked as a high or moderate priority, in order, were:

- Promote affordable housing (81.8%)*
- Promote housing for the elderly (81.5%)*
- Provide housing rehabilitation assistance (68.2%)*
- Provide code enforcement (67.8%)*
- Promote rental housing (60.3%)*

*Combined "high" and "moderate" response.

Thus, a variety of housing policies are considered as a priority by Huntingdon County citizens. In a review of recent comprehensive plans, most housing recommendations center around housing rehabilitation programs. Additional elements include elderly housing, one continuing care retirement community proposal, the use of historic districts for income-producing dwellings and some limited "new housing" recommendations.

ANALYSIS AND PLAN

Goal: To Encourage the Provision of Decent, Safe, and Sanitary Housing for All Residents of Huntingdon County Regardless of Age, Race, Sex, Income, Religious or Ethnic Background.

To maintain consistency with the 1978 Plan, the policies and programs set forth in this section generally follow that format. Once more, the theme is appropriateness. Usable themes were retained, and others deleted. In this section, existing conditions are outlined, followed by a series of remedial steps. Generally, the steps are listed by priority:

A. Housing Conditions: There exist a number of substandard housing units in Huntingdon County. Only one community in Huntingdon County (Mount Union) has a comprehensive code enforcement program in effect. Finally, no pervasive demolition program which would remove dilapidated housing is available.

- 1. Building/Housing Code:** The need for building codes will vary tremendously throughout Huntingdon County. For communities with older housing stock and less prospects for new development, the need is typically for an existing structures code to stabilize conditions and prevent dilapidated structures from becoming a dangerous nuisance. For communities seeing new suburban development, the greater need may be for a code to ensure new housing and buildings are safe. There has been long-term, Statewide interest for adoption of a uniform building code across Pennsylvania. All pending bills are based upon the BOCA family of codes. All State Bills are focused on alteration or new construction. For either existing building or new construction, a code adoption program could this four-step outline:

Step 1 - Identify a Countywide agency with the capacity, will, and expertise to enforce such a code.

Step 2 - Customize the BOCA Building Maintenance Code for use in Huntingdon County. Promote its adoption by individual municipalities, or the County, assigning enforcement to the Countywide agency (Step 1).

Step 3 - Review and customize, as necessary, the CABO one- and two-family dwelling code. Target developing areas for its adoption. Use the code agency (Step 1) for administration.

Step 4 - Review and promote, for municipal enactment, the full BOCA Code, once more using the Countywide group for administration. (The full BOCA Code involves the Property Maintenance code, new construction code for multi-family/commercial and industrial, and the 1- and 2-family dwelling code for new construction.)

- 2. Housing Rehabilitation:** Housing rehabilitation has been another Huntingdon County success story. The basic recommendations are to "stay the course," but expand the program's impact by coupling it with related initiatives.

Step 1 - Continue the County's owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs [Community Development Block Grant (CDBG and Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Programs].

Step 2 - Coordinate housing rehabilitation efforts with local banks and savings institutions under their Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) obligations.

Step 3 - Selected municipalities should consider a real estate tax abatement policy in deteriorated neighborhoods (RETAP) to encourage reinvestment in homes.

To this date, all rehabilitation has been for owner-occupied units. The County should investigate the options for rental rehabilitation, most likely as a low or no-interest loan, or combined with a rent-control agreement.

3. Home Buyer's Program:

Step 1 - Coordinate housing rehabilitation efforts with a first-time homeowner's program. Through this liaison, some new approaches could be tried. For example, the value of the "rehab" might be used as the down payment for a home. Target this program to villages and boroughs (centers) to have the greatest impact. Companion educational services on personal financial management and home maintenance are helpful adjuncts to these efforts.

4. **Housing Demolition:** Every effort must be made to prevent a level of deterioration that allows dilapidation. However, when structures are too deteriorated, it is not feasible to rehabilitate them, and demolition is necessary. The primary goal of this Plan is community conservation. This is especially important where potentially historic structures are involved.

Step 1 - Institute a voluntary demolition program of vacant homes. Under this program, local municipalities would notify owners of dilapidated structures that the structure should be razed, and alert them to the voluntary program. Rather than a code approach, the owner would voluntarily offer the structure for demolition, signing needed waivers. The municipality, a regional agency (COG, etc.), or a Countywide code agency would administer the program (grant assistance is possible).

Step 2 - Under the BOCA Building Maintenance Code, or via single-purpose municipal ordinances, mandatory demolition can be ordered. Some assistance to local municipalities will be needed. Local ordinances must contain due process clauses and adequate enforcement language to require demolitions. If a Countywide code agency exists, they could provide services to individual municipalities for demolition activities.

- B. **Housing Supply:** According to current estimates, 3,500 to 4,000 new housing units will be needed by the year 2020 (just 20 years from now). Some of this need will be filled by converting existing single-

family homes to apartments. It is expected most of this need can be met by the private market. However, the following actions are suggested:

1. **Conversions:** A review of existing zoning ordinances is needed to insure residential conversions of single homes to apartments will have a positive, not negative, impact. Density, parking, and, in historic areas, design should be considered.
2. **Assisted Housing:** Some new households will be formed by single parents. Often, these are females, and normally, they have limited economic resources.

The traditional solution to this issue has been the provision of publicly assisted housing, through either housing projects or vouchers which can be used for subsidized private units. At present, 16.7 percent of all rental units in the County are subsidized. Comparatively, the typical rate for rural counties is around 10 percent. Even Erie County, home to the third largest city in Pennsylvania, is less than 11 percent.

The key reason for this statistic is a particularly high concentration in Mount Union Borough. This concentration tends to limit the geographical housing choice of low-income households. For example, a person working at a low-paying job will have a very difficult time finding affordable housing in northern Huntingdon County. The concentration of public housing also affects communities in a negative manner as well. Concentrations of dense low-moderate income housing can affect municipal and school district tax base, through a negative service to tax ratio.

Finally, it must be noted that concentration of assisted housing tends to create artificial environments, not real neighborhoods. This lesson has been learned in larger cities where concentrations of assisted housing leads to crime and blight. However, as David Rusk (former Mayor of Albuquerque, NM) has written, "Urban underclass behavior dissolves with integration into the larger community." Individual poverty and dependence or individual

acts of crime certainly do not disappear, but they lack critical mass to blight whole communities.

It is, thus, recommended that no new assisted housing "projects" be built in Huntingdon County in the future. Rather, efforts should be pursued to ensure that future public housing is distributed geographically and at very small scales. Mixed developments which include varied density and a mixture of assisted and non-assisted units should also be promoted.

Finally, it should be the policy of Huntingdon County to promote homeownership as the preferred option of housing for persons of all income levels. High rates of homeownership contribute to neighborhood stability and feelings of belonging within the entire community. Owner-occupied homes are less likely to become deteriorated. Owned homes also foster entrepreneurship by providing security to capitalize on small businesses. The impediment is frequently down payments.

A number of communities have created first-time homebuyer's programs to realize these many benefits. Such an initiative is recommended for Huntingdon County. Initially, a number of options are available. The simplest of these is to combine a homebuyer's program with housing rehabilitation. Initially, realtors should be contacted to find deteriorated homes which are not selling. Simultaneously, a local bank should be persuaded to accept the investment of rehabilitation funds in lieu of down payment by an otherwise credit-worthy prospect. The program can then be advertised. The prospect gets credit approval, chooses his home, and it is rehabbed.

There are also non-governmental initiatives which should be supported, such as Habitat for Humanity. Again, the goal is to make owner-occupied housing the preferred option — regardless of income.

3. **Elderly Housing:** Demographic projections indicate many new housing consumers will be over the age of 40 - some over 55. Their needs are varied, thus, so should County policies be varied.

- Retirement Housing - Huntingdon is already home to a successful retirement community. The expansion of that facility, or the encouragement of one or more additional developments, is appropriate. This is best done by existing church or nonprofit groups. The County Planning Office's role is one of a catalyst. However, an objective analysis of projected needs is a must in this market.
- Nursing Homes - The number of nursing home beds and needs should be closely monitored, especially after the year 2010.
- Apartment Units - The demand for apartment units designed for older citizens should expand rapidly after 2010. Though private market options should be pursued first, additional assisted units may be in demand. As noted in "Retirement Housing," accurate market studies in this field are a must.

4. **Private Market:** The private market will supply most of the needed new housing. Though the private market is the supplier, meeting those needs should be approached as a public-private partnership. It is the task of a forward-looking community to analyze demographic growth trends and plan for anticipated levels of growth through its infrastructure and land use policies. A borough should examine infill opportunities, while a township may be more concerned with steering development away from inappropriate areas. Within the context of the whole County, there are two separate challenges:

- Housing Quality - The traditional housing subdivision can often lead to inefficient urban sprawl. The County can act in an educational capacity to apprise both local municipalities and private builders of newer or

nontraditional approaches. Conservation subdivision, and much of the "growing-greener" movement, offers both good design and an economic incentive to the developer. This fact must be communicated to the marketplace and to regulating municipalities.

A model County subdivision ordinance providing such options should be prepared (see also Land Use) and potentially adopted by the County and/or individual municipalities.

Beyond the issue of wise and efficient use of land, there is also a need to assure quality housing. In addition to the new construction code mentioned previously, the Huntingdon County Builders Association has suggested a license for qualified builders and contractors. An examination of the County code does not seem to include this power. The consultant has been unable to find County-level licensing in another Pennsylvania county. It is probable that any form of certification would need to be voluntary (unless changes in State law package license requirements with a Statewide building code). This should be a partnership with the local builders, realtors, Chamber of Commerce, and the County. In addition to certification, such a program must be accompanied by education so that homeowners and homebuyers understand the advantage of a certified builder.

Another quality issue is the conversion of single-family dwellings to multiple-family units. This should be done in a way which assures a safe, decent, environment for all tenants.

- High-End Rental/Condo Housing: Here, the question is whether the market for such units, especially in the Huntingdon Borough area, is now strong enough to encourage the private sector to respond to that need. If not, the following steps are suggested:

Step 1 - Hold an informational meeting between the County Planning Office, the Huntingdon County Builders

Association, local realtors, and business leaders to explore this need.

Step 2 - If a need for further action is verified, a special feasibility study for that market may be needed for this type of housing.

Step 3 - In the event that study results are not sufficient to institute action, a coalition is suggested between real estate developers and firms expressing a need for such housing. It is possible that a private subsidy maybe needed. Any public involvement should be advisory only.

- C. **Residential Environment**: The creation and enforcement of a modern subdivision and land development ordinance would be a first step to assure a good residential environment. This ordinance could be adopted by individual municipalities or perhaps the County. Another factor is the adoption of good zoning ordinances in "growth" communities. The need for a model County zoning ordinance is indicated. Also, constructive reviews of existing ordinances would be a positive tool. Finally, the provision of a code program (already discussed) is needed.

Some forms of protective zoning are frequently desired by the residents of new single-family subdivisions (referred to in common parlance as "R-1 zoning"). However, within this context, municipalities must also meet the needs of citizens who desire or require other forms of housing. Municipalities with the infrastructure to absorb higher-density housing should devote adequate land resources for this option. Also, in rural areas without infrastructure, mobile homes provide an important option for affordable housing. Local zoning should not prevent such a range of housing choices. It should assure that they are located in areas appropriate to their infrastructure needs and meet health and safety standards. For example, in the case of mobile homes, local regulations should include standards for adequate foundations and tie downs.

Second home developments comprise a significant number of units in Huntingdon County. The potential problem of such housing is

their subsequent conversion to year-round use. Some camps and cottages are not built to sufficient standards to allow year-round use. This creates several problems. Frequently, the road systems are not designed for year-round use. School buses and emergency vehicle access can be severely limited. At best, this is inconvenient, but at worst, it is dangerous. Other problems can occur due to infrastructure. Often, septic systems are underdesigned. In certain cases, they may be non-existent. With the small lots typical of many seasonal developments, the threat of drinking water pollution can be very real.

The key to preventing such problems is to ensure that seasonal homes meet minimum standards during the subdivision process. Road access, adequate drinking water, and proper wastewater disposal are a must. This should be done with the knowledge that some year-round occupancy will be inevitable.

D. Housing Availability: There are two basic aspects to this concern.

1. **Fair Housing:** The County and many of its constituent municipalities already have mechanisms in place to report housing discrimination to the appropriate agencies (PA Human Relations Commission, HUD). These resources need periodic publicity.
2. **Assistance:** There are a variety of programs that can assist those of modest income to purchase homes. These are available from local banks, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, or local initiatives. Currently, there is no clear measure of the need for such assistance. Therefore, research into homeowner assistance needs is suggested before a specific program is initiated.

E. Housing Roundtable: The greatest problems of plan implementation are a deadly combination of apathy and hostility. Apathy is usually on the part of citizens and local officials who are neither involved nor aware of program benefits. Hostility is often expressed by private-sector businesses who view any government actions as unneeded and unwanted intrusions. Housing Plan implementation will only occur if these groups are brought into the process, preferably before plan adoption. A roundtable composed of local government and private real estate interests could both offer positive suggestions for improving

programs and ease the implementation process. A secondary benefit of such a Roundtable is to bring together diverse agencies whose programs can support or complement another organization's efforts. This is especially true for home-buyer efforts.

Summary: The Housing Plan envisions the retention of most current housing programs, the enhancement of others, and the initiation of new efforts. The Plan makes it clear that the provision of good housing for the residents of Huntingdon County will only be successful through the combined effort of many agencies, public and private. Inducement, regulation, and cooperation are all part of the strategy to insure better housing for Huntingdon County residents.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Facilitate the private sector's development of new housing.
- ▶ Promote a first-time home buyer's program for Huntingdon County.
- ▶ Encourage the adoption of the BOCA Property Maintenance Code in urban municipalities.
- ▶ Encourage cooperative and regional administration of the new State Construction Code by Huntingdon County municipalities.
- ▶ Review land use ordinances to ensure they do not unnecessarily contribute to housing costs.
- ▶ Support new avenues for affordable housing in cooperation with the Huntingdon County Housing Authority, and other entities.
- ▶ Support the provision of owner and renter housing rehabilitation grants and loans in cooperation with Weatherization, Inc.

SCENARIO 2020

Visitors to the area frequently remark about the high quality of local housing. Whether new or old, single-family or multi-family, owner or renter, seasonal or year-round, homes throughout the County are well maintained and sound. Huntingdon County residents are enjoying an

unprecedented variety of housing choices at affordable prices. These have been provided through private housing developers with minimal governmental subsidy. The governmental role has been to administer reasonable subdivision and land development standards, zoning, and a housing maintenance code.

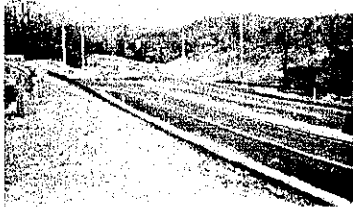
One of the more remarkable features of local housing the market is the older neighborhoods which contain affordable, and often historic, homes. The creation of several historic districts and selected use of property tax abatement has been helpful in preserving these neighborhoods. There, one can find both well maintained single-family homes and apartments within close proximity to shopping, schools, and services. Grants and low-interest loans also aid residents in maintaining these neighborhoods. New homes fill the few vacant lots created by demolition of substandard properties. Local code enforcement policies in every municipality require property maintenance, making slum landlords a thing of the past.

Newer subdivisions with both community water and sewer service can be found in or near the county's boroughs and villages. Many of these are designed to emulate the traditional appearance of these communities, with short setbacks from the street, porches and parking in the rear along narrow alleys. Other subdivisions are almost invisible along rural roads, being built following a practice called "conservation subdivisions." In these developments, houses have been clustered on smaller lots and large areas of open space have been permanently preserved -- often as pasture or cultivated farmland. Completely redesigned attractive manufactured housing units have been integrated into many of these new communities to provide affordable housing.

The continuing trend toward smaller households has generated the development of significant new housing choices: conversion of older homes to apartments, redevelopment of apartments over commercial space in community centers, construction of townhouse-style condominiums. These smaller households include married and unmarried people under 30, empty nesters (45-55 years old) and the retired (65+). Young singles and couples have been attracted to apartments in converted older homes. Many empty nesters and retired persons live in new condominiums, where easy maintenance gives them the freedom to travel. A third new retirement community, offering housing options from totally independent living to skilled nursing care, was recently completed.

For traditionalists, single-family housing is still available in developed centers on lots less than one-fourth acre, in conservation subdivisions on lots of one-fourth to one-half acre, in conventional subdivisions with one-half acre to two-acre lots and in rural areas on lots ranging from two to ten acres. Many recreational communities offer seasonal housing options with amenities such as: community recreation centers, swimming pools, tennis courts and golf courses. Some offer locations close to public hunting and fishing areas.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN



To even the casual examiner of community growth and change, the role of transportation is obvious. In today's society, road transportation is the most important transportation mode, accounting for over 90 percent of all U.S. annual vehicle miles (U.S. DOT Statistics). The location of homes, businesses, and factories are often decided by the capacity,

convenience, and connectivity of the road system. A new subdivision, a successful industrial park, or the latest big-box retailer all see transportation as a key locational determinant. The interplay between transportation and a community's future is both absolute and obvious.

Transportation facilities represent a major investment of public capital which both influence and are influenced by land use. Highways, railroads, and airports link local communities with each other and with the world.

I. Summary of Findings: To achieve the vision of healthy centers and excellence, a holistic view of transportation is a necessity. Past experience has sadly shown that adding lanes (capacity) to key roads, without forethought, can actually diminish road convenience. Multi-lane roads become a magnet, drawing a multitude of users along its boundaries. As people enter and leave the road to shop, take the kids to school, go to work, or visit a relative, turn movements and volumes choke capacity and degrade convenience.

In practical terms, land uses generate traffic. A new 50-unit subdivision can easily generate 300 to 500 trips a day as people leave and return on their daily routine. A "big-box" retailer may generate 60 trips a day per each 1,000 square feet of space. Thus, a typical "superstore" of 130,000 square feet may see nearly 800 arrivals and departures during a shopping day. These are national averages — but the message is clear — once the road is improved, it will attract uses, which, left unchecked, will create yet more congestion.

Recognizing this simple fact, the Transportation Plan realizes the role of major roads is to provide for the efficient movement of local and through-traffic, rather than facilitating commercial development. Actions which can be taken to preserve the transportation function of Huntingdon County's major roads are needed. Route 22 is the best example of a major highway where the managed access of new development is needed to preserve that road's capacity.

Though road transportation may be the dominate subject of this section, other modes of transportation cannot be ignored. Rail traffic still carries a large volume of freight in Pennsylvania, and Huntingdon County sits astride an east-west main line. Similarly, air travel for pleasure or business is growing annually. Finally, the walker, hiker, and biker must not be forgotten. For health, recreation, and sometimes as an alternate commute, these modes are also becoming more popular.

One final note. Every discipline has its own terms. Much of this section will focus on highway transportation. Over the years, transportation planners have arrived at four general road types. The definition of these will facilitate an understanding of this Plan element.

Expressways - These highways provide connections between major cities and regions. They are limited access, divided, four-lane, roads that can handle large traffic volumes at high speeds. The Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-76) and I-99, located a short distance from the County, are such roads.

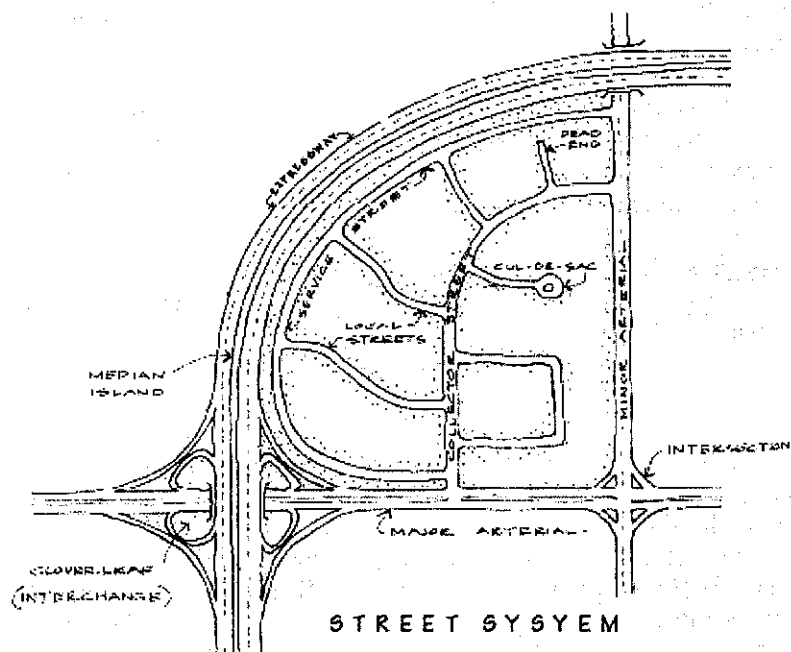
Arterials - Are also major roads, but can be two- or four-lane. They typically connect major population centers in a county as well as providing for through-traffic. These roads are intended to handle high traffic volumes, but at more moderate speeds than expressways. Arterials in Huntingdon County include U.S. Route 22, U.S. Route 522, PA Route 26, PA Route 453, PA Route 913, as well as PA Routes 45 and 655.

Collectors function in two ways. Their most obvious role is to "collect" traffic from local roads and provide subsequent access to arterials. Collectors can also provide connections between arterials or link important trip generators (residential neighborhoods, smaller shopping centers, etc.). Examples of collectors in Huntingdon County

would include PA Route 305 and PA Route 994, PA Route 35, and PA Route 350.

Local Roads - The primary function of local roads is to provide access to individual properties. They are designed for moderate to low traffic flows, at moderate to low speeds.

Sketch "A" shows a schematic representation of these roads.



Each day in Huntingdon County, residents and visitors drive 1,275,000 miles. They do this on a network estimated to contain 1,446 miles of road - about half of which is in PennDOT's inventory. Indeed, its roads are, far

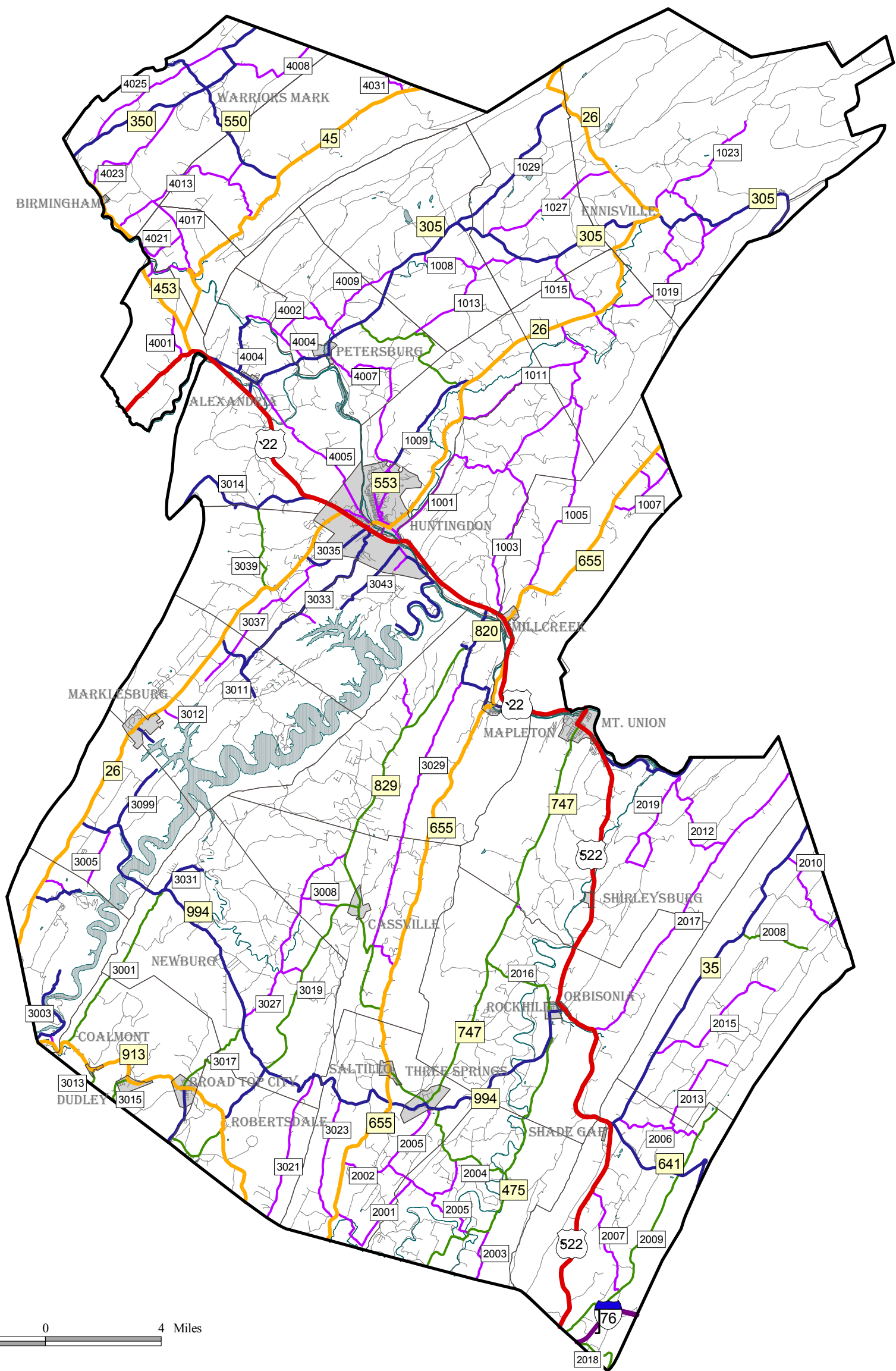
and away, the most traveled portion of Huntingdon's transportation inventory.

From the standpoint of Statewide importance and traffic volume, U.S. 22 and U.S. 522 are the two most important highways in Huntingdon County. They also make up the primary elements of the National Highway System (NHS) in the County. The only other NHS segment is about 2½ miles of PA Turnpike which just nips Huntingdon's southeast tip. Routes 22 and 522 travel from the Pennsylvania Turnpike to Lewistown. It travels through the communities of Orbisonia/Rockhill, Shirleysburg, Mount Union, Mill Creek, and Huntingdon. U.S. Route 22 follows the Juniata Valley through the County in an east-west direction, connecting Huntingdon with both Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. The central portions of the corridor (Mill Creek west to Blair County) experience high traffic counts - often over 10,000 vehicles a day.

A second major road corridor is PA Route 26, which traverses the County in a north-south direction from Centre County to Bedford County. There, traffic volumes are lighter, except near Huntingdon Borough, they range from 5,000 to 10,000 vehicles-a-day. Together, these three road networks dominate the County and serve the majority of the County's residents, through traffic, as well as much of its economic base.

In terms of total usage, railroads lag far behind the highways, but still represent an important asset. Norfolk Southern tracks (formerly Conrail) roughly bisect the County following a diagonal path along the Juniata River, U.S. 22, and PA 453/45. This service is important to freight users in the County. Also, Amtrak uses these rails with Huntingdon as a stop on the cross-State passenger service. Finally, the East Broad Top Railroad operates between Rockhill and Shirleysburg.

Public transportation in the County is limited to a demand-response rural transportation system, operated by the Bedford-Fulton-Huntingdon Area Agency On Aging. Primarily, the system is intended to provide transportation to those over 65 years of age. Most trips are for medical or shopping purposes. Users must call the Agency 24 hours in advance to schedule their trip. The system is accessible to the general public, but they



1999



HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FUNCTIONAL CLASS OF HIGHWAYS

- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES
- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL, FREEWAY
- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- MAJOR COLLECTOR
- MINOR COLLECTOR
- LOCAL ROAD
- ROADS
- WATER

HUNTINGDON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

HUNTINGDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

GRANEY, GROSSMAN, RAY, AND ASSOCIATES
A Community Planning and Development Partnership
Harrisville, Pennsylvania

This project was funded, in part, with a State Planning Assistance Grant (SPAG) from the Department of Community and Economic Development.

must pay full fare. Overall, this system receives very limited use by the general public.

The Huntingdon County Airport is the only such public-use facility in the County. The airport, privately owned, is located along U.S. 522 in Shirley Township. It has a 3,120-foot gravel runway. According to the Huntingdon Business Airport Study (1995), there are about 10 aircraft based here and nearly 8,000 takeoffs and landings annually.

Other aspects of transportation include recreational trails and the Path of Progress. According to the 1997 Transportation Study, there are 11 recreation trails in the County for hiking and/or bicycling. The Path of Progress is a 500-mile highway route in southwest Pennsylvania which links heritage sites. It has two loops within Huntingdon County.

Continuity Through Conservation II, Phase II, presents the following findings under Transportation:

1. *The County has no public transportation, creating nearly total reliance on private automobile transportation.*
2. *Intercity passenger access is difficult due to limited rail passenger service and a lack of scheduled air service in the County.*
3. *County residents do not have direct access to the Interstate Highway system, but access is within 30 to 60 minutes of all areas of the County.*
4. *While most County roads operate at an acceptable level of service, many are inadequately maintained and do not meet modern design standards.*
5. *The County's ridge and valley topography make travel (particularly east-west) difficult and road construction expensive.*

Survey and Citizen Views: In May of 1998, a Quality of Life Survey was sent to 1,700 residents of Huntingdon County. Transportation questions resulted in the following responses:

- ▶ In general, maintenance of the existing system was given priority over new roads.
- ▶ Neither the County Airport nor public transit received high priority.
- ▶ Relative to improvements to existing roads:
 - Route 26 north of Huntingdon Borough
 - Route 22 to four-lane status
 - Route 26 south of Huntingdon Borough

were the high priorities.

During the public meetings, transportation received various priorities. Overall, there was a concern about the highway system and the need to maintain the current system. Also, concerns about a lack of public transit was frequently mentioned. Two additional concerns mentioned were the East Broad Top Railroad and increased traffic from Tyrone along Route 453.

ANALYSIS AND PLAN

Goal: As an Improved Transportation System Permits, the Free Movement of People to Communities with the Best Jobs and Highest Environmental Quality can be supported.

This goal is detailed by a series of Objectives, Policies, and Actions which are detailed below.

Plan for a High-Quality Arterial Highway System Which Serves to Connect Huntingdon County to the Rest of the World: This policy requires two quite separate but critical actions. The first is obvious — to aggressively request programming for construction projects to upgrade and improve Huntingdon County's principal roads, primarily U.S. 22 and U.S.

26. The second is to control road access so the physical improvements are not neutralized by unchecked commercial strip development.

- Focus State and Federal aid on arterial highway needs.
 - * Already identified major projects include PA Route 26 (northern, middle, and southern section)
 - * U.S. Route 22 reconstruction (Porter and Smithfield Townships)
 - * PA Route 26 reconstruction study
 - * U.S. Route 522

Support the Development of Secondary (Marginal) Access Roads and Use Other Strategies to Minimize Entrances to Arterial Roads: Unlimited access to arterial roads creates safety problems as well as effectively diminishing road capacity. These strategies to preserve optimum road function.

- Support limiting new access onto arterial roads through the PennDOT driveway permit process.
 - * Regulate minimum spacing driveways
 - * Regulate minimum corner clearance
 - * Limit access per property frontage
 - * Consolidate access from adjacent properties
 - * Require access (where possible) on secondary roads
- Insert the requirement for marginal access roads into existing subdivision and land use development ordinances — develop standards for same.

- Through PennDOT and FHWA partnerships, secure funding of marginal access roads as a strategy to preserve the capacity of NHS arterials.
- Work with the HCB&I to have marginal access roads as a design standard for major economic projects along arterials.
- Purchase frontage development rights along prime arterials.

Discourage Strip Commercial Development in Local Zoning: The control of strip retail use along major roads will help keep roadway capacity. It will also diminish conflict between development and transportation goals.

- Educate local elected officials and planning commission members on the negative elements of strip commercial zoning.
- Prepare a retail market study to quantify the remaining need for additional commercial zoning in the County.

Participate Fully in the Transportation Planning and Development Process Through Participation with Both the Southern Alleghenies Transportation Committee and Directly with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

Encourage a concept for Routes (PA) 26, (U.S.) 22, and others to protect important vistas, including the purchase of scenic easements and limited frontage easements. The scenic beauty of Huntingdon County is one of its primary assets. However, it is also a perishable one. If special vistas are not preserved, this unique visual sense of place will be lost.

- Identify arterial sectors of scenic value (see Transportation Plan - Key Scenic Roads).
- Approach public and foundation sources to acquire scenic frontages.
- Aggressively participate in PennDOT design to further key rural road preservation.
- Design criteria for scenic areas should consider

- ▶ Natural landscapes extending 30 feet to 100 feet from the cartway edge.
- ▶ Retention of existing farm fields or woodlands as much as possible.
- ▶ New development setbacks.
- ▶ Avoidance or reduction of cross street and driveway access.

Support intersection improvements and realignments for the traffic safety. Basic safety improvements to protect the traveling public make sense. Such projects also fit Federal program priorities nicely:

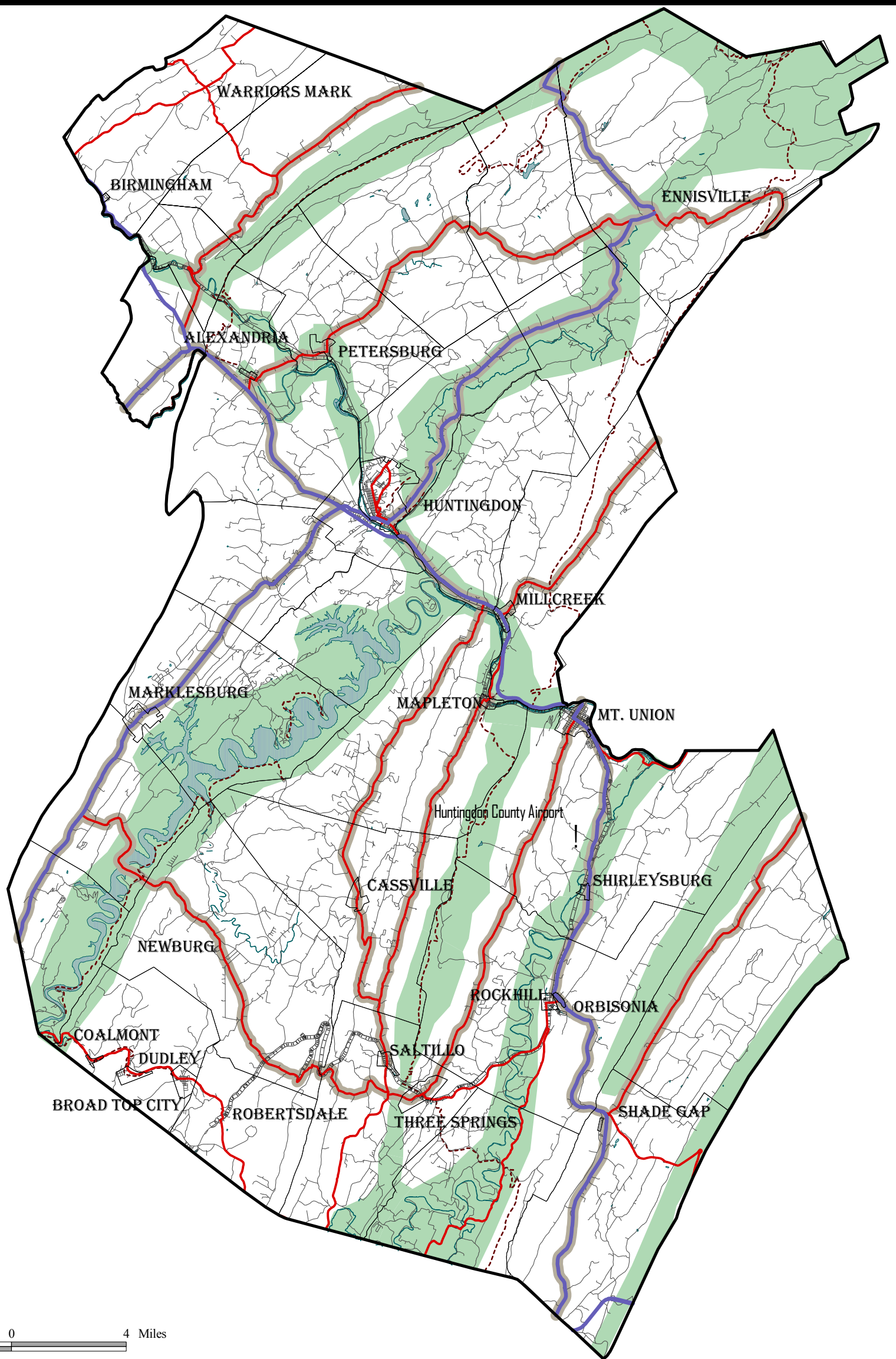
- Work with PennDOT accident data to identify the worst ten accident intersections in Huntingdon County.
- Based upon intersectional analysis, promote remedial projects to alleviate the problems.

Continue offering testimony to the regional planning agency to support the decision-making process (an ongoing HCPC function). The aggressive participation in this planning process is the keystone to the Transportation Plan. Federal and State funds are allocated by this process, and they hold the sole means for effective Plan implementation.

- Huntingdon County is part of a multi-county Rural Planning Organization (RPO), the Southern Alleghenies. As lead agency in the County, the HCPC must continue to emphasize its priorities to the RPO and directly to PennDOT.
- The overall concept strategy for major highways in Huntingdon County is shown by Table T-1.
- The annual Transportation Improvement Program for Huntingdon County should incrementally implement the overall concept strategy.

**TABLE T-1
LONG-TERM CONCEPT STRATEGY FOR HUNTINGDON COUNTY ARTERIALS AND EXPRESSWAYS**

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
I-76	Fort Littleton to Tuscarora Tunnel	Safety improvements.	The Pennsylvania Turnpike is in need of continual improvements to bring it up to current traffic safety and design standards.
U.S. 22	Mount Union to Water Street	Widen from 2 or 3 to 4 or 5 lanes, providing a center turn lane.	The design of US 22 dates from the late 1940s. Additional traffic capacity is needed along with implementation of access management.
U.S. 522	Mount Union to I-76	Reconstruct the cartway to allow for 2 twelve-foot lanes and wide paved shoulders.	While most of US 522 was reconstructed in the 1990s, additional work is needed to provide a modern 2-lane highway from the PA Turnpike to US 22.
PA 26	Huntingdon to State College	Reconstruct the cartway to allow for 2 twelve-foot lanes and wide paved shoulders.	PA 26 has been designated as the Standing Stone Parkway. Access controls are needed to protect this key highway from encroachment.
PA 26	Huntingdon to Everett	Reconstruct the cartway to allow for 2 twelve-foot lanes and wide paved shoulders.	PA 26 carries considerable recreational traffic and is the gateway to Raystown Lake. Access controls are needed to protect this key highway from encroachment.
PA 45	PA 453 to Centre County Line	Reconstruct the portion near Spruce Creek to 2 twelve-foot lanes and wide paved shoulders.	PA 45 has been designated a part of the Pennsylvania Bicycle Route. Paved shoulders will aid bicycle safety.
PA 453	US 22 to I-99	Reconstruct the cartway to allow for 2 twelve-foot lanes and wide paved shoulders.	The portion of roadway near Birmingham has narrow road cuts, falling rock, and inadequate shoulders.
PA 655	US 22 to Fulton County Line	Reconstruct the cartway to allow for 2 twelve-foot lanes and wide paved shoulders.	PA 655 is an important Minor Arterial.
PA 913	PA 26 to Fulton County Line	Reconstruct the cartway to allow for 2 twelve-foot lanes and wide paved shoulders.	PA 913 is an important Minor Arterial.



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1999



HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

HUNTINGDON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

HUNTINGDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

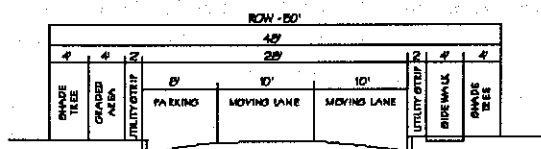
- Controlled Access Arterials
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads
- Rail Network
- - - Trail Network
- Key Scenic Roads
- Water
- Greenways

GRANEY, GROSSMAN, RAY, AND ASSOCIATES
A Community Planning and Development Partnership
Harrisville, Pennsylvania

This project was funded, in part, with a State Planning Assistance Grant (SPAG) from the Department of Community and Economic Development.

Encourage an appropriate standard for new rural roads in low-intensity areas through subdivision and land development standards. At the same time, discourage excessive standards.

- See Sketch B.

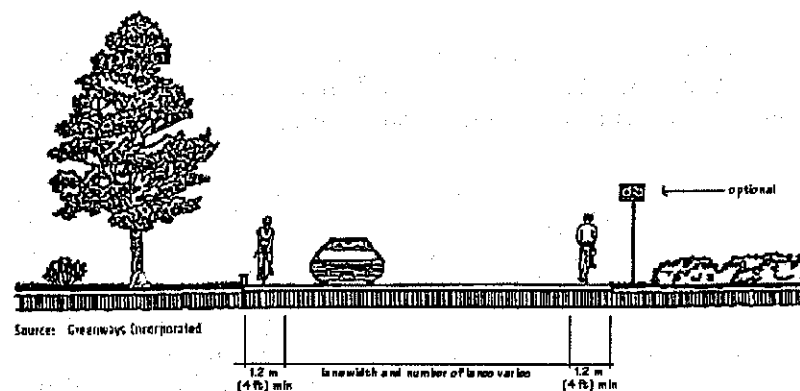


A design element, related to roads, is sidewalks. Sidewalks provide pedestrians an alternate route for short trips. The requirement of sidewalks in higher-density residential subdivisions, be they urban or suburban, can impact road width and promote pedestrian safety. The new standards model subdivision and land development ordinance and review process can also be used for this goal.

-- A new approach in public transit and transportation is warranted. This is not merely an issue of individual mobility but also may

- Encourage paved shoulders, when appropriate, and lanes for pedestrian non-motorized traffic.

- See Sketch C.



- ### Section III: Analysis and Plan

Local service should be maintained, and enhanced, as opportunities arise.

- Support an expanded role for the EBT Railroad.
- Support the continued development of improved facilities at the Huntingdon County Airport to become an adequate facility for general aviation and local business use.
- A master plan for the airport is now underway. That document will set forth an incremental improvement program. Such a program is needed to attract greater use of this facility.

Better Access to Raystown Lake: Raystown Lake is a truly regional attraction, drawing visitors from not only Pennsylvania but the entire Eastern and mid-Atlantic area. Better and more efficient road access is needed.

The 1980 Transportation Plan suggested 20 separate road improvements to facilitate links to key Raystown facilities (see Table T-2). Some of the suggested improvements have been realized (i.e., improvements to SR 994 to the Restart Area), and others are part of the County's arterial strategy. However, much remains to be accomplished. A Raystown Transportation Task Force should place priorities on State-owned roads and work for their improvement via annual maintenance funding or by the TIP. New funding options for Township roads may need to be explored as some key links to the Dam and Overlook on local roads.

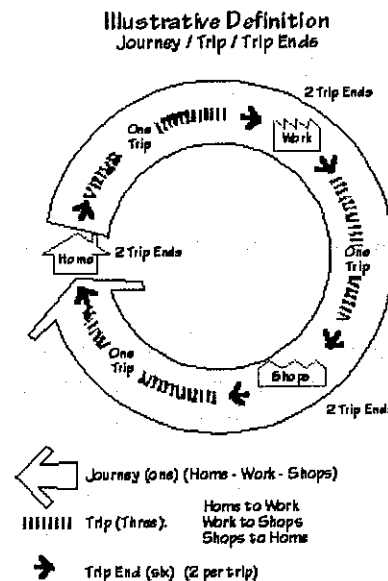
Where Does the Money Come From? In most planning reports, the issue of funding is ignored. Yet, for certain plan elements, it is indeed important. That is the case for transportation. Federal and State taxes on diesel fuel and gasoline will pay for most, if not all, of the major improvements envisioned by this Plan.

There is little doubt that Federal funds are the most critical element for freeway and arterial funding. The current Federal program is "TEA-21," the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. This act sets general goals and provides for the distribution of Federal funds — primarily from

the Highway Trust Fund, until the year 2003. Dollars are allocated to the National Highway System, the Interstate System, the Surface Transportation Program, and for bridge replacement and rehabilitation. Transit, highway safety, and research are also funded by TEA-21. This is accomplished by an ongoing planning process which is formalized by an annual TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) and a long-term plan. In all, these Federal funds will total \$35 to \$39 billion annually.

If this Plan is to be successfully implemented, County priorities must be matched with TEA-21 funding priorities. Only then can there be a reasonable chance for success.

Airport funding is derived separately from fees charged to air system users. Once again, there are clear Federal priorities and specific programs that need to be recognized if improvements to the Huntingdon County Airport are to be realized.



The emphasis of this Plan is based upon major road, rail, and air needs. However, the County's transportation network is incrementally extended as new residential, commercial, and industrial subdivisions are built. Historically, the cost of these new streets are the developer's responsibility. The Plan suggests no change to that policy. Furthermore, certain construction and design standards must be met. Again, this Plan suggests no change from current policy. One new element should be added, the relation of new roads and streets to the existing road network. Contemporary road network design suggests more interconnection between new development and existing roads are needed. Where high traffic generation is expected (over 250 trips per day), these links become very important.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Promote free-flowing traffic on arterials by promoting sound design standards and avoiding excessive strip development.
- ▶ Discourage excessive entrances into major arterials.
- ▶ Develop appropriate standards for urban, suburban, and rural local roads.
- ▶ Focus financial assistance on arterial highway needs (Routes 22, 26, and 453).
- ▶ Coordinate both public and private actions in support of transportation improvements, including participation in the transportation planning process.
- ▶ Develop a County-level Transportation Information System.
- ▶ Promote mass transit rail and paratransit options.
- ▶ Improve access to Raystown Lake.

SCENARIO 2020

Why this complicated and far-reaching plan? The following is where this Plan's visions transportation in Huntingdon County 20 years hence.

Transportation in Huntingdon County in the Year 2020: Huntingdon County is finally well connected with all areas of the state and nation through an intermodal system of transportation. While County residents and businesses are still primarily reliant on highways and private automobiles, improvements have been made to highways as well as trails, public transportation, intercity rail, and air transportation to increase mobility and improve transportation safety.

Highways: The County's arterial highways, U. S 22, U.S. 522, PA 26, PA 453, PA 913, PA 655 and PA 45 are well maintained after having been upgraded to modern design standards over the past ten years. All areas of Huntingdon County are within 25 miles of an Interstate Highway on these upgraded roads. Even collector roads have received overdue maintenance and are in excellent shape. *All arterial and collector roads have a level of service of "C" or higher.*

TABLE T-2 - PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR RAYSTOWN ACCESS ROADS

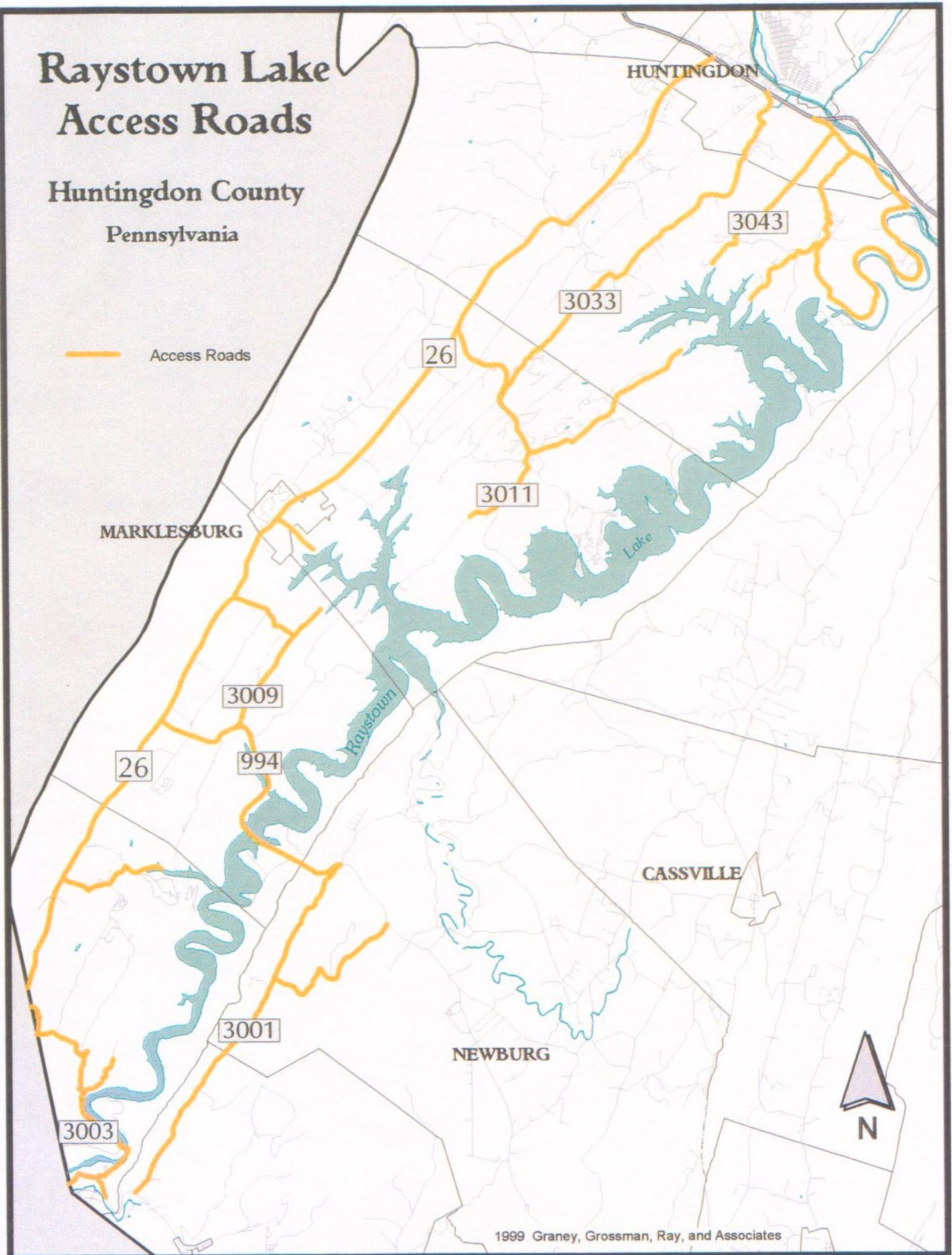
<u>Priority</u>	<u>Traffic Route</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Serving As Access To</u>	<u>Level of Improvement</u>	<u>Miles</u>
1	SR 994	PA 26 to SR 3001	Raystown Resort Tatman Run	Reconstruction*	5.2
2	SR 3011	PA 26 to Corps Boundary	Seven Points	2-Lane Relocation*	3.0
3	SR 3033	SR 3016 to SR 3009	Seven Points	Widening and Structural Overlay*	7.1
4	PA 26	US 22 to Bedford County Line	Raystown Lake	Reconstruction	19.5
5	SR 3001	PA 913 to PA 994	Raystown Resort	Widening and Structural Overlay	5.6
6	T 431	SR 3045 to T 440	Dam	Reconstruction	5.5
7	T 430	SR 3009 to Dead End	Susquehannock	Reconstruction	5.0
8	SR 3010	PA 26 to Corps Boundary	Aitch	Widening and Structural Overlay	0.4
9	SR 3007 and SR 3003	PA 913 to Bridge on SR 3003 Across Reservoir	Hopewell	Widening and Structural Overlay	1.0
10	SR 3002	Existing PA 26 to Corps Boundary	Shy Beaver	2-Lane Relocation	0.8
11	SR 3003	East Side of Bridge on SR 3003 to Corps Boundary	Weavers Falls	Reconstruction and Bridge Improvement	2.3
12	SR 3043	U.S. 22 to Corps Boundary	Snyder's Run	Reconstruction	3.4
13	SR 3045	SR 3043 to T 434	Lookout and Dam	Widening and Structural Overlay	1.2
14	SR 3009	PA 994 to T 405	James Creek	Reconstruction	2.0
15	T 434	SR 3045 to Corps Boundary	Lookout and Dam	Reconstruction	2.8
16	T 440	T 434 to Corps Boundary	Dam	Reconstruction	1.0
17	T 405	Existing PA 26 to SR 3009	James Creek	Reconstruction	1.1
18	T 419	PA 26 to Brumbaugh's Homestead	Brumbaugh's Homestead	Widening and Structural Overlay	0.5
19	T 369	PA 26 to SR 3003	Hopewell	2-Lane Reconstruction	2.2
20	SR 3011	Administration Building to Corps Boundary	Upper Corners Area	Reconstruction	2.2

*Completed Project

Raystown Lake Access Roads

Huntingdon County
Pennsylvania

— Access Roads



Route 22 has been improved to a four-lane controlled access highway throughout Huntingdon and nearby counties. In the Huntingdon Area, a fifth turning lane has been added from the Million Dollar Bridge to the PA 26 interchange. In other areas *an innovative program has allowed the purchase of frontage development rights along Route 22 to reduce the number of driveways* onto this heavily traveled arterial road. U.S. 22, the old William Penn Highway, is now a modern four-lane highway from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh.

The innovative controlled access program has been extended to U.S. 522 and PA 26. While these roads have remained two-lane, turning lanes have been provided at key intersections to promote traffic safety and the roads have been widened to 12-foot lanes with 8 foot paved shoulders. This allows recreational bicyclists to use these roads safely. The recently completed McAlevys Fort Bypass and various curve realignments have smoothed travel between Huntingdon and State College. The reconstruction of U.S. 522, completed throughout Huntingdon County in 2002, has been extended south through Fulton County to I-76 at Fort Littleton and to I-70 at Warfordsburg.

The Huntingdon County Scenic and Heritage Route provides a comprehensive tour of the County over various state highways. *Interpretive pull-offs and scenic overlooks* have been provided to tell visitors about Raystown Country and the many attractions found in the County. The route still follows the same roads as when it was established in 1995: Northern Loop follows PA 26 from Huntingdon to PA 45 in Pine Grove Mills, PA 45 south to U.S. 22 at Water Street, and US 22 from there back to Huntingdon; Southern Loop follows PA 26 from Huntingdon to PA 913 at Saxton, from there to Robertsdale, from Robertsdale to Rockhill via PA 994, from Rockhill to Mount Union on U.S. 522, and, finally, back to Huntingdon on U.S. 22.

Rail - Intermodalism is working very well between AMTRAK, the new "Access Huntingdon" public transportation system and the private taxi company serving the Huntingdon Area. Both the taxi and "Access" vans meet each train. Passengers are then transported to their final destination by either the "Access" van or a taxi. Several area resorts support "Access" by including the price of a shuttle between the railroad station and the resort in the price of their lodging.

Railroad passenger service to the County was improved significantly recently with the addition of *two additional trains east and west for a total of four east-bound and four west-bound trains each day.* Service was also improved with the addition of new "high speed rail" equipment on the Harrisburg to Pittsburgh section of the former PRR Mainline and various track improvements. Passenger trains can now operate at speeds of up to 150 mph, cutting the travel time from Huntingdon to Harrisburg from 2.0 hours to 1.25 hours and from Huntingdon to Pittsburgh from 2.5 hours to 1.6 hours.

Freight and passenger service were improved with *the reestablishment of the East Broad Top Railroad from Mount Union to Robertsdale.* Freight service is provided to the Riverview Business Center via a dual gauge track (using standard gauge cars). Tourists can now travel from Mount Union to Robertsdale via the authentic narrow gauge steam railroad. Frequent trips are made each day between Mount Union and Rockhill. Die-hard rail fans can take the day-long round trip between Mount Union and Robertsdale with a stop-over at the historic Rockhill Railroad Shops and Roundhouse.

Air - The new Huntingdon County Airport in Shirley Township is home base to over 30 private and corporate aircraft. The newly lengthened 4,000 foot asphalt runway and improved hanger and ground support facilities have encouraged six local companies to base aircraft here. The existence and location of the airport has been credited with attracting three firms to the Riverview Business Center over the past five years.

Sidewalks and Trails - After years of neglect, *pedestrians and cyclists now have improved sidewalks and trails.* A fully developed system of walks serves all of the County's eighteen boroughs and adjacent urban development. While the trail system primarily serves recreational users, portions are used by cyclists who prefer to commute via the bicycle. Recently completed trails include the multi-use Juniata River Trail, which extends from Williamsburg in Blair County to Mount Union, and the Blair Trail, which extends from Penn Street in Huntingdon to the Standing Stone Golf Course in Oneida Township. Portions of the old Huntingdon and Broad Top Mountain Railroad have been reclaimed as a multiple use trail near Marklesburg Borough and

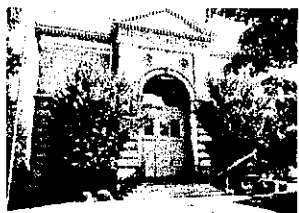
through the Broad Top Area. Hiking trails, such as the Mid-State, Link and Terrace Mountain Trails, are regularly used by back-country hikers and campers.

Public Transportation - An innovative employer-supported transportation system has provided additional options to workers who prefer to leave the automobile at home. Built on the foundation of the Bedford-Fulton-Huntingdon Area Agency on Aging "demand-responsive" van system, the new *"Access Huntingdon" system has provided a way for low-income residents to get to work without owning an automobile.* This system has also received additional support from various social service providers to allow their clients to travel to the various service locations in the County. Support from state government, private employers and social service agencies has enabled Access Huntingdon to increase service while keeping fares at an affordable level.

Another major improvement in public transportation was made recently with the initiation of the *first private taxi operation in the County in over 30 years.* This service, based out of Huntingdon Borough, will pick up a fare any place within five miles of Huntingdon, Mount Union, or Alexandria. This new venture was made possible by changes in the policies governing taxi's in rural areas by the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission.

Transportation, a major element needed to realize Huntingdon's vision of its future.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES PLAN



A large part of planning is about the stewardship of our possessions and resources for the future. Perhaps the most important of these resources are the ones which are in community ownership. The water systems, public sewers, municipal buildings, schools, and parks of Huntingdon County represent decades of time and millions of dollars of investment. To rebuild them in one effort would probably not be affordable.

The most influential community facilities, relative to future development, are sewer and water services. In Huntingdon County's Comprehensive Plan, *Continuity Through Conservation II*, this is especially true. Much of the overall thrust of this Plan stresses the "centers" concept. Basically, the centers approach emphasizes encouraging development around existing development nodes, typically villages and boroughs. One of the reasons the centers idea makes sense is the fact that many of these existing communities have essential sewer and water systems in place. So, there is no need to build new water or sewer plants. However, even if new facilities are needed, the existence of a current population base helps make such expensive services more affordable. But, even more important, the Centers philosophy encourages new development to focus on existing nodes, rather than promoting endless low-density sprawl development. Finally, public water and sewage services can also greatly reduce the amount of land that is consumed by new development, lessening the pressure on the rural landscape.

Thus, from both a public and a planning perspective, the issue of sewer and water systems is obviously a key consideration. However, there are many other facets to a good community. Police and fire departments protect the County's physical and social investments. Schools and libraries transmit the knowledge that will allow local children to assume positions of

leadership in the future. Together, these various forms of community facilities and services are the components of our civilization.

Through surveys and public meetings, the citizens of Huntingdon County have made one idea very clear — they like this area very much as it exists today. They do not wish the open space, farm fields, boroughs, and villages replaced by a sea of faceless, low-density subdivisions. A common thread of preserving the natural heritage of Huntingdon County is shared by this section, the Land Use Plan, and the Natural Resources, Conservation, and Energy Conservation Plan. The concept of rural conservation, small town preservation, greenways, trails, and scenic key rural roads can only be realized through a multi-discipline approach, which reinvests in historic centers. Consequently, though water and sewer services may be a primary focus of this Plan segment, it is only one element vital to realize the vision of a better County.

I. Summary of Findings: The following information is presented in capsule form to provide an overview of key community facilities and services in Huntingdon County. It is taken from the Background data in Phase I and its Supplement.

Water Systems: There are 17 separate water systems in the County. Huntingdon Borough easily has the largest facility, producing up to 4 million gallons daily. However, the important consideration is not merely the size of the system but its current condition and capacity for expansion. In the Background Report and Supplement, 8 systems were adjudged as having good capacity for expansion, 6 needed upgrades, and 3 were now inadequate. Of greatest concern for this Plan were the limitations of the Huntingdon, Alexandria, and Shirleysburg systems, as well as major problems with the Mount Union system.

The system of water providers is fragmented in most areas of Huntingdon County. The trend throughout the State has been toward the consolidation of water providers. This is partially the result of increased Federal regulatory standards.

Sewer Systems: Some 18 sanitary sewer systems were examined during the background studies. However, the Dudley facility, though proposed, has no final funding plan. Thus, only 17 facilities were analyzed. Once again,

systems were divided into three categories, nine were considered as being adequate to serve current users and allow for expansion, five adequate but needing upgrades, and three inadequate to serve as a developmental node. Once more, the Mount Union system was in the inadequate column. The Shirley Township collection system was also in the inadequate classification, partially due to their reliance on Mount Union for treatment, but also due to their own system's I&I problems.

Recreation: In the Background Report, recreational facilities of the County were inventoried. There were 397.5 acres of municipal resources, 998.2 acres operated by educational facilities, plus expansive private resources. The Raystown Lake complex, State Game Lands, as well as State forests comprise over 88,000 acres.

Yet, acreage alone is quite misleading. Much of this resource is undeveloped, focused on either outdoor/nature activities or are kept in a primitive state. This Plan element's concern focused on the adequacy of facilities for County residents. Originally, available active recreational resources were adjudged as inadequate. Subsequent analysis concluded that there were adequate facilities, on a Countywide basis in most recreational categories (ballfields, tracks, etc.). However, their condition and the spatial distribution of resources, in relation to County residents, represented an unknown factor. Furthermore, the physical inventory did not address local preferences or needs, nor address new recreation options (in-line skating, etc.).

Education: The County is served by six school districts, a vocational-technical school and a few private secondary schools. There are three advanced educational facilities, the DuBois Business College (branch campus); Penn State (in nearby State College); and Juniata College, located in the County Seat of Huntingdon.

Municipal Resources: There are 48 municipalities in Huntingdon County with a variety of resources and capacities. For many of the Plan's recommendations, these entities will play key implementation roles. A brief analysis of municipal characteristics revealed:

- 28 (58%) have municipal buildings or community centers

- 7 have full-time employees, another 3 employ 6 or more part-time persons
- An analysis of municipal income estimates that 24 may have adequate economic resources to address new responsibilities.
- Interest by municipal officials in formal cooperative action is limited.

County Resources: The County Seat is located in Huntingdon Borough, where the 1883 Court House is found on the 200 block of Penn Street. Other facilities include the Jail, the Sheriff's Office, HCB&I offices, Raystown Visitor's Bureau, and a District Magistrate's Office on Mifflin Street. Children Services are located on Penn Street. The County Home is in Shirley Township. As witness to their need for space, the County leases two buildings in Huntingdon Borough.

Public Services and Resources: There are a variety of organizations involved in the provision of health and safety services for Huntingdon County. Many of the primary providers are volunteer.

Police services are provided by five organizations. The County Sheriff's Office has four full-time employees. In addition to their traditional services, the Sheriff also provides security services for Raystown Lake. Huntingdon and Mount Union Boroughs have their own police departments, while Petersburg- Alexandria (Juniata Valley Regional) have a joint organization. The Huntingdon Borough barracks of the Pennsylvania State Police provide overall police service in the County.

There are 19 fire departments in the County providing service via 22 stations. These are volunteer operations. Many of the fire departments have ambulance services associated with them. In all, 7 such operations are listed in the Phase I Report.

Public safety dispatching is via a 911 call system, headquartered in Huntingdon Borough.

There is a County Library System which has three branches, Orbisonia, Mount Union, and Huntingdon Borough. Alexandria has its own local

facility. Both Juniata College and Penn State provide additional library and cultural resources for County residents.



The J. C. Blair Memorial Hospital, located in Huntingdon Borough, is the County's primary health facility. In addition, four medical centers are scattered in central and southern Huntingdon County.

Survey and Citizen Views: In 1998, a survey was sent to 1,700 County residents relative to their views and aspirations on a number of planning issues. The results relative to community facilities and services are highlighted below:

- The extension of existing water and sewer lines from existing systems was generally supported.
- Support for additional local recreational facilities was positive, but not overwhelming. This may have been influenced by a somewhat mixed attitude on the development of new tourist facilities.
- The creation of stronger library system received an 85 percent approval rating.
- Public safety services were generally rated as good, with fire and ambulance services receiving the best rankings.
- Health care was classified as fair to good by respondents

The survey results were somewhat confusing relative to recreation. In ranking existing resource services, most persons gave a good to fair mark.

Yet, the question on the need for improvements seemed to elicit only modest support.

Overall, the survey results showed a focused on the economy and jobs. Thus, community facilities and services in support of such goals would probably experience wide public support.

While the survey presented a Countywide view of issues and interests, the series of public meetings and mini-conferences tended to be more focused. That focus typically centered around some current, important, local issue or a theme. Items perceived as important County strengths included Juniata College, the hospital, parks, and its good rural, low-crime, environment.

ANALYSIS AND PLAN

The overall goal of this element of *Continuity Through Conservation II* is:

"It is our vision that future development is focused on existing boroughs and villages to take advantage of existing public investment in utilities and services."

Public Water and Sewer: This goal clearly emphasizes and supports the Centers concept. And, nowhere else can that concept be better realized than in the arena of community facilities and services.

Both the centers concept and the historic design of Huntingdon County's centers revolve around a density of people and buildings conducive to walking. The main issue this raises is that higher densities of people with private wells and septic tanks can overwhelm groundwater resources and pollute drinking water supplies. For centers to flourish, public water and sewers are essential. A major foundation of this Plan is thus the support, maintenance, and upgrade of existing water and sewer systems and the development of a network of new ones in designated centers.

- ❖ **Water** - There are four existing centers where the current water systems need significant upgrading to achieve Plan goals. These are Huntingdon Borough, Alexandria, Shirleysburg, and Mount Union. In addition, eight centers, now lacking water, should be encouraged to create water systems:

Shade Gap
Coalmont
Cassville
Marklesburg
Hesston
McAlevys Fort
Birmingham
Spruce Creek

Due to ever-increasing regulations on water systems by the Federal EPA, as enforced by DEP, new small independent water systems should be discouraged. New and existing smaller systems should be encouraged to federate or join together to create a better ability to cope with increasing restrictions.

In yet other areas, expansions are suggested to accommodate and guide future growth (see Future Utilities Plan).

There are some concrete steps which can realize these needs. Prepare a Countywide Water Supply and Facilities Plan for the County to assess current resources, determine future needs, and recommend actions to meet such needs. The HCPC should also take the lead in promoting regional wellhead protection studies. Given their expertise in land use planning, a Countywide consistency in protective regulations can be achieved. It is possible that the Countywide Water Facilities Plan can be integrated into this effort directly — or as a phased plan.

- ❖ **Sewer Systems** - Similar to the strategy for water systems, sewer facilities should embrace the Centers concept. In areas with public sewers, current inadequacies in Mount Union and the Shirley Township area are a major concern, and the Huntingdon Borough facilities will require constant attention. Proposed sewer system

expansions are shown on the Future Utilities Plan. New systems are recommended in the following communities:

- Birmingham Borough
- Warriors Mark
- McAlevys Fort
- Spruce Creek
- Robertsedale

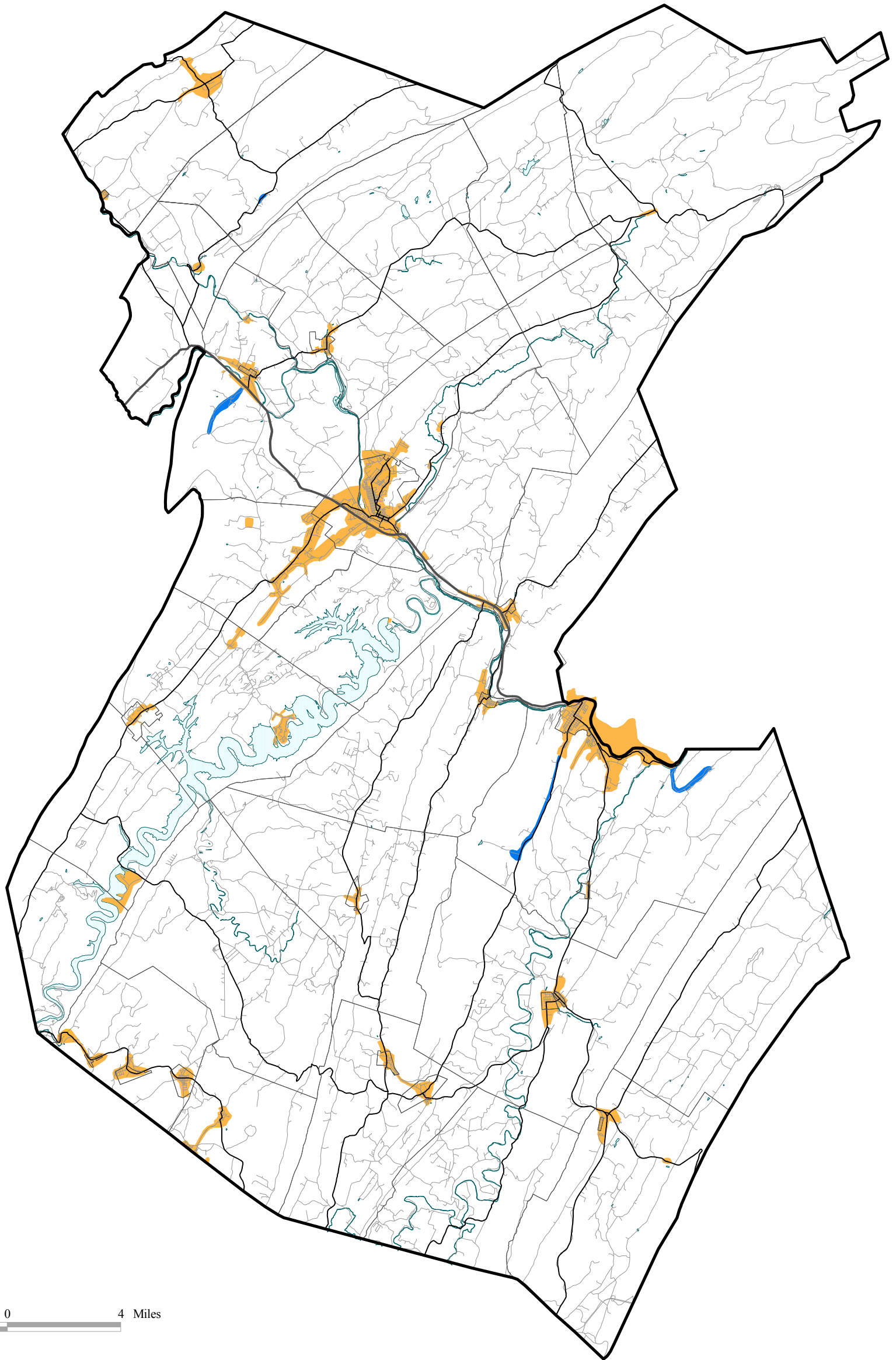
As a partner to the positive program to create new systems and expand or upgrade existing systems, a second policy is needed. That policy would be to discourage new sewer plants in areas not designated on the Future Utilities Map. Some small "package" systems may be needed to accommodate special needs, such as those related to recreational places such as Raystown Lake. Also, pockets of existing pollution may require topical solutions. However, the proliferation of sprawl subdivision sewer systems would be directly contrary to this Plan's policies.

All municipalities should also have updated Act 537 Plans. It is imperative that Act 537 Plans be integrated into the traditional comprehensive planning process and not tolerated as stand-alone documents. The continuity of individual Act 537 Plans to the centers concept is critical for the success of this Plan.



Recreational Resources: Huntingdon County is obviously rich in outdoor recreational opportunities. There are probably some major deficiencies in the area of developed recreational opportunities (sports fields and playgrounds).

The analysis of local recreation resources on a Countywide level is too generalized to give facility-specific recommendations. Furthermore, it is obvious that school districts are becoming increasingly active in both recreational resources and programming. To intelligently plan for local recreation needs, regional recreation studies, throughout Huntingdon County, are needed. Such studies must bring these primary players and other key parties to the same



HUNTINGDON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

 Water and Sewer Service
 Water Service Only

Future Utilities Plan

**HUNTINGDON COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**HUNTINGDON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

GRANEY, GROSSMAN, RAY, AND ASSOCIATES
A Community Planning and Development Partnership
Harrisville, Pennsylvania

table to allow for the wise development, and maintenance of recreational facilities.

At the same time, these facilities are being examined at a regional-local level. Their potential role in the provision of a system of Countywide greenways and trail must be evaluated. Local parks will serve as important links and nodes in such a system. In light of this diversity of needs and lack of data, the central recommendation is for the Huntingdon County Planning Commission to undertake a Countywide Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has funding support for such an effort which will allow the Commission to ascertain the need on a sub-county basis. The second recommendation is that public investment in these areas should mirror the centers concept. Developed recreation should be placed in, or adjacent to, centers. If municipalities outside centers wish to pursue municipal recreation, they may wish to consider a "conservation park" option, which would provide resources such as picnic areas, scenic areas, walking trails, and hunting or fishing. While this would duplicate some State and Federal resources, the concept could be combined with the recommendation for municipal forest in the Natural Resources and Conservation Plan.

A cooperative planning and management process with the agencies responsible for Federal and State recreational resources in the County must be initiated. Controlling just under 90,000 acres, Raystown Lake, State Forests, and the State Game Lands are nearly ten times as large as the combined local and school district recreational holdings. They can be of great assistance in realizing greenway goals. Likewise, they are key in any tourist development efforts. The most important reason for planning liaison is the potential impact these facilities can exert on Huntingdon County.

One major recreational resource which will lie largely outside centers but can tie centers, rural areas, and greenways into a cohesive network are trail systems. The State Recreation Plan illustrates that trail systems are among the most popular facilities in the Commonwealth. Two new trails should be investigated and supported.

- A Huntingdon/Smithfield to Mount Union trail

- Implementation of a hiking/biking trail around the lake as outlined in the Raystown Lake Master Plan.

Libraries and Public Schools: These comprise the educational resources of the County. Perception of school quality is a major factor in household locational decisions. Rates of library use rise proportionally as both income and education rise, so libraries are also a factor that business leaders look for in a quality community.

Regarding schools, a former problem has been the abandonment of schools in centers and their replacement by new buildings elsewhere. However, new policies at the State level have removed the penalties for upgrading existing schools versus building new facilities. Consequently, existing community schools can more easily be maintained. Furthermore, even if new facilities are needed, the location of such schools in existing Centers will help to strengthen entire communities.

To help further this policy, the HCPC should strive to become an active partner in school district planning. The Commission has much to offer school districts in terms of its database of demographics, land use, and utilities. As an active partner in school planning, HCPC can better further the Centers policy and other County goals.

As mentioned previously, public schools often have extensive recreation facilities. They have potential cultural resources as well, through such facilities as auditoriums. Good planning should work against the unnecessary replication of such facilities. As schools are public facilities and the resources are frequently underutilized, consideration should be given to expanding schools into multi-use community centers open to all citizens of good character.

Libraries represent a very popular and well regarded County/municipal service. The people of Huntingdon County have expressed their clear desire for a strengthened library system. The questions at this point are how to coordinate and serve the whole County well. The library currently does not have a Master Plan. The preparation of one is a practical prerequisite to any facility changes.

Public Services and General Government Buildings: Counties in Pennsylvania are becoming more and more involved in a myriad of services. All too often, these new, often mandated, functions have a poor physical and management connection with traditional County operations. A space need study, combined with a capital budget approach, will allow a more consolidated approach. It could also support the Centers concept by keeping activities focused in Huntingdon Borough.

In a related vein, many municipalities in Huntingdon County lack any public meeting or office space at all. As the County grows, the complexity of local government activities will grow proportionally. It is the policy of this Plan that every municipality in the County have some form of public meeting space/municipal office. In smaller communities, this could be shared with another community-based organization, such as a fire department. Where possible, these facilities should be located in centers to facilitate public access and participation in local government.

Among the growing complexities which can be expected will be increased needs for emergency services, and social services. At present, Huntingdon County is preparing a 911 address system to develop fully integrated public safety response. After its completion, levels of protection can be evaluated.

The 911 system provides a good model for social services as well. Regardless of economic development or other policies, a number of citizens will still require social services. An integrated, interagency approach should be developed.

All of these activities require a high degree of coordination and forward looking. Again, like 911, many of these activities will fall upon the County Planning Commission (which is the only planning commission in the County with staff resources). The integration of these activities will necessitate a continued strengthening of these resources.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Create a Countywide Municipal Authority to provide operator/billing and financing services to small water and sewer systems.

- ▶ Assist those urban areas which need public water or sewer to implement the centers concept.
- ▶ Develop a County recreation and open space plan to address the recreation and open space conservation needs of the County.
- ▶ Encourage formation of multi-municipal recreation commissions as a partnership of boroughs, townships, and school districts.
- ▶ Encourage the update of Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plans where needed in the County.
- ▶ Ensure that municipal sewage facility plans (Act 537) are compatible with local and County land use plans.
- ▶ Prepare a Countywide Water Plan.
- ▶ Encourage the expansion of a greater network of trails and greater interconnectivity of trails.

SCENARIO 2020

By the year 2020, a nearly invisible network of community services and facilities will blanket Huntingdon County, offering County residents services equal to the world's most civilized places. Visible facilities such as municipal and other government buildings, libraries, schools and parks, and "Invisible" services such as water, sewer, telecommunication, inter-municipal, administrative and social services are provided in a professional and economical manner.

The other "invisible" service which continues to play a vital role in the community is the visioning and leadership development spawned by *Continuity Through Conservation II*, the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan in 2000. Huntingdon County government continues to partner with local municipalities, as an educator, technician, grantsman, and facilitator.

The highest level of services is available in the County's urban centers, including schools, libraries, municipal buildings, parks, and community

water and sewer service. Rural services include on-lot water and sewer, governmental administrative, social and telecommunication services.

Inter-municipal cooperation is nearly universal. This cooperation is exemplified by joint municipal planning commissions and councils of governments. These organizations have developed several regional plans and administer joint municipal zoning. With County administrative support, the councils of governments administer joint municipal purchasing and other management services saving local taxpayers thousands of dollars each year.

The telecommunications revolution of the late 20th and early 21st centuries did not bypass Huntingdon County. A surprising number of people "commute" to work each day on Internet V. This instant communications medium allows these workers to enjoy the best of rural small-town living while earning top wages. A Countywide "electronic village" connects every household with each other and with vital services.

In both urban and rural areas of the County, schools are used as multi-purpose community centers, offering both education and community recreation to youth and adults. This has allowed these areas to maximize the use of these facilities and to keep tax millage low.

Partnerships between Federal, State, local, and private agencies have led to cultural as well as recreation opportunities. Both Juniata College's Rosenberger Auditorium and the new Raystown Lake Amphitheater offer the community quality theater and musical entertainment. The County's 150,000 acres of State open space and parks provide first-class boating, hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation. Over 50 local parks provide playgrounds, play fields and community recreation close-to-home for the County's 50,000 residents.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires all municipalities to integrate the policies of their comprehensive plan in two fashions. The first is a requirement to include a statement explaining how all the divergent elements of a comprehensive plan interrelate to each other, and the second is to consider the effect of the plan upon neighboring municipalities. This section of the Plan will fulfill those criteria. However, as this is a Countywide plan, the County also has a responsibility to consider the relationship with its constituent municipalities.

I. The County and Its Municipalities: Huntingdon County must continue to define its role in relation to its constituent municipalities. In the past, this role has been one of leadership and technical assistance. This role should continue, with a primary emphasis on facilitator. First and foremost, it is recommended that following Countywide adoption, municipalities in the County adopt this Plan as their comprehensive plan or become a formal partner through municipal resolution. To fulfill the vision, the County should:

- ▶ For and foremost, continue to provide ongoing public forums for education and planning.
- ▶ Continue to provide detailed reviews of local plans and ordinances.
- ▶ Provide basic model text for local ordinances.

Within the context, the County role will be realistically confined to education and leadership. To realize the vision, municipalities must act with each other to fulfill the citizen visions. The County should always facilitate this process. Where possible, all future municipal comprehensive plans should be joint or inter-municipal efforts.

- The County should initiate some form of pilot process to illustrate how this might work throughout the County. At this point, the most natural regions for this to occur are in Huntingdon/

Smithfield/Walker, the greater Mount Union area, and the Broad Top. Due to its cohesion, strong regional identification, and history of economic problems, the Broad Top would be a good first choice for a pilot project in inter-municipal cooperation. It is recommended that Huntingdon and Bedford Counties initiate a two-stage renewal process in the Broad Top.

- ▶ Stage One - Citizen-based economic renewal, emphasizing training in community-based economic development.
- ▶ A technical study on shared services, the feasibility of municipal merger and the potential to develop a new CDBG entitlement community.

II. Inter-County Issues: Beyond the obvious areas of Mount Union and the Broad Top/Saxton area, it is believed that opportunities for inter-county land use planning are limited by topography. Huntingdon County's border with large parts of Centre, Blair, Franklin, and Mifflin Counties follow high ridge tops. Where there are not ridge tops, such as parts of the border with Fulton and Blair Counties, continued low-intensity development is anticipated on both sides of the border.

With such limitations, the County is anxious to build inter-county relationships whenever possible. This may take the form of joint activities, such as revitalizing the Saxton/Broad Top or Mount Union areas, or improving and funding a joint sewer/water system for the Mount Union/Kistler area. It may also be an ongoing activity, such as County participation on many multi-county organizations (including regional planning entities and transportation coalitions).

III. Internal Consistency: Much of the success of plan implementation will rest on the interrelationship of Plan elements around two areas: the quest for excellence and the maintenance of the centers concept.

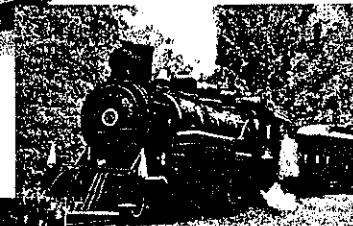
- Environmental Conservation Plan - A healthy environment is a pre-requisite for a quality community.
- Heritage Plan - This assures that the historic centers remain pleasant small towns worthy of both private and public investment.

- Community Facilities and Transportation - These are key Plans to ensure that public investment implements the Plan, rather than negating it.
- Housing Plan - Provides the builder and real estate communities with incentives to implement the Plan, by illustrating how the centers principle means profitable development.

- Economic Base Plan - Provides the economic stability to keep and attract quality development. This Plan also protects the finances of households. The strong households will become strong communities. Strong communities can demand excellence in development, rather than accepting the substandard from the desperation of financial hardship. For example, a financially successful farmer will be less likely to sell his land for development.

Section IV

Action Plan
Conclusions



HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING/COSTS	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Encourage all municipalities to become municipal partners by adopting the County Comprehensive Plan.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send resolution to municipalities. 2. Offer recognition to municipal partners. 3. Explore higher levels of County assistance to municipal partners. 	<p>County Planning Commission</p> <p>County Commissioners</p> <p>Townships</p> <p>Boroughs</p>	Low Cost	High	This action should not be confused with County adoption of the Plan by the County Commissioners.	Land Use Plan
Move toward complete coverage of Huntingdon County by Subdivision and Land Development Regulations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine which municipalities desire to become partners in preparing a model ordinance. 2. Develop model ordinance 	<p>County Planning Commission</p> <p>Municipal Partners</p>	<p>SPAG/Shared Municipal Services</p> <p>Local Funds</p>	High	Combine with model ordinance activity.	Land Use Plan
Promote zoning ordinance coverage of all boroughs in Huntingdon County and select high-growth townships.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support joint grant application. 2. Contact municipalities. 3. Develop library of model ordinance text. 	<p>County Planning Commission</p> <p>Municipal Partners</p>	<p>SPAG</p> <p>SCPAP</p> <p>Local Funds</p>	Medium	Combine with model ordinance activity.	Land Use Plan
Support upgrade of zoning and codes administration in Huntingdon County.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer PA Municipal Planning Education Institute workshops. 2. Investigate shared administration by several municipalities. 	<p>County Planning Commission oversight</p> <p>Municipal Planning Commissions</p> <p>Municipal Governments</p>	<p>Shared Municipal Services</p> <p>Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute</p>	Medium	Have agreement prepared prior to workshops.	Land Use Plan
Encourage the development of municipal or regional comprehensive plans in all areas of Huntingdon County.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify communities of need & funding possibilities. 2. Provide assistance to communities in consultant selection and first steps. 3. Provide County finance incentive. 4. Provide professional review of draft Plans. 	<p>County Planning oversight</p> <p>Municipal Planning Commissions</p> <p>Municipal Governments</p>	<p>SPAG</p> <p>SCPAP</p> <p>Shared Municipal Services</p>	High	Multi-municipal efforts get State priority.	Land Use Plan

NOTE: See the last page of this section for the definition of acronyms.

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING/COSTS	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Support the use of site-specific real estate tax abatements as a tool of revitalization in urban areas.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Obtain LERTA and RETAP laws. 2. Disseminate information to local officials. 	Boroughs Townships Huntingdon County Business and Industry	Low Cost	High		Housing Plan Economic Development Plan
Develop a planning education program to promote best practices in planning and land use regulation techniques and professional administration of land use ordinances.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact national organization with speakers (APA, etc). 2. Hold a series of seminars in conjunction with municipalities. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Huntingdon County Municipalities	Low Cost	High	See prior page.	Land Use Plan
Develop a model subdivision and zoning ordinance which incorporates "best management principles" such as neo-traditional development and conservation subdivisions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine municipal interest. 2. Examine funding. 3. Develop model ordinance. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Municipal Partners	SPAG Shared Municipal Services SCPAP	High	See prior page.	Land Use Plan
Encourage inter-municipal compatibility analysis a part of the review standard of municipal comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt County Plan. 2. Develop compatibility standards checklist. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission	Low Cost	High		Land Use Plan
Incorporate the Goals/ Actions/Policies of the Comprehensive Plan into the review criteria for use of County CDBG funds.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare standards. 2. Notify municipal applicants of changes. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Huntingdon County Commissioners	Low Cost	High		All elements of the Comprehensive Plan
Develop and encourage a process whereby land purchases by State and Federal agencies can be part of, or linked to, a cohesive greenway network.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet all agency land-holders to share land use goals. 2. Draft a memorandum of agreement between County and State agencies. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Huntingdon County Environmental Review Board State Agencies Central PA Conservancy	Low Cost	Long Term	Could be a key initiative for greenways.	Land Use Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING/COSTS	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Encourage municipal financial support of local land conservancies and local watershed association.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a "challenge" fund raising program. 2. Promote the needs and results achieved. 	Southern Alleghenies Conservancy Local Watershed Groups County Planning oversight	Local Funds	Long Range	Foundation funding possible	Natural Resources and Conservation Plan
Integrate the protection of environmentally sensitive areas (steep, riparian, floodplain, wetland) into local zoning and subdivision ordinances.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrate into model zoning and subdivision projects. 2. Find defensible standards used by other Pennsylvania communities. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Municipal Partners	SPAG SCPAP Shared Municipal Services	High		Land Use Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Plan
Improve the level of enforcement of local floodplain regulations and development of riparian buffer zones.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review floodplain ordinances. 2. Meet with flood-prone municipalities. 3. Draft new regulations. 4. Conduct municipal workshops. 	Watershed Associations Municipal Partners Huntingdon County Planning Commission	Low Cost	Medium	State funding possible	Land Use Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Plan
Ensure that land use regulations in rural areas do not restrict traditional rural activities, such as keeping of livestock or home-based businesses.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review local ordinances. 2. Develop standards and definitions in model ordinances. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission	Low Cost	Medium	Differentiate confined feeding and other farms.	Land Use Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Plan
Encourage forest land owners to participate in the Stewardship Forestry Program or Tree Farm Program.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist State forester in better public knowledge of program. 	DCNR Service Forester Penn State Cooperative Extension Environmental Advisory Board American Forest Foundation	Low Cost	Long Range		Land Use Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING/COSTS	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Encourage sound use of energy in all municipal and County buildings.	1. Conduct an energy audit of County and municipal buildings.	Huntingdon County Commissioners Local municipal officials Utility Companies	General Fund	Medium		Natural Resources and Conservation Plan
Develop a model sign ordinance to protect the visual qualities of communities and the natural environment.	1. Include in preparation of other model ordinances.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Huntingdon County Environmental Review Board	SPAG Shared Municipal Services	Medium	Usually included in zoning. Can be Subdivision and Land Development or Single-Purpose Ordinance	Natural Resources and Conservation Plan Land Use Plan
Conduct a natural heritage inventory of Huntingdon County.	1. Contact Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. 2. File grant application.	Huntingdon County Commissioners Huntingdon County Environmental Review Board Huntingdon County Planning Commission	Western Pennsylvania Conservancy DCNR	Long Term	Education and publicity needed.	Natural Resources and Conservation Plan
Develop standards for alternative development in rural areas, such as conservation subdivisions.	1. Integrate into subdivision and land development and zoning ordinances.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Municipal Partners	SPAG SCPAP Shared Municipal Services	High	See page 1	Land Use Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Plan
Promote a strategy for the preservation of agricultural land which includes the add addition of new Agricultural Security Areas, purchase of agricultural easements, agricultural zoning and other techniques.	1. County creates a Farmland Preservation Board. 2. Designate support staff. 3. Apply for funding.	Cooperative Extension Farm Bureau	PA Dept. of Agriculture U.S. Dept. Of Agriculture	High	Farm community support needed.	Land Use Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Plan
Extend Agricultural Security Areas (ASA) to those municipalities with substantial agriculture.	1. Public meeting in each township. 2. File ASA for participating landowners.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Township Governments Farm organizations PA Dept. of Agriculture	Low Cost	High		Land Use Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Educate communities with need and interest about agricultural protection zoning as a further option.	1. Develop library of model ordinances. 2. Share with those communities who may be interested.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Municipal Planning Commissions Municipal Governments	Low Cost	Long Range		Land Use Plan See page 1.
Include deed notation in subdivision regulations in Agricultural Security Areas.	1. Integrate into subdivision and land development ordinances.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Municipal Planning Commissions Municipal Governments	Low Cost	Medium		Land Use Plan See page 1.
Create a Countywide Municipal Authority to provide operator/billing, financing, and services to small water or sewer systems.	1. Determine local interest. 2. Create Authority.	Municipalities and Authorities initiate County to assist in set up and creation.	Shared Municipal Services DEP	Medium	Must create interest with 2 or 3 Authorities to be viable.	Communities Services and Facilities Plan
Form a Huntingdon County Agricultural Development Council to become a full partner in local economic efforts.	1. Recruit interested farmers. 2. Establish needs and priorities for agricultural-based economic development.	Cooperative Extension Huntingdon County Business and Industry Farm Bureau	Low Cost	Medium		Economic Development Plan
Support the development of new agriculture-related businesses.	1. Find a funding source. 2. Advertise to attract borrowers.	Huntingdon County Business and Industry Agriculture Development Council	USDA (Fund for Rural America)	Long Term	Need to create Ag. Council.	Economic Development Plan
Support the direct sale of farm products to County institutions.	1. Compile list of farmers who are already involved in direct sales or are interested.	Huntingdon County Business and Industry Agriculture Development Council	USDA (Fund for Rural America)	Long Term		Economic Development Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING/COSTS	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Target major industrial-commercial development into 2-3 high quality sites to be developed as true public-private partnerships.	1. Do site planning 2. Develop sites.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Huntingdon County Business and Industry	Community Revitalization Assistance EDA	High		Economic Development Plan
Establish a Pennsylvania Enterprise Zone in the Mount Union area. Examine feasibility of inter-County Zone in Huntingdon & Broad Top area.	1. Build partnership with local governments. 2. File application for Phase I funding.	Huntingdon County Business and Industry Municipal governments	Pennsylvania Enterprise Zone Program	High	Keystone Opportunity Zone may also be a remote possibility.	Economic Development Plan
Pursue redevelopment and revitalization of Huntingdon Industrial Park and surrounding area.	1. Analyze job losses. 2. Apply for EDA funds.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Huntingdon County Business and Industry	EDA Title IX SSED	High		Economic Development Plan
Offer revolving loan funds to ensure access to capital for all types and sizes of businesses.	1. Analyze unmet business capital needs by size of business. 2. Develop new guidelines. 3. Retool former County RLF to meet this need.	Huntingdon County Business and Industry	Lost Cost	High	Venture Capital	Economic Development Plan
Begin an organized effort to publicize local economic development successes.	1. Convene meeting to develop a coherent PR strategy.	Huntingdon County Business and Industry	Low Cost	High		Economic Development Plan
Develop an economic renewal program for the Broad Top which emphasizes inter-municipal effort and community-based development techniques.	1. Convene meeting of region-wide entities and Huntingdon County Business and Industry.	Huntingdon County Business and Industry Broad Top Area Coal Miners Historical Society Shoup's Run Watershed Association	SCPAP Shared Municipal Services Foundation Grants	Medium		Economic Development Plan
Develop prison land in Smithfield Township as a high-quality retail/service center. Use similar patterns for the Huntingdon Industrial Park and Riverview Business Center.	1. Develop standards to issue a Request for Proposals from developers.	Smithfield Twp. Econ. Development Corporation Technical assistance by Huntingdon County Business and Industry and Huntingdon County Planning Commission	Cost Born by Developer	High	Underway	Economic Development Plan Land Use Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Support improvements in vocational-technical training.	1. Examine current resources and employer needs. 2. Survey employer needs.	Huntingdon County Business and Industry	State	Medium		Economic Development Plan
Support the transfer and development of all land owned by the State Department of Corrections, south of Route 22 for planned community purposes.	1. Form lobby coalition. 2. Contact State officials.	Huntingdon County Business and Industry Huntingdon County Commissioners Smithfield Township	Low Cost	Medium	Couple with previous priority.	Economic Development Plan Land Use Plan
Support and encourage the development of a year-round, full-service resort at Raystown Lake.	1. Examine market options. 2. Contact Corps of Engineers.	Huntingdon County Business and Industry Raystown Country Visitors Bureau	Costs Born by Developer	Medium		Economic Development Plan
Examine the feasibility of a living, outdoor, farm museum at Raystown Lake.	1. Build partnership with farm community. 2. Conduct Feasibility Study. 3. Investigate moving farm antique collection from fairgrounds.	Raystown Country Visitors Bureau Huntingdon County Planning Commission Historical Societies Farm Bureau	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	Long Term	Feasibility must be clearly established.	Historical and Cultural Plan
Encourage the preservation, reconstruction, and interpretation of the East Broad Top Railroad to become a major tourist resource. Implement the <u>Full-Steam Ahead</u> report.	1. Lobby for State financial support.		Huntingdon County Heritage Committee Pennsylvania Capital Budget Allegheny Heritage Development Corp. Pennsylvania Museum Commission	High		Economic Development Plan Historical and Cultural Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Develop a first-time home buyers' program for Huntingdon County and support adequate leadership for the program.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene a meeting of potential partners. 2. Educate people on program opportunities. 3. Pursue grant funding. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Huntingdon County Housing Authority Huntingdon County Board of Realtors Banks and Mortgage Companies	HOME CDBG	High		Housing Plan
Support adequate local ordinances to assure high-quality residential environment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and possibly amend BOCA and Property Maintenance Code for local use.. 2. Develop shared administration. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Huntingdon County Boroughs	General Funds for Admin	Medium	Needed to preserve housing quality.	Housing Plan
Continue the housing rehabilitation program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue the County program. 2. Encourage selective municipal or regional efforts. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Weatherization, Inc. Local municipalities	CDBG, HOME, local	High		Housing Plan
Ensure that land use regulations do not unnecessarily increase the cost of housing.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop standard for review. 2. Review all adopted ordinances. 	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Municipal Partners	Low Cost	Medium	This is a one-time effort.	Housing Plan
Support new avenues for affordable housing in cooperation with the Huntingdon County Housing Authority, and other entities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a plan for public housing needs. 	Huntingdon County Housing Authority	HUD	High		Housing Plan
Prepare National Register of Historical Places applications for honor and protection of resources.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with communities and property owners. 	Huntingdon County Heritage Committee Huntingdon County Historical Society Huntingdon County Planning Commission	General Funds	Medium	Owners of resources must be involved.	Historical and Cultural Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Review local zoning ordinances to ensure compatibility to historic town planning and to encourage the reuse of historic structures.	1. Integrate into new model zoning. 2. Integrate into County's ordinance review process.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission	Low Cost	Medium	Owners of resources must be involved.	Historical and Cultural Plan
Coordinate both public and private actions in support of transportation improvements, including participation in the transportation planning process.	1. Have model HARB and Overlay Zone text available.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission	Low Cost	Medium		Historical and Cultural Plan
Assist those urban areas which need public water or sewer to implement Land Use Plan.	1. Contact communities to encourage application for County CDBG funds. 2. Make knowledge of other infrastructure grants available.	Municipal Partners Huntingdon County Boroughs Huntingdon County Planning Commission	CDBG PA Single Application USDA PENNVEST	High		Community Services and Facilities Plan
Develop a County Park and Recreation Plan.	1. Examine potential for municipal partnership.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Municipalities School Districts	Keystone Grant Program	Medium	Partnering a must for success.	Community Services and Facilities Plan
Encourage formation of multi-municipal recreation commissions as a partnership of boroughs, townships, and school districts.	1. Develop brief description of how Recreation Commission works.	Township Association Boroughs School Districts	Low Cost	Medium		Community Services and Facilities Plan
Encourage the update of Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plans where needed in the County.	1. Contact communities with other plans.	Municipal Partners County Planning Oversight	Act 537 Cost Share	High		Community Services and Facilities Plan
Ensure that 537 Sewage Facilities Plan mirror municipal and County Land Use Plans.	1. Adopt County Comprehensive Plan. 2. Integrate compatibility analysis into local reviews.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission	Low Cost	High		Community Services and Facilities Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Prepare a County Water Supply Plan and investigate implementation of wellhead protection measures.	1. Recruit municipal/ Authority partners.	Municipalities Authorities Huntingdon County Planning Commission	DEP	Medium	Consider Wellhead Protection element also.	Community Services and Facilities Plan
Support the development and maintenance of trails, including: Lower Trail Extension, Investigate Huntingdon/ Smithfield to Mount Union Trail.	1. Integrate into County-wide Park, Recreation, and Open Space Study.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Area Trail Organizations	Keystone Rails-to-Trail Grant	Long Range		Community Services and Facilities Plan
Encourage an appropriate standard for new rural roads in low-intensity areas through subdivision and land development ordinances. At the same time, discourage excessive highway standards (excessive street widths, unnecessary curbing overuse of cul-de-sacs, etc.).	1. Integrate into model zoning. 2. Integrate into land use review process.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Municipal Partners	SPAG Shared Municipal Services			Transportation Plan Land Use Plan
Support limiting new access onto arterial roads through the PennDOT driveway permit process.	1. Comment on Highway Occupancy Permits in subdivision review.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission PennDOT		High		Transportation Plan
Develop appropriate standards for urban, suburban, and rural local roads.	1. Integrate into subdivision regulations.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Municipal Partners	SPAG Shared Municipal Services			Transportation Plan Land Use Plan
Focus on State and Federal financial assistance on arterial highway needs.	1. Translate local priorities into regional and State transportation programs.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission PennDOT	Federal and State	High	Follow established policy.	Transportation Plan

HUNTINGDON COUNTY ACTION PLAN (Continued)

POLICIES	ACTIONS	LEAD ENTITIES	FUNDING	PRIORITY	NOTES	PLAN REFERENCE
Coordinate both public and private actions in support of transportation improvements, including participation in the transportation planning process.	1. Take lead in presentation to PennDOT and the Transportation Commission.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Huntingdon County Business and Industry Municipalities		High		Transportation Plan
Develop a County-level Transportation Information System.	1. Adapt the RPO model software to County needs.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission	Low Cost	High	Underway	Transportation Plan
Promote mass transit, rail, para-transit, and pedestrian intermodal options.	1. Develop a Regional Transit Plan.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission	Federal and State	Medium		Transportation Plan
Support better access to the Raystown Lake area through upgrading State and local highways.	1. Prioritize roads, State Road Assistance. 2. Assist townships - find funding for local roads.	Huntingdon County Planning Commission PennDOT Municipalities	Federal and State	Medium	Need to find funding for local roads.	Transportation Plan

Glossary

SUMMARY OF ACTION PLAN TOOLS BY FUTURE LAND USE TYPE
Primary Tool ✓ Secondary Tool •

	Urban		Suburban			Rural				
Action Plan Tool	Medium/High Density Residential	Commercial-Institutional	Medium/Low Density Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Agriculture	Public Lands	Low Density Residential	Low Intensity	Special Conservation
Subdivision and Land Development Regulations	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Municipal Plan Partners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Municipal - Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plans	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tax Abatements	✓	✓	•	•	✓					
Zoning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		•	•	•
Neo-Traditional Development	✓	✓	✓	•						
Conservation Subdivisions			•			✓		✓	✓	✓
Deed Notation						✓				
Conservation Easements						✓	•		✓	✓
Property Maintenance Code	✓	•	•					•		
Public Water and Sewer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		•			
Steep Slope Protection	•	•	•	•	•			✓	✓	✓
Riparian Buffers	•	•	•	•	•	✓		✓	✓	✓
Land Purchase							✓			•
Ag Security Areas						✓		•	•	•

ACRONYMS

CDBG - Community Development Block Grant - Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Renewal but administered by DCED. Generally, funds must benefit low- or moderate-income residents.

DCED - Department of Community and Economic Development

DCNR - Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

DEP - Department of Environmental Protection

EDA - The Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce

HARB - Historic Architecture Review Board - a board used to review development required by Act 167 of 1961.

HUD - The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. A Federal source for program assistance for housing and community development needs.

LERTA - An acronym for a local real estate tax abatement program aimed at commercial and industrial properties.

PENNVEST - A low-interest infrastructure loan program of Pennsylvania.

RETAP - The residential equivalent to LERTA. However, the length of the abatement is limited to three years.

RPO - Rural Planning Organization - a multi-county (Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission) transportation planning group officially recognized by the State.

SCPAP - Small Communities Planning Assistance Program, a program offering grant assistance for planning. These are Federal funds administered by DCED. It has specific eligibility requirements.

SPAG - Small Planning Assistant Grant, a program offering grant assistance for planning (usually 50%) offered by DCED.

DEFINITIONS

Act 247 - The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Known commonly as the Planning Code or MPC, this Act was adopted in 1968 and re-enacted with extensive amendments in 1988. It is the sole State law governing planning and related land use controls, such as zoning, subdivision and land development regulations, comprehensive plans, and official maps.

Act 537 Plan - Act 537, the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act, requires that all municipalities in Pennsylvania prepare and periodically update a plan for the disposal of sewage in the municipality.

Adaptive Reuse - This practice involves the rehabilitation of older structures (often converting them to new uses) in a manner that preserves their original design. Examples include conversion of school buildings to apartments or an old home into offices.

Agricultural Security Areas - Pennsylvania Act 43 established the Agricultural Security Area law. It allows a municipality, typically a township, to establish an Agricultural Security Area after a petition by farmland owners. The total minimum involved land must be at least 250 acres. Agricultural Security Areas promote farming by limiting the official control of normal farming practices and limiting certain State or local development activities (new roads, etc.). See also PACE.

Big-Box Retailers - A reference to retail operations using large box-like buildings. With "super" stores of 100,000 to 130,000 square feet, some Wal-Mart and K-Mart operations are examples of this type of operation.

Buffer - An open area, either landscaped or natural, used to separate one use from another or protect a resource. Zoning often uses buffer strips as screens for parking lots or industrial uses. Buffers can also be used to prevent development from encroaching upon streams or wetlands.

Conservation Easement - The purchase of development rights to keep land in a natural state and preclude future development.

Controlled Access - The practice of limiting access to a primary road from abutting properties. This is usually accomplished by directing access to marginal streets or otherwise restricting vehicular traffic to the primary road.

Fair Housing - This refers to the Federal Fair Housing Act (1988) which was an amendment to Civil Rights legislation. In general terms, it prohibits discrimination in the sale or lease of housing based upon race, gender, familial status, or disability.

Goal - The end which a community strives to obtain. Goals are individual elements of an overall vision.

Greenway - A lineal open space, usually along a natural corridor (stream valley, ridge line, etc.), often used to link natural features. Greenways can be publicly owned, a public easement, or in private ownership for such uses as recreation, agriculture, or forestry.

Growing Greener - A development process where new development can occur while maximizing land conservation techniques and maintaining overall building density.

HCPC - The Huntingdon County Planning Commission.

Historic Site/District - Historic Sites and Districts are designated by the United States Department of Interior maintains the National Register of Historic Places. Designation is accomplished by the submission of specific documentation concerning a site's historic significance to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and their subsequent nomination to the Department of Interior. Local historic districts require regulatory compliance and may be created by any municipality in Pennsylvania, usually in areas on the National Register.

Impact Fees - It is a charge imposed on a new development to pay for the cost of offsite streets, sewers, waterlines, etc. to serve that development. In Pennsylvania, impact fees are focused on transportation.

Infrastructure - Facilities and services needed to sustain active land use – industrial, commercial, or residential. Usually people think of water and

sewer lines as well as roads when they use this term. However, it also includes electric, gas, telephone, cable, and can sometimes cover public services (safety, education, etc.).

Land Development Regulations - In Pennsylvania, local subdivision regulations may also apply to the development of individual lots involving either a single commercial building or multiple structures and/or uses (e.g., shopping center or apartment complex). These land development regulations typically address traffic circulation and parking, construction standards, site design, and provision of adequate utilities.

Limited Access - Roads like the Interstate system where there is no direct access to abutting properties and access is limited to certain road interchanges.

Micro-Business - This usually refers to small, owner-operated, businesses, with only one or two additional employees.

Model Ordinance - A model ordinance (e.g., zoning or subdivision regulation) is used to guide municipal decision-makers in developing local policy, while saving time and money. The model ordinance contains a general operational framework and administrative procedure as well as various optional provisions.

National Highway System (NHS) - Under recent transportation legislation, the Federal government has established a National Highway System. It includes the Interstate network and other key routes.

Neo-Traditional - A contemporary school of urban design which embraces the concepts of traditional urban or village neighborhoods, rather than replicating typical suburban patterns. This usually focuses on narrower lots, smaller front yards, sidewalks, porches, two-story dwellings, with alleys to access rear lot garages. It attempts to create the type of development common in the early 20th century to encourage a feeling of neighborhood and community.

Objective - A specific course of action (usually measurable) designed to implement a community goal or vision.

PACE - Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements. This program is generally county-initiated, though funding primarily comes from State and Federal funds. It involves the purchase of "development rights" from farmers assuring that land will be kept in agricultural use. The PACE program can only purchase development rights in designated Agricultural Security Areas.

Policy - A course of action designed to implement a community objective.

PRD - Planned Residential Development: A provision of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Article VII) which allows a mixture of housing, support uses and open space at densities higher than traditional zoning. It combines elements of both zoning and subdivision regulations.

Scenic Rivers - A scenic river is a river designated as "scenic" by either the State or Federal government. Such a river usually exhibits natural beauty, water quality, and recreation values, which are exemplary and worthy of protection under either the Pennsylvania Scenic Rivers Act or the National Wild, and Scenic Rivers Act.

Sprawl - Uncontrolled growth, usually low-density residential developments, occurring in suburban and rural areas and some distance from either existing infrastructure or development.

Strip Development - Development, usually commercial, which follows a street or highway development. It lacks depth, extending one building deep along both sides of the highway.

Subdivision Regulations - Act 247 allows counties and municipalities to regulate land division, including setting approval procedures and design standards (e.g., new building lots and streets, adequate water and sewer facilities).

TEA-21 - This Federal transportation legislation, titled the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century, was passed in 1998.

Vision - A vision statement, based on community input and conveying a verbal picture of what the future will look like, is often developed during the early stages of a planning study to guide a planning team or project.

Wellhead Protection - Land controls which limits the exposure of wells used for public water supplies to the risk of toxic pollution. Normally, these controls are set up in three zones, with the degree of control greatest near the well.

Zoning - Article VI of the Planning Code allows counties and municipalities to adopt regulations relative to the use of land in specific districts, the intensity of use and spacing of buildings. Zoning allows specific areas or zoning districts to be created for appropriate uses, such as residential, commercial, or industrial. Zoning standards usually regulate lot size, density, building heights, setbacks, and yard spacing in each district.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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