

A Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for:

Greene

Independence

Potter

Raccoon



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- Preserving Rural Character, American Planning Association Planning Advisory Service
- Rural Development Guidelines, New York Planning Federation

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Scenic View from McCleary Road, Greene Township

Plan Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Overview

The municipalities of Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships came together to develop this multi-municipal comprehensive plan to guide future growth and development in a coordinated fashion and to protect the quality of life enjoyed by area residents. The planning area, consisting of the four municipalities, is located in southwestern Beaver County. The area encompassing the four municipalities is defined by the Ohio River to the north, Raccoon Creek to the east, and West Virginia to the west. Twelve municipalities in Pennsylvania and one county in West Virginia surround the planning area. The commonalities the four municipalities share in history and land use, demographic trends, housing conditions, transportation and infrastructure, community facilities, environmental features, and economic conditions reinforce the need for the municipalities to plan in a unified fashion.

In addition, the townships identified the following reasons to support this multi-municipal plan:

- The municipalities recognize the value of creating a unified vision for the region, which will help the communities identify how and where they want to grow. A unified vision will assist them in creating more consistency in land use planning among the townships.
- The municipalities currently coordinate in some public services, such as public works and equipment purchasing. This plan will help identify additional areas for cooperation that will be financially beneficial to the municipalities and the residents.
- The plan helps the communities think regionally about economic development, transportation, and infrastructure and address issues that are common to all the municipalities.

The Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships was funded in part by the Land Use Planning and Technical

“A good plan is like a road map: it shows the final destination and usually the best way to get there.”
- H. Stanley Juder

Assistance Program (LUPTAP) of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the Local Government Academy (LGA), and the participating municipalities.

The Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan

A multi-municipal comprehensive plan is a plan developed and adopted by any number of contiguous municipalities as authorized by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

The multi-municipal plan is developed through cooperation and coming to consensus among the involved communities on the goals, vision, and strategies for implementation.

The multi-municipal comprehensive plan serves to:

- provide relevant information on the physical, social, and economic features of the planning area
- foster consensus on the vision and future land uses, including redevelopment, new development, and conservation of land
- offer recommendations and strategies to achieve community goals
- create a rationale for developing or updating land use tools, such as zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.
- address all elements required by the Pennsylvania’s Municipalities Planning Code

The Multi-Municipal Planning Process

This plan is organized into three sections. Section I assesses the existing conditions in the planning areas. Section II identifies a vision and goals for the area. Section III outlines an action plan for implementation.

Section I - Situational Profile

This section answers the question, “Where are we now?” An assessment of existing conditions in the region is conducted to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the area.

Section II - Creating the Vision

This section answers the question, “Where do we want to be 10 to 15 years from now?” A community vision is developed using language and visuals describing the ideal future conditions in the area. Goals are identified relating to each plan element. A corresponding future land use scenario is created, which outlines where to target future development and the type and scale of development. Preservation areas are also depicted on the map for environmentally sensitive land and farmland.

Section III - Strategies for Action

This section answers the question, “How do we get there?” An action plan is developed, including strategies and a timeline for implementation.

The flow chart on page 4 shows the planning process used to develop the plan and corresponds to the three sections outlined above.

Section I - The Situational Profile
The situational profile provides necessary background information for determining the strengths, weaknesses, and future needs of the region.

Section II - Creating the Vision
The vision defines an ideal for the future. It inspires, motivates, and transforms desires into action.

Section III - Strategies for Action
Strategies are realistic, action-oriented ways of achieving the goals of the community at large.

Public Involvement Process

Public involvement is essential in a multi-municipal planning process. It fosters a sense of ownership of the plan among those who contributed to the process. A multi-municipal plan created with public involvement is more likely to effectively address the key issues in the planning area and lead to effective implementation.

The plan was developed through a participatory planning approach. The planning process engages citizens and strengthens communication and coordination between the municipalities. Many forums were used to generate public involvement and solicit feedback from citizens and officials. They include:

- 8 project steering committee meetings
- Key person interviews
- 2 public input meetings
- 2 visioning focus group meetings
- 2 public presentations of the final plan

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement on the following page was drafted by the project steering committee. The statement was formed by consensus of the committee.

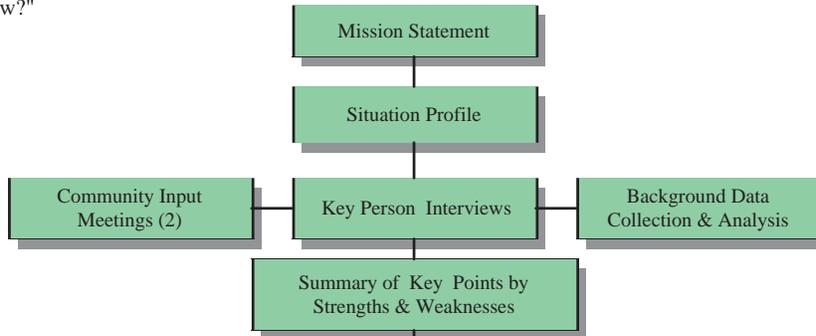
The mission of this plan is to...

- *Build on the good relations and on-going communication between the townships to create a unified vision of the future.*
- *Identify, promote, and protect the unique natural, cultural, historical, and agricultural resources in each township.*
- *Assess the current and future land use, transportation, and infrastructure needs of the townships to determine potential impacts from development and make recommendations consistent with the vision of the future.*
- *Determine the type, scale, and location of development that is appropriate for future growth in the townships and seek consistency in development across municipal borders using sound land use tools and design concepts.*
- *Foster collaboration between the townships to pull together resources and identify economic development opportunities that will benefit the townships and Beaver County overall.*
- *Identify ways to enhance the quality of life and preserve the rural character valued by the residents, while attracting young people and families to the area.*

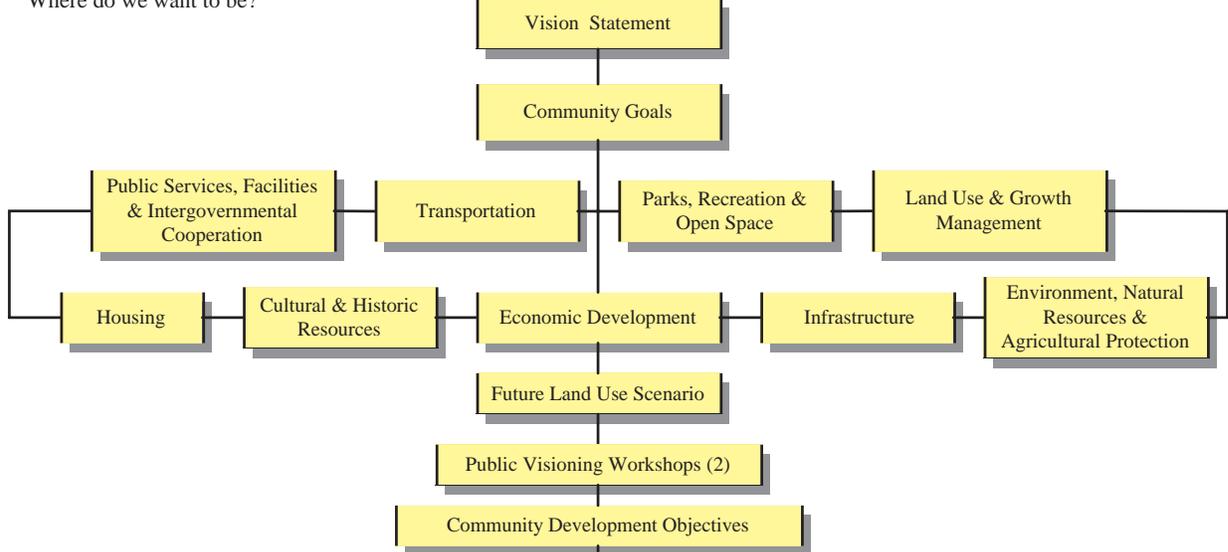
A REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR GREENE, INDEPENDENCE, POTTER, AND RACCOON TOWNSHIPS

"Our unique approach : a strategic planning process"

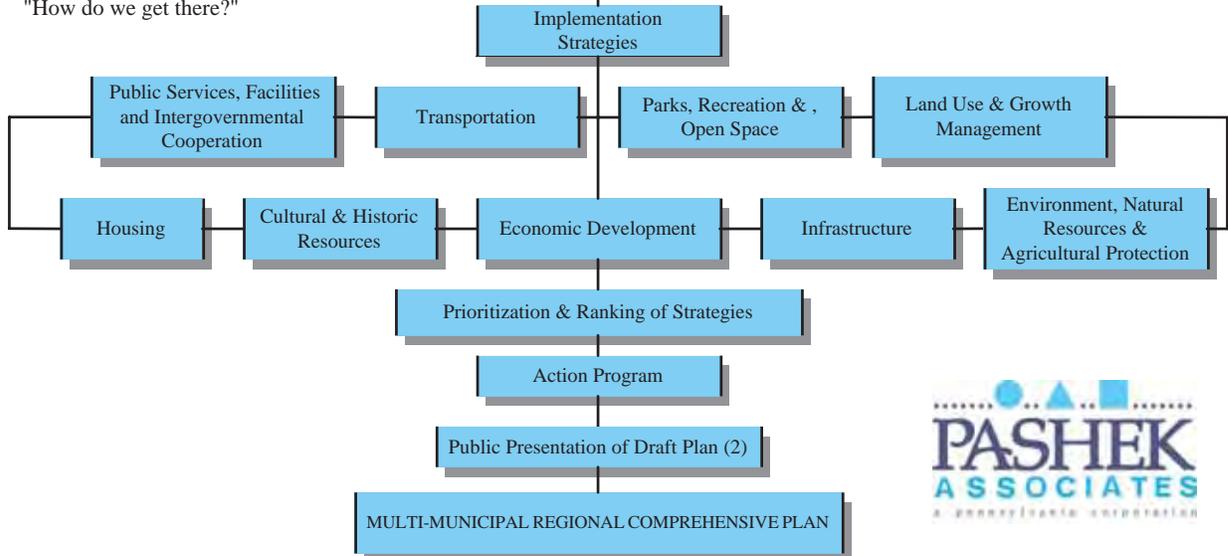
I. SITUATIONAL PROFILE
"Where are we now?"



II. CREATING THE VISION
"Where do we want to be?"



III. STRATEGIES FOR ACTION
"How do we get there?"



Section I: Where Are We Now?

Assessment of Existing Conditions

“All you need is the plan, the road map,
and the courage to press on to your destination.”
- Earl Nightingale



Calhoon Road, Raccoon Township

Introduction

“WHERE ARE WE NOW”

The situational profile is an inventory and assessment of the existing conditions in Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships. The assessment of existing conditions for the planning area and each municipality serves as a platform from which the vision, future land use scenario, and action program will be developed.

The main topics reviewed in this section include:

- Existing Land Use
- Socio-economic and Housing Conditions
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Environment, Natural Resources, and Agricultural Preservation
- Transportation Conditions
- Community Facilities
- Water and Sewer Infrastructure
- Economic Conditions
- Function and Form of Government
- Summary of Public Input

The assessment of existing conditions serves as a platform from which the vision, future land use scenario, and action program will be developed.

On the following pages, key points from the situational profile have been extracted and are identified as either a strength/opportunity or a weakness/threat for an individual municipality or the planning area as a whole. This classification of strengths and weaknesses is neither a positive or a negative assessment of the planning area. It is intended to be a neutral exercise that shows areas that can be enhanced and improved within the community and strengths to build on in the future.

For ease of reference, the Strengths and Weakness Tables are organized by the following topics:

- Socio-economic and Housing Conditions
- Land Use, Growth Management, and Community Image
- Economic Conditions
- Agriculture, Environment, and Natural Resources
- Historic, Cultural, and Recreational Assets
- Transportation and Infrastructure
- Public Services and Government Administration

SOCIO-ECONOMIC and HOUSING CONDITIONS

Strengths/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The population and number of households in the planning area increased from 1990 to 2000 (by 4.1% & 8.2% respectively), whereas the populations of many surrounding municipalities decreased ▪ There are a high percentage of family households (~80%) in the planning area compared to Beaver County (~70%) overall ▪ The overall level of educational attainment of people in the planning area increased from 1990 to 2000 (~15% increase in number of people with a high school degree and 63% increase in people with a bachelor's degree) ▪ Median household income (\$46,253) in the planning area tend to be higher than what is found in Beaver County (\$36,995) overall and incomes have increased at a much greater rate than what is found at the county level ▪ Low density single-family residential development contributes to the rural character of the area ▪ The housing stock is generally in good condition, affordable, and fits within the rural character of the area (ex. log homes) ▪ There is a good balance of older and newer housing ▪ There is a very high percentage of owner-occupied housing (89.4%) and a low percentage of vacant housing units (4.8%) compared to Beaver County (74.9% and 6.7% respectively) ▪ Poverty rates are generally lower in the planning areas (7.3%) compared to the county (9.4%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The population of Raccoon Township decreased from 1990 to 2000 by a rate of 0.8% ▪ Poorly maintained mobile home courts and dilapidated homes detract from aesthetics and rural character of the area ▪ Need for more flexible and affordable housing options for senior citizens ▪ There is very little variety in the type of housing found in the area – dominated by single-family homes and mobile homes ▪ Poverty rates vary throughout the planning area, with the highest poverty levels found in Greene and Independence Townships (10.5% and 7.7% of individuals, respectively), yet poverty is an issue for the entire area (7.3% of individuals for the area)

LAND USE, GROWTH MANAGEMENT, and COMMUNITY IMAGE	
Strengths/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rural character and scenic beauty of the area contribute to the high quality of life • The area has many recreational, environmental, and cultural assets that contribute to the high quality of life and can be marketed to outsiders • Future growth and development should be coordinated with infrastructure improvements to enable economic development in appropriate areas • All four municipalities have a comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, and subdivision/land development ordinance to manage land use • There is a desire to identify development design options that preserve open space and environmentally sensitive areas and to target existing areas of development as growth or infill areas • Scenic views and rural vistas are found throughout the area and can be incorporated into rural residential designs to enhance property values and maintain the natural beauty of the area • Industrial development is primarily concentrated in one area in Potter Township which reduces residential/industrial land use conflicts • Local stores and businesses are the dominant type of commercial development which support the overall rural character of the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some dilapidated buildings, auto salvage yards, and poorly maintained properties detract from the natural beauty and aesthetics of the area • Inconsistent signage and lack of access management along Route 18 creates poor aesthetics along the transportation corridor • There is inconsistency between zoning districts, permitted uses, and densities between the municipal ordinances • Lack of coordinated planning among the municipalities has resulted in scattered and inconsistent land use patterns throughout the area • Sidewalks or pedestrian paths are generally lacking in some medium density residential areas • Development is restricted in many areas due to steeply sloped land (<25%), wetlands, floodplains, and poor soil conditions

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS	
Strengths/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Farming and agricultural pursuits are an important contributor to the local economy, including the sale of local produce and goods within the area ▪ There is a significant industrial base in Potter Township that include regional employers (BASF, ZINC Corp, PGT Trucking, NOVA Chemicals) ▪ The Route 18 corridor is a good location for businesses and industries due to proximity to major transportation corridors ▪ Other major regional employers that are considered an asset include USAIR and the Pittsburgh International Airport, health care facilities, and the First Energy plant in Shippingport ▪ The unemployment rate in Potter and Raccoon Townships are very low compared to the county and state ▪ The area has a lot of potential for recreational and tourism businesses ▪ The area is well-situated between major cities in Pennsylvania and Ohio to act as a regional warehousing and distribution center ▪ Home-based businesses are an alternative form of local employment ▪ Riverfront has potential for both recreation and the transport of goods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The farming profession is threatened by increasing costs and competitiveness, and decreasing interest from young people ▪ Independence, Greene, and Raccoon Townships do not have a significant business or industry presence to support the municipal tax base – economic development is needed to continue providing high quality public services ▪ Greene Township has a high unemployment rate (6.2%) and Independence Township’s rate of unemployment just exceeds the county and state ▪ The area lacks public water and infrastructure to support business and industrial development – some areas report annual water shortages ▪ There is a need for more supporting businesses (shops, hotels, campgrounds, etc.) to make tourism viable in the area ▪ Need for more local restaurants to serve employers of local businesses and industries

AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT, and NATURAL RESOURCES

Strengths/Opportunities

- Agricultural legacy and rural character of the area is valued highly by residents
- 13,951 acres of farmland is in Agricultural Security Areas (ASA) in Greene, Independence, and Raccoon Townships
- Family farms, dairy farms, and hobby farms contribute to the rural character of the area and provide local goods
- Open space, agricultural lands, streams, and hillsides contribute to the scenic beauty of the area
- People are attracted to the area for the open space, rural character, and environmental amenities
- Environmental features including mature forests, wetlands, floodplains, rivers, and streams serve important ecological functions
- Specific PA DEP water quality criteria have been set for 15 streams and rivers in the area
- Service Creek is one of only two High Quality Waters in Beaver County
- Many streams and creeks are buffered by forested areas
- The Beaver County Natural Heritage Inventory identifies 10 areas of unique environmental significance
- High potential for greenway development to conserve open space
- Community support for conserving unique environmental areas and protecting rural/agricultural land

Weaknesses/Threats

- Farming as a viable profession and livelihood is threatened due to high volume workload, cost of labor, lack of interest, and lack of economic incentives
- Some farmland has been converted to residential development
- Public access to rivers and streams is limited
- There are several mining sites adjacent to the Ohio River in Greene Township
- Potential pollution and run off from heavy industry on the Ohio River can impact the Upper Ohio Watershed
- Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) is degrading water quality in the Raccoon Creek Watershed in Washington County.
- All-terrain vehicle use is degrading stream crossings and hillsides resulting in landslides
- “Little Blue” (Power Plant Lake) poses potential environmental and public health hazards

HISTORIC, CULTURAL, and RECREATIONAL ASSETS

Strengths/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Several historic sites in the area including historic villages, churches, buildings, and navigational structures along the Ohio River ▪ Municipalities value the cultural , historic, and agricultural heritage of the area ▪ The Southside Historic Village Association is working to acquire and re-create an historic vi llage at the fairgrounds – the village serves as an educational resource for the community ▪ Greene Township supports the Southside Historic Village Association in their preservation efforts ▪ Churches represent the history and culture of the area, and enhance the sense of community and identity for residents. The Service United Presbyterian Church is the site of the first theological seminary west of the Alleghenies ▪ Variety of park and recreational facilities including regional parks, community parks, fairgrounds, and neighborhood parks ▪ Potential for greenways and trails in the region, especially along the Ohio River ▪ Opportunities to connect cultural and historic sites with greenways/trails ▪ Independence and Raccoon Townships completed Park Master Plans for community parks to improve the park facilities ▪ Raccoon Creek State Park , the Wildflower Reserve, and the State Game Lands offer both environmental and recreational benefits to the area ▪ School playgrounds and sports fields supplement parks in the area ▪ Potential for recreation and tourism along Raccoon Creek, the State Park, and the Ohio River ▪ Need to revisit canoe launches along Raccoon Creek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local preservation groups lack funding to carry out their mission ▪ Some historic sites and markers are on private property which limits public access ▪ Lack of local government policies, programs, and regulations to protect historic resources ▪ Park and recreational opportunities are limited in Potter Township ▪ All-terrain vehicle use is common throughout the area, but can have a negative impact on stream crossings and environmentally sensitive areas ▪ Limited access to the Ohio River for recreational pursuits ▪ Need for more recreational programs, activities, and centers for senior citizens and youth ▪ Limited greenway and trail development in the area ▪ Public access to the Ambridge Reservoir is limited for recreational pursuits ▪ The environmental and recreational amenities provided by Raccoon Creek State Park could be compromised by nearby development ▪ Raccoon Creek State Park is not used by local residents as much as by people from other parts of s outhwestern PA

TRANSPORTATION and INFRASTRUCTURE	
Strengths/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of public water and sewer infrastructure is a limitation to high density and greater rates of development in the area, which helps maintain the rural character • Some public water service is provided in Raccoon and Potter Townships by the Aliquippa and Center Township Municipal Authorities • There is a desire for joint cooperation of the municipalities to address water and sewer issues on a regional level • The Ambridge Reservoir is located in the planning area • No current traffic congestion problems • Anticipated traffic demand does not appear to require roadway widening • Most roadways are adequately maintained • Close proximity and access to the Pittsburgh International Airport, and City of Pittsburgh • Close proximity to the Beaver Valley Expressway (travels north-south on the edge of the planning area) and access to Route 60 from Potter Township • Ohio River offers opportunities for alternative modes of transport • PennDOT is straightening Route 30 to improve roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of water for the South Side School district is a issue – the school district periodically ships in water to meet its demand and there is not an adequate water resource to protect the school complex in case of fire • Poorly drained soils and permitting requirements for on-lot wastewater systems is requiring higher cost alternatives to traditional septic systems • The expansion of public sewer from adjacent municipalities is cost prohibitive given the density of existing development • Malfunctioning on-lot systems and contaminated wells are costly to repair and negatively impact the environment • The lack of water and sewer infrastructure prohibits economic development opportunities • The Ambridge Reservoir is near capacity and is not a viable public water source for the area – the Ambridge Water Authority is seeking new sources of water to support its customers • Public utility right-of-ways cut through the municipalities in an uncoordinated fashion • Several intersections with perceived safety problems such as Route 168/Route 30, Route 18/Green Garden Road, and Route 18/Route 151 • Lack of local or commuter public transit service • Little to no existence of sidewalks /pedestrian facilities • Temporary bridge in Hopewell Township providing access to Raccoon Township via Green Garden Road inadequate for truck traffic and inadequate sight distance • Raccoon Creek Road (Potter Township) is in need of immediate attention to fix falling guard rails and road damage due to mudslides • PennDOT straightening of Route 30 may cause increased vehicle speeding

PUBLIC SERVICES and GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The area has high quality school districts – Center Area School District, Hopewell Areas School District, and South Side School District ▪ Penn State – Beaver and the Community College of Beaver County are located in close proximity to the planning area ▪ Raccoon, Independence, and Potter Townships have local or contracted police service that provides 24-hour police coverage ▪ The volunteer fire departments (VFD) operate in an environment of mutual aid and cooperation ▪ All the VFD’s are members of the Southwestern Tanker Association, which ensures that an adequate number of tanker trucks respond to calls ▪ The Potter Township Volunteer Fire Department is building a new facility ▪ The Independence Township VFD provides Quick Response Service (QRS) ▪ The municipal governments are viewed as a strength to the communities ▪ Major hospital facilities are within close proximity to the area ▪ EMS service is provided by Medic Rescue to Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships ▪ The four local governments currently cooperate in the areas of road maintenance, joint purchasing, recycling, comprehensive planning, recreation planning, and the Uniform Construction Code implementation ▪ The municipalities have active planning commissions and recreation boards ▪ There is positive communication between the municipal governments, villages/boroughs, and major businesses in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public library is lacking in the planning area – the closest public libraries are located in Beaver and Midland ▪ Lack of local police service is perceived as an issue in Greene Township ▪ Additional resources are needed to support police, fire, and EMS services ▪ All the VFD’s are having increasing difficulty recruiting new members and fundraising to cover operations/ maintenance expenses ▪ The Hookstown Fire Department lacks a sufficient water source to protect the South Side School District in event of a fire ▪ Local or community health care facilities are lacking in the area



Existing Land Use

Rural Views, Independence Township

The existing land use assessment provides general information on existing land use patterns in the planning area. The assessment also summarizes land use trends and characterizes development types and styles for each municipality and the planning area.

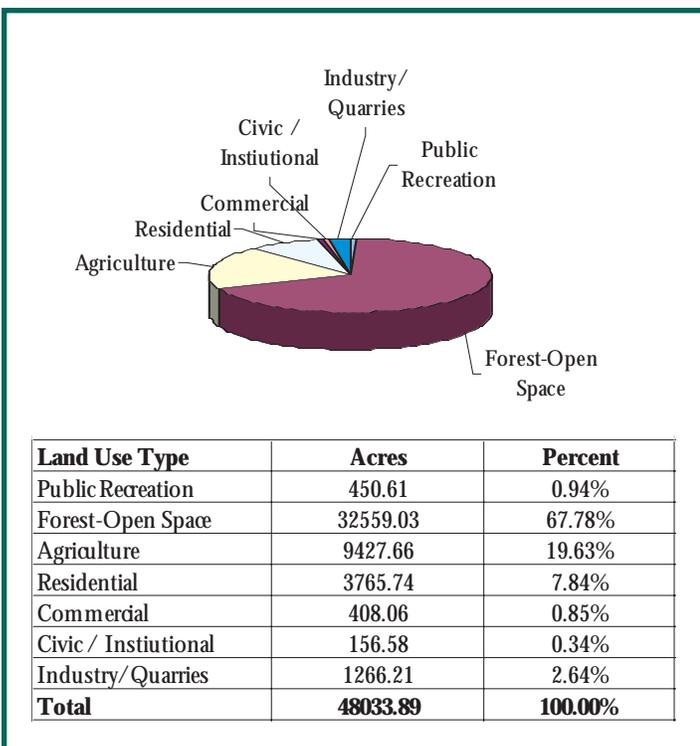
The Existing Land Use Map on page 19 should be referenced when reviewing this section. Information used to compile the existing land use assessment is based on Geographic Information System (GIS) data from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation and a field view of the study area to verify the data.

Overview of the Planning Area

A two-day field view was conducted of the region to survey the land use, environmental features, and transportation routes in the planning area. The existing land use analysis examines development trends and characterizes the type of development that exists in the planning area and each municipality. Land use types include residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, institutional, and forestland/open space. It is important to view land use on an area-wide level, as well as for each individual municipality, to understand development trends and identify future growth and conservation areas. Finally, land use should be examined within the context of the other plan elements, such as transportation and economic development, to identify both negative and positive impacts of varying types of land use in a community.

Located in southwestern Beaver County, the planning area includes Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships and encompasses approximately 75 square miles. Potter Township is the smallest municipality with an area of 6.73 square miles. Greene Township is the largest municipality with an area of 26.27 square miles. The northern border of the planning area is defined by the Ohio River, which fronts both Greene and Potter Townships. Raccoon Creek travels through the eastern part of the planning area. The major roadways are Route 60 (Beaver Valley Expressway), Route 30, Route 151, Route 168, and Route 18.

Figure 1: Existing Land Use by Type





Rural Calhoon Road, Raccoon Township

The townships are rural in nature and low density residential development is the dominant development type in the area. The lack of public sewer service throughout the area and limited water service in Potter and Raccoon Township, has restricted residential densities to at least two acres per dwelling unit. Residential areas are surrounded by open space and farmland.

Commercial and industrial development in the planning area is concentrated along the Route 18 (Frankfort Road) corridor in Potter Township. There are a few scattered industrial and mining sites in Greene and Raccoon Townships. Pockets of commercial

development are located at major roadway intersections throughout the area. They include the intersection of Route 169 and Route 30 in Greene Township, the intersection of Route 18 and Green Garden Road in Raccoon Township, and along Route 151 in Independence Township.

All four municipalities have a community park. In addition to the municipal park, Greene Township owns a farm site that is used for community events and storage. Other recreational areas include the State Game Land #189 and Raccoon Creek State Park Wildflower Reserve in Independence Township. All-terrain vehicle use is common in non-developed portions of the planning area.

Community facilities in the planning area include schools associated with the South Side and Hopewell Area School Districts, churches, municipal buildings, and volunteer fire stations, among others.

Greene Township

Greene Township occupies 26.27 square miles of land in southwestern Beaver County. It borders Hanover Township to the south, Raccoon Township to the east, Shippingport to the northeast, and Hancock County, West Virginia to the west. Midland, Ohioville, and Glasgow are located across the Ohio River from Greene Township to the north. Georgetown and Hookstown Boroughs are embedded within the borders of Greene Township.

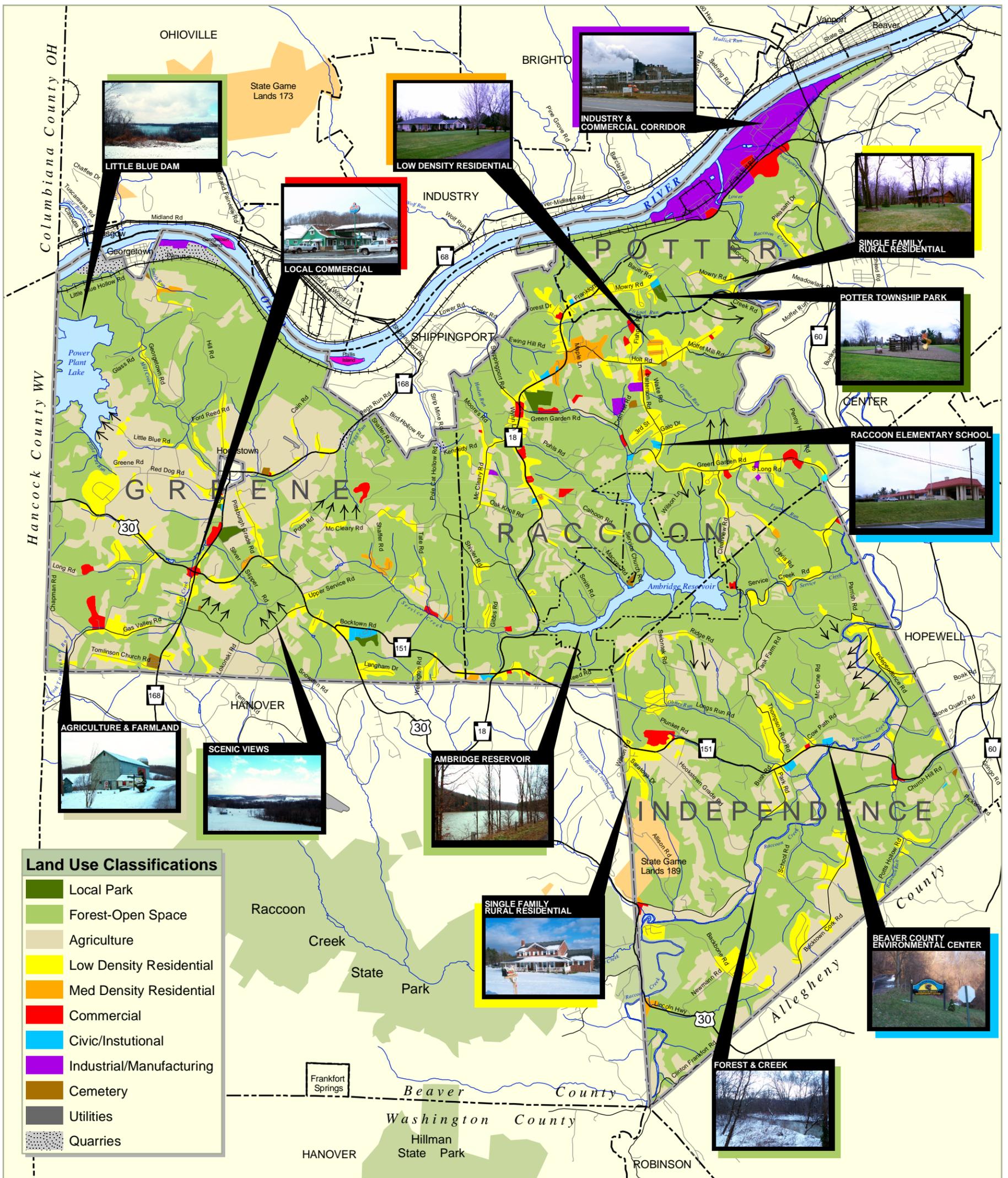
Greene Township is a rural community dominated by agricultural and residential land uses. A small concentration of small businesses is located at the intersection of Route 168 and Route 30. There are also several active and inactive mining and industrial sites. The township is heavily forested in some areas with scenic views from the hillsides and in the stream valleys.

The major transportation routes in Greene Township are Route 30, Route 151, and Route 168. Route 30, historically known as the Old Lincoln Highway, runs in an east/west direction. It provides access to Hancock County, West Virginia traveling west and

Hanover Township traveling to the southeast. Route 168 runs in a north/south direction from Hanover Township to Hookstown, and then veers northeast toward Shippingport. Route 151, an east/west corridor, enters Greene Township in the southeastern corner of the township and terminates at Route 30.



Laughlin's Corner: Intersection of Route 30 and Route 168, Greene Township



Land Use Classifications

- Local Park
- Forest-Open Space
- Agriculture
- Low Density Residential
- Med Density Residential
- Commercial
- Civic/Instutional
- Industrial/Manufacturing
- Cemetery
- Utilities
- Quarries

Legend

- US/State Route
- Legis Route
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Airport
- State Park
- State Game Land
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife
- Forest Reserve
- Scenic Views

Map Notes

Information used to produce this map was provided by Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation.
 Additional sources include:
 State managed lands--Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access
 Pashek Associates makes no claims to the accuracy of this data.
 Existing land use digitized from an analysis of USGS orthophotos, land use coverages provided by Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation, and a field analysis conducted by Pashek Associates in December 2003.
 Projection: State Plane NAD 1983, Units=feet
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Area of Detail



EXISTING LAND USE



Wooded Area Along Shaffer Road, Greene Township

Environmental Features

The topography of Greene Township ranges from relatively flat, agricultural lands to hilly and forested terrain. Steep slopes and scenic views are found along Hill Road, Upper Service Road, and McCleary Road, which is the highest point in Greene Township.

The Ohio River borders Greene Township to the north. Mining areas are located along the river on both sides of Georgetown Borough in Greene Township and along Polecat Hollow Road.

Land along the riverfront becomes more natural and forested traveling east along Dam Road toward Shippingport. There are currently no trails or greenways located along the river. Georgetown Island, located on the Ohio River near Greene Township, is a protected bird sanctuary.

The Little Blue Run Dam is an earthen dam and 800-acre reservoir located in the northwestern corner of the township. The reservoir and dam, the largest earthen dam east of the Mississippi, are owned and managed by First Energy. The reservoir is used to dispose of scrubbing chemicals and slurry from First Energy's coal-fired plant in Shippingport. The slurry and waste is piped into the reservoir from the Shippingport Plant. The area around the reservoir and dam is mostly forested and access to the reservoir is restricted.

Agriculture is common throughout the township, but is more prevalent in the western part of the township. Farms are located along Hill Road, McCleary Road, Little Blue Road, Red Dog Road, Route 30, Route 168, Gas Valley Road, Tomlinson Church Road, Chapman Road, Upper Service Road, and Tate Road. Agricultural activities range in type and scale of operation. There are dairy farms, livestock farming, cropland, and smaller hobby farms with horses, llamas, and emus.

Residential Land Uses

Residential areas in Greene Township consist of low density, single family homes scattered throughout the township. There are several newer housing developments with larger, single family homes located along Tomlinson Church Road, Mill Creek Road, Wellington Road, and Lokomski Road. Residential densities vary from low density rural residential to suburban residential developments with two-acre lot sizes. There is a mix of older and newer homes. Mobile homes are also a common type of housing found throughout the township. There are four mobile home parks in the township and a nursing home.



House on Route 151, Greene Township

Industrial Uses

Industry is not a dominant land use in Greene Township. However, several active and inactive industrial and mining sites are located along the Ohio River on the Georgetown border. The active sand and gravel plant is located along Dam Road and the inactive plant is located on Little Blue Hollow Road, which is now a private road. In addition, an active coal mine is located on Pole Cat Hollow Road just before the Shippingport border. An inactive coal mining site is located on Route 168, which is undergoing remediation by a local industry. There are also three junk yards located in the southern part of the township.



Business Located at Laughlin's Corner, Greene Township

Commercial Uses

There is limited commercial development in Greene Township. Several stores and businesses are located at the intersection of Route 168 and Route 30. They include a restaurant and gas station, a tax office/insurance agency, motorcycle repair shop, used car lot, beauty salon, and a convenience store. Inspection stations in auto shops are located in various parts of the township, and there are a number of home based businesses.

Park and Recreation Uses

There are several recreational facilities in Greene Township. The American Legion Hall is located on Route 158. The Hookstown Grange and the Historic Village are also located on Route 168, as is the Mill Creek Municipal Park. The South Side School District complex also includes sports and recreation fields, and the Fun Zone, a community recreation facility.

The Greenefields Municipal Complex includes the North Mile Trail and a facility for community events, such as the annual Greene Township Community Days. There are 30 acres reserved for open space and future recreation facilities on the Municipal Complex. The Ohio River is a potential recreational asset for the township. Recreational trails along the Ohio River are nonexistent. However, a re-enactment of the Louis and Clark expedition was staged along the Ohio River in 2003.

Public Buildings/Uses

The Greene Township Municipal Building is located on Route 168 just outside of Hookstown. The Hookstown Volunteer Fire Department is located on Silver Slipper Road and Route 168. The South Side School District Complex (including the elementary, junior high school, and high school) lies entirely within Greene Township on Route 151.



Greene Township Municipal Building

The township owns two large properties. The Greenefields Municipal Complex, a 95-acre site, is used for storage of municipal equipment and community events. The township also owns a 165-acre undeveloped site between Hill Road and the Ohio River. Accessibility to the site is limited and it is not open to public use at this time. However, the township has considered developing a horseback riding trail on the site.

Historic/Cultural Sites

The South Side Historic Village Association has re-created a historic village, which is located on the Hookstown Fairgrounds. The village includes an original one-room schoolhouse and a blacksmith shop. There are many churches located throughout the township, including Tomlinson Run Church and Mill Creek Church.



South Side Historic Village Blacksmith Shop,
Greene Township

Independence Township

Independence Township, encompassing 23.27 square miles, is located in the southeastern corner of Beaver County. It borders Raccoon Township to the north, Hanover Township to the west, Hopewell Township (Beaver County) to the east, and Findlay Township (Allegheny County) to the south.

The township is primarily rural with rolling hills, scenic vistas, and farms located along rural roads. Newer suburban style residential development is evident in areas off Route 151. Route 151 is the major east/west transportation corridor in the township.



Farm on Bocktown Road, Independence Township

Environmental Features

Significant natural areas and environmental features in Independence Township include the State Game Lands 189, Raccoon Creek State Park Wildflower Reserve, Beaver County Conservation Area, and the Independence Marsh Wetlands. Independence Township contains large areas of forested land, stream valleys, and steep slope throughout the township. The Pennsylvania State Game Land #189 is located along the western edge of the township. Just south of the game lands is the eastern

portion of Raccoon Creek State Park and wildflower reserve. Rocky cliffs run along Longs Run Road, which is a scenic rural roadway corridor. The Beaver County Conservation Area and Independence Marsh Wetlands are located between Route 151 and Cow Path Road. Agricultural land and farms are scattered throughout the township. Farms are characteristic of hobby farms with livestock such as sheep, ewes, and cows. Dairy farming is also prominent.

Residential Land Uses

Residential areas in Independence Township consist of rural, low density housing and pockets of newer, suburban housing developments located along Thompson Run Road, Wilson Road, Saratoga Road, and Backbone Road. The majority of homes are single family, detached dwellings, but some mobile home parks are located in the township as well. Log cabins are found in the wooded areas in the township and add to the rural character of the area. Residential densities vary from very low density rural residential to suburban residential developments with two-acre lot sizes. Due to the rural nature of the township, street amenities such as sidewalks, street trees, special signage, or lanterns are not evident.



Residential Development on Saratoga Road, Independence Township

Industrial Uses

There are no significant industrial or manufacturing sites in Independence Township. There are a few truck yards and small business located along Route 151.

Commercial Uses

Commercial businesses are scattered along Route 151 in Independence Township. Local businesses include Schiefelbein's Farmers Market, Aldo's Frozen Foods, Independence Deli, convenience stores, and Ameriga's.



Schiefelbein's Farm Market on Route 151, Independence Township

Park and Recreation Uses

The most significant passive recreational use is Raccoon Creek State Park, which is located in the southwestern portion of the township. The park's wildflower reserve is located in Independence Township. Other recreational uses include the Independence Township Community Park located near Independence Elementary School. There are also several special use recreation facilities in the township.

Public Buildings/Uses

Public buildings include the Independence Elementary School, the municipal building, and the fire department, all located in a cluster at the intersection of Route 151 and School Road.



Independence Municipal Building and Elementary School

Cultural/Historic Sites

There is one church in the township, New Bethlehem Church, which is located on New Bethlehem Church Road. Mount Olivet Church and Cemetery is located in Hanover Township near the Independence Township municipal border.

Potter Township

Potter Township is located in south-central Beaver County on the south side of the Ohio River. It is the smallest of the townships in the planning area with 6.73 square miles. It also has the smallest population of the four municipalities with just 580 people. Potter Township is bordered by Raccoon Township to the south, Shippingport Borough to the west, and Center Township to the east. Industry Borough and Beaver Borough are located across the Ohio River to the north of Potter Township.

Potter Township is a semi-rural community characterized by industrial and residential land uses. The main transportation corridor in Potter Township is Frankfort Road (Route 18) which runs parallel to the Ohio River before turning south into Raccoon Township. An active railroad runs along the riverfront area. The Montgomery Locks and Dam are also located on the Ohio River between Potter Township and Industry Borough. It is one of six locks and dam located along the Ohio River from the confluence in Pittsburgh to the Ohio state line. Managed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the primary purpose of Montgomery Locks and Dam is to accommodate the navigational needs of commercial vessels. Forested land surrounds the Montgomery Locks and Dam on the Potter riverfront. A local road provides access to the riverfront area leading to Montgomery Locks and Dam.



Route 18 Corridor, Potter Township

Environmental Features

The land area bordering the Ohio River in Potter Township is relatively flat, with the exception of the northeastern tip where slopes exceed 25% in the Monaca Bluffs area. The remainder of the township contains a mix of steep slopes, hillsides, and stream valleys. Forested land is dominant throughout the non-developed parts of the township. Woodlands surround Lower Raccoon Creek to the south of Frankfort road and Squirrel Run in the western part of the township. Parts of Frankfort Road are wooded and steeply sloped, as well as the portion of Mowry Road that links with Frankfort Road. Bauer Road is also heavily forested. The Mowry Road loop near Lower Raccoon Creek appears to be used by four-runners and all-terrain vehicles.



Log Home on Mowry Road, Potter Township

Residential Land Uses

Residential areas are located along Pleasant Drive, Mowry Road, and the adjoining side streets. Homes are also located along the portion of Frankfort Road entering into Raccoon Township. The majority of homes in Potter Township are single family detached units, but mobiles are also common. The neighborhoods are spread out and rural to suburban in nature with residential densities ranging from 1-2 units per acre or more. Housing quality and age varies and properties are generally well-maintained. There are a few

dilapidated homes located on Mowry Road. In addition, there are several log homes in the township which enhance the quality of the neighborhoods and provide character. Setbacks are consistent on some roads, but street amenities such as sidewalks, street trees, and street lighting are lacking.

Industrial Uses

Potter Township is the most industrial of all the municipalities in the planning area. The riverfront area in Potter is occupied by several industries, including Nova Chemicals, BASF Corporation, Zinc Corporation, VersiTech, and Beaver Cogeneration. All of the industrial complexes are accessible from Frankfort Road. The riverfront becomes less industrialized traveling from east to west along Frankfort Road.



Industry along Route 18, Potter Township

Commercial Uses

A number of small- to medium-sized businesses and restaurants are located on Frankfort Road between Mowry Road and Pleasant Drive.

Parks and Recreation

The Potter Township Park is adjacent to the municipal building on Mowry Street. The park has playground equipment and a basketball court. The Ohio River is a major asset for the township not currently used for recreation. Limitations include limited access to the riverfront area, in addition to rail and industrial uses. The township is currently assessing the feasibility of a recreational trail along the river.



Potter Township Park

Public Buildings/Uses

The Potter Township Municipal Building is located on Mowry Road, an otherwise residential street. The township is also in the process of building a new volunteer fire station near the municipal building on Mowry.

Historic/Cultural Sites

The Merrill Lock #6 is a historic canal dock located along Route 68, across from Potter Township in Industry Borough.

Raccoon Township

Raccoon Township, encompassing 19.27 square miles, is located in south-central Beaver County. It is bordered by Potter Township to the north, Center Township to the east, Greene Township to the west, and Hanover and Independence Townships to the south.

The township is rural in nature with open space, agricultural lands, and pockets of residential homes and commercial businesses. The northern part of the township contains low density residential development, while the southern portion contains more forestland and farms. Wooded rolling hills and scenic views are prominent throughout the township. The Route 18 corridor is the primary north/south route, which traverses through the western side of the township. Green Garden Road and Route 151 are main east/west corridors in the township. Many rural, windy gravel roads exist within the township with scattered farms. Some signs on the rural roads state: "Travel at Your Own Risk" and "No Winter Maintenance."

