
Section 2

Creating the Vision - Where do we want to be?

*"You must first see a thing in your mind before
you can do it."*

- Alex Morrison



Introduction

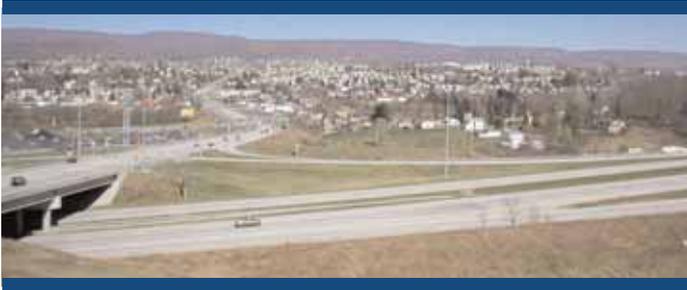
The vision and goals lay the foundation for the action plan and the objective set the overall framework for identifying strategies and action steps.

The purpose of this section is to answer the question, "Where do we want to be in the future." The main components of this section are the vision, goals, and objectives that address the key issues identified in Section I of the plan. The vision and goals lay the foundation for the action plan and the objective set the overall framework for identifying strategies and action steps. The second major component of this section is the land demand analysis and future land use plan. The land use plan was developed by projecting trends in population and economic conditions from 2000 to 2020 to determine the future population of the County and each Planning Region. Using the projections, the amount of new residential, commercial, and industrial land needed to meet the needs of the future population was calculated. A Future Land Use Map was then compiled by allocating land for new development to targeted growth areas in each Planning Region.

This section is organized by the following components:

- A. The Countywide Vision Statement
- B. Goals and Objectives
- C. The Future Land Use Plan
- D. Developments of Regional Significance and Impact (DORSI)
- E. Statement of Compatibility
- F. Plan Interrelationships

The vision statement, goals, and future land use plan were developed with input from the public. Five visioning workshops were conducted throughout the County to give elected officials, planning commission members, and residents the opportunity to provide input on the type of community they want to live in, what it will look in the future, and the land use patterns that will be encouraged in each Planning Region.



The Vision Statement

The "vision" is a statement that articulates the type of place Blair County is striving to become in the future. It sets the context for the goals, objectives, and action plan by identifying the ideal future conditions in the County and providing the County with something to work toward through implementation of the action plan. The following ten statements best describe the vision for Blair County.

In the future, Blair County will be...

...an attractive, vibrant, and unique place to live with good employment, education, recreation, and cultural opportunities. Young people and families will find that Blair County offers the type of lifestyle they are seeking.

...a place where residents share a strong sense of community and a deep appreciation for those assets that make the County unique - the natural environment and scenic views, a rich history, and a well-grounded agricultural community.

...a place where residents enjoy a high quality of life due to the quality services and education, safety of their communities, and access to amenities.

...a diverse community (culturally, economically, racially) that is accepting of new ideas and people, but also embraces the culture and history of its past as a major social and economic asset.

...economically stable, with a diversifying job market and industry base focused on innovation, technology, and tourism. This, coupled with a strong k-12 and higher education system, will make Blair County attractive to employers and residents alike.

...a place where older neighborhoods and downtowns are attractive places to live, work, and shop due to revitalization efforts. Quality development that incorporates architectural and landscaping standards has increased the desirability of real estate in the County's urban areas and had a positive impact on property values.

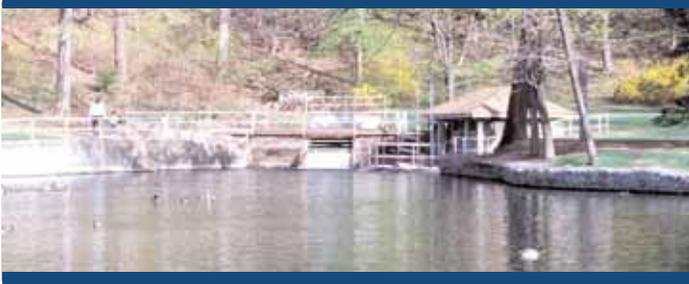
The "vision" is a statement that articulates the type of place Blair County is striving to become in the future.

...a destination for tourists. The County has capitalized on its history and historic assets to bring people to visit and spend tourist dollars to support the local economy.

...a place where residents have access to a variety of housing types at a range of affordability levels. Blair County neighborhoods will be attractive and sensitive to the surrounding environment and land uses.

...committed to applying sustainability principles to guide decision-making on future growth and development. This ensures that the needs of current and future generations are met without compromising the social, economic, or environmental viability of the County.

...a place with a strong and viable transportation system that includes multiple transportation options including air, rail, highway, public transit, and bike and pedestrian facilities.



Community Goals and Development Objectives

The community goals reflect the key themes identified in the vision. The goal statements are the first step in breaking down the vision into targeted statements that outline how to make the vision a reality. Accordingly, the objectives are consistent with the goals and support the implementation strategies - concrete action steps that the County should take to achieve the overall desired character of the area. The goals and objectives should guide county and local officials in developing and implementing land use and community development policies. The community goals and objectives relate to the following topics:

The goal statements are the first step in breaking down the vision into targeting statements that outline how to make the vision a reality.

- Land Use
- Housing
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Agriculture and Farmland Preservation
- Community Facilities and Services
- Economic Conditions
- Parks and Recreation
- Transportation

LAND USE

Goals:

- To encourage consistent and compatible land use patterns across all Blair County municipalities.
- To improve the coordination of land use, infrastructure, and transportation planning throughout the County.
- To strengthen the downtown and village areas that represent Blair County's core communities.
- To preserve the character and function of rural areas through support for agricultural preservation efforts, by directing development toward villages that serve as community centers, and protecting key natural areas and open space.
- To continue to serve as a strong model for regional planning and intergovernmental cooperation in Pennsylvania.

Objectives:

- 1.0 Promote land use planning, tools, and regulations that are consistent with the Areawide Plan and provide alternatives to conventional development patterns.
- 2.0 Coordinate land use planning, transportation planning, and infrastructure improvements to ensure that a full range of public infrastructure and services are adequately planned and provided in future growth areas.
- 3.0 Promote consistency of land use both within and across municipal borders in order to prevent negative land use impacts on communities.
- 4.0 Revitalize existing urban areas and downtowns through infill and redevelopment efforts, and blight abatement.
- 5.0 Preserve the character and function of rural areas through support for agricultural preservation efforts, directing development toward villages that serve as community centers, and protecting key natural areas and open space.
- 6.0 Encourage the development and implementation of land use tools and regulations that promote a positive community image.
- 7.0 Create, enhance, and improve the existing sense of place created by the City, Boroughs, and villages that are Blair County's core communities.

HOUSING

Goals:

- To provide for a variety of affordable housing choices that meet the needs of all Blair County residents.
- To encourage residential development that is sensitive to the natural, cultural, and agricultural assets that make Blair County unique.

Objectives:

- 1.0 Preserve and enhance the existing housing stock throughout the County so that it remains in sound and livable condition.
- 2.0 Support development efforts that provide for a variety of housing types at a range of affordability levels to meet the changing housing needs of Blair County residents.
- 3.0 Promote new housing development in identified growth areas by implementing alternatives to

conventional residential development patterns through land use tools that preserve open space and promote compact design.

- 4.0 Promote neighborhood development that is consistent and compatible in design and architecture with the surrounding community.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Goals:

- To provide for a healthy and stable natural environment through resource protection and preservation.
- To create a viable green infrastructure system that includes protected open space, trails, and areas of natural beauty in Blair County.

Objectives:

- 1.0 Severely restrict development on sensitive environmental features, including wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes over 25%.
- 2.0 Enhance and conserve the environmental resources (air, water, land) in Blair County, including core natural areas, important bird areas (IBAs), important mammal areas (IMAs), natural and biological diversity areas, and water supply watersheds.
- 3.0 Protect Blair County communities and the environmental health of waterways and watersheds through flood controls, stormwater management, and reduction of non-point source pollutants throughout the county.
- 4.0 Eliminate illegal dumping of waste on land and in streams through regulatory and voluntary efforts.
- 5.0 Create a greenway system and open space network that includes important natural and cultural features such as contiguous forestlands, scenic areas and viewsheds, natural heritage areas, and significant historic sites. Corridors that connect Blair County's core natural areas should be part of the greenway system, including stream corridors and mountain ridges.
- 6.0 Promote energy efficiency to conserve water, electricity, fuel, and raw materials.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Goals:

- To promote a strong appreciation of the County's history and culture.
- To preserve the unique historic and cultural sites in Blair County.

Objectives:

- 1.0 Protect, enhance, and promote the unique historical and cultural assets in Blair County.
- 2.0 Promote significant historic and cultural sites in the County as tourist attractions through heritage tourism programs and projects
- 3.0 Support the expansion of arts and cultural opportunities in Blair County in order to increase education and awareness about the history and culture of Blair County for both residents and visitors alike.

AGRICULTURE AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Goals:

- To generate widespread appreciation for agriculture and its significance to Blair County.
- To preserve and enhance prime agricultural lands and long-standing agricultural communities in Blair County.
- To support a economically stable agricultural sector.

Objectives:

- 1.0 Strongly support agricultural and conservation agencies, boards, and committees in their efforts to preserve prime farmland, promote sustainable farming practices, and ensure the viability of the farming profession.
- 2.0 Severely restrict development on prime agricultural soils and soils of statewide importance to agricultural land uses and related activities.
- 3.0 Encourage the compatibility of land use regulations with agricultural operations in areas with prime farmland and a historic presence of agricultural land use.
- 4.0 Raise awareness of the importance of agriculture and farming through education and training programs.

- 5.0 Expand market opportunities for local farmers and explore areas for new niche markets.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goals:

- To provide for well-run, efficient, and effective community facilities and services that support the long-term needs of residents.

Objectives:

- 1.0 Provide safe and efficient water and sewer service to Blair County residents through coordinated land use and infrastructure planning, and increased communication between municipal officials and municipal authorities.
- 2.0 Support municipal efforts to provide reliable and affordable public services to residents (police, fire, EMS).
- 3.0 Ensure that residents have access to high-quality public facilities and services including schools, libraries, and health care facilities.
- 4.0 Continue to provide for the solid waste management needs of Blair County and meet countywide recycling objectives.
- 5.0 Encourage municipalities to include safe pedestrian amenities as part of their infrastructure requirements for development and redevelopment.
- 6.0 Explore opportunities for coordination of public works responsibilities between municipalities in the County in order to identify potential cost savings and efficiency gains.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Goal:

- To support economic development efforts that foster a strong regional economy and the creation of quality employment opportunities.

Objectives:

- 1.0 Support the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation in its efforts to retain and attract businesses and industries that provide high quality employment opportunities in the County.

- 2.0 Foster the type of community and environment that attracts businesses by improving the key factors that influence business site selection. These include: 1) access to a skilled and educated workforce; 2) good transportation systems, infrastructure, and services; 3) quality business climate and education system; and 4) good quality of life and community image.
- 3.0 Focus infrastructural investments and add value to Blair County communities by developing cultural/entertainment opportunities, technological resources, and neighborhood amenities that firms currently seek in more sophisticated, urban environments.
- 4.0 Ensure that agriculture is a viable and strong contributor to the Blair County economy by supporting local farm production and limiting development on prime agricultural soils and agricultural soils of statewide importance.
- 5.0 Encourage business friendly regulations on a local level that streamline regulatory procedures where opportunities exist.
- 6.0 Support the development of the tourism industry by promoting significant historic and cultural sites in the County as tourist attractions through heritage tourism programs and projects.
- 7.0 Work with economic development agencies to market the benefits of doing business in Blair County.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Goals:

- To provide for a well-designed and managed park and recreation system that support a variety of recreation opportunities and facilities within close proximity to Blair County's population centers.

Objectives:

- 1.0 Maintain and improve existing park and recreation facilities and identify opportunities for the creation of new facilities to meet the needs of Blair County residents.
- 2.0 Ensure that a wide range of recreational opportunities are available to residents in the County, including community parks, neighborhood parks, special use facilities, and county parks that serve as passive and active recreational areas.

- 3.0 Develop and enhance the trail network in the County by connecting with current trail systems and incorporating unique natural and historic features into the trail network.
- 4.0 Collaborate with tourism-oriented organizations to identify and capitalize on opportunities for recreational tourism.

TRANSPORTATION

Goals:

- To develop a well-coordinated, efficient, and effective transportation and public transit system.
- To encourage safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities that promote walking and biking to and from work, school, community centers, downtowns, and other destinations.

Objectives:

- 1.0 Implement the recommendations of the Long Range Transportation Plan for Blair County
- 2.0 Explore multi-modal transportation options (part of the Long Range Plan) including air, rail, highway, public transit, and bike and pedestrian facilities
- 3.0 Ensure that sidewalks and bicycle paths are provided in all new development and upgrade/retrofit facilities in existing neighborhoods where such facilities are deteriorating or lacking
- 4.0 Encourage connectivity between existing and future neighborhoods, commercial centers, and amenities, such as schools, to facilitate vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian movement
- 5.0 Ensure that adequate parking is provided and parking needs are addressed in existing downtowns and villages through parking standards
- 6.0 Continue to implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the Blair County Metropolitan Organization (Altoona MSA)



The Future Land Use Plan

The future land use plan identifies how and where Blair County intends to grow and develop in the future. It is based on an estimation of future demand for residential, commercial, and industrial land in a manner that is consistent with the County's vision, goals, and objectives. The future land use plan was developed with community input through a series of five public meetings, to ensure that the Countywide Plan adequately responds to and meets the need of local communities. The land use plan consists of two key elements - the land demand analysis and the Future Land Use Map. The land use plan is a conceptual guide for land use planning on a municipal level. It should be used to refine municipal future land use plans and identify appropriate implementation tools.

The future land use plan was developed with community input through a series of five public meetings, to ensure that the Countywide Plan adequately responds to and meets the need of local communities.

The land use plan demonstrates how future growth and development is allocated in the County based on the following land use policies:

- Preservation of prime farmland and land in Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs) for continued agricultural land uses, with no extension of public infrastructure into prime agricultural areas.
- Target future growth and development in areas that have access to public water and sewer infrastructure, or areas that are in close proximity to public infrastructure.
- Restrict development on sensitive environmental features including slopes over 25%, wetlands, and floodplain areas.

To carry forward this policy, the County should work with municipalities to implement the plan through the designation of Future Growth Areas and Rural Resource Areas, as defined below. The designation of Future Growth Areas and Rural Resources Areas is a growth management tool enabled to local governments through the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC).

Future Growth Areas: An area of a municipal or multi-municipal plan outside of and adjacent to a designated growth area where residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses and

development are permitted or planned at varying densities. Public infrastructure services may or may not be provided, but future development at greater densities is planned to accompany the orderly extension and provision of public infrastructure services.

Rural Resource Areas: An area described in a municipal or multi-municipal plan within which rural resource uses including, but not limited to, agriculture, timbering, mining, quarrying and other extractive industries, forests and game lands, and recreation and tourism are encouraged and enhanced. Development that is compatible with or supportive of such uses is permitted, and public infrastructure services are not provided, except in villages.

LAND DEMAND ANALYSIS

Land demand was analyzed on a county and planning region scale using the population and economic projections provided by the economic development consultant, Wade VanLandingham. The land demand analysis provides information on the amount of land that will be needed over the next fifteen years to accommodate the people living and working in Blair County.

RESIDENTIAL LAND DEMAND

Table 2.1 provides an overview of the residential land demand estimated for each Planning Region. A full analysis of the residential land demand is provided in the Appendix. Residential land demand was estimated based on population projections, residential lot sizes over the past ten years, and trends in household size and persons living in group quarters. The following assumptions apply to the residential land demand analysis:

- Household size in the planning regions will decline at an average of the rate of decline from 1980 to 2000 and 1990 to 2000.
- The percent of the population living in group quarters will change according to the same rate of change in group quarters population from 1980 to 2000. The land demand for each person living in group quarters is 0.11 acre.
- The average lot size is based on residential subdivision permits over the past ten years.

- An additional 20% of land will be needed for infrastructure for residential development.
- The housing vacancy rate for the entire County is 6%.
- No demolitions will occur in the County.

Based on the population projections for 2020, Blair County should be planning for a future population of approximately 121,000 people. This represents approximately a 6% decline over the 2000 population of 129,144 for the County. Despite the declining population, it is anticipated that the County will continue to see a demand for new residential development. This is primarily due to a trend in declining household size. This trend of a declining household size is typical of an aging population, such as Blair County's. In 2000, the average household size in Blair County was 2.43 persons per household. By 2020, it is expected that this number will decrease to 2.19 persons per household. Therefore, in 2020 it is anticipated that Blair County will have approximately 52,500 households, versus the 51,500 households in 2000. At a 6% housing vacancy rate, by 2020 Blair County will require approximately 1,700 more housing units over the 55,000 units currently found in the County. Based on previous residential land development trends, this translates in approximately 3,400 acres of additional residential land throughout the County.

Table 2.1 Residential Land Demand

Region	Projected Pop. in Households (2020)	Projected Household Size (2020)	Projected Households (2020)	Projected Total Housing Units (2020)*	Projected New Housing Units (2020)	Average Lot Size (acres)	New Residential Land Demand (acres)**
Region 1	10,443	2.21	4,726	5,009	293	1.09	409
Region 2	8,112	2.27	2,539	3,794	311	0.92	356
Region 3	53,006	2.16	24,566	26,040	-616	0.65	-103
Region 4	3,431	2.28	1,504	1,594	86	2.00	232
Region 5	23,096	2.09	11,053	11,716	354	0.60	491
Region 6	4,104	2.20	1,862	1,973	276	0.47	162
Region 7	13,295	2.12	6,274	6,651	1,012	0.62	801
Total	115,487	2.19	52,524	56,777	1,716	0.69	3,419

*Assumes a 6% vacancy rate

**Assumes additional 20% land demand for infrastructure

**Includes group quarters

COMMERCIAL LAND DEMAND

Given the projected population decreases for the County over the next fifteen years, it is anticipated that the current large-scale shopping areas will fill the need for regional commercial development. This accounts for projects in the works, such as the Logan Town Center. However, if decentralization of the population continues to occur in the County, there will be a need for neighborhood convenience shopping, such as pharmacies, grocery stores, and dry cleaners, to accommodate continued residential growth and expansion. It is also expected that there will be new development in restaurants and hotels near the I-99 interchanges when the extension to State College is complete.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND DEMAND

Based on the demographic and economic projections and analysis, industrial land demand will be minimal. It is anticipated that less than 100 acres of new industrial land will be required to meet future needs and less than 500 acres of additional land will be needed for all economic activities. However, demand for greenfield, or undeveloped, sites can be reduced by directing economic activities to urban areas where reuse and redevelopment opportunities exist.

Blair County lacks large sites for industrial development due to environment and development constraints. Therefore, future industrial land use should be targeted toward existing business and industrial parks and reuse of brownfield sites or vacant/underutilized industrial sites. However, there will be a demand for additional land for transportation and warehousing activities. This is consistent with both county and national growth trends, especially with the completion of the I-99 extension to State College and the opening up of north and south access points to major interstates.

It is expected that the County will see some demand for new office space in the administrative services sector and the information sector, two growing areas for the County. In addition, the health care and social services sector will require additional space for growth and expansion. This may involve new development or reuse of existing commercial space.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map is an illustration of where demand for residential, commercial, and industrial land is physically allocated in each Planning Region. In doing so, the Future Land Use Map targets areas for future growth, reinvestment, and conservation of land based on the land use policies outlined above. While

the Future Land Use Map shows the type and location of development desired in the community, the Future Land Use Map is not meant to be a zoning map. However, the Future Land Use Map should serve as a guide for the implementation of land use tools on a municipal level.

Public Input

The Future Land Use Map was developed with input from the public. Five regional workshops were held throughout the County in April of 2005, in which participants worked together to draft their own future land use maps. At the workshops, participants were divided into groups and asked to consider what type of future development is desired in their region and municipality. Groups were also asked to identify where future growth should take place in the community. Each group of workshop participants was asked to consider the following questions in developing their future land use maps:

- Where should residential land use be targeted for new development, redevelopment, or infill?
- What areas are most appropriate for commercial or mixed-use development?
- Where is manufacturing and industrial development most appropriate in the planning area?
- Where should natural areas, historic resources, parks, and agricultural land be preserved or enhanced (ex. streams, farmland, woodlands, parks, historic sites, or scenic views)?
- Do you want to promote enhancements or special districts in certain areas (ex. gateways, streetscape improvement, design improvements)?
- What type of transportation and public transit upgrades are needed to better facilitate the movement of goods and people, and create better access to neighborhoods, jobs, shopping areas, and other key destinations?

Several maps were provided to each group of workshop participants:

- A base map showing municipal boundaries, roads, and major waterways.
- An existing land use map that shows where and what type of development currently exists in the community.

- An environmental features map that identifies potential development constraints including steep slopes, wetlands, and floodplains.

Finally, each group of participants was provided with graphic examples of various land use types, densities, and design enhancements. The graphic examples were compiled into a series of visual boards shown on the following pages that reflect the following land use categories:

- Residential (low, medium, and high density, conservation subdivision option)
- Commercial (small-scale and regional)
- Industry and Manufacturing
- Mixed-Use (commercial and residential)
- Service, Civic, and Institutional
- Agriculture
- Open Space
- Trails and Greenways
- Special Districts (historic districts, village districts)
- Enhancement areas - signage, gateways, sidewalks, buffering, landscaping, street lighting

At the end of the workshops, participants were asked to present their ideas to the entire group. The feedback received at the workshops was reviewed and used to inform the development of the Future Land Use Map for each Planning Region.

Land Use Categories

High Density Residential



Medium Density Residential



Low Density Residential



Industrial and Manufacturing



Regional Commercial



Small - Medium Scale Commercial



Mixed Use Areas



Service, Civic, Institutional, Historic



Conservation Approach



Agricultural Areas



Open Space



Enhancements

Trails



Greenways



Signage



Special District



Amenities - gateways, sidewalks, screening, buffering, landscaping, street trees, lanterns, street furniture



REGIONAL FUTURE LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS

A Future Land Use Map was developed for each Planning Region using the land demand information. Together, the regional maps depict the Future Land Use Map for Blair County. It is not anticipated that the current development patterns in the County will change significantly over the next fifteen to twenty years. Therefore, the Future Land Use Map shows only subtle changes in residential, commercial, and industrial land use. The core urban areas of Altoona and Hollidaysburg should be strengthened and new development should be targeted toward existing village areas, along major transportation corridors, and within public service areas. Given that the population is likely to decline over the next fifteen years, new development should be concentrated in areas that have the ability to provide infrastructure and services. Such a development policy will leave large areas of undeveloped land for recreation, tourism, agriculture, and conservation purposes. The following are descriptions of the Future Land Use Map for each Planning Region. The Future Land Use Maps on pages ____ represent the preferred scenario for future growth and development in Blair County that are consistent with the following land use goals and criteria for development.

Conservation areas: No new development should take place on environmentally sensitive land, including steep slopes over 25%, wetlands, and land in the 100-year floodplain.

Public Lands: No new development will take place on public lands that have been set aside for open space purposes, including State Game Lands and publicly owned parks.

Prime Agricultural Land: The Areawide Comprehensive Plan identifies a goal of preserving prime farmland for agricultural uses. This is particularly important in the Sinking Valley (Region 1) and Morrisons Cove area (Regions 4 and 7). Therefore, prime farmland and land enrolled in Agricultural Security Areas (ASA) were avoided in identifying areas for new residential growth.

Availability of Infrastructure: New growth is targeted in areas that fall within public infrastructure

service areas or areas where infrastructure extensions are planned.

Proximity to Existing Places: New growth is targeted on viable land within close proximity to existing boroughs, villages, and towns.

REGION 1

Municipalities: Snyder Township, Tyrone Borough, and Tyrone Township

Residential land demand: approximately 400 acres

The growth strategy for Region 1 focuses on maintaining the rural character of Region 1, while managing potential development impacts from the I-99 corridor extension to State College. Under this scenario, Snyder Township and Tyrone Borough will see the majority of development in the region, with Tyrone Township remaining relatively undisturbed and preserved for conservation and agricultural uses. The Little Juniata River should be buffered from future development due to a history of flooding problems in Tyrone Borough.

The following are the highlights of the Future Land Use Plan for Region 1:

- Take advantage of the I-99 corridor extension and access to State College by directing new residential development to areas that have access to the I-99 and Route 220 corridors. Some scattered residential development will take place up in the "the hollows" including Decker Hollow, Baughman Hollow, and Cook Hollow but lack of infrastructure and environmental constraints are an issue in this area. The Snyder Township Act 537 Sewage Facilities plan identifies this area for future extension of public sewer service.
- Strengthen Tyrone Borough and the villages in the area by concentrating new development where infrastructure and services exist in and around the Borough and villages.
- Utilize the existing industrial park - Jubelirer - for future manufacturing and industrial development.
- Promote redevelopment efforts in Tyrone (ex. Lincoln School & Big Yank Building) and continue the successful Tyrone Streetscape Project.
- Retain the State Game Lands and Reservoir Park as preserved conservation land, which also serves to protect water resources.

- Preserve stream corridors and ridge tops for conservation, open space, and greenways. Buffer and preserve the Little Juniata River, Bald Eagle Creek, Sinking Run, and Elk Run corridors for trail and greenway uses and limit floodplain development to prevent further flooding hazards. (see the Blair County Greenway Plan)
- Preserve prime farmland for agricultural uses in Tyrone Township (Sinking Valley). Limit the extension of infrastructure in Tyrone Township in order to prevent large-scale residential development on prime agricultural land.

REGION 2

Municipalities: Antis Township, Bellwood Borough

Residential land demand: approximately 350 acres

The growth strategy for Region 2 is to continue to support the viability of Bellwood Borough, while managing future residential and commercial development along the I-99 and Route 220 corridors. The majority of new residential development will take place in Antis Township, given that Bellwood is almost entirely built-out.

The following are the highlights from of the Future Land Use Plan for Region 2:

- Target new residential development in and around Bellwood where opportunities exist and infrastructure is available.
- Focus new residential development along Route 220 in the southern end of Antis Township and within close proximity of the City of Altoona.
- Target neighborhood commercial land uses along the southern end of Route 220 near Pinecroft.
- Utilize the existing industrial parks - Ardie J. Dillen and the I-99 Enterprise Campus - for future manufacturing and industrial growth.
- Preserve the State Game Lands as conservation land, which also serve to protect water resources.
- Preserve stream corridors and ridge tops for conservation and open space. Buffer the Little Juniata River to restrict floodplain development and encourage recreation, trail, and greenway uses. (see the Blair County Greenway Plan)

REGION 3

Municipalities: City of Altoona and Logan Township

Residential land demand: no residential demand shown based on population projections for Region 3

Given that the land demand analysis projects no need for new residential development in Region 3, the growth strategy the region focuses on redevelopment and revitalization of Altoona with a mix of residential, commercial, business/office, institutional, and entertainment uses. Infill development and housing rehabilitation efforts should be supported to provide for flexible housing options in the City. Given that Altoona hosts the majority of major employers in the County, Altoona should remain viable, livable, and affordable so that residents are able to live in close proximity to job centers. New residential neighborhoods in Logan Township, if it continues, should be developed to include design features such as sidewalks, variation in residential types, and connectivity with surrounding neighborhoods and the city.

The following are the highlights of the Future Land Use Plan for Region 3:

- Upgrade and enhance existing neighborhoods in Altoona through housing rehabilitation, infill development, and streetscape improvements.
- Target the Juniata neighborhood in Altoona for mixed residential development.
- Target downtown Altoona as a mixed-use commercial and business center with small-scale specialty shops and cultural attractions. Utilize existing business and industrial corridors and parks for expansion of manufacturing and emerging business sectors.
- Physically connect historic sites and the downtown shopping district with pedestrian facilities and transit service.
- Encourage higher-density, mixed-use development in conjunction with transit oriented development (TOD) in Altoona.
- Encourage more community oriented green spaces and parks in downtown Altoona.
- Preserve ridge tops, stream corridors, and scenic views surrounding the City. (see the Blair County Greenway Plan)

REGION 4

Municipalities: Catherine Township, Woodbury Township, Williamsburg Borough

Residential Land Demand: approximately 230 acres

The growth strategy for Region 4 is to contain future growth to within a one-half to one-mile radius around Williamsburg Borough where developable land with access to public infrastructure is available. The remainder of the Region is primarily undeveloped land, which should be preserved for agricultural and open space uses.

The following are the highlights from the Future Land Use Plan for Region 4:

- Target new residential development within a one-mile radius around Williamsburg Borough in areas targeted for infrastructure extensions.
- Target new commercial and business development in the area just west of Williamsburg Borough on Route 866.
- Promote redevelopment and reuse of existing industrial sites for business and manufacturing development.
- Support and enhance the Lower Trail by developing small-scale service shops and other amenities near the trail.
- Preserve the prime farmland in Woodbury and Catherine Townships for agricultural land use.
- Preserve the ridge tops along Tussey Mountain and Canoe Mountain for conservation and open space. (see the Blair County Greenway Plan and Map)
- Preserve stream corridors and buffer the Little Juniata River to restrict floodplain development and encourage recreation, trail, and greenway uses.

REGION 5

Municipalities: Allegheny Township, Blair Township, Frankstown Township, Juniata Township, Duncansville Borough, Hollidaysburg Borough, Newry Borough

Residential land demand: approximately 500 acres

The growth strategy for Region 5 is to accommodate new residential growth in areas adjacent to Hollidaysburg Borough and Duncansville Borough.

Given the historic assets and nature of Region 5, it is important to promote new development that fits within the character of the area.

The following are the highlights from the Future Land Use Plan for Region 5:

- New residential development is targeted in close proximity of Hollidaysburg and Duncansville.
- Expand neighborhood commercial uses within and just outside of Hollidaysburg Borough.
- Encourage redevelopment and infill development on vacant and/or underutilized sites Hollidaysburg and Duncansville.
- Redevelop the Hollidaysburg Car Shops for business, industrial, or a mixed-use development.
- Utilize existing business and industrial corridors (I-99, Route 764) for expansion of manufacturing and emerging business sectors.
- Maintain Canoe Creek as preserved open space and buffer the water supply reservoirs for conservation areas.
- Encourage greenway and trail development along the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway and the extension of the Lower Trail to Hollidaysburg. (see the Blair County Greenway Plan)

REGION 6

The growth strategy for Region 6 is to target new residential development and neighborhood commercial land uses within close proximity of Route 220 in areas served by public water and sewer infrastructure.

The following are the highlights from the Future Land Use Plan for Region 6:

- New residential development should be targeted toward existing village areas and where there are no development constraints along the Route 220 corridor.
- Utilize the existing industrial parks - Ward Industrial Park and Walter Business Park - for future manufacturing and industrial growth.
- Buffer streams and restrict development in the floodplains to prevent further flooding hazards. Address inappropriate development in floodplain areas to identify site relocation options through Hazard Mitigation Planning.

REGION 7

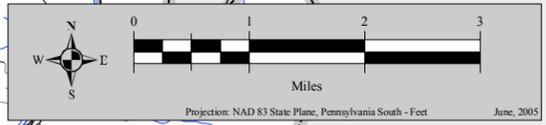
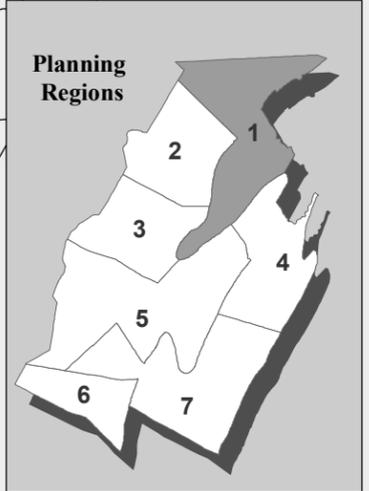
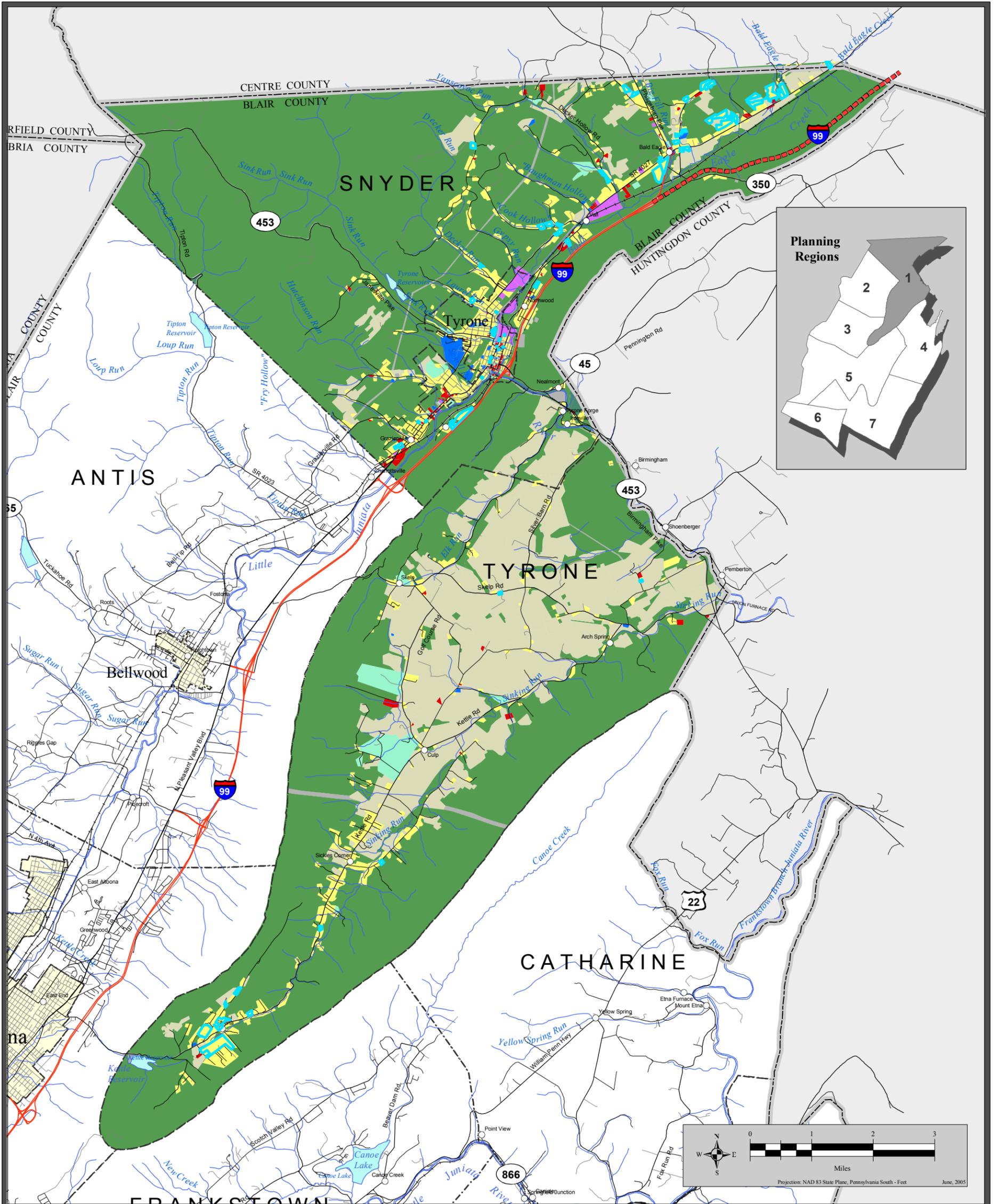
Municipalities: Freedom Township, Huston Township, North Woodbury Township, Taylor Township, Martinsburg Borough, Roaring Spring Borough

Residential land demand: Approximately 800 acres

Region 7 shows the greatest residential land demand compared to the other Planning Regions, yet this region also serves as the agricultural heartland of Blair County. Therefore, the growth strategy for Region 7 is to seek a balance between new residential development and farmland preservation. Preventing land use conflicts between active farms and new residential sub-divisions will be important in Region 7 as new development continues. Therefore, land use tools should be in place to prevent the encroachment of residential uses on prime farmland and active farms.

The following are the highlights from the Future Land Use Map for Region 7:

- Target new residential development on developable land in Freedom Township, which has the best access to I-99 and the least amount of prime farmland in Region 7.
- Expand residential land use in developable areas around Roaring Spring, along Route 164, and north of Roaring Spring in the Plum Creek area, avoiding sensitive environmental areas.
- Avoid conflicts with the Blair County Airport and prime agricultural land in targeting residential development near Martinsburg.
- Direct neighborhood commercial along the Route 36 corridor in Freedom Township and the Route 164 corridor in Roaring Spring and Martinsburg.
- Locate new manufacturing and business development along the Route 164, with some limits on size and access points to maintain the integrity of the corridor.
- Preserve prime farmland for agricultural land uses in Huston Township, North Woodbury, and Taylor Township.



Legend

- County Boundary
- City/Borough
- Township
- Place
- Interstate
- State Route
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Lake/Reservoir
- River/Creek/Stream

Future Land Use Classifications

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Residential | Education/Public Admin/Health Care |
| General Sales or Service | Mining/Extraction |
| Manufacturing/Wholesale | Agriculture |
| Transportation/Communication/Utilities | Forest/Gamelands |
| Arts/Entertainment/Recreation | |

BLAIR COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION



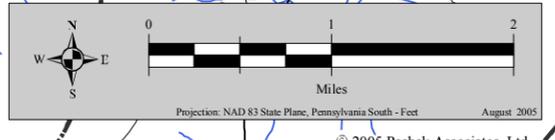
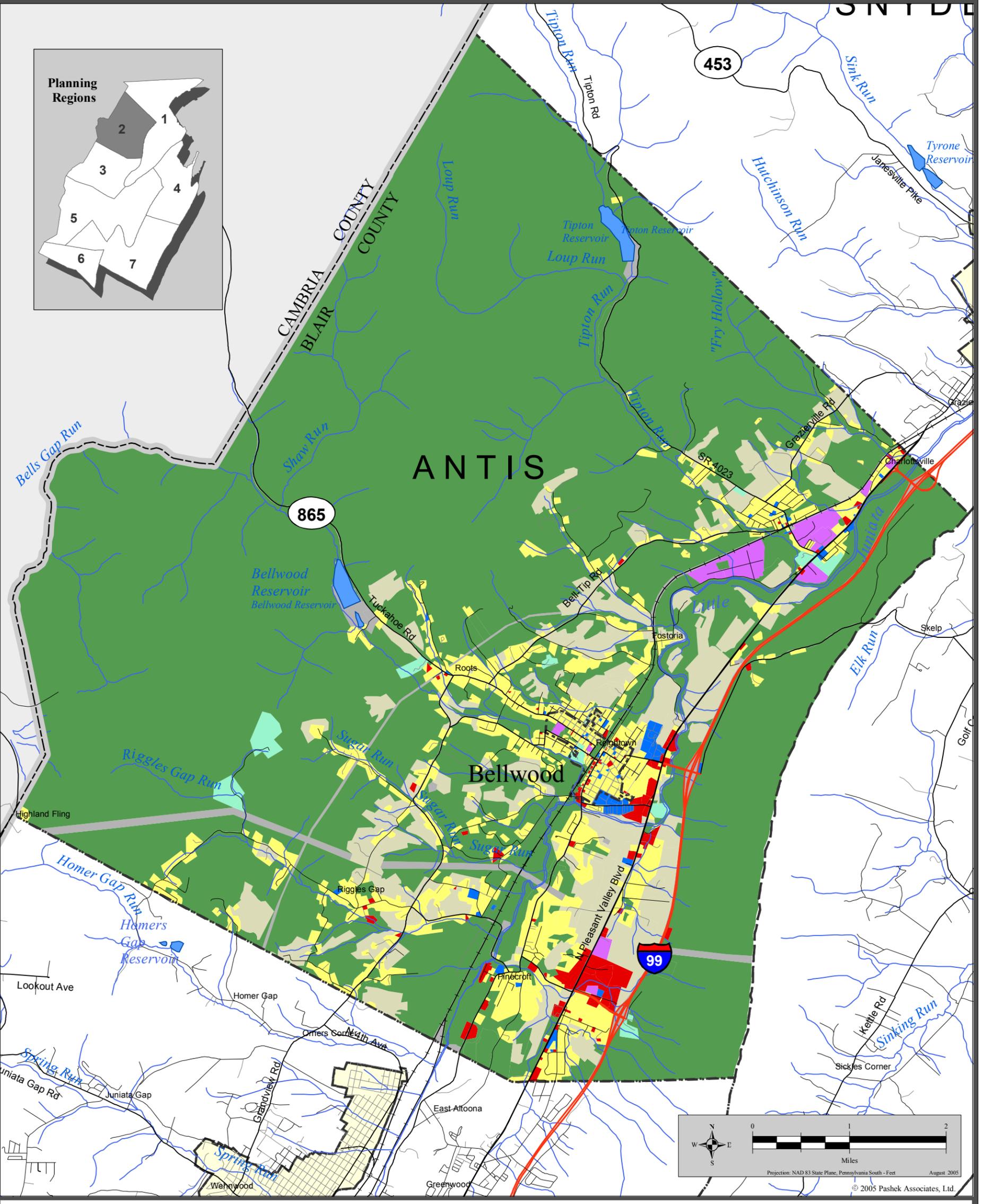
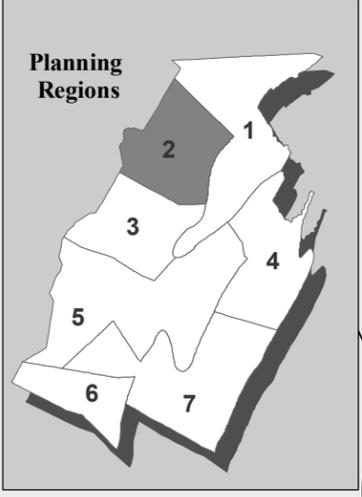
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Map Sources:
 Transportation and Boundaries - Blair County 911 Data
 Hydrology-ERRI Networked Streams (PASDA)
 Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
 Land Use - Blair County Planning Commission

An Areawide Comprehensive Plan
 for
Blair County, Pennsylvania

Future Land Use
Region 1





Legend

- County Boundary
- City/Borough
- Township
- Place
- Interstate
- State Route
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Lake/Reservoir
- River/Creek/Stream

Future Land Use Classifications

- Residential
- General Sales or Service
- Manufacturing/Wholesale
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Arts/Entertainment/Recreation
- Education/Public Admin/Health Care
- Mining/Extraction
- Agriculture
- Forest/Gamelands

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Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
Land Use - Blair County Planning Commission

An Areawide Comprehensive Plan
for
Blair County, Pennsylvania

Future Land Use
Region 2



An Areawide Comprehensive Plan

for
Blair County, Pennsylvania

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Map Sources:
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Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
Land Use - Blair County Planning Commission (Altoona
landuse information provided by the City
of Altoona)

Legend

- County Boundary
- City/Borough
- Township
- Place
- Interstate
- State Route
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Lake/Reservoir
- River/Creek/Stream

Future Land Use Classifications

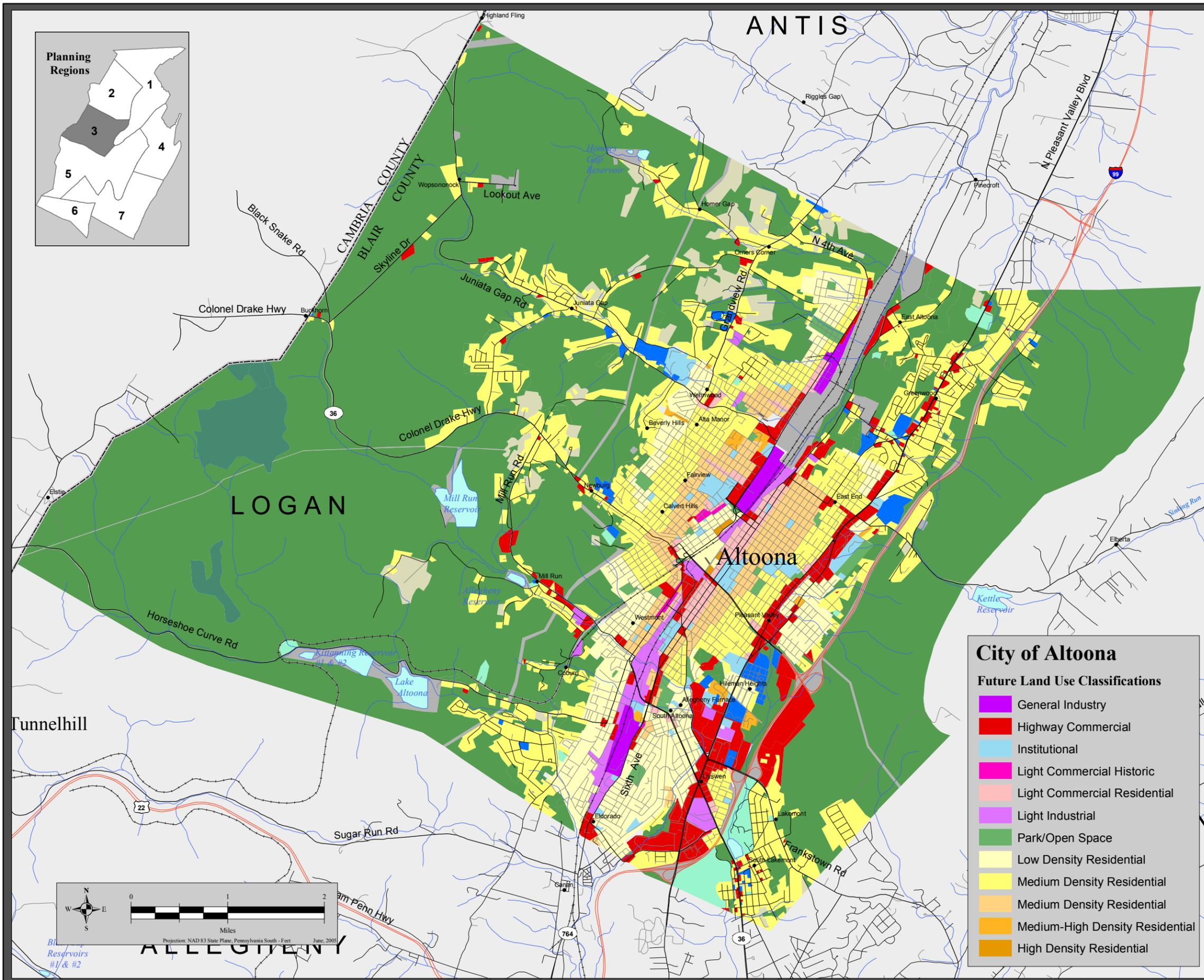
- Residential
- General Sales or Service
- Manufacturing/Wholesale
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Arts/Entertainment/Recreation
- Education/Public Admin/Health Care
- Construction Related Business
- Mining & Extraction
- Agriculture
- Forest/Game Lands

City of Altoona

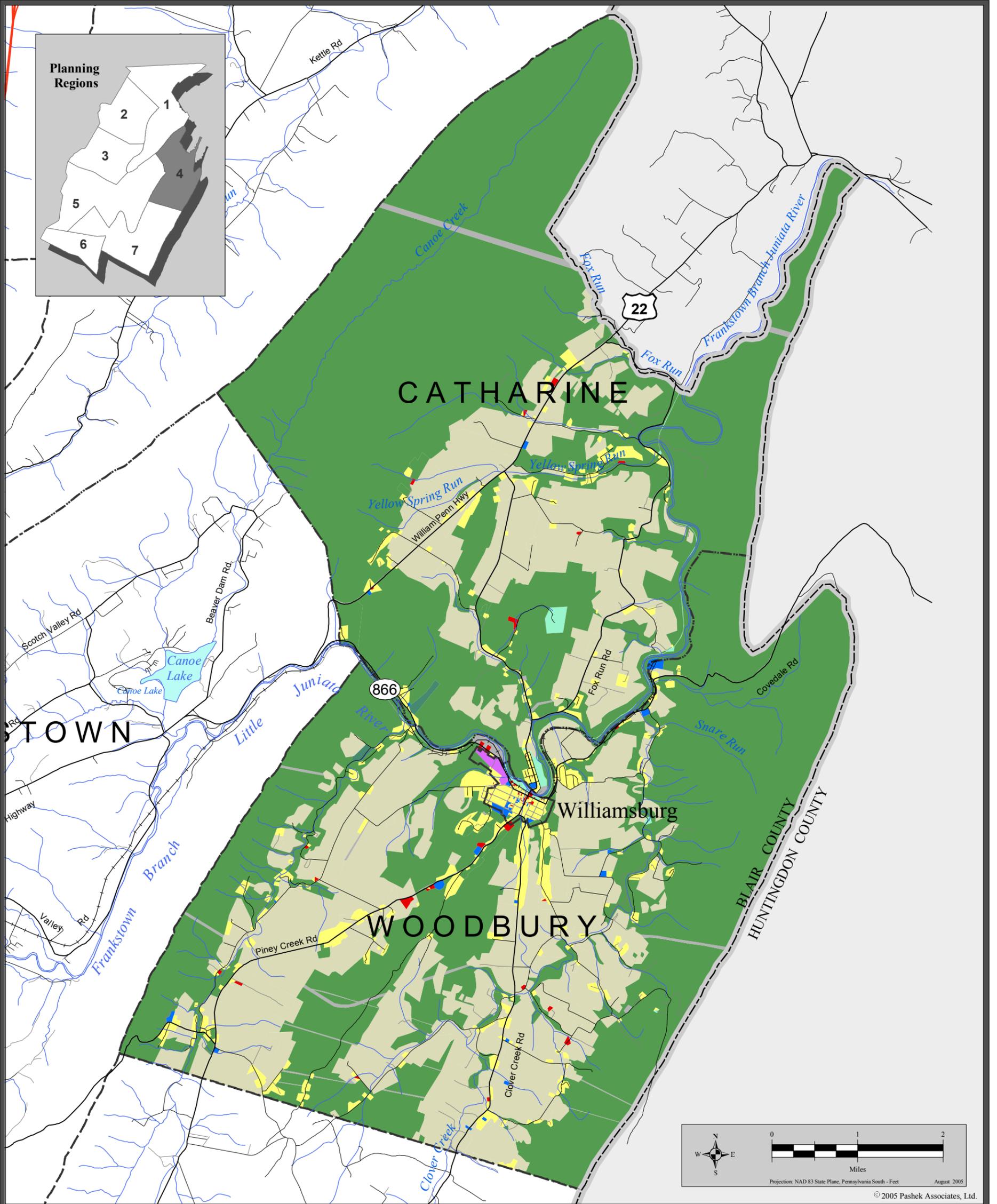
Future Land Use Classifications

- General Industry
- Highway Commercial
- Institutional
- Light Commercial Historic
- Light Commercial Residential
- Light Industrial
- Park/Open Space
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Medium-High Density Residential
- High Density Residential

Future Land Use Region 3



Projection: NAD 83 State Plane, Pennsylvania South - Feet
June, 2005



- Legend**
- County Boundary
 - City/Borough
 - Township
 - Place
 - Interstate
 - State Route
 - Local Road
 - Railroad
 - Lake/Reservoir
 - River/Creek/Stream

- Future Land Use Classifications**
- Residential
 - General Sales or Service
 - Manufacturing/Wholesale
 - Transportation/Communication/Utilities
 - Arts/Entertainment/Recreation
 - Education/Public Admin/Health Care
 - Mining/Extraction
 - Agriculture
 - Forest/Gamelands

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Map Sources:
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Hydrology-ERRI Networked Streams (PASDA)
Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
Land Use - Blair County Planning Commission

An Areawide Comprehensive Plan
for
Blair County, Pennsylvania

Future Land Use
Region 4



a pennsylvania corporation

An Areawide Comprehensive Plan

for
Blair County, Pennsylvania

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Map Sources:
Transportation and Boundaries - Blair County 911 Data
Hydrology-ERRI Networked Streams (PASDA)
Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
Land Use - Blair County Planning Commission (Altoona landuse information provided by the City of Altoona)

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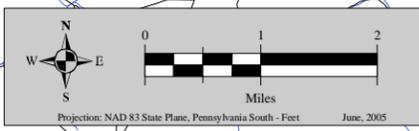
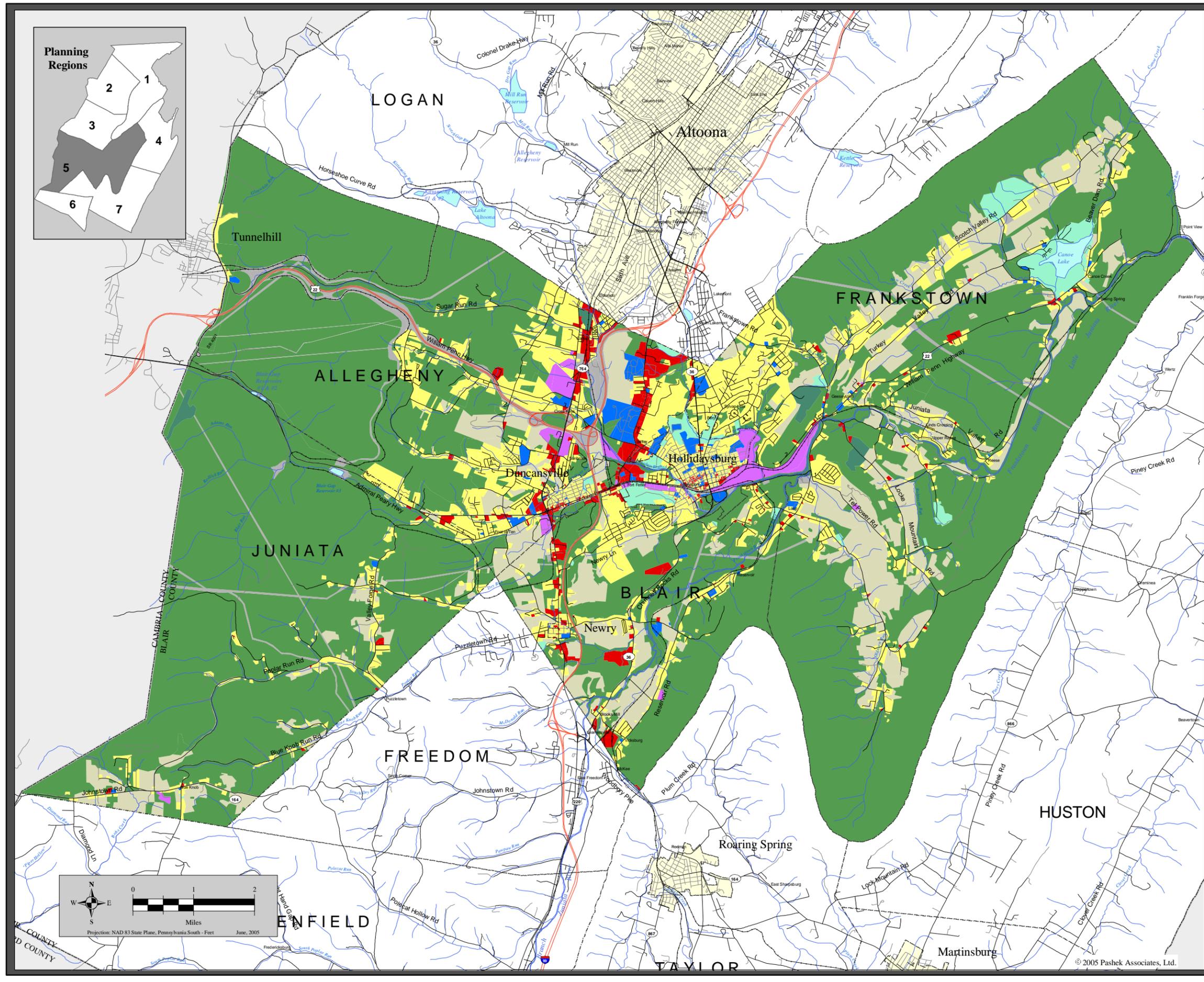
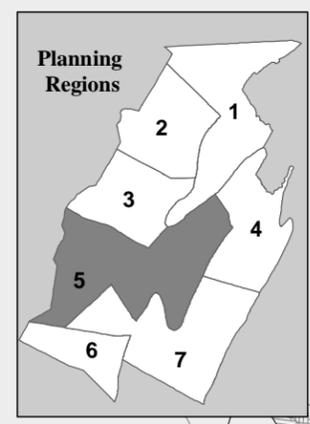
- County Boundary
- City/Borough
- Township
- Place
- Interstate
- State Route
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Lake/Reservoir
- River/Creek/Stream

Future Land Use Classifications

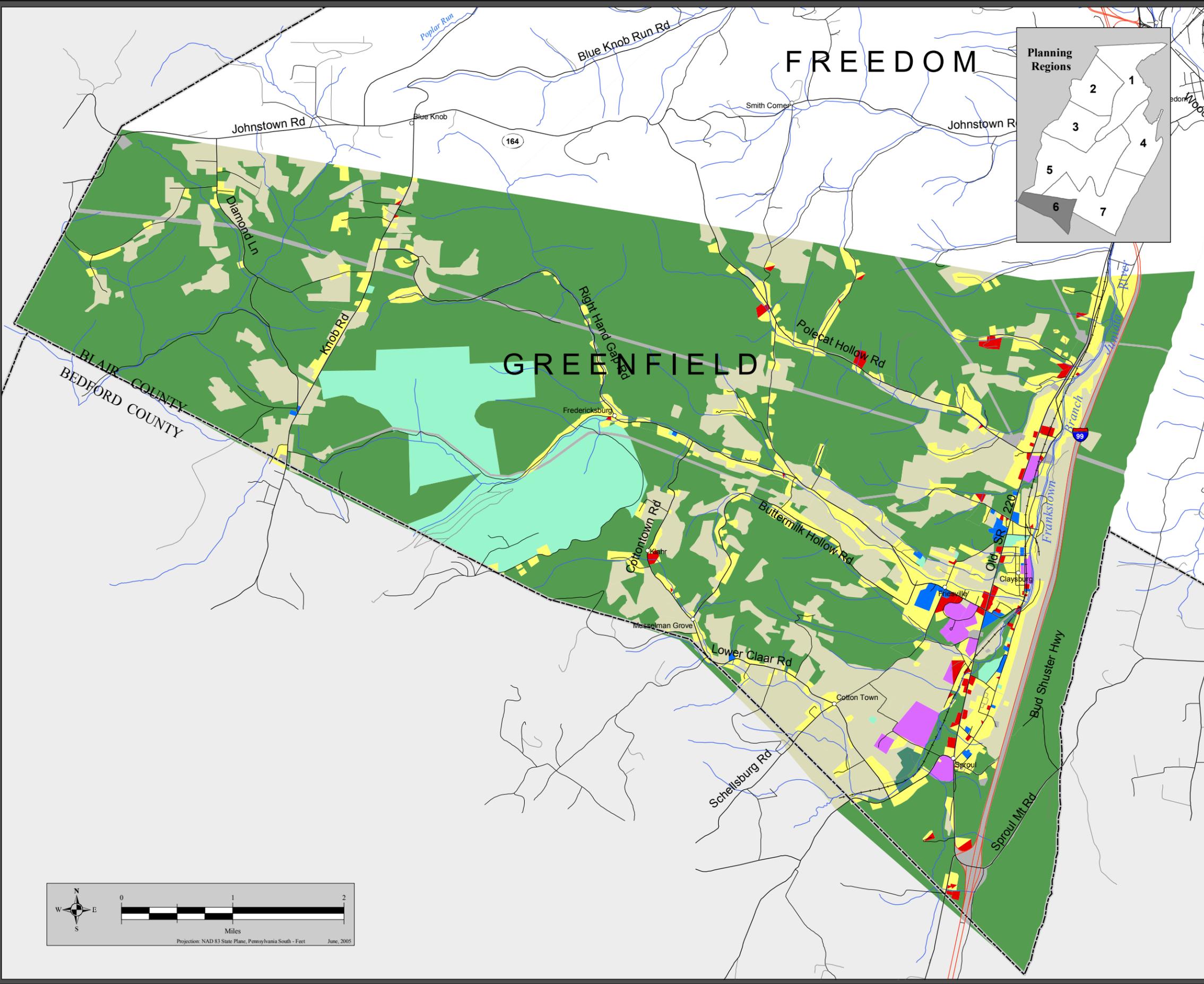
- Residential
- General Sales or Service
- Manufacturing/Wholesale
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Arts/Entertainment/Recreation
- Education/Public Admin/Health Care
- Construction Related Business
- Mining & Extraction
- Agriculture
- Forest/Game Lands



Future Land Use Region 5



Projection: NAD 83 State Plane, Pennsylvania South - Feet June, 2005



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Blair County, Pennsylvania

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Map Sources:
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Hydrology-ERRI Networked Streams (PASDA)
Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
Land Use - Blair County Planning Commission (Altoona land use information provided by the City of Altoona)

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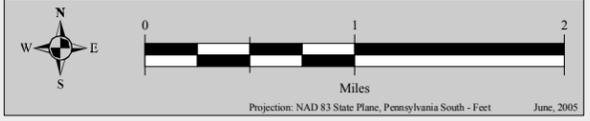
- County Boundary
- City/Borough
- Township
- Place
- Interstate
- State Route
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Lake/Reservoir
- River/Creek/Stream

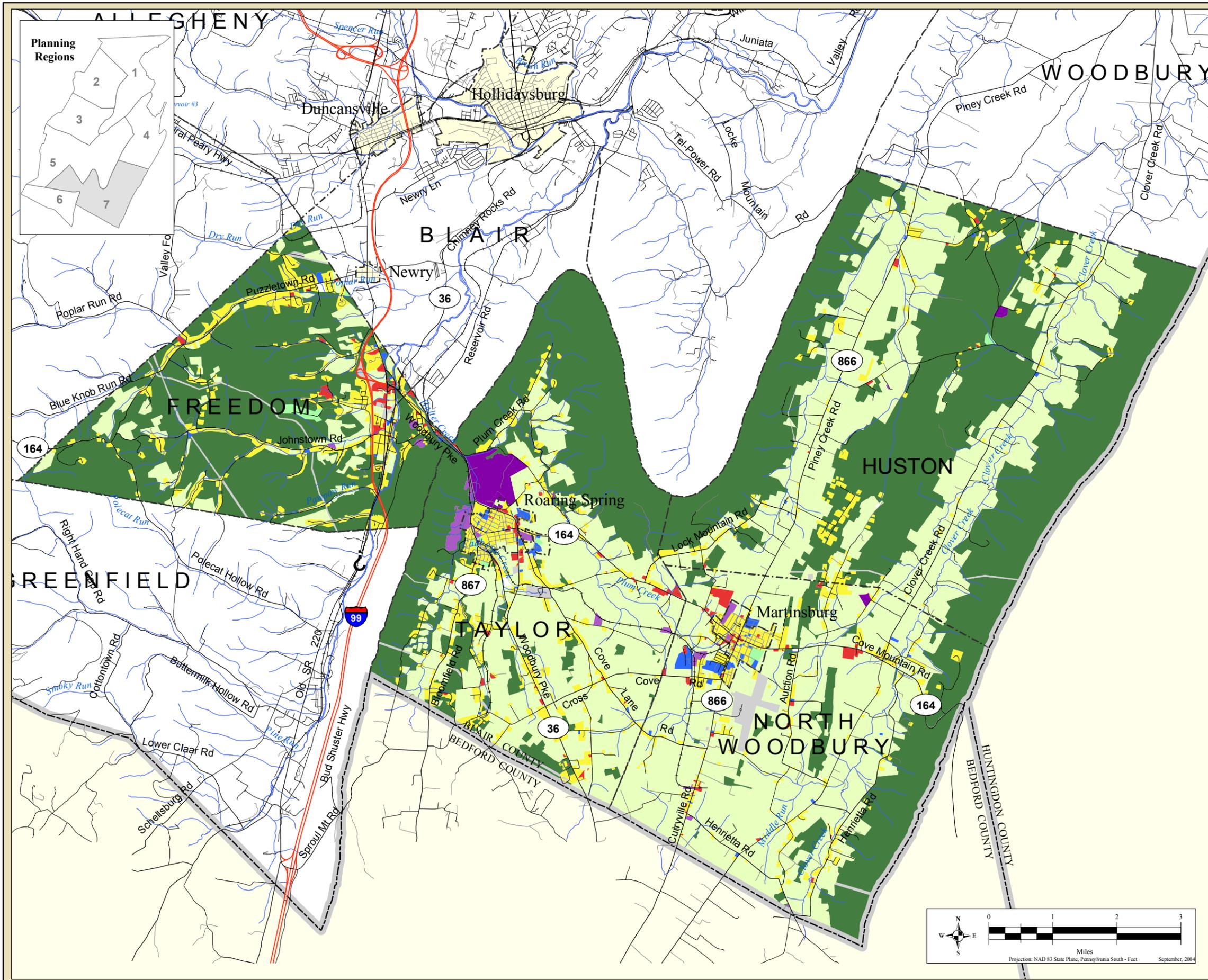
Future Land Use Classifications

- Residential
- General Sales or Service
- Manufacturing/Wholesale
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Arts/Entertainment/Recreation
- Education/Public Admin/Health Care
- Construction Related Business
- Mining & Extraction
- Agriculture
- Forest/Game Lands



Future Land Use Region 6





An Areawide Comprehensive Plan

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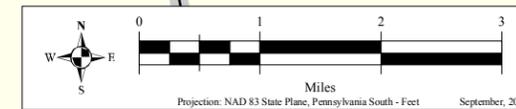
Map Sources:
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Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
Land Use - Blair County Planning Commission

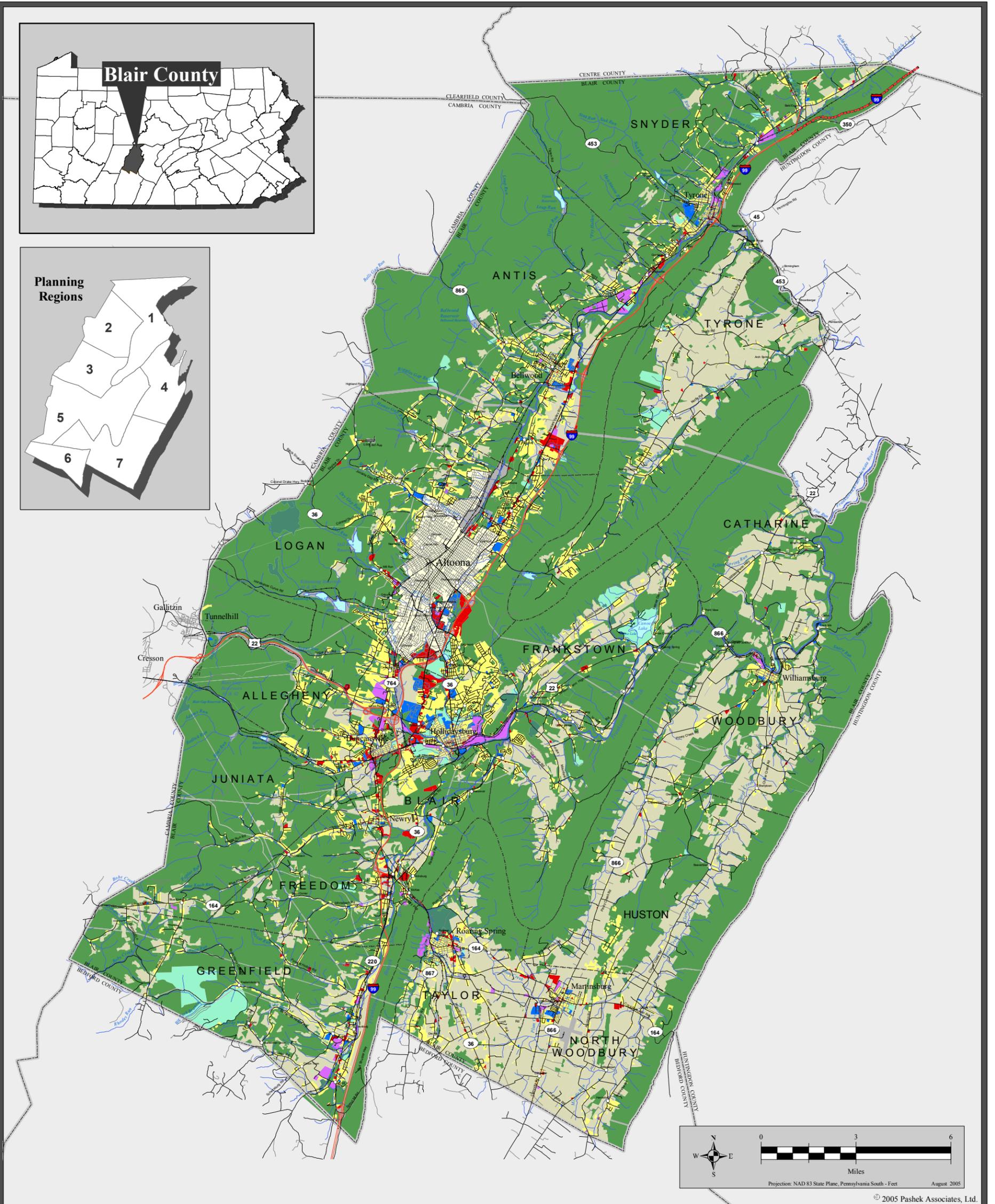
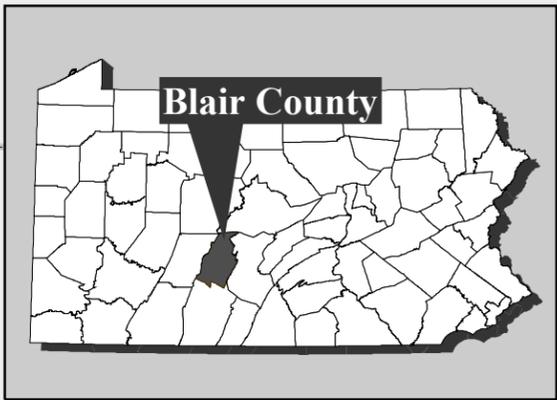
Legend

- County Boundary
- City/Borough
- Township
- Place
- Interstate
- State Route
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Lake/Reservoir
- River/Creek/Stream
- Land Use Classifications**
- Residential
- General Sales or Service
- Manufacturing/Wholesale
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Arts/Entertainment/Recreation
- Education/Public Admin/Health Care
- Construction Related Business
- Mining & Extraction
- Agriculture
- Forest/Game Lands
- Vacant



Region 7 Existing Land Use





Legend

- County Boundary
- City/Borough
- Township
- Place
- Interstate
- State Route
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Lake/Reservoir
- River/Creek/Stream

Future Land Use Classifications

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Residential | Education/Public Admin/Health Care |
| General Sales or Service | Mining/Extraction |
| Manufacturing/Wholesale | Agriculture |
| Transportation/Communication/Utilities | Forest/Gamelands |
| Arts/Entertainment/Recreation | |

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Land Use - Blair County Planning Commission

An Areawide Comprehensive Plan
for
Blair County, Pennsylvania

**Future
Land Use**





Developments of Regional Significance and Impact

The MPC defines a development of regional significance and impact (DORSI) as any land development that, because of its character, magnitude, or location, will have substantial effect upon the health, safety, or welfare of citizens in more than one municipality.

According to the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), a county comprehensive plan should identify current and proposed land uses that have a regional impact and significance. The MPC defines a development of regional significance and impact (DORSI) as any land development that, because of its character, magnitude, or location, will have substantial effect upon the health, safety, or welfare of citizens in more than one municipality. Such land uses could include large shopping centers, major industrial or office parks, mines, storage facilities, large residential developments, regional entertainment and recreational complexes, hospitals, and airports.

Criteria are to be put forth by counties for evaluating DORSIs. The American Planning Association (APA) Recommended List of Threshold Considerations for Developments of Regional Impact is included below to assist the County and local municipalities in defining the evaluation criteria. A DORSI review process should also be established in order to advise a municipality considering a DORSI. It is the role of the DORSI review committee to consider the impacts of the development on roads, schools, municipal services (police, fire, EMS), infrastructure, and economic conditions in the County. The review committee can involve the existing Blair County Planning Commission, a subset of the Commission, or a separate DORSI committee consisting of county and municipal representatives. However, the final decision-making authority for approval or denial of the DORSI rests with the host municipality.

American Planning Association (APA) Recommended List of Threshold Considerations for Developments of Regional Impact

The DORSI Review Committee shall include in its consideration the impact of the proposed development on:

1. the environment and natural resources of the state or region, including, but not limited to, air, land, surface water supply and quality, air quality,

- endangered or threatened species habitats, open space, scenic resources, agriculture, and other unique natural features in the region;
2. the built environment of the state or region, including, but not limited to, historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological, and recreational resources;
 3. the existing capital facilities of affected local governments and special districts and the extent to which new capital facilities will be required to serve the proposed development;
 4. the amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic likely to be generated;
 5. the number of persons likely to be residents, employees, or otherwise present on site;
 6. the size of the proposed development site;
 7. the size of structure(s) to be constructed on site;
 8. the likelihood that a proposed development will stimulate additional development in the surrounding area;
 9. the unique qualities of the site;
 10. the likelihood that a proposed development will be affected by or will affect natural hazards; and
 11. the extent to which a proposed development will create additional demand for energy.

DORSI and subject to review for impact on the entire County and region. Developments in Blair County that currently meet the above DORSI criteria include:

Table: 2.2

Developments of Regional Significance and Impact		
Type of Development	Metropolitan Regions – Altoona MSA	Non-metropolitan Regions
(1) Office	Greater than 400,000 gross square feet	Greater than 125,000 gross square feet
(2) Commercial	Greater than 300,000 gross square feet	Greater than 175,000 gross square feet
(3) Wholesale & Distribution	Greater than 500,000 gross square feet	Greater than 175,000 gross square feet
(4) Hospitals and Health Care Facilities	Greater than 300 new beds; or generating more than 375 peak hour vehicle trips per day	Greater than 200 new beds; or generating more than 250 peak hour vehicle trips per day
(5) Housing	Greater than 400 new lots or units	Greater than 125 new lots or units
(6) Industrial	Greater than 500,000 gross square feet; or employing more than 1,600 workers; or covering more than 400 acres	Greater than 175,000 gross square feet; or employing more than 500 workers; or covering more than 125 acres
(7) Hotels	Greater than 400 rooms	Greater than 250 rooms
(8) Mixed Use	Total gross square feet greater than 400,000; or covering more than 120 acres	Total gross square feet greater than 125,000; or covering more than 40 acres
(9) Airports	All new airports, runways and runway extensions	Any new airport with a paved run way; or runway additions of more than 25% of existing runway length
(10) Attractions & Recreational Facilities	Greater than 1,500 parking spaces or a seating capacity of more than 6,000	Greater than 1,500 parking spaces or a seating capacity of more than 6,000
(11) Post-Secondary School	New school with a capacity of more than 2,400 students, or expansion by at least 25 percent of capacity	New school with a capacity of more than 750 students, or expansion by at least 25 percent of capacity
(12) Waste Handling Facilities	New facility or expansion of use of an existing facility by 50 percent or more	New facility or expansion of use of an existing facility by 50 percent or more
(13) Quarries, Asphalt & Cement Plants	New facility or expansion of existing facility by more than 50 percent	New facility or expansion of existing facility by more than 50 percent
(14) Wastewater Treatment Facilities	New facility or expansion of existing facility by more than 50 percent	New facility or expansion of existing facility by more than 50 percent
(15) Petroleum Storage Facilities	Storage greater than 50,000 barrels if within 1,000 feet of any water supply; otherwise, storage capacity greater than 200,000 barrels	Storage greater than 50,000 barrels if within 1,000 feet of any water supply; otherwise, storage capacity greater than 200,000 barrels
(16) Water Supply Intakes/Reservoirs	New Facilities	New Facilities
(17) Intermodal Terminals	New Facilities	New Facilities

(18) Truck Stops	A new facility with more than three (3) diesel fuel pumps; or containing a half acre of truck parking or 10 truck parking spaces.	A new facility with more than three (3) diesel fuel pumps; or containing a half acre of truck parking or 10 truck parking spaces.
(19) Any other development types not identified above (includes parking facilities)	1000 parking spaces	1000 parking spaces

Source: Adapted from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Developments of Regional Impact Tiers and Development Thresholds

COMMERCIAL:

- The Logan Valley Mall (784,000 sqft.)
- Plank Road Commons (485,330 sqft.)
- Park Hills Plaza (300,000 sqft.)
- Logan Town Center (839,304 sqft.)

INDUSTRIAL:

- Juniata Locomotive Shops (Norfolk & Southern)

AIRPORTS:

- The Blair County Airport

ATTRACTIONS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES:

- Blair County Ballpark seats 7,210.

POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL:

- Penn State Altoona had 3,823 students in 2004

QUARRIES, ASPHALT, & CEMENT PLANTS:

- New Enterprise Stone and Lime Co.
- Grannas Brothers

PETROLEUM STORAGE FACILITIES:

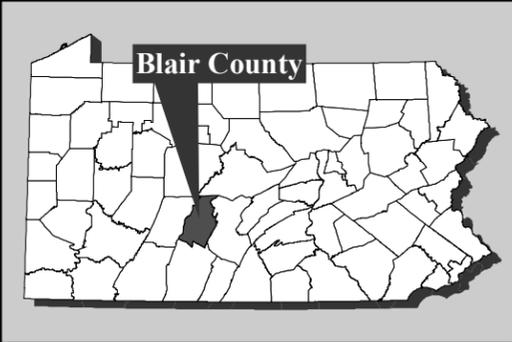
- Burns Avenue Tank Farm

WATER SUPPLY INTAKES/RESERVOIRS:

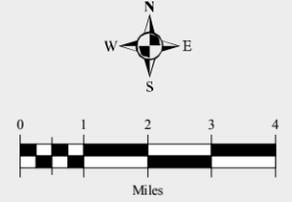
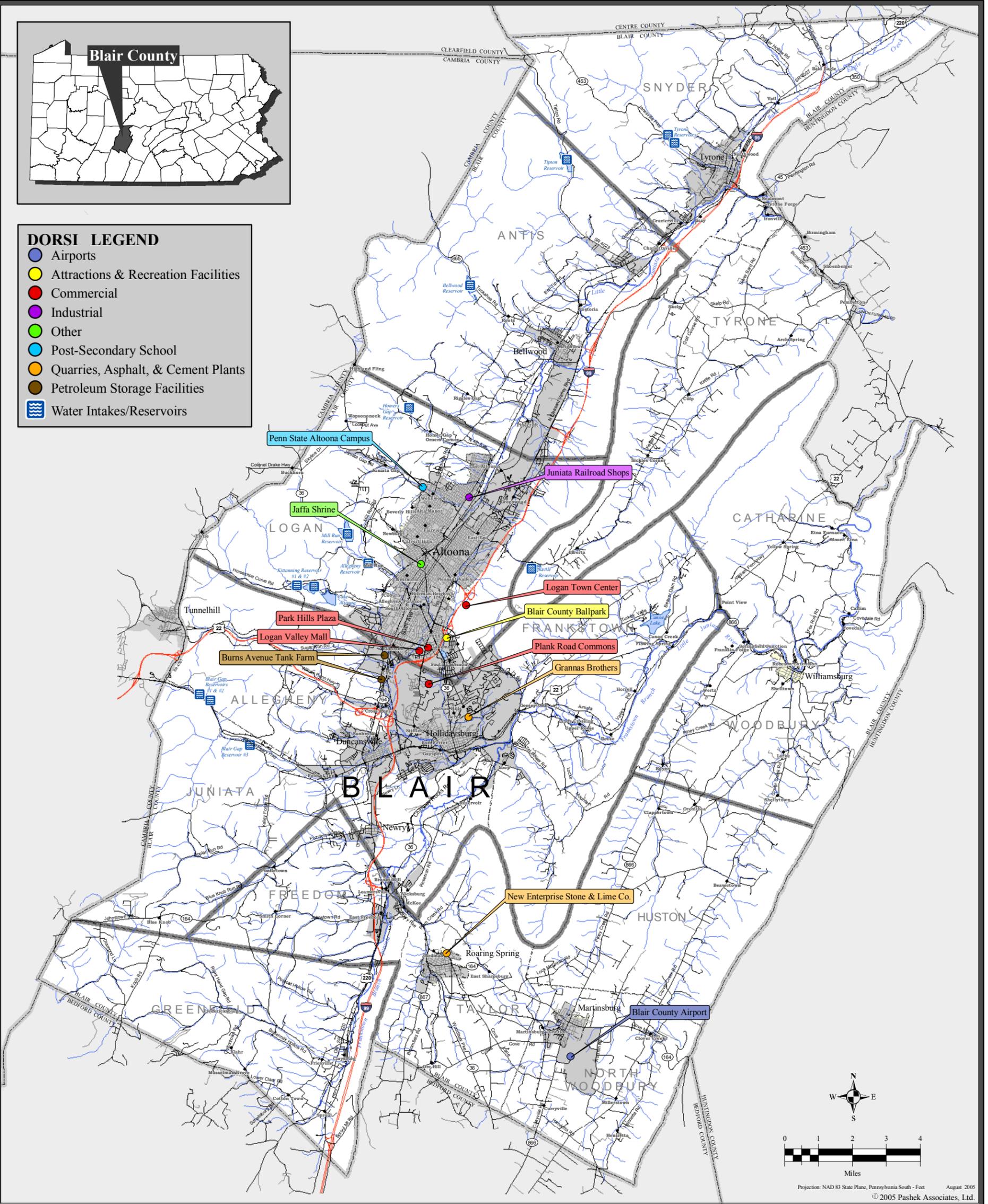
- Kettle Reservoir
- Tyrone Reservoir
- Bellwood Reservoir
- Tipton Reservoir
- Mill Run Reservoir
- Kittanning Reservoir #1 and #2
- Homers Gap Reservoir
- Allegheny Reservoir
- Blair Gap Reservoir #1, #2, and #3

OTHER

- Places of worship: Jaffa Shrine



- DORSI LEGEND**
- Airports
 - Attractions & Recreation Facilities
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Other
 - Post-Secondary School
 - Quarries, Asphalt, & Cement Plants
 - Petroleum Storage Facilities
 - Water Intakes/Reservoirs



Projection: NAD 83 State Plane, Pennsylvania South - Feet August 2005
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Planning Regions



Legend

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|
| County Boundary | Lake/Reservoir | Urban Areas |
| Interstate | River/Creek/Stream | Planning Regions |
| State Route | City/Borough | |
| Local Road | Township | |
| Railroad | | |

BLAIR COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION



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Map Sources:
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 Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System

An Areawide Comprehensive Plan
 for
Blair County, Pennsylvania

**Developments of Regional
 Significance & Impact**





Statement of Consistency and Compatibility

REVIEW OF CONSISTENCY WITH MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

Thirteen of Blair County's twenty-five municipalities have prepared and adopted comprehensive plans. The purpose of this section is to review these plans for consistency with this *Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County (Altoona MSA)*. This review will mostly focus on each municipal comprehensive plan's future land use map, designated growth areas, designated preservation or agricultural areas, consideration of environmental constraints (e.g., floodplains, wetlands, steep slope areas), and consideration of existing and planned infrastructure.

It is recommended that new or updated municipal comprehensive plans be prepared on a multi-municipal basis. By planning together, municipalities can address growth management and redevelopment issues on a scale that would be impossible if each worked alone.

Note that although thirteen Blair County municipalities have adopted comprehensive plans, only four of these have been adopted in the past 20 years. Although Section 301(c) of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code* (Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as reenacted and amended) requires that municipal comprehensive plans "be reviewed at least every ten years," there is no legal requirement as to when such plans should be updated or replaced. Still, given the changes that Blair County has endured since the early 1980s, it is strongly recommended that every plan over 20 years old should be updated.

Moreover, it is recommended that new or updated municipal comprehensive plans be prepared and adopted on a multi-municipal basis - preferably by school district, since school districts tend to define functional communities and sometimes even trade areas. By planning together, municipalities can address growth management and redevelopment issues on a scale that would be impossible if each worked alone. Furthermore, more funding opportunities are available for multi-municipal comprehensive plans than for individual municipal comprehensive plans.

Each existing municipal comprehensive plan is reviewed in the order in which it was adopted, starting with the most recent.

ALLEGHENY TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (ADOPTED 2003)

The Blair County Planning Commission (BCPC) originally reviewed the *Allegheny Township Comprehensive Plan* on November 21, 2002. In its review letter, the Commission praised the Township for "producing such a thorough, thoughtful, coherent, innovative, and attractive comprehensive plan. In many aspects, this document clearly raises the bar for planning throughout Blair County." Today, the *Allegheny Township Comprehensive Plan* remains the high water mark for municipal planning in the County.

However, the BCPC also noted in 2002 that by not basing their land demand projections on a cohort-survival population projection (which would have captured the Township's rapidly aging population) and an economic base projection (which would have captured the slowing demands for industrial and commercial lands), Allegheny Township may have overestimated the amount of land that it would need to develop by 2020. Thus, the *Allegheny Township Comprehensive Plan* projected that the Township would need 520 acres of new residential land by 2020. The *Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County (Altoona MSA)* projected that the entire Hollidaysburg Area School District would only need 490 acres of new residential land in that same timeframe - largely due to the area's aging population and lack of women in their childbearing years.

Thus, the *Allegheny Township Comprehensive Plan's* future land use map may significantly overstate the amount of residential and commercial land that should be developed by 2020. This, coupled with the Areawide Plan's goal to preserve as much green space and agriculture as possible, accounts for all differences between the Township's future land use map and the countywide future land use map. However, while the countywide map leaves some lands in their existing undeveloped state, the Township map designates these areas for development. They include: around the intersections of Mill and Dry Run Roads, between Foot of Ten Road and Blair Gap Run, north of Old Route 22 at Maher Road, south of Bridge Lane, around the intersection of Maple Hollow and Mill Roads, around the intersection of Mill Road and Twinsite/Tree Lanes, towards the end of Carson Valley Road, between Maple Hollow Road and U.S. 22, south of the intersection of

Sugar Run Road and Broad Avenue Extension, just north of Carson Valley Road, between S.R. 764 and I-99 following Mill Run down to Allegheny No. 1 Elementary School, around Jennifer Road, in and around Sunbrook Farms, below the Blair County Convention Center, and between I-99 and the Ramada Inn. The land that the countywide map designates for development is never inconsistent with the Township map. Thus, the two maps are not fully inconsistent, and the County map respects the Township map's directives as much as possible given the vastly differing land demand projections.

The *Allegheny Township Comprehensive Plan* does an exceptional job of avoiding development on steep slope areas, floodplains, and wetlands. Furthermore, it fully integrates the Township's sewer and water planning into the future land use map. These are two significant reasons why the Allegheny Township Comprehensive Plan, despite any noted faults, remains one of the County's most sophisticated planning efforts.

ALTOONA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (ADOPTED 2000)

The Blair County Planning Commission originally reviewed the *Altoona Comprehensive Plan* on November 24, 1999. In its review, the Commission praised the land use plan as being "very comprehensive, innovative, and cogent." Indeed, one of the plan's most striking features is its detailed and imaginative vision for each land use classification on the future land use map. Although we noted back in 1999 that the future land use map could be made more defensible if it was "more explicitly based on quantified demographic and economic analyses and projections," we nevertheless have adopted this map into the countywide future land use map verbatim. Note that this map fully considers both environmental and infrastructure concerns expressed in the Areawide Plan.

TOWNSHIP OF LOGAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (ADOPTED 1999)

The Blair County Planning Commission originally reviewed the *Township of Logan Comprehensive Plan* on November 3, 1999. Although this plan was a valuable and impressive effort that included much public participation, its future land use map (identified as the "Proposed Zoning" map in the plan itself) was not

based on an existing land use map or any known demographic, economic, or land demand projections. Furthermore, it did not explicitly consider any environmental constraints or infrastructure plans (i.e., sewer and water) in allocating the Township's various land uses to appropriate locations.

In order to correct these deficiencies, the countywide future land use map differs substantially from the future land use map in the *Township of Logan Comprehensive Plan*. Although the countywide land demand projections show that the Township would actually need less land for development, the areawide future land use map allocates up to 400 acres of land for new residential development by 2020. This is a fraction of the land slated for residential development in the Township plan.

The land in the Township that is allocated for residential development on the areawide future land use map lies in areas that either have sewer service or are planned to by the *Act 537 Plan for Logan Township, Blair County* (May 1994, as updated). Furthermore, the BCPC eliminated from consideration all wetlands, floodplains, prime farmlands, or areas with slopes over 25%. In an attempt to limit sprawl, the BCPC allocated only land near existing development and tried to protect viewsheds and large patches of green space. Using these rules, the BCPC selected areas for residential development in lower Lakemont, Eldorado Springs, Red Hill, Juniata Gap, Grandview, East Altoona, Bellmeade, Greenwood, and the East End. The BCPC also allocated a substantial amount of land for commercial development in and around Logan Town Centre and Lakemont.

ANTIS TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADOPTED 1997)

The *Antis Township Comprehensive Development Plan* is a solid municipal planning effort in almost every facet. However, its future land use map is based on an over-optimistic projection of the Township's population growth - the plan's projected population for the year 2000 was overestimated by 472 residents. No quantifiable economic or land demand projections appear to have been used in the plan. Although the future land use map generally respects Antis Township's environmental constraints and infrastructure plans, its largest fault is that it appears to significantly overestimate the amount of land that the Township will

need to develop for residences, commerce, and especially industry.

Therefore, the countywide future land use map differs from that of the *Antis Township Comprehensive Development Plan* only in that the BCPC allocates much less land for residential, commercial, and industrial development in the Township. However, the locations where the BCPC allocates this land are never inconsistent with the Township's future land use map. For example, the nearly 400 acres of land that the BCPC allocated for residential development in Antis Township all lies within the larger area that the *Antis Township Comprehensive Development Plan* delineated for residential development. The BCPC concentrated its projected 400 acres between Bellwood and the Pineroft Interchange. This location has many advantages for new development including existing infrastructure; easy access to I-99, Altoona, and State College; few environmental constraints; little prime agricultural land; and few sensitive environmental features, leaving the bulk of the Township's forests, mountains, viewsheds, and farms will remain undisturbed.

The BCPC also allocated a few hundred acres of commercial development to the area around the Pineroft Interchange, as there is an indication that this area will develop shortly.

Antis Township is reportedly beginning the process of updating its 1997 *Antis Township Comprehensive Development Plan*. If this update is prepared according to the guidelines of the *Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County (Altoona MSA)* (e.g. defensible demographic, economic, and land demand projections), the BCPC will amend the countywide future land use map to be consistent with the Township's updated map upon adoption of the Township plan.

BOROUGH OF HOLLIDAYSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (ADOPTED 1982)

The *Borough of Hollidaysburg Comprehensive Plan* is arguably more of a detailed statement of community objectives than a legal comprehensive plan as defined in Article III of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*. There are no population projections, economic projections, or land demand projections. There is no existing land use map to serve as a base for planning from said projections. Instead of a future land use

map, the plan merely refers to the Borough's Zoning Ordinance. Thus, there is no graphic consideration in the plan of the Borough's environmental constraints or infrastructure. There are no action items or implementation procedures. Despite this, Hollidaysburg Borough has one of the strongest historic district ordinances in Blair County and has made significant efforts in historic preservation, downtown redevelopment, and heritage park planning, all of which are consistent with the goals of the Areawide Plan.

Unfortunately, within the Borough of Hollidaysburg, the countywide future land use map is only a partial improvement. Because the BCPC projects no significant population or employment changes for the Borough itself, the future land use map merely reflects the Borough's existing land uses. However, this tactic denies the Borough any opportunity to change or reinvent itself. Thus, we propose that the Borough improve on the performance of the Areawide Plan by preparing a new municipal comprehensive plan in accordance with the guidelines set forth both in this document and in the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*. It is also recommended that the Borough work with other municipalities of the Hollidaysburg Area School District to create a multi-municipal plan. Then, we will amend the countywide future land use map to reflect the Borough's new vision.

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR BLAIR TOWNSHIP (ADOPTED 1978)

The existing Blair Township comprehensive plan is an extremely thorough planning effort, forming a solid blueprint for the Township's future up to its target year of 2000. Although its population projection (page 62) overshot the Township's actual population in 2000 by 1,200 residents, the plan thoroughly and competently allocates areas for both preservation and future development using, as guides, all reasonable environmental constraints, all infrastructure plans that were adopted at the time, and many innovative public participation events.

The countywide future land use map is roughly consistent with the future land use map of *A Comprehensive Plan for Blair Township* (page 79). The lines differ slightly, but the major concentrations of development and preservation are in the same general places. However, this is largely due to how closely the

Township's development has followed its future land use map since 1978. The Areawide planning effort only allocates a few hundred more acres for residential development above the Wye Switches, along Newry Lane, and around Newry Borough. Due to the age structure of the County and especially the Hollidaysburg Area School District, the BCPC projects a decreasing rate of growth in Blair Township.

Note that since the planning timeframe of *A Comprehensive Plan for Blair Township* has passed (its projections and last future land use map only date to the year 2000), this plan should be updated - preferably in a multi-municipal effort involving the other municipalities of the Hollidaysburg Area School District.

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE BOROUGH OF TYRONE (ADOPTED 1974)

Tyrone Borough is currently in the process of updating this thorough, two-volume, large-scale planning effort. *A Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Tyrone* covers a wide range of planning topics, including a new town center design that was only ever partially implemented. Its land use plan considers the Borough's environmental constraints, physiology, and infrastructure plans of the time. Strangely, it is based on a population projection that actually underestimated the Borough's 1980 population by 416 residents.

Given the time gap in the plans of over thirty years, it is difficult to assess consistency. However, the future land use map of *A Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Tyrone* is generally consistent with the countywide future land use map - differing in only a few places. Where the two maps differ, it is due to the areawide map more closely reflecting what exists on the ground in Tyrone Borough as of 2005.

If the update to *A Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Tyrone* is prepared in accordance to the guidelines set forth both in this plan and the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*, the BCPC will amend the countywide future land use map to reflect the updated Tyrone Borough future land use plan and map. This will likely and hopefully be the first official amendment to the *Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County (Altoona MSA)*. Moreover, it will make the Borough and County plans 100% consistent.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE WILLIAMSBURG AREA REGION (ADOPTED 1974)

Roughly thirty years before the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania began to promote multi-municipal comprehensive plans, Williamsburg Borough, Catharine Township, and Woodbury Township - the three municipalities of the Williamsburg Community School District - pioneered inter-municipal cooperation with the well-conceived *Comprehensive Plan for the Williamsburg Area Region*. The plan's future land use map is based on population projections that only stretch out to 1990. However, it skillfully deals with the region's environmental constraints - assigning all steep slope areas, floodplains, and wetlands to its "open space," "floodplain," or "stream preservation" categories. Likewise, it places designated growth areas where infrastructure either exists or is planned to exist.

However, the *Comprehensive Plan for the Williamsburg Area Region's* future land use map uses a largely different set of land use categories than the countywide future land use map does. Thus, comparing the two is somewhat difficult. Within the Borough, for instance, the countywide future land use map merely reflects the Borough's existing land uses - as the BCPC projects no major population or employment growth there. *The Comprehensive Plan for the Williamsburg Area Region* places all Borough land that is not environmentally sensitive into a "village" category that "contains a compatible intermixing of desirable uses typical of the central portions of many villages and towns." Thus, while the two plans are not technically consistent here, they are hardly inconsistent.

Based on the BCPC demographic and economic projections, the countywide future land use map allocates approximately 350 acres of land for new residential and commercial development in Catharine and Woodbury Townships. This land is allocated in areas where infrastructure already exists or is planned to by the applicable Pennsylvania Act 537 plans - largely land close to Williamsburg Borough along S.R. 866, Piney Creek Road, Clover Creek Road, Covedale Road, and Yellow Springs Road. Although the future land use categories of the *Comprehensive Plan for the Williamsburg Area Region* are, as noted above, different than ours, the two plans are surprisingly consistent here - even across thirty years. Both plans recommend that the remainder of these townships be left for more rural land uses, especially agriculture.

Despite the surprising extent to which the *Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County (Altoona MSA)* is consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan for the Williamsburg Area Region*, we nevertheless strongly recommend that Williamsburg Borough, Catharine Township, and Woodbury Township again join together and create a new multi-municipal comprehensive plan for the 21st Century. Much has changed in their valley since 1974, and will continue to change there in the next thirty years.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: MARTINSBURG BOROUGH, NORTH WOODBURY TOWNSHIP (ADOPTED 1972)

Like the *Comprehensive Plan for the Williamsburg Area Region*, this multi-municipal planning effort was thirty years ahead of its time. Unlike the Williamsburg effort, though, it isn't clear if all of the involved municipalities actually adopted the *Comprehensive Plan: Martinsburg Borough, North Woodbury Township*. More specifically, we can find no evidence that North Woodbury Township ever adopted the plan - which might explain why we can't find a future land use map that covers the entire Township.

That aside, the *Comprehensive Plan: Martinsburg Borough, North Woodbury Township* carefully considers environmental constraints, setting aside sensitive lands in and around Martinsburg for its "Conservation-Recreation" land use category. It develops its future land use plan in tune with the present and planned infrastructure of the early 1970s by using the county sewer and water plan (page 7-6). It bases the Borough's growth on what turned out to be a fairly accurate population projection, although it actually *underestimated* the Township's 1990 population.

In and around Martinsburg Borough (the only area shown on the future land use map of the *Comprehensive Plan: Martinsburg Borough, North Woodbury Township*), the plan's future land use map is generally consistent with the countywide future land use map. The major exceptions are the allocation of less land for industry (especially west of Auction Road, south of Spring Street, and around Airport Road), less land for residences (especially to the north and west of the Borough), and more land for agriculture in accordance with the proposed BCPC policy that promotes strict agricultural preservation more modern demographic/economic projections.

Note that outside of this relatively small area in and around Martinsburg Borough, the countywide future land use map makes every attempt to avoid steep slope areas, wetlands, floodplains, and especially prime farmland in allocating land for development in Morrisons Cove. This forces our designated growth areas into a widely scattered pattern that we hope will be further refined when Martinsburg Borough and North Woodbury Township update the *Comprehensive Plan: Martinsburg Borough, North Woodbury Township*.

ROARING SPRING MASTER PLAN (ADOPTED 1968)

Although it is badly outdated, (some of the land that exists in Roaring Springs today hadn't been annexed at the time of writing) the 1968 Roaring Spring Master Plan is still an impressive comprehensive plan. Besides the 1972 County comprehensive plan, the *Roaring Spring Master Plan* is likely the most thorough and massive comprehensive plan in Blair County history. It contains neighborhood and facilities plans that have probably never been matched in detail on the local level.

Although the future land use plan most likely does not adequately consider the Borough's environmental limitations (at least not by modern standards), it is reasonably based on what few infrastructure plans existed in the 1960s. Like many local future land use plans, it is based on what turned out to be an over-optimistic population projection (3,365 residents by 1985). But unlike many such plans, it foresaw the Borough's advancing age structure.

The Roaring Spring Master Plan's future land use map outlines more specific land use categories than the countywide future land use map does (local plans should be more specific than county plans). Nevertheless, it is apparent that the countywide map allocates a far smaller portion of the Borough to the central business district, a far smaller portion to industrial uses (especially south of Walnut Street and around Nason Hospital), a slightly larger portion to highway commercial (especially north of the S.R. 36 bypass), and a much larger portion to residences than the *Roaring Spring Master Plan* does. These inconsistencies are all due to the fact that the countywide map closely reflects what currently exists in Roaring Spring Borough as of 2005. The countywide future land use map also reflects projections for little to no growth in the Borough over the next 15-20 years.

Needless to say, the BCPC strongly recommends that the *Roaring Spring Master Plan* be updated - preferably in a multi-municipal effort with the other municipalities of the Spring Cove School District.

As has been mentioned above, the Blair County Planning Commission will amend the *Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County (Altoona MSA)* and its future land use map to match the future land use map of any subsequent municipal or multi-municipal comprehensive plan that is prepared according to the guidelines set forth in this plan and Article III of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*. Any such municipal plan should be based on either the demographic, economic, and land demand projections of the *Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County* or other locally-produced demographic, economic, and land demand projections. However, the BCPC strongly recommends at least the cohort-survival method of projection populations, due to the rapidly aging nature of Blair County's residents. Likewise, the BCPC strongly recommends at least the economic base method of projecting future employment. It is hoped that by amending the County comprehensive plan to match properly prepared municipal comprehensive plans, all comprehensive plans in the county will be 100% consistent with each other by the time the BCPC updates the *Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County (Altoona MSA)* in ten years. The update of the *Areawide Plan* will then be closely built upon these municipal comprehensive plans.

REVIEW OF CONSISTENCY WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

In accordance with the requirements of Section 301(a)(5) of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*, the Blair County Planning Commission can report - with some study to support it - that the existing and proposed development of Blair County is compatible with the existing and proposed development - and plans - of neighboring counties.

In consultation with the Bedford County Planning Commission, the BCPC feels that the *Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County (Altoona MSA)* is consistent with 1977 *Bedford County Comprehensive Plan* along the common border of the two counties (note that Bedford County is currently updating its

comprehensive plan). The future land use maps for both counties have agricultural uses across the floor of Morrisons Cove and most of Claysburg's valley, bordered by three mountain greenways.

After some reviews, the BCPC also feels that the Areawide Plan is consistent with *Continuity Through Conservation II* - the 2000 *Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan*, the 1977 *Centre County Comprehensive Plan* (currently being updated), the 1991 *Clearfield County Comprehensive Plan* (currently being updated), and the 2004 *Cambria County Comprehensive Plan Update*.



Plan Interrelationships

The Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County should be consistent with other functional plans for Blair County in order to carry out the future land use plan. This is because the land use plan and recommendations require coordination with transportation planning, sewage planning, and open space planning, among others, to ensure that new development, redevelopment, and conservation is directed toward those areas identified in the plan. The following is a summary of interrelationship between the future land use plan and various functional plans that will be implemented either countywide, on a regional level, or on a municipal level.

The Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County should be consistent with other functional plans for Blair County in order to carry out the future land use plan.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR BLAIR COUNTY LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Long Range Plan includes a list of the highway and transit projects included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the twelve (12) year program, a list of proposed projects eight (8) years beyond the twelve (12) year program, and a waiting list of projects proposed outside of current funding levels. The plan, included in the Appendix, is the main transportation planning document for Blair County. It is consistent with the following goals identified in the Areawide Plan:

- To improve the coordination of land use, infrastructure, and transportation planning throughout the County.
- To develop a well-coordinated, efficient, and effective transportation and public transit system.
- To encourage safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities that promote walking and biking to and from work, school, community centers, downtowns, and other destinations.

The future land use plan should be used to help set project priorities for the Long Range Transportation Plan, the twelve (12) year program, and the TIP by targeting transportation and transit investment in

existing areas and areas identified for future growth. Areas with the highest employment and population concentration, such as Region 3, should be used help prioritize highway and transit improvements. In addition, land use planning in areas with the highest land demand projections, such as Region 7 and Region 5, should be closely coordinated with the Long Range Transportation Plan. Land use planning in Regions 1 and 2 should be closely coordinated with the I-99 extension project, which will likely have an impact on residential, commercial, and industrial development in the northern end of the County.

BLAIR COUNTY GREENWAY PLAN

The Blair County Greenway Plan is included as Section IV of the Areawide Comprehensive Plan. The Blair County Greenway Plan identifies four main goals in the Areawide Plan with which it is consistent:

- To provide for a healthy and stable natural environment through resource protection and preservation.
- To create a viable green infrastructure system that includes protected open space, trails, and areas of natural beauty in Blair County.
- To provide for a well-designed and managed park and recreation system that support a variety of recreation opportunities and facilities within close proximity to Blair County's population centers.
- To encourage safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities that promote walking and biking to and from work, school, community centers, downtowns, and other destinations.

Implementation of the Blair County Greenway Plan is identified as a priority strategy in Section III: The Action Plan. The Greenway Plan identifies three types of greenways: conservation greenways, drinking water protection greenways, and recreational/transportation greenways. These natural and recreation corridors are identified on Map 4 of the Greenway Plan - Proposed Greenways. The proposed greenway areas complement the future land use plan in that it identifies those areas where the County should focus their conservation and recreation efforts and programs. Comparing the Future Land Use Map to the proposed greenway network, there are no areas where new development is in conflict with a proposed greenway.

MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BLAIR COUNTY

The Municipal Waste Management Plan for Blair County (2002) is summarized in Section I of the plan. The major goals of the plan include: 1) illustrate how the county intends to reach the recycling goal of 35% by the year 2003 and 2) show that there is capacity available for the county for the disposal of waste generated within its boundaries for at least a ten (10) year period. The Areawide Comprehensive Plan identifies the following objectives that are consistent with the Municipal Waste Management Plan:

- Continue to provide for the solid waste management needs of Blair County and meet countywide recycling objectives.
- Eliminate illegal dumping of waste on land and in streams through regulatory and voluntary efforts.

Furthermore, Action Plan strategies that are associated with the above objectives support implementation of the Municipal Waste Management Plan, such as increasing education and awareness of recycling, exploring options for increased efficiency in municipal trash collection, and addressing the illegal dumping issue through education and enforcement.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLANS

Blair County is required by the Pennsylvania Storm Water Management Act (Act 167) to prepare and adopt a watershed stormwater management plans for designated watersheds in the County's planning jurisdiction. Two such management plans have been developed and/or adopted: the Stormwater Management Plan for the Beaverdam Branch watershed and the Stormwater Management Plan for the Little Juniata River. Implementation of the stormwater management plans is consistent with the following goal from the Areawide Plan:

- Protect Blair County communities and the environmental health of waterways and watersheds through flood controls, stormwater management, and reduction of non-point source pollutants throughout the County.

The future land use plan targets new development with several environmental constraints in mind, including

floodplains, steep slopes, and wetlands. Protecting these sensitive areas from development is a stormwater management strategy. Furthermore, implementation of the stormwater management plans is a high priority strategy for the Areawide Plan.

ACT 537 SEWAGE FACILITIES MANAGEMENT PLANS

All municipalities are required to prepare Act 537 Sewage Facilities Management Plans. However, the date of Act 537 plans varies from 1985 to 2000 in Blair County municipalities, with some municipalities still lacking such a plan. The future land use plan was developed with careful consideration of the location of water and sewer service area. New development is targeted in areas that either currently have sewer service, or areas where the extension of service is planned according to municipal Act 537 Plans. Implementation of the sewage facilities management plans is consistent with the following objectives identified in the plan:

- Coordinate land use planning, transportation planning, and infrastructure improvements to ensure that a full range of public infrastructure and services are adequately planned and provided in future growth areas.
- Severely restrict development on sensitive environmental features, including wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes over 25%.
- Protect Blair County communities and the environmental health of waterways and watersheds through flood controls, stormwater management, and reduction of non-point source pollutants throughout the County.

Section 3

Creating the Action Plan - How do we get there?

*“Developing the plan is actually
laying out the sequence of events that
have to occur for you to achieve your goal.”*
- George L. Morrisey



Introduction

The purpose of this section is to lay out an action plan that includes detailed strategies and recommendations for achieving the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan.

Section III of the Areawide plan focuses on implementation of the plan. The purpose of this section is to lay out an action plan that includes detailed strategies and recommendations for achieving the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan. The action plans are detailed tables that outline strategies, priorities, responsible and participating parties, and potential funding sources for implementation of the plan. The following definitions aid in interpreting the action plan:

Strategy: A plan of action intended to reach a specific goal.

Timeframe: Categorization of short (5 years), medium (10-15 years), and long range strategies (15 years).

Responsible and Participating Parties: Those agencies, organizations, or public entities responsible for implementing the strategy.

Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance: Reference to grant programs and agencies that support the strategy

Record of Action: Intentionally left blank and used to track progress in carrying-out each strategy.

The action plan is organized around the following plan elements, for which goals and objectives were identified in Section II:

- Land Use and Planning Strategies
- Housing Strategies
- Economic Development Action Plan
- Environment and Natural Resources Strategies
- Agricultural Farmland Preservation
- Cultural and Historic Resources Strategies
- Parks and Recreation Strategies
- Community Services and Facilities Action Plan

The action plan identifies available resources to implement the plan strategies, where available. Technical and financial assistance is available from

county and state programs, as well as non-profits, and foundations. In some instances, matching funds are a requirement for grant funding. The Appendix includes a Grants and Community Resources reference list of agencies and programs that can be tapped for plan implementation. Included in this list, is information on available programs, agency contact information, and eligibility requirements.

The strategies presented provide guidance to decision-makers and implementers of the plan on the key planning issues identified throughout the planning process. In addition, successful implementation will require continued cooperation among all stakeholders from the public, private, and non-profit sector. This includes on-going oversight by the Blair County Planning Commission and continued participation of the project steering committee. Finally, options for administering a zoning ordinance are provided, including the option of not zoning a municipality. It is essential that Blair County citizens participate in the implementation process in order to ensure ongoing community support for the plan. The Blair County Planning Commission should make a commitment to provide on-going education to residents and community stakeholders on the plan and its goals, objectives, and strategies throughout the implementation process. This can be done by presenting the plan at schools, granges and fairs, churches, and community meetings. Efforts should be made to update members of the public on the progress of the plan and the accomplishments of the Planning Commission and its member municipalities in implementing the plan's recommendations.

The municipal members of the Blair County Planning Commission are key participants in the implementation of the Areawide Plan. This is because many of the recommendations and strategies require action or involvement on the local government level. The role of the Blair County Planning Commission is to act as an advisor and resource for planning at the local level, through implementation of the Areawide Plan. Therefore, the second component of Section III is the Criteria and Guidelines for Local Comprehensive Plans. The purpose of the guidelines is to establish broad goals and criteria for municipalities to use in the preparation of local comprehensive plans and land use regulations. The guidelines include a summary of the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), recommendations for background studies, public participation techniques, and an overview of

the plan elements that must be addressed in local plans (with reference to the specific section of the MPC that addresses each plan element).

The final part of Section III includes criteria and guidelines for local comprehensive plans. This section consists of three main parts:

- Guidelines for developing municipal comprehensive plans
- Guidelines for preparing municipal comprehensive plans that are consistent with the Areawide Comprehensive Plan
- Broad goals and criteria for uniformity with respect to local planning, zoning, and land use terminology/regulations

The guidelines for developing municipal comprehensive plans outline resources that support planning in Pennsylvania, general information on multi-municipal planning and funding sources, and an overview of the requirements for comprehensive plans under the MPC. This includes a description of public input techniques that municipalities should consider integrating into their comprehensive planning process, such as focus group meetings, key person interviews, questionnaires, and public meetings.

Municipalities are not required by the MPC to have Comprehensive Plans. However, for those that do, according to the MPC Section 301.4, adopted municipal comprehensive plans should be generally consistent with the adopted county comprehensive plan. Therefore, broad guidelines are also provided for developing municipal comprehensive plans that are consistent with the Areawide Plan. The guidelines are organized around the three main sections of the Areawide Plan – Section I: the assessment of existing conditions; Section II: the vision and future land use plan, and Section III: the action plan. Recommendations are made for promoting consistency with the Areawide goals, objectives, land use plan, and strategies.

The final portion of Section III looks at broad goals and criteria for uniformity with respect to local planning, zoning, and land use terminology/regulations. This section sets forth criteria for evaluation of local plans and zoning ordinances for consistency with the

Areawide Plan. It identifies specific land use provisions under the MPC that municipalities must enforce through zoning. It also includes a description of special zoning designations that provide an added layer of protection for natural, cultural, historic, and scenic features that should be evaluated and considered for application in Blair County municipalities.



The Action Plan

LAND USE AND PLANNING STRATEGIES

The land use goals of the Areawide Plan focus on strengthening planning on the local level through multi-municipal cooperation in order to achieve desired land use patterns. During focus groups with local municipalities, it was noted that elected officials and planning commissioners would like to step-up planning efforts on a local level. The land use plan puts forth a strategy to strengthen existing town and village centers, while preserving prime farmland and environmental features throughout the county. Therefore, the Areawide Plan identifies the following land use and planning objectives to work toward the land use plan outlined in Section II:

The land use plan puts forth a strategy to strengthen existing town and village centers, while preserving prime farmland and environmental features throughout the county.

- Promote land use planning, tools, and regulations that are consistent with the Areawide Plan and provide alternatives to conventional development patterns.
- Coordinate land use planning, transportation planning, and infrastructure improvements to ensure that a full range of public infrastructure and services are adequately planned and provided in future growth areas.
- Promote consistency of land use both within and across municipal borders in order to prevent negative land use impacts on communities.
- Revitalize existing urban areas and downtowns through infill and redevelopment efforts, and blight abatement.
- Preserve the character and function of rural areas through support for agricultural preservation efforts, directing development toward villages that serve as community centers, and protecting key natural areas and open space.

- Encourage the development and implementation of land use tools and regulations that promote a positive community image.
- Create, enhance, and improve the existing sense of place created by the City, Boroughs, and villages that are Blair County's core communities.

It should be noted that the Blair County Planning Commission has attempted to paint a realistic picture of future development needs based on population and household projections. While the development needs may appear surprisingly conservative to some, the land demand projections are reflective of both past and future population trends showing that Blair County's population is both declining slightly and aging. The benefits of land use policies that are consistent with the objectives stated above and this outlook for growth include greater consideration for environmentally sensitive and agricultural lands and improved efficiency in infrastructure planning and service delivery. In addition, exploring alternative development options, including varying densities and housing types, will provide alternatives to Blair County residents, many of which will require more compact and transit-oriented neighborhoods to retain their quality of life and mobility.

The first objective focuses on supporting planning on a local level through comprehensive plans and implementation of land use tools. The plan advocates for multi-municipal planning based on the planning regions to achieve consistency with the Areawide Plan. The Blair County Planning Commission (BCPC) should provide technical assistance to municipalities engaged in multi-municipal planning. Technical assistance can function as in-kind services to qualify for programs, such as the Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), to supplement the cost of comprehensive planning.

The second component of the first objective is developing land use tools to implement the local plans. Municipalities should employ a range of tools, including land use ordinances, to meet their community development objectives. The tables on pages ___ outline various land use tools and zoning techniques that are

available to Blair County municipalities. In particular, it is recommended that the municipalities adopt specific land use tools, such as conservation subdivision design, to provide increased options for residential development. The following types of residential development should be considered by Blair County municipalities:

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND): TND encourages the development of mixed-use, walkable communities. Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) should be explored in and around village and hamlet areas and on larger infill development sites. TND should be considered for new development in close proximity of Altoona, Hollidaysburg, and the smaller boroughs in the County.



Planned Residential Development (PRD): PRDs permit variations in lot requirements and uses within a development parcel to allow for a variety of housing types. Provisions encourage a variety of designs and types of housing arranged in an efficient manner on the land with set asides of common open space and recreational areas. The benefits of PRDs include allowing for a mix of housing types and densities, a much simpler and streamlined review process for developers, and the ability to address all aspects of the design through the review process.

Conservation Subdivision Design: Rural Conservation Subdivisions allow for flexibility in dimensional and use requirements, but focus more specifically on land conservation. According to the Natural Lands Trust, "Conservation Design rearranges the development on each parcel as it is being planned so that half (or more) of the buildable land is set aside as open space." This technique allows for the same number of dwellings

that would otherwise be permitted in the zoning district, but situates them on the parcel in a manner that maximizes contiguous open space. A Conservation Subdivision Design model ordinance is available from the Natural Lands Trust (NLT). It is recommended that Conservation Subdivision Design options be included as a permitted use in residential zoning districts to remove barriers from the use of this tool.



It is also recommended under the first objective that the Blair County Planning Commission and its member municipalities adopt smart planning guidelines in order to evaluate the impacts of future developments and ensure consistency with the Areawide Plan. Criteria for evaluation may include to what extent developments:

- Take advantage of existing infrastructure rather than require new construction and expansion of public infrastructure
- Conserve of land resources through infill and brownfield site redevelopment
- Encourage and mix of compatible land uses
- Reuse existing resources and sites in urban/semi-urban areas
- Recycle material and structures
- Conserve energy and other non-renewable resources
- Improve and restore natural systems and ecological features
- Promote long-term economic sustainability

The second objective focuses on the need to coordinate land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning. This is important because upgrades and extensions to public infrastructure and services should reinforce the goals and objective of the Areawide Plan. To that end, strategies focus on increasing coordination between the Blair County Planning Commission, local

municipalities, and service providers in the areas of public transit and transportation planning and sewage facilities planning.

The third objective looks to promote consistency in land use planning and prevent negative impacts of development through careful evaluation of developments of regional significance and impact and implementation of joint zoning, where feasible, closely tied to joint comprehensive plans.

The next objective focuses on strengthening the existing town and village centers through redevelopment, infill, and housing rehabilitation. Several municipalities have started to implement redevelopment projects, including Altoona, Tyrone, and Hollidaysburg. Such efforts should continue to be sustained and supported. Strategies also focus on improvements to existing commercial and residential areas through Main Street and Elm Street programs. It is recommended that municipalities examine land use ordinances to identify and remove potential barriers to redevelopment and reinvestment in existing downtowns. Finally, it is suggested that the Blair County Planning Commission and member municipalities consider the integration of smart growth principles in planning decisions and land use tools throughout the county.

Smart growth principles:

- Mixed land uses
- Compact design
- Range of housing choices
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Distinctive, attractive communities
- Preserved farmland and open space
- Investment in existing communities
- A range of transportation choices
- Fair and predictable development decisions
- Community and stakeholder collaboration

The fifth objective centers on the need and desire to preserve the character of rural communities in Blair County. A number of strategies overlap with those that are suggested in the Agricultural Preservation section. They focus on protecting agricultural land through land use tools, limiting investment in the extension of public infrastructure in rural resource areas, and protecting sensitive environmental areas in the County.

Finally, the last objective focuses on implementing design guidelines to encourage development that preserves and enhances the visual appeal of the County. Strategies focus on improvements to high visibility gateways and corridors and encouraging the adoption of model ordinances that include design standards and guidelines. In particular, guidelines and standards should be developed to address the following issues:

Neighborhood Design: Provide more neighborhood design options, such as conservation subdivision design and traditional neighborhood development. Assist municipalities in updating ordinances to integrate residential design features including sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, retaining natural vegetation, and appropriate road widths for neighborhood traffic.

Commercial Design: Encourage municipalities with strip style commercial development to institute a design review process for commercial buildings by adopting guidelines to reclaim existing strips and promote mixed-use, walkable developments. Encourage municipalities to adopt zoning standards for landscaping, buffer areas, building placement and orientation, façade design, access points, driveways and parking for commercial areas. Encourage municipalities with less commercial development pressure to adopt voluntary design guidelines for commercial development.

Hillside Development: Address the need for hillside planning to limit intensive land uses on steep slopes, ridges, and bluffs. Work with municipalities to create and adopt a hillside development policy and ordinance. The purpose of a hillside development ordinance is to protect lives and property from landslides and fire, protect environmental resources from damage or destruction, prevent erosion and stormwater management problems, protect the water supply, and maintain scenic views.

Signage: Create guidelines for signage control to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community. A sign ordinance also serves to preserve and enhance community aesthetics and character by minimizing sign clutter, unsightliness, confusion, and unsafe distraction to motorists. Signage guidelines should be recommended to municipalities with an emphasis on controlling signage along major commercial corridors and gateways, in historic and downtown districts, and along scenic roads that provide access to natural and cultural assets, scenic views, and bicycle routes and trails.

Billboards: Amortization does not apply to non-conforming billboards in Pennsylvania. Likewise, an outright ban of billboards in a municipality could be considered exclusionary zoning and subject to court challenges. An outright billboard ban should only be instituted in municipalities that can provide a significant case for the protection of the health, safety, morals, and welfare of the community. However, billboards should be restricted in key gateways, commercial corridors, historic districts, and other unique areas to Blair County. BCPC should work with municipalities to develop sign ordinances that designate specific location and size requirements, to require that billboards renew their sign permits on an annual basis, and require that billboards be removed if property owners change or if the billboard structure is significantly altered.

Table 3.1: Land Use Tools

Tool	Description
Zoning	<p>The purpose of a zoning ordinance is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of a community. A zoning ordinance is used to guide growth and development in a community by identifying community development objectives and laying out zoning districts. Zoning ordinances should adequately identify the type of land uses permitted, the location, and the intensity of development through density and bulk standards. In addition, zoning ordinances should adequately address pedestrian and bicycle facilities, landscaping, parking, and signage. Joint zoning should be encouraged where two or more municipalities have adopted a multi-municipal comprehensive plan.</p>
Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO)	<p>Subdivision is commonly referred to as the division of a parcel into two or more lots. Development activities outlined in the ordinance include construction of buildings, roads, utilities, parks, and other facilities. For those municipalities that do not have zoning ordinances, subdivision and land development ordinances should include separate development standards for a range of development types, such as office complexes, shopping centers, or multi-family residential. Subdivision and land development standards should be reasonable and objective, and consistent with the community development objectives of the municipality.</p>
Official Map	<p>The Official Map identifies the projected areas a municipality will eventually need for public purposes that elected officials can realistically expect to acquire. In short, the Official Map gives the municipality the right of first refusal to acquire a parcel. It identifies specific parcels or portions of private property within a municipality where public improvements are envisioned. An official map provides a focus for various agencies and boards to identify needed road improvements, wellhead protection areas, parks, playgrounds, open space, trails, and sites for other public purposes. Thus, the official map complements zoning and serves as a valuable tool to help implement the comprehensive plan and a capital improvement program. Community education is needed to ensure that landowners and residents understand the purpose of the Official Map.</p>

Table 3.2: Zoning Techniques

Technique	Applicability	Description
Act 167 Historic District Ordinance	Historic preservation of National Register Sites	Protects structures in a designated historic district and enables a municipality to designate a Historic Architectural Review Board to review developments in the historic district
Historic District Overlay	Historic Preservation	Outlines area, bulk, and incentive regulations for historic structures
Conservation Subdivision Design	Residential Development Open Space Protection	Requires consideration of natural and cultural resources in site design and development process; conserves a minimum of 50% of open space on the site
Traditional Neighborhood Development	Village and hamlet development Walkable communities Mixed-use	Allows for small scale mixed-use development with a range of housing types at higher densities to encourage walking
Planned Residential Development	Mixed housing types and densities	Mixes housing types of densities and streamlines the development review process
Agricultural zoning	Farmland preservation	Prohibits subdivision of land to allow for residential sub-divisions that consume and conflict with agricultural uses
Performance zoning	Open space/natural resource protection	Establishes performance criteria to be adopted to limit the negative impact of development
Form based zoning	Mixed-use development Community design	Establishes standards and criteria on buildings and site design, rather than use
Transfer of Development Rights	Open space protection	Allows for the transfer of development rights from sending areas to receiving areas
Sensitive Area Ordinance/ Overlays Floodplain Wetland Riparian Buffer Slopes/Hillsides Scenic River Scenic Roads	Protection of sensitive environmental features	Limits or prohibits development on and near sensitive environmental features and preserves scenic views by designating compatible uses and height restrictions

Table 3.2: Zoning Techniques cont.

Landscaping and Tree Ordinance	Protection of existing vegetation;	Limits construction activity to retain natural vegetation and require landscaping to improve aesthetics in new development
Wellhead Protection	Drinking water protection	Protects well quality by managing the type of development in buffered areas around wells
Signage	Community aesthetics and safety; preserving community character	Encourage consistency in design along corridors and prevent uncontrolled sign clutter
Access Management	Traffic flow and congestion along major corridors	Outlines access requirements to businesses and stores along major corridors to control traffic flow and reduce congestion; improves design of commercial corridors

Land Use and Planning

Objective 1.0: Promote land use planning, tools, and regulations that are consistent with the Areawide Plan and provide alternatives to conventional development patterns.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 1.1	<p>Provide technical and financial to support multi-municipal planning on a regional level. On a school district basis, Blair County Planning Commission should initiate multi-municipal planning efforts and educate municipal officials on the need for and benefits of good planning. Work with groups of municipalities to ensure consistency of goals, objectives, and land use plans between the Areawide Plan and the multi-municipal plans. Provide technical assistance and data to municipalities to facilitate local planning efforts, such as GIS data, population projections, economic and employment data, and land demand estimates.</p>	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; School Districts	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; Blair County Planning Commission	
LU 1.2	<p>Provide technical assistance to municipalities who have undergone municipal or multi-municipal planning to develop specific land use tools to implement the objectives identified in their plans.</p>	10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; School Districts	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; Blair County Planning Commission	
LU 1.3	<p>Encourage municipalities to update their ordinances to provide for innovative land use tools that encourage open space preservation. Limit sprawling development by allowing for a range of housing types and densities, such as traditional neighborhood development, planned residential development, and conservation subdivision design. Disseminate materials through publications and workshops to increase awareness of the benefits of conservation subdivisions and better design standards.</p>	10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; Natural Lands Trust; Pennsylvania Environmental Council	

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 1.4	Provide assistance to municipalities to update land use ordinances and tools to provide options for clustered commercial development with improved standards and design guidelines for large retail facilities.	10 years	Blair County Planning Commission, Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
LU 1.5	Adopt smart planning principles to evaluate the pros and cons of development projects (including Developments of Regional Significance and Impact) and consistency with the areawide comprehensive plans.	10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
LU 1.6	Implement a project to streamline and uniformize ordinance language among local governments in Blair County. This involves a detailed inventory of existing municipal zoning ordinances and districts, and the development of uniform districts, definitions, and standards to be applied consistently across the county. This project should be done concurrently with the development of model ordinance provisions that will introduce smart growth concepts into ordinance districts, definitions, and standards.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission, Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
LU 1.7	Reactivate the previously established Governmental Advisory Committee to provide support to local planning efforts. Such a committee should include local government officials from each planning region and should provide guidance to local communities in implementing local plans in a manner that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Areawide Plan.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission, Municipal Officials and Planning Commissioners	Blair County Planning Commission	

Objective 2.0: Coordinate land use planning, transportation planning, and infrastructure improvements to ensure that a full range of public infrastructure and services are adequately planned and provided in future growth areas.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 2.1	In partnership with Altoona Metro Transit (AMTRAN), identify appropriate areas in Altoona for the designation of a Transportation Revitalization Improvement Districts (TRID) or Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in order to provide incentives for economic development and revitalization of areas near mass transit locations. Eligible locations include any geographic area of a municipality or group of municipalities, including vacant, underutilized, or potentially re-developable land, within 1/8 mile to 1/2 mile radius from railroad, transit, light rail, busway, or other transit stops.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Metro Transit (AMTRAN)	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; PennDOT	
LU 2.2	Encourage municipalities to coordinate comprehensive planning and Act 537 Sewage Facilities Planning to ensure that land use and infrastructure planning are mutually supportive of the community's development goals and objectives. Recommend that municipalities include municipal authorities and engineers on comprehensive planning committees and a thorough review of Act 537 Plans is complete to identify inconsistencies with the community's development objectives.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Municipal Authorities	PA DCED-Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program, PA DEP Act 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Grants	
LU 2.3	Work with municipalities to direct public investments in roads and water/sewer infrastructure to targeted future growth areas identified on the Blair County Land Use Plan.	10-20 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Municipal Authorities	PA DCED, PennDOT, PennVest	

Objective 3.0: Promote consistency of land use both within and across municipal borders in order to prevent negative land use impacts on communities.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 3.1	Work with municipalities to establish a Development of Regional Significance and Impact (DORSI) review process and regional committees. It is the role of the DORSI review committee to consider the impacts of the development on roads, schools, municipal services (police, fire, EMS), infrastructure, and economic conditions in the County and advise the host municipality on a course of action. The review committee can involve the existing Blair County Planning Commission, a subset of the Commission, or a separate DORSI committee consisting of county and municipal representatives. However, the final decision-making authority for approval or denial of the DORSI rests with the host municipality.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; School Districts; Metropolitan Planning Organization	Blair County Planning Commission	
LU 3.2	Encourage joint zoning or multi-municipal coordination in developing zoning ordinances in order to provide for consistent and compatible land use patterns across municipal boundaries.	10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	

Objective 4.0: Revitalize existing urban areas and downtowns through infill and redevelopment efforts, and blight abatement.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 4.1	Identify and assist municipalities in applying for Main Street and Elm Street designation for downtown and neighborhood areas to support revitalization and historic preservation involving marketing, economic development, design enhancements, and partnership efforts. Communities must first establish a Main Street Program to be eligible for Elm Street. Work with Hollidaysburg Borough to identify lessons learned from their Main Street Program in order to benefit other downtown communities in Blair County.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Hollidaysburg Community Partnership; Community Development Organizations	PA DCED - Main Street and Elm Street Programs	
LU 4.2	Support funding needs to implement neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment projects and support on-going projects in Hollidaysburg, Altoona, Tyrone, and Logan Township.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; County of Blair Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Community Development Corporations	Community Development Block Grants; PA DCED - Community Revitalization Program and Urban Development Program	
LU 4.3	Work with municipalities to promote infill development that is consistent with existing development patterns through ordinances that encourage consistent design standards including sidewalks, setbacks, height, and parking standards.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 4.4	Promote redevelopment projects that meet the housing and community development needs of Blair County residents, such as senior housing. Work with the municipalities and the Redevelopment Authority to identify pockets of deteriorated housing where property acquisition, demolition, and redevelopment opportunities exist.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; County of Blair Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Housing and Redevelopment Assistance Program	
LU 4.5	Facilitate brownfield redevelopment and reuse of abandoned and/or vacant business and industrial sites.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Corporation; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DEP - Land Recycling Program	
LU 4.6	Facilitate floodplain redevelopment through voluntary programs to relocate people and homes out of floodplain areas. This will be an important component of the Blair County Hazard Mitigation Plan.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA Department of Emergency Management; Federal Emergency Management Agency	
LU 4.7	Focus resources on enhancing select neighborhoods that have a distinct character and mixed-use village orientation in order to attract younger people and professionals to Blair County's urban areas.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	PA DCED - Main Street and Elm Street Programs	
LU 4.8	Incorporate livability and smart growth principles in all levels of planning in Blair County in order to promote investment in existing communities.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; School Districts	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	

Objective 5.0: Preserve the character and function of rural areas through support for agricultural preservation efforts, directing development toward villages that serve as community centers, and protecting key natural areas and open space.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 5.1	Protect agricultural land and prime farmland by directing residential and commercial development that requires infrastructure toward existing village centers through the designation of Future Growth Areas and Rural Resource Areas.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
LU 5.2	Support municipal efforts to preserve prime farmland by encouraging low-density development on wooded lots that do not require significant infrastructure investment. Support this policy through designated Rural Resources Areas, zoning, and subdivision and land development ordinances that minimize disturbance of prime farmland by requiring placement of homes near roads or tucked on wooded lots.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
LU 5.3	Preserve open space through the creation of a Blair County greenway network.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Allegheny Ridge Corporation; Blair County Rails to Trails; Juniata Valley Audubon Society; Canoe Creek State Park	PA DCNR - Heritage Parks Grants and Community Conservation and Recreation Program; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy	

Objective 6.0: Encourage the development and implementation of land use tools and regulations that promote a positive community image.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 6.1	<p>Support municipal efforts to upgrade and enhance the following gateways and high visibility corridors to improve the safety and aesthetics of the corridor through standards that address traffic, access, signage, and design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route 36 / Union Ave – Hollidaysburg (Emeigh Bridge) through Altoona • Route 764 / 6th and 7th Ave. – Duncansville (Rt.22) through Altoona • 17th Street from I-99 through the City of Altoona to 12th Avenue • Pleasant Valley Blvd./Plank Road – Duncansville (Rt.22) through Greenwood • Chestnut Avenue through the City of Altoona • Convention Center Blvd. • Interstate 99 Corridor 	2 to 5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	PennDOT; Metropolitan Planning Organization for Blair County; PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
LU 6.2	<p>Partner with the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation to implement the “Visual Appeal, Economic Development and Sense of Place” White Paper for Blair County, which seeks to promote a modern community image in Blair County. Utilize the White Paper to initiate an on-going discussion with local governments and business leaders the actions required to improve the visual image and attractiveness of Blair County in order to be competitive on a regional and national level.</p>	2 to 5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 6.3	Explore the application of form-based codes and mixed-use zoning districts in municipalities striving to achieve more flexibility in permitted uses, while encouraging design that is consistent with the community character. Form-based codes provide more flexibility in allowing for a mix of uses by focusing on the density, size, form, and placement of buildings and parking, and less on the land use itself. Simple and clear graphic illustrations are used to identify desired development in a community.	10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	

Objective 7.0: Create, enhance, and improve the existing sense of place created by the City, Boroughs, and villages that are Blair County's core communities.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 7.1	Work with municipalities to ensure that zoning ordinances adequately protect the integrity and historic character of designated Historic Districts on the National Register of Historic Places, including those in Hollidaysburg, Altoona, Tyrone Borough, Williamsburg Borough, and Roaring Spring Borough. Work with the municipalities to identify additional neighborhoods worthy of historic designation and protection using historic districts and overlays.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission, Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	National Register of Historic Places; PA Historical and Museum Commission; PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	

HOUSING STRATEGIES

Information gathered as part of the planning process indicates that housing issues focus primarily on the need for a variety of affordable housing in the County. Results from the community survey do indicate that residents find Blair County to be an affordable place to live. However, with an aging population and many residents on fixed incomes, it will be increasingly important that residents have access to affordable housing. Likewise, the changing nature of the population will demand new and different types of housing to accommodate varying lifestyles. In order to address these housing issues, the plan identifies the following objectives:

- Preserve and enhance the existing housing stock throughout the County so that it remains in sound and livable condition.
- Support development efforts that provide for a variety of housing types at a range of affordability levels to meet the changing housing needs of Blair County residents.
- Promote new housing development in identified growth areas by implementing alternatives to conventional residential development patterns through land use tools that preserve open space and promote compact design.
- Promote neighborhood development that is consistent and compatible in design and architecture with the surrounding community.

The first objective emphasizes the importance of maintaining the existing housing stock in the County. This is important in order to retain the livability of the urban centers and core communities in the County. Therefore, strategies focus on promoting housing redevelopment and rehabilitation and promoting home ownership in the urban communities. In addition, an emphasis is placed on facilitating infill development through flexibility in land use ordinances and planning for potential redevelopment sites.

Strategies that aim to provide for a variety of housing types in the county emphasize both affordability and density. It is recommended that the Blair County

Planning Commission (BCPC) continue to support the on-going efforts of public and non-profit institutions to provide affordable housing options to residents. In addition, it is recommended that the BCPC provide technical assistance to municipalities in the evaluation of zoning ordinances, to ensure that a variety of housing types are allowed at appropriate densities.

The third strategy recognizes that housing will consume more land than any other land use in Blair County over the next 20 years. In order to meet the conservation goals of the County, new housing development should not compromise the rural character or rural land uses in the County. Therefore, the plan recommends that municipalities adopt land use policies and tools that allow for more flexibility in preserving farmland and open space, such as conservation subdivision design.

Finally, recommendations focus on the preservation and enhancement of community character. Strategies are designed to promote community aesthetics and neighborhood desirability by providing for neighborhood amenities that support livability and a sense of community. In addition, recommendations focus on protecting the integrity and character of historic districts and neighborhoods.



Housing

Objective 1.0: Preserve and enhance the existing housing stock throughout the County so that it remains in sound and livable condition.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
H 1.1	Encourage redevelopment planning in urban areas and villages to identify neighborhoods for targeted housing improvements. Develop and implement neighborhood plans that outline strategies for acquisition of blighted areas, demolition of buildings that are beyond repair, rehabilitation of those for which it is economically feasible, and promotion of new construction on infill sites.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; County of Blair Housing and Redevelopment Authority; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Partners in Neighborhood Revitalization	DCED - Housing and Redevelopment Assistance Program and Urban Development Program; Community Development Block Grants	
H 1.2	Support municipal efforts in urban areas to identify and map vacant lots and buildings in need of demolition in order to identify priority sites for infill development. Ensure that local zoning ordinances provide adequate flexibility to enable infill development to take place.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; County of Blair Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Housing Authorities and Community Organizations	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
H 1.3	Work with public and non-profit partners to expand housing rehabilitation programs in the County, targeting urban areas and villages.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Partners in Neighborhood Revitalization, Inc.; Improved Dwellings for Altoona	DCED - Housing and Redevelopment Assistance Program and Urban Development Program	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
H 1.4	Encourage Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions to participate in the Elm Street Program, which provides funding for enhancement of residential neighborhoods in close proximity to a downtown shopping district. Establishment of a Main Street Program is a criteria for participation in the Elm Street Program.	2 to 5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - ELM Street Program	
H 1.5	Work with local non-profits and housing authorities to expand home ownership programs in conjunction with acquisition, rehab, and resale programs.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Housing Opportunities of Blair County; Housing Authorities; Habitat for Humanity	Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency; DCED - Community Revitalization Program	
H 1.6	Promote homeownership throughout the County in order to encourage residents to take pride in their home and community, improve community image and aesthetics, increase property values, and support the tax base.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Local Municipalities; Housing Opportunities of Blair County; Habitat for Humanity	DCED - Community Revitalization Program	
H 1.7	Encourage the on-going maintenance of the housing stock through homeowner education programs and code enforcement.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; County of Blair Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Community Revitalization Program	

Objective 2.0: Support development efforts that provide for a variety of housing types at a range of affordability levels to meet the changing housing needs of Blair County residents.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
H 2.1	Continue to support the efforts of the Blair County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, the Altoona Housing Authority, and Improved Dwellings for Altoona in the administration of affordable housing programs for families and the elderly.	on-going	County of Blair Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Altoona Housing Authority; Improved Dwellings for Altoona	Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency	
H 2.2	Work with municipalities to evaluate zoning ordinances to ensure that a range of housing types and densities are provided for to accommodate disabled persons, families, retirees, and elderly people. Municipalities should allow for the development of assisted living facilities, multi-family dwellings, townhouses/duplexes, and quads/patio homes that provide variation in choice for housing. Land use ordinances should provide for housing options that suit the growing elderly population in Blair County.	2 - 5 years	Blair County Planning Commission, Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
H 2.3	Encourage redevelopment efforts in the urban and village areas to include a mix of housing types that fit within the character of the community. Identify redevelopment areas and opportunities for infill housing for senior citizens, young professionals, and families.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; County of Blair Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Partners in Neighborhood Revitalization; Be Proud Task Force	DCED - Housing and Redevelopment Assistance Program and Urban Development Program; Community Development Block Grants	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
H 2.4	Engage in dialogue with developers to gauge the market for varying housing types and identify opportunities and challenges for alternatives to single-family housing.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Blair County Builder's Association	County and Municipal Assistance	
H 2.5	Review local comprehensive plans and land use ordinances within the context of the Areawide Plan to ensure consistency with the goal of providing for a variety of housing options.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Assistance	
H 2.6	Encourage and support the development of market rate housing in urban areas in order to provide for a mix of incomes and diversity in urban areas.	5 -10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Builder's Association Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Assistance	
H 2.7	Support affordable housing programs that provide extended services to low-income persons and families in the form of job training, educational opportunities, and social and mental health services.	on-going	Blair County Human Services; Blair County Community Action Agency; Blair Senior Services, Inc.	County and Municipal Assistance	

Objective 3.0: Promote new housing development in identified growth areas by implementing alternatives to conventional residential development patterns through land use tools that preserve open space and promote compact design.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
H 3.1	Encourage the creation of higher density urban housing through zoning that is consistent with existing neighborhood design and community character in redevelopment of Blair County's core communities.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
H 3.2	Work with suburban municipalities to ensure that alternatives to conventional single-family subdivisions are offered through zoning. Promote innovative housing development alternatives such as Conservation Subdivision Design and Traditional Neighborhood Development.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; Natural Lands Trust	
H 3.3	Encourage multi-municipal planning to coordinate local objectives for residential development along the I-99 corridor extension to State College, and implement corresponding land use tools that are consistent with local objectives.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
H 3.4	Promote efficient and orderly residential land development in rural areas with minimal fragmentation of prime farmland by promoting new residential development within and near existing boroughs and villages.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
H 3.5	In rural areas with limited public infrastructure, limit the number of residential lots on a site to a reasonable number that can be adequately supported by on-lot septic systems without producing negative environmental and public health impacts.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Assistance	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
H 3.6	Maintain a database to track residential land development in Blair County over time to assess trends in land consumption relative to population. Such a database is useful in assessing the effectiveness of county and local land use policies regarding residential development.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Assistance	
H 3.7	Work with municipalities to prioritize the use of county, state, and federal funding for housing projects to areas with existing infrastructure and within close proximity to existing community facilities.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Assistance	

Objective 4.0: Promote neighborhood development that is consistent and compatible in design and architecture with the surrounding community.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
H 4.1	Provide assistance to municipalities to update land use ordinances and design standards for sidewalks, setbacks, height, and parking to promote redevelopment in Blair County's core urban areas that is consistent with existing development patterns. Zoning in urban areas should accurately reflect existing housing patterns, seek to preserve the unique characteristics of the community, and offer flexibility in order to generate investment.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; ABCD Corporation; Be Proud Task Force	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
H 4.2	Explore the application of form-based codes and mixed-use zoning districts in municipalities striving to achieve more flexibility in permitted uses, while encouraging design that is consistent with the community character.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; ABCD Corporation; Be Proud Task Force	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
H 4.3	Work with municipalities to ensure that zoning ordinances adequately protect the integrity and historic character of designated Historic Districts, including those in Hollidaysburg, Altoona, Tyrone Borough, Williamsburg Borough, and Roaring Spring Borough.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Historic Architectural Review Boards	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
H 4.4	Increase education and awareness of municipal officials, homebuilders, realtors, and homeowners on the impact of neighborhood design on property values and desirability of the neighborhood.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Blair County Home Builders Association; Be Proud Task Force; ABCD Corporation	County and Municipal Assistance	
H 4.5	Encourage the development of a local group of historic preservation contractors that are experienced in historically appropriate renovation and repair work that meet the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB) approval. Currently, there is a lack of contractors with historic preservation training in Blair County and property owners in historic districts are waded of the district requirements due to the high cost and lack of trained contractors.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Historic Review and Architectural Board; Blair County Builder's Association	County and Municipal Assistance	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

Support for economic development was evident throughout the planning process and emerged as a priority issue in public meetings, focus groups, and the community survey. Respondents to the community survey indicated one of the greatest challenges to Blair County is the lack of interesting job opportunities and need for higher quality employment opportunities. By far the largest number of write-in comments on the survey stated that attracting new business to create jobs is the most pressing issue for the County. When asked to prioritize public spending, more than half of respondents designated spending for economic/business development as the first priority public investment. In light of the importance of economic development to the community, the steering committee identified the following key objectives for Blair County with input from economic development organizations:

- Support the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation in its efforts to retain and attract businesses and industries that provide high quality employment opportunities in the County.
- Foster the type of community and environment that attracts businesses by improving the key factors that influence business site selection. These include: 1) access to a skilled and educated workforce; 2) good transportation systems, infrastructure, and services; 3) quality business climate and education system; and 4) good quality of life and community image.
- Focus infrastructural investments and add value to Blair County communities by developing cultural/entertainment opportunities, technological resources, and neighborhood amenities that firms currently seek in more sophisticated, urban environments.
- Ensure that agriculture is a viable and strong contributor to the Blair County economy by supporting local farm production and limiting development on prime agricultural soils and agricultural soils of statewide importance.
- Encourage business friendly regulations on a local and state level in order to improve the

business climate in Pennsylvania and streamline regulatory procedures where opportunities exist.

- Support the development of the tourism industry by promoting significant historic and cultural sites in the County as tourist attractions through heritage tourism programs and projects.
- Work with economic development agencies to market the benefits of doing business in Blair County.

The economic development strategies target several areas in order to provide a positive economic outlook and high quality of life in the County. The first objection focuses on retaining and attracting high quality employers. The primary strategy for which is to work through existing agencies and partnerships, such as the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation, to expand ready-to-go sites, reuse former industrial and brownfield sites, and take advantage of state programs such as the Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) and Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ).

The second target area is providing businesses and industries with the optimal business environment so that they will choose to locate in Blair County. This includes making investments in workforce training, infrastructure, and public services. More and more, community image and quality of life are important considerations for both residents and businesses when considering a location for settlement. Therefore, one key strategy identified by the plan is to expand current efforts to improve the community image and quality of life factors so that Blair County is competitive for quality jobs and employers. In particular, it is suggested that the Blair County Planning Commission partner with the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation to implement the “Visual Appeal, Economic Development and Sense of Place” White Paper for Blair County. The white paper outlines opportunities and challenges to promoting a modern community image in Blair County. One key strategy is to utilize the White Paper to initiate an on-going discussion with local governments, business leaders, and community members on the actions required to improve the visual image and attractiveness of Blair County in order to be competitive on a regional and national level.

Other economic development strategies involve making investments in transportation (air, freight, and rail), telecommunications, and natural gas infrastructure. In addition, it is recommended that the Blair County Planning Commission assist local municipalities in reviewing land use ordinances to identify areas where local government regulations serve as barriers to economic development.

Strategies also focus on supporting two key economic sectors for Blair County – agriculture and tourism. Support for the agricultural sector focuses on both the preservation of prime farmland and the identification of new agricultural markets. Both are required in order for agriculture to remain viable in Blair County. As discussed in previous sections, Blair County has strong tourism potential for both recreation and heritage tourism, which should be pursued along with revitalization and redevelopment plans.

Finally, it is recognized that economic development in Blair County requires a strong regional marketing plan for Blair County and south-central Pennsylvania. A marketing plan requires the efforts of local and regional economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, business associations, and local governments.

Suggested Actions to Improve the Image and Competitiveness of Blair County:

- Target high profile gateways and corridors for improvement
- Participate in local planning processes to support the implementation design standards to improve the visual impact of the target areas. Design standards should address build-to lines (setbacks), building height and orientation, parking to the side or rear of buildings, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, signage, and street layout, width, and design that encourages connectivity and walkability. In addition, ordinances should allow for higher-density, mixed-use development in urban areas.
- Monitor and maintain green space along existing corridors
- Support the Adopt a Highway Program
- Develop a program that recognizes businesses and residences that promote a positive visual impact
- Inventory corridors to identify priority improvements and communicate findings with municipal officials
- Identify infrastructure needs to support redevelopment and rehabilitation projects along priority corridors
- Develop recommended themed designs and corridor features in cooperation with tourism groups

Economic Development

Objective 1.0: Support the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation in its efforts to retain and attract businesses and industries that provide high quality employment opportunities in the County.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 1.1	Provide technical support, such as mapping services, to the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation in implementing their business recruitment strategy, which targets companies that show strong potential for economic development in the County. Business recruitment efforts should target companies that are similar in their business needs and business models as existing successful businesses in Blair County. Marketing efforts should also focus on utilizing the skills of the current and future workforce and creating job opportunities that attract new residents.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	Blair County Planning Commission Technical Assistance	
ED 1.2	Promote the full utilization of the Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ), Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zoning (KOEZ), Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ), and LERTA district sites and existing business/industrial parks in Blair County. Market the benefits of KOZ, KOEZ, and KIZ sites for both residential and industrial development to potential developers and employers.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED; Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission	
ED 1.3	Support cooperative relationships between economic development agencies, colleges/universities, and local health care institutions to implement re-training and re-education programs focused on emerging industries, such as biotech and health sciences, medical devices, higher education, software development, engineering, and information technology. Workforce development and training should be closely coordinated with business recruitment efforts to ensure that skills match with the needs of modern employers.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Penn State - Altoona Campus; Altoona Regional Health Systems	Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 1.4	Encourage business start-up activities through support for business development ventures and small business financing programs.	5 years	Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission	PA DCED - Small Business Service Centers and Small Businesses First; Pennsylvania Capital Access Program; Community Economic Development Program	
ED 1.5	Promote the Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ) I-99 Innovation Corridor in partnership with the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation, Bedford County, Centre County, and Pennsylvania State University (PSU). Highlight the connections to State College and major east/west corridors (I-76 and I-80), providing for business, industry, and residential development opportunities.	2-5 years	Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Bedford and Centre Counties; Penn State University	PA DCED - Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ)	
ED 1.6	Involve the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation in local and regional planning efforts to ensure that future land use planning is coordinated with industrial park, KOZ site, and Enterprise Zone expansion plans.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
ED 1.7	Work with the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation to promote business and industry park development in a manner that is consistent with the land use goals and objectives of the Areawide Comprehensive Plan.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	Blair County Planning Commission Technical Assistance	

Objective 2.0: Foster the type of community and environment that attracts businesses by improving the key factors that influence business site selection. These include: 1) access to a skilled and educated workforce; 2) good transportation systems, infrastructure, and services; 3) quality business climate and education system; and 4) good quality of life and community image.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 2.1	Work in partnership with the school districts and colleges/universities to improve the level of education of Blair County residents through high school retention programs and promotion of higher education and vo-tech programs.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County School Districts and School Boards; Penn State University	Blair County School Districts; Penn State Altoona	
ED 2.2	Support the advancement of research and development at Penn State University in the area of materials science, as well as the specialization of K-12 curriculums to introduce new fields and career paths to students.	5-10 years	Penn State University; Blair County School Districts and School Boards	Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority - Technology Development Grant	
ED 2.3	Support the development of a well-networked transportation system that provides options for multi-modal freight transport by highway, rail, and air service.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Metropolitan Planning Organization for Blair County (MPO); Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission	Transportation Improvement Plan; PA DCED - Rail Freight Assistance	
ED 2.4	Promote the use of the Altoona Blair County Airport for freight transport and corporate services by recruiting new carriers, improving vehicular access to the airport, and improving on-site amenities.	10 years	Altoona Blair County Airport Authority; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 2.5	Work with economic development agencies and local governments to ensure that adequate infrastructure and services are provided to create ready-to-go sites for business and industry. Infrastructure improvements should be targeted in existing business and industrial parks, urban centers, brownfield sites, and vacant and/or underutilized industrial sites.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commission; Municipal Authorities; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	PA DCED - Businesses in Out Sites Program; Pennsylvania Industrial Development Corporation	
ED 2.6	In partnership with local municipalities, economic development agencies, and private investors, redevelop priority brownfield sites, including the Hollidaysburg Car Shops, and recycle vacant business and commercial sites to provide reuse opportunities for emerging sectors, such as the health care, life sciences, technology sectors.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Municipal Officials and Planning Commission	PA DCED - Industrial Sites Reuse Program; PA DEP - Land Recycling Program	
ED 2.7	Address the need for natural gas resources in the northern end of Blair County through feasibility studies, in order to provide adequate infrastructure for new business and industry.	10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials; Utility Service Providers	Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	
ED 2.8	Support partnerships between the education and business community to improve communication about employer needs and promote business and education opportunities in Blair County.	on-going	Penn State University; Blair County Businesses and/or Business Associations	PA DCED - Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ)	

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 2.9	Partner with the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation to implement the “Visual Appeal, Economic Development and Sense of Place” White Paper for Blair County, which seeks to promote a modern community image in Blair County. Utilize the White Paper to initiate an on-going discussion with local governments, business leaders, and community members on the actions required to improve the visual image and attractiveness of Blair County in order to be competitive on a regional and national level.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Municipal Officials and Planning Commission; Blair County Chamber of Commerce	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	

Objective 3.0: Focus infrastructural investments and add value to Blair County communities by developing cultural/entertainment opportunities, technological resources, and neighborhood amenities that firms currently seek in more sophisticated, urban environments.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 3.1	Incorporate livability and smart growth principles in all levels of planning in Blair County in order to promote investment in existing communities.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; School Districts	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
ED 3.2	Support initiatives to improve the economic and financial health of the City of Altoona through reinvestment in vacant business and industrial sites, downtown redevelopment, and encouraging private investment in the existing housing stock. Such efforts should increase the image and desirability of Altoona, which in turn, has a positive impact on the image of the entire County.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Private Investors	PA DCED - Community Revitalization Program; Main Street/Elm Street Programs; Housing and Redevelopment Assistance Program	
ED 3.3	Work with the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation, the Be Proud Taskforce, and other interest groups to develop model subdivision and land development ordinances (SALDO) and model zoning provisions that include design standards, which support improved livability and desirability of Blair County's urban areas.	2 to 5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Be Proud Task Force	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
ED 3.4	Proactively encourage the development of state-of-the-art communications infrastructure in Blair County, such as wireless (WiFi) neighborhoods.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Telecommunications Providers	Public and Private Resources	

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 3.5	Encourage and permit by local ordinance live-work spaces, low impact home-based businesses, and other entrepreneurial development types that allow for a diversity of working environments.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
ED 3.6	Focus resources on enhancing select neighborhoods that have a distinct character and mixed-use village orientation in order to attract younger people and professionals to Blair County's urban areas.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Be Proud Task Force	PA DCED - Main Street/Elm Street Programs	

Objective 4.0: Encourage business friendly regulations on a local and state level in order to improve the business climate in Pennsylvania and streamline regulatory procedures where opportunities exist.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 4.1	Provide assistance to municipalities to evaluate their land use ordinances to identify opportunities for streamlining site plan review and approval processes. Evaluate land use ordinances to eliminate vague and/or confusing language and provide clear guidelines for development.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
ED 4.2	Work with municipalities to identify opportunities for service sharing and joint land use planning to create consistent land use patterns and better efficiencies that benefit business and industry.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; PA DCED - Shared Municipal Services Program	
ED 4.3	Proactively engage leadership at the state level to address statewide challenges to business development (unemployment compensation costs, worker's compensation costs, and state corporate income tax structure) and identify potential solutions for improving the business climate in Pennsylvania.	2 years	Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Corporation; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	County Funds and Assistance	

Objective 5.0: Ensure that agriculture is a viable and strong contributor to the Blair County economy by supporting local farm production and limiting development on prime agricultural soils and agricultural soils of statewide importance.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 5.1	Work with municipalities to update land use tools in order to direct business and industrial development to urban and village areas where a full range of public facilities and infrastructure are available.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
ED 5.2	Develop an agricultural marketing campaign to promote agricultural products produced in Blair County.	2-5 years	Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Local Farmers and Cooperatives	PA DCED - First Industries Fund	
ED 5.3	Encourage and support the formation of community-based agriculture initiatives. Such initiatives encourage farmers to sell products directly to consumers through cooperatives, community-supported farms, retail outlets on the farm, and farmer's markets.	on-going	Local Communities and Farmers; Farming Associations	PA Department of Agriculture	
ED 5.4	Support farmer's efforts to market locally grown produce to be sold at existing retail outlets (ex. grocery stores) in the County. Identify opportunities for downtown revitalization through farmer's markets. Local zoning ordinances should not overly restrict farmer's markets.	2-5 years	Local Communities and Farmers	PA Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Product Promotion Matching Grant Program	
ED. 5.5	Support the efforts of agricultural organizations and agencies that provide business development training to farmers and identify technologies that support the economic viability of agriculture.	on-going	Penn State Cooperative Extension	PA Department of Agriculture	

Objective 6.0: Support the development of the tourism industry by promoting significant historic and cultural sites in the County as tourist attractions through heritage tourism programs and projects.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 6.1	Create a Blair County tourism and travel guide that includes articles and information on outdoor activities (hiking, fishing, biking, etc), historic sites, and entertainment venues. Disseminate information over the internet and through written publications.	2-5 years	Blair County Chamber of Commerce; Blair County Historical Society	Allegheny Mountains and Visitors Bureau; Southern Alleghenies Tourism Confederation	
ED 6.2	Encourage the formation of business partnerships through business associations to promote retail shopping districts that are tied into cultural and historic districts and sites.	2-5 years	Blair County Chamber of Commerce; Business Associations; Blair County Historical Society	Blair County Chamber of Commerce	

Objective 7.0: Work with economic development agencies to market the benefits of doing business in Blair County.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 7.1	Act as a partner in strengthening the lines of communication between businesses (Chambers of Commerce), local governments, economic development agencies, and real estate professionals to market Blair County to potential investors.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials; Blair County Chamber of Commerce; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	County Technical Assistance	
ED 7.2	Promote marketable aspects of Blair County to potential investors including the quality and success of the school districts, proximity to major markets (Pittsburgh, Washington-Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York) via the I-99 corridor, and affordable housing stock.	on-going	Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission	Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission	
ED 7.3	Support the mobilization of Blair County businesses to market their services to local consumers and throughout the state.	2 years	Blair County Chamber of Commerce; Business and Trade Associations	Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission	

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES STRATEGIES

Protecting sensitive environmental resources such as floodplains, streams, forests, and riparian buffers was noted as a high priority among public meeting participants during the planning process. Results from the community survey show that over 50% of respondents value the scenic beauty of the area as one of top three things they like about living in Blair County. In addition, water resource protection, stormwater management, and flood prevention were all cited by municipal officials as important issues that need to be addressed in Blair County. Therefore, it was clear throughout the planning process that protecting sensitive environment features to preserve the natural beauty of Blair County and protect the public health are important to residents and municipalities. Table 3.3 on page 284 outline tools that are available to municipalities to implement the environment and natural resource strategies. The following objectives were identified to meet Blair County's environmental goals:

- Severely restrict development on sensitive environmental features and prime farmland, including wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes over 25%.
- Enhance and conserve the environmental resources (air, water, land) in Blair County, including core natural areas, important bird areas (IBAs), important mammal areas (IMAs), biological diversity areas, and water supply watersheds.
- Protect Blair County communities and the environmental health of waterways and watersheds through flood controls, stormwater management, and reduction of non-point source pollutants throughout the county.
- Eliminate illegal dumping of waste on land and in streams through regulatory and voluntary efforts.
- Create a greenway system and open space network that includes important natural and cultural features such as contiguous forestlands, scenic areas and viewsheds, natural heritage areas, and significant historic sites. Corridors

that connect Blair County's core natural areas should be part of the greenway system, including stream corridors and mountain ridges.

- Promote energy efficiency to conserve water, electricity, fuel, and raw materials.

The first objective focuses on implementing sensitive area ordinances to limit or restrict development on sensitive environmental features, including floodplains, steep slopes, wetlands, and riparian buffer areas. Protecting these features provides ecological, aesthetic, and public health benefits by preventing flooding, land slides, and erosion and sedimentation. Several model ordinances are available to municipalities, including stormwater and floodplain protection ordinances developed by the Pennsylvania Department of the Environment. A model riparian buffer ordinance is available from the Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds.

The second objective focuses on preserving unique ecological and biological areas in the County, namely intact forests, mountain and ridge tops, and areas identified as Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and Important Mammal Areas (IMAs). Land acquisition and preservation efforts should be targeted in those areas of the County that have been identified to be ecologically and biologically significant. Designated IBAs include Tussey Mountain, the Canoe Creek Watershed, the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River, and Bald Eagle Creek. Designated IMAs include the Canoe Creek Watershed. Furthermore, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy recently completed a Natural Heritage Inventory for Blair County, which identifies significant biological diversity areas and landscape conservation areas.

The next objective focuses on watershed protection by promoting improved stormwater management and floodplain protection. Recommendations include developing a hazard mitigation plan with an emphasis on flood prevention, implementing stormwater management plans for designated watersheds, and participating in the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy, which identifies new targets for watershed protection. This objective should also be implemented through increased education on the importance of stormwater management, including individual actions residents and businesses can take to protect their watersheds.

Illegal dumping was cited as a key environmental and public health issue by several municipalities during the planning process. Therefore, an objective was created to address this specific issue through education on the negative impacts of dumping and increased enforcement of local ordinances. In addition, the Areawide Plan supports the implementation of the Blair County Solid Waste Management Plan, including targets for recycling and efforts to increase efficiencies in municipal waste collection.

The Blair County Greenway Plan is included as a separate section in the Areawide Plan. The Greenway Plan identifies a potential greenway network for the County, with the goal of providing for water resource protection, natural resource protection, and recreational trails. Implementing the Greenway Plan is a key strategy, in addition to supporting on-going greenway and trail projects, such as extension of the Lower Trail and the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway.



Conservation practices in both business operations and lifestyle choices. Grants, tax incentives, and special loans are available to both businesses and private residents that adopt energy conservation technologies and practices. In addition, it is important that local governments look to ways to reduce energy consumption through audits, in order to identify ways to reduce the cost and environmental impact and energy consumption. Tools for Environmental Protection and Open Space Preservation:

Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Targets:

- Reduce nitrogen discharges to the Bay to no more than 71.9 million pounds. It will require a reduction goal of 37.3 million pounds from the year 2002 watershed model loads.
- Reduce phosphorus discharges to the Bay to no more than 2.47 million pounds. This will require a reduction goal of 1.11 million pounds from the year 2002 watershed model loads.
- Reduce sediment discharges to the Bay to no more than 0.995 million tons. This will require a reduction goal of 116,000 tons from the year 2002 watershed model loads.

Initiatives to achieve Pennsylvania's nutrient and sediment reduction goals:

- Limiting wastewater and industrial discharges
- Upgrading Sewer & Water Infrastructure
- Enhancing Stormwater Management
- Preserving Agriculture, Communities and Rural Environments
- Accelerating Dam Removals & Building Fish Passageways
- Expanding the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
- Increasing Forested Buffers & Wetlands
- Promoting Manure-to-Energy Programs
- Nutrient Trading
- Conservation Easement for Riparian Buffer Areas
- Implementation of Growing Greener II

Table 3.3 Open Space Protection Tools

Tool	Description
Land Trust/ Conservation Easement Program	Identify potential public/private partnerships to support a Blair County land trust for the purpose of protecting environmentally significant land in the County through conservation easements (purchases and voluntary donations of development rights). Engage nearby land trusts such as the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy to identify opportunities for projects in Blair County. Such a land trust should coordinate with existing greenway and environmental conservation efforts and groups in the County.
PA Farmland Preservation Agricultural Easement Program	Continue to support the PA Farmland Preservation Conservation Easement purchase program. This program is designed to purchase development rights on prime farmland that meets the program criteria.
Forest Legacy Program	Identify a local sponsor to support the Forest Legacy Program in Blair County. The Forest Legacy Program provides funding for conservation easements on privately-owned environmentally sensitive forest lands. Participation in the program requires identification and designation of eligible Forest Legacy Areas in cooperation with the PA State Forester. High priority forest land for Blair County include the four Important Bird Areas (IBAs) – Canoe Creek, Bald Eagle Ridge, Greater Tussey Mountain, Frankstown Branch and Juniata River.
Land Acquisition for Open Space, Parks, and Greenways	BCPC should work with local municipalities, municipal authorities, and other interested parties in identifying priority open space, park, conservation, and greenway lands for direct acquisition and management. Funding options for acquisition will need to be identified.
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)	TDRs allow landowners in areas where conservation is desired to transfer some or all of the development rights associated with their land (sending areas) to areas where growth is desired at densities in excess of that permitted by current zoning (receiving areas). Under the PA MPC, TDRs can be used only by municipalities that have adopted a joint zoning ordinance.
Sensitive area zoning ordinance overlays	Protect sensitive areas, including riparian buffers, hillsides, floodplains, and wetlands, from intensive development

Environment and Natural Resources

Objective 1.0: Severely restrict development on sensitive environmental features and prime farmland, including wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes over 25%.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 1.1	Protect steep slopes and floodplains from development by working with municipalities to implement sensitive area ordinances for hillsides and floodplains. Provide GIS mapping of these areas to the municipalities and develop and/or disseminate sensitive areas model zoning ordinances to encourage consistent regulations to protect environmental features throughout the County.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP)	
ENV 1.2	Identify and prioritize high quality wetlands for protection and restoration using the Penn State Cooperative Wetland Center database and Upper Juniata Wetlands Pilot Study. Encourage the protection of exceptional value wetlands in the County by establishing natural buffers around wetlands. One exceptional value wetland has been identified at the intersection of Sabbath Rest Road and Route 220 at the headwaters of Sandy Run in Antis Township (Region 2). Protective measures, such as buffers and use of best management practices on adjoining lands are needed to ensure the integrity of this exceptional value wetland.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Blair County Conservation District	Penn State Cooperative Wetland Center; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; PA DEP	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 1.3	Protect High Quality and Exceptional Value stream corridors from development and stormwater run-off. High Quality waters include Mill Run, Canoe Creek, Piney Creek, Clover Creek, Tipton Run, and Big Fill Run. Big Fill Run is also designated at the only Exceptional Value waterway in the County. Stream protection measures may include designating riparian buffers and working with municipalities to implement riparian buffer ordinances. Additional priority stream corridors include Bald Eagle Creek, the Little Juniata River, and the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Blair County Conservation District; Watershed Organizations; Juniata Valley Audubon Society	PA DEP; Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds; Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	
ENV 1.4	Increase education and awareness on the importance of protecting sensitive environmental features in the County, including the associated financial and ecological benefits.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Conservation District; School Districts; Conservation Groups and Chapters	County and Municipal Funds	
ENV 1.5	Support the Blair County Conservation District's Erosion and Sedimentation control program and the promotion of erosion and sedimentation control Best Management Practices (BMPs).	on-going	Blair County Conservation District	Blair County Conservation District; PA DEP	

Objective 2.0: Enhance and conserve the environmental resources (air, water, land) in Blair County, including core natural areas, important bird areas (IBAs), important mammal areas (IMAs), biological diversity areas, and water supply watersheds.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 2.1	Protect and preserve core natural areas using open space preservation tools and sustainable forest management practices. Core natural areas include contiguous forestland along the Tussey Mountain, Canoe Mountain, Brush Mountain, Bald Eagle Mountain, Lock Mountain, Dunning Mountain and the Allegheny Front.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Private Landowners; PA Game Commission; Juniata Valley Audubon Society	Forest Legacy Program; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; PA DCNR	
ENV 2.2	Work with municipalities and landowners to preserve areas designated as Biological Diversity Areas (BDA) in the Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory. Limit the type and intensity of development in areas identified as Landscape Conservation Areas in order to prevent future fragmentation of continuous forestland.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Private Landowners; PA Game Commission	Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
ENV 2.3	Work with partner organizations to protect Important Bird Areas (IBAs), Important Mammal Areas (IMAs), and cave habitats from habitat fragmentation and destruction by supporting the implementation of conservation management plans for IBAs and IMAs. Conservation management techniques for IBAs/IMAs include Best Management Practices (BMPs) in residential and agricultural areas, wetland restoration, streambank and floodplain protection, and riparian buffer protection.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Canoe Creek State Park; Private Landowners; PA Game Commission; Juniata Valley Audubon Society	Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; PA DCNR	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 2.4	Engage environment, conservation, and watershed organizations in local planning efforts to ensure coordination and consistency between local conservation efforts and planning.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Conservation and Watershed Organizations	County and Municipal Funds	
ENV 2.5	Implement the recommendations of the Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory conducted by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.	2-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Conservation District	Western Pennsylvania Conservancy	
ENV 2.6	Create an environmental education curriculum focusing on environmentally sensitive design for developers and homebuilders in partnership with the Blair County Builders Association and the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Builders Association; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	PA DEP	
ENV 2.7	Encourage the creation and continued operation of community-based watershed organizations, who work to protect watershed quality through watershed management plans.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Juniata Clean Water Partnership; Local watershed organizations	PA DEP - Growing Greener Watershed Grants	

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 2.8	Educate municipal officials on the purpose and advantages of establishing a county-wide or planning region based Environmental Advisory Councils (enabled by Act 177 of 1996). Investigate the possibility of establishing a county-wide EAC, which would advise and provide assistance for environmental planning in all Blair County municipalities. EACs advise local officials, planning commission members, and park and recreation boards on the conservation, management, and use of natural resources in a municipality or group of municipalities.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions and Planning Commissions	County and municipal funding; PA DEP	
ENV 2.9	Work with municipalities and authorities to protect and manage water supply watersheds in order to ensure the long-term viability of the quality and quantity of the water in the County. Designate environmental standards and limit impervious surfaces in water supply watersheds.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Local Water Authorities; Watershed Organizations	PA DEP Stormwater Management Grants	
ENV 2.10	Encourage sustainable forest management and mineral extraction practices throughout the County through forest management planning and landowner participation in the PA Forest Stewardship Program.	on-going	Blair County Conservation District	PA Forest Stewardship Program	
ENV 2.11	Support the Blair County Conservation District's efforts to develop and implement Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) restoration plans for all watersheds impacted by AMD in the County, specifically Kittaning Run.	10 years	Blair County Conservation District	PA Growing Greener Grants; PA DEP	

Objective 3.0: Protect Blair County communities and the environmental health of waterways and watersheds through flood controls, stormwater management, and reduction of non-point source pollutants throughout the county.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 3.1	Develop a Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan that identifies solutions to flooding hazards in the County, such as flood control measures and stormwater management best management practices.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission	PEMA - Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	
ENV 3.2	Provide support to municipalities to develop and implement floodplain management ordinances and mapping.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DEP - Floodplain Land Use Assistance Program	
ENV 3.3	Facilitate floodplain redevelopment through voluntary programs to relocate people and homes out of floodplain areas. This will be an important component of the Blair County Hazard Mitigation Plan.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission	PEMA - Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	
ENV 3.4	Implement Stormwater Management Plans for the Beaverdam Branch, the Little Juniata River, and Bob's Creek, and develop Stormwater Management Plans in cooperation with neighboring counties for the Frankstown Branch, Yellow Creek, Moshannon Creek, and Clearfield Creek (in accordance with Act 167 Stormwater Management Planning). As part of the planning, prepare a watershed-wide evaluation of on-lot systems and municipal systems.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Neighboring Counties; Watershed Organizations	PA DEP (Stormwater model ordinance); PENNVEST	
ENV 3.5	Provide education and training to Blair County municipalities for implementation of the Beaverdam Branch model stormwater management ordinance to promote better consistency of stormwater management across municipal boundaries.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County Funds	

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 3.6	Promote education efforts to raise awareness among residents and developers on the importance of stormwater management and floodplain protection efforts.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Conservation District	PA DEP - Environmental Education Grants Program	
ENV 3.7	Work with municipalities and municipal authorities to address Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) by separating sanitary and stormwater sewers.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission, Municipal Authorities; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DEP; PENNVEST	
ENV 3.8	Work with Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and regional watershed teams to identify municipal actions required to implement the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy for Pennsylvania to meet nutrient and sediment reduction goals for the Chesapeake Bay.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Chesapeake Bay Executive Council	PA DEP	
ENV 3.9	Continue to support the Blair County Conservation District's efforts to promote conservation and livestock waste management plans on farms. Encourage implementation of plans through participation in federal, state, and regional programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).	5 years	Blair County Conservation District; Penn State Cooperation Extension; Natural Resource Conservation Service	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program	

Objective 4.0: Eliminate illegal dumping of waste on land and in streams through regulatory and voluntary efforts.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 4.1	Educate residents on the environmental impacts of dumping, waste regulations, enforcement procedures, and proper waste and recycling disposal options to foster awareness and encourage behavior change.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling; PA Cleanways	Water Resources Education Network; PA DEP - Environmental Education Grants Program	
ENV 4.2	Work with municipalities to implement and enforce local ordinances and penalties for improper disposal, transportation and storage of waste.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Funds	
ENV 4.3	Identify and map illegal dump sites in order to target enforcement and prioritize clean-up sites.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; PA Cleanways	PA Cleanways; County and Municipal Funds	
ENV 4.4	Coordinate an annual Blair County clean-up and recycling awareness day with PA Cleanways and its Blair County affiliates and chapters.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; PA Cleanways; Blair County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling; School Districts; Local Businesses	PA DEP; Private Foundations and Sponsors	
ENV 4.5	Work with municipalities and haulers to identify cost effective solutions for providing trash collection in all municipalities in order to prevent illegal dumping and burning.	2-5 years	Blair County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Municipal Waste Haulers	County and Municipal Funds	

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 4.6	Support the implementation of the Blair County Solid Waste Management Plan.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling	County Technical Assistance or Funds	

Objective 5.0: Create a greenway system and open space network that includes important natural and cultural features such as contiguous forestlands, scenic areas and viewsheds, natural heritage areas, and significant historic sites. Corridors that connect Blair County's core natural areas should be part of the greenway system, including stream corridors and mountain ridges.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 5.1	Implement the Blair County Greenway Action Plan, which includes greenway corridors for recreational and water trails, conservation areas, and water supply protection.	10-20 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Allegheny Ridge Corporation; Blair County Rails-to-Trails; Canoe Creek State Park; PA Game Commission; Municipal Water Authorities	PA DCNR Greenway Grants - Community Conservation Partnership Program	
ENV 5.2	Support the development of the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway and extension of the Lower Trail.	10-20 years	Allegheny Ridge Corporation; Blair County Rails-to-Trails; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions and Neighboring Counties	PA DCNR Heritage Parks Program and Grants; PA Historical and Museum Commission	
ENV 5.3	Assist in the designation of the following corridors as Pennsylvania Scenic Byways and work with municipalities located along the scenic byways to develop a corridor management plan that outlines strategies for retaining the unique character, scenic views, and natural, cultural, historic, and recreational assets along the corridor: - Route 22 between Hollidaysburg and Huntingdon - Route 36 Hollidaysburg to the Bedford County line - Route 866 between Routes 22 and 36 - Interstate 99	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	National Scenic Byways Program; PennDOT Byways Coordinator	

Objective 6.0: Promote energy efficiency to conserve water, electricity, fuel, and raw materials.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ENV 6.1	Identify incentives for residents and businesses to adopt energy conservation measures (ex. reducing fuel and energy consumption, water conservation, etc). Promote alternative energy sources for heating and cooling, such as wind power and geothermal systems.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Blair County Chamber of Commerce	PA DEP - Advantage Grant Program and Energy Harvest Program	
ENV 6.2	Support environmental education and awareness raising efforts on the benefits of environmentally sensitive design, brownfield and infill development, and "green buildings."	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission	PA DEP - Environmental Education Grants Program	
ENV 6.3	Perform energy conservation audits on County facilities to identify energy saving opportunities and retrofits.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission	County Funds	
ENV 6.4	Support and provide assistance in energy audits on municipal facilities and buildings to identify energy saving opportunities for local governments.	2 years	Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Blair County Planning Commission	County and Municipal Funds	

AGRICULTURAL FARMLAND PRESERVATION

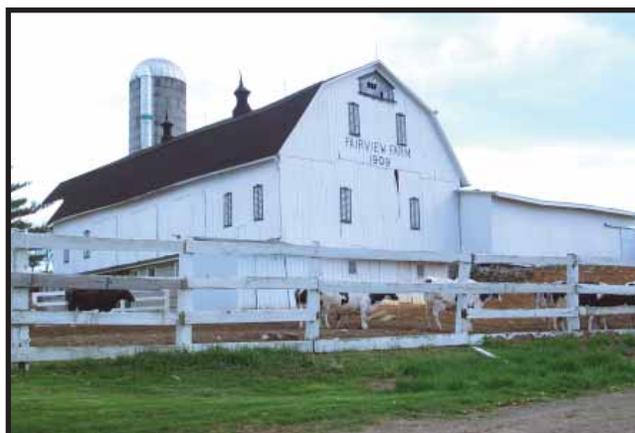
One of the main goals of the Areawide Plan is to preserve and enhance prime farmland and support farming as a viable profession in the County. This goes hand in hand with the desire of residents to retain the rural character and scenic beauty of the County, as expressed through the public input process. Therefore, the following objectives were identified by the steering committee to support the farmland preservation goals of the county:

- Strongly support landowners, agricultural and conservation agencies, boards, and committees in their efforts to preserve prime farmland, promote sustainable farming practices, and ensure the viability of the farming profession.
- Severely restrict development on prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance to agricultural land uses and related activities.
- Encourage the compatibility of land use regulations with agricultural operations in areas with prime farmland and a historic presence of agricultural land use.
- Raise awareness of the importance of agriculture through education and training programs.
- Expand market opportunities for local farmers and explore areas for new niche markets such as organic farming.

The first objective focuses on farmland preservation and promoting sustainable farming practices in order to ensure the long-term viability farming in Blair County. One of the most effective tools for preserving farmland in Blair County is the Pennsylvania Farmland Protection Program. This program, administered by state and local agricultural land preservation boards, enables state, county and local governments to purchase conservation easements from owners of quality farmland. Given the success and popularity of the program in the state and in Blair County, it is recommended that the County and its municipalities continue to participate and provide matching funds for the program.

The second objective suggests additional tools for limiting development on prime farmland through agricultural zoning and the designation of rural resources areas. Implementation of both tools will require coordination with rural municipalities on comprehensive planning and significant public input on the feasibility of zoning in rural areas. Along those lines, the third objective looks to ensure that land use regulations provide protection, as well as flexibility, to agricultural land uses. One such mechanism is the Agriculture, Communities, Rural Environment (ACRE) initiative, which assists municipalities in reviewing land use ordinances to ensure compatibility with agricultural land uses and practices.

The third objective focuses on increasing awareness among the community on the importance of farming in Blair County. This can be done through a variety of education and outreach mechanisms, such as Agriculture in the Classroom, 4-H programs, and fairs. Agriculture in the Classroom is a formal program that brings the agriculture and educational communities together to inform school children of the environmental, economic, and quality of life benefits of agriculture in the United State and elsewhere. Education and awareness raising efforts should involve the school districts, colleges, and community organizations. The last objective looks to increase demand for local agricultural products through new markets opportunities such as farmer's markets, community supported agriculture, and retail outlets.



Agriculture and Farmland Preservation

Objective 1.0: Strongly support landowners, agricultural and conservation agencies, boards, and committees in their efforts to preserve prime farmland, promote sustainable farming practices, and ensure the viability of the farming profession.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
AG 1.1	Continue to provide funding at the County level in support of the Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Conservation Easement Program. Conservation easements should be utilized to protect high priority farmland and agricultural areas. Encourage municipalities to participate in the easement purchase program by working with them to identify local funds to support the program. In addition, pursue voluntary donation of conservation easements by landowners.	on-going	Blair County Agricultural Land Preservation Board; Blair County Conservation District; Landowners (farmers); Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA Department of Agriculture; County and Municipal Funds; Private Landowners	
AG 1.2	Continue to encourage municipalities to establish Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs) and increase enrollment in ASAs. Farms that are enrolled in an ASA are eligible for inclusion in the Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Program. Any land that is currently in agricultural production or has the potential to be in agricultural production (including woodlands) is eligible for enrollment in an ASA.	on-going	Blair County Agricultural Land Preservation Board; Blair County Conservation District; Landowners (farmers); Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	Municipal Funds	
AG 1.3	Conduct a “Future of Agriculture” study that identifies challenges and opportunities for farming in Blair County. Such a study uses a combination of farmer focus groups and survey to identify specific issues facing farmers today to make detailed recommendations to address problems and opportunities identified by the farming community.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Agricultural Land Preservation Board; Landowners (farmers); Agriculture Today and Tomorrow Committee; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	Penn State Cooperative Extension; PA Department of Agriculture	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
AG 1.4	Support the use of sustainable agriculture and forest management practices that serve to protect environmental resources through workshops, demonstration projects, and education and training initiatives.	2-5 years	Blair County Agricultural Land Preservation Board; Blair County Conservation District; Southern Alleghenies Resource Conservation and Development Council; Landowners (farmers)	Penn State Cooperative Extension; PA Department of Agriculture	
AG 1.5	Promote soil conservation practices through erosion and sedimentation control practices to ensure the viability of prime farmland soils.	on-going	Blair County Conservation District; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Funds	
AG 1.6	Continue to support the Blair County Conservation District's efforts to promote conservation and livestock waste management plans on farms. Encourage implementation of plans through participation in federal, state, and regional programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).	2-5 years	Blair County Conservation District; Landowners (farmers)	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	

Objective 2.0: Severely restrict development on prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance to agricultural land uses and related activities.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
AG 2.1	Work with municipalities to develop and implement agricultural zoning for areas with prime farmland and land that has traditionally been used for farming.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
AG 2.2	Support local planning efforts that coordinate comprehensive planning and Act 537 planning to limit public infrastructure extensions in prime farmland areas and direct investment toward existing towns and villages.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Municipal Authorities	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; Act 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Grants	
AG 2.3	Direct new development in rural areas to locate within or near rural centers and villages that have access to infrastructure and services through the designation of Future Growth Areas and Rural Resource Areas.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
AG 2.4	Encourage conservation subdivision design that reserves prime agricultural land as open space.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; Natural Lands Trust	
AG 2.5	Encourage municipalities to amend their subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO) and their zoning ordinance to minimize disturbance of prime farmland by requiring placement of homes near roads or tucked on wooded lots on the side of mountains.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	

Objective 3.0: Encourage the compatibility of land use regulations with agricultural operations in areas with prime farmland and a historic presence of agricultural land use.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
AG 3.1	Encourage rural municipalities who are developing zoning ordinances to engage farmers to get their feedback to ensure that zoning regulations are flexible and do not overly prohibit agricultural land uses in the community. Work with the statewide Agriculture, Communities, and Rural Environment (ACRE) initiative to review ordinances that impact agricultural areas prior to adoption to ensure full compliance with the law.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Landowners (farmers)	PA Department of Agriculture - ACRE Initiative	
AG 3.2	Involve the Blair County Conservation District (BCCD) in developing zoning ordinances by having the BCCD review proposed land use ordinances and amendments that impact agricultural areas and potentially disrupt prime farmland.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Blair County Conservation District	County and Municipal Funds	
AG 3.3	Prevent land use conflicts between agricultural operations and residential development by promoting agricultural zoning and the designation of Agricultural Security Areas in agricultural areas lacking such initiatives.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
AG 3.4	Work with rural municipalities to protect their rural character and scenic beauty through zoning controls that designate appropriate areas for less desirable land uses. Without zoning controls, rural municipalities have no protection or control over locally unwanted land uses.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Funds	

Objective 4.0: Raise awareness of the importance of agriculture through education and training programs.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
AG 4.1	Work with municipalities, school districts, Penn State Cooperative Extension, and the Conservation District to increase local knowledge of the importance of agriculture and agriculture-related careers through school curriculums (Ag in the classroom), 4-H programs, local fairs, and outdoor classrooms.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Conservation District; School Districts; Granges	Penn State Cooperative Extension; PA Department of Agriculture	
AG 4.2	Support the development of an environmental education center in order to provide opportunities for environmental education and awareness raising curriculums.	10 years	Blair County Conservation District; Penn State Cooperative Extension	Private Foundations and Partners	
AG 4.3	Educate farmers, municipal officials, and the public on agricultural preservation practices.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Conservation District; Granges	Blair County Conservation District; Penn State Cooperative Extension	

Objective 5.0: Expand market opportunities for local farmers and explore areas for new niche markets such as organic farming.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
AG 5.1	Encourage and support the formation of community-based agriculture initiatives. Such initiatives encourage farmers to sell products directly to consumers through cooperatives, community-supported farms, retail outlets on the farm, and farmer's markets.	on-going	Local Communities and Farmers; Farming Associations	PA Department of Agriculture	
AG 5.2	Support farmer's efforts to market locally grown produce to be sold at existing retail outlets (ex. grocery stores) in the County. Identify opportunities for downtown revitalization through farmer's markets. Local zoning ordinances should not overly restrict farmer's markets.	2-5 years	Local Communities and Farmers	PA Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Product Promotion Matching Grant Program	
AG 5.3	Support the efforts of agricultural organizations and agencies that provide business development training to farmers and identify technologies that support the economic viability of agriculture.	on-going	Penn State Cooperative Extension	PA Department of Agriculture	

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES STRATEGIES

Blair County is rich in historic assets dating back to the settlement of the County in the mid 1700's. These assets, many remnants from the Revolutionary War era and the industrial revolution, track the history and progress of both the county and the entire country. Blair County was a pivotal juncture in early transportation systems involving the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal, and later the Pennsylvania Railroad. Given the number of significant assets and places in Blair County, efforts should be made to preserve the history of the county so that future generations can learn about the events, people, and places that shaped what Blair County is today. Therefore, the following objectives were identified for cultural and historic preservation:

- Protect, enhance, and promote the unique historical, cultural, and scenic assets in Blair County.
- Promote significant historic and cultural sites in the County as tourist attractions through heritage tourism programs and projects.
- Support the expansion of arts and cultural opportunities in Blair County in order to increase education and awareness about the history and culture of Blair County for both residents and visitors alike.

The first objective focuses on protecting, promoting, and enhancing important historic and cultural assets. Historic preservation organizations and efforts are well-established and underway through existing sites such as Fort Roberdeau, Canal Basin Park, Horseshoe Curve, and the proposed Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway. Strategies focus on continuing to strengthen historic preservation efforts. It is recommended that the Blair County Planning Commission maintain a database of historic assets; create a historic preservation toolkit for local governments, including model ordinances for historic districts, and support outreach and education on historic preservation incentives such as tax credits.

The second objective focuses on capitalizing on historic and cultural sites through heritage tourism

opportunities, such as the Allegheny Ridge Heritage Area, designation of scenic byways, and developing recreational trails and greenways. This also involves enhancing downtown and main street districts to provide for amenities, shops, and restaurants in support of the tourist industry.

Finally, the last objective recognizes the need for continued expansion of arts and cultural opportunities in Blair County as a contributor to the quality of life and attractiveness of the County. There is a need for increased education and awareness about the arts, history, and cultural opportunities that exist in the County. Strategies focus on partnering with historic societies and organizations to improve marketing and outreach. In addition, strategies focus on partnering with school districts to develop school curriculums that incorporate the history of Blair County, and ultimately distill a greater appreciation among youth for local history.



Cultural and Historic Resources

Objective 1.0: Protect, enhance, and promote the unique historical, cultural, and scenic assets in Blair County.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CH 1.1	Work with local historic preservation societies and municipalities to develop and maintain a historic site survey to track historic properties recognized under the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Historic surveys include ownership information, history and documentation of the site, and condition of sites/structures. Utilize GIS to link data for historic sites to mapping.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Historical Society; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	Blair County Planning Commission; Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission - History and Museum Grant Program	
CH 1.2	Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures and buildings by providing information to municipalities, developers, and property owners on financial assistance available for historic preservation. Such programs include the Pennsylvania State Historic Tax Credit Program, the Federal Historic Tax Incentives program, and state grants administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Housing and Redevelopment Authorities	Blair County Planning Commission; Preservation Pennsylvania; Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	
CH 1.3	Provide technical assistance to municipalities in creating municipally regulated historic districts, which are protected by historic district ordinances that specify development standards to maintain the historic integrity of the neighborhood. Assist municipalities in reviewing and updating land use tools and ordinances to integrate community goals for historic preservation (evaluate parking, setback, height, bulk, and signage provisions to ensure development in historic districts is consistent with the historic character).	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CH 1.4	Work with municipalities to evaluate the need for a historic overlay districts for existing National Register Historic Districts. Hollidaysburg Borough has a Historic Resources Overlay that regulates demolition and alteration of structures and buildings in the Historic District through the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB). Other National Register Historic Districts include Altoona, Roaring Spring, Tyrone, and Williamsburg.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Historic Architectural Review Board	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	
CH 1.5	Ensure that public outreach and education is a key component of historic district planning. Outreach efforts should focus on providing information on historic districts and options for protection to ensure neighborhood support for implementation of historic preservation tools.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Funds	
CH 1.6	Encourage municipalities to provide developers with guidelines on identifying important historic assets of a site prior to development. Develop procedures and criteria for determining the significance of the historic features, as well as protection measures.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Funds	
CH 1.7	Encourage the development of a local group of historic preservation contractors that are experienced in historically appropriate renovation and repair work that meet the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB) approval. Currently, there is a lack of contractors with historic preservation training in Blair County and property owners in historic districts are waived of the district requirements due to the high cost and lack of trained contractors.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Historic Architectural and Review Board; Blair County Builder's Association	County and Municipal Assistance	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CH 1.8	Support the designation of “eligible” historic properties on the National Register of Historic Places and provide assistance to municipalities in identifying and nominating additional sites for inclusion on the National Register.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Blair County Historical society	County and Municipal Funds; Preservation Pennsylvania	
CH 1.9	Implement the Fort Roberdeau Master Plan study.	5-10 years	Fort Roberdeau Association Board; Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Heritage Committee	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; Private Foundations	
CH 1.10	Develop and disseminate a historic preservation “toolkit” for municipalities that includes detailed information on historic preservation grants, incentives, and model ordinances for municipal historic districts.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Local Municipalities and Planning Commissions; Historic Architectural Review Boards (HARB)	County Funds	
CH 1.11	Assist in the designation of the following corridors as Pennsylvania Scenic Byways and work with municipalities located along the scenic byways to develop a corridor management plan that outlines strategies for retaining the unique character, scenic views, and natural, cultural, and historic assets along the corridor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route 22 between Hollidaysburg and Huntingdon • Route 36 Hollidaysburg to the Bedford County Line • Route 866 between Routes 22 and 36 • Portions of I-99 	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	National Scenic Byways Program; PennDOT Byways Coordinator	

Objective 2.0: Promote significant historic and cultural sites in the County as tourist attractions through heritage tourism programs and projects.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CH 2.1	Identify and assist municipalities in applying for Main Street and Elm Street designation for downtown and neighborhood areas to support revitalization and historic preservation involving marketing, economic development, design enhancements, and partnership efforts. Communities must first establish a Main Street Program to be eligible for Elm Street. Work with Hollidaysburg Borough to identify lessons learned from their Main Street Program in order to benefit other downtown communities in Blair County.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED - Main Street and Elm Street programs	
CH 2.2	Support the implementation of the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway.	10-20 years	Allegheny Ridge Corporation; Blair County Rails-to-Trails; Blair County Heritage Committee; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions and Neighboring Counties	PA DCNR Heritage Parks Program and Grants; PA Historical and Museum Commission	
CH 2.3	Support efforts to promote and increase awareness of the historic and recreational opportunities in the Allegheny Ridge Heritage Area.	on-going	Allegheny Ridge Corporation; Blair County Rails-to-Trails; Blair County Heritage Committee	PA DCNR Heritage Parks Program and Grants; PA Historical and Museum Commission	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CH 2.4	Work with the City of Altoona to create a linkage plan to physically connect key cultural and historic sites in Altoona with the mixed-use shopping and business district. Such efforts could involve updating the Altoona Historic Downtown Walking Tour.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; City of Altoona Department of Planning and Community Development; PA Railroaders Museum	PA Historical and Museum Commission	
CH 2.5	Develop a corridor management plan for potential Blair County Scenic Byways that outline tourism and economic development opportunities and a marketing plan for the byways.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	National Scenic Byways Program; Allegheny Mountains and Visitors Bureau; Southern Alleghenies Tourism Confederation	
CH 2.6	Promote the County's historic and cultural heritage through tourism and economic development programs. Coordinate efforts and tourism promotion programs with the Allegheny Mountains and Visitors Bureau and the Southern Alleghenies Tourism Confederation.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Heritage Committee; Allegheny Ridge Development Corporation; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	Allegheny Mountains and Visitors Bureau; Southern Alleghenies Tourism Confederation	
CH 2.7	Promote connections (physical and interpretive) between recreation areas, trails, and historic sites through implementation of the Blair County Greenway Plan.	10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Allegheny Ridge Development Corporation; Blair County Rails-to-Trails	PA DCNR - Greenway Grants - Community Conservation Partnership Program	

Objective 3.0: Support the expansion of arts and cultural opportunities in Blair County in order to increase education and awareness about the history and culture of Blair County for both residents and visitors alike.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CH 3.1	Establish connections with historical societies and support their historic preservation and public outreach efforts.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Historical Society	Blair County Planning Commission	
CH 3.2	Support studies on the economic impacts of historic preservation on local communities (property values, tourism dollars, etc) and disseminate findings to businesses, residents, and municipalities. Facilitate peer-to-peer networking so that Hollidaysburg Borough can share their experiences in historic preservation efforts with other municipalities.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Historical Society; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation	PA Historical and Museum Commission	
CH 3.3	Work with the local school districts and colleges to advance heritage programs and projects through educational venues and engage youth in historic preservation efforts. Incorporate a history of Blair County into school curriculums.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Heritage Committee; Blair County Historical Society; School Districts	PA Historical and Museum Commission; Blair County Planning Commission; School Districts	

PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIES

Park and recreational amenities are important public facilities that provide residents with opportunities for social interaction, daily exercise, and conservation of open space. Therefore, it is important that residents have access to varying types of parks in Blair County, from a neighborhood within walking distance of homes to a community park that includes facilities for sports programs and organized events. Another important element of the park and recreation system in the County is walking and hiking trails. The community survey indicated that nearly 50% of respondents would like greater access to trails and one-third would like better access to parks. The write-in comments on the survey show that respondents most often voiced a need for more places for youth activities (playgrounds, youth centers, baseball fields, swimming pools and ATV trails). Therefore, the following objectives were created by the steering committee:

- Maintain and improve existing park and recreation facilities and identify opportunities for the creation of new facilities to meet the needs of Blair County residents.
- Ensure that a wide range of recreational opportunities are available to residents in the County, including community parks, neighborhood parks, special use facilities, and county parks that serve as passive and active recreational areas.
- Develop and enhance the trail network in the County by connecting with the existing trail system and incorporating unique natural and historic sites into the trail network.
- Collaborate with tourism-oriented organizations to identify and capitalize on opportunities for recreational tourism.

The first objective speaks to the need in Blair County for a comprehensive evaluation of the park and recreational facilities and opportunities provided to residents. The county does not have an updated Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan. Therefore, this is one of the high priority items for the County in evaluating park and recreational needs of the

community. In addition, it is suggested that Blair County pursue partnerships with municipalities, private, and non-profit recreation providers to implement a comprehensive recreation plan. One outcome of the plan should be an evaluation of capital improvements that should be pursued to improve park and recreational facilities over the next ten to twenty years.

The second objective focuses on providing for differing types of park and recreational facilities to meet the varying needs of the residents. These objectives should be implemented hand in hand with a comprehensive park and recreation plan to ensure that residents have proper access to neighborhood parks, community parks, county parks, and special use facilities.

The next objective hones in on opportunities to create a trail network in the County. As expressed in the community survey, there is an increasing desire among residents for access to trails. Therefore, recommendations focus on implementation of the Blair County Greenway Plan, which outlines proposed recreational trails in conjunction with a county-wide greenway network. Other recommendations support local trail and greenway efforts including the Lower Trail and the Beaverdam Branch Greenway.

Finally, it is recognized that the natural environment and vast open spaces of Blair County provide excellent outdoor recreational opportunities for hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, and nature study, among others. Blair County should provide for and promote outdoor recreation as a component of its tourism economy. Therefore, recommendations include preserving open space to retain the natural environment that supports recreational pursuits, marketing, and connecting recreational and heritage tourism assets.



Parks and Recreation

Objective 1.0: Maintain and improve existing park and recreation facilities and identify opportunities for the creation of new facilities to meet the needs of Blair County residents.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
PR 1.1	Create a Countywide Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan for Blair County in partnership with local municipalities and park and recreation providers. The parks and recreation plan should layout a comprehensive park and recreation system for Blair County that consists of local, county, and state parks. The plan should identify specific areas for enhancement and development of park and recreation facilities. It should also bring together park and recreation providers to identify a management model that is effective for Blair County. Such a plan should be closely tied to the Countywide Greenway Plan.	5 years	Central Blair Parks and Recreation Authority; Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Blair County Planning Commission; Local Municipalities and Park Boards; Canoe Creek State Park	DCNR - Community Conservation Partnerships Program	
PR 1.2	Strengthen cooperation between the County, local municipalities, state agencies, non-profit organizations, private landowners, and the private sector in providing for recreational facilities and programs in the County.	on-going	Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Central Blair Parks and Recreation Authority; Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Recreation Boards; Private and Non-Profit Recreation Providers	County Funds	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
PR 1.3	Support partnerships between local municipalities, the Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and Recreation Authorities to pursue funding for parks, biking and walking trails, open space preservation, and other recreation projects.	on-going	Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Central Blair Parks and Recreation Authority; Municipal Recreation Boards; Municipal Officials	County and Municipal Funds	
PR 1.4	Support local municipalities in their efforts to upgrade recreational facilities.	on-going	Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Central Blair Parks and Recreation Authority; Blair County Planning Commission	DCNR - Community Conservation Partnerships Program	
PR 1.5	Develop an appropriately funded 10-year capital improvements program for the County based on the recommendations of a Countywide Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Central Blair Parks and Recreation Authority; Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee	County Assistance and Funds	

Objective 2.0: Ensure that a wide range of recreational opportunities are available to residents in the County, including community parks, neighborhood parks, special use facilities, and county parks that serve as passive and active recreational areas.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
PR 2.1	Work with local municipalities to provide for community parks in all school districts and encourage local communities and school districts to manage and share park and recreation facilities to the greatest extent possible.	5-10 years	Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Central Blair Parks and Recreation Authority; Municipal Officials and Park Boards; School Districts and School Boards	DCNR - Community Conservation Partnerships Program; County and Municipal Funds	
PR 2.2	Provide technical assistance to local municipalities to develop and implement Recreation Fee In-lieu ordinances to create neighborhood parks in close proximity of new developments.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCNR - Community Conservation Partnerships Program; County and Municipal Funds	
PR 2.3	Explore opportunities to provide for designated off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation areas in order to reduce illegal riding on public and private lands. Survey the need for other special use facilities within the county, such as skate parks and scooters.	2-5 years	Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Blair County Planning Commission	DCNR - Snowmobile/ATV Grants; County and Municipal Funds	
PR 2.4	Identify opportunities through a Countywide Park and Recreation plan for the expansion and/or creation of new County parks, particularly in the northern and southern parts of the County where no such county facilities exist.	5-10 years	Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Blair County Planning Commission	DCNR - Community Conservation Partnerships Program; County and Municipal Funds	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
PR 2.5	Encourage the integration of town squares, parks, and community greens in neighborhood design to provide for public spaces for the community.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	County and Municipal Technical Assistance	
PR 2.6	Ensure that all park and recreation facilities are accessible to all members of the public and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.	on-going	Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Recreation Boards	County and Municipal Funds	
PR 2.7	Work with state and local partners to implement environmental education programs in County and State parks.	on-going	Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Canoe Creek State Park; Blair County Conservation District	PA DEP - Environmental Education Grants Program	

Objective 3.0: Develop and enhance the trail network in the County by connecting with the existing trail system and incorporating unique natural and historic sites into the trail network.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
PR 3.1	Provide for trail access in every planning region as an opportunity for exercise, recreation, and alternative modes of transportation by linking key destinations and amenities.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; Blair County Rails-to-Trails; Allegheny Ridge Corporation	PA DCNR - Recreational Trails Program	
PR 3.2	Pursue state and local funding for implementation of the Blair County Greenways Plan, which integrates key historic, cultural, and recreational destinations into a countywide greenway and trail network. Utilize the Greenway Plan as an umbrella for the mobilization of local recreation and open space organizations in their efforts to implement countywide trail and open space preservation projects. Facilitate annual meetings with local municipalities, trail groups, greenway, recreation, and open space organizations within the County to track implementation progress.	10-20 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Conservation District; Allegheny Ridge Corporation; Blair County Rails-to-Trails; Canoe Creek State Park	PA DCNR Greenway Grants - Community Conservation Partnership Program	
PR 3.3	Support the efforts of trail partners and local municipalities to maintain the Lower Trail and implement trail extension plans that will connect the trail with the Borough of Hollidaysburg.	5-10 years	Blair County Rails-to-Trails; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCNR Greenway Grants - Community Conservation Partnership Program	
PR 3.4	Support the implementation of the Beaverdam Branch Greenway Plan as a component of a county-wide greenway and trail system.	5 years	Borough of Hollidaysburg; Blair County Conservation District; Juniata Clean Water Partnership	PA DCNR Greenway Grants - Community Conservation Partnership Program	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
PR 3.5	Explore the use of a wayfinding system and interpretive signage to direct and inform visitors on the park, recreational, and cultural assets in the County.	5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Allegheny Ridge Corporation; Blair County Rails-to-Trails; Canoe Creek State Park	Allegheny Mountains and Visitors Bureau; Southern Alleghenies Tourism Confederation	

Objective 4.0: Collaborate with tourism-oriented organizations to identify and capitalize on opportunities for recreational tourism.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
PR 4.1	<p>Develop scenic driving tours of the County and support the designation of the following corridors as Pennsylvania Scenic Byways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route 22 between Hollidaysburg and Huntingdon • Route 36 Hollidaysburg to the Bedford County Line • Route 866 between Routes 22 and 36 • Portions of I-99 	5-10 years	<p>Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Altoona Blair County Development Corporation</p>	<p>National Scenic Byways Program; PennDOT Byways Coordinator</p>	
PR 4.2	<p>Promote Blair County as a destination for mountain biking, hiking, fishing, hunting, and nature study and retain the open space and natural features that enable recreational tourism.</p>	on-going	<p>Canoe Creek State Park; National Park Service; Blair County Trout Unlimited; Allegheny Ridge Corporation</p>	<p>Allegheny Mountains and Visitors Bureau; Southern Alleghenies Tourism Confederation; PA DCED Heritage and Tourism Marketing Grants</p>	
PR 4.3	<p>Capitalize on local historic assets to link recreational and heritage tourism opportunities.</p>	5 years	<p>Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Heritage Committee; Allegheny Ridge Development Corporation; Blair County Rails to Trails</p>	<p>PA DCNR Greenway and Trail Grants</p>	

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES ACTION PLAN

Local governments are tasked with protecting the health, safety, and welfare of their residents. Maintaining community facilities and providing public services that accomplish this without straining municipal budgets and overburdening taxpayers is a major challenge for local governments. Joint planning provides an opportunity to explore areas for municipal cooperation in public service delivery with potential cost savings, without compromising on the quality of services provided. The community survey indicated that respondents are very supportive of developing long range plans. Furthermore, just over eighty percent voiced support for joint purchasing of common materials, and just over half of the respondents indicated support for consolidation of water/sewer services and police protection. To that end, the following public service objectives were identified:

- Provide safe and efficient water and sewer service to Blair County residents through coordinated land use and infrastructure planning, and increased communication between municipal officials and municipal authorities.
- Support municipal efforts to provide reliable and affordable public services to residents (police, fire, EMS).
- Ensure that residents have access to high-quality public facilities and services including schools, libraries, and health care facilities.
- Continue to provide for the solid waste management needs of Blair County and meet countywide recycling objectives.
- Encourage municipalities to include safe pedestrian amenities as part of their infrastructure requirements for development and redevelopment.
- Explore opportunities for coordination of public works responsibilities between municipalities in the County in order to identify potential cost savings and efficiency gains.

The first objective targets increased coordination in the areas of water and sewer service. In particular, it is recommended that respective sewer authorities identify areas to promote increased efficiencies in managing the municipal sewer systems through cooperative efforts.

The second objective focuses on continuing to provide reliable public services by ensuring that adequate police and fire staffing levels are met. Strategies also suggest that the County and municipalities look for opportunities to coordinate police and fire service delivery among municipalities through mutual aid and other service sharing agreements. It is also suggested that Blair County municipalities look at ways to coordinate public works functions, particularly in the areas of joint purchasing.

Recommendations under the third objective look to strengthen partnerships between the County and local governments and school districts, higher educational facilities, and health care institutions to ensure the full range of community services are met.

Recommendations also support implementation of the Blair County Solid Waste Management Plan. This includes increasing efficiencies in municipal waste collection and recycling services. Municipalities should explore implementation of joint recycling programs in order to provide recycling to those areas of the community that lack curbside service.

Finally, strategies look at ways to provide for pedestrian facilities in order to provide for the safe movement of people in a community. The county should work with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and local municipalities to identify areas for improvements for pedestrian and bicycle amenities, such as sidewalk and bicycle lanes.



Community Services and Facilities

Objective 1.0: Provide safe and efficient water and sewer service to Blair County residents through coordinated land use and infrastructure planning, and increased communication between municipal officials and municipal authorities.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CS 1.1	Work with municipalities and municipal authorities to provide for the orderly expansion of water and sewer systems in a manner consistent with the Areawide County Comprehensive Plan and local land use plans. Ensure that sewer service plans are consistent with land use plans by closely coordinating the implementation of the Areawide Plan, municipal comprehensive plans, and municipal Act 537 plans.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Municipal Authorities	PA DCED-Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program; PA DEP Act 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Grants	
CS 1.2	Support public investments in water and sewer infrastructure that are consistent with the long-range land use goals of Blair County. Give priority to sewer infrastructure upgrades that support infill and redevelopment projects, and new development within close proximity to existing places and infrastructure.	10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Municipal Authorities	PennVest; PennWorks; PA DCED - Infrastructure Development Program	
CS 1.3	Support the expansion of sewer systems where required to serve high population densities for planned growth or to correct malfunctioning and failing systems, where no other such solution exists.	on-going	Municipal Water and Sewer Authorities; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PennVest; PennWorks; PA DCED - Infrastructure Development Program	
CS 1.4	Promote increased cooperation between municipal authorities in water and sewer planning across municipal boundaries to coordinate system operations and upgrades in an efficient manner.	on-going	Municipal Water and Sewer Authorities; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DCED-Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program, PA DEP Act 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Grants	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CS 1.5	Work with municipalities and municipal authorities to identify and implement needed improvements to deficient public sewer systems currently under moratorium.	10 years	Municipal Water and Sewer Authorities; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PennVest; PennWorks; PA DCED - Infrastructure Development Program	
CS 1.6	Encourage municipalities to implement on-lot sewage management programs to monitor and maintain on-lot systems and prevent malfunctioning systems that can be a threat to both environmental and human health.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Sewage Enforcement Officers	PA On-Lot Sewage Management Program	
CS 1.7	Protect water supply watersheds and limit development activity by maintaining natural buffers around reservoirs to ensure a reliable supply of potable water for Blair County residents.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Water Authorities; Watershed Organizations	PA DEP	
CS 1.8	Ensure that adequate security is provided to protect the Blair County water supply.	on-going	Municipal Water and Sewer Authorities	PA Emergency Management Agency	

Objective 2.0: Support municipal efforts to provide reliable and affordable public services to residents (police, fire, EMS).

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CS 2.1	Work with local municipalities to ensure that police and fire staffing, facilities, equipment, and response times are provided to the community within acceptable state and national standards.	on-going	Blair County Emergency Management Agency; Police Service Providers; Volunteer Fire Departments	County and Municipal Funds; Regional Police Assistance Grant Program	
CS 2.2	Support municipal efforts to provide police and fire personnel with modern stations, equipment, and vehicles.	2-5 years	Blair County Emergency Management Agency; Public Service Providers	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency; PA DCED - Emergency Responder and Resources Training Program	
CS 2.3	Support multi-municipal efforts to reduce the cost and increase the efficiency of public services through joint or shared services and mutual aid agreements.	2-5 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials; Public Services Providers	PA DCED - Shared Municipal Services Grants	
CS 2.4	Create a County Emergency Plan that identifies an emergency operations plan for the prevention and minimization of injury and damage caused by disaster. Ensure that emergency personnel are adequately trained to respond to local, state, and national disaster situations, including terrorism response and preparedness.	5 years	Blair County Emergency Management Agency; Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials; Public Service Providers	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency	

Objective 3.0: Ensure that residents have access to high-quality public facilities and services including schools, libraries, and health care facilities.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CS 3.1	Coordinate municipal land use planning and school district strategic planning so that future school facility needs can be anticipated and planned. Encourage reuse or renovation of existing school buildings to meet school capacity needs. New school facilities, should they be built, should be sited so that they are easily accessible and integrated within the community.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County School Districts and School Boards; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
CS 3.2	Support alternative use of extra school facilities for community-based groups and continuing education programs.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County School Districts and School Boards; Municipal Officials; Community Organizations	County, School District, and Municipal Funding	
CS 3.3	Provide support to the Blair County Public Library System to maintain current collections and modern facilities and technologies.	on-going	Blair County Public Libraries	County Funds	
CS 3.4	Ensure that public facilities are easily accessible by the community with pedestrian and transit connections.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Altoona Metro Transit; Municipal Officials	PennDOT - Home Town Streets/Safe Routes to School	

Objective 4.0: Continue to provide for the solid waste management needs of Blair County and meet countywide recycling objectives.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CS 4.1	Promote countywide efforts to increase education and awareness on “Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle” to decrease the amount of waste entering landfills.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling	PA DEP - Environmental Education Grants Program	
CS 4.2	Conduct a feasibility study on the cost effectiveness of providing curbside recycling in all municipalities.	10 years	Blair County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling; Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials	County and Municipal Funds	
CS 4.3	Work with municipalities and haulers to identify cost effective solutions, such as service sharing arrangements, for providing trash collection in all municipalities in order to prevent illegal dumping and burning.	2-5 years	Blair County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions; Municipal Waste Haulers	County and Municipal Funds	
CS 4.4	Support the implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plans for Altoona and Hollidaysburg in order to increase efficiencies in the collection system and reduce the costs for residents.	5 years	Blair County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling; City of Altoona; Hollidaysburg Borough	Municipal Funds	

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No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CS 4.5	Support the implementation of the Blair County Solid Waste Management Plan.	5-10 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Blair County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling	County Technical Assistance or Funds	

Objective 5.0: Encourage municipalities to include safe pedestrian amenities as part of their infrastructure requirements for development and redevelopment.

No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CS 5.1	Provide technical assistance to municipalities to evaluate the effectiveness of local land use ordinances in providing for bicycle and pedestrian facilities in new developments. Identify areas where retrofit opportunities exist to build new bicycle and pedestrian facilities in existing areas.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program	
CS 5.2	Provide for bicycle and pedestrian connections between schools, neighborhoods, shopping destinations, recreational and cultural attractions, and other key destinations in the County.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PennDOT - Home Town Streets/Safe Routes to School; DCNR Greenway and Trail Grants	
CS 5.3	Consider opportunities for the development or designation of bicycle lanes along county roadways as roadways are constructed or repaired.	on-going	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions	PennDOT	
CS 5.4	Evaluate the progress toward implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Blair County (Altoona MSA).	2 years	Metropolitan Planning Organization for Blair County; PennDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator	Metropolitan Planning Organization for Blair County	

Objective 6.0: Explore opportunities for coordination of public works responsibilities between municipalities in the County in order to identify potential cost savings and efficiency gains.					
No.	Strategies	Timeframe (2, 5, 10, 20 yrs)	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CS 6.1	Create inventories of existing municipal equipment and purchasing to identify opportunities for equipment sharing and joint purchasing.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Public Service Providers	DCED - Shared Municipal Services Grant Program	
CS 6.2	Convene regional municipal focus groups to discuss potential areas for cooperation between local governments.	2 years	Blair County Planning Commission; Municipal Officials and Public Service Providers	County and Municipal Funds	



Criteria and Guidelines for Local Comprehensive Plans

I. GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

A. Resources for Comprehensive Planning in Pennsylvania:

1. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Code (Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247), as amended (the MPC).
2. The Comprehensive Plan in Pennsylvania, Governor's Center for Local Government Services, Department of Community and economic Development (August 2001).
3. Planning Beyond Boundaries, a Multi-Municipal Planning and Implementation Manual for Pennsylvania Municipalities, 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania (2002).
4. Land Use Management Toolkit, Resources for Smart Development, Sustainable Pittsburgh (2004).
5. Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code: Checklist for Municipal Comprehensive Plans, prepared by the Blair County Planning Commission (attached).

B. General Information:

1. The MPC directs local planning agencies to prepare comprehensive plans at the request of their governing bodies (MPC 201.1(a)(1)).
2. Priority for state funding is given to municipalities that adopt plans that are generally consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan (MPC 301.5).
3. Comprehensive plans may be developed by a single municipality or by two or more municipalities jointly. However, grant monies are more readily available from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) to groups of municipalities that develop multi-municipal comprehensive plans.

4. Comprehensive plans must be reviewed at least every ten years (MPC 301(c)).
5. Municipalities who plan jointly must enter into an Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreements that identifies the municipalities involved in the joint plan and their respective responsibilities.

C. Preparation of the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Collection of Background Information - at a minimum, Section 301.2 of the MPC requires the municipality(ies) to survey, study and analyze the following information:
 - a. Housing characteristics and trends;
 - b. Demographic characteristics and trends;
 - c. Economic conditions and trends;
 - d. Existing land uses, including amount, type, location and interrelationships;
 - e. Transportation facilities, including location and extent of;
 - f. Community facilities, including location and type of;
 - g. Natural features affecting development;
 - h. Natural, cultural, and historic resources; and
 - i. Expectations for future growth in the municipality(ies).

This information is generally laid out at the beginning of the comprehensive plan. It provides a clear picture of where each municipality stands today and is used to understand its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (also known as a “SWOT analysis”). It is used to develop goals and objectives, a future land use plan, and the other plan requirements under section 301 of the MPC.

2. Public Participation – municipalities should involve a broad cross-section of the community in the development of the Plan through a variety of public participation techniques. This is to ensure that the plan adequately responds to community needs and to garner full support for the plan through direct public involvement.
 - a. Section 302 of the MPC requires at least one public meeting and one public hearing prior to adoption of the comprehensive plan. It also requires the municipality(ies) to provide the draft plan to, and consider the comments of, contiguous municipalities, the County and the school district.
 - b. Municipalities are also encouraged to use one or more of the following public participation tools to gather relevant data and opinions from their residents:
 - i. Focus group meetings – these are discussions with small groups of individuals with specialized knowledge about a particular plan topic such as municipal services or housing.
 - ii. Key person interviews – local “experts” identified by the steering committee are contacted to answer questions on a particular plan topic. They may include local government officials, business leaders or officers of local nonprofit organizations.
 - iii. Questionnaires – written surveys are sent out to a random cross-section of the community requesting feedback on relevant topics. Questions should be tailored to specific issues of concern to the municipality(ies).
 - iv. Visual preference surveys – often presented at a public meeting as a slide show depicting different types of land uses, densities and development styles. The audience is asked to record their preferences about what they would prefer to see in their communities.
 - v. Nominal Group Technique – used during public meetings, the Nominal Group Technique is a structured method for group brainstorming that encourage contributions from everyone in the audience.
 - vi. Targeted mailings – in addition to advertising a public meeting as required by the MPC, a letter or postcard is sent to members of the community that have a special interest in the outcome of

the plan or who have demonstrated concern for the welfare of the municipality. For example, planning commission members, realtors or members of local civic organizations may receive such mailings. This technique may be used as a means of boosting attendance at public meetings.

3. Required Elements of the Comprehensive Plan - Section 301 of the MPC requires that all comprehensive plans contain certain elements, which are summarized below:
 - a. A statement of objectives concerning future development;
 - b. A plan for land use designating areas to be used for residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, transportation, and recreational uses as well as for utilities, community facilities, public grounds, and preservation of prime agricultural land, flood plains, and other special hazards;
 - c. A housing plan to meet the needs of present and expected future residents of all income levels;
 - d. A transportation plan for the movement of people and goods, including roadways, public transit, parking, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and the like;
 - e. A plan for community facilities and utilities that may include education, recreation, municipal buildings, police and fire services, libraries, hospitals, water and sewer facilities, storm drainage, flood plain management and the like;
 - f. A statement of interrelationships among the plan components;
 - g. Short- and long-term implementation strategies including proposals for new or amended ordinances and identification of potential funding sources;
 - h. Statements ensuring that the Plan 1) proposes development compatible with that of neighboring municipalities and 2) is generally consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan;
 - i. A plan for the protection of natural and historic resources, such as wetlands, woodlands, steep slopes, prime agricultural lands, flood plains, unique natural areas and historic sites; and
 - j. A water supply plan for current and future needs.
4. Optional Elements of the Comprehensive Plan
 - a. Identification of future growth areas (MPC 301(d))
 - b. An energy conservation plan (MPC 301.1)

In addition, multi-municipal plans (MPC Section 1103) may identify:

- c. Growth areas for residential, mixed use, commercial, industrial and institutional uses and the services to accommodate them;
- d. Potential future growth areas where future development can occur with orderly extension of services;
- e. Rural resource areas, where services to serve any development would not be publicly financed;
- f. A plan for accommodation of all uses within the overall planning area covered by the multi-municipal plan;
- g. A plan for developments of areawide significance and impact; and
- h. A plan for conservation of natural, scenic, historic and aesthetic resources.

II. PREPARING MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE AREAWIDE (BLAIR COUNTY) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Municipalities are not required by the MPC to have Comprehensive Plans. However, for those that do, according to the MPC Section 301.4, adopted municipal comprehensive plans should be generally consistent with the adopted county comprehensive plan. A municipality also has the option of using the Areawide plan as a guide for growth in place of a municipal plan. The following are general guidelines for municipalities to consider when developing local plans in order to promote consistency between the county and local plans.

- A. Background information** – a significant amount of research was conducted during the preparation of the Areawide Plan. In addition, the Blair County Planning Commission conducted a countywide assessment of land use. Municipalities should consult the Areawide Plan for background information relevant to their community and/or communities. Housing characteristics and trends and demographic information should be based on the most recent United States Census data (US Census data for 2000 is provided for all municipalities in the Areawide Plan). In addition, the following Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data is available to municipalities at the Blair County Planning Commission:
1. Demographics and Housing: United States Census Data (2000)
 2. Land Use: Existing land use organized by the Land Based Classification Standards, Developments of Regional Significance and Impact (Blair County Planning Commission). New aerial photography for Blair County will be flown in 2006, providing an opportunity to update existing land use maps.
 3. Environment and Natural Resources: Wetlands (National Wetland Inventory), Floodplains (Federal Emergency Management Agency – National Floodplain Insurance Program), Steep Slopes (United State Geologic Survey Digital Elevation Model), Soils (Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey Geographic), Mineral Resources
 4. Cultural and Historic Resources: Historic and Cultural Sites (National Register of Historic Places)
 5. Farmland Preservation: Agricultural Security Areas (Blair County Conservation District), Prime Farmland (Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey Geographic)
 6. Community Facilities and Services: School Districts (Pennsylvania State Data Center), Schools, Libraries, Museums, Municipal Buildings, Public Water Service Areas and Public Sewer Service Areas (Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission & municipal authorities)
 7. Parks and Recreation: Park and Recreation Areas, State Game Lands (Pennsylvania State Data Center), Existing and Proposed Trails and Greenways (Blair County Planning Commission, Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, Pennsylvania State Data Center)
 8. Economic Development: Major employers, Enterprise Zones (Blair County Planning Commission)
- B. Goals and Objectives** – it is extremely important that municipalities consult the Areawide Plan when creating their local planning goals and objectives to ensure that the cumulative impacts of local land uses do not counteract the regional vision. The following are the key goals to consider when developing local plans:
1. Land Use: To encourage consistent and compatible land use patterns across all Blair County municipalities.
 2. Housing: To provide for a variety of affordable housing choices that meets the needs of all Blair County residents.
 3. Environment and Natural Resources: To provide for a healthy and stable natural environment through resource protection and preservation.
 4. Cultural and Historic Resources: To preserve the unique historic and cultural sites in Blair County.

5. **Farmland Preservation:** To preserve and enhance prime agricultural lands and long-standing agricultural communities in Blair County.
6. **Community Facilities and Services:** To provide for well-run, efficient, and effective community facilities and services which support the long-term needs of residents.
7. **Economic Conditions:** To support economic development efforts that fosters a strong regional economy and the creation of quality employment opportunities.
8. **Parks and Recreation:** To provide for a well-designed and managed park and recreation system that supports a variety of recreation opportunities and facilities within close proximity to Blair County's population centers.
9. **Transportation:** To develop a well-coordinated, efficient, and effective transportation and public transit system.

C. The Land Use Plan – the areawide future land use plan was developed using both a quantitative land demand analysis and a qualitative public input process. Likewise, municipalities should strive to do the same when creating land use plans on the local level. As part of the planning process, the Blair County Planning Commission (BCPC) developed realistic demographic and economic projections for 2020 using a combination of cohort-survival population projections and economic base projections. Population projections were then translated into an estimate of future land demand based on trends in household size, housing vacancy rates, and average lot sizes for each planning region. To ensure consistency in development objectives and future land use plans, it is strongly recommended that municipalities examine and include the projections provided by the County, or a similar analysis conducted on the local level, as rational for their future land use plan. Municipalities should plan for a realistic amount of growth based on land demand analyses, and look to preserve significant conservation lands and open space as assets to the municipality and county. In addition, local governments should consult the areawide future land use plan to ensure consistency in the type and location of future land uses. In particular, municipalities can refer to recommendations outlined in the Municipal Consistency Review (see Section II) when developing and/or updating future land use plans to promote consistency with the areawide future land use plan. Ultimately, land demand projections should be used to generate a realistic outlook of growth and development in the municipalities.

The Blair County Planning Commission will amend the Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County (Altoona MSA) and its future land use map to match the future land use map of any subsequent municipal or multi-municipal comprehensive plan that is prepared according to the guidelines set forth in this plan and Article III of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Any such municipal plan must be based on either the demographic, economic, and land demand projections of the Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County or other locally-produced demographic, economic, and land demand projections. However, the BCPC strongly recommends that the cohort-survival method of projection populations, due to the rapidly aging nature of Blair County's residents. Likewise, the BCPC strongly recommends the economic base method of projecting future employment.

D. Strategies and Recommendations – Section III of the plan includes the recommendations and action plan for implementation of the plan. Local municipalities are a strategic partner in the implementation of nearly every strategy identified in the Areawide Plan. This is because local governments have authority over local land use controls. The Blair County Planning Commission (BCPC) serves primarily as an advisory body for planning throughout the County. Therefore, the Areawide Plan will not be effective in meeting its objectives without multi-municipal planning and action on a local level. Local governments should review each action plan item for relevance to local conditions and include relevant

strategies as part of their own comprehensive plans, with a particular focus on the land use and planning recommendations.

III. UNIFORMITY WITH RESPECT TO LOCAL PLANNING, ZONING AND LAND USE TERMINOLOGY/REGULATIONS

Section 603 of the PA MPC states that zoning ordinances should reflect the policy goals of the community development objectives, and give consideration to the character of the municipality, needs of citizens, and the special nature of parts of the municipality. It also states that zoning ordinances adopted by municipalities shall be generally consistent with the municipal or multi-municipal comprehensive plan or, where none exists, with the municipal statement of community development objectives and the county comprehensive plan. If a municipality amends its zoning ordinance in a manner not generally consistent with its comprehensive plan, it shall concurrently amend its comprehensive plan in accordance with Article III. (MPC Section 603 (j)).

Zoning is one of the primary tools available to local governments for implementing comprehensive plans and land use policies. The comprehensive plan is a policy guide, which has little legal effect unless effectively implemented through land use tools. Therefore, it is important that zoning ordinances clearly reflect the community's vision and goals through the designation of definitions, zoning districts, and development standards. All too often, zoning ordinances lead to development that is inconsistent with the community's vision due to vague and confusing language and development standards that do not appropriately meet the community's objectives. On the other hand, clear and consistent land use regulations, developed from consistent county and local goals, result in projects that are consistent with the regional plan and community vision.

While municipalities have control over land use and zoning regulations, it is important that local governments recognize the potential regional impacts of planning and development decisions. The Areawide Plan recommends implementing a multi-municipal body to review and evaluate the impacts of developments of regional significant and impact (DORSI). It is equally important that local zoning regulations adequately address regional developments in addition to local land use issues.

A. Criteria for Evaluation of Zoning Ordinance Consistency

The following criteria should be used to evaluate the consistency of municipal zoning ordinances with the Areawide Plan and, if applicable, municipal comprehensive plans:

1. **Community Development Objectives:** does the zoning ordinance promote and protect the community character as articulated in the community development objectives?
2. **Land Use:** Does the zoning ordinance provide for all types of land uses as required by the MPC? Are permitted uses appropriate for their location and zoning district? Does the zoning ordinance include a classification and mechanism for identification and review of developments of regional significance (DORSI) and impact (consistent with DORSI's identified in the Areawide Plan)?
3. **Future Growth and Development:** Does the zoning ordinance put forth consistent districts, standards, and guidelines with designated Future Growth Areas and Rural Resources Area, as defined by the MPC? Are zoning districts and standards appropriately designated so as to accommodate anticipated development based on reliable population and economic growth projections?

4. **Housing:** Does the zoning ordinance allow for a range of housing types and densities, including but not limited to, group homes, senior housing options (assisted living, nursing homes, patio homes), live/work spaces, manufactured housing, mobile home parks, multi-family, and single-family dwelling units?
5. **Economic Development:** Does the ordinance allow for economic activities through business, manufacturing, and industrial development? Does the zoning ordinance allow for redevelopment of brownfield sites and reuse of former industrial sites?
6. **Mixed-Use:** Does the zoning ordinance allow for a mix of compatible residential, business, and commercial uses in downtowns, business districts, and village areas? Do parking standards overly restrict redevelopment activities and mixed-use development? Is vertical housing (apartments above ground floor retail) a permitted use in mixed-use districts?
7. **Farmland Preservation:** Does the zoning ordinances promote the preservation of prime farmland through agricultural zoning and/or transfer of development rights? What types of agricultural zoning techniques are utilized and do they adequately preserve large tracts of land for farms and prevent inefficient large-lot suburban development on prime farmland? Are agricultural zoning districts adequately situated in designated Rural Resource Area?
8. **Sensitive Environmental Features:** Does the zoning ordinance limit inappropriate levels of development in floodplain areas, on steep slopes, wetlands, and other significant environmental features? Are floodplain districts, hillside development, and resource conservation districts utilized?
9. **Historic Sites and Features:** Does the zoning ordinance account for the preservation of significant historic sites and/or historic districts through the use of overlay zoning?
10. **Parks and Recreation:** Does the zoning ordinance allow for a range of recreational uses (both public and private) throughout the municipality? Does the ordinance include recreation fee-in-lieu requirements to provide for recreational facilities for growing communities?
11. **Reasonable Use of Land:** Does the ordinance allow for the reasonable use of private property so as not to constitute a taking?

The table at the end of this section provides addition guidelines for consistency with the goals of the Areawide Comprehensive Plan.

B. Specific MPC Requirements

1. Section 603 (f): Zoning ordinances may not unreasonably restrict forestry activities. To encourage maintenance and management of forested or wooded open space and promote the conduct of forestry as a sound and economically viable use of forested land throughout this commonwealth, forestry activities, including, but not limited to, timber harvesting, shall be a permitted use by right in all zoning district in every municipality.
2. Section 603 (g) (1): Zoning ordinances shall protect prime agricultural land and may promote the establishment of agricultural security areas.
3. Section 603 (g) (2): Zoning ordinances shall provide for protection of natural and historic features and resources.
4. Section 603 (h): Zoning ordinances may not restrict agricultural operations or changes to or expansions of agricultural operations in geographic areas where agriculture has traditionally been present, unless the agricultural operation will have a direct adverse effect on the public health and safety

5. Section 603 (i): Zoning ordinances shall provide for the reasonable development of minerals in each municipality.
6. Section 603 (l): Zoning ordinances shall permit no-impact home-based businesses in all residential zones of a municipality as a use permitted by right, except that such permission shall not supersede any deed restriction, covenant or agreement restricting the use of land, nor any master deed, bylaw or other document applicable to a common interest ownership community.

C. Special Zoning Provisions

Overlay zoning regulations provide additional standards and regulations for unique features or areas requiring special attention, such as sensitive environmental areas, historical sites and districts, and transportation corridors. Such regulations are in addition to the requirements of the underlying zoning district or districts. The Blair County Planning Commission (BCPC) encourages local municipalities to consider including such overlay or special protection districts in municipal zoning ordinances to provide an added layer of protection for environmental and historic assets. Several overlay districts are also outlined in the action plans and strategies. The BCPC can offer technical assistance to local municipalities in developing and implementing overlay ordinances, and refer municipalities to model guidelines.

1. **Floodplain Protection Overlay:** A floodplain overlay district specifies added development standards and requirements for the 100-year floodplain as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the National Flood Insurance Program. This overlay district serves to protect from the loss of life or property due to flooding and limit the extent of flooding by retaining floodplains in a more natural, undeveloped condition.
2. **Hillside Development Overlay:** The purpose of a hillside protection overlay is to prevent excessive hillside development which could threaten steep slopes through grading and razing of hillsides. Such an overlay looks to minimize earthwork and grading, and prevent soil erosion, silting of lower slopes, landslides, flooding, and severe cutting or scarring of the land.
3. **Water Resource Protection Zone:** A water resource protection zone provides added protection for both surface and groundwater resources, particularly those that serve as a potable water source. Regulations serve to protect vulnerable water resources to ensure the proper recharge of water resources. In addition, the zone serves to protect valuable water resources from hazardous substance pollution by controlling or abating pollution from commercial and industrial sources.
4. **Riparian Buffer Overlay:** The purpose of a riparian buffer ordinance is to retain a natural vegetative state along waterways, including streams, creeks, and rivers. A riparian buffer limits run-off, streambank erosion, and flooding, thereby reducing the amount of nutrients, sediment, organic matter, pesticides, and non-point source pollutants that could potential enter waterways. The Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers has published a Riparian Buffer Model Ordinance.
5. **Greenway Overlay:** A greenway overlay should serve to maintain and protect the natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, economic, and recreational assets of potential greenways identified in the Blair County Greenway Plan. This type of overlay may be used in conjunction with an Official Map to identify and acquire key greenway connections.
6. **Access Management/Transportation Corridor Overlay:** The purpose of an access management overlay is to facilitate vehicular movement and maintain levels of service along a transportation corridor by limiting access points, regulating land use, and/or requiring the use of secondary access

roads, alleys, or service streets. Transportation corridor overlays should also enhance and promote a consistent visual impact along corridors through requirements for lighting, landscaping, signage, sidewalks, and/or bicycle lanes. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation released an Access Management Model Ordinance in April, 2005.

7. **Historic District Overlay:** The purpose of a historic resources overlay is to establish a process to protect the character, identity, and heritage of Blair County and its nationally recognized historic districts. Regulations serve to identify and protect historic structures and districts in order to maintain community character, improve local property values, foster civic pride, enhance local attractions to tourists and visitors, strengthen the local economy, and promote the use of such resources for the education of the local citizens.

D. Zoning Administration Options

Only nine of Blair County's twenty-four municipalities have a zoning ordinance in place. They include:

- City of Altoona
- Borough of Duncansville
- Borough of Hollidaysburg
- Borough of Martinsburg
- Borough of Roaring Spring
- Frankstown Township
- Borough of Tyrone
- Borough of Williamsburg
- Logan Township

As municipalities complete and/or update comprehensive plans, it will be important for them to determine their administrative options for implementation of a zoning ordinance. There are three main options for implementation of zoning in Pennsylvania. The first is not to adopt and implement a zoning ordinance. The second is to implement local municipal zoning for a single municipality, and the third option is to develop and adopt a joint municipal zoning ordinance with two or more municipalities.

1. **No Zoning Ordinance:** It is recognized in Pennsylvania that Euclidean zoning with strict separation of uses, has lead to undesirable and inefficient land use patterns, with "sprawl" cited as one negative outcome. However, a municipality with no zoning controls has little protection from land uses that has potential negative impacts, such as land fills, junk yards, and adult-oriented businesses. Zoning places control in the hands of municipalities on where such uses are most appropriate in a community in order to preserve property values, maintain the community character, and protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents. Twelve Blair County municipalities have a subdivision and land development ordinance, but no zoning ordinance. While the subdivision and land development ordinance outlines how land will be subdivided and developed, it does not regulate where specific land uses are permitted in a municipality.
2. **Local Municipal Zoning:** Article VI of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) outlines provisions that apply to the development and implementation of a municipal zoning ordinance. The main advantage of local zoning is that local municipalities retain control over land use decision making. This provides municipalities the ability to implement the level of zoning for which the elected officials and residents are comfortable. Often, neighboring municipalities are implementing very different ordinance based the unique conditions in each municipality. However, there is growing recognition on a municipal level that development impact span municipal borders.

3. **Joint Municipal Zoning:** Article VIII-A of the MPC outlines provisions for joint municipal zoning in Pennsylvania. More and more, municipalities are developing joint comprehensive plans to identify and address regional growth and development issues. The next logical step for these municipalities is to implement a joint zoning ordinance that is consistent with the multi-municipal plan. In addition to promoting regional planning goals and community development objectives, there are several recognized benefits of joint municipal zoning. Currently in Pennsylvania, municipalities are required to zone for every land use within the municipal boundaries. A joint municipal zoning ordinance provides more flexibility to municipalities to account for all land uses across and multi-municipal area. Therefore, both municipalities do not have to zone separately for industrial uses, junk yards, land fills, or other undesirable uses. The second benefit of joint zoning is that municipalities can share the cost of implementing the ordinance through a joint code enforcement officer and zoning hearing board.

PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPALITIES PLANNING CODE CHECKLIST FOR MUNICIPAL
COMPREHENSIVE PLANS¹

MPC SECTION	QUESTION	YES	NO
THE PLANNING AGENCY			
201	Has the municipality created a planning agency?		
201	If this agency is a planning committee, is it composed exclusively of members of the governing body?		
205	If this agency is a planning commission, has it been created by ordinance, and are most of its members neither officers nor employees of the municipality?		
209.1(a)	Has the governing body formally requested that a municipal comprehensive plan be prepared?		
209.1(a)(1)	Has the planning agency prepared this plan?		
301(a)(1)	Does the plan contain a statement of the municipality's objectives concerning the location, character, and timing of future development?		
301(a)(2)	Does it contain a future land use plan, which <i>may</i> include provisions for the amount, intensity, character, and timing of residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, transportation, utility, community facility, and/or floodplain development?		
301(a)(2.1)	Does it contain a plan to meet the housing needs of present and future residents?		
301(a)(3)	Does it contain a plan for the movement of people and goods, which <i>may</i> address roads, railroads, seaports, airports, pedestrian/bicycle trails, parking facilities, and public transit networks?		
301(a)(4)	Does it contain a plan for the municipality's community facilities and public utilities, which <i>may</i> address public schools, private schools, recreational facilities, municipal buildings, fire fighting companies, police organizations, emergency medical services, hospitals, libraries, water supply systems, sewage disposal systems, solid waste disposal networks, storm water drainage facilities, and utility corridors?		

Section 3

Criteria and Guidelines for Local Comprehensive Plans

MPC SECTION	QUESTION	YES	NO
301(a)(4.1)	Does the plan contain a statement of the interrelationships among the various plan components, which <i>may</i> include an estimate of the plan's environmental, energy, fiscal, economic, and social consequences?		
301(a)(4.2)	Does the plan contain a discussion of short and long range implementation strategies, which <i>may</i> address capital improvements programming, new or updated development regulations, and/or the amount of public funds potentially available for implementation?		
301(a)(5)	Does the plan contain a statement indicating that the existing and proposed development of the municipality is compatible with the plans, existing development, and proposed development of its neighboring municipalities? If not, does it contain a statement indicating measures which have been taken to buffer the incompatibilities?		
301(a)(5)	Does the plan contain a statement indicating that the existing and proposed development of the municipality is generally consistent with the objectives and plans of the Blair County Comprehensive Plan?		
301(a)(6)	Does it contain a plan for the protection of the municipality's natural and historic resources (including wetlands, aquifer recharge zones, woodlands, steep slope areas, prime agricultural lands, floodplains, unique natural areas, and historic sites) to the extent not preempted by federal or state law?		
301(b)	Does it contain a plan for the reliable supply of water that (1) considers current and future water availability, uses, and limitations; (2) includes provisions adequate to protect the municipality's water sources; (3) is consistent with the State Water Plan and any applicable river basin plans; and (4) contains a statement recognizing that mineral extraction and commercial agricultural activities impact water supplies and are governed by statutes?		
301.1	If the plan contains an energy conservation plan element (this is not required), does it (1) systematically analyze the energy consequences of each implementation measure, and (2) propose measures that will reduce the municipality's consumption of non-renewable energy?		

MPC SECTION	QUESTION	YES	NO
301.2	In preparing the comprehensive plan, did the planning agency make careful surveys, studies, and analyses of the municipality's housing, demographic, and economic characteristics and trends?		
301.2	In preparing the comprehensive plan, did the planning agency make careful surveys, studies, and analyses of the amount, type, and general location of the municipality's various land uses? Did the planning agency study the interrelationships between these uses?		
301.2	In preparing the comprehensive plan, did the planning agency make careful surveys, studies, and analyses of the general location and extent of the municipality's transportation and community facilities?		
301.2	In preparing the comprehensive plan, did the planning agency make careful surveys, studies, and analyses of the municipality's natural features that may affect development?		
301.2	In preparing the comprehensive plan, did the planning agency make careful surveys, studies, and analyses of the municipality's natural, historic, and cultural resources?		
301.2	In preparing the comprehensive plan, did the planning agency make careful surveys, studies, and analyses of the municipality's prospects for future growth and development?		
302(a)	Has the planning agency held at least one public meeting - - with proper public notice – before forwarding the proposed comprehensive plan to the governing body?		
302(b)	Has the governing body held at least one public hearing - - with proper public notice -- before adopting the proposed comprehensive plan?		
301.3	No less than 45 days before this public hearing, did the municipality forward copies of the proposed comprehensive plan to its contiguous municipalities, its school district, and the Blair County Planning Commission for review and comment?		
301.4 and 306(a)	Is the proposed comprehensive plan generally consistent with the most recently adopted county comprehensive plan?		

Section 3

Criteria and Guidelines for Local Comprehensive Plans

MPC SECTION	QUESTION	YES	NO
302(b)	If the municipality's proposed plan was substantially revised after the governing body's public hearing, did the governing body subsequently hold another public hearing – with proper public notice – before adoption?		
301(c) and 306(b)	Within 30 days of adoption, was a certified copy of the municipality's new comprehensive plan forwarded to the Blair County Planning Commission? Was a copy also sent to the Center for Local Government Services?		

(Footnotes)

1 This checklist is drawn from Articles II and III of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, P.L. 805, Number 247, as reenacted and amended (Fourteenth Edition, August 2000).

AREAWIDE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR BLAIR COUNTY
ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY GUIDELINES

AREAWIDE PLANNING GOAL	SUGGESTED ZONING PROVISIONS
To strengthen the downtown and village areas that represent Blair County's core communities.	Zone for a mix of high density residential, commercial, and business uses; include pedestrian and streetscape enhancements for sidewalks and landscaping; ensure parking and area/bulk requirement allow for infill development; permit community facilities
To provide for a variety of affordable housing choices that meet the needs of all Blair County residents.	Zone for a mix of residential uses with consideration for public service areas; permitted uses in urban and village areas - townhouses, lofts, assisted living facilities, patio homes; permit mobile homes in rural areas with design specifications
To provide for a healthy and stable natural environment through resource protection and preservation.	Floodplain protection provisions that limits all development that raises the 100-year flood stage; permitted uses in flood prone areas that limit damage and destruction to life and property such as parks and accessory structures; hillside development standards; impervious surface standards in critical watersheds
To preserve the unique historic and cultural sites in Blair County.	Historic districts or historic overlays standards; requirements for identification and consideration of historic features on a development site; permit cultural venues in downtown and village areas
To preserve and enhance prime agricultural lands and long-standing agricultural communities in Blair County.	Rural-density or area-based allocations; permit agricultural uses and agriculture-related businesses; permit conservation subdivisions; transfer of development rights; allowable densities that do not require public infrastructure
To provide for well-run, efficient, and effective community facilities and services which support the long-term needs of residents.	Rural zoning that accounts for limited public infrastructure; mixed-use or medium density zoning in village areas and urban centers with reduced lot width, frontage, and setback requirements
To support economic development efforts that fosters a strong regional economy and the creation of quality employment opportunities.	Designate institutional districts and permitted uses for school, universities and hospitals in urban areas; permit industrial and manufacturing uses on vacant sites and near roads and public infrastructure

Section 3

Criteria and Guidelines for Local Comprehensive Plans

<p>To provide for a well-designed and managed park and recreation system that supports a variety of recreation opportunities and facilities within close proximity to Blair County's population centers.</p>	<p>Permit parks (community and neighborhood) in residential and mixed-use areas; open space zoning for town squares and greens; variety of permitted park and recreation uses (public and private), recreation fee in lieu ordinance</p>
<p>To develop a well-coordinated, efficient, and effective transportation and public transit system.</p>	<p>Access management and corridor enhancement overlays; transit oriented development; clustered commercial zoning with big-box standards; pedestrian and bicycle facilities</p>

Section 4

Blair County Greenways Plan: Linking Our Natural Assets for Conservation, Recreation, and Drinking Water Protection



What is a Greenway?

Greenways have been defined in several ways since the term was first coined in the 19th century. Charles Little, in his book, *Greenways for America*, defined them in the following way:

A greenway is a linear open space established along either a natural corridor, such as a riverfront, stream valley, or ridgeline, or overland along a railroad right-of-way converted to recreational use, a canal scenic road or other route. It is any natural or landscaped course for pedestrian or bicycle passage. An open-space connector linking parks, nature reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and with populated areas.

Some people think of greenways as primarily recreational, like biking and water trails (sometimes called "blueways"). For them, greenways are places where they can actively experience the outdoors. For others, the purpose of greenways is chiefly for conservation of cohesive tracts of undeveloped habitat. To them, greenways protect important environmental assets, like forests, wetlands and stream banks, and the plants and animals that live there. Still others see greenways as principally aesthetic, preserving the countryside in rural areas or establishing green landscapes in urban areas. All these definitions are embraced by this greenways plan.

In 1987, the movement to establish greenways was given a significant boost when the President's Commission on American Outdoors recommended that an interconnected greenways network be established throughout the nation. Many states, including the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, took up the task of promoting greenways. *Pennsylvania's Greenways - An Action Plan for Creating Connections* was published in 2001. This report established a strategy for creating a comprehensive, statewide greenway network by the year 2020. The Governor appointed the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to oversee the Commonwealth's greenways program. DCNR partners with County and municipal officials to support greenways planning and implementation through education, technical assistance and grant making programs.



Why Create a Greenways Plan for Blair County?

Wherever greenways are established, they provide numerous benefits to local municipalities and their residents. Some of the benefits provided by greenway development are:

- Preservation of Natural Resources
- Protection of Water Resources
- Stewardship of Pennsylvania's Rural and Farmland Legacy
- Conservation of Historic and Cultural Resources
- Conservation of Scenic Resources
- Fostering of Public Recreation, Health and Fitness
- Creation of Educational Opportunities
- Support of Economic Prosperity
- Promotion of Sustainable Development and Sound Land Use
- Provision of Alternative Transportation
- Building Partnerships¹

“Greenways differ in their location and function, but overall, a greenway will protect natural, cultural and scenic resources, provide recreational benefits, enhance natural beauty and quality of life in neighborhoods and communities, and stimulate economic development opportunities.”

- Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Commission

In this section, the plan focuses on several benefits that are particularly applicable to the development of a greenway network in Blair County.

PRESERVING BLAIR COUNTY'S DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

When people talk about what they like about where they live, character or "sense of place" often ranks high on their lists. Residents like the features that set their community or region apart from every other place.

Any visitor to Blair County is immediately struck by the awe-inspiring beauty of the landscape. Its forested mountain ridges, lush river valleys and rolling farmlands, dotted with historic communities and sites, give the County its unique character. The imposing facades of Tussey Mountain and the Allegheny Front, the pastoral settings of Morrisons Cove and Sinking Valley, the quaint towns of Hollidaysburg and Roaring Spring, and historic landmarks like Horseshoe Curve and the Allegheny Portage Railroad are a few of the special places that come to mind when one thinks of Blair County. A greenway network will help connect and protect these assets for present and future generations.

EXPANDING THE ECONOMY

Recreational tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in Pennsylvania's economy. According to DCNR, tourism is the second largest industry in the Commonwealth and nearly one-fifth of Pennsylvania's tourists travel to enjoy its outdoor amenities. The Allegheny Mountains Convention and Visitors Bureau reports that travel and tourism are also the second largest industry in Blair County.²

Blair County has many recreational assets, including the Lower Trail, the Mid-State Trail, Canoe Creek State Park, numerous State gamelands, as well as streams & rivers. They provide opportunities for biking, hiking, hunting, fishing, boating, wildlife viewing and other pastimes.

In addition to its abundant recreational assets, Blair County has a rich history that is well-preserved. Several significant historic sites such as the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site, Horseshoe Curve National Historic Landmark, the Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum and Fort Roberdeau provide opportunities for increasing tourism to the county. Altoona, Hollidaysburg, Roaring Spring, Tyrone and Williamsburg have National Historic Districts as well as restaurants, shops and lodging. A greenway network linking historic resources with the County's recreational amenities will increase their accessibility and attract more tourists to Blair County.

The economic benefits of greenway development are well-documented. In 2002, York County published a study of the Heritage Rail Trail, which had been in operation for three years. The study, Heritage Rail Trail County Park 2001 User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis, concluded that trail users were having a measurable, positive impact on the York County economy. Specifically, the report stated:

In terms of economic impact, 72% of the respondents indicated they had purchased "hard goods" in the past year in conjunction with their use of the trail. The majority of these purchases were bicycles and bike supplies that resulted in an average purchase amount of \$367.12. While these types of purchases are not annually recurring, even with the most conservative usage estimate they amount to millions of dollars in sales.

Even more significant is the purchase of "soft goods" (water, soda, candy, ice cream, lunches, etc.). 65.6% of the respondents indicated that they purchased these types of items on their most recent trip to the trail. The average purchase amount per person was \$8.33. Considering that the average user makes several trips to the trail on an annual basis, at the minimum these types of purchases are contributing several hundred thousand dollars to the York County economy. And, these types of purchases are recurring year after year. Only 15% of the respondents indicated that they did not make a purchase in conjunction with their use of the trail.

To cater to the needs of recreational users, new service businesses, such as bike shops, canoe & kayak rentals, restaurants, campsites, and bed and breakfasts often spring up around recreational greenways. These new businesses bring new jobs and additional tax dollars to the host municipalities.

A study of the benefits of greenways noted that in 2002, recreational tourism accounted for 459,000 jobs statewide, an increase of 100,000 from 1998. Moreover, the report noted that "there is also evidence to demonstrate that communities with recreational greenways have witnessed significant increases in real estate values."³

In addition to these direct economic benefits of greenways, other less tangible fiscal impacts may be attributed to greenway development. For instance, when looking for places to site new companies, employers look at a variety of factors including amenities for their employees. Workers, particularly young people, are attracted to places that provide opportunities for easy access to outdoor recreation. Greenway trails provide such accessibility since they connect employment centers to parks and other natural amenities.

PROTECTING SENSITIVE HABITATS

The forests, wetlands, limestone caves, rivers and streams of Blair County provide habitat for a wide array of plants and animals. The Pennsylvania Biological Survey has designated four Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and one Important Mammal Area in Blair

County. Moreover, in the Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy has identified Biological Diversity Areas (BDAs) that serve as critical habitat for species of special concern, and Landscape Conservation Areas (LCAs) that host a variety of habitats and landscape features warranting conservation. The Inventory pinpoints about a dozen BDAs of high or exceptional significance and approximately half a dozen LCAs of high or exceptional significance in the County.

A greenway network will help to protect these sensitive environmental areas from development and to restrict uses that would threaten their conservation.

PROTECTING DRINKING WATER RESOURCES

Much of the drinking water in Blair County comes from above-ground reservoirs, supplemented by several wells and springs. Thirteen reservoirs serve as drinking water sources. Twelve of them are located in the western part of the County, draining water from streams originating along the slopes of the Allegheny Front. The remaining one - Kettle Reservoir - is located on Brush Mountain. The water authorities own much of the land immediately surrounding the reservoirs. Land upgradient of these reservoirs is steeply sloped and largely undeveloped. Incorporating a drinking water protection corridor into the greenway network can help ensure a safe supply of potable water for current and future residents of Blair County.

DIMINISHING THE RISKS OF FLOODS

Parts of Altoona, Bellwood and Tyrone often experience heavy flooding during storm events. As more land in floodplains, adjacent wetlands and along steep slopes and tributary streams is paved for development, the frequency and severity of flooding will increase. Incorporating these resources into a greenway network that encourages conservation and restoration of the floodplains will provide residents of Blair County with increased control over the escalating risk of flooding.

Footnotes:

1. *Pennsylvania Greenways: An Action Plan for Creating Connections*, Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Commission and Greenways Partnership Advisory Committee (June 2001).
2. Allegheny Mountains Convention and Visitors Bureau website, www.amcvb.com.
3. *Benefits of Greenways: A Pennsylvania Study*, Pennsylvania Greenways partnership Commission (June 2002).



The Inventory - Building Blocks of a Greenway System

GATHERING THE DATA

Much of the background information needed to support the greenways plan has been gathered in connection with the comprehensive plan. However, some independent research was conducted specific to the greenways plan. Studies and reports were obtained and reviewed, including the Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory, the PennDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the Beaverdam Branch Greenways Plan. Other information was gathered through interviews with County experts knowledgeable about environmental and recreational assets. Interviews were conducted with representatives of several groups like the Juniata Valley Audubon Society, Pennsylvania Rails-to-Trails, and the Pennsylvania Game Commission. In this section, the plan will describe Blair County's resources and the sources of information we consulted, referring to relevant sections of the comprehensive plan, where appropriate.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Understanding the County's natural resources is fundamental to developing a greenways plan. For example, sensitive riparian or steep slope habitats are candidates for conservation corridors, while rivers and lakes provide opportunities for water trail development. Unique natural features may become important greenway destinations.

WATER RESOURCES

Blair County has an abundance of water resources. Primary among them are its three main rivers - the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River, the Little Juniata and the Beaverdam Branch - and their associated floodplains and wetlands. Small portions of the Raystown Branch watershed also lie in the southwestern and southeastern corners of the County. These river systems and their numerous tributaries form the headwaters of the Juniata River. There are no wild and scenic rivers in Blair County, but six stream

Section 4

The Inventory - Building Blocks of a Greenway System

basins have been classified as either high or exceptional value waters. The County also has one lake (Canoe Lake) and thirteen drinking water reservoirs. Water resources are depicted on Map 1, Hydrologic Resources. An extensive inventory of the County's water resources can be found in Section 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, *Environment and Natural Resources*, subsections I and II.

NATURAL AREAS, IMPORTANT PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITATS

The forests, wetlands, limestone caves, rivers, streams and vernal pools of Blair County provide habitat for a wide array of plants and animals. The Pennsylvania Biological Survey has designated four Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Blair County - Tussey Mountain IBA, Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River IBA, Canoe Creek Watershed IBA, and the Bald Eagle Ridge IBA. According to the Audubon Society, "to qualify as an IBA, a site must meet at least one of four criteria, each associated with a different type of vulnerability. It must support endangered or threatened species; species that are not widely distributed; species that are restricted to a single extensive habitat or biome; or high densities of congregating species, such as waterfowl or shorebirds."¹ Several of these areas are also important flyways for migrating birds in Spring and Fall.

In addition, the Canoe Creek Watershed has been designated as an Important Mammal Area by the Pennsylvania Biological Survey. This is due to the presence of the federally endangered Indiana bat as well as several other notable bat species.²

Another essential source of information about important habitat areas is the Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) currently being completed by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. This survey inventories the species of special concern, significant habitat areas supporting a diversity of animal and plant life and outstanding geologic features. A summary of the draft findings was presented to the Blair County Greenways Plan Steering Committee on May 11, 2005.

Biological Diversity Areas (BDAs) are generally small areas that form critical habitat supporting species of special concern. They consist of two habitat classifications, Core Habitat (the essential habitat of a species or natural community) and Supporting Landscape (lands that are not essential habitat, but

support natural features of concern by maintaining vital ecological processes or secondary habitat). Core habitat areas can absorb very little activity without substantial impact to the natural features of concern. Supporting Landscape Areas may be able to accommodate some types of activity without detriment to natural resources of concern.

Approximately a dozen BDAs of exceptional or high value have been identified by the NHI for Blair County. They include Tytoona Cave BDA; Beaverdams Wetland BDA; Tussey Mountain Bat Habitat BDA, Canoe Valley/Lock Mountain Bat Habitat BDA and Tub Run Headwaters Pools BDA. These areas support populations of species of special concern like the northern myotis, the Indiana Bat and the several threatened plants including a sedge and the Northeastern Bulrush.

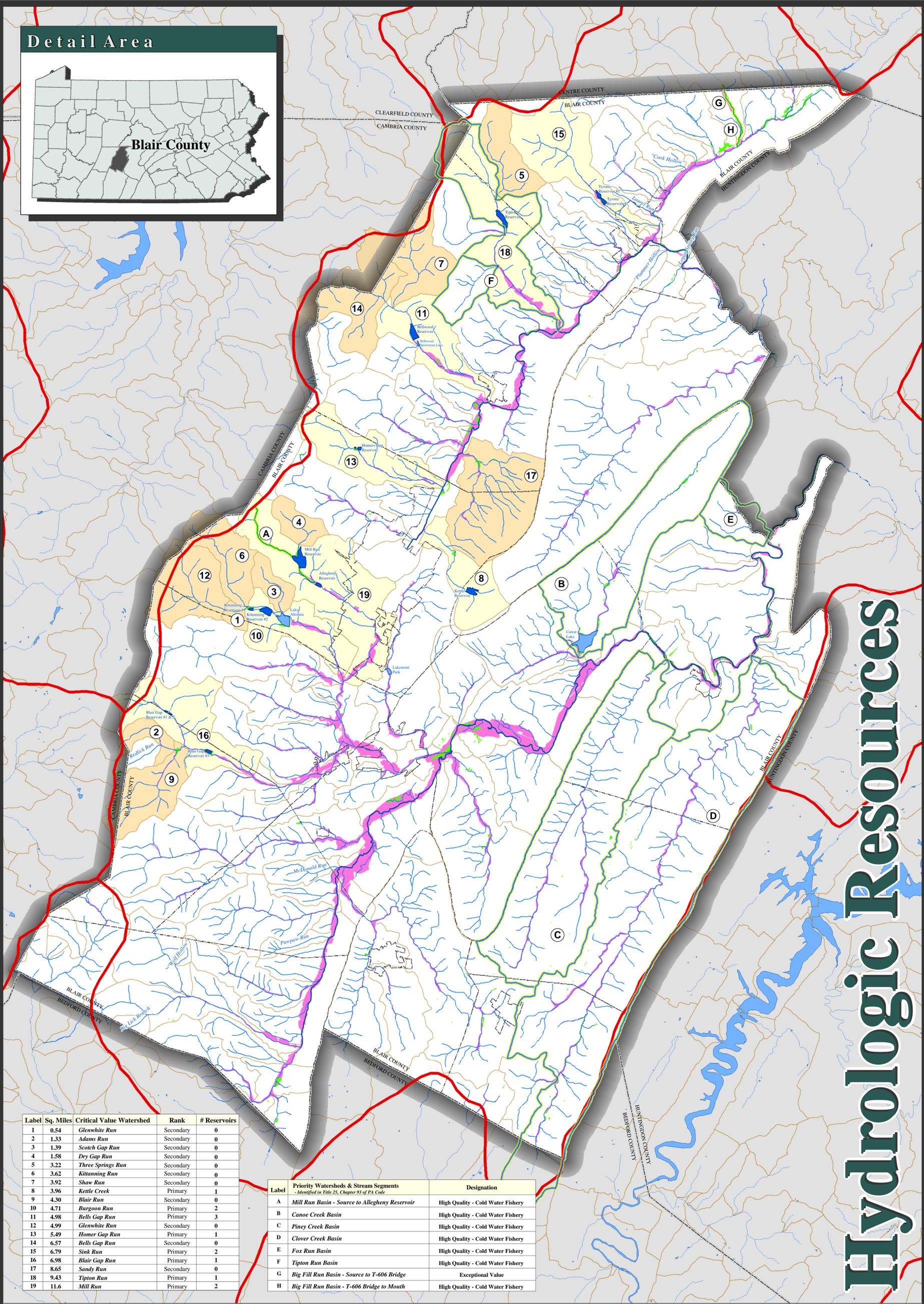


photo courtesy of Jessica McPherson,
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

The NHI also identifies Landscape Conservation Areas (LCAs). These are generally larger areas that host a variety of habitats and landscape features meriting conservation. For example, some LCAs may be designated because they are Core Forest Areas, areas that are home to species that inhabit "interior" forests, like scarlet tanagers and woodland salamanders. These areas are characterized by fewer predators, fewer invasive species and higher breeding success. The Blair County NHI identifies approximately seven exceptional or high value LCAs, including Allegheny Front LCA, Brush Mountain East LCA and Loop Mountain LCA. These areas were all identified because they contain large contiguous areas of forest habitat.³

The IMAs, IBAs, BDAs and LCAs for Blair County are depicted on Map 2, Priority Habitat Areas.

Detail Area



Label	Sq. Miles	Critical Value Watershed	Rank	# Reservoirs
1	0.54	Glenwhite Run	Secondary	0
2	1.33	Adams Run	Secondary	0
3	1.39	Scotch Gap Run	Secondary	0
4	1.58	Dry Gap Run	Secondary	0
5	3.22	Three Springs Run	Secondary	0
6	3.62	Kittanning Run	Secondary	0
7	3.92	Shaw Run	Secondary	0
8	3.96	Kettle Creek	Primary	1
9	4.30	Blair Run	Secondary	0
10	4.71	Burgoon Run	Primary	2
11	4.98	Bells Gap Run	Primary	3
12	4.99	Glenwhite Run	Secondary	0
13	5.49	Homer Gap Run	Primary	1
14	6.57	Bells Gap Run	Secondary	0
15	6.79	Sink Run	Primary	2
16	6.98	Blair Gap Run	Primary	1
17	8.65	Sandy Run	Secondary	0
18	9.43	Tipton Run	Primary	1
19	11.6	Mill Run	Primary	2

Label	Priority Watersheds & Stream Segments - Identified in Title 25, Chapter 93 of PA Code	Designation
A	Mill Run Basin - Source to Allegheny Reservoir	High Quality - Cold Water Fishery
B	Canoe Creek Basin	High Quality - Cold Water Fishery
C	Piney Creek Basin	High Quality - Cold Water Fishery
D	Clover Creek Basin	High Quality - Cold Water Fishery
E	Fox Run Basin	High Quality - Cold Water Fishery
F	Tipton Run Basin	High Quality - Cold Water Fishery
G	Big Fill Run Basin - Source to T-606 Bridge	Exceptional Value
H	Big Fill Run Basin - T-606 Bridge to Mouth	High Quality - Cold Water Fishery

Hydrologic Resources



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Hydrography

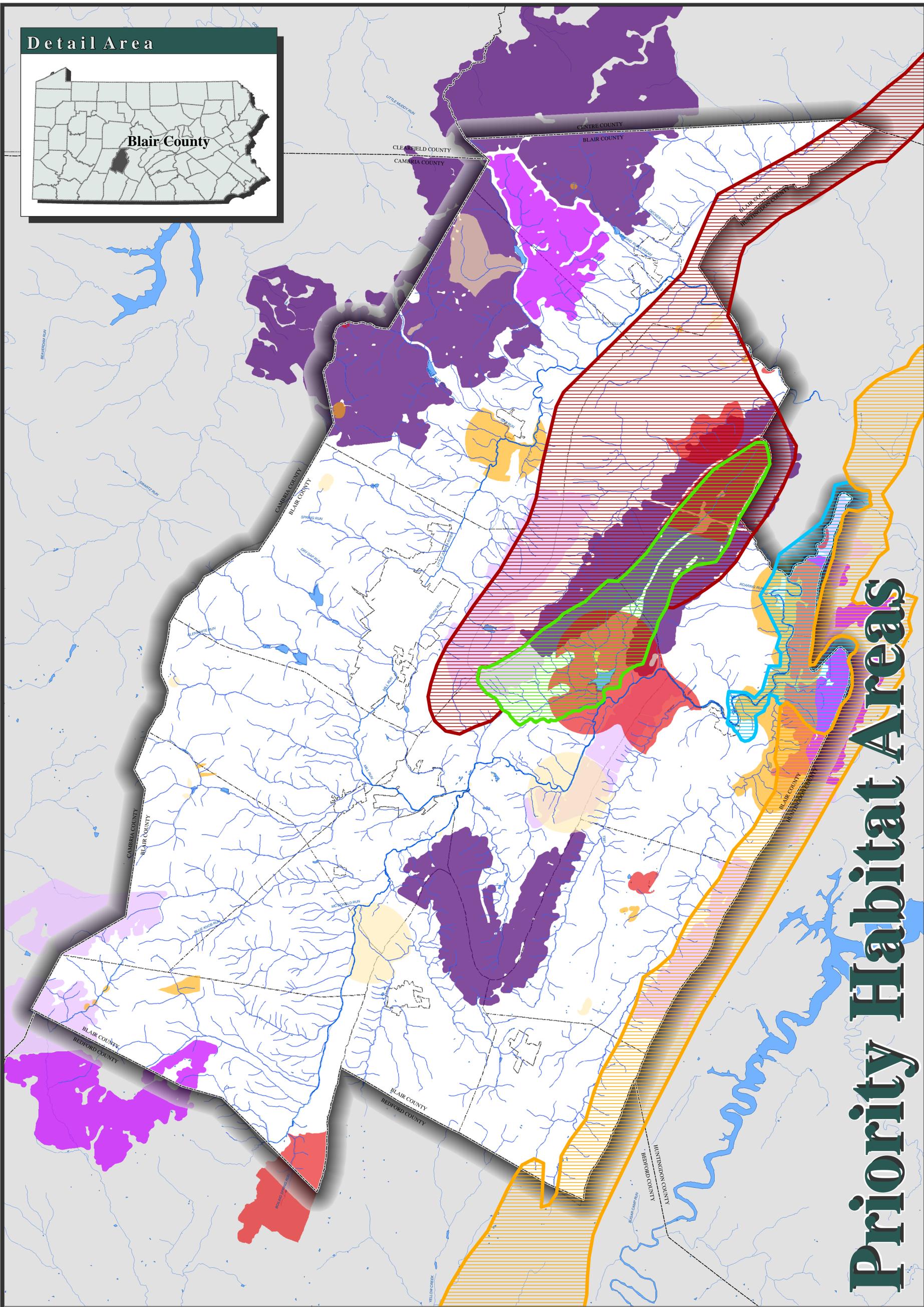
- Streams
- Rivers
- Lakes
- Reservoirs
- Wetland
- FEMA 100 Year Floodplains
- High Quality Stream
- Blair County Conservation District Designation
- Sub-Watershed
- Major Watershed
- Critical Value Sub-Watersheds
- Primary Reservoir within sub-watershed
- Secondary Drains into sub-watershed with reservoir
- Priority Watersheds - PA Code Title 25 Chapter 93

Map Sources:
 Transportation and Boundaries - Blair County
 Hydrology-ERRI Networked Streams (PASDA)
 Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
 Additional data provided by PASDA
 (Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access) and Blair County.

Projection: State Plane - NAD 1983
 Pennsylvania South, Feet

2 1 0 2
 Miles

Detail Area



Priority Habitat Areas



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Biological Diversity Areas
Level of Significance
Exceptional
High
Notable
County

Landscape Conservation Areas
Level of Significance
Exceptional
High
Notable

IBA's - (Important Bird Areas)
Bald Eagle Ridge - IBA #32
Cane Creek Watershed - IBA #76
Frankstown Branch/Lower Trail - IBA #75
Tussey Mountain - IBA #81

Map Sources:
Transportation and Boundaries - Blair County
Hydrology-ERRI Networked Streams (PASDA)
Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy - Natural Heritage Inventory
Additional data provided by PASDA (Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access) and Blair County.

Projection: State Plane - NAD 1983
Pennsylvania South, Feet



FORESTS AND WOODLANDS

Large tracts of intact forest are still present in Blair County. Most are located along the mountain ridges that extend across the length of the County in a generally southwest to northeast direction. About one-fourth of these woodlands are protected state game lands, but the remaining three-fourths remain under private ownership. Woodlands are described in detail in Section 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, under *Environment and Natural Resources*, subsection I. They are depicted in the Comprehensive Plan's Existing Land Use Map.

PUBLIC AND OTHER PROTECTED OPEN SPACE

There are no national or state forests in Blair County. However, more than 54,000 acres in Blair County are protected as State game lands. These lands are managed by the State Game Commission for wildlife conservation, hunting and trapping. These activities remain tantamount to any other proposed activities on these lands. Proposals for other uses are reviewed by the Game Commission to determine if they are compatible with primary uses. Public access to State game lands for hiking is permitted at any time as long as users obey the regulations. Camping in State game lands is prohibited by regulation. Other uses such as horseback riding and mountain biking are permitted on some trails known as "designated routes." Some significant game lands are SGL 73 and 118 (along the Tussey Mountain Ridge), SGL 198 (in Western part of County through which the Mainline Canal Greenway runs), and SGL 166 (containing Canoe Creek, a stocked trout stream, as well as the Important Bird Area and Important Mammal Area discussed above).⁴

There is only one State Park in the County, Canoe Creek State Park. This park contains 958 acres of forests and fields and a 155-acre, stocked lake. Other areas of protected open space include two County parks and approximately 10 community parks. While privately-owned, Blue Knob Ski Resort contains provides year-round recreational opportunities on forested land adjoining Blue Knob State Park in Bedford County.

The Mainline Canal Greenway extends across the middle of the County. While much of it is still in the planning stages, land surrounding the Lower Trail from Huntingdon County to Canoe Creek State Park is permanently protected. Much of the greenway corridor

between Hollidaysburg and the Allegheny Portage Railroad Site is owned by the National Park Service or the State Game Commission. A detailed description of game lands, parks and other open space can be found in Section 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, under *Parks, Recreation and Open Space*. These protected areas are depicted on the Comprehensive Plan's Recreation Inventory Map.

In addition to the parks and game lands, land around most of the County's reservoirs is also protected. Several reservoirs in the northern part of the County are located within State game lands. However, in the south, where that is not the case, the municipal water authorities have purchased land to buffer the reservoirs. The City has established a Watershed Protection Committee that is taking additional steps to protect the long-term quality of the water supply. The Committee is working to secure conservation easements with private landowners within certain watersheds, upstream from the Authority's reservoirs.⁵

FARMLAND

Farming plays an important role in the Blair County. In 2002, over 85,000 acres in the County were used for agriculture. The two prominent farming areas are Morrisons Cove in the southeast corner of the County and Sinking Valley in the north. Besides their economic value, farms provide large areas of open space and aesthetic benefits. Approximately 4,300 acres of agricultural lands have been permanently protected through easements under the Conservation Easement Purchase Program as of 2004. In addition, over 45,000 acres of farmland have been registered in the Agricultural Security Program. An extensive analysis of agricultural lands, including prime agricultural lands, is included in Section 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, *Prime Agricultural Lands*. Farmlands are also depicted on the Comprehensive Plan's Agriculture Map.



SOILS AND GEOLOGIC FEATURES

An analysis of the soils and geology of Blair County is included in Section 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, under *Environment and Natural Resources*. Key soil types for purposes of greenways planning include hydric soils. Hydric Soils are depicted on Map 3, Sensitive Environmental Features.

In addition, the Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory identifies significant geologic features in Blair County that merit conservation. Limestone outcrops, such as the Pemberton Bridge Cliff, and caves in the Canoe Creek watershed provide unique habitat for threatened and endangered plant and animal species.

STEEP SLOPES

Land with slopes exceeding 25% is generally considered environmentally sensitive and in need of protection. In Blair County, most steeply sloped land is also forested, providing significant wildlife habitat. Conservation of steep slopes is also important for purposes of flood control. Steep slopes in Blair County can be found on parts of the Allegheny Front and Dunning, Short, Loop, Lock, Brush, Bald Eagle, Canoe and Tussey Mountains. They are described in Section 1 of the Comprehensive Plan under Environment and *Natural Resources* and are shown on Map 3, Sensitive Environmental Features.

RIDGE TOPS AND SCENIC VIEWSHEDS

The ridge tops in Blair County are one of its defining characteristics. As one looks in any direction, the mountain ridges dominate the landscape. They demonstrate the power and constancy of the natural forces that shaped them. Development along ridge tops should be discouraged so that their imposing beauty is preserved. Ridge lines that should be conserved are the Allegheny Front and Dunning, Short, Loop, Lock, Brush, Bald Eagle, Canoe and Tussey Mountains.



photo
courtesy of
Jessica
McPherson,
Western
Pennsylvania
Conservancy

Moreover, ridge tops and other overlooks afford views over scenic landscapes throughout the County. A few notable viewsheds include vistas over 1) Morrisons Cove and Raystown Lake from the Mid-State Trail on Tussey Mountain; 2) Altoona and Brush Mountain from Wopsonnock Lookout on the Allegheny Front; and 3) Hollidaysburg from Chimney Rocks Park. Ridge tops are depicted on an inset map, Blair County's Mountain Ranges, located on the Comprehensive Plan's Environmental Features Map.

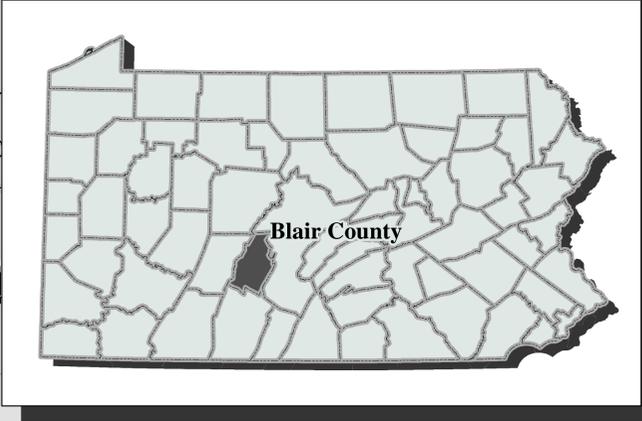
MANMADE RESOURCES

Greenways also capitalize on certain features of the built environment. Most commonly, one thinks of abandoned rail lines that are reborn as recreational rail trails. But sound greenways planning also requires an understanding of many types of manmade resources. There are those that facilitate a greenway corridor, like old canal beds or utility corridors. There are others that present challenges to greenway development, like major highways and active industrial sites. And there are some manmade features that provide interesting stops along the greenway, like historic sites and cultural amenities.

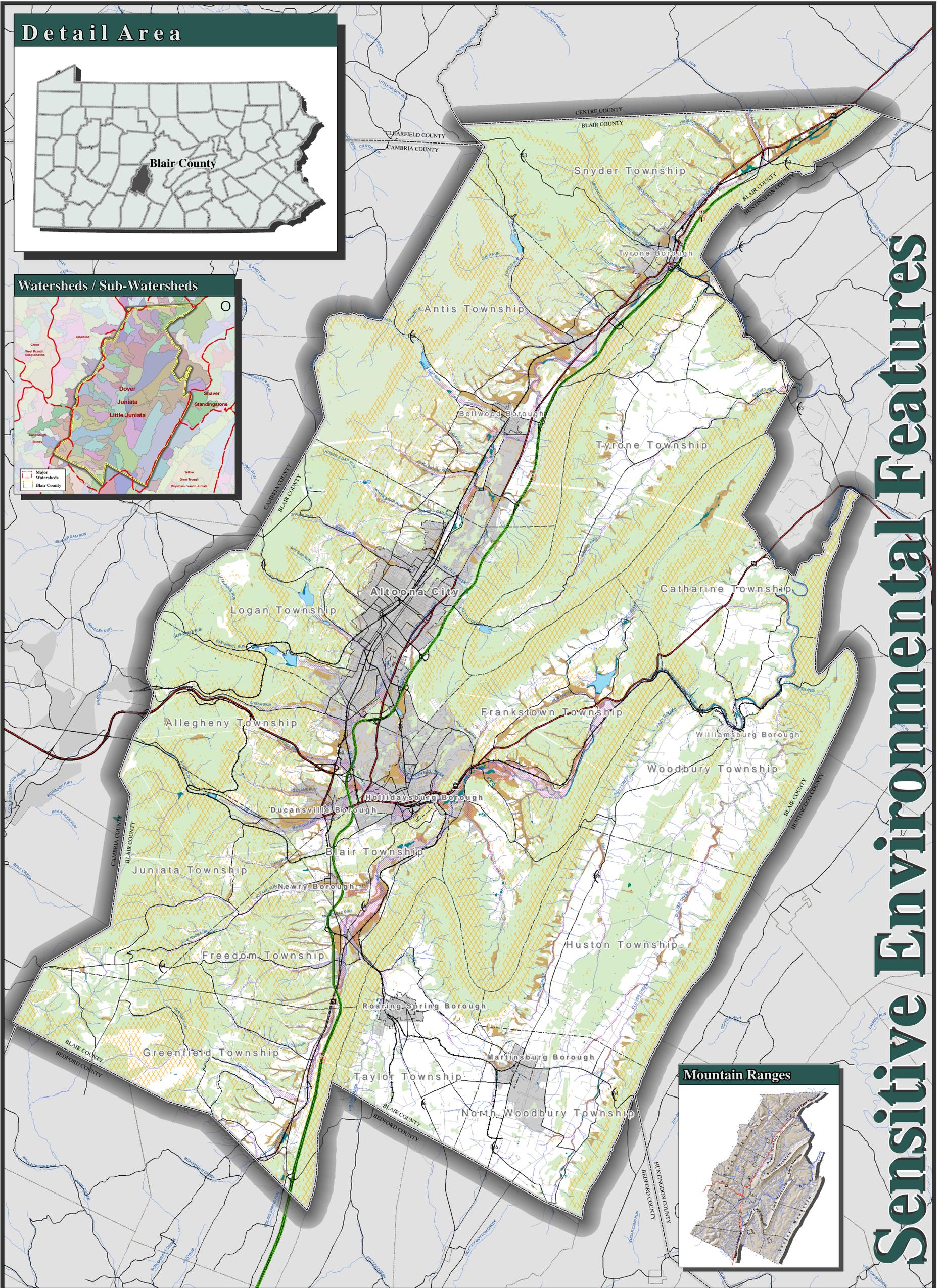
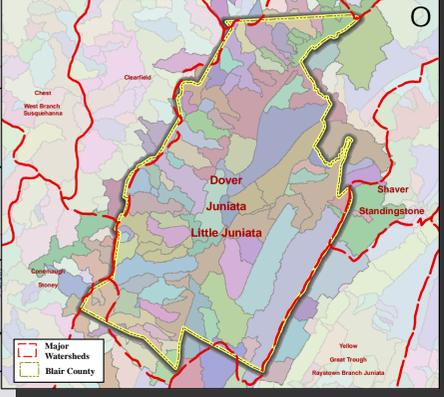
TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITY CORRIDORS

- **Canals** - The historic Pennsylvania Mainline Canal traverses central Blair County. It was built to compete with the well-known and highly successful Erie Canal that traversed New York State. The canal operated from 1834 to 1854 as a means of transporting goods westward from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. After the Allegheny Portage Railroad closed in 1854, segments of the canal continued to operate until 1875. Currently, there are plans to create a Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Greenway following the course of the old canal bed. The segment in Blair County includes the trace of the Allegheny Portage Railroad as well as the Lower Trail. There are no other former canals in the County.
- **Abandoned Rail lines** - Several discontinued rail lines exist in Blair County. The former Petersburg branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad line ran from the Hollidaysburg Car Shops to the County's eastern border and into Huntingdon County. The Lower Trail, a recreational rail trail, is being built along the former rail bed, and has been completed

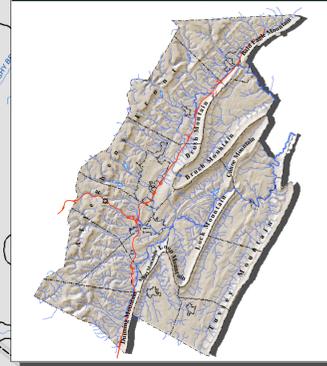
Detail Area



Watersheds / Sub-Watersheds



Mountain Ranges



Sensitive Environmental Features

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LEGEND

County Boundary	Interstate	100 Year Floodplain
Urban Areas	US Highway	Wetlands
Township	State Route	Hydic Soils
Lake/Reservoir	Local Road	Steep Slopes (>25%)
River/Creek/Stream	Railroad	Forested Areas

Map Sources:
 Transportation and Boundaries - Blair County
 Hydrology-ERRI Networked Streams (PASDA)
 Places - USGS Geographic Name Information System
 Additional data provided by PASDA (Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access) and Blair County.

Projection: State Plane - NAD 1983
 Pennsylvania South, Feet

Scale: 0 to 2 Miles

to date from Huntingdon County through Williamsburg to Canoe Creek State Park. In 1882, the Logan Valley Electric Railroad began carrying passengers between Altoona and Tyrone. This trolley line operated along 54 miles of track. The Bellwood-Antis Community Trust is leading an effort to redevelop a portion of the line as a recreational trail. A feasibility Study has been done and funding is available.

Another abandoned rail line runs from Bellwood Borough up the mountain to Blandburg. This line is also currently planned for redevelopment as the Bellwood Gap Recreational Trail. A Master plan has been completed and design will be starting soon.⁶

From 1891 to 1919, the Wopsononock Railroad operated a small train, called the "Alley Popper" from Juniata to Dougherty, a former mining town in Cambria County. The train stopped at a resort hotel at the crest of the mountain, where visitors could take in commanding views over the valley and Altoona. While the railroad ties are no longer in place, the course traveled by the line is still visible and is used by hikers and mountain bikers who ascend to the lookout to enjoy the vista. Students from the Penn State Altoona Campus's Spring 2005 Environmental Studies Seminar have developed a proposal recommending that the line be redeveloped as a hiking and mountain biking trail.⁷

Another abandoned line runs from the Morrison Cove line's current terminus at Curryville to Henrietta. At present, there are no plans to redevelop this line.

Finally, another stretch of abandoned rail line runs from Tyrone north to Philipsburg in Centre County. This line achieved notoriety in 1893, when the Walter L. Main Circus Train jumped the tracks. A Bengal tiger escaped, terrorizing the town for several days, until it was shot by a posse of local citizens.

- Highway bike lanes - There are currently no such highway bike lanes, but there are several designated on-road bike routes in the County. Bicycle PA has a signed North- South State biking route that crosses through Blair County. From south to north, Bicycle PA Route G traverses County roads

through Claysburg, Roaring Spring, Martinsburg and Williamsburg where it joins the Lower Trail. Cycle Southern Alleghenies has charted three on-road routes in Blair County: the Fort Roberdeau Revolutionary Route from Tyrone through Sinking Valley to historic Fort Roberdeau and back; the Horse & Buggy Tour, from Williamsburg through the rolling farmlands of the Cove; and the Diamond Loop, beginning in Hollidaysburg and traveling through Scotch Valley and Canoe Creek State Park. These routes are self-guided and signed with Cycle SA Route markers.⁸

- Pedestrian walkways - other than urban sidewalks in the City of Altoona and the boroughs, there are no pedestrian walkways in the County.
- Park and ride lots - there is currently only one park and ride lot in the County at the Pinecroft Interchange of Route I-99.
- Bus and train terminals - AMTRAK trains stop in both Altoona and Tyrone. The Tyrone station is located in Railroad Park at the end of Pennsylvania Avenue. The Altoona Transportation Center, situated on 13th Street between 10th and 11th Avenues, serves as the terminal for AMTRAK, AMTRAN and Greyhound buses.

RECREATION FACILITIES

Recreation facilities are extensively discussed in Section 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, *Parks, Recreation and Open Space*. Significant resources include Canoe Creek State Park, more than a dozen State game land preserves, ten community parks, the Lower Rail Trail, and Blue Knob Ski Resort. In addition, the following recreational assets are relevant to the greenways plan:

- The Mid-State Trail is a 510 km hiking trail that begins in Tioga County in the north of the State and winds southward through Centre, Blair and Bedford Counties into Northern Maryland. It is a wilderness footpath, meaning that it is left in its natural state with boulders and rocks in most areas. It is intended for walking and not for other types of uses. For much of its length in Blair County, the trail is located along Tussey Mountain ridge, where it meanders back and forth between Blair & Huntingdon Counties. On this stretch, the trail

traverses State game lands 118 and 73. From the ridge, there are several commanding views of Morrisons Cove to the west and Raystown Lake to the east. From the ridge, the trail drops down to the town of Williamsburg where it joins the Lower Trail for the remainder of its course in Blair County. The trail is maintained by Mid State Trail Association.⁹

- Planned Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails - In August 2000, the Blair County Metropolitan Planning Organization adopted a Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan for the County. This plan established the following top five goals:
 1. Completion of Blair County links of the Mainline Greenway.
 2. Develop bicycle/pedestrian access to area attractions, schools and parks.
 3. Link Mainline Canal Greenway to the Bellwood area with a rail trail.
 4. Explore other greenway possibilities through the City of Altoona (Mill Run, Brush Run, etc.).
 5. Stronger pedestrian component in municipal comprehensive plans.



The plan includes specific trail objectives, such as creating "a major north/south connection from Tyrone to Hollidaysburg and on to Williamsburg" and building "a system of greenways through the City, that connect to greenbelts such as along streams (Mill Run, Brush Run, etc.) and recreational trails." The plan also establishes an implementation matrix that divides the trails into measurable segments to chart progress. The plan calls for completion of three additional segments of the Lower Trail, Canoe Creek to Hollidaysburg/Canal Basin Park; Hollidaysburg to Duncansville; and

Duncansville to the Allegheny Portage Railroad. The last segment, being planned by the National Park Service, is in design. Other trails in the planning stages are the Altoona to Horseshoe Curve on-road trail, Bells Gap rail trail and a segment of the north/south trail in Bellwood Borough.¹⁰

- Planned Water Trails - Water trails are water-based recreational trails. They provide opportunities for water-based recreation such as canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. The trails are marked and have access points with boat launches and public services. Currently two water trails are being planned in Blair County. The first, on the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River, will extend from Canoe Creek State Park to Petersburg in Huntingdon County. This trail is part of the Mainline Canal Greenway and will parallel the Lower trail. The second will be located along the Little Juniata River from Tyrone to Alexandria in Huntingdon County.¹¹
- Beaverdam Branch Greenways Plan - In October 2004, Hollidaysburg Borough and Blair Township completed a study for development of a greenway corridor along the Beaverdam Branch of the Juniata River. The study set four goals: floodplain protection and floodplain mitigation; recreational opportunities; connections and links to historic, natural and recreational opportunities; and river corridor and community aesthetic improvements. The plan recommends a phased implementation plan for constructing a riverside recreational trail and flood mitigation enhancements along three and a half miles of the Beaverdam Branch. Once completed, the trail would form a partial link in the Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway, between the Lower Trail and the planned trail along the Allegheny Portage Railroad.¹²

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SITES

The Comprehensive Plan contains a detailed description of the places of cultural and historic interest in Blair County. This discussion can be found in Section 1, *Cultural and Historic Resources*. The Historic, Cultural and Unique Features Map depicts the location of these features throughout the County. The following cultural and historic resources are of interest in planning the Blair County Greenways network:

- Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site
- Horseshoe Curve National Historic Landmark and Museum
- Canoe Creek State Park and Limestone Kilns
- Fort Roberdeau and Sinking Valley Lead Mines
- Chimney Rocks
- Wopsonnock Lookout
- Historic Districts in Altoona, Hollidaysburg, Roaring Spring, Tyrone and Williamsburg
- Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum
- Altoona Heritage Discovery Center
- Baker Mansion



POPULATION CENTERS AND DESTINATIONS

Blair County has fifteen townships, eight boroughs and one city. According to the 2000 census, the five largest municipalities in Blair County are the City of Altoona (population 49,523), Logan Township (11,925), Frankstown Township (7,694), Allegheny Township (6,965) and Antis Township (6,328). The smaller boroughs and villages, however, often have unique historic features and character that make them appealing destination points. Those of particular interest to this Greenways Plan are:

- Bellwood Borough
- Hollidaysburg Borough
- Martinsburg Borough
- Roaring Spring Borough
- Tyrone Borough
- Williamsburg Borough
- The Village of Claysburg

These municipalities and their surrounding regions are described in detail in Section 1 of the Comprehensive Plan under *Existing Land Use*.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Areas targeted for future growth were evaluated in detail Section 2 of the Comprehensive Plan under the Future Land Scenario. A land demand analysis was undertaken to project the number of acres that are likely to be developed and recommendations were made regarding where best to direct such development given the current infrastructure and land conservation goals of the municipalities. The following bullets summarize some of the notable future growth areas identified in the Plan:

- New residential development in Snyder Township and Tyrone Borough is expected in areas that border the I-99 and Route 220 corridors.
- Similarly, new residential and commercial development is expected along the I-99 and Route 220 corridors in Antis Township, particularly surrounding the I-99 interchanges.
- Future development in Altoona is expected to be primarily redevelopment of existing built areas.
- Some residential development is targeted for land immediately surrounding Williamsburg, with commercial development just west of the borough on Route 866.
- Construction of new housing is expected in close proximity to Hollidaysburg and Duncansville.
- Redevelopment of the Hollidaysburg Car Shops is planned for business, industrial, and/or a mixed-use development.
- Expansion of manufacturing and industry around Hollidaysburg and Duncansville would be directed to land along the existing business and industrial corridors (I-99, Route 764).
- The Southeast corner of the County, including Freedom Township, Huston Township, North Woodbury Township, Taylor Township, Martinsburg Borough, and Roaring Spring Borough, are predicted to experience the largest growth pressures in the County with a projected residential land demand of 800 acres. The Comprehensive plan calls for directing new housing

Section 4

The Inventory - Building Blocks of a Greenway System

to Freedom Township (access to I-99), to areas immediately surrounding Roaring Spring Borough and to the Plum Creek area.

In addition, future commercial and industrial development in Blair County is likely to occur in the areas designated as Pennsylvania Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZs). A KOZ is a geographic area targeted for future growth that is designated by local governments and approved by the state as a tax free zone for up to 12 years. The KOZ Program was established to attract needed investment to economically distressed urban and rural communities.

Blair County includes four KOZ subzones:

- Vail Subzone - 112 acres in Snyder Township.
- Northern Altoona Subzone - 777 acres in the City of Altoona, Logan Township and Antis Township
- Northern Altoona Extended Subzone - 98 acres in the City of Altoona and Antis Township.
- I-99 Corridor Subzone - 445 acres in Hollidaysburg Borough, Greenfield Township and Logan Township¹³

Because these areas benefit from both tax incentives and proximity to Blair County's major transportation arteries, future growth in these zones should be expected.

Footnotes:

1. Kloor, Keith, "Putting Birds on the Map," Audubon Magazine (December 2002).
2. "Important Mammal Areas Project," www.pawildlife.org/imap.htm.
3. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, draft findings for the Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory (May 2005).
4. Key Person Interview with Rob Criswell, PA Game Commission, South Central Office, April 18, 2005.
5. Key Person Interview with Stan Kotala, City of Altoona Watershed Protection Committee, March 22, 2005. Mr. Kotala also serves on the Board of Directors of the Juniata Valley Audubon Society.
6. Key Person Interview with Palmer Brown, Project Manager, Central PA Rail-to-Trails, March 21, 2005.
7. "The Wopsy Trail: A Proposal, A Vision," Environmental Studies Senior Seminar, Penn State Altoona (Spring 2005).
8. Cycle Southern Alleghenies website, www.cyclesa.com
9. Guide to the Mid-State Trail in the Seven Mountains of Pennsylvania, Mid-State Trail Association, 10th Ed. (2001).
10. Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Blair County, Gannett Fleming (June 2000, adopted August 2000).
11. Key Person Interview with Clark Fisher, Fisher Works Consulting, April 19, 2005.
12. Beaverdam Branch Greenways Plan, Final Report (October 2004).
13. Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development website, www.sakoz.com.



The Greenways Plan - Designing a Greenway Network

THE CRITERIA

As discussed earlier, greenways can take several forms. In determining what guiding principles should be used to designate greenways for Blair County, we looked to several goals that were established in the Comprehensive Plan. The following goals pertain directly to greenway development:

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- To provide for a healthy and stable natural environment through resource protection and preservation
- To create a viable green infrastructure system that includes protected open space, trails, and areas of natural beauty in Blair County

PARKS AND RECREATION

- To provide for a well-designed and managed park and recreation system that supports a variety of recreation opportunities and facilities within close proximity to Blair County's population centers

TRANSPORTATION

- To encourage safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities that promote walking and biking to and from work, school, community centers, downtowns, and other destinations

These goals support the three bases for defining Blair County's greenways:

- 1) Conservation Greenways are corridors whose primary function is preservation of sensitive environmental features and habitats, like wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, high quality streams and high value habitats identified by the Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory. They are linear tracts of essentially undeveloped open space. While some low-impact activity is acceptable in these corridors, intense development or multi-use trail

“Preparing the concept plan allows you to dream, make ambitious plans, and explore ideas before you work toward a final master plan.”

- The Conservation Fund,
Greenways, A Guide to Planning, Design
and Development.

development is not recommended. For example, hiking or wildlife viewing would be compatible uses, but biking or motorized vehicle use would be discouraged in conservation greenways.

- 2) Drinking Water Protection Greenways are areas whose primary function is to protect the sources of drinking water for the residents of Blair County. These greenways encompass land surrounding reservoirs and their tributaries. Development and uses in these corridors should be managed to ensure a clean drinking water supply for current and future residents.
- 3) Recreational & Transportation Greenways are corridors where trail development is recommended. These greenways connect population centers and points of interest in Blair County. They bring people into contact with the outdoors and engender an appreciation of the natural world. These trails also provide alternative, environmentally-friendly transportation options for commuters and visitors. In some cases, recreational trails overlay areas where conservation of natural assets is also an objective. To avoid conflicts, impacts from recreational uses will have to be managed. For example, a biking trail along a river or stream corridor should be designed to preserve steep slopes, wetlands and other sensitive areas.

Conservation Greenways were established using the system of prioritization set forth in Table 4-1 below.

Table 4.1 Conservation Greenways Criteria

TYPE OF RESOURCE	PRIORITY		
	High	Medium	Low
Environmentally Sensitive Areas:			
100 - Year Floodplains	X		
Wetlands	X		
Steep Slopes >25%	X		
Hydric Soils	X		
Ridgelines	X		

Table 4.1 continued

Priority Habitat Areas:			
NHI Biological Diversity Areas:			
Exceptional Value	X		
High Value	X		
Negotiable Value		X	
County Significance			X
NHI Landscape Conservation Areas			
Exceptional Value	X		
High Value		X	
Notable Value			X
Important Bird Areas	X		
Important Mammal Areas	X		
Protected Lands			
State Gamelands	X		
State Parks	X		
County and Local Parks		X	
Protected Farmland			X

Because connectivity is the essence of a greenway plan, not every piece of land containing a high priority resource could be encompassed within the conservation greenway network. Instead while most contiguous areas are included, small isolated patches are not. This does not diminish their significance, but rather, it is recommended that such areas be addressed at the municipal level through other conservation tools such as riparian buffers, steep slope ordinances and the like.

The criteria used to establish the proposed Drinking Water Protection Greenways are straightforward. All above-ground reservoirs and the watersheds feeding them were used to plot the areas needed for water supply protection. Because all such areas are deemed equally important, no prioritization system was used.

Finally, the network of recreational and transportation greenways was established by first identifying those locations in the County that qualify as key destination points. Table 4-2 sets forth the criteria used to designate the "hubs." Only those receiving a high priority rating were chosen. Those designated as medium or low were considered "points of interest" provided that they fell within or in close proximity to a proposed recreational and transportation greenway.

Table 4.2 Recreational and Transportation Greenway Hub Selection Criteria

	High	Medium	Low
Population Centers:			
Municipalities with Visitor Services (Restaurants, Lodgings, Main St. Retail)	X		
Municipalities with Cultural and Historic Sites (Museums, Theaters, Libraries, etc)	X		
Municipalities with Train or Bus Access		X	
Other Municipalities			X
Natural and Recreational Assets :			
State Parks	X		
County & Local Parks		X	
Private Recreational Facilities > 100 acres	X		
Private Recreational Facilities < 100 acres			X
Unique Natural Features		X	
Viewpoints and Scenic Vistas		X	

Cultural & Historic Sites

National Historic Parks and Landmarks	X		
National Register Historic Districts		X	
Local Historic Sites w/ Regional Visitation	X		
Local Historic Sites with Local Visitation		X	
Museums and Cultural Centers		X	
Secondary Schools & Universities		X	
Libraries			X

Once the hubs were pinpointed, the "spokes" or trail connections between them were charted using one or more of the following manmade or natural features:

- Existing or planned land and water trails
- Abandoned rail lines
- Former canal routes
- Stream & river corridors
- Road corridors

Preference was given to off-road trail opportunities wherever feasible. However, in making trail linkages through urban areas or across rural areas where other options were not available, trails on or adjacent to roadways are proposed.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE NETWORK

Building the framework of the greenway network began with laying out the conservation and water resource protection greenways. These corridors follow the natural systems and contours of the land - forests and ridge lines, significant river and stream corridors, and important wildlife habitats. Overlaying this backdrop, the plan adopts a "hubs and spokes" structure for its recreational and transportation greenways. The report,

Pennsylvania Greenways: An Action Plan for Creating Connections, describes this configuration as follows:

Pennsylvania's greenways network will ultimately take the form of "hubs and spokes." The "hubs" of this network will be the state's parks, forests, game lands, lakes and other destination areas, including our towns. The "spokes" of the network will be greenways-connecting our natural areas and recreational and cultural destinations with the places where we live. The landscape connections that will result throughout Pennsylvania will create a "green infrastructure" of open space vital to the health of Pennsylvania's ecological systems and human communities.

The hubs, sometimes also called "nodes," are the significant destination points - cities and boroughs, historic and cultural sites, and important parks and recreational areas. The spokes or corridors will provide the links between them. In some areas, conservation and drinking water protection corridors are distinct from recreational greenways; in other cases, they overlap. Finally, because rivers, mountains, habitats and other green assets do not terminate at the County's boundaries, the greenways network proposes that corridors continue and link to other assets in neighboring counties.

It should be noted that any plan to develop greenways will encounter hurdles, such as incompatible land uses, environmental constraints and unwilling private and public landowners. These issues, while inevitable, should not prevent the County from creating its vision of a greenway network. Conflicts can be addressed at a later phase, when segments of this plan proceed to design and implementation at the local level.

The greenway network for Blair County is depicted on Map 4, Proposed Greenways.

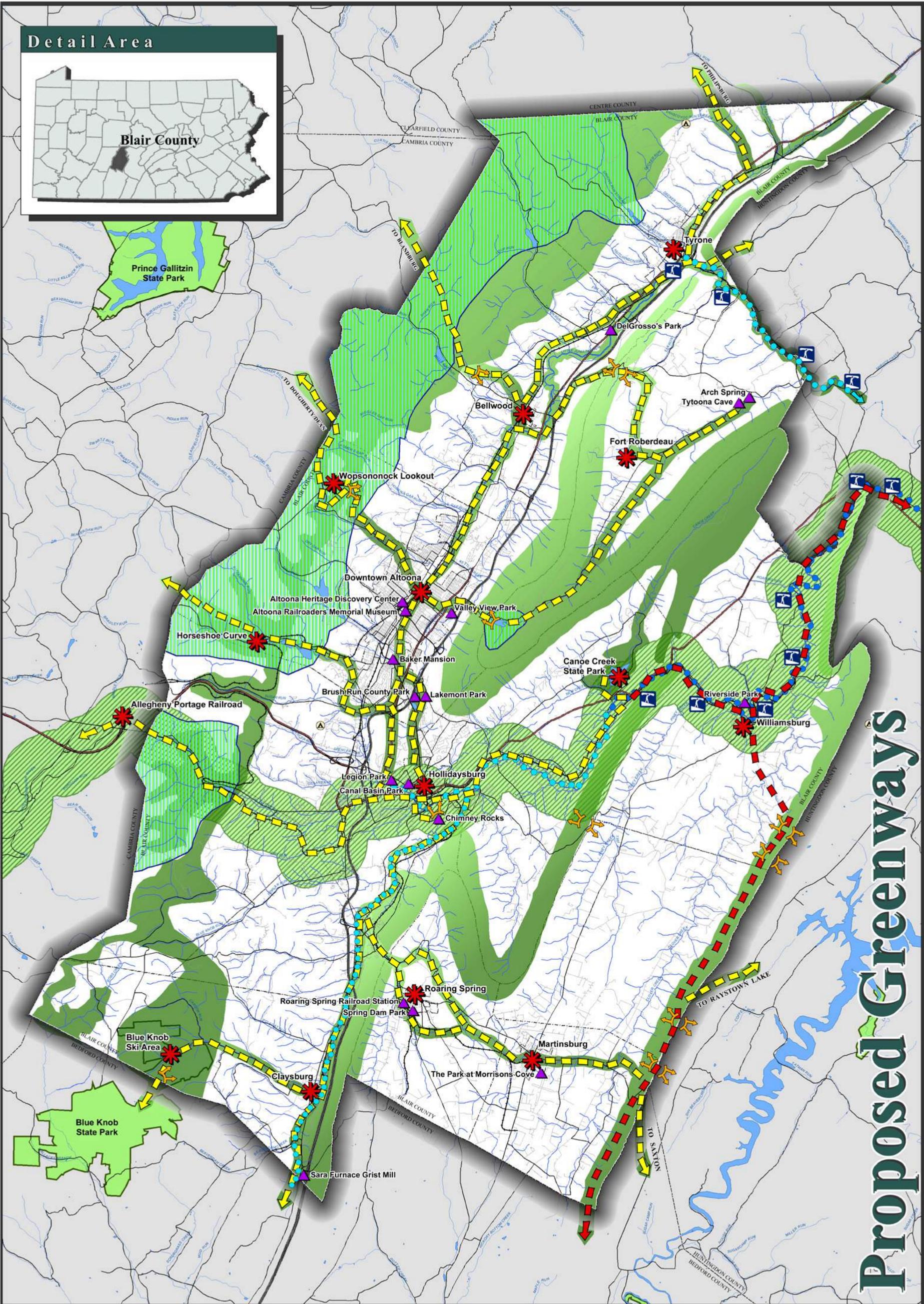
CONSERVATION CORRIDORS

- Tussey Mountain Conservation Greenway follows the ridge line of Tussey Mountain along the eastern edge of the County. It is characterized by forested and steeply sloped mountain terrain. This corridor encompasses the Tussey Mountain Important Bird Area, home to 149 species of birds. It is an important stopping point on the eastern flyway and a habitat for bald eagles. This greenway corridor also includes portions of the Tussey Mountain Bat

Habitat Biological Diversity Area, an area known for providing hibernation sites for several bat species. The Tussey Mountain Landscape Conservation Area, a region of unbroken forest land, is also covered by this greenway corridor.

- Dunning, Short, Loop and Lock Mountain Conservation Greenway traces the curving ridgelines of these three connecting mountains. Like Tussey Mountain, they contain large areas of contiguous forests that are home to a number of important plant and animal species. This corridor merits conservation due to the presence of the Sproul BDA (wetland habitat harboring several rare plants); the Gromiller Cave and McKees Quarry BDAs (providing habitat for bats and the small-footed bat); and the Loop Mountain LCA (encompassing a large area of intact woodlands). This conservation corridor also includes important floodplains surrounding the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River.
- Canoe Creek Conservation Greenway is one of the most significant biological regions in the County. The corridor covers the area surrounding Canoe Creek from its headwaters to its outlet in Canoe Creek State Park. It encompasses the Canoe Creek IBA (housing 115 species of birds) and the Canoe Creek IMA. According to the December 2003 newsletter of the Sierra Club's Moshannon Group of the Pennsylvania Chapter, the Canoe Creek IMA received its designation because it supports the largest federally endangered Indiana bat colony in the State, as well as breeding habitat for the little brown bat, caves used by the threatened small-footed bat and northern long-eared bat, and forests used by the silver-haired bat. In addition, the Canoe Creek conservation greenway would protect a portion of the Canoe Valley/Lock Mountain Bat Habitat BDA and the Beaverdams Wetland BDA, two areas designated by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in the Blair County NHI as having exceptional biological significance.
- Brush Mountain and Bald Eagle Ridge Conservation Greenway encompasses the steep slopes and ridges of these contiguous mountains. It is proposed as a conservation greenway due to its large, unbroken stretches of forest habitat. It includes a portion of the Tytoona Cave BDA

Detail Area



Proposed Greenways



BLAIR COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION
Valley View Home, Wing E
381 Valley View Boulevard
Altoona, PA 16602-6409
Phone: (814) 948-5978
Fax: (814) 948-5985
TTY: (800) 654-2984

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| Conservation
Drinking Water Protection
Mainline Canal Greenway
Recreation | Existing Trails
Proposed/Planned Trails
Overlooks/View Points
Campgrounds | Existing Water Trail
Proposed Water Trail
Water Trail Access Points |
| Hubs/Destinations
Points of Interest | | |

Map Sources:
Transportation and Boundaries - Blair County
Hydrology-ERRI Networked Streams (PASDA)
Additional data provided by PASDA (Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access) and Blair County.



Blair County - Greenway Plan

(summer habitat for the northern bat, a species of special concern) and the Brush Mountain LCA (a large forest block rated exceptional value for providing habitat for unique species). This conservation corridor also contains part of the Bald Eagle Ridge IBA, an area harboring 148 species of birds.

- Little Juniata/Bald Eagle Creek/Big Fill Run Conservation Greenway includes the floodplains and adjacent wetlands of these three waterways. The Little Juniata River starts near downtown Altoona and flows north toward the Borough of Tyrone where it turns south east and flows into Huntingdon County. It is fed by numerous tributaries originating in the Allegheny Front. While the river corridor is fairly developed between Altoona and Tyrone, it travels through remote and scenic countryside for the latter half of its course through the County. Bald Eagle Creek, in the northeastern corner of the County, supports an extensive area of wetlands. Big Fill Run flows into Bald Eagle Creek and is the only stream in the County that has been designated as an exceptional value stream by the Blair County Conservation District.
- Allegheny Front Conservation Greenway is proposed along the mountains of the western corner of the County. This region is characterized by steeply sloped woodlands and numerous stream valleys. This conservation corridor includes two BDAs designated for their unique plant species. The Tub Run Headwaters Pools BDA includes a series of vernal (or seasonal) pools where the federally threatened Northeastern bulrush is found. In addition, the Loop Run BDA is located here. This watershed supports the mountain startwort, a species of concern.
- Mainline Canal Greenway, also known as the Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Greenway, is both a conservation and recreational greenway. In June 2004, a greenways plan was released by the Allegheny Ridge Corporation for a 320-mile greenway following the course of the old Mainline Canal bed. The segment in Blair County follows the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River through the eastern half of the County. The River is surrounded by extensive floodplain areas and

several wetlands. The greenway also encompasses the Frankstown Branch IBA, home to 115 bird species. This Blair County Greenways Plan incorporates the Mainline Canal Greenway Plan in its entirety.

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION CORRIDORS

Residents of Blair County derive much of their drinking water from above-ground reservoirs. Thirteen reservoirs serve as drinking water sources. Twelve of them are located in the western part of the County, draining water from streams originating along the slopes of the Allegheny Front. They are:

- Tyrone Reservoir
- Bellwood Reservoir
- Tipton Reservoir
- Mill Run Reservoir
- Lake Altoona
- Kittanning Reservoirs #1 and #2
- Homers Gap Reservoir
- Allegheny Reservoir
- Blair Gap Reservoirs #1, #2 and #3

The remaining one, Kettle Reservoir, is located on Brush Mountain. Because these reservoirs are fed by mountain streams, water quality is generally excellent.¹ Much of the land immediately surrounding the reservoirs is located in State game lands or is owned by the Municipal Water Authorities. However, land upgradient of some reservoirs is in private hands. Because protecting water quality is an important objective of Blair County, this greenways plan has established three drinking water protection corridors. They are:

- Allegheny Front (North) Drinking Water Greenway - this is the largest of the three and would protect nine drinking water sources: Tyrone, Tipton, Bellwood, Homers Gap, Mill Run, Allegheny, Lake Altoona and Kittanning #1 and #2 reservoirs, as well as their associated tributaries. This greenway overlaps part of the Allegheny Front Conservation Greenway.
- Allegheny Front (South) Drinking Water Greenway - this smaller greenway intersects with the westernmost part of the Mainline Canal Greenway in Blair County. It is designated to safeguard the three Blair Gap reservoirs and their feeder streams.

- Kettle Reservoir Drinking Water Greenway - this area, not really a greenway in its own right, is designated to protect the Kettle Reservoir and its source water streams. It is wholly encompassed within the Brush Mountain/Bald Eagle Ridge Conservation Greenway.

RECREATION AND TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS

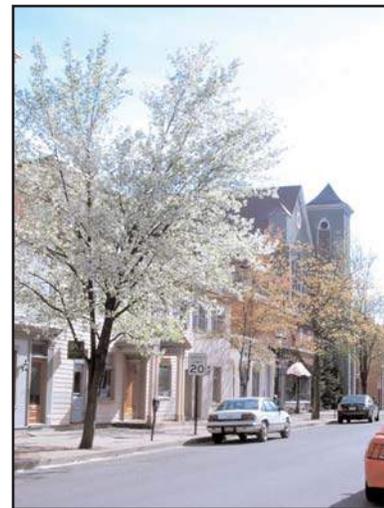
The third type of greenway, recreation and transportation, connects population centers and points of interest in Blair County. Proposed trails are either passive recreation (hiking, wildlife viewing) or active recreation (biking, cross-country skiing, paddling and the like). In general, these trails will be suitable for non-motorized recreation and transportation. Where proposed recreation and transportation greenways coincide with conservation corridors, trail design should strive to minimize impacts from these uses.

In some cases, the trails described in our greenway network are existing or planned. In others, this plan recommends new connections. The goal is to create an interconnected system of green infrastructure. However, because this plan is making proposals on a County-wide level, it is important to bear in mind that the precise routes and designs are not specified. This plan is conceptual in nature and implementation will require further study. Nevertheless, wherever known, this plan discusses possible constraints to recreation and transportation greenway development.

The Hubs - The Blair County Greenways Plan connects 14 key places to visit. They are:

Population Centers

- The City of Altoona is the only city in the County. Its origins began with the chartering of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1846. Shortly thereafter, Altoona became the staging area for construction of the railroad. In 1854, Horseshoe Curve was completed as the westward rail passage over the Allegheny Front. It was an engineering marvel in its day and enabled the railroad to replace the Mainline Canal as the commercial transportation route from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. Altoona grew substantially throughout the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century as a center for steam locomotive and rail car manufacturing. Today, the City contains four historic districts, Baker Mansion, the Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum and the Altoona Heritage Discovery Center.
- Hollidaysburg Borough was founded in 1836. It was the main transfer point between the Mainline Canal and the Allegheny Portage Railroad. In 1846, it became the County seat. In 1903, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company built a large switching yard in the borough, further spurring commercial and industrial growth. Today, Hollidaysburg contains a charming historic district containing more than 400 structures and Canal Basin Park, along the Beaverdam Branch of the Juniata River. This municipality has numerous services catering to residents and visitors, like shops, restaurants and bed and breakfasts.



- Tyrone Borough, in the far north of the County, was founded in 1857. It is home to an historic district and several service businesses.
- Williamsburg Borough was incorporated in 1827. Today, it has a small historic district and is a major access point to the Lower Trail.
- Bellwood Borough was incorporated in 1888. Originally called Bell's Mills, it was first settled by Edward Bell, who established a grist mill and saw mill there around 1800. Later, he built the Mary Ann Forge and Elizabeth Furnace in the area. Bell Mansion, built by Edward Bell in 1822, is said to be the first brick house built in northern Blair County. Today it serves as a senior center.

- Martinsburg Borough was incorporated in 1832. The area was part of the tract of land issued to James Brumbaugh by the Penn family in 1792. It is believed to have been named after an early settler in the Cove area, John Martin.
- The Borough of Roaring Spring, originally named Spang Mills, was founded by the Spang family who operated a grist mill there. A small village grew around the mill. In 1863, the land was purchased by Daniel Bare who built a paper mill in the town, ushering in a period of significant growth. In 1887, the town was renamed and incorporated as the borough of Roaring Spring. The town derives its name from the natural spring in the middle of town. Today, the spring still produces 8 million gallons of water per day. Much of that is captured and bottled by the Roaring Spring Water Company. Today, the town is home to a lovely historic district and Blair County's only remaining original train station.
- The Village of Claysburg is a small settlement of clustered housing in Greenfield Township. Located in the southernmost section of the County, Claysburg developed in the mid-1800's as a center for manufacturing. Today, the village lies just west of the I-99 corridor.

Important Parks & Natural Features

- Canoe Creek State Park is the only State Park in Blair County. It contains 958 acres of forests and fields, as well as Canoe Lake, a 155-acre, stocked lake. Activities permitted in the park include hiking, boating, fishing, swimming, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and ice skating.



- Blue Knob Ski Area is a privately-owned, year-round resort located on the northern face of Blue Knob Mountain, the second highest mountain in the State. Winter activities include skiing, snowboarding, tubing and cross-country skiing. At other times of the year, the resort is open for golfing, hiking and mountain biking. The resort adjoins Blue Knob State Park in Bedford County.

Significant Historic/Cultural Sites

- The Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site is owned and managed by the National Park service. It stretches along the trace of the former Allegheny Portage railroad, an inclined plane railway that carried barges traveling on the Mainline Canal up and over the Allegheny Front. The Historic Site covers 1249 acres and includes a number of attractions including the Summit Level Visitor Center, the historic Lemon House and the Skew Arch Bridge. The Park Service is developing a recreational trail that will become one of the links in the Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway.
- Horseshoe Curve was completed in 1854. A tightly curved segment of track gradually ascending the Allegheny Front, it was an engineering marvel in its day that led to the ascendance of rail transportation as the primary means of transport to the West. Today, it is preserved as the Horseshoe Curve National Historic Landmark.



- Fort Roberdeau was built in 1778 by General Daniel Roberdeau, one of Pennsylvania's representatives to the Second Continental Congress. Its purpose was to protect the nearby lead mines and smelters that manufactured ammunition for the Continental Army. Today, the site covers 230 acres of picturesque meadows and woodlands in Sinking

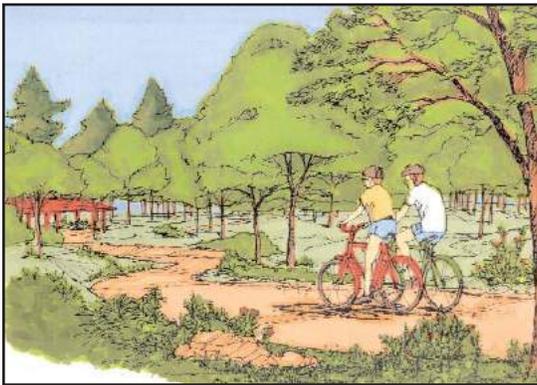
Valley. It operates as a museum and educational center with a reconstructed stockade, six log cabins, an 1858 barn, an 1860 farmhouse and White Oak Hall, a multi-purpose meeting facility.

- Wopsononock Lookout provides breathtaking views over Altoona and the surrounding valley. It can be accessed from Juniata Gap Road up the mountain from the Penn State Altoona campus.

The Spokes

Land Trails

The following land-based recreation and transportation trails are included in the network. They consist of several main trails as well as smaller spurs.



- The Mid-State Trail - The Blair County Greenways Plan incorporates this existing hiking trail. The plan recommends maintaining this greenway as a footpath suitable for hiking and other passive recreation. The trail passes through two State game lands which prohibit mountain biking and motorized recreation except on designated routes. Because this trail also overlaps an important conservation corridor, reserving the trail for passive recreation is further justified. Where the trail intersects with more active recreation trails such as the Lower Trail and the connection from the Frankstown Branch, signs and gates or other barriers should be erected to discourage spillover of more active uses onto the Mid-State Trail.
 - o Spur to Raystown Lake - This Greenways Plan proposes developing a side trail from the Mid-State trail east to Raystown Lake in Huntingdon County. This recreational area has facilities for camping, hiking, swimming, fishing and

boating. In addition, the Southern Alleghenies Tourism Confederation is working with Army Corps of Engineers to develop 25 miles of off-road trails there on federal public lands. The spur from the Mid-State Trail is envisioned as a hiking trail to bring hikers and backpackers off the trail to services and other recreational opportunities. Because of the steep terrain descending Tussey Mountain, further study will be needed to determine a feasible trail alignment.

- The Pennsylvania Millennium Trail - The Blair County Greenways Plan incorporates into its network this existing and planned walking and biking trail in its entirety. In eastern Blair County, this trail is known as the Lower Trail. It is being built along an abandoned line of the Pennsylvania Railroad as part of the Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway. To date, the trail has been completed from Huntingdon County through Williamsburg to Canoe Creek State Park. Other segments further upstream along the Frankstown Branch are in the planning stages.



The recreational trail will eventually cross the County and follow the former path of the Allegheny Portage Railroad over the Allegheny Front and into Cambria County. From Duncansville to the headquarters of the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site in Cresson, the National Park Service is planning a trail called the "6 Through 10 Trail," meaning that it will follow inclined planes 6 through 10 of the Allegheny Portage Railroad. From Duncansville to the Muleshoe Bridge, the trail will be built along the former New Portage railroad bed. This segment is owned by the National Park Service and will be a

hiker/biker trail. The portion of the New Portage Railroad that goes up and over the Allegheny Front, however, is owned by the Game Commission. Because there is concern about conflicting uses between trail users and hunters, no agreement has been reached at this time to continue the hiker/biker trail along the course of the New Portage. Therefore, current plans call for the 6 Through 10 Trail to continue as a footpath only from the Muleshoe Bridge to the National Park Headquarters. It will parallel the eastbound side of Route 22 up the mountain, and cross over the westbound side at the Skew Arch Bridge.² It is hoped that a mutually satisfactory agreement can be reached between the National Park Service and the Game Commission to allow for continuation of the hiker/biker trail along the New Portage Railroad.

- o Beaverdam Branch Greenway - This Greenways Plan adopts the recommendations put forward in the October 2004 Beaverdam Branch Greenways Plan. This plan proposes constructing a riverside recreational trail and flood mitigation enhancements along three and a half miles of the Beaverdam Branch River in Hollidaysburg. This trail will form a partial link between the Lower Trail and the 6 Through 10 Trail. A 2.5 mile gap from the Plank Road Bridge (terminus of the Beaverdam Branch Greenway Study) to Dry Run Road (terminus of the 6 Through 10 Trail) across privately-owned land should be evaluated for trail development.

The Beaverdam Branch Greenway recreational trail would also connect to Chimney Rocks Park, both a significant geological formation in the County as well as a notable viewpoint. Further study will be needed to determine how a recreational trail connection can be developed from the riverbank to the tops of the rocks. The Beaverdam Branch Greenways Plan suggests that a pedestrian connection using cantilevered walkways may be an option.

- Frankstown Branch recreational trail - The Blair County Greenways Plan proposes that a walking and biking trail be continued along the Frankstown Branch beyond its confluence with the Beaverdam Branch near Hollidaysburg. At this point, the

Lower Trail ends and the planned Pennsylvania Millennium Trail proceeds west along the Beaverdam Branch River and the Allegheny Portage Railroad. Extending a recreational trail south would provide a link to the village of Claysburg and beyond to Bedford County. However, there are constraints to trail development that will require further study. Because sensitive floodplain areas line the banks of Frankstown Branch, trail development would need to be carefully designed. In addition, much of the proposed trail will parallel Interstate I-99, Route 220 and an active railroad line below the village of Newry. This will pose challenges to trail alignment.

- o Spur to Blue Knob Ski Area and Blue Knob State Park - This Greenways Plan also proposes that a trail connection suitable for hiking, cross-country skiing and mountain biking be developed from the Frankstown Branch trail just south of Claysburg along South Poplar Run and Big Lick Branch. This trail would provide an important connection to year-round recreational trails and facilities at the ski resort and to Blue Knob State Park just over the border in Bedford County.



- Frankstown Branch and Mid-State Trail Link - The Blair County Greenways Plan recommends that a recreation and transportation corridor connect the Frankstown Branch trail with the Mid-State Trail, with a possible extension east to Saxton in Huntingdon County. This trail would pass through the scenic, rolling terrain of Morrisons Cove and connect important hubs like the historic towns of Roaring Spring and Martinsburg. A loop from Roaring Spring would parallel Plum Creek. However, the narrow gap between Dunning & Short Mountains may present challenges to trail development. This gap currently contains the

Woodbury Pike, an active railroad line, a quarry and a paper mill. Further study is needed to determine how a trail could overcome these possible barriers.

- North-South Link from Hollidaysburg to Tyrone and beyond to Cambria County - The Blair County Greenways Plan adopts the Blair County MPO's recommendation to "create a major north/south connection from Tyrone to Hollidaysburg." This proposal is one of the County's top five priorities enumerated in the August 2000 Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. Parts of this trail are already in the planning stages.

From Hollidaysburg, the trail would follow Brush Run to Lakemont Park and then on to the City of Altoona. A parallel route from Hollidaysburg would begin at the Beaverdam Branch trail east of I-99 and travel north to Altoona. These two trails would join above Lakemont Park and then proceed north through the City of Altoona. Between Altoona and Tyrone, the trail would follow the course of the former Logan Valley Electric line, a streetcar that carried passengers along 54 miles of track between the two municipalities. Pennsylvania Rails-to-Trails is working with the Bellwood Community Trust to redevelop a portion of the line as a recreational trail. For much of its course, this trail would also follow the Little Juniata River. Beyond Tyrone, the trail would continue northeast along Bald Eagle Creek, turning northwest along the abandoned Vail Secondary Railroad toward Phillipsburg in Centre County.

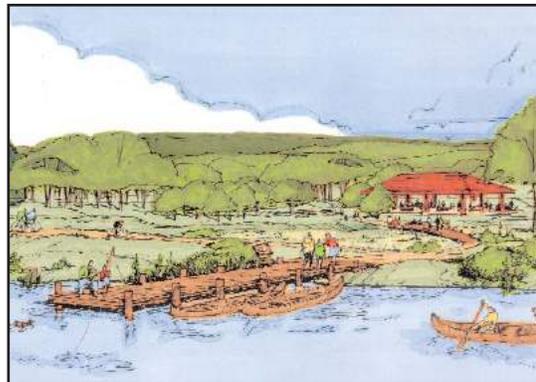
While this trail poses significant development challenges, it also would present considerable benefits to Blair County residents. It would connect some of the largest population and employment centers, providing many citizens with access to recreational opportunities and transportation alternatives. It would also provide a needed connection for local residents wanting to use the Lower Trail. Conversely, it will provide out-of-town users of the Lower Trail with access to services, cultural amenities and historic sites in Hollidaysburg, Altoona, Bellwood and Tyrone.

Development challenges include determining feasible on-street routes through Altoona and other densely developed areas; working around active railroad lines, highways, road crossings and

industrial parks; and designing trails to minimize impacts to wetlands and floodplains surrounding rivers and streams.

- o Spur to Horseshoe Curve - The Blair County Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan includes planned trail connections from Altoona to Horseshoe Curve. The first trail will be an on-road bike lane and the second will parallel an active rail line from downtown Altoona. This Greenway Plan incorporates these trails and proposes that they be extended beyond Horseshoe Curve northwest to Cambria County. Further study will be required to determine whether the extension should be on-road or off-road.
- o Spur to Wopsononock Lookout and east to Cambria County - From 1891 to 1919, the Wopsononock Railroad operated a small train, called the "Alley Popper" from Juniata to Dougherty, a former mining town in Cambria County. The train stopped at a resort hotel at the crest of the mountain. Today, the railroad ties are no longer in place, but the railroad bed is still visible. In Spring 2005, students from the Environmental Studies Senior Seminar at Penn State - Altoona proposed that the abandoned rail bed be developed into a hiking and mountain biking trail. The report, *The Wopsy Trail - A Proposal, A Vision*, suggests that the trail be constructed in two phases. The first phase would connect the campus to Lookout Point. The segment of the proposed trail would climb gradually up the mountain, through forest to the ridge line where several view points over the valley are present. The second phase would continue the trail into Cambria County to the abandoned town of Dougherty. This Greenways Plan adopts the Wopsy Trail into its proposed greenway network.
- o Bells Gap Spur - Another rails-to-trails project included in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan, the Bells Gap trail would ascend from Bellwood Borough to Blandburg along a former railroad bed. A master plan has been prepared and design is expected to begin soon. This Greenways Plan adopts the Bells Gap Trail into its proposed greenway network.

In the 1890's, when the Bells Gap railroad was still operating, the Pennsylvania Railroad developed Rhododendron Park for its employees and their families to enjoy. The park was located near the top of the gap, just before the railway crossed into Cambria County. It had a large bandstand, gazebos, fish ponds and ball fields as well as a large picnic area.³ This Greenways Plan recommends that a study be conducted to evaluate restoration of Rhododendron Park as a tourist destination.



- o Spur to Warriors Mark, Huntingdon County - The Blair County Greenways Plan proposes that an abandoned rail line from Tyrone toward Warriors Mark Township in Huntingdon County be developed as an active recreation trail. This proposal originated from comments made at an April 26, 2005 public meeting in Tyrone. This trail is not included in the County's Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan and therefore further study will be required to determine the location and condition of the railroad bed.
 - Fort Roberdeau Loop - Finally, this Greenways Plan recommends that an active recreational circuit connecting Altoona, Bellwood and Fort Roberdeau be developed. From Altoona to Bellwood, the loop follows the course of the North-South Trail. It then branches off and climbs Brush Mountain to a viewpoint at Skelp. This stretch would probably run on or directly adjacent to Skelp Road. Beyond Skelp the trail would turn south to Fort Roberdeau and then roughly follow Sinking Run through the valley. It would then climb the ridge to Kettle Reservoir and descend back to Altoona along Kettle Creek. Further analysis will be needed to determine where the trail should follow existing road corridors and where opportunities exist for off-road trail development.
 - Frankstown Branch Water Trail - A water trail is being planned by several state and local partners including the PA Fish and Boat Commission, DCNR, and the Allegheny Ridge Corporation. It will follow the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River from Canoe Creek to Petersburg in Huntingdon County. This trail would form part of a water trail system that would stretch east to Harrisburg. This stretch of the Frankstown Branch passes through two important habitat areas, the Frankstown Branch IBA and the Tussey Mountain Bat Habitat BDA.
- This Greenways Plan adopts the planned Frankstown Branch Water Trail and proposes that it be extended to include the stretch of the river upstream, potentially as far as its source in Bedford County. A feasibility study will be required to determine how much of the river is navigable and what steps (e.g., clearing of brush dams) would be necessary to allow for water trail development. Moreover, the Frankstown Branch experiences heavy flooding during storms. In 2004, flooding heavily damaged the Lower Trail as well as residences and businesses in the floodplain. The feasibility study will have to evaluate the impacts of flooding on water trail development.

Water Trails

Recreational water trails provide opportunities for canoeing, kayaking, tubing, fishing and wildlife viewing. Blair County contains rivers, streams, and wetland areas, but few are navigable. This Greenways Plan proposes the development of three water trails. Water trails and boat launches/access points are depicted on Map 4, Proposed Greenways.

- Beaverdam Branch Water Trail - The Beaverdam Branch River, a tributary to the Frankstown Branch, originates in mountain streams along the Allegheny Front. The river joins the Frankstown branch just east of Hollidaysburg. This Greenways Plan proposes that the Beaverdam Branch be developed as a water trail from Canal Basin Park to its confluence with the Frankstown Branch. This trail would connect the proposed Frankstown Branch Water Trail extension to the Borough of

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Hollidaysburg, thereby providing trail users with access to accommodations, restaurants and other services. Moreover, development of this water trail would compliment the plans to develop a land-based recreation trail envisioned in the October 2004 Beaverdam Branch Greenways Plan.

Because the Beaverdam Branch is a small, shallow river containing brush dams, a feasibility study would be required to determine what steps would be required to make the river suitable for water trail development. Like the Frankstown Branch, this river also experiences flooding during storm events. While flood mitigation plans are being implemented, any water trail study should evaluate the impacts of flooding on water trail development.

- Little Juniata Water Trail - The Little Juniata River begins just above the City of Altoona and flows north to Tyrone. There it turns southeast where it forms the boundary between Blair and Huntingdon Counties before passing into Huntingdon County. Much of this stretch is remote and scenic, although it parallels an active rail line. At Petersburg, the Little Juniata joins the Frankstown Branch to form the Juniata River. The Allegheny Ridge Corporation and several state partners are planning a water trail that would begin at Tyrone and continue to Petersburg where it would merge into the Juniata River Water Trail (also planned). Eventually, this water trail is expected to extend to Harrisburg. This Greenways Plan incorporates these plans for a water trail along the Little Juniata from Tyrone to Huntingdon County.

Points of Interest & Aesthetic Value - The following points along the greenway network will provide trail users with places to rest, recreate or learn about the history of Blair County. These venues are not the only places of interest in the County, just those that happen to coincide with the proposed trail network. To the extent possible, trails should be designed to connect to or come close to these points. Signage directing trail users to these sites and noting their historic or other significance should be considered as part of trail design.

- Chimney Rocks - This unique geological feature consists of vertical limestone formations in Frankstown Township. A park has been developed at and surrounding the summit, providing

panoramic views over Hollidaysburg and the surrounding valley. Options for connecting Chimney Rocks to the proposed Beaverdam Branch recreational greenway trail, a segment of the planned Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway, are discussed in the October 2004 Beaverdam Branch Greenway Plan.

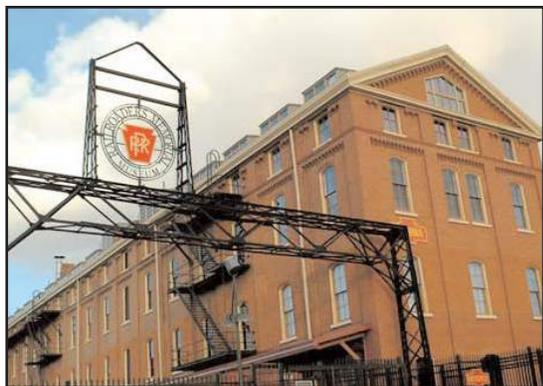
- Canal Basin Park - This heritage park and visitor center, located in Hollidaysburg, interprets the history of the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal. The park is located at the site where goods were transferred from the Mainline Canal to the Allegheny Portage Railroad. The Reiser House, a restored Victorian residence that serves as a visitor and educational center, is located within the park. Canal Basin Park is also located within the planned Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Greenway.



- Other County & Community Parks (Brush Run County Park/Lakemont Park, Valley View Park, Legion Park, DelGrosso Park, Riverside Park and the Park at Morrisons Cove) are identified along the Blair County greenways network. These parks will provide stopping points along the way for picnicking, recreation and relaxation.
- Tytoona Cave & Arch Spring - These unusual natural features are located in Sinking Valley. The National Speleological Society purchased approximately 7 acres surrounding the cave in 1997 and established a preserve for education and recreation. The cave, which consists of several rooms, is about a mile long. The first 1,000 feet is easily accessible to tours. The remainder can only

be accessed by experienced cave sump divers. The underground stream resurfaces through Arch Spring, a four-foot opening in the rock, and becomes Sinking Run. Downstream, Sinking Run flows through a limestone arch approximately 40 - 50 feet high and 15-20 feet wide, providing the spring with its name. Arch Spring is situated on privately-owned land and can only be visited with the owner's permission.⁴

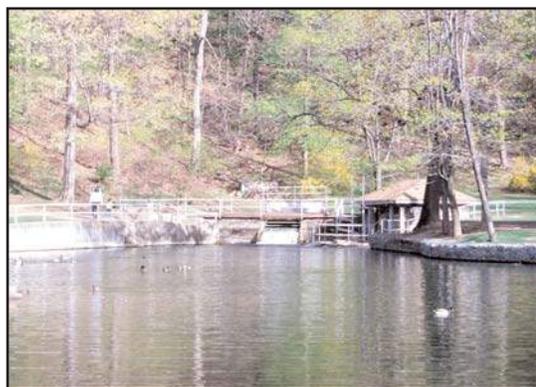
- Baker Mansion - This stately, Greek revival mansion was built in 1849 by Elias Baker, owner of the Allegheny Furnace. It is located at 3419 Oak Lane in Altoona. Today, it is a museum and functions as the headquarters of the Blair County Historical Society.
- Railroaders Memorial Museum - This museum commemorates Altoona's prominence as a national center of rail transportation. In 1849, the Pennsylvania Railroad purchased 35 acres in what is now the heart of the City and began to build what would become the nation's largest railroad facility. The city became the center of the Pennsylvania Railroad's repair and maintenance shops, its locomotive construction facility, and its test department. Opened in 1998, the museum is located in the former Pennsylvania Railroad master mechanics building in downtown Altoona.



- Altoona Heritage Discovery Center - Located in downtown Altoona, this facility is one of the "gateways" to the Allegheny Ridge Heritage Area, a 50-mile corridor stretching through four counties - Blair, Cambria, Huntingdon & Somerset. The Area was designated to celebrate the industrial heritage of the region. The Center is in a renovated historic building and contains an exhibit hall that is also

rented for private events. The property is managed by the Allegheny Ridge Corporation.

- Sarah Furnace Grist Mill - When Blair County was first settled, several gristmills were built to grind excess grain grown by local farmers. Many were located adjacent to the region's iron furnaces. One such mill was the Sarah Furnace Grist Mill, situated in the extreme southern part of the County below Claysburg. Today, the mill still has its nineteenth century machinery and its water wheel.
- Spring Dam Park is located in the heart of Roaring Spring Borough, surrounding the spring that gave the town its name. The park has an electric fountain constructed in 1937.



- Roaring Spring Train Station - Located in the park, this train station is the only remaining original station of the Pennsylvania Railroad in Blair County. A restored 1942 PRR caboose stand adjacent to the station.
- Schools - Since students and young people are likely to be trail users, proposed greenways should connect to colleges/universities and secondary schools in close proximity to the greenways network. They include the Penn State Altoona campus and local high and middle school facilities throughout the County. These are identified on the Community Facilities Map in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Libraries - Finally, the proposed greenways should provide links to public libraries within close proximity to the trail network. They include the Altoona Public Library, Bellwood-Antis Public Library, Claysburg Area Public Library,

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Hollidaysburg Free Public Library, Martinsburg Community Library, Roaring Spring Community Library and Williamsburg Public Library. The locations of libraries are shown in the Comprehensive Plan's Community Facilities Map.

- Viewpoints - Numerous points along the course of the Blair County Greenways Network will provide visitors with vistas across valleys, mountain ridges, farmlands and other landscapes. While this plan cannot possibly name every scenic viewpoint, a few notable overlooks can be appreciated from Blue Knob, Tussey Mountain (Mid-State Trail), Lock Mountain, Wopsonnock Lookout, Bells Gap Trail, and the village of Skelp (Fort Roberdeau Loop).

Footnotes:

1. According to the Blair County Conservation District, four watersheds in Blair County are impacted by acid mine drainage. Three of those watersheds - Sugar Run, Shaw Run, and Glenwhite Run - are being addressed by reclamation projects. Kittaning Run is still impacted by active mining, but is channelled away from drinking water reservoirs.
2. Key Person Interview with Keith Newlin, National Park Service, July 6, 2005.
3. Information recieved from Study Commitee member, Hazel Bilka, June 2005.
4. Mid-Appalachian Region of the National Speleological Society website, www.caves.org/region/mar/tytoona.htm.



Making it Happen - The Action Plan

In this Section, the Greenways Plan lays out a framework for implementation. It proposes concrete strategies that can be undertaken by municipalities, agencies and organizations to build the greenways network.

The action plan is organized into several subsections: 1) Management Structure; 2) Land Conservation Tools; 3) Implementation Plan; and 4) Potential Funding Sources. The Section concludes with a more detailed examination of two types of trail segments. This analysis is intended to depict how the trail network could look in two typical, but different environments: an urban streetscape and a stream corridor.

Implementation of this Greenways Plan will require leadership at the County level and the development of strong partnerships with local municipalities and key organizations, both public and private. The proposed network can only be realized if there is commitment at the County and local level to execute the plan. Greenway and trail corridors are not developed overnight. They are built piece-by-piece, often a parcel at a time. The process can take years, even decades. Segments that can be achieved with few obstacles should be undertaken first to establish a record of success and build momentum for the plan. This Section provides guidance about those tools that can be used to help bridge the gap from concept to completion.

As Blair County adopts its Comprehensive Plan, it will move to implement it at the planning region level. The Blair County Planning Commission is spearheading this effort and will provide guidance and assistance to officials from the seven planning regions in developing municipal or multi-municipal comprehensive plans that advance the objectives of the County Plan.

Similarly, if the goals expressed in this Greenways Plan are to move ahead, implementation should be taken up at the planning region level. Multi-municipal and municipal comprehensive plans should revisit and refine the recommendations made in this Greenways Plan and recommend the adoption of new land use tools in local

*“You’ll never plough a field by
turning it over in your mind”*

- Irish Proverb

ordinances that facilitate greenway development. Such tools may include, but are not limited to, adoption of conservation corridor overlay districts, riparian buffer requirements, steep slope restrictions and developer incentives that encourage the preservation of contiguous open space in new subdivisions. It is also recommended that implementation of the greenways and trails network be achieved through development of multi-municipal greenway plans or feasibility studies. These plans will evaluate the corridors proposed in this Plan in greater detail, including trail alignments, land ownership at the parcel level, known obstacles and proposed solutions.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Successful realization of this Plan also requires a well-organized and collaborative management structure. No one organization in Blair County has the capacity or expertise to undertake an effort of this magnitude single-handedly. Therefore, a partnership structure is recommended. Partnerships require careful coordination and well-defined roles. Therefore, the structure illustrated in the organizational chart in Figure 4.1 is proposed.

Under this proposed management structure, planning and coordination of implementation functions would be guided by three organizations: the Blair County Planning Commission, the Blair County Conservation District and the Allegheny Ridge Corporation. These three entities, referred to herein as "planning and coordination partners," would be responsible for joint policy-making and decision-making regarding the execution of the Greenways Plan. Each would designate one staff person charged with the responsibility for planning and coordination of greenways. The three representatives would meet regularly to review the status of implementation efforts and to determine what assistance (technical, financial, etc.) is needed by local municipalities to advance the Plan. In addition, they would coordinate with the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission to ensure that there is continuity and connectivity between Blair County's greenways network and that envisioned under the Southern Alleghenies Regional Greenways Plan.

The three planning and coordination partners would each have distinct but complimentary roles. The Blair County Planning Commission would be responsible for ensuring that the goals of the County Greenways

Plan are carried forward into the multi-municipal comprehensive and greenways plans. It would have the primary oversight role and serve as the central point of contact for local municipalities seeking to plan and implement greenways. It is also recommended that the Blair County Planning Commission take the lead in seeking funds needed to advance the greenway plans at the planning region level. This would require coordination with local municipalities to identify likely funding sources and submit grant applications.

The Allegheny Ridge Corporation would take the lead in providing technical guidance to local municipalities working to establish recreational and transportation greenways. As the primary proponent of the Mainline Canal Greenway, Allegheny Ridge has valuable trail planning expertise that local partners can draw upon. Similarly, the Blair County Conservation District has the knowledge and skills needed to advance conservation corridors at the local level. Therefore, it would be the primary resource for local municipalities in establishing conservation greenways. Where the two types of corridors overlap, all three planning and coordination partners would collaborate to assist municipalities and ensure that their objectives do not conflict.

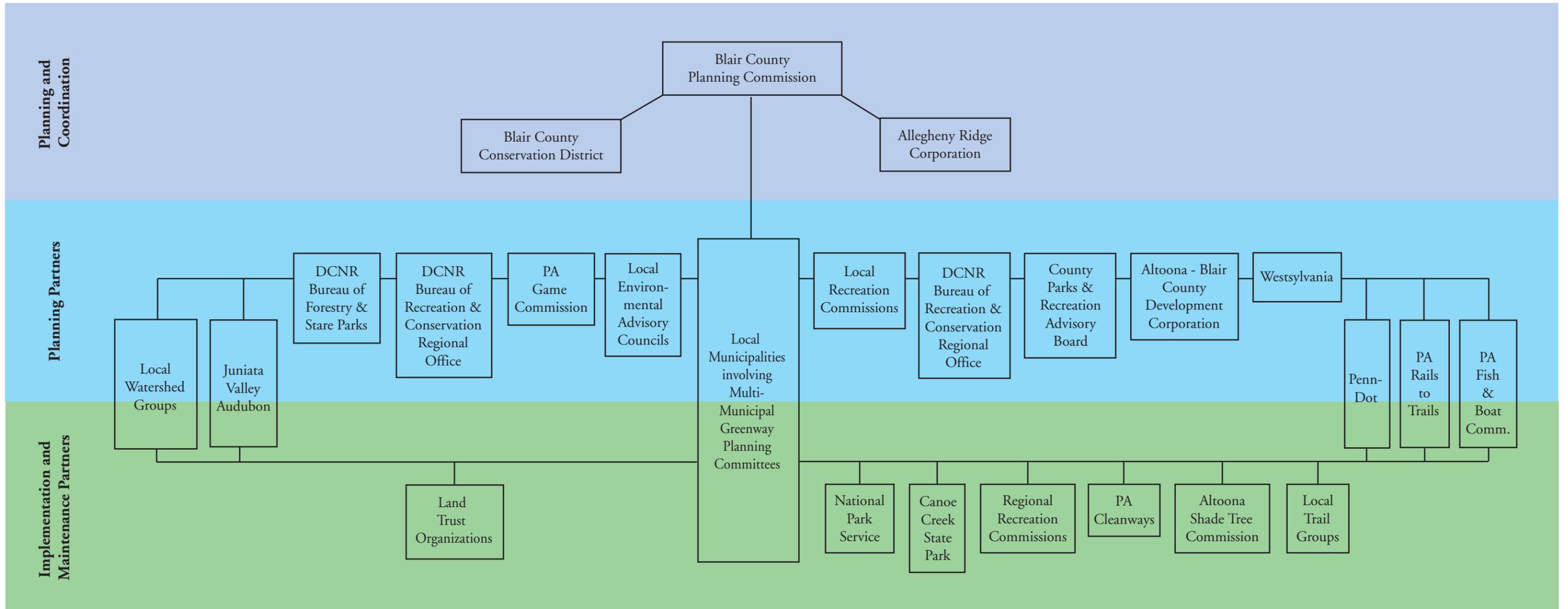
It is also recommended that the planning and coordination partners explore the possibility of creating a new staff position within the Blair County Planning Commission dedicated to greenway implementation. In other greenway planning efforts, lack of a "point person" charged with responsibility for advancing the greenways plan has resulted in stagnation of the plan. A Greenway Coordinator can focus attention on bringing the appropriate agencies and nonprofit organizations to the table, interfacing with municipal officials and providing technical assistance where needed. Depending on the funding available, this could be either a full-time or part-time position.

Local municipalities, preferably through multi-municipal greenway planning committees, would be the primary partners responsible for planning and implementation of greenways at the planning region level. It is recommended that environmental advisory councils be established at the municipal, multi-municipal or County level to assist in the planning of conservation corridors, while municipal or multi-municipal recreation commissions would provide similar guidance for recreation and transportation corridors.

Blair County Greenways Plan Proposed Management Structure

Conservation

Recreation/Transportation



Other organizations in Blair County with expertise valuable to greenway planning would serve as partners for planning and/or implementation and maintenance. The organizational chart above depicts certain key partners with knowledge and skills pertinent to the establishment of greenways. The Allegheny - Blair County Development Corporation can be a valuable partner in bringing the business community to the table and promoting the economic benefits of greenways. For conservation greenways, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Juniata Valley Audubon Society, local watershed groups and land trust organizations (such as the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy) should be brought in as partners. Where recreational and transportation greenways are being pursued, the Central PA Chapter of Rails to Trails, the County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, local trail groups and Pennsylvania Cleanways, among others, should be involved. It is recommended that the local municipalities enlist representatives from these partner organizations to serve on their greenway planning committees or, at a minimum, coordinate closely with them. Moreover, municipalities are encouraged to identify and engage other partners that have the know-how and resources to move the plan forward.

LAND CONSERVATION TOOLS

Some of the land proposed for greenway corridors passes through public land such as State Gamelands and is protected from development and other adverse uses. However, much of the land proposed for inclusion in the greenway network is privately owned and steps will need to be taken to conserve it. This Section presents a comprehensive discussion of the land conservation tools that can be used when establishing trails or conservation corridors.

There are two primary methods for protecting open space. The first category includes various means of acquiring property or certain underlying rights to property. The second category involves types of zoning requirements. Many of the mechanisms highlighted below are discussed in the publication "Land Use in Pennsylvania: Practices and Tools"¹

Footnote:

1. Department of Community and Economic Development, Governor's Center for Local Government Services, 2000.

ACQUISITION TOOLS

These tools generally provide permanent protection of land and are preferred when establishing greenways.

FEE SIMPLE PURCHASE

- **Description:** This practice involves the acquisition of land for the purpose of preservation of open space and natural areas. The purchase is usually done by a governmental or public agency or a non-profit land trust organization. Land acquisition can be made at every level of government.
- **Benefits:** Acquisition of fee simple title provides a more permanent long-term protection of open space and natural areas than through other methods such as zoning or subdivision requirements. Acquisition by nonprofit groups in partnership with communities to protect open space and natural areas imposes minimal or no cost and little administrative burden to local governments.
- **Implementation:** Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Growing Greener Program has sources of funding to help communities and non-profit groups implement acquisition of open space and natural areas projects.

OPTION/FIRST RIGHT OF REFUSAL

- **Description:** A local government may enter into an agreement with a landowner that gives the government entity the right to bid on the land before anyone else should the landowner decide to sell.
- **Benefits:** This technique gives the municipality time to assemble funds needed to purchase the property or to reach an agreement with the landowner to protect the land through other means.
- **Implementation:** The option is negotiated and memorialized in a legal agreement. If the property is to be sold, the municipality may, but is not obligated to, submit a bid to the landowner.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

- **Description:** Under this option, the landowner voluntarily agrees to sell the right to develop his land in certain ways by granting an easement to

another entity such as a land trust. The landowner retains title to the land and continues to pay taxes on it. The easement may or may not allow the grantee access to the land for certain purposes.

- **Benefits:** Acquisition of conservation easements also provides permanent long-term protection of open space and natural areas, but is less costly than fee simple acquisition because the purchaser receives less than full title to the land. Similarly, where the easement is held by a nonprofit group, there is little cost or burden on local governments. Moreover, the landowner pays lower real estate taxes on land subject to conservation easements.
- **Implementation:** Generally, the purchaser pays the landowner the difference between the value of the land that can be fully developed and the value of the land without development potential. The easement is recorded with the deed and "runs with the land," meaning that if the land is sold by the grantor, the land transfers subject to the easement.

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

- **Description:** Agricultural conservation easements are a subset of conservation easements described above. They permanently protect farms from development. Landowners voluntarily sell the rights to develop the farm to a government entity or private conservation organization or land trust. The agency or organization usually pays them the difference between the value of the land for agricultural use, and the value of the land for its "highest and best use" which is generally residential or commercial development.
- **Benefits:** Conservation easements permanently preserve land for agricultural use. They provide a financial benefit to farmers, while allowing conservation of farmland that often provides important habitat. Real estate taxes on land subject to conservation easements are lower.
- **Implementation:** County Agricultural Land Preservation Boards have primary responsibility for developing application procedures. They also establish priority for easement purchases based on a numerical ranking system. The ranking system is modeled upon state regulations that require consideration of soil quality, conservation practices, development pressures in the County, and the location of other permanently preserved farmland and open space.

FOREST LAND CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

- **Description:** Conservation easements on working forests are a market-driven tool used to preserve open space, like those used to protect working farmland. Easements can be used to protect forests for present and future economic benefit, simultaneously preserving wildlife habitat, protecting watersheds, providing outdoor recreation opportunities, and promoting soil conservation.
- **Benefits:** Again, this tool provides permanent protection of land from development. Since timber is one of the top five sectors in Pennsylvania's economy and its continued availability is dependent upon the existence and preservation of open space and forests, the benefits of such easements are economic as well as environmental. Benefits to landowners include lower property taxes.
- **Implementation:** Some non-profit organizations such as conservancies and land trusts provide financial support for purchasing easements from landowners; they also accept tax-deductible donations of easements from landowners. The U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy initiative provides funding to state governments to help purchase easements on private forestland.

TRANSFER/ PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

- **Description:** Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) is a tool that allows conservation and development to coexist within a municipality or group of municipalities with joint zoning. TDRs permit landowners in areas where conservation is desired to transfer some or all of the development rights associated with their land (sending areas) to areas where growth is desired at densities in excess of that permitted by current zoning (receiving areas). The landowner keeps title to the land and the right to use it, but gives up the right to develop the property for other purposes. The purchaser of the development rights uses them to develop another parcel at great density than would otherwise be permitted. With TDRs, the transfer of rights occurs at the time of development.

Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs) operates in a similar manner. However, with PDRs, an entity buys the rights to develop land from the

landowner. The landowner retains the use of the land, and receives tax benefits. The municipality can pass a bond issue to buy the rights and "bank" them. A developer may purchase the development rights from the municipality when ready to develop an area with high density. The municipal bond financing which was entered into to purchase the right is paid off over the years by the purchase of the development rights as development occurs.

- **Benefits:** The value of each development right is controlled by the open market, not the municipality. TDRs are an equitable option for preserving open space and agricultural lands, by compensating the owner of preserved land, while guiding the growth of development through the allowance of increased density where existing infrastructure can support it.

PDRs provide an immediate return to the landowner. They compensate the landowner for reduction in development potential and facilitate the goals of the development district concept. PDRs also streamline the time line for development, since private sales and negotiations for development rights are not necessary to go forward with high density development. It allows the municipality to guide growth since it owns all the development rights.

- **Implementation:** In Pennsylvania, TDR programs can only be used to transfer development rights within a single municipality or among municipalities with a joint zoning ordinance. It is up to each municipality implementing TDR to set up a mechanism to accomplish this transfer.

ZONING TOOLS

Regulatory mechanisms can also be useful when establishing greenways. However, because they always can be amended or even abolished by local officials, they cannot be relied on as a means of providing permanent protection of land. Nevertheless, they should not be overlooked when putting together a long-term strategy for assembling a greenway network.

OPEN SPACE ZONING/CONSERVATION DESIGN

- **Description:** The purpose of this technique is to preserve a larger amount of land for conservation uses while still allowing full-density development. In contrast to cluster zoning, where the emphasis is more often placed on providing active recreation areas, open space zoning is more suited for protecting farmland, woodland habitat, historic sites, and scenic views. Subdivisions are required to dedicate a significant portion of their unconstrained land to permanent open space uses. The open space is typically owned and managed (according to an approved management plan) by a homeowner association. Other possible owners include land trusts, the municipality, or individuals with large "conservancy lots", which are a form of non-common open space.
- **Benefits:** This technique, while a regulatory tool, provides a means for permanent protection of undeveloped land. It preserves large open spaces while allowing full-density development. Ideally, the open space in each new subdivision will ultimately join together to form interconnected systems of conservation lands.
- **Implementation:** This technique can be implemented through a municipality's zoning ordinance. The number of dwellings permitted is based on the net acreage of buildable land and the underlying density in the zoning district. Easements are then placed in the open space to ensure that it will not be further subdivided or developed.

OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS

- **Description:** An overlay zoning district applies additional regulations to an underlying zoning district or districts. The restrictions of the overlay district supplement and supercede (where there is a conflict) the provisions of the underlying district. Overlay districts have been used to conserve floodplains and other sensitive natural features.
- **Benefits:** Overlay zoning allows regulations to be tailored to specific conditions. Administration is the same as any zoning district.
- **Implementation:** In general, the provisions of a zoning district must apply uniformly to each class of uses or structures within each district. However, Section 605(2) of the Municipal Planning Code authorizes additional classifications, potentially through the use of overlay zoning, for "regulating,

restricting, or prohibiting uses and structures at, along or near ...

- (ii) Natural and artificial bodies of water, boat docks and related facilities.
- (iii) Places of relatively steep slope or grade, or the areas of hazardous geological or topographic features....
- (vi) Places having unique historical, architectural, or patriotic interest or value.
- (vii) Floodplain areas, architectural areas, sanitary landfills, and other places having a special character or use affecting and affected by their surroundings."

BUFFER ZONES

- **Description:** Municipalities may enact regulations requiring that buffers of a prescribed width be established between incompatible uses such as residential and commercial areas or adjacent to sensitive resources such as streams or drinking water supplies. This tool allows the municipality to limit or prohibit development within the buffer area.
- **Benefits:** Buffers can be used to protect large, linear corridors of valuable resources like stream and river banks. Therefore, they are well-suited for greenway development. They allow municipalities to protect areas of sensitive land without having to shoulder the expense of acquisition.
- **Implementation:** Requirements for buffers are enacted as part of a zoning ordinance or subdivision and land development ordinance. Buffer restrictions should be wide enough to protect the resource or shelter the less intensive use. However, care must be taken not to create buffers that are so wide that they will disproportionately reduce the value of land in the municipality.

AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION ZONING

- **Description:** Agricultural Protection Zoning ordinances designate areas where farming is the primary land use, and discourage other land uses in those areas.
- **Benefits:** Agricultural Protection Zoning stabilizes the agricultural land base by keeping large tracts of land relatively free of non-farm development. This can reduce the likelihood of conflicts between farmers and their non-farming neighbors.

Maintaining a critical mass of agricultural land can ensure that there will be enough farmland to support local agricultural services.

- **Implementation:** Agricultural Protection Zoning can be economically viable by coupling it with such tools as Transfer of Development Rights and Purchase of Development Rights.

MANDATORY DEDICATION AND FEE-IN-LIEU ORDINANCES

- **Description:** Township officials may require developers to dedicate a portion of the undeveloped land on a development parcel for open space preservation purposes. The amount of open space dedication required is often reflective of the type, amount, and intensity of development to occur on the site.

Fees in lieu of dedication may be required of the owner or developer as a substitute for a dedication of land, usually calculated in dollars per lot, and referred to as in-lieu fees or in-lieu contributions. These funds can then be used by the municipality to purchase new park or conservation land.

- **Benefits:** Mandatory dedication ensures that a certain amount of open space will automatically be preserved as a municipality develops. With careful planning by municipal officials, these areas of open space can be aligned to create green corridors. However, many municipalities prefer payment of fees-in-lieu to mandatory dedication because it allows the municipality to aggregate funds from several developments and purchase a single contiguous tract of recreation or conservation land.
- **Implementation:** Provisions requiring mandatory dedication and fee-in-lieu can be added to municipal zoning ordinances by amendment. The Municipalities Planning Code requires that "the land to be dedicated or the fees to be paid shall bear a reasonable relationship to the use of the park or recreational facilities by future inhabitants of the development...". The municipality is also required to expend any fee within three years of payment by the developer.

OTHER REGULATORY TOOLS

THE OFFICIAL MAP

- **Description:** The Municipalities Planning Code permits municipalities to create an "official map" that designates public or private land for which it has identified a current or future public need. This can be land for roads and other infrastructure as well as open space for conservation and recreation needs. This tool puts landowners and developers on notice about land that the municipality is planning to use for public purposes.
- **Benefits:** The Official Map is a powerful tool for municipalities planning their open space and recreation needs. The time period allowing the right of first refusal gives a municipality time to assemble funding needed to purchase land or easements.
- **Implementation:** The Official Map does not cause a taking of land, but rather allows the municipality to have the right of first refusal to purchase the land or obtain an easement. After one year, the right of first refusal expires and the landowner can sell the property to another interested purchaser. Municipalities wanting to establish an official map should only do so after they have identified the lands needed to serve a public purpose through a comprehensive planning process. Official maps can designate parks, trail corridors, greenways and conservation lands protecting sensitive environmental features such as wetlands and floodplains. However, if lands are to be reserved in an official map, the municipality should have a reasonable prospect of obtaining the funds necessary to purchase the interest.

AGRICULTURAL SECURITY AREAS

- **Description:** A landowner or group of landowners, whose parcels together comprise at least 250 acres, may apply to their local government for designation as an Agricultural Security Area.
- **Benefits:** Agricultural Security Designation encourages the preservation of agricultural land. Security Areas give a landowner protection from local ordinances that restrict farm practices, unless those ordinances have a direct relationship to public health or safety. These areas also protect an area from nuisance ordinances. Additionally, the

designation limits land condemnation procedures- eminent domain by the Commonwealth and local agencies- unless approval is gained from the Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board. The designation also qualifies the land of 500 acres or more for the purchase of conservation easements under the Pennsylvania statewide program.

- **Implementation:** The process to designate an ASA must be initiated by a landowner or a group of landowners and is reviewed by local officials with assistance from the County Agricultural Land Preservation Board.

AGRICULTURAL TAX INCENTIVES

- **Description:** Differential assessment laws direct local governments to assess agricultural land at its value for agriculture, instead of at its full market value, which is generally higher. Differential assessment laws are enacted in the state, and implemented at the local level.
- **Benefits:** The programs afford protection to farmers to continue operating an agricultural operation in the face of development, thus helping to ensure the economic viability of agriculture. These tax laws align agricultural property taxes with what it actually costs local governments to provide services to the land.
- **Implementation:** Landowners must apply to the County Assessment Office.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This Section of the Greenways Plan includes a step-by-step plan for the implementation of the greenways network. Table 4.3 lays out the sequence of events needed to take the Greenways Plan from the County Greenway Vision expressed in this Plan to completion of conservation and recreation/transportation corridors. The table breaks the process down into key objectives, the sequence of tasks needed to achieve them, and the parties who will take the lead and assist in undertaking these tasks. Responsible parties will need to seek funding through grants or cost reimbursement programs throughout the process. Lists of funding sources are provided later in this section.

Table 4.3 Implementations Steps

	OBJECTIVE	TASK(S)	LEAD ROLE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)
1	Develop a County greenway vision	Complete & adopt County Greenways Plan	Blair County Planning Commission	Blair County Greenways Plan Study Committee
2	Obtain municipal commitments to implement greenways	Complete & adopt multi-municipal or municipal greenways plans (preferably within multi-municipal or municipal comprehensive plans)	Municipal officials (through steering committees)	BCPC, Planning Partners (see Figure 4.1)
3	Refine the greenway concept and advance segments at the local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify key players to carry out the plan - Select specific greenway segment - Conduct feasibility study - Research land ownership in corridor - Conduct environmental site assessments & other studies - Develop detailed cost estimates, a budget and a funding strategy - Secure grants and local matching funds - Design the greenway corridor 	Municipal officials and/or non-profit organization established to advance the greenways	BCPC, Blair County Conservation District (BCCD), Allegheny Ridge Corporation (ARC), Planning Partners
4	Secure access to the corridor/ establish conservation greenway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negotiate with landowners and neighbors - Acquire property or obtain easements - Enact municipal ordinances that protect specific resources or create incentives for open space preservation 	Municipal officials and/or non-profit organization established to advance the greenways	BCPC, BCCD, ARC, Juniata Valley Audubon, Land Trusts, Local Watershed Groups, etc.
5	Establish recreation/ transportation greenway	Construct trail	Municipal officials and/or non-profit organization established to advance the greenways	BCPC, BCCD, ARC, PA Rails-to-Trails, PennDOT, Recreation Commissions, Local Trail Groups, etc.
6	Ensure the greenway's future success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and adopt a greenway maintenance plan - Develop and implement a marketing strategy 	Municipal officials and/or non-profit organization established to advance the greenways	ARC, Allegheny Mtns Convention & Visitors Bureau, trail & watershed groups, PA Cleanways, etc.

The second part of the Implementation Plan sets forth specific strategies that are organized into tables on the following pages. Each entry includes columns specifying responsible parties, priority, estimated cost and status (for keeping track of progress). Tables should be reviewed no less than annually to determine which tasks have been accomplished, which should be undertaken next and whether adjustments need to be made.

Table 4.4 lists those strategies that apply broadly to the implementation of the whole network. They include recommended action items related to process and management. Table 4.5 lists strategies that apply more specifically to establishment of the conservation corridors. Finally, strategies needed to put the recreation and transportation greenways in place appear in Table 4.6.

Under "Responsible Parties," the tables identify the entities that will have a role in undertaking a particular strategy. This list should be viewed as preliminary. Additional parties with expertise or interest in a particular aspect of the plan should continue to be identified and brought into the process.

Prioritization of tasks has been divided into Short-term, Mid-Term and Long-Term. Short-Term tasks (designated as "S") should be accomplished within the first two years after adoption of the plan. These are the strategies that will set the course for the successful implementation of the Greenways Plan. Mid-term priorities ("M") are those tasks that should be undertaken in years three through five and long-term priorities ("L") are expected to begin after five or more years.

Many of the strategies listed have little or no cost beyond the administrative costs that will be incurred by the responsible parties. However, where recommended tasks will require an additional expense for implementation, a cost estimate is included. The costs are "ball park" estimates based on similar projects or initiatives. However, more detailed cost estimates will need to be developed through feasibility studies.

It is recommended that the "Status" column of the tables be used to keep track of progress made toward completion of each strategy. For example, "I" could be noted to indicate "In Progress" and "C" to indicate "Complete."

The implementation strategies are intended to provide guidance to the Blair County Planning Commission, the Blair County Conservation District, the Allegheny Ridge Corporation and its planning and implementation/maintenance partners. These tables outline a recommended game plan. Actual implementation will depend upon the fiscal and political climate in any given year. Therefore, it is essential that the tables be reviewed annually and strategies modified and reprioritized to reflect what is achievable under the circumstances. This implementation section should be a "living document," one that sets high goals, but responds to fiscal and political realities.

Table 4.4 Comprehensive Greenway Network Strategies

	Task	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost Estimate	Status
1.	Adopt the Greenways Plan as part of the County Comprehensive Plan	BCPC, County Commissioners	S	-	
2.	Convene Planning and Coordination Partners; refine responsibilities and establish meeting schedule & procedures for decision-making	Blair County Planning Comm'n (BCPC), Blair County Conservation Dt (BCCD) Allegheny Ridge Corp. (ARC)	S	-	
3.	Establish a "Greenway Coordinator" position within the BCPC to serve as a "champion" for greenway development in the County. Seek combination of funding from County and other sources (DCNR)	BCPC, County Commissioners	S	\$20,000 (part-time); \$35,000 (full-time)	
4.	Develop a detailed public education program to inform County residents about the many benefits of greenway development (economic, environmental, health, etc.)	ARC with assistance from Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development, Westsylvania, BCPC and ABCD Corp.	S	\$15,000	
5.	Meet with municipal officials to discuss goals of the Greenways Plan and the means of advancing it through local comprehensive plans, greenway feasibility studies and ordinances; request that local municipalities pass resolutions endorsing the Greenway Plan.	BCPC, Municipal Elected Officials & Planning Commissions, ABCD Corporation	S	-	
6.	Provide Municipal Officials with information about tools they can use to preserve open space (for example, Chester County's "Open Space Planning: A Guidebook for Municipalities.")	BCPC	Ongoing	-	
7.	Create a package of incentives to encourage municipalities to pursue the multi-municipal greenway planning. Such incentives may include providing matching funds, grantwriting and other technical assistance. Investigate whether County Parks & Recreation Board funding could be applied or whether a new dedicated funding stream should be established by the Commissioners.	BCPC with advice from ARC, BCCD	S	\$20,000 annually	
8.	Pilot a multi-municipal greenway feasibility study at the Planning Region level to refine the recommendations of the County Plan	Municipal Elected Officials & Planning Commissions w/ guidance from BCPC	S	\$40,000 to \$60,000	

Table 4.4 Continued

	Task	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost Estimate	Status
9.	Carry forward and refine the recommendations of this Greenway Plan through municipal or multi-municipal greenway plans/feasibility studies	Municipal Elected Officials & Planning Commissions w/ guidance from BCPC	Ongoing	\$40,000 per planning region	
10.	Coordinate local greenway planning efforts with Southern Alleghenies Greenway Plan to ensure connectivity of recreation and conservation corridors across County lines.	BCPC	Ongoing	-	
11.	Explore joint grant writing with counties in the Southern Alleghenies Greenway Planning Group for greenway projects stretching across County lines.	BCPC	Ongoing	-	
12.	Develop a strong marketing plan to promote the many attractions of the greenway network (eco-tourism, recreation, cultural, historic, etc.). Seek grant money for hiring professional marketing consultant.	ARC with assistance from Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development, Westsylvania, & Allegheny Mountains Convention & Visitors Bureau	M, L	\$30,000	

Table 4.5 Conservation Greenway Strategies

	Task	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost Estimate	Status
1.	Establish Environmental Advisory Councils at the municipal (preferred), multi-municipal or County level to advise local elected and appointed officials about conservation priorities and assist in conservation efforts.	Local municipal officials with advice from, BCPC, BCCD, Juniata Valley Audubon and local watershed groups	Ongoing	-	
2.	Prioritize conservation corridor areas that are most threatened (I-99 corridor) or contain most endangered species (exceptional and high value BDAs)	BCCD, Environmental Advisory Councils	S	-	
3.	Work with local municipalities to ensure that conservation and drinking water protection corridors are established in municipal or multi-municipal comprehensive plans and/or greenway plans	BCPC, BCCD	Ongoing	-	
4.	Assist municipalities in applying for funds (such as Growing Greener) to purchase conservation land or easements	BCPC, BCCD	Ongoing	-	
5.	Work with the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy and/or other land trusts to identify lands suitable for acquisition or conservation easements.	BCPC, BCCD	Ongoing	-	
6.	Limit development in sensitive environmental areas through zoning and/or subdivision and land development tools, and developer incentives (buffer requirements, steep slope regulations, PRDs, conservation subdivisions, etc.)	Local municipal officials with guidance from BCPC and ABCD Corp.	Ongoing	-	
7.	Undertake strategic purchases of floodplains in areas prone to flooding and conduct bank restoration projects	BCPC, BCCD	M, L	\$100,000 per year	

Table 4.6 Recreation and Transportation Greenway Strategies

	Task	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost Estimate	Status
1.	Support completion of the Pennsylvania Millenium Trail by extending the Lower Trail east to Alexandria and west to the Allegheny Portage National Historic Site. Work with Cambria and Huntingdon Counties on promotion and funding.	ARC, County Government	Ongoing	\$200,000 per year	
2.	Establish multi-municipal recreation commissions to spearhead trail development at the local level.	Local municipal officials	S	-	
3.	Pilot development of trail segment connecting Hollidaysburg to Altoona (alternative: Altoona to Bellwood) to create momentum for development of the trail network.	Local Municipal Officials, BCPC, BCCD, ARC, County Parks & Rec. Comm'n, local rec. Comm.'n, PA Rails to Trails	S	\$300,000	
4.	Work with local officials to promote safe pedestrian routes across intersections within or connecting to greenway corridors.	Local Municipal Officials, BCPC, PennDOT	M	-	
5.	Work with City of Altoona Planning Department to identify best routes through city streets. Explore feasibility of bike lanes or designated bike routes with signage.	BCPC, ARC, City of Altoona Planning Department, Other City Officials	S, M	-	
6.	Connect Lakemont bikeway with City of Altoona through construction of a bicycle/pedestrian bridge across I-99. Apply for transportation enhancements funding to study best and most cost effective route.	BCPC, ARC, Municipal Officials, Rec. Comm'n	M, L	\$75,000 (study) \$250,000 (bridge)	
7.	Pursue negotiations with the PA Game Commission to create designated routes through State Gamelands for the 6 Through 10 Trail (SGL 198), the Bells Gap Trail (SGL 158) and the Wopsy Trail (SGL 267).	BCPC, ARC, National Park Service, PA Rails to Trails, Local Trail Groups, Rec. Comm'ns	S, M	-	
8.	Engage the MPO Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee to help advance local trail plans. Ensure that adopted trail plans requiring transportation improvements are included on the Long-Range Plan and TIP for the Region.	BCPC, Local Municipal Officials	M, L	-	
9.	Partner with local hospitals and health organizations such as Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity to develop an outreach and marketing campaign to promote the health benefits of recreational trails. Piggyback on existing efforts such as the Keystone Active Zones Program.	BCPC, ARC	M, L	\$10,000	

Table 4.6 Continued

	Task	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost Estimate	Status
10.	Work with the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission to promote the local trails and emphasize their economic development potential.	BCPC, ARC, ABCD Corp.	M, L	-	
11.	Develop a plan for trail maintenance using a combination of County and local resources as well as volunteer services such as PA Cleanways and students from Penn State Altoona.	Local Municipal Officials, Parks & Recreation Commissions, PA Cleanways	L	-	

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Development of a greenway network is costly and requires a long-term strategy that taps into a variety of State, Federal, and private sources. Funding programs designed to conserve natural resources, develop recreational trails and create transportation improvements are all potential sources of grants. Most require that local matching funds be allocated toward the project. Tables 4.7 through 4.9 list current funding sources that may be useful in establishing a greenway network. Because these programs are constantly changing, these tables are a starting point. When seeking grant programs, applicants should check the websites of the funding organizations for an updated listing of grants programs and eligibility requirements.

Moreover, any funding strategy should leverage local sources as well. Private and non-profit contributors in the local community are an important source. In addition, efforts should be made to create public-private partnerships and seek out in-kind contributions from local businesses.

Table 4.7 Potential Funding Sources - State

Source	Program	Description	Contact Information
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)	Community Conservation Partnership Program	<p>Grant monies are available to municipal governments to support greenway and park planning, design and development. A 50% match is required from the local project sponsor. This program includes the following specified grants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Planning Grant Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plans • Conservation Plans • Feasibility Studies • Greenways and Trails Plans • Rails-to-Trails Plans • Master Site Plans • Rivers Conservation Plans 2) Technical Assistance Grant Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Training • Peer-to-Peer • Circuit Rider 3) Acquisition Grant Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park and Recreation Areas • Rivers Conservation • Rails-to-Trails 4) Development Grant Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Rehabilitation and Development • Greenways and Trails • Rails-to-Trails • Rivers Conservation 	DCNR South Central Regional Advisor, 717-772-3839 www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc
DCNR	PA Recreational Trails Program	Provides funds to develop and maintain recreation trails and trail-related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreation trail use. The program requires a 20% match from the local sponsor.	DCNR South Central Regional Advisor, 717-772-3839 www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc

Source	Program	Description	Contact Information
DCNR	Heritage Area Grants	Grants are available to promote public-private partnerships that preserve and enhance natural, cultural, historic and recreation resources to stimulate economic development through heritage tourism. Municipalities, nonprofit organizations or federally designated commissions acting on behalf of the municipalities in heritage park areas may apply. Funds may be used for feasibility studies; development of management action plans for heritage park areas; specialized studies; implementation projects; and hiring of state heritage park managers. Grants require a 25-50% local match.	Jane Sheffield, 814-940-1922 jsheffield@alleghenyridge.org www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/heritageparks
DCNR	Urban and Community Forestry Grants	These grants can be used to encourage the planting of trees in Pennsylvania communities. Municipal challenge grants provide 50% of the cost of the purchase and delivery of trees. Special grants are available for local volunteer groups, civic clubs, and municipalities to train and use volunteers for street tree inventories, and other projects in urban and community forestry.	Norm Lacasse, 717-783-0385, www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc
Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)	Growing Greener Program	These funds can be used for farmland-preservation projects; preserving open space; cleanup of abandoned mines, watershed planning; recreational trails and parks and other land use projects. Eligible applicants include nonprofit groups, counties, and municipalities. A local match is encouraged, but not required.	Growing Greener Helpline, 877-724-7336, GrowingGreener@state.pa.us www.depweb.state.pa.us/growinggreener
DEP	Stormwater Planning and Management Grants	This program provides grants to counties and municipalities for preparation of stormwater management plans and stormwater ordinances. The program requires a 25% local match that can come in the form of in-kind services or cash. This program is part of the Growing Greener Initiative.	Durla Lathia, 717-772-4048 www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/watermgt/wc/Subjects/StormwaterManagement/GeneralInformation/default.htm
DEP	Nonpoint Source Management Section 319 Grants	This funding comes from the federal Clean Water Act. Grants are available to local governments and nonprofit groups for watershed assessments, watershed restoration projects, and projects of statewide importance. A 60% local match is required and 35% of the construction costs of projects implemented on private land must come from non-federal sources.	Russ Wagner, 717-787-5642 www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/watermgt/wc/Subjects/NonpointSourcePollution/default.htm

Source	Program	Description	Contact Information
DEP	Environmental Education Grants	This program uses a 5% set aside of the pollution fines and penalties collected in the Commonwealth each year for environmental education in Pennsylvania. There are eight different grant tracks, most requiring a 20% match. Public and private schools, nonprofit conservation/education organizations and county conservation districts may apply for the grants.	DEP, 717-772-1828 DEPLearningCenter@state.pa.us www.depweb.state.pa.us/enved/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=473483
DEP	Land Recycling Grants Program	This program provides grants and low interest loans for environmental assessments and remediation. It is designed to foster the cleanup of environmental contamination at industrial sites and remediate the land to a productive use.	DEP, 717-787-7816, www.depweb.state.pa.us/dep/site/default.asp
Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)	Community Revitalization Program	This funding source supports local initiatives aimed at improving a community's quality of life and improving business conditions.	Oliver Bartlett, 717-720-7352, www.newpa.com/programDetail.aspx?id=72
DCED	State Planning Assistance Grants	This program provides funding to municipalities for preparation and maintenance of community development plans, policies, and implementation measures. The grant requires a 50% match and priority is given to projects with regional participation.	Kerry Wilson, 717-720-7445, www.landuseinpa.com or www.newpa.com/default.aspx?id=129
DCED	Community Development Block Grants	This program provides financial and technical assistance to communities for infrastructure improvements, housing rehabilitation, public services, and community facilities. It targets local governments and 70% of each grant must be used to benefit low to moderate income people.	Scott Dunwoody, 717-787-5327, www.newpa.com/programDetail.aspx?id=71
DCED	Main Street Program	This program provides grants to municipalities and redevelopment authorities to foster economic growth, promote and preserve community centers, create public/private partnerships, and improve the quality of life for residents. It has two components, a Main Street Manager and Commercial Reinvestment.	Diana Kerr, 717-787-5327, www.newpa.com/programDetail.aspx?id=79

Source	Program	Description	Contact Information
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)	Transportation Enhancements, Home Town Streets & Safe Routes to Schools Program	This cost reimbursement program funds projects within twelve categories including pedestrian and bicycle trails and bike lanes; purchase of scenic easements or scenic sites; and preservation of abandoned railway corridors. Any federal or state agency, county or municipal government, school district or non-profit can apply.	Dante Accurti, 717-783-2258, www.dot.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)	Keystone Historic Preservation Grants	Local governments and non-profit groups may apply for this grant. A 50% local match is required and funds may be used for preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic properties, buildings, structures, sites, or objects.	Scott Doyle, 717-783-6012, midoyle@state.pa.us , www.artsnet.org/phmc/pdf/khpc_app.pdf
PHMC	Certified Local Government Grants	The PHMC administers this federal funding program for purposes of cultural resource surveys, technical and planning assistance, educational and interpretive programs, and national register nominations. The program includes a 40% local match that can be made with in-kind services, cash, or Community Development Block Grants.	Michel Lefevre, 717-787-0771, mlefevre@state.pa.us , www.artsnet.org/phmc/pdf/clg_app.pdf

Table 4.8 Potential Funding Sources - Federal

Source	Program	Description	Contact Information
Federal Highway Administration	Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program	States, MPOs, and local governments are eligible to receive planning and implementation grants for projects that include reducing impacts of transportation on the environment, minimizing the need for costly future infrastructure investments, and improving the efficiency of the transportation system.	Kenneth Petty, (202) 366-6654 kenneth.petty@fhwa.dot.gov www.fhwa.dot.gov/tcsp
National Parks Service (NPS)	Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program	This program provides technical assistance to community groups and local, State, and federal government agencies so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways.	Helen Mahan, 215-597-6483 www.nps.gov/rtca/
NPS	Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants	Administered by DCED. See Table 4.	
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	Community Block Grants	Administered by DCED. See Table 4.	
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)	Conservation Reserve Program	This is a voluntary program for agricultural landowners who receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conservation methods on eligible farmland. The annual rental payments are based on the agriculture rental value of the land. The program provides cost-share assistance for up to 50% of the participant's costs in establishing approved conservation practices. Participants enroll in CRP contracts for 10 to 15 years.	Malcolm Henning, 202-720-1872 www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crp.htm
USDA	Wetlands Reserve Program	The Department of Agriculture provides direct payments to private landowners who agree to place sensitive wetlands under permanent easements. This program can be used to fund the protection of open space and greenways within riparian corridors.	Tony Puga, 202-720-1067. Tony.Puga@wdc.usda.gov www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp

Source	Program	Description	Contact Information
USDA	Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Grants	The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides funding to state and local agencies or nonprofit organizations authorized to carry out, maintain and operate watershed improvements involving less than 250,000 acres. The NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to eligible projects to improve watershed protection, flood prevention, sedimentation control, fish and wildlife enhancements, and recreation planning. The NRCS requires a 50% match for public recreation and fish and wildlife projects.	Stuart Simpson, 202-720-8770 www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/watershed/index.html
Environmental Protection Agency	Targeted Watersheds Program	The EPA awards funds to encourage successful community-based approaches and management techniques to protect and restore the nation's waters. Eligible projects include addressing agricultural pollution, urban and industrial runoff or streambank or wetland restoration for sediment control. Watersheds must be nominated by the governor. A non-federal match of 25% is required.	Ralph Spagnolo, 215-814-2718, spagnolo.ralph@epa.gov http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative/regions.html

Table 4.9 Other Potential Funding Sources

Source	Program	Description	Contact Information
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)	General Matching Grants	NFWF awards matching grants to governments, education institutions, and non-profit conservation organizations for projects that address priority actions promoting fish and wildlife conservation and the habitats on which they depend.	NFWF Eastern Regional Office 202-857-0166 http://www.nfwf.org/programs.cfm
NFWF	Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants	This program promotes community-based efforts to protect and restore the natural resources of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. It provides grants to organizations working to improve the condition of their local watershed while building citizen-based resource stewardship.	Jonathan Mawdsley jonathan.mawdsley@nfwf.org http://www.nfwf.org/programs.cfm
NFWF	Five-Star Restoration Matching Grants Program	Provides grants between \$5,000 and \$2,0000 to support community-based wetland, riparian and coastal habitat restoration projects that build diverse partnerships and foster local stewardship through education, outreach, and training.	Mathew Hurley mattew.hurley@nfwf.org http://www.nfwf.org/programs.cfm
NFWF	Acres for America	Provides funding for acquisition of interests in real property that conserve important habitat.	Megan Oliver megan.oliver@nfwf.org http://www.nfwf.org/programs.cfm

VISUALIZING THE RECREATIONAL AND TRANSPORTATION GREENWAYS

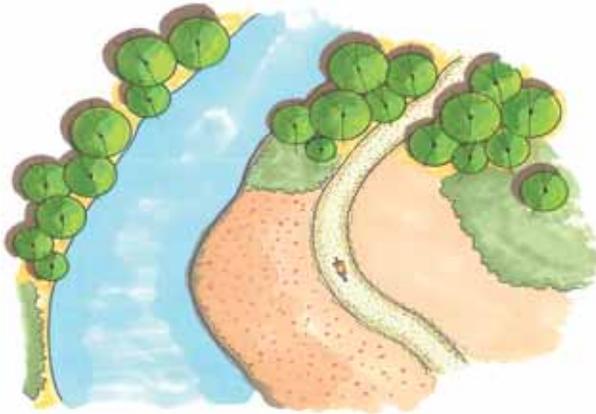
The trail network proposed in this Greenways Plan will pass through valleys and along mountainsides, through natural landscapes and commercial areas, and along country roads and city streets. In this Section, we have taken two likely trail locations – a rural stream corridor and an urban street – and created a graphic representation of what trails may look like when constructed there.

The first study involves a typical stretch of stream corridor, in this case along Brush Creek between Altoona and Hollidaysburg (see Figure 4.2). The first sketch depicts an aerial view of the proposed trail, set back from the bank and following the natural contours of the stream. The second sketch shows an artist's view of the trail. It is designed to preserve as much of the riparian buffer as possible, including as grasses, cattails, shrubs and trees. This buffer will help prevent erosion of the banks, protect wildlife habitat and allow the stream corridor to maintain its natural flood control capability. Vegetation also keeps the trail cooler for pedestrians and cyclists and makes the greenway more scenic.

The second alignment studied takes the trail along a downtown street. While the street depicted is located in downtown Altoona (see Figure 4.3), the example is applicable to any trail segment from Tyrone Borough to the Borough of Roaring Spring where trail users will need to share a narrow right-of-way with cars, pedestrians and parking.

In the sketches of this “urban greenway,” one side of the street becomes a designated bike lane, allowing riders a safer path out of the main stream of traffic. Lane striping and signage puts drivers on notice that this portion of the roadway is reserved for bicycle use. Street trees provide shade and a more attractive trail appearance. When aligning a trail through an urban area, a balanced approach should be taken that avoids the most trafficked or high speed streets, yet directs riders close to important cultural and historic sites as well as local businesses.

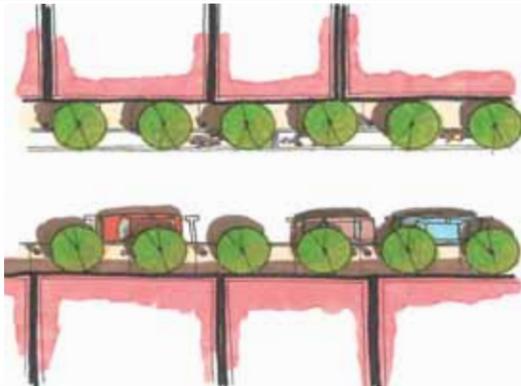
Figure 4.2. Rural Greenway Study



Rural Greenway



Figure 4.3. Urban Greenway Study



Urban Greenway