Environmental Features

The topography of Raccoon Township is characterized by rolling hills, stream valleys, and pockets of flat agricultural lands. Agricultural activities revolve around local family and hobby farms. There are dairy farms, tree farms, orchards, and hobby farms in the area. A significant environmental feature is the Ambridge Reservoir, located in the southern portion of the township and surrounded by the Ambridge Reserve Service Creek Forest Reserve. The forested land in the reserve serves as a natural buffer to adjacent uses and enhances to the scenic beauty of the area.

Steep slopes, stream corridors, and floodplains are constraints to future development, yet these environmental features add to its pristine beauty. In addition, the stream corridors provide potential pathways for future greenway corridors in the area.



Raccoon Township Farm

Residential Land Uses

Low density residential development is concentrated in the northern portion of the township, specifically along Holt Road, Route 18, and Maple Lane. Lot size varies throughout the township from rural residential densities to suburban residential densities with two-acre lot sizes. Homes are predominantly single family, detached dwellings, but pockets of mobile homes exist as well. Setbacks are consistent on some roads, but street amenities such as sidewalks, street trees, and street lighting are lacking. Property and yard maintenance appears to be an issue in parts of the



Housing on Holt Road, Raccoon Township

township. Auto salvage yards and other home-based businesses such as barbershops are visible, as well as signage, which advertises the business. There does not appear to be consistent signage or property maintenance standards.

Industrial Uses

There are no major industrial or manufacturing centers in the area. Small warehousing/storage facilities and light manufacturing businesses are scattered throughout the township. A few industrial sites are located on Green Garden Road and Crail Hill Road.



Kipin Industries, Raccoon Township

Commercial Uses

The majority of small-scale commercial businesses are located along the Route 18 corridor and Green Garden Road, but businesses are also scattered throughout the township. Types of commercial businesses include local restaurants, barbershops, corner stores, gas stations, auto repair shops, and auto salvage yards. Some of the local farms also sell their products from their property such as Janoski's Orchard and Allison's Christmas Tree Farm. Home-based businesses are also evident in the township, such as barbershops and auto yards.



Local Commercial, Raccoon Township

Parks and Recreation Uses

Recreational assets within Raccoon Township include the Raccoon Township Municipal Park located on Green Garden Road. Raccoon Township has developed a park master plan to update the park facilities based on the needs of the residents in the area. The park has five fields, used for baseball, football, and t-ball. It also has a concession stand, three pavilions, and a sand volleyball court.

Public Buildings/Uses

Public buildings in the township include the Raccoon Municipal Building and the Raccoon Elementary School. The volunteer fire department has two stations. The first is located on Patterson Road and the second is adjacent to the municipal building.

Cultural/ Historic Sites

Churches are the most common historic and cultural asset found in the township. They include Community Bible Church, Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church, Service United Presbyterian Church and Cemetery, and Christian Hill Baptist Church. Service United Presbyterian Church and Cemetery is also a historic site as the first theological seminary west of the Alleghenies.



Potter Township Municipal Building

Socio-Economic and Housing Characteristics

The purpose of this section is to provide a demographic profile of the area. This analysis is based on United States Census data from 1990 to 2000. Comparisons are made to demographic trends in the county and adjacent municipalities. The demographic analysis aids in understanding the characteristics of the community in terms of population, education, housing conditions, and the distribution of income.

This section summarizes existing conditions and trends for the following:

- Population
- Education
- Housing
- Income and Poverty

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Total Population

Planning Area (Table 1-1)

- In 2000, the total population in the area encompassing Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships was 9,484. From 1990 to 2000, the population of the planning area increased by 4.1%, with a total population of 9,484 in 2000.

- Raccoon Township has the largest population of the four municipalities with 3,397 people reported in 2000. Raccoon is followed by Independence Township with 2,802 people, Greene Township with 2,705 people and Potter Township with 580 people.

- Independence Township's population growth outpaced the other four municipalities, increasing by 9.3% from 1990 to 2000. Potter Township's population increased by 32 people, a 6.2% increase over the 1990 population of 546 and Greene Township experienced a 5.1% increase in population over the ten-year period. Raccoon Township was the only municipality of the four that decreased in population from 1990 to 2000, with a 0.8% decline.

Table 1-1. Total Population

Municipality	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Greene	2,573	2,705	5.1%
Independence	2,563	2,802	9.3%
Potter	546	580	6.2%
Raccoon	3,426	3,397	-0.8%
Total	9,108	9,484	4.1%
County			
Beaver County	186,093	181,412	-2.5%

Source: United States Census

- Positive population growth trends in the region contradict the negative population trends witnessed on the county level. The population of Beaver County decreased by 2.5% from 1990 to 2000, whereas the population of the planning region increased by 4.1%.

Surrounding Municipalities (Table 1-2)

- Of the 13 municipalities that border the planning area, only four experienced positive growth rates in population from 1990 to 2000. They included Center Township, Hanover Township, Shippingport Borough, and Findlay Township in Allegheny County.
- Overall, the river towns adjacent to the planning area along the Ohio River experienced declines in population from 1990 to 2000, with the exception of Shippingport. Beaver Borough lost the greatest number of people with a decrease of approximately 250 people in the 10-year period. The number of people in Glasgow Borough decreased to 74, a 14.9% decrease over the 1990 population.
- From 1990 to 2000, the population of Hancock County, WV, to the west of the planning area, decreased by 7.3%.

Table 1-2. Total Population - Surrounding Municipalities

Municipality	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Beaver Borough, Beaver Co.	5,028	4,775	-5.0%
Center Township, Beaver Co.	10,742	11,492	7.0%
Georgetown Borough, Beaver Co.	194	182	-6.2%
Glasgow Borough, Beaver Co.	74	63	-14.9%
Hanover Township, Beaver Co.	3,470	3,529	1.7%
Hookstown Borough, Beaver Co.	169	152	-10.1%
Hopewell Township, Beaver Co.	13,274	13,254	-0.2%
Industry Borough, Beaver Co.	2,124	1,921	-9.6%
Midland Borough, Beaver Co.	3,321	3,137	-5.5%
Ohioville Borough, Beaver Co.	3,865	3,759	-2.7%
Shippingport Borough, Beaver Co.	227	237	4.4%
Findlay, Allegheny Co.	4,500	5,145	14.3%
Hancock County, WV	35,233	32,667	-7.3%

Source: United States Census

Age Distribution of the Population (Table 1-3 & 1-4)

- In 2000, people under the age of 18 made up 27.7% of the population in the planning area, while 63.4% of the population was 18-64 years of age, and 8.9% of the population was over the age of 65.
- The population of the planning area is younger and has a smaller proportion of senior citizens compared to the age distribution of the Beaver County population in 2000. In Beaver County, 22.6% of the population was under the age of 18, compared to 27.7% in the planning area, and 18.4% of the Beaver County population was over the age of 65 compared to 8.9% in the planning area.
- Of the four municipalities, Greene and Independence Townships had the greatest proportion of young people under the age of 18, making-up 29.4% and 27.6% of the total population, respectively. Potter Township had the smallest percent of people under the age of 18, with this age group making up 23.3% of the population.
- In both Greene and Potter Townships 7.9% of the population is 65 years and older, and 9.7% of the Independence Township population and 9.3% of the Raccoon Township population is 65 years and older.

- Overall, the population of people age 18 to 64 saw the greatest increase from 1990 to 2000 with a 6.8% increase. The population of people under the age of 18 declined by 0.9% in the planning area, and the population of people over the age of 65 increased in 1.9%.
- However, when examined for each municipality the trends for each age group vary among the four municipalities. For instance, the number of people under the age of 18 actually increased slightly in Greene, Independence, and Potter Townships, but decreased in Raccoon Township by 5.7%. The number of people ages 18-64 years increased in every township in the planning area. The number of people in this age group increased by 11.8% in Independence, but only 1.5% in Raccoon. The population of people ages 65 and over decreased in every municipality except Independence, which saw a 15.3% increase over the 1990 population.
- In Beaver County, the over 65 population increased by 6.0% from 1990 to 2000, while the under 18 population and the 18-65 age group both declined, by 5.4% and 3.8% respectively.

Table 1-3. Population Age Distribution (2000)

Municipality	<18 Years	% of Total	18-64 Years	% of Total	>65 Years	% of Total
Greene	795	29.4%	1,696	62.7%	214	7.9%
Independence	774	27.6%	1,757	62.7%	271	9.7%
Potter	135	23.3%	399	68.8%	46	7.9%
Raccoon	921	27.1%	2,159	63.6%	317	9.3%
Total	2,625	27.7%	6,011	63.4%	848	8.9%
County						
Beaver County	41,062	22.6%	106,926	58.9%	33,424	18.4%

Source: United States Census

Table 1-4. Population Trends in Age Distribution

Municipality	< 18 years			18 yrs - 64 yrs			> 65 years		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Greene	786	795	1.1%	1,568	1,696	8.2%	219	214	-2.3%
Independence	757	774	2.2%	1,571	1,757	11.8%	235	271	15.3%
Potter	130	135	3.8%	360	399	10.8%	56	46	-17.9%
Raccoon	977	921	-5.7%	2,127	2,159	1.5%	322	317	-1.6%
Total	2,650	2,625	-0.9%	5,626	6,011	6.8%	832	848	1.9%
County									
Beaver County	43,422	41,062	-5.4%	111,151	106,926	-3.8%	31,520	33,424	6.0%

Source: United States Census

Household Trends (Table 1-5 & 1-6)

- From 1990 to 2000, the total number of households in the planning area increased from 3,096 to 3,350. However, the average household size decreased at the same time from 2.9 persons/household in 1990 to 2.8 in 2000, which partially accounts for the increase in the number of households.
- The growth rate of households in the planning area exceeded that of the County. The number of household in Beaver County grew by 0.8%, while households in the planning area grew by 8.2% from 1990 to 2000.
- In 2000, the average household size for the county (2.44 persons per dwelling) was lower than that for the planning area (2.8 persons per dwelling) and the four municipalities in the planning area.
- In 2000, Raccoon Township had the greatest number of households of the four municipalities (1,186 households), but experienced the slowest rate of growth in households from 1990 to 2000, increasing by just 3.5%.

- Potter Township has the fewest number of households with just 210 households, but this number grew by 8.8% from 1990 to 2000.
- Independence Township experienced the greatest rate of growth in households from 1990 to 2000, with the number of households increasing by 12.9%. From 1990 to 2000, the number of households in Greene Township increased by 9.5%.
- In 2000, family households accounted for 79.9% of the households in the planning area and non-family households accounted for 20.1% of the total. Beaver County has a lower proportion of family to non-family households than the planning area, with 69.6% family households and 30.4% non-family households.

Table 1-5. Household Trends, 2000

Municipality	Total Households 1990	Avg Household Size 1990	Total Households 2000	Avg Household Size 2000	% Change in Households
Greene	865	2.94	947	2.84	9.5%
Independence	892	2.87	1,007	2.78	12.9%
Potter	193	2.8	210	2.76	8.8%
Raccoon	1,146	2.99	1,186	2.82	3.5%
Total	3,096	2.9	3,350	2.80	8.2%
County					
Beaver County	71,939	2.54	72,576	2.44	0.9%

Source: United States Census

Table 1-6. Type of Household, 2000

Municipality	Family Households		Non-Family Households	
	#	% of total	#	% of total
Greene	754	79.6%	193	20.4%
Independence	785	78.0%	222	22.0%
Potter	168	80.0%	42	20.0%
Raccoon	970	81.8%	216	18.2%
Total	2,677	79.9%	673	20.1%
County				
Beaver County	50,521	69.6	22,055	30.4

Source: United States Census

Population Race Distribution (Table 1-7)

- The racial make-up of the planning area is predominantly white (98.3% of the population). Non-white persons of other racial backgrounds make-up less than 2% of the population in the planning area. This racial breakdown is reflected throughout the four municipalities in the planning area.
- Beaver County has slightly more racial diversity than what is found in the planning area with 92.5% of the population white, 6.0% black, and the remaining 2.5% distributed throughout other non-white races.

Table 1-7. Population Race Distribution (%)

Municipality	% White	% Black or African American	% American Indian	% Asian	% Two or more Races	% Hispanic Origin (can be any race)
Greene	98.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	1.2%	0.8%
Independence	97.8%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	1.7%	0.6%
Potter	99.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
Raccoon	98.7%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	0.7%
Total	98.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.0%	1.1%	0.7%
County						
Beaver County	92.5%	6.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.9%	0.7%

Source: United States Census

Population Density (Table 1-8)

- In 2000, the population density (# of persons/square mile land area) for the planning region was 130.9 persons per square mile. This is well below the density of the Beaver County population of 417.8 people per square mile.
- The population density is highest in Raccoon Township with 108.1 people per square mile and lowest in Potter Township with 94.6 people per square mile.

Table 1-8. Population and Housing Density

Municipality	Population	Housing Units	Total Area (sq. miles)	Total Land Area (sq. miles)	Population Density (persons/sq mile)	Housing Density (units/sq mile)
Greene	2,705	1,002	26.27	24.9	108.6	40.2
Independence	2,802	1,069	23.27	22.87	122.5	46.7
Potter	580	222	6.73	6.13	94.6	36.2
Raccoon	3,397	1,227	19.27	18.53	183.3	66.2
Total	9,484	3,520	75.54	72.43	130.9	48.6
County						
Beaver County	181,412	77,765	443.9	434.21	417.8	179.1

Source: United States Census

EDUCATION CHARACTERISTICS

Educational Attainment (Table 1-9 &1-10)

Planning Area

- As of 2000, 15.1% of the population over 25 years of age in the planning area had not completed high school, while 84.9% had received at least a high school diploma or a higher degree, and 12.7% had received a bachelor's degree or higher.
- In Beaver County, 16.4% of the population over 25 years had not completed high school in 2000. This is a slightly higher percentage than what is found in the planning area. However, the county has a higher percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher compared to the planning area.

- As of 2000, Independence had 345 people, or 18.3% of the population over the age of 25, that had not completed high school. Of the four municipalities, Independence Township has the greatest number of people and the highest percent of the population over 25 that has not completed high school. Roughly 14% of the population of both Greene and Raccoon Townships has not completed high school and just 8.9% in Potter Township.
- In Raccoon Township, 16.2% of the population over 25 has completed a bachelor degree or higher. Raccoon Township has the greatest number of people of the four municipalities that have a college degree or higher.
- Trends (1990-2000) in educational attainment show that the population of the planning area is becoming increasingly better educated. The number of people over age 25 without a high school education decreased in all four municipalities, coupled with increases in the number of people with a high school diploma, bachelor's degree, or higher.
- Potter Township demonstrated the greatest rate of change in the number of people without a high school diploma, which decreased by 40%. The number of people with a high school diploma or higher increased by just over 30%, which outpaced the other municipalities. Independence Township showed the greatest change in the number of people with a college degree or higher, which increased by just over 82%.
- Improvements in educational attainment for the planning area outpaced changes on the county level, with the exception of the declining numbers of people over 25 with less than a high school diploma. This category decreased by nearly 35% for the County and just under 20% for the planning area.

Table 1-9. Educational Attainment, 2000 (persons 25 and older)

Municipality	Total population >25 years	Less than High School Diploma		High School Grad or Higher		Bachelor's Degree or Higher	
		Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
Greene	1,699	243	14.3%	1,456	85.7%	181	10.7%
Independence	1,879	345.0	18.3%	1,534	81.6%	226	12.0%
Potter	403	36.0	8.9%	367	91.1%	51	12.7%
Raccoon	2,257	320.0	14.2%	1,937	85.8%	336	16.2%
Total	6,238	944	15.1%	5,294	84.9%	794	12.7%
County							
Beaver County	126,933	20,823	16.4%	106,110	83.6%	20,051	15.8%

Source: United States Census

Table 1-10. Educational Attainment Trends

Municipality	Less than a High School Diploma			High School Diploma or Higher			Bachelors Degree or Higher		
	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Greene	301	243	-19.3%	1,297	1,456	12.3%	133	181	36.1%
Independence	406	345	-15.0%	1,234	1,534	24.3%	124	226	82.3%
Potter	60	36	-40.0%	281	367	30.6%	31	51	64.5%
Raccoon	405	320	-21.0%	1,796	1,937	7.9%	199	336	68.8%
Total	1,172	944	-19.5%	4,608	5,294	14.9%	487	794	63.0%
County									
Beaver County	31,885	20,823	-34.7%	95,162	106,110	11.5%	15,140	16,239	7.3%

Source: United States Census

Surrounding Municipalities (Table 1-11)

- Generally, the educational attainment of the municipalities surrounding the planning area is comparable to the four municipalities in the planning area. However, the educational attainment level does vary between the municipalities. Of the surrounding municipalities, Glasgow Borough, Hookstown Borough, and Shippingport Borough have the lowest levels of educational attainment, and Beaver Borough, Center Township, and Findlay Township have the highest levels of educational attainment.

Table 1-11. Educational Attainment in Adjacent Municipalities, 2000 (persons 25 and older)

Adjacent Municipalities	Total population >25 years	Less than High School Diploma		High School Grad or Higher		Bachelor's Degree or Higher	
		Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
Beaver Borough, Beaver Co.	3,555	350	9.8%	3,205	90.2%	1,269	35.7%
Center township, Beaver Co.	7,886	920	11.7%	6,966	88.3%	1,924	24.4%
Georgetown Borough, Beaver Co.	117	11	9.4%	106	90.6%	15	12.8%
Glasgow Borough, Beaver Co	54	15	27.8%	39	72.2%	0	0.0%
Hanover Township, Beaver Co.	2,342	340.0	14.5%	2,002	85.5%	329	14.0%
Hookstown Borough, Beaver Co.	123	38	30.9%	85	69.1%	2	1.6%
Hopewell Township, Beaver Co.	9,847	1,381	14.0%	8,466	86.0%	1,822	18.5%
Industry Borough, Beaver Co.	1,375	171	12.4%	1,204	87.6%	175	12.7%
Midland Borough, Beaver Co.	2,153	510	23.7%	1,643	76.3%	137	6.4%
Ohioville Borough, Beaver Co.	2,569	371	14.4%	2,198	85.6%	261	10.2%
Shippingport Borough, Beaver Co.	165	45	27.3%	120	72.7%	15	9.1%
Findlay, Allegheny Co.	3,514	432	12.3%	3,082	87.7%	725	20.6%
Hancock County, WV	23,502	4,022	17.1%	19,480	82.9%	2,708	11.5%

Source: United States Census

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Housing Value

Planning Area (Table 1-12)

- The median house value is significantly greater in the region when compared to Beaver County in both 1990 and 2000. The 1990 median house value in the region was \$62,575. The 1990 median house value in Beaver County was \$50,500. In 2000, the median house value for the planning area and the County was \$103,900 and \$85,000, respectively.
- Of the four municipalities in 2000, Independence Township had the highest median house value of \$112,700 and Raccoon the lowest at \$99,000. Potter Township had the highest median rent at \$592 and Independence the lowest at \$474.00.
- Greene and Potter Townships had the greatest increase in house values from 1990 to 2000, increasing by 84% and 76.7%, respectively.

Table 1-12. Trends in the Cost of Housing

Municipality	Median Rent (\$)			Median House Value (\$)		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Greene Township	\$364	\$513	40.9%	\$55,700	\$102,500	84.0%
Independence Township	\$361	\$474	31.3%	\$72,300	\$112,700	55.9%
Potter Township	\$388	\$592	52.6%	\$57,400	\$101,400	76.7%
Raccoon Township	\$400	\$518	29.5%	\$64,900	\$99,000	52.5%
Regional Average	\$378	\$524	38.6%	\$62,575	\$103,900	66.0%
County						
Beaver County	\$230	\$438	90.4%	\$50,500	\$85,000	68.3%

Source: United States Census

Neighboring Municipalities (Table 1-13)

- Generally, the housing values in municipalities bordering the planning region are slightly lower than housing values in the planning area. Four of the neighboring municipalities (Beaver Borough, Center Township, Hanover Township, and Findlay Township) have median house values that exceed the average for the planning area.
- Median rents for the municipalities bordering the planning area are also slightly under those found in the planning area. Two of the twelve municipalities (Center and Hopewell Townships) have median rent values that exceed the average for the planning area. In addition, Beaver Borough, Center Township, Glasgow Borough, Hanover Township, Hopewell Township, and Industry Borough have median rents that exceed one or more of the municipalities in the planning area.

Table 1-13. Trends in the Cost of Housing - Adjacent Municipalities

Neighboring Municipalities	Median Rent (\$)			Median House Value (\$)		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Beaver Borough, BC	\$302	\$503	66.6%	\$65,500	\$107,600	64.27%
Center Township, BC	\$339	\$620	82.9%	\$70,200	\$113,900	62.25%
Georgetown Borough, BC	\$225	\$425	88.9%	\$43,200	\$83,900	94.21%
Glasgow Borough, BC	\$163	\$475	191.4%	\$22,500	\$26,700	18.67%
Hanover Township, BC	\$291	\$508	74.6%	\$69,100	\$110,800	60.3%
Hookstown Borough, BC	\$175	\$510	191.4%	\$40,700	\$62,300	53.07%
Hopewell Township, BC	\$300	\$572	90.7%	\$59,800	\$93,000	55.52%
Industry Borough, BC	\$277	\$479	72.9%	\$50,200	\$75,300	50.00%
Midland Borough, BC	\$172	\$294	70.9%	\$28,400	\$44,000	54.93%
Ohioville Borough, BC	\$269	\$498	85.1%	\$52,000	\$86,900	67.12%
Shippingport Borough, BC	\$220	\$400	81.8%	\$54,000	\$70,800	31.11%
Findlay Township, AC	\$280	\$543	93.9%	\$64,200	\$110,300	71.81%

Source: United States Census

Age of Housing Stock (Table 1-14)

- Of the 3,536 housing units in the planning area, just over one-quarter (26.4%) were built from before 1960 and approximately three-quarters (74.6%) were built after 1960.
- Just over a fifth (20.1%) of the housing stock in the planning region was built from 1990 to 2000 whereas only 7.5% of the housing stock in all of Beaver County was built in the same time period.
- In 2000, Raccoon Township had the greatest number of housing units (1,227) of the four municipalities, followed by Independence with 1,092 units and Greene with 999 units.

- Potter Township has the fewest number of housing units of the four municipalities with 219 units. Potter Township experienced a slower growth in housing since 1980 compared to Greene, Independence, and Raccoon Townships. The number of housing units in Potter increased by 23% since 1980, compared to 37.6% for the planning region.
- Greene Township had the greatest growth in housing from 1990 to 2000 with a 22.5% increase in housing units, followed by Independence with a 21.2% increase in housing units. The number of housing units in Raccoon Township increased by 18.2% from 1990 to 2000.

Table I-14. Trends in Housing Construction

Municipality	Total Housing Units	Pre 1960 (%)	1960-1969 (%)	1970-1979 (%)	1980-1989 (%)	1990-2000 (%)
Greene	999	25.2%	6.3%	29.3%	16.6%	22.5%
Independence	1,092	21.0%	10.2%	28.1%	19.6%	21.2%
Potter	218	40.4%	9.6%	27.1%	9.2%	13.8%
Raccoon	1,227	29.7%	13.4%	20.9%	17.8%	18.2%
Total	3,536	26.4%	10.2%	25.9%	17.5%	20.1%
County						
Beaver County	77,765	61.2%	11.7%	13.3%	6.3%	7.5%

Source: United State Census

Units in Structure (Table 1-15)

- The majority of the homes in the planning area are single family detached units, which consists of 73.2% of the housing stock.
- Multi-unit structures or buildings with two or more housing units make up only 2% of the housing stock in the planning area.
- Mobile homes are the second most common type of housing in the area, next to single family detached units, making up 27.2% of the housing stock, compared to just 5.6% in Beaver County overall.
- Just over three quarters of the housing in Potter and Raccoon Townships are single family detached homes, whereas only 66% of Greene and 67% Independence Townships' housing are single family detached homes.
- Mobile home make up just over 32% of the housing stock in both Greene and Independence Township, which is comparatively higher than the percentage of mobile homes than Potter and Raccoon Townships, where mobile homes make-up 15.3% and 20.7% of the housing stock, respectively.

Table 1-15. Housing Type: Units in Structure, 2000

Municipality	1-unit detached		1-unit attached		2-4 units		5+ units		Mobile Home	
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%
Greene	662	66.3%	2	0.2%	0	0.0%	9	0.9%	322	32.2%
Independence	724	66.3%	5	0.5%	11	1.0%	0	0.0%	347	31.8%
Potter	167	76.6%	0	0.0%	17	7.8%	0	0.0%	34	15.6%
Raccoon	929	75.7%	11	0.9%	33	2.7%	0	0.0%	254	20.7%
Region	2482	70.2%	18	0.5%	61	1.7%	9	0.3%	957	27.1%
County										
Beaver	56933	73.2%	2600	3.3%	7220	9.3%	6601	8.5%	4382	5.6%

Source: United States Census

Housing Tenure (Table 1-16)

- In 2000, the four municipalities in the planning area had roughly the same breakdown between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing. The majority of housing in the planning area was owner-occupied, with less than 12% of housing in each municipality renter-occupied.
- In Beaver County, nearly three-quarters of the housing was owner-occupied and just over one-quarter of housing was renter occupied in 2000.
- In 2000, the average percentage of owner-occupied housing units in the planning area was significantly greater than Beaver County as a whole (89.4% versus 74.9%, respectively).
- The average percentage of renter-occupied housing units in the region is significantly less than Beaver County as a whole (10.6% and 25.1%, respectively).

Table 1-16. Housing Tenure, 2000

Municipality	Occupied Housing Units	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
		# units	%	# units	%
Greene	947	836	88.3%	111	11.7%
Independence	1,007	899	89.3%	108	10.7%
Potter	210	187	89.0%	23	11.0%
Raccoon	1,186	1,074	90.6%	112	9.4%
Total & Regional Average	3,350	2,996	89.4%	354	10.6%
County					
Beaver County	72576	54367	74.9%	18209	25.1%

Source: United States Census

Housing Vacancy (Table 1-17)

- In 2000, Independence Township had the highest vacancy rate of the four municipalities with 5.8% of the housing units vacant, followed by Greene and Potter Townships. Raccoon Township had the lowest vacancy rate of the four municipalities with 3.3% of the housing units vacant.
- In 2000, the regional average percentage of vacant housing units in the planning area was 4.83%. This was lower than the vacancy rate for the county of 6.7%.

Table 1-17. Housing Vacancy, 2000

Municipality	Total Housing Units	Total (Occupied) Households	Vacant Housing Units	% Vacant
Greene	1,002	947	55	5.50%
Independence	1,069	1,007	62	5.80%
Potter	222	210	12	5.40%
Raccoon	1,227	1,186	41	3.30%
Total	3,520	3,350	170	4.83%
County				
Beaver	77765	72576	5189	6.70%

Source: United States Census

POVERTY AND INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

Income

Planning Area (Table 1-18)

- In 2000, Raccoon had the highest median household income (\$53,036) of the four municipalities, followed by Potter and then Greene Townships. Independence Township had the lowest median household income (\$40,372) of the four municipalities.
- The 1990 regional average median household income in the planning area (\$28,646) was less than the 1990 average median household income for Beaver County (\$32,044). In 2000, the average median household income in the planning area significantly increased to \$46,253. In comparison, Beaver County's average median household income in 2000 was \$36,995.
- There is a loose correlation between income and education. Independence Township has the lowest median household income in the planning area and the greatest number of people without a high school diploma. Potter and Raccoon Township have the highest median household income and the highest levels of educational attainment in the planning area (Table 1-11).

Table 1-18 . Income Trends for Planning Area

Municipality	Median Household Income (\$)			Per Capita Income (\$)		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Greene	\$27,206	\$43,167	58.7%	\$10,450	\$16,890	61.6%
Independence	\$27,446	\$40,372	47.1%	\$12,192	\$17,946	47.2%
Potter	\$29,205	\$48,438	65.9%	\$11,825	\$20,451	72.9%
Raccoon	\$30,726	\$53,036	72.6%	\$11,170	\$19,363	73.3%
Regional Average	\$28,646	\$46,253	61.5%	\$11,409	\$18,663	63.6%
County						
Beaver County	\$32,044	\$36,995	15.5%	\$15,422	\$18,402	19.3%

Source: United States Census

Surrounding Municipalities (Table 1-19)

- In general, the median household incomes in municipalities adjacent to the planning area are comparable or slightly lower than incomes in the planning area. Of the neighboring municipalities in 2000, Midland Borough had the lowest median household income and Georgetown Borough the highest.
- There is a loose correlation between income and educational attainment in the adjacent municipalities. Glasgow, Hookstown, Midland, and Shippingport have the lowest median household income and the highest percentage of people without a high school diploma. Beaver, Center, and Georgetown Boroughs have higher median household incomes and higher levels of educational attainment in comparison.

Table 1-19. Income Trends for Adjacent Municipalities

Municipality	Median Household Income			Per Capita Income (\$)		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Beaver Borough, BC	\$29,213	\$42,113	44.2%	\$16,803	\$24,003	42.85%
Center Township, BC	\$34,978	\$50,071	43.1%	\$13,945	\$21,143	51.62%
Georgetown Borough, BC	\$35,625	\$57,500	61.4%	\$12,228	\$19,838	62.23%
Glasgow Borough, BC	\$20,000	\$33,500	67.5%	\$11,871	\$17,989	51.54%
Hanover Township, BC	\$31,066	\$44,393	42.9%	\$12,541	\$18,079	44.2%
Hookstown Borough, BC	\$18,594	\$27,500	47.9%	\$9,302	\$16,499	77.37%
Hopewell Township, BC	\$29,830	\$42,065	41.0%	\$13,091	\$20,802	58.90%
Industry Borough, BC	\$29,357	\$38,125	29.9%	\$11,979	\$18,337	53.08%
Midland Borough, BC	\$15,528	\$23,117	48.9%	\$9,116	\$17,066	87.21%
Ohioville Borough, BC	\$27,551	\$39,962	45.0%	\$10,898	\$17,837	63.67%
Shippingport Borough, BC	\$22,500	\$33,333	48.1%	\$9,801	\$13,759	40.38%
Findlay Township, AC	\$35,028	\$47,484	35.6%	\$14,506	\$21,417	47.64%
Hancock County, WV	\$26,031	\$33,759	29.7%	\$12,464	\$17,724	42.20%

Source: United States Census

Poverty (Table 1-20)

- The average percentage of individuals (7.3%) and families (5.7%) within the region that are in poverty is lower than Beaver County’s average on a whole (9.4% and 7.2%, respectively). However, Greene Township has the highest percentage of individuals and families in poverty in the region (10.5% and 7.6% respectively), which is slightly greater than the county’s average.

Table 1-20. Poverty Characteristics, 2000

Municipality	Individuals		Families	
	Number	%	Number	%
Greene	281	10.5%	59	7.6%
Independence	212	7.7%	41	5.1%
Potter	19	3.3%	3	1.7%
Raccoon	182	5.4%	49	5.0%
Regional Average	694	7.3%	152	5.7%
County				
Beaver County	16635	9.4%	3642	7.2%

Source: United States Census



Cultural and Historic Resources

Service United Presbyterian Church, Raccoon Township

The rich rural and industrial heritage of Beaver County is evident in the municipalities of Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships. The rural landscape and farms found throughout the area are symbols of the agricultural history of the area. Beaver County also developed as one of the major industrial centers in Pennsylvania due to its natural resources and accessibility to both rail and river transportation routes. Prominent industries in the county consisted of manufactured glass, tile, brick, ceramics, electric products, roofing, lumber, chemicals, electrical machinery, and various consumer goods. This industrial influence is evident today in Potter Township along the Route 18 corridor with the significant industrial base that has built up along the Ohio River.

This section is an overview of the historic and cultural resources in the planning area. This section also highlights local historic groups and their work in the area to enhance existing historic buildings and to increase community appreciation of the local heritage. Many of the cultural and historic sites have potential to serve as tourist destinations, which can improve the economy and quality of life of the region.

Refer to the Community Assets Map when reviewing this section. The map indicates the location of the cultural and historic resources discussed in this section.

This section was compiled from the following resources: The Beaver County Inventory and Assessment of Historic and Heritage Sites, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, the Beaver County Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plan, the Comprehensive Plan for Beaver County, the Beaver County Bicentennial Atlas, key person interviews, and a field view of the planning area.

Greene Township

Greene Township was formed in 1812 from part of Hanover and Second Moon Townships. The Township reduced in land area with the formation of Raccoon Township in 1833. Greene Township has traditionally been a farming community and agriculture continues to play a large role in the township.

The following historic and cultural resources were noted in or near Greene Township:

Hookstown Historic District:

Hookstown Borough is located in the center of Greene Township. Originally known as “Hook’s settlement,” Hookstown was established by Matthias Hook, a settler from Maryland, in the early 1800’s and incorporated as a Borough in 1843. The village consisted of stores and a mill, which served the surrounding farmers. The population of Hookstown has remained relatively stable over history, with just under 300 people. The Presbyterian Church of Hookstown was established in 1854. The town is known for the annual “Hookstown Grange Fair” which is attended by many Beaver County citizens. The Hookstown Fairgrounds is located in Greene Township.

Georgetown Borough:

Incorporated in 1850, Georgetown is the second oldest town in Beaver County. Populated predominantly by captains, pilots, engineers, and others in the boat industry, the village was historically a resting area for boat travelers. St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, built in 1814, is located in Georgetown and is the oldest church in Beaver County. Unlike Hookstown, the population has been steadily declining during the past seventy-five years. The location of the Tri-State Cornerstone Marker.



South Side Historic Village One-Room School House

South Side Historical Village:

The South Side Historical Village is a replica of a village that has been re-created and located on the Hookstown Fairgrounds and managed by the South Side Historical Village Association. The following structures and buildings are located in the village:

- One-room school house, originally located in Greene Township, and two original outhouses
- The Clyde A. Porter Blacksmith Shop, located to the village from Ohioville.
- Coal Shed

The Association is also acquiring a corn crib, two log cabins, and a former doctor’s office to add to the village.

Greenefields Municipal Complex

An old corn crib, originally from Hanover Township, is located on the site.

Lock and Dam #7:

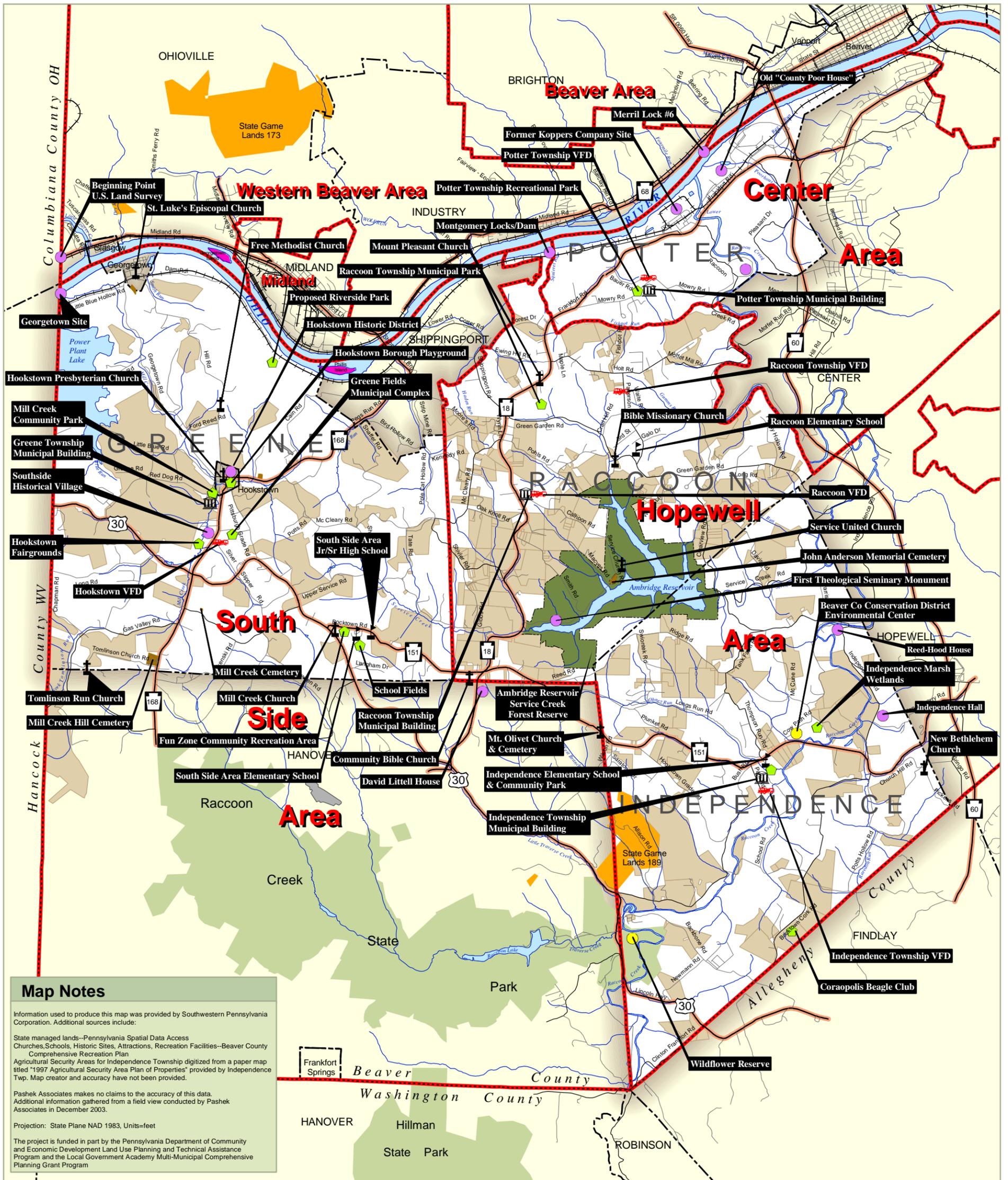
A former Ohio River lock with extant building and lock wall.

Bauer Nelson House:

An early 1800’s stone farmhouse located east of Laughlin’s Corner on Route 30, and formerly part of the Underground Railroad during the Civil War.

Locust Grove:

An early 1800’s stone house located south of Laughlin’s Corner. The location of the Tri-State Cornerstone marker.



REGIONAL COMMUNITY ASSETS

A Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships



PASHEK ASSOCIATES

SEPTEMBER 2004

The following churches are located in Greene Township:

- **Free Methodist Church:** A church located in the north of the township off Hill Road. This church originated on Hill Road in Greene Township before relocating to Hookstown Borough. Plans are being made again to move the church to Greene Township.
- **Mill Creek Presbyterian Church and Cemetery:** This is the oldest church in Beaver County, dating back to 1785. The original Mill Creek Church site has a log cabin with no doors or windows, constructed to provide security from Native Americans. In 1970 the Mill Creek and Hookstown Presbyterian Churches merged and located at the existing church site on Route 151.
- **Tomlinson Run Church of Christ:** Established in 1834, by the Presbyterians, the church was relocated in 1948 from its former site, which suffered two fires, to Tomlinson Church Road.

Independence Township

Formed in 1848, Independence Township was the site of Independence Village, Hopewell Township's first polling place. Independence Township is a historically agricultural community. A dam was built on Service Creek in 1955, creating the Ambridge Reservoir and Service Creek Forest Reserve to provide water for the Ambridge Municipal Water Authority.

The following historic sites and churches were noted in Independence Township:

Independence Hall

Social hall built in 1920 just north of Bocktown.

Reed-Hood House

Established in 1880, the original post office for Independence Village or "76." The house is located on Independence Road.

New Bethlehem Church:

Founded in 1865, this church is the oldest in the township. It is located in the southwest corner of the township.

Potter Township

Established in 1912, Potter Township was formed from parts of Raccoon and Moon Townships. The character of Potter Township changed significantly during the 1930's when two large industrial plants settled along the Ohio River in the village of Bellowsville. One industry was the zinc smelting plant of the St. Joseph Lead Company and the other was the Koppers Company. The area along the Ohio River remains predominantly industrial.



New Bethlehem Church

The following historic sites were noted in Potter Township:

Koppers Company Site:

Nova Chemicals sits on what used to be the Koppers Company Site. This was the first polystyrene (plastic production) company, which played an important role in World War II making butadiene. The Koppers Company also built "Kobuta", a World War II defense plant that produced rubber and an accompanying housing development. The name "Kobuta" was a combination of Koppers and Butadiene (material used to make the rubber).

Montgomery Dam and Lock:

A lock and dam structure on the Ohio River built by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1936.



Montgomery Locks and Dam

Beaver County Home:

Built in 1870, the home is located north of Poorhouse Run. The house is owned by Zinc Corporation and is used as a research center.

Underground Storage Tanks

There are several significant underground storage tanks located in the southern part of the township off Raccoon Creek Road. The storage tanks were formerly utilized by the federal government and the property is now held by Zinc Corporation.

Raccoon Township

Named for Raccoon Creek, which forms the eastern boundary of the municipality, Raccoon Township was created in 1833 from parts of Moon and Greene Townships. Early on, the township consisted of a series of villages, located along what is now Frankfort and Green Garden Roads. The villages were surrounded by open farms and wooded areas. The names of the original villages, Holt, Green Garden, and McCleary, are still evident today as roadway names. Raccoon Township lost its riverfront access when Shippingport Borough incorporated in 1910.

The following historic sites and churches are located in Raccoon Township:



Service United Cemetery

Service United Church:

One of the earliest churches founded in Beaver County in the mid-to late- 1700's. The church was originally a log building, but now stands as a brick structure, established in 1929. The Service United Church and Cemetery are located adjacent to the Ambridge Reservoir in Raccoon Township.

Eudolpha Hall:

Eudolpha Hall is the site of the first theological seminary west of the Alleghenies. Founded in 1794, John Anderson, D.D., established the Service Theological Seminary as a related institution to the Service United Church known as "Eudolpha Hall." The seminary trained young men for ministry in a two-story log cabin in the early 1800's.

Historic Homes

There are several historic homes in Raccoon Township. There is an old stone house built in 1808 by the Kennel family that was formerly owned by Matthias Hook, a historic log cabin, and the Shaffer house. All properties are currently under private ownership.

Mount Pleasant Church:

A church located off Route 18 in the northern section of the township.

Bible Missionary Church:

A church located in the center of the township off Green Garden Road.



Mount Pleasant Church

Community Bible Church and School:

A church and school located in the southern area of the township off Route 18.

Sites in Adjacent Municipalities**Beginning Point for the U.S. Public Land Survey:**

A National Historic Landmark located in Ohioville Township on the Ohio State line indicating the location of the first United States Public Land Survey.

David Littell House:

A historic log house established in 1851 and on the National Register of Historic Places. The house is located on Route 18 in Hanover Township.

Merril Lock #6:

Located in Industry Borough, the oldest lock on the Ohio River and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic and Cultural Organizations

The South Side Historical Village Association, Inc. works to preserve historic buildings and structures in Beaver County that are in danger of being destroyed. Local volunteers run the non-profit, which is funded primarily through membership dues, fundraisers, and fairs. The association acquires historic structures through donations and purchases, disassembles the structures, and transports them to the South Side Historic Village at the Hookstown Fairgrounds. The association is in the process of transferring three log cabins, a grinding stone, an old fire engine, and an old ford garage to the village.

The association is also looking to acquire the first doctor's office in Greene Township located on Route 30. The historical village is open during fairs and special events and private tours can be arranged. Classes are offered at the Blacksmith shop on a regular basis to encourage the younger generation to learn the trade. They also have regular visits from school and community groups, such as the boy and girl scouts.

Mill Creek Valley Historic Association is also located in Greene Township. It helped to stage the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Camp and boat repair in Georgetown in September of 2003.

County Observations

Below are observations about cultural and historic resources from the Beaver County Comprehensive Plan, which are relevant to the planning area:

- Historic landscape considerations play an integral role in the enhancement of the natural, rural, urban, and suburban landscapes.
- The rich diversity of cultural and historic resources have greatly contributed to the development of the county's rural and urban river valley communities.
- County and local officials and residents recognize the value of conservation, rehabilitation, restoration, or adaptive reuse of historic features and styles to preserve the county's past.
- The various organizations and programs focused on preserving the county's cultural and historic resources are an invaluable resource in protecting the county's historical and cultural resources.
- The county's "Inventory and Assessment of Historic and Heritage Sites" master plan serves as an excellent resource guide for enhancing the county's cultural and historic programs.

Based on the county's survey, the majority of residents feel that the region's scenic beauty is a high priority. In addition, most respondents felt that a high priority should be given to conserving the quality and character of the existing communities in the future.



Raccoon Creek

Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture

The natural environment contributes to the economic vitality, environmental health, and quality of life of a community. Environmentally sensitive areas, such as woodlands, wetlands, steep slopes, stream valleys, and floodplains are found throughout the planning area. They contribute to the scenic beauty of the region and support important ecological functions.

This section provides an overview of the environmental conditions in the area and outlines the location of environmentally sensitive lands and features. This section also discusses the location and significance of prime farmland and agricultural land uses.

It is important to understand the extent and location of these environmental features in order to identify limitations to development, avoid severe environmental impacts, and prevent property loss or damage. Information on environmental resources should be used to guide growth to areas that are suitable for development in order to protect important natural areas. Environmental features identified in the region include:

- Soils
- Wetlands
- Rivers, Streams, and Lakes
- Floodplains
- Natural Heritage Inventory Biodiversity Areas
- Forest Land
- Steep Slopes
- Mining areas
- Agriculture and Farmland Preservation

The Environmental Features Map indicates the occurrence of environment features. It should be referenced when reviewing this section. This section was compiled using the following resources of information: the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, the Natural Heritage Inventory for Beaver County, the Beaver County Comprehensive Plan, the Beaver and Butler County Soil Survey, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and key person interviews.

SOILS

Understanding soil types is important for protecting water quality, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. Information on general soil types are provided by soil surveys. Soil surveys evaluate the behavior of a type of soil under alternative uses, its potential for erosion, ground water contamination, and suitability and productivity for cultivated crops, trees, and grasses. The general soil associations found in the planning area are based on The Soil Survey for Beaver and Lawrence Counties (1982). The Soil Association Table (Table 1-21) provides an overview of the general soil associations in the planning area as well as the potential uses and limitations. There are five general soil associations in the planning area. These associations have a distinctive pattern of soils, relief, and drainage. In general, the soils in the planning area are shallow to deep, and are gently sloping to very steeply sloping.

Table 1-21

General Soil Associations in Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships				
Association	Township	Soil Description	Soil Potential	Soil Limitations
Urban Land-Monongahela-Tyler Association	Along Ohio River & Raccoon Creek in Greene, Independence, Raccoon, and Potter Townships	Nearly level to sloping, deep, moderately well drained and somewhat poorly drained soils; formed in old alluvium	Fair to poor for farmland; fair to good for woodland and wildlife habitat; fair to poor for nonfarm uses	Seasonal wetness; slow permeability; flooding
Gilpin-Wharton-Weikert Association	Middle part of Greene Twp; Northeastern corner of Potter Twp	Nearly level to very steep, shallow to deep, well drained and moderately well drained soils, formed in residual material weathered from acid shale, siltstone, and sandstone.	Good for farmland, woodland, and wildlife habitat; fair to poor for most nonfarm uses	Seasonal wetness; slow permeability; depth to bedrock, and slope
Gilpin-Upshur-Weikert Association	South of the Ohio River in Greene Twp; widespread throughout Independence & Raccoon Twps	Gently sloping to very steep, shallow to deep, well drained soils; formed in residual material from acid shale, siltstone, sandstone, and nonacid red shale.	Fair to poor for farmland; good for woodland and wildlife habitat; poor for nonfarm uses	Slope; depth to bedrock; dayey soil material; hazards of slips and landslides
Gilpin-Guernsey-Culleoka Association	Central and southern part of Greene Twp	Gently sloping to very steep, moderately deep and deep, well drained soils; formed in residual material from acid and nonacid shale, siltstone, and sandstone	Fair to good for farmland; good for wildlife habitat; poor for most nonfarm uses	Depth to bedrock, slope, seasonal wetness, dayey soil material, hazard of slips or landslides
Gilpin-Weikert Association	Northern part of Raccoon Twp and Southern part of Potter Twp	Gently sloping to very steep, shallow and moderately deep, well drained soils; formed in residual material from acid shale, siltstone, and sandstone	Fair to poor to farmland; good for woodland and wildlife habitat; poor for most nonfarm uses	Depth to bedrock, steep slopes
Source: Beaver County Soil Survey (1982) and Allegheny County Soil Survey (1981)				

The Urban Land-Monongahela-Tyler Association:

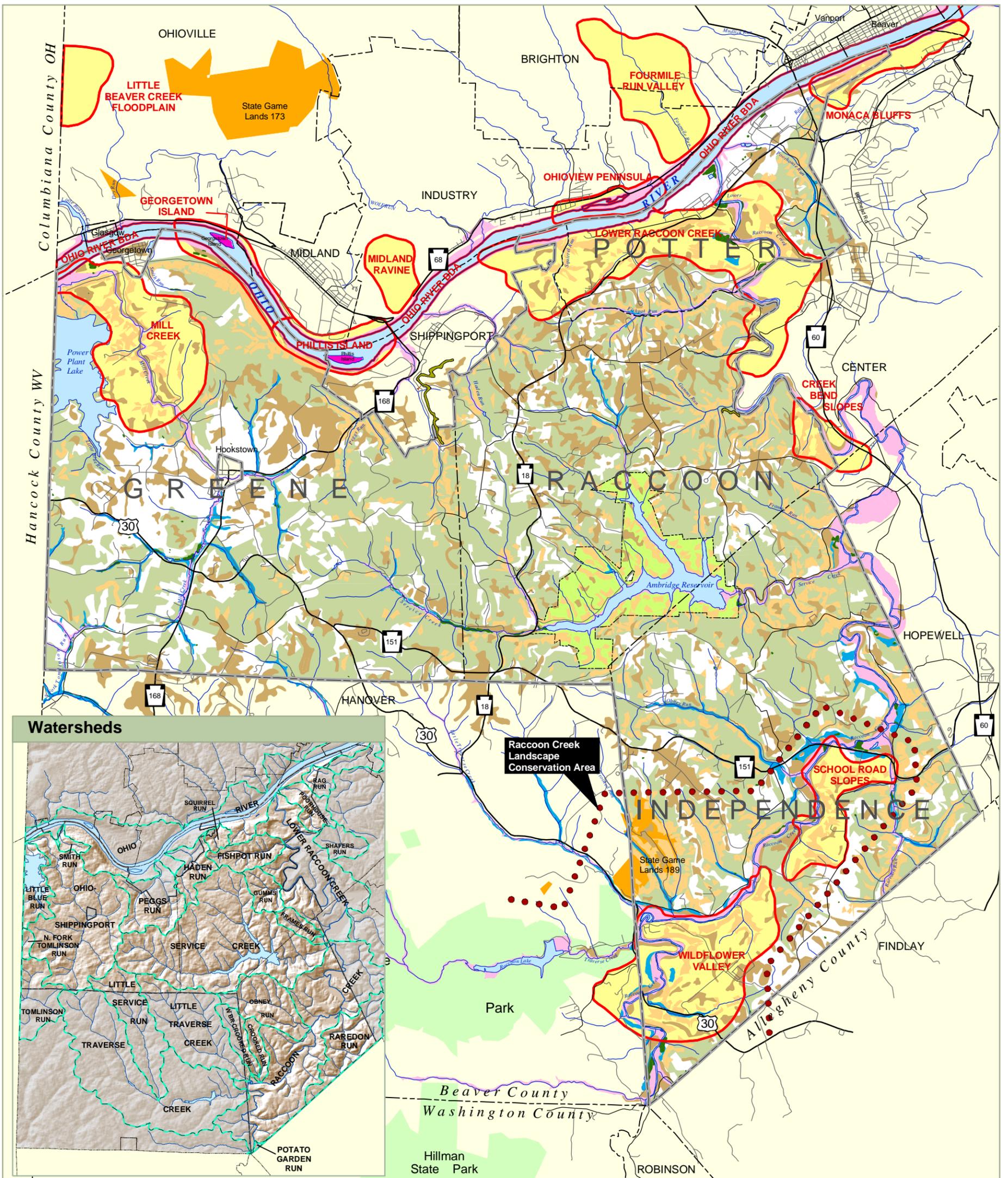
Occurs along the Ohio River and Raccoon Creek. This area includes both urban land consisting of industrial development along the Ohio River in Potter Township, and natural land and open space throughout the Raccoon Creek corridor. Located in the floodplains and along creeks and rivers, the main limitations to this association are seasonal wetness and flooding.

The Gilpin-Wharton-Weikert Association

Found in the central part of Greene Township and the northeastern tip of Potter Township. The association is found on broad to narrow ridgetops, side slopes, and hillsides which contain farmland and woodland, and some residential development.

The Gilpin-Upshur-Weikert Association

Very common throughout Raccoon Township and covers all of Independence Township, with the exception of areas along Raccoon Creek. There is also a small area of this association in central Greene Township. This association occupies rolling ridges and hillsides, which contain residential development, woodlands, and scattered farmland.



Legend		Map Notes	Area of Detail
		<p>Information used to produce this map was provided by Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation. Additional sources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State managed lands--Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access Hydric Soils--USDA digital soil survey Abandoned Mine Land Data--PA DEP Landscape Conservation Area--Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory Forested Areas--Existing Land Use <p>Pashek Associates makes no claims to the accuracy of this data.</p> <p>Projection: State Plane NAD 1983, Units--feet</p> <p>The project is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program and the Local Government Academy Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Grant Program</p>	
		<p>Abandoned Mines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spoil Pile Strip Mine Discharge Area 	

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

A Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships



The Gilpin-Guernsey-Culleoka Association

Found in the central to southern portion of Greene Township extending into Hanover Township to the south. This association occupies rolling, broad and narrow ridgetops, side slopes, and hillsides which are primarily farmland and woodland, with some residential areas.

The Gilpin-Weikert Association

Found in the northern part of Raccoon and the central to southern part of Potter Township. This association occupies ridges and hillsides which are wooded or open, with some residential development and scattered farmland.

Hydric Soils

It is important to note the occurrence of hydric soils in a natural resource inventory. These soils can indicate land that is susceptible to flooding and poor drainage, which can affect the suitability of land for development. Hydric soils may also indicate the presence of wetlands. The definition of hydric soils according to the Natural Resource Conservation is, “a soil that forms under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part.” Hydric soils include soils developed under sufficiently wet conditions to support the growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation. Hydric soils are located along Raccoon Creek, Mill Creek and its tributaries, Obney Run, and parts of Service Creek and Fishpot Run. As shown on the Environmental Features Map, wetlands are also found along parts of Raccoon Creek, Mill Creek, and Service Creek.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year, or for varying periods of time during the year, including during the growing season (U.S. EPA). Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas.

The Environmental Features Map shows the location of wetlands in the planning area. Independence Marsh, an 18-acre mitigation wetland, is located along Raccoon Creek in Independence Township. The wetlands are managed by the Beaver County Conservation District. The wetlands are not naturally occurring, but were created to mitigate the loss of wetlands destroyed in the expansion of the Pittsburgh International Airport in the mid 1990's. The Clean Water Act mandates a “no net loss” of wetlands policy. According the Act, any jurisdictional wetlands destroyed as a result of development activity must be replaced, preferably in the same watershed. The Beaver County Conservation District also manages an Environmental Center near the wetlands, which educates people on the important ecological functions of wetlands.

Wetlands Serve Important Ecologic and Social Functions:

- Maintain water quality
- Support aquatic productivity
- Serve as habitat for fish, birds, & other wildlife
- Control flooding & erosion
- Recharge groundwater
- Provide recreational and educational opportunities
- Serve as a source of energy
- Filter stormwater run-off and act as a natural catchment basin

Naturally occurring wetlands are found in Potter Township on the western floodplain of Raccoon Creek, several miles from the mouth of the stream. The wetland is bordered by Raccoon Creek Road to the east, separating the wetland from Raccoon Creek and downstream areas. As a result, the road has potentially affected the drainage patterns of the wetland.

RIVERS, STREAMS, AND LAKES

The Ohio River borders the planning area to the north and several tributaries to the Ohio transverse the planning area. These creeks and streams are an important environmental feature of the region because they are associated with wetlands, floodplains, and provide habitat for plant and animal community. Waterways also serve important recreation, navigation, and water supply functions. This section identifies watersheds in the region and discusses water quality protection designations for streams in the planning area. Special attention has been given to the Ohio River and the lakes and reservoirs in the area.

Rivers and Streams

The municipalities fall within the Upper Ohio watershed, which includes a total of 1,971.66 square miles in West Virginia, Ohio, and western Pennsylvania. The Upper Ohio watershed drains to the Ohio River Basin, encompassing 204,000 square miles.

The Ohio River, which defines the northern boundary of the planning area, is an important water resource in the region. The Ohio River originates in Pittsburgh at the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers, and flows north and west through Beaver County toward Ohio. The development of cities and towns in Beaver County took place along the river where industries took advantage of the river for transportation and navigation.

Similar to other Beaver County municipalities, the riverfront in Potter Township is lined with industrial development. The riverfront is less developed traveling west toward Shippingport, which lies between Potter and Greene Townships. Two power plants are located along the river in Shippingport. Entering into Greene Township the riverfront is less developed, except for two sand and gravel mines that occupy sites along the river near Georgetown. The navigational uses of the Ohio are also evident in the planning area, with the Montgomery Locks and Dam located on the Ohio River off Potter Township.

The industrialization that occurred along the river during the 20th century resulted in decreased water quality and a loss of native species in the river. This was due to poorly regulated industrial discharges, construction of lock and dams that altered the depths and currents of the river, and dredging of the river to extract sand, gravel, and cobblestone for ease of transportation.

A federal mandate was issued over twenty-five years ago to clean-up the Ohio River. This, coupled with a decline in industrial activity, has resulted in improved water quality. The present day Ohio River is classified as a low- to medium-quality warm water fishery. The water quality in the river has improved over the past decade with some fish populations improving their populations and pollution-sensitive species are returning such as walleye, sauger, and bass. The Beaver County Natural Heritage Inventory has designated the Ohio River as a natural community for numerous species of plants, birds, and wildlife.

What is a watershed?

A watershed is the area of land where all of the water that is under it (ground water) or drains off of it travels to the same place, whether it is a stream, river, lake, or the ocean.

Watersheds conform to natural hydrologic boundaries, rather than political boundaries. As a result, it is important for municipalities located within the same watershed to coordinate efforts to protect water quality and stream habitat.



The Ohio River



Power Plants in Shippingport Located Near the Ohio River

Raccoon Creek is the largest stream in the planning area, with the Raccoon Creek watershed draining 184 square miles to the Ohio River. The Raccoon Creek watershed encompasses parts of Potter, Raccoon, and Greene Townships and all of Independence Township, in addition to parts of Allegheny, Beaver, and Washington Counties. Water quality in the watershed has been negatively impacted by Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD). There are over 200 mine sites and 10,000 acres of surface mined lands in the watershed. AMD has degraded thirty to forty miles of tributaries located in Washington County. Future threats to water quality in the watershed include nonpoint source pollution, open and abandoned mines, agricultural run-off, malfunctioning on-lot septic systems, and municipal waste. Efforts are underway to restore the watershed, including treatment and reclamation of AMD, but additional resources are needed to continue restoration efforts. (Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS) State Water Plan Subbasin 20D, Raccoon Creek, Allegheny, Beaver, and Washington Counties)

Smaller watersheds associated with the streams in the planning area are shown on the Environmental Features Map. Several of the watersheds include pristine streams and creeks that are protected for specific designated uses under the Clean Streams Law. The Pennsylvania Code, Title 25. Environmental Protection, Chapter 93. Water Quality Standards sets water quality standards for surface water in Pennsylvania. According to the Act, surface waters can be designated as protected for specific water uses, for which water quality criteria are set forth. Water uses are designated according to the following categories: 1) aquatic life; 2) water supply; 3) recreation; 4) special protection for high quality and exceptional value waters; and 5) other uses such as navigation. The following is a list of the categories and types of protected uses found in the planning area.

Aquatic Life Protected Uses

Warm Water Fishes (WWF): Sets forth water quality criteria for the maintenance and propagation of fish species and additional flora and fauna which are indigenous to a warm water habitat

Cold Water Fishes (CWF): Sets forth water quality criteria for the maintenance and/or propagation of fish species includes the family Salmonidae and additional flora and fauna which are indigenous to a cold water habitat.

Trout Stocking (TSF): This designation includes maintenance of stocked trout from February 15 to July 31, and maintenance and propagation of fish species and additional flora and fauna, which are indigenous to a warm water habitat.

Special Protection

High Quality Waters (HQ): A stream or watershed which has excellent quality waters and environmental or other features that require special water quality protection.

Other Protection Designations

Navigation (N): Use of the water for the commercial transfer and transport of persons, animals, and goods.

Table 1-22 on the following page identifies streams in the planning area and their designated water uses. As shown in the table, the majority of streams in the planning area are protected for warm water fishes (WWF). Service Creek is the only high quality water designation found in the planning area, and only one of two watersheds with this designation in Beaver County. Mill Creek is the only trout stocking designation

Lakes and Reservoirs

There are several lakes, and reservoirs found in the planning area as well. They include the Ambridge Reservoir and Little Blue Run Dam (indicated as Power Plant Lake on the Environmental Features Map).

Table 1-22 Designated Uses for Waterways and Streams

Stream Name	Area	Townships in Planning Area	Designated Water Uses
Ohio River	The confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers to the PA-OH State border	Potter Township Raccoon Township Greene Township	Warm Water Fishes; Navigation
Raccoon Creek	Basin and Main Stem	Potter Township Raccoon Township Independence Township	Warm Water Fishes
Poorhouse Run	Basin	Potter Township Independence Township	Warm Water Fishes
Raredon Run	Basin	Greene Township Raccoon Township	Warm Water Fishes
Service Creek	Basin Source to J.C. Bacon Dam (Ambridge Reservoir)	Greene Township	High Quality - Cold Water Fishes
Service Creek	J.C. Bacon Dam (Ambridge Reservoir) to mouth	Independence Township	Warm Water Fishes
Gums Run	Basin	Raccoon Township	Warm Water Fishes
Frames Run	Basin	Raccoon Township Independence Township	Warm Water Fishes
Fishpot Run	Basin	Potter Township Raccoon Township	Warm Water Fishes
Squirrel Run	Basin	Potter Township Raccoon Township	Warm Water Fishes
Haden Run	Basin	Raccoon Township	Warm Water Fishes
Peggs Run	Basin	Greene Township	Warm Water Fishes
Smiths Run	Basin	Greene Township	Warm Water Fishes
Mill Creek	Basin	Greene Township	Trout Stocking
South Fork Tomlinson Run	Basin	Greene Township	Warm Water Fishes

Source: Pennsylvania Code Title 25 Environmental Protection

The Ambridge Reservoir

The Ambridge Reservoir is a 368-acre man-made lake located on Service Creek in Raccoon and parts of Independence Townships. Created in 1955 from the damming of Service Creek, the reservoir is owned by the Ambridge Water Authority and used as a public water supply. The Ambridge Water Authority pipes water from the reservoir to the nearby municipalities of Ambridge Borough, Baden Borough, Borough of Bell Acres, Conway Borough, Economy Borough, Harmony Township, and Leetsdale Borough. The reservoir is not open to the public for recreational use. The reservoir is surrounded by second-growth forest and managed as the Ambridge Reservoir Service Creek Forest Reserve. This forested buffer helps to maintain the high water quality of the reservoir. The Ambridge Water Authority restricts any activity in the upland areas managed by the Authority that could negatively impact water quality in the lake.



Ambridge Reservoir

Little Blue Run Dam (Power Plant Lake)

Little Blue Run Dam is an earthen dam and 800-acre reservoir located in the northwestern corner of Greene Township. The dam is the largest earthen dam east of the Mississippi. Both the dam and the reservoir are owned and managed by First Energy. The reservoir is used to dispose of scrubbing chemicals and slurry from First Energy's Bruce Mansfield power plant in Shippingport. The slurry and waste is piped into the reservoir from Shippingport. The area around the reservoir and dam is mostly forested and access to the reservoir is restricted. People are advised not to swim or fish in the reservoir. The Greene Township Comprehensive Plan (1994) states that the lake is an existing resource which renders little development value to residents, poses potential environmental risks, and therefore should not be expanded at any time in the future.



Little Blue Run Dam and Lake

FLOODPLAINS

Development in a floodplain can result in damage and destruction of property due to flooding, habitat destruction and loss of riparian buffers, and increased downstream flooding. Therefore, it is important to identify those areas in the 100-year floodplain and establish floodplain management guidelines to prevent damage and destruction due to flooding. The 100-year floodplain includes those areas with a history and statistical probability of flooding at least one percent per year.

The Environmental Features Map identifies those areas in the 100-year floodplain. Flood-prone areas include land along Raccoon Creek, Mill Creek, Fishpot Run, Raredon Run, and Service Creek. There are also several floodplain areas located along the Ohio River in Potter, Raccoon, and Greene Townships. A significant floodplain area is located where Mill Creek merges with Little Blue Run in northwestern Greene Township. This is part of the Mill Creek Natural Heritage Area. Floodplains are present in several natural heritage areas (see page 58), including the Lower Raccoon Creek Biodiversity Area, Creek Bend Slopes Biodiversity Area, School Road Slopes Biodiversity Area, and the Wildflower Valley Biodiversity Area.

Riparian Zones

Riparian zones are vegetated strips of land bordering creeks, rivers, lakes, and other bodies of water. These areas should be protected because they provide a natural buffering around waterways. This buffer helps maintain the natural flow of water, protects water quality and stream habitat, and reduces the volume and velocity of run-off and

flood waters. Riparian buffers also provide important ecological functions, such as providing food, shelter, nesting sites, and contiguous habitat for a variety of wildlife. Finally, riparian zones can be tied into recreation, such as fishing, hiking, camping, and wildlife observation.

NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY BIODIVERSITY AREAS



Buffered Creek along Longs Run Road

A natural heritage area is an area that is recognized for its unique biodiversity and ecological integrity. The Natural Heritage Inventory for Beaver County was a joint effort of the Pennsylvania Department of Community Development, the Beaver County Planning Commission, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. The inventory identifies natural heritage areas in Beaver County and classifies them as exceptional, high, and notable according to their county significance. The inventory was created to assist the public (state, county, and municipal governments) and private sectors in protecting significant environmental resources and species habitat when planning for the future.

The Natural Heritage Inventory Table on the following page is a summary of the natural heritage areas located in or adjacent to the planning area. The table describes the locations and significance of the area. Refer to the Environmental Features Map for the location of the natural heritage areas that are identified in the inventory.

Dedicated Areas

Dedicated Areas are areas in which the management of land is dedicated to the protection of the natural environment and biodiversity. According to the Natural Heritage Inventory, there are two Dedicated Areas in Beaver County, both of which are located in the planning area. They include Raccoon Creek State Park Wildflower Reserve and the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

Raccoon Creek State Park Wildflower Reserve:

Located in the eastern part of Raccoon State Park, this 275-acre nature reserve includes habitat for plant species and diverse natural communities that are unique to Beaver County.

Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge:

The Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge consists of 38 islands along the Ohio River that are significant for their fish and wildlife habitat, and scientific, recreational, and natural heritage values. The wildlife refuge extends from Shippingport to Manchester, Ohio. Georgetown and Phillis Islands, located on the Ohio River near Greene Township and Shippingport, are part of the wildlife refuge. The wildlife refuge is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It contains natural communities of species and ecosystems that are unique to the county. The islands are currently protected from development, but are threatened by dredging, water pollution, dam construction and recreational overuse.

Managed lands in the planning area include the State Game Lands #189, Raccoon Creek State Park, and the Service Creek Reservoir (Ambridge Reservoir).

FOREST LAND

According to the Beaver County Comprehensive Plan, approximately 49% of Beaver County is forested. The heaviest concentration of mixed forest is found in Raccoon Creek State Park and northwestern Greene Township. In addition to this area, forestland is located throughout the planning area. The Beaver County Natural Heritage Inventory found the most common forest type in Beaver County to be the Sugar Maple-Beech Climax association.

Table 1-23, Natural Heritage Areas in Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships

Name	County Significance*	Location	Description	Existing Development or Threats
Ohioview Peninsula Biodiversity Area	Exceptional	On the Ohio River in Industry Borough across the River from Potter Township	Unique natural community and habitat for terrestrial and aquatic animal species of special concern; 30 acres of floodplain forest and shallow water backchannel - one of the last riverine forest communities along the Ohio River	Disturbance from excavation activities along the river; use of peninsula for recreation; potential for logging; changes in water level
Georgetown Island and Phillis Island Biodiversity Areas	Exceptional	On the Ohio River off of Greene Township and Shippingport Borough	Restricted, undeveloped islands with a recovering Floodplain Forest Community and species of special concern; part of the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge	New Cumberland Dam navigational pool influences on Georgetown Island; commercial dredging for sand, gravel, and cobble; mooring, anchoring, and tying of barges and boats along shorelines
Wildflower Valley Biodiversity Area and Raccoon Creek State Park Wildflower Reserve	Exceptional	Independence Township and portions of Raccoon Creek State Park extending into Hanover Township	Important natural communities and high species diversity, especially of herbaceous species; occurrence of several endangered, threatened, or rare plants in the state; floodplain areas with recovering forest; trails to showcase the variety of flowers and trees in their natural habitat; one of the most significant Natural Heritage Areas in Beaver County	Mowing of fields and floodplains; improper trail use and maintenance; spraying of pesticides; Route 30 road maintenance and construction activity
Raccoon Creek Landscape Conservation Area	Exceptional	Hanover Township (including all of Raccoon Creek State Park) extending into Independence Township	Large open space with a diverse assemblage of natural features and communities, and habitats for several plant species of special concern; represents some of the most vital biological resources in Beaver County	Inadequate buffers for the natural communities and Raccoon Creek State Park and the wildflower reserve
Ohio River Biodiversity Area	High	Entire length of the Ohio River in Beaver County; Greene, Potter, and Raccoon Townships in the planning area	A number of natural heritage areas are located adjacent to the Ohio River stressing its importance as a unique natural feature in southwestern PA that provides habitat for animal species of special concern (concentrated around Montgomery Dam and Ohioview Peninsula)	Navigational locks and dams; dredging for sand, gravel, and cobblestone; residential, commercial, and industrial development along the riverfront
Lower Raccoon Creek Biodiversity Area	High	Potter and Raccoon Townships	Steep slopes and tributary stream valleys of the lower Raccoon Creek and Squirrel Run - extensive area including a high diversity of natural features, natural communities and habitat for plant species of special concern	Timber harvesting; industrial landfill usage and fuel storage; agriculture, commercial, and industrial development; fragmentation due to roadways; all-terrain vehicle use and dirt bikes; gypsy moth

Table continued on following page

Monaca Bluffs Biodiversity Area	High	Potter Township extending NE into Center Township	Steep slopes, exposed bluffs, and deep ravine with important forest communities and habitat for two plant species of special concern	Railroad tracks traverse the site; site is restricted in size by surrounding residential, industrial, and commercial development; history of zinc and heavy metal poisoning of soils from nearby industry
School Road Slopes Biodiversity Area	High	Independence Township	Slopes, upland areas, and tributary valleys along the eastern bank of Raccoon Creek; good examples of several natural forest communities and relatively high diversity of plant species and habitats	Logging and grazing of forest; clearing for farming and stream manipulation along the Raccoon Creek Floodplain; construction or maintenance of utility right-of-ways (ROW); residential development
Creek Bend Slopes Biodiversity Area	Notable	Raccoon Township extending into Center and Hopewell Townships	Fairly steep slopes that form a bowl around the Raccoon Valley with uncommon natural forest community	Residential development; clearing for agriculture
Mill Creek Biodiversity Area	Notable	Greene Township	Tributary to the Ohio River with a forested river valley and slopes and rich, moist soils; remaining example of a mature Floodplain Forest along the Ohio River; overall unusual natural community with high habitat diversity	Residential development along Georgetown Road; fragmentation due to roadways; gravel mining and all-terrain vehicle use along the Ohio River floodplain

*County significant is ranked according to how significant the Natural Heritage Area is according to the level of uniqueness to Beaver County

Source: Beaver County Natural Heritage Inventory, 1993

These forests are found on the slopes and uplands in Beaver County and are dominated by sugar maple, white oak, red oak, hickories, American beech, American basswood, and white ash. The Mesic Central Forest characterizes the smaller stream valleys, northern slopes, and more protected areas and is dominated by eastern hemlock.

The natural heritage areas include significant forest communities. The following is a list of the natural heritage area and its associated forest type:

Raccoon Creek State Park Tributary Stream Valley:

Mostly recovering Mesic Central Forest communities dominated by sugar maple and white oak

Wildflower Reserve:

Mesic Central Forest with sugar maple and white oak; Dry-Mesic Acidic Central Forest with mixed oaks and hickory; Floodplain Forest with sycamore, silver maple, American elm, and box elder

Mill Creek Floodplain:

Mature Floodplain Forest with large cottonwood, silver maple, elm trees and younger forest of buckeye, sycamore, silver maple, and American and red elm

School Road Slopes:

Northern Hardwood-Conifer forest community with American beech, white pine, eastern hemlock.

Raccoon Creek Floodplain:

Maturing from disturbances with sycamore, silver maple, and American elm

Creek Bend Slopes:

Northern Hardwoods community with eastern hemlock, sugar maple, black birch, and red maple

STEEP SLOPES

Slope information is important for land use planning as it affects transportation, building design, stormwater management, and sewage disposal. Steep slopes are a development constraint due to the lack of supportive surfaces for buildings and homes and instable soils, which make development on steep slopes cost prohibitive. However, steeply sloped areas should be incorporated into greenways in order to connect wildlife habitat corridors and natural areas.

Slopes in excess of 25% are found throughout the planning area. Portions of the Ohio riverfront are steeply sloped in Greene Township and northeastern Potter Township (Monaca Bluff area). Some of the more steeply sloped stream valleys include Squirrel Run, Peggs Run, Haden Run, Gums Run, Fishpot Run, Frames Run, and Service Creek. The land around the Ambridge Reservoir is also steeply sloped, in addition to the State Game Lands #189. Independence Township is extremely hilly throughout the township, with concentrations of steep slopes in southern and northeastern parts of the township. In addition, steep slopes are found along parts of Route 18 in Potter Township, Route 151 in Independence Township, and Pole Cat Hollow Road in Greene Township.

MINING

Mining and resource extraction industries can impact the environmental health and water quality in a region. Prior to 1977, when Congress passed the Federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act, (SMCRA), Pennsylvania produced one-third of all coal mined in the United States. However, the unregulated mining of the past scarred the land, degraded areas with subsidence potential and resulted in coal refuse and spoil piles, abandoned mine drainage

(AMD), dry and flooded strip mines, and abandoned and/or dilapidated buildings. Inactive, abandoned mines sites should be reclaimed and restored to the natural environment in order to prevent further negative environmental impacts.

There are several sites in the planning area occupied by active or inactive mining sites for coal, sand, and gravel. To the east and west of Georgetown in Greene Township are two sand and gravel mining sites. The sand and gravel mine to the east of Georgetown is active and owned and operated by Georgetown Sand and Gravel. The site to the west of Georgetown is inactive and currently owned by First Energy. This site is located in the Mill Creek natural heritage area and near the floodplain on the Ohio River. Also in Greene Township, is a former coal wash plant site located along Route 168 at Peggs Run. This site is being restored to its natural conditions by a local company with funding from the state. The project will restore two miles of Peggs Run and replant 80 acres of watershed land. There is an active coal mine located on Pole Cat Hollow Road where room and pillar mining has occurred extending into Shippingport Borough.

Abandoned mine drainage is impacting the health of the Raccoon Creek Watershed, primarily in Washington County. Abandoned sites are discharging iron into Raccoon Creek and its tributaries. While these discharge areas are located outside of the planning area, impaired water quality in the upper portion of the watershed in Washington County could potentially impact the lower part of the watershed in the planning area. Organizations involved in resolving the abandoned mine drainage problems in the Raccoon Creek Watershed include the Raccoon Creek Watershed Association, the Washington County Watershed Alliance, Cross Creek Watershed Association, Pennsylvania Cleanways, and the Independence Marsh Foundation, Inc.

AGRICULTURE AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION

The municipalities in the planning area have traditionally been rural communities with a strong agricultural presence, primarily in dairy farming. Potter Township, due to its size and location, has very little agriculture compared to Greene, Independence, and Raccoon Townships. A range of agricultural land uses are found in the region including small hobby farms, orchards, Christmas tree farms, cropland, and livestock and dairy farm operations. Many of the farms in the region are owned and operated by families with strong ties to the community.

The Environmental Features Map shows the location of prime agricultural soils, which are located in pockets throughout the planning area. Agricultural land use (as shown on the Existing Land Use Map on page 19) generally mirrors the location of prime agricultural soils where residential or commercial development does not currently exist. However, agricultural land use is not limited to areas in which prime agricultural soils are found.

Agricultural Preservation

According to the 1997 Census of Agriculture conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the number and acres of land in farms has decreased in Beaver County since 1992. In 1997, 19.3% of land in Beaver County was in farms, compared to 20.8% in 1995. In addition, the total land in farms in Beaver County decreased by over 5,000 acres over this time period. A number of issues have contributed to a loss of farmland in Pennsylvania and Beaver County. Farmers are finding it increasingly difficult to make a living with increased cost of equipment and labor, competition in the market place, increasing property taxes, and high health care and insurance costs. In addition, there is little interest from young people to enter into farming or carry on a family farm. Finally, development pressures and financial incentives in some rural areas are enticing farmers to forego farming and sell their land.



Janoski's Orchard, Raccoon Township

Farmland preservation programs are being implemented at the state, county, and local level in order to maintain agriculture as a viable industry in Pennsylvania and preserve the way of life in rural communities throughout the state. Farmland preservation programs that are being implemented in Pennsylvania and Beaver County are described in more detail below.

Agricultural Security Areas

The Agricultural Security Area (ASA) is a voluntary program administered by a local governing body. To participate, landowners must submit a petition to their governing body to enroll in the Agricultural Security Area program. A minimum of 250 acres is required among all the participating landowners. To be eligible for the program, the land included must currently be used for or be capable of being used for agricultural production. As part of an ASA, farmers are protected from nuisance complaints and local ordinances that would unreasonably restrict farming practices. Agriculture Security Areas are reviewed once every seven years. At this time, landowners have the option of opting out of the program.



Greene Township Farm

The Community Assets Map on page 31 shows the location of Agricultural Security Areas in the planning area. There are Agricultural Security Areas in all four townships in the planning area. However, there is interest from landowners in Potter Township in participating in the program, but they do not have enough land to meet the 250-acre minimum requirement for establishing an ASA. Therefore, the Beaver County Land Preservation Board is exploring options of a coordinated ASA program between Potter and Raccoon Townships.

Table 1-24 summarizes the land enrollment in Agricultural Security Areas for the planning area. There are 436 parcels enrolled in the Agriculture Security Areas totaling 13,951 acres. The Agriculture Security Areas in Raccoon and Independence Townships will undergo their seven-year review in 2004, and Greene Township will undergo a review in 2005.

Agricultural Conservation Easements

Table 1-24 Agriculture Security Area Enrollment

Township	Parcels	Acres
Greene	126	5,018.30
Independence	97	4,300
Raccoon & Potter	213	3,632.79
Total	436	13,951.00

The Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program was established to prevent the loss of farmland to development and other non-agricultural uses. The program is administered by a state preservation board in cooperation with county agricultural land preservation boards. The program enables states, counties, and local governments to purchase conservation easements (or development rights) from local farmers. To be considered, the applicant must meet specific criteria regarding the quality of the farmland to be protected, the stewardship practices, and the likelihood of conversion and development of the land. The sale of their development rights provides farmers with capital for continued operations and maintenance of their farms. To qualify for an easement, a farm must be a minimum of 50 acres and part of an existing Agricultural Security Area. According to the Beaver County Agricultural Land Preservation Board, the county currently holds a total of eleven conservation easements for farms in Beaver County. There are no farms in the planning area participating in the Conservation Easement Purchase Program. The county has been averaging about two easements per year and is working on three easements to be added for 2004. They currently have applications from one landowner in Greene Township and one landowner in Independence Township to be considered for the easement program.

Clean and Green Program

The Clean and Green Program preserves farmland and open space by taxing land according to the use of the land, rather than the market value. This eases a landowner's local tax burden by lowering a farm's assessed value. A minimum of ten acres is required to qualify and the farm must generate at least \$2,000 in annual income. Qualifying farmland uses include agricultural production, an agricultural reserve, and open space. Parcels less than ten acres and capable of producing \$2000 annually from the sale of agricultural products are eligible for the agriculture use designation.

This program appears to be having a positive effect in the southeastern part of Pennsylvania where there is development pressure on small farms and little open space remains. In areas with large amounts of open space, as more gentleman farms or homeowners with small tracts of land are accepted into the program, the local tax base can be significantly reduced. This may limit the ability of the local governing body to maintain a reasonable level of public services. Beaver County participates in the Clean and Green program, as do the municipalities in the planning area. The Clean and Green program is administered by the Beaver County Assessment Office. Participation in the program is as follows:

- Greene - 57 farms
- Potter - 11 farms
- Independence - 85 farms
- Raccoon - 59 farms

Education and Technical Assistance

The Beaver County Conservation District and the Penn State Cooperative Extension in Beaver County provide technical assistance and education programs to farmers throughout Beaver County. Some of the annual events sponsored by the Cooperative Extension include Field Days, Crop Days, Pesticide Certification Information, and regional dairy workshops.



Potter Township Park

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Active and passive recreation areas and facilities are valuable assets that add to the quality of life in a region. Recreation areas consist of both developed land and undeveloped land. The developed areas often include active parks and recreation facilities. The undeveloped land often includes the passive recreational uses such as hiking, fishing, nature watching, and camping. Undeveloped passive recreation areas also serve to protect streams and stream valleys, forests, scenic views, and serve as buffers and greenway corridors. The number and type of recreational facilities in a municipality and region should be correlated with population density in order to meet the varying needs of a community.

This section identifies and classifies parks, recreation facilities, and open space opportunities in the municipalities of Raccoon, Greene, Independence, and Potter Townships. Criteria developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) are used to classify the recreational facilities according to the type of recreational opportunities, the facility size, and service area. The classifications are defined in more detail below.

The Community Assets Map should be referenced when reviewing this section. The map indicates the location of park and recreation areas in the municipalities. This section was compiled from the following resources: the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, the Beaver County Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plan, the Park Master Plan for Independence Township Community Park, key person interviews, and a field view of the planning area.

The benefits of recreation, parks, and open space assets are essential to the quality of life and relate to environmental quality, economic conditions, community health, and personal health.

Table 1-25 Benefits of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

<p><i>Environmental Benefits:</i> Ensure clean water and air Preserves the wildlife Reduces pollution Protects ecosystems Provides a place to enjoy nature’s beauty</p>	<p><i>Economic Benefits:</i> Increases tourism Enhances land values Increases business retention Generates revenue Reduces vandalism and crime</p>
<p><i>Community Benefits:</i> Provides a meeting place to interact with neighbors Reduces crime and delinquency Connects families Support youth Offers lifelines for elderly</p>	<p><i>Personal Benefits:</i> Reduces stress Increases life expectancy Balances work and play Eliminates boredom</p>

Regional Park

A regional park is defined as an area of natural quality for passive outdoor recreation. These activities include many outdoor opportunities such as viewing or studying nature or wildlife habitat, picnicking, fishing, swimming, boating, and hiking, among others. A regional park preserves large areas of land for conservation and natural resource management, with a small amount of land used for active recreation. Parks of this nature are normally large in area and begin at approximately 100-acres in size. The service area of a regional park is 40 to 50 miles.

Community Park

A community park is defined as an area of diverse environmental quality, which includes areas suited for varying types of recreational opportunities. These activities may include athletic complexes, large swimming pools, or areas of natural quality for outdoor recreation such as walking, viewing nature or wildlife habitat, or picnicking. The service radius for a community park is one to three miles and the parks range from 30-to 50-acres in size.

Neighborhood Park

This type of park is easily accessible to the adjacent neighborhood population. Its purpose is to be a compact area for non-intense recreational activities such as field games, court games, playground apparatus areas, skating, picnicking, wading pools, and other related activities. Neighborhood parks are not as large as community park facilities, and are designed to serve a concentrated population. They are typically less than 25-acres in size.

Play lots/Mini-parks

Play lots or mini-parks provided at the sub-neighborhood level serve residents within the immediate vicinity. These play areas are typically less than one-acre in size and can be as small as 2500 square feet. The general characteristics of a play lot or mini-park include several pieces of playground equipment and park benches.

Special Use Facilities

These areas are for special recreational activities such as golf courses, nature centers, marinas, zoos, conservatories, arboretums, display gardens, arenas, outdoor theaters, gun ranges, and campgrounds. There is no applicable standard for the service area for a special use facility.

Greenways and Linear Parks

A greenway is a contiguous corridor of open space. Greenways can take on a range of forms (narrow verses wide), travel through a variety of different places (urban, suburban, rural), and can be located on public and private lands and along waterways. Some are used for recreation or preserving scenery, while others are used for environmental protection. Usually, greenways serve both environmental and passive recreational roles. In Pennsylvania, greenway networks are made up of hubs and spokes. The linear greenway areas are considered to be the spokes that connect significant cultural, natural, and recreational assets, which constitute the hubs.

A linear park is another type of park, which is different from those previously listed, yet similar in some ways to greenways. Linear parks also play an important role in a region's open space and recreation assets and typically take the form of bike paths and trails.

PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN THE PLANNING AREA

The park and recreation facilities for each municipality in the region are described in more detail below. The NRPC classification is noted for each facility.

RACCOON TOWNSHIP

Raccoon Township Municipal Park - Community Park

The Raccoon Township Municipal Park is a 45-acre community park. A master plan has recently been completed to upgrade the park's facilities. The study is based on input from existing park users and the public, as well as an assessment of population projections and community recreation needs. The study makes programming and maintenance recommendations.



Raccoon Township Municipal Park

Existing facilities within the Raccoon Township Municipal Park include the following:

- Walking Trail
- Camp Area
- 5 Baseball Fields
- Football Field
- Announcer's Booth
- Basketball Court
- Batting Cages
- Sand Mound
- Sand Volleyball Court
- Tot-lot

GREENE TOWNSHIP

Greene Fields Municipal Complex ("Farm Site") - Community Park

The Greene Fields Municipal Complex is a 95-acre site that includes municipal buildings and storage facilities. The site also serve as an area for community recreation and events. On the old farm site is a renovated barn, used to host community events. The farm site also includes the North Mile Trail.

Mill Creek Community Park - Community Park

Mill Creek Community Park is located on Route 168 near the municipal building. Existing facilities include:

- three baseball fields
- one softball field
- two batting cages
- one track
- one multi-purpose field
- playground



Mill Creek Community Park, Greene Township

- restroom facility
- concession stand
- picnic tables and grills

Hookstown Fairgrounds - Special Use Facility

The Hookstown Fairgrounds, located along Route 168, is the site of the annual Hookstown Fair.

Hookstown Borough Playground - Neighborhood Park

The playground is located in Hookstown Borough, in the center of Greene Township. The playground has a basketball court.

Proposed Riverside Park

Greene Township owns a 165-acre undeveloped site between Hill Road and the Ohio River. The site is not very accessible and is not open to public use at this time. However, the township has considered developing a riverside park and horseback riding trail on the site.

Fun Zone

A community playground area located adjacent to the South Side School Complex.

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP

Raccoon Creek State Park - Regional Reserve

Raccoon Creek State Park, established in the 1930's, is a significant regional park for the region. The majority of the park is located in Hanover Township, yet a small portion of the park, including the wildflower reserve, is located in Independence Township. Recreational opportunities and facilities in the park are plentiful. The park is used for picnicking, fishing, swimming in the lake, ice skating on the lake, boating, hunting, hiking, camping, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, and nature watching. Raccoon State Park is one of the few state parks that offer special cabin lodging. The park offers both modern and rustic cabins.

There have been recent efforts to clean-up Raccoon Creek, which travels through the planning area and the Independence side of Raccoon Creek State Park, in order to reduce the sulfurous mine drainage pollution in the stream. There is great recreational potential for Raccoon Creek. During the 1960's, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy developed an area along Raccoon Creek as a wildflower preserve, which is still a passive recreational resource.

Independence Township Municipal Park - Community Park

The Independence Township Municipal Park is a 60-acre site located on School Road, near the school buildings and playground facilities. The park site is undeveloped. In September 2003, a master plan was completed for the park. The plan includes a community background assessment, inventory and analysis of the site, a park vision and goals, and recommendations for implementation.

The master plan recommends the following facilities for the park:

- skate park
- basketball courts
- sand volleyball courts
- community playground
- open space for spontaneous recreation pursuits
- picnic groves and shelters
- site for a new municipal building
- outdoor classroom
- accessible fishing platform along Raccoon Creek
- aesthetic and shade plantings
- enhancing existing wetland for wildlife habitat

The time frame for developing the park is over the next ten- to twenty-years. Therefore, the project has been broken into five phases for construction.

Beaver County Environmental Center and Independence Marsh Wetlands - Special Use Facility

Owned and managed by the Beaver County Conservation District, the Beaver County Environmental Center is located off Cow Path Road across from the Independence Marsh Wetlands. The center and wetlands are used for environmental education.

State Game Lands #189 - Special Use Facility

The State Game Lands are located along the western border of Independence Township. Allison Road traverses through the game lands. The game lands are a common hunting spot in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Sports Fields

There is a playground and school fields located at Independence Elementary School on School Road. This area supplements community recreation facilities while plans are being made to development the Independence Community Park. There are also private soccer fields located on Service Creek Road.

POTTER TOWNSHIP

Potter Township Neighborhood Park

The three-acre neighborhood park is located off Mowry Road. The park has a basketball court, playground, and a pavilion and several picnic tables and grills.



Beaver County Conservation District Environmental Center, Independence Township



Potter Township Municipal Park



Transportation and Traffic Assessment

Frankfort Road, Potter Township

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for Greene, Independence, Raccoon, and Potter Townships, a transportation analysis was completed by URS Corporation. The goal of the transportation analysis is to evaluate the conditions of the existing roadway network. This evaluation will be used to prioritize roadways and intersections in need of general improvements.

A field view of the existing transportation network conducted in February 2004. The field evaluation was supplemented by average daily traffic volumes and roadway functional classifications provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Engineering District 11-0. The results of the transportation evaluation are summarized in the following sections.

The Transportation Issues Map should be referenced when reviewing this section. The map identifies functional classifications for roadways and notes transportation conditions for each municipality in the planning area.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK AND CIRCULATION PATTERNS

The study area involves four townships located in southeastern Beaver County, Greene, Raccoon, Independence and Potter Township. The total study area is approximately 75 square miles. The townships are rural in nature and low density residential development is the dominant development type in this area.

Greene Township

Greene Township is a rural community with rolling hills and windy roads and little to no sidewalks. Greene

Township is surrounded by Hancock County, West Virginia to the west, Raccoon Township to the east, Hanover Township to the south and the Ohio River, Midland Borough and Shippingport Borough to the north. Greene Township has an area of 26.2 square miles, 21 miles of state roads and 38 miles of municipal roads.

The main roads in Greene Township include U.S. 30, S.R. 151, and S.R. 168. U.S. 30 runs in an east/west direction. It provides access to Hancock County, West Virginia traveling west and Hanover Township traveling to the southeast. S.R. 168 runs in a north/south direction from Hanover Township to Hookstown Borough, and then veers northeast toward Shippingport Borough. S.R. 151, an east/west corridor, enters Greene Township in the southeastern corner of the township and terminates at U.S. 30.

Independence Township

Independence Township is a rural community with rolling hills and windy roads with little to no sidewalks. Independence Township is surrounded by Hanover Township to the west, Hopewell Township (Allegheny County) to the east, Raccoon Township to the north, and Findlay Township (Allegheny County) to the south. Independence Township has an area of 23 square miles, 16 miles of state roads and 42.92 miles of municipal roads.

The main roads in Independence Township include U.S. 30 and S.R. 151. U.S. 30 runs in an east/west direction from Hanover Township to Findlay Township in Allegheny County. S.R. 151 is the major east/west transportation corridor in the township.

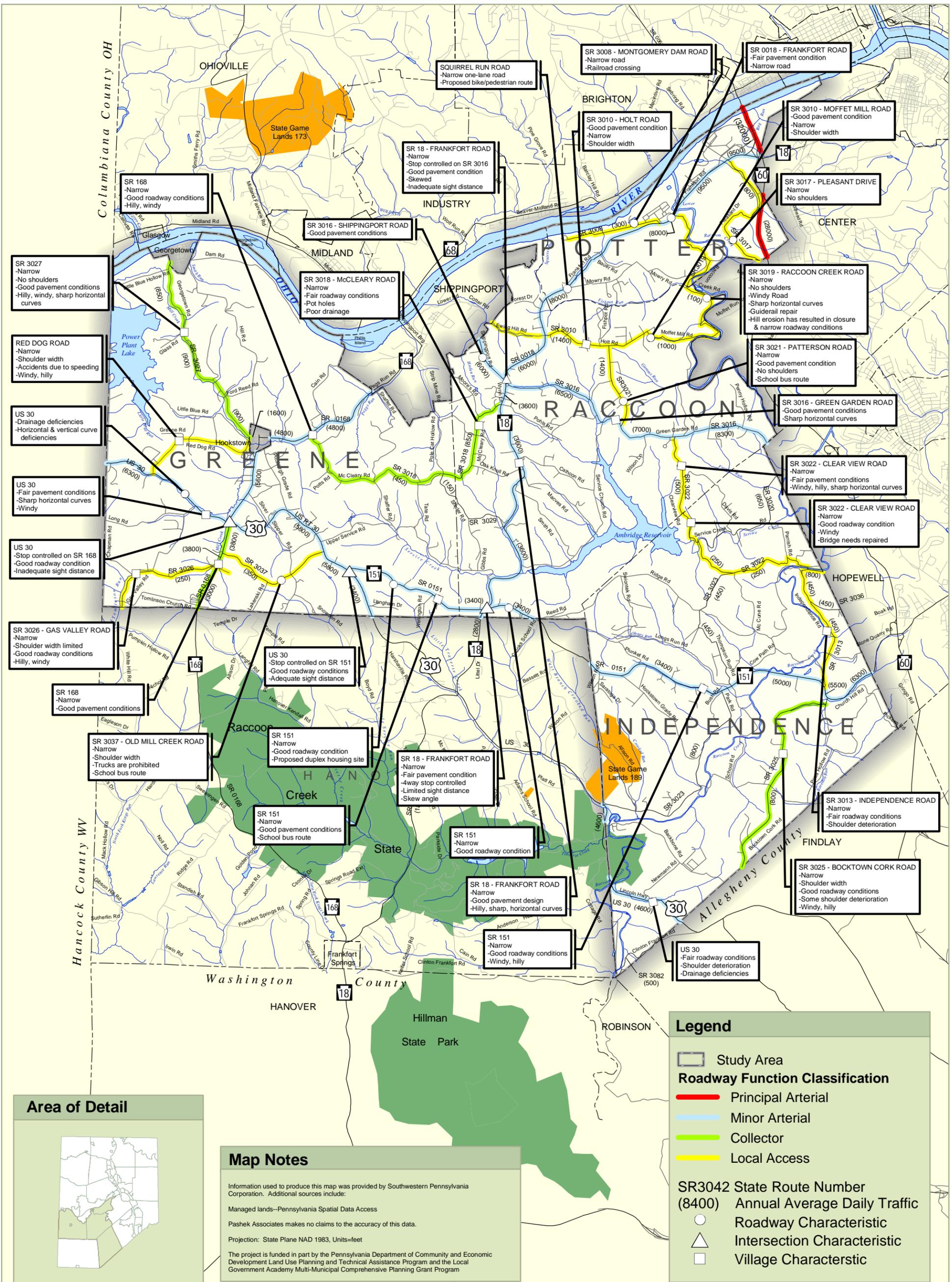
Raccoon Township

Raccoon Township is a rural community with rolling hills and windy roads with little to no sidewalks. Raccoon Township is surrounded by Greene Township to the west, Center Township to the east, Potter Township to the north, and Independence Township to the south. Raccoon Township has an area of 20 square miles, 24 miles of state roads and 29 miles of municipal roads.

Table 1-26
Roadway Classification and Traffic Volumes*
Source: PennDOT District 11-0, 2004

STATE ROUTE	LOCATION	LOCAL NAME	FUNCTIONAL CLASS	AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (vehicles per day)	ROAD WIDTH (feet)	NUMBER OF LANES	SHOULDER WIDTH (feet)
U.S. 30	Greene Twp.		Minor Arterial	6,300	18	2	2
S.R. 168	Greene Twp.	Pegs Run Rd	Minor Arterial/Collector	4,300	18	2	1
S.R. 151	Greene Twp.	Route 151	Minor Arterial	3,400	18	2	2
	Greene Twp.	McCleary Rd	Collector	800	16	2	2
S.R. 3026	Greene Twp.	Gas Valley Rd	Collector	250	16	2	<1
	Greene Twp.	Georgetown Rd	Collector	900	16	2	<1
S.R. 3037	Greene Twp.	Old Mill Creek Rd	Local Access Rd	350	16	2	<1
U.S. 30	Independence Twp	U.S. 30	Minor Arterial	4600	18	2	2
S.R. 151	Independence Twp	Route 151	Minor Arterial	3400	18	2	2
S.R. 3013	Independence Twp	Independence Rd	Local Access Rd	450	16	2	<1
S.R. 3022	Independence Twp.	Clearview Rd	Local Access Rd	500	16	2	2
S.R. 3023	Independence Twp	Park Rd	Collector	800	16	2	2
S.R. 3025	Independence Twp	Bocktown Cork Rd	Collector	800	16	2	<1
S.R. 151	Raccoon Twp	Route 151	Minor Arterial	3,400	18	2	2
S.R.18	Raccoon Twp	Franfort Road	Minor Arterial	8,000	18	2	1
S.R. 3010	Raccoon Twp	Holt Rd/Moffet Mill Rd	Local Access Rd	1,400	16	2	<=1
S.R. 3016	Raccoon Twp	Shippingport Rd/Green Garden Rd	Minor Arterial	8,300	22	2	2
S.R. 3018	Raccoon Twp	McCleary Rd	Collector	850	16	2	<1
S.R. 3021	Raccoon Twp	Patterson Rd	Local Access Rd	1,400	16	2	<1
S.R. 3022	Raccoon Twp	Clearview Rd	Local Access Rd	500	16	2	1
S.R.60	Potter Twp	Beaver Valley Expressway	Principal Arterial	28,000	48	4	4
S.R. 18	Potter Twp	Frankfort Rd	Minor Arterial	9,500	18	2	1
S.R. 3008	Potter Twp	Montgomery Dam Rd	Local Access Rd	300	18	2	1
S.R. 3017	Potter Twp	Pleasant Dr	Local Access Rd	1,800	16	2	<1
S.R. 3019	Potter Twp	Raccoon Creek Rd	Local Access Rd	100	16	2	<1

* Roadway Classifications are based on the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Classification.



Map Notes

Information used to produce this map was provided by Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation. Additional sources include:

- Managed lands--Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access
- Pashek Associates makes no claims to the accuracy of this data.

Projection: State Plane NAD 1983, Units=feet

The project is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program and the Local Government Academy Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Grant Program

Legend

- Study Area

Roadway Function Classification

- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Local Access

SR3042 State Route Number (8400)

- Annual Average Daily Traffic
- Roadway Characteristic
- △ Intersection Characteristic
- Village Characteristic

The main roads in Raccoon Township are S.R. 18, S.R. 151, and S.R. 3016 (Green Garden Road). Route 18 is the primary north/south route, which traverses the western side of the township. S.R. 3016 (Green Garden Road) is a main east/west corridor connecting Shippingport Borough to Hopewell Township (Allegheny County) providing direct access to S.R. 60. S.R. 151 is also a main east/west corridor in the township connecting Greene Township with Hanover Township.

Potter Township

Potter Township is a rural community with some industry. It is relatively flat with some rolling hills and windy roads with little to no sidewalks. Potter Township is located in south-central Beaver County on the south side of the Ohio River. It is surrounded by Raccoon Township to the west and south, Center Township to the east and the Ohio River to the north. Potter Township has an area of 6.73 square miles, 12 miles of state roads and approximately 5.5 miles of municipal roads.

The main roads in Potter Township are S.R. 60 and S.R. 18. S.R. 18 is an east/west corridor that parallels the Ohio River. S.R. 18 provides a major link for trucks traveling between Shippingport Borough and S.R. 60. S.R. 60 runs north/south along the eastern limits of the study area. Access to the study area is provided at the following four interchanges within or directly adjacent to the study area: S.R. 151, S.R. 3016 (Green Garden Road), S.R. 3010 (Holt Road/Moffet Mill Road), and S.R. 18 (Frankfort Road). S.R. 60 also provides one of the limited number of Ohio River crossings adjacent to the study area.

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Functional classifications are used to categorize roadways according to their function. Primarily roadways serve two functions, mobility (the ability to go from one place to another) and access (the ability to enter adjacent property). The roadway's functional classification is based on the degree to which the roadway is used for these two functions. For the purpose of this study, the roadways will be classified into the following three categories:

- 1) Arterials provide for high mobility and limited access. Arterials often connect an urban center with outlying communities and employment. Arterials are designed for high volumes of traffic at moderate speeds. PennDOT further classifies Arterials as Principal and Minor.
- 2) Collectors provide access between local roads and streets with arterials. Collector roads are intended to provide for moderate volumes of traffic at reduced speeds.
- 3) Local Roads provide immediate access to adjoining land uses. Local roads are intended to provide for transportation within a particular neighborhood, or to one of the other two road types.

The following paragraphs provide descriptions of the various roads within the study area. These descriptions are summarized by roadway functional classification for each township. The Transportation Issues Map shows the existing transportation system. Table 1-25 lists the roads in the study area, grouped by municipality, and their volume and classification based on the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Roadway Classification. Discrepancies may exist between the PennDOT classification and the local classification.

GREENE TOWNSHIP

Arterials

U.S. 30

U.S. 30 is a two-lane Minor Arterial with 12' lanes and 2' shoulders. It runs west/east from Hancock County, West Virginia southeast to Hanover Township. U.S. 30 has a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour (mph). The average daily traffic (ADT) volume on this route ranges from 3,400 to 6,300 vehicles. There are residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial land uses along S.R. 30.

U.S. 30 has minor potholes and some drainage issues. Between its intersections with Red Dog Road to Long Road, most of the shoulder on the north side of the road has deteriorated. There is some evidence that the deterioration may be due to a creek that runs parallel to U.S. 30 that overflows in this area.

The intersection of U.S. 30 with S.R. 168 is two-way stop controlled intersection with stop signs on S.R. 168. The intersection of U.S. 30 and S.R. 151 is a T-intersection that is stop controlled on S.R. 151.



U.S. 30, Greene Township



U.S. 30 Road Conditions, Greene Township

S.R. 168

S.R. 168 is a two-lane north/south roadway with 9' lanes and 1' shoulders. It is classified as a Minor Arterial between Shippingport Borough and U.S. 30, and has an ADT volume of 5,600 vehicles. South of U.S. 30, it is a Collector where the ADT ranges from 3,000 to 3,800 vehicles. There is an 11% truck percentage. S.R. 168 has a posted speed limit of 45 mph. Adjacent land uses include residential, industrial, agricultural, park and recreational, public buildings, and commercial.



S.R. 168, Greene Township

S.R. 151

S.R. 151 is a two-lane Minor Arterial with 9' lane widths and 2' shoulders that runs west/east intersecting with U.S. 30 and connecting to Raccoon Township. S.R. 151 has a posted speed limit of 40 mph and an ADT of 3400 vehicles. There are residential, agricultural, park and recreational, and public building land uses on S.R. 151.

There is a proposed duplex housing project on this road.



S.R. 151, Greene Township

Collector*

S.R. 168

S.R. 168 is a two-lane Collector with 9' lane widths and 1' shoulders that runs north/south through Greene Township. S.R. 168 has a posted speed limit of 45 mph with an ADT that ranges from 3,000 to 3,800 vehicles. There are residential, agricultural, park and recreational, and public building land uses along S.R. 168.

Georgetown Road - S.R. 3027

Georgetown Road is a two-lane Collector road with 8' lanes widths and narrow to no shoulders. It runs north/south connecting Georgetown Borough and S.R. 168. Georgetown Road has a posted speed limit of 40 miles per hour with an ADT between 850 and 900 vehicles. There are residential and agricultural land uses, with some industrial on Georgetown Road.

Gas Valley Road - S.R. 3026

Gas Valley Road is a two-lane Collector with 8' lane widths and little to no shoulders. It runs west/northeast connecting Hanover Township to S.R. 168 with a posted speed limit of 35 mph and an ADT of 250 vehicles. This road provides access for adjacent residential and agricultural land uses.

McCleary Road - S.R. 3018

McCleary Road is a two-lane roadway with 10' lane widths and 2' shoulders. It is classified as a Collector and provides east/west access to residential and agricultural uses between S.R. 168 and S.R. 18. McCleary Road has a posted speed limit of 30 mph and ADTs range from 450 to 850 vehicles. Although McCleary Road is a township road, there is a state owned bridge that crosses over a small creek.



McCleary Road, Greene Township

Local Access Roads*

Old Mill Creek - S.R. 3037

Old Mill Creek is a two-lane Local Access Road with 8' lanes widths and narrow to no shoulders. Old Mill Creek has a posted speed limit of 35 mph with an ADT of 350 vehicles. Old Mill Creek runs west/east between S.R. 168 and U.S. 30, providing access to adjacent residential and agricultural land uses.

Trucks are prohibited on this road, however, it is used as a school bus route.



Old Mill Creek Road, Greene Township

Red Dog Road

Red Dog Road is a two-lane tar and chipped Local Access Road with 8' lanes and no shoulders. Red Dog Road has a posted speed limit of 35 mph and provides access between U.S. 30 and Hookstown Borough. There are residential and agricultural land uses on Red Dog Road.

Local authorities have noted that there are a high number of accidents on this road due to speeding.



Red Dog Road, Greene Township

*at the time of writing, Greene Township was revising the weight and speed limit postings on Township maintained roads. The proposed speed and weight limit for collector and local access roads is 25 mph and 10 tons, with the exception of Georgetown Road and McCleary Road.

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP

Arterial

U.S. 30

U.S. 30 is a two-lane Minor Arterial with 12' lanes widths and 2' shoulders. It runs west/east in the southwestern part of Independence Township from Hanover Township to Findlay Township (Allegheny County). U.S. 30 has a posted speed limit of 45 mph and an ADT of 4,600 vehicles. There are some residential and agricultural land uses along S.R. 30.

In general, the roadway pavement is in need of some minor repair. There are also spot locations with some deterioration of the shoulders and drainage deficiencies.

S.R. 151

S.R. 151 is a two-lane Minor Arterial with 9' lane widths and 2' shoulders. It runs west/east through the middle of Independence Township, connecting Hanover Township with S.R. 60.

Throughout the township, S.R. 151 has a posted speed limit of 40 mph and ADTs that range from 3,400 and 6,300 vehicles. There are some residential, agricultural, commercial, public buildings, and industrial land uses along S.R. 151.

S.R. 151 is a school bus route for Independence Elementary School. Both approaches to the school are signed with flashing school zone signs.



S.R. 151, Independence Township

Collector

Bocktown Cork Road - S.R. 3025

Bocktown Cork Road is a two-lane Collector with 8' lanes and no shoulders. It is a hilly, windy road that runs west/northeast connecting Findlay Township (Allegheny County) with S.R. 151. It has a posted speed limit of 40 mph and an ADT of 800 vehicles. There are some residential and agricultural land uses along S.R. 3025.

In general, the roadway is in good condition, however, there are spot locations with some deterioration of the shoulders.



S.R. 151, Independence Township

Local Access Road

Independence Road - S.R. 3013

Independence Road is a two-lane Local Access Road with 8' lanes and varying shoulder width. Independence Road is a north/south road connecting Clearview Road (S.R. 3022) and S.R. 151. It has a posted speed limit of 40 mph and an ADT of 450 vehicles. There are some residential, agricultural, commercial, public buildings, and industrial land uses along S.R. 3013.

There were potholes that were noted along with some deterioration of shoulders.



Bocktown Cork Road, Independence Township

Clearview Road - S.R. 3022

Clearview Road is a two-lane Local Access Road with 8' lanes and 2' shoulders. Clearview Road is a west/southeast road connecting Green Garden Road (S.R. 3016) and Independence Road (S.R. 3013). It carries a volume of 250 to 500 vehicles per day. Adjacent land uses along this road include residential and agricultural. At the intersection of Clearview Road and Independence Road, there is a bridge that is need of repair.



Clearview Road, Independence Township

RACCOON TOWNSHIP

Arterial

S.R. 151

S.R. 151 is a two-lane roadway with 9' lanes and 2' shoulders. It is a Minor Arterial that runs west/east through the middle of Independence Township, and provides access to S.R. 60. S.R. 151 has a posted speed limit of 40 mph and an ADT volume of 3400 vehicles. There are some residential and agricultural land uses along S.R. 151 and is used as school bus route.



Bridge on Clearview Road, Independence Township

S.R. 18

S.R. 18 is a two-lane Minor Arterial with 9' lane widths and 1' shoulders. It runs north/south through Raccoon Township connecting Potter Township and Hanover Township. It intersects with two other minor arterials, S.R. 3016 (Green Garden Road) and S.R. 151. S.R. 18 has a posted speed limit of 45 mph. The ADT volume on this road ranges from 3,600 vehicles near S.R. 151 to 9,500 vehicles at S.R. 60. There are some residential, agricultural, and commercial land uses along S.R. 18.



S.R. 151, Raccoon Township

Shippingport Road/Green Garden Road (S.R. 3016)

Shippingport Road/Green Garden Road is a two-lane Minor Arterial with 11' lanes and 2' shoulders. It runs west/east connection Shippingport Borough to S.R. 18. At S.R. 18, S.R. 3016 changes road name to Green Garden Road and continues to Hopewell Township where it intersects S.R. 60. S.R. 3016 has a posted speed limit of 45 mph. Traffic volumes along this road vary. Shippingport Road has an ADT of 6,000 vehicles on Shippingport Road and ADTs on Green Garden Road range from 6,500 to 8,300 vehicles. There are residential, agricultural, commercial, park and recreational, and public building land uses on S.R. 3016.



S.R. 18, Raccoon Township

Traveling east from Shippingport there is a truck-climbing lane, which ends just before the intersection of S.R. 18.

Collector

McCleary Road - S.R. 3018

McCleary Road is a two-lane Collector with 8' lane widths and no shoulders. It runs west/northeast connecting Greene Township



Shippingport Road/Green Garden Road, Raccoon Township

and S.R. 18 McCleary Road has a posted speed limit of 35 mph and an ADT of 850 vehicles. There are residential and agricultural land uses on S.R. 3018.

This road has several large potholes. In addition, poor drainage conditions exist along the road that must be addressed.

Local Access Road

Holt Road/Moffet Mill Rd - S.R. 3010

Holt Road/Moffet Mill Rd is a two-lane paved Local Access Road with 8'-9' lane widths and 1' to no shoulders. Holt Road, a west/east road that connects S.R. 18 to Patterson Road (S.R. 3021) then becomes Moffet Mill Road that intersects with its interchange at S.R. 60 in Center Township. S.R. 3010 has a posted speed limit of 45 mph with ADTs of 1,400 vehicles on Holt Road and 1,000 vehicles on Moffet Mill Road. There are residential and agricultural land uses on S.R. 3010.



Holt /Moffet Mill Road, Raccoon Township

This is also a school bus route.

Patterson Road - S.R. 3021

Patterson Road is a two-lane Local Access Road with 8' lanes and no shoulders. It is a north/south road that connects Holt Road (S.R. 3010) to Green Garden Road (S.R. 3016). Patterson Road has a posted speed limit of 35 mph and an ADT of 1,400 vehicles.



Patterson Road, Raccoon Township

Raccoon Elementary School is located on this road. Standard school zone signing is located on both approaches. There are also residential and agricultural land uses on S.R. 3021.

Clearview Road - S.R. 3022

Clearview Road is a two-lane Local Access Road with 8' lanes and no shoulders. Clearview Road has a posted speed limit of 30 mph and an ADT of 500 vehicles. There are residential and agricultural land uses on S.R. 3010.



Clearview Road, Raccoon Township

POTTER TOWNSHIP

Arterial

S.R.60

S.R. 60 is a 4-lane Principal Arterial with 12' lane widths and 4' shoulders. It runs through Potter Township at the eastern most tip. It is a limited access facility with an interchange at S.R. 18. At the interchange, there is a 7% truck percentage. It has a posted speed limit of 65 mph and an ADT of 28,000 vehicles.

Frankfort Road - S.R. 0018

S.R. 18 is a two-lane Minor Arterial. It has narrow lane widths (8-9') and 1' shoulders. It runs west/northeast connecting Raccoon



Franfort Road, Potter Township

Township to Center Township. S.R. 18 has a posted speed limit of 45 mph and ADTs that range from 8,000 to 9,500 vehicles. There are two signalized intersections in Potter Township on S.R. 18. One is at the intersection of S.R. 18 and Pleasant Drive (S.R. 3017) and the other is located in front of the Nova Chemical Plant. S.R. 18 is used for transporting material back and forth from the Nova Chemical Plant located on S.R. 18 in Potter Township to the Gypsum plant in Shippingport Borough. There are residential, industrial, and agricultural land uses on S.R. 3010.



Pleasant Drive, Potter Township

Local Access Road

Montgomery Dam Road - S.R. 3008

Montgomery Dam Road is a two-lane Local Access Road with 8-9' lane widths and 1' shoulders. It runs west/east providing access to S.R. 18 to the lock and dam at the Montgomery Locks and Dam. S.R. 3008 has a posted speed limit of 35 mph and an ADT of 300 vehicles. This road also provides access to and from a gravel company. There is an at-grade railroad crossing on Montgomery Dam Road.



Raccoon Creek Road, Potter Township

Pleasant Drive - S.R. 3017

Pleasant Drive is a two-lane Local Access Road with 8' lane widths and no shoulders. Pleasant Drive is a north/south road that parallels S.R. 60 between the S.R. 18 and S.R. 3010 interchanges. Pleasant Drive has a posted speed limit of 30 mph and an ADT of 1,800 vehicles and is primarily a residential road.

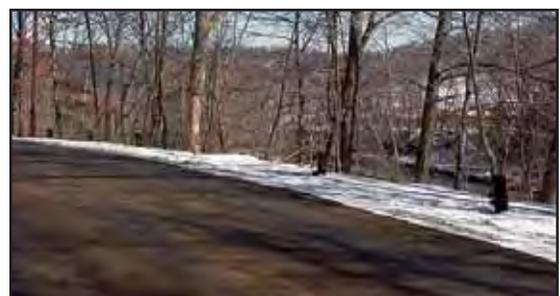


Ice along Raccoon Creek Road

Raccoon Creek Road - S.R. 3019

Raccoon Creek Road is a two-lane Local Access with 8' lane widths and no shoulders. It has a posted speed limit of 35 mph with an ADT of 100 vehicles and is used as a school bus route.

Raccoon Creek Road is a very windy road. Some of the cable guide rail was noted to have been knocked down and lying on the ground. There was evidence that the creek had overflowed onto the road, leaving behind huge pieces of ice on both sides of the road. Mudslides have occurred on this road adjacent to Mowry Road, which have resulted in the reduction of Raccoon Creek Road to one lane in this area. There are a few residents along this road.



Raccoon Creek Road Guard Rail

This road is need of immediate attention.

Squirrel Run Road

Squirrel Run Road is a one-lane 10' wide local road. In addition to providing residential access, construction of a proposed bicycle/pedestrian route to the Ohio River is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2004.



Squirrel Run Road, Potter Township



Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Route 151, Independence Township

The distribution area and capacity of public water and sewer infrastructure influence the location and intensity of development in a community. Water and sewer infrastructure enables growth and development to take place at greater densities. Therefore, municipalities should guide infrastructure decisions with community input on the type and intensity of future growth desired in a community. The development and expansion of infrastructure should not be an end goal in itself, but should serve the broader development and preservation goals of the community, while at the same time protecting the public health, safety, and welfare.

This section identifies the existing public water and sewer utility providers and service areas in the planning area.

The Water Service Area Map and the Sewer Service Area Map on pages should be referenced when reviewing this section. Digital data for mapping of the service areas was obtained from the Pennsylvania State Data Center (PASDA) and Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

WATER SERVICE

Of the entire planning area, only portions of Potter and Raccoon Townships are served by public water. The remainder of the planning area, including all of Greene and Independence Townships, rely on private wells for water. The two public water providers that service Potter and Raccoon Townships are the Aliquippa Municipal Water Authority and the Center Township Municipal Authority.

The lack of water infrastructure has been identified as an issue for both Greene and Independence Townships, and the planning area as a whole. The previous comprehensive plans for all municipalities in the planning area note the lack of public water as an emerging issue that needs to be addressed as development continues. However, the development and/or expansion of water infrastructure and facilities have been cost prohibitive for the municipalities in the

planning area, particularly Greene and Independence Townships, up until this point. A shortage of water has been identified as an issue for the school facilities, in particular, for several years.

Several studies have been conducted to assess options for providing public water service to the planning area. They include:

- Feasibility Study - Southside Beaver County Water Supply (1994)
- South Side School Water Study (1993)
- Engineering Report on Prefeasibility Study - Public Water System (1989)
- Airport Impact and Planning Preparedness Study in Southern Beaver County (1990)

The studies identify options and alternative scenarios for providing both public water and sewer service to parts of the planning area. However, conclusions are made that extensions of water and sewer from existing authorities are cost prohibitive given the level of residential development in the planning area. Water authorities located adjacent to the planning area include the following (as shown on the Water Service Map):

- Vanport Township Municipal Authority
- Midland Borough Municipal Authority
- Creswell Heights Municipal Authority
- Beaver Borough Municipal Authority
- Industry Borough Municipal Authority
- Shippingport Borough Municipal Authority

Greene Township

The 1994 Comprehensive Development Plan Review and Update for Greene Township identify alternative service options for the delivery of water to the township. The plan finds the delivery of water as the primary challenge for Greene Township, as opposed to the supply of water. The delivery of water to the South Side School District is identified as a priority. Alternatives for extending water infrastructure from the Midland Borough Municipal Authority to portions of Greene Township are discussed. Four different service area scenarios are explored for Hookstown, Georgetown, Laughlin's Corner, and the South Side School District, as well as capital costs for each service scenario.

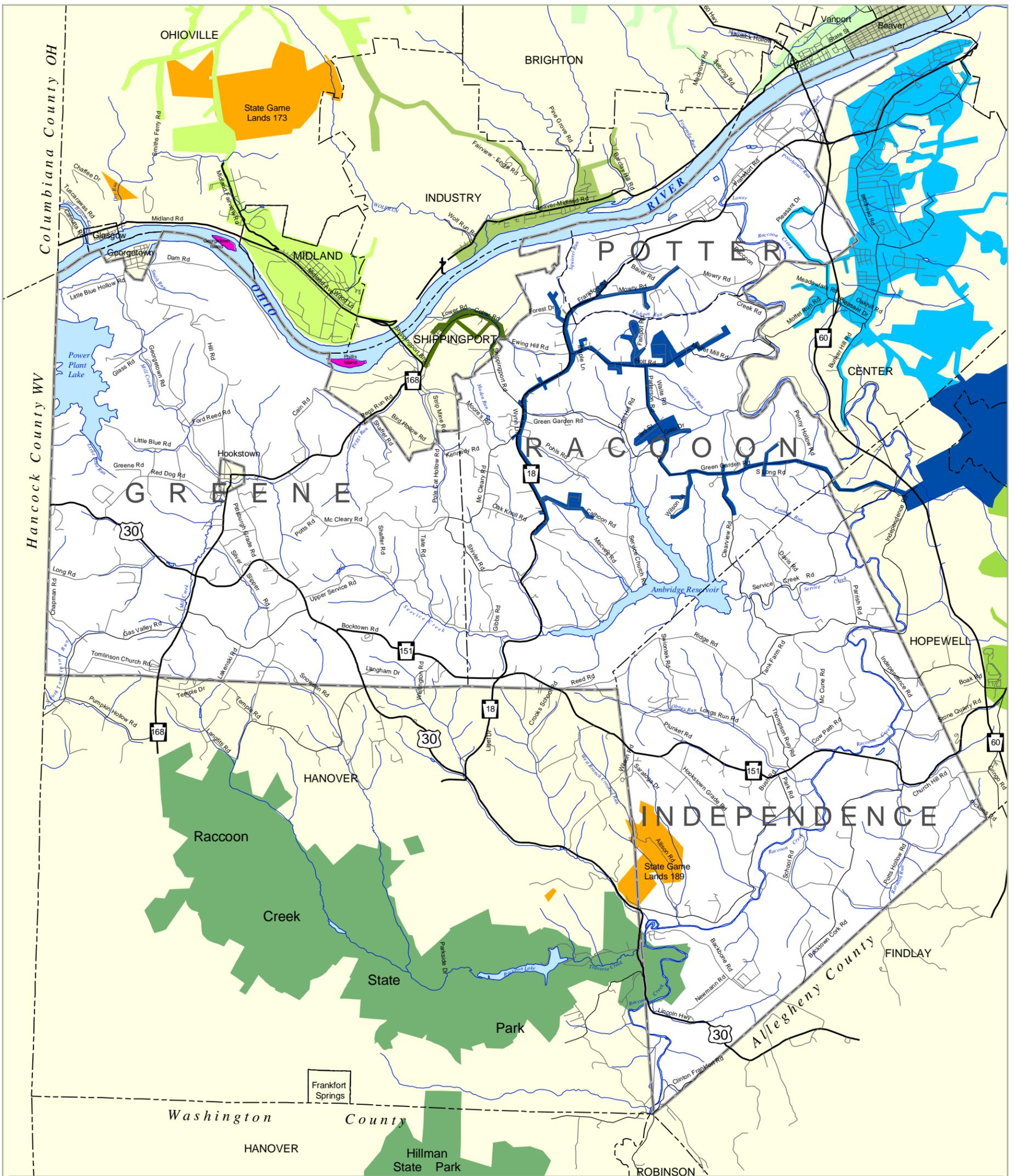
Independence Township

The 1990 Independence Township Comprehensive Plan references the Airport Impact and Planning Preparedness Study in Southern Beaver County (1990). The study suggests that water could be supplied by the Creswell Heights Joint Authority extending west along Route 151 to Thompson Hill Road as one alternative for providing public water to the more developed portions of the township.

A prior report, the Engineering Report on Prefeasibility Study - Public Water Systems (1989), explores the options for public water service to the township, yet the report concluded that public water service was not economically feasible at the time.

Potter Township

Both the Aliquippa Municipal Water Authority and the Center Township Municipal Authority provide public water service to Potter Township. The Center Township Water Authority provides service to the eastern part of the township along Pleasant Drive. The Aliquippa Municipal Water Authority provides services to the southern part of the township along Route 18 (Frankfort Road) and portions of Mowry Road. The middle portion of the township, including parts of Route 18, is not served by public water.



Legend

Water Service Areas

- CENTER TOWNSHIP WATER AUTHORITY
- ALIQUIPPA MUNICIPAL WATER AUTHORITY

Adjacent Water Service Areas

- VANPORT TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY
- MIDLAND BOROUGH MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY
- CRESWELL HEIGHTS JOINT AUTHORITY
- BEAVER BOROUGH MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY
- INDUSTRY BOROUGH MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY
- SHIPPINGPORT BOROUGH WATER DEPARTMENT

Map Notes

Information used to produce this map was provided by Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation. Additional sources include:
 Managed lands--Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access
 Pashek Associates makes no claims to the accuracy of this data.
 Analysis of Sewer Service Areas revealed no current sewer service within the study area.
 Projection: State Plane NAD 1983, Units=feet
 The project is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program and the Local Government Academy Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Grant Program

Area of Detail



WATER SERVICE AREAS

A Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships



Raccoon Township

Raccoon Township is serviced partially by the Aliquippa Municipal Water Authority in the middle and northern portion of the township. The southern area of the township does not have public water service and businesses and residents in this area operate on private wells.

The Ambridge Reservoir, located in Raccoon and Independence Townships, is the primary water source for the Ambridge Water Authority, serving the Borough of Ambridge, Economy Borough, and Harmony Township in the eastern part of Beaver County. According to interviews with the Ambridge Water Authority, the Authority is permitted by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) to draw 4.8 million gallons per day (mgd) of water from the reservoir, with a one-day peak per year of 6.6 mgd. The Authority is currently operating near capacity, pumping approximately 4.3 mgd from the reservoir. As a result, PA DEP has issued a mandate to the Authority to identify an additional water source to provide 0.6 mgd to meet the needs of its service area in the next 20- 25 years.

SEWER SERVICE

The municipalities in the planning area do not have public sewer facilities and infrastructure. Wastewater is disposed and treated using either individual or community on-lot systems, such as septic systems and sand mounds, which require a 1-acre lot minimum. Lot sizes in the planning area are generally two-acres or more based on existing zoning regulations. The industrial areas along the Route 19 corridor in Potter Township utilize private facilities for wastewater treatment and disposal. The lack of public sewer service has been identified as an issue for all the municipalities in the planning area given the poor suitability of soils and the increasing cost and unreliability of on-lot systems.

Municipalities are required to prepare an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan according to the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act. Sewage facilities plans should include: 1) an assessment of existing areas served by public sewer systems; 2) future infrastructure requirements based on socio-economic and demographic trends and the existing condition of the systems; and 3) community goals for the preservation of land and designation of growth areas to be served by public sewer. Act 537 plans should be consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the municipal or multi-municipal plan. No municipality in the planning area has an up-to-date Act 537 Plan.

Sewer authorities in the immediate vicinity to the east of the planning area include the Center Township Sewer Authority, which extends to the border of Potter and northern Raccoon Township and the Hopewell Township Sewer Authority, which extends to the eastern boundaries of Independence Township.

Additional public sewer authorities located in adjacent municipalities to the service area include (as shown on the Sewer Service Map):

- Aliquippa Municipal Water Authority
- Beaver Borough Municipal Authority
- Brighton Township Sewer Authority
- Midland Borough Municipal Authority
- Vanport Township Municipal Authority

Greene Township

The 1994 Comprehensive Plan for Greene Township states that the Pennsylvania Department of the Environment regulations for on-lot septic systems are becoming increasingly stringent, which is forcing people to higher cost alternatives such as sand mounds. Given that upgrades to a public sewer system are cost prohibitive, the plan finds that development should be controlled to minimize uses that cannot be adequately accommodated by available wastewater collection and treatment systems. The township has no immediate plans for public sewer infrastructure, but is considering several service delivery scenarios.

Potter Township

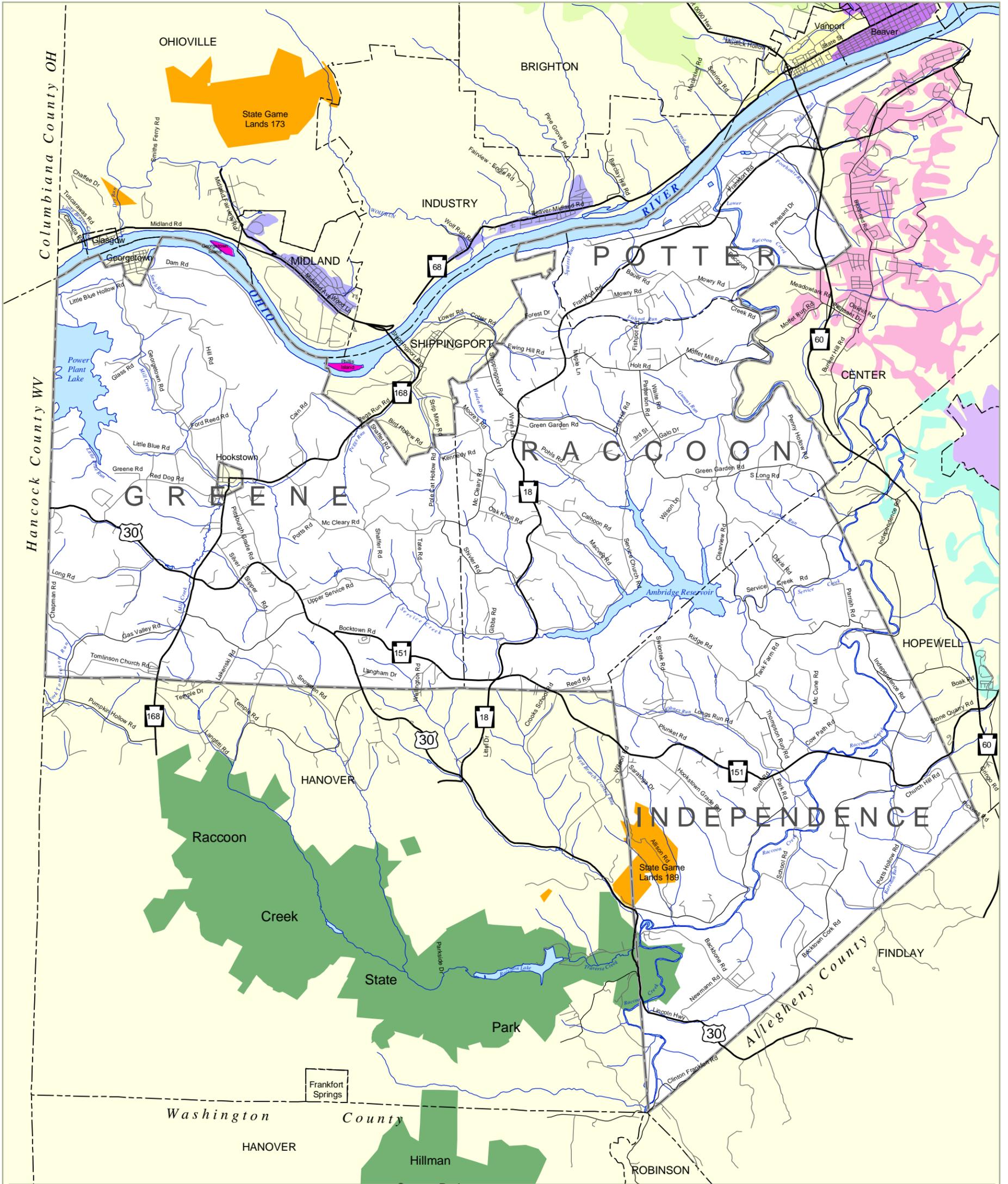
The township has no plans to tap-in to a public sewer system at this time given the cost and existing levels of residential growth. However, if Potter Township continues to find problems with existing on-lot systems, the demand for public sewer may increase in the future. The Center Township Sewer Authority is the closest public sewer service provider to Potter Township.

Independence Township

The 1990 Independence Comprehensive Plan identifies the Hopewell Township Sewer Authority as the most likely to accommodate public sewer service for Independence Township. This is an accurate assessment at this time as well given the proximity of Independence Township to Hopewell Township. The plan finds that based on previous studies, the extension of infrastructure to Independence Township will require a new sewage treatment plant located Raccoon Creek. Independence Township has no immediate plans for public sewer infrastructure development.

Raccoon Township

The 1990 Comprehensive Plan for Raccoon Township identifies the Hopewell Township Sewer Authority and the Center Township Sewer Authority as the nearest public sewer service providers, which remains relevant today. However, the plan finds that it is unlikely that the authorities can accommodate service expansion in Raccoon due to capacity limitations. The plan recommends that Raccoon Township should continually monitor the community to identify specific problem areas and discourage development practices that perpetuate problems with on-lot systems. Given this, Raccoon Township has no immediate plans for sewer infrastructure development.



Legend

Adjacent Sewer Service Areas

- ALIQUIPPA MUNICIPAL WATER AUTHORITY
- BEAVER BOROUGH MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY
- BRIGHTON TOWNSHIP SEWER AUTHORITY
- CENTER TOWNSHIP SEWER AUTHORITY
- HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP SEWER AUTHORITY
- MIDLAND BOROUGH MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY
- VANPORT TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Map Notes

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 Managed lands--Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access
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Area of Detail



SEWER SERVICE AREAS

A Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships





Nova Chemical Site, Potter Township

Economic Conditions

Overview and Background

This section provides an overview of economic conditions, including labor force characteristics and major employment centers that provide job opportunities for people living in the planning area.

Beaver County developed as one of the major industrial counties in Pennsylvania due to its proximity to rail and river transportation routes that enabled the movement of goods to major cities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia. Many companies emerged along the Ohio River valley focusing on the manufacturing and metals industries. However, the recession in the 1980's affected the economic stability of the region and resulted in the loss of many regional employers in Beaver County including Jones & Laughlin Steel, Babcock & Wilcox, Crucible Industries, American Bridge Corporation. As a result, employment in the manufacturing sector declined with corresponding decreases in population in the mill towns and industrial centers.

Today, the Beaver County Comprehensive plan predicts that future economic development prospects are good due to an improved economic climate and attractive amenities in the county, which create favorable conditions for growth of businesses and industries. In addition, there is recognition of the economic value of tourism and recreation in Beaver County. However, residential growth is outpacing business and industrial growth in Beaver County. From 1995 to 1997, the Beaver County Assessment Office found that single family residential development increased by 44%, while the number of permits for commercial/industrial development decreased by 9%.

Industrial land use makes up a small part of the planning area, primarily concentrated in the northeast corner of Potter Township along the Ohio River. The history of this industrial cluster dates back to World War II, for which the facilities produced supplies. Unlike the rest of the river mill towns in Beaver County, this area is not historically tied to steel manufacturing and coal.

Major Employers in the Region

Today, several significant regional and international businesses have located along the Route 18 corridor, consisting of chemical, manufacturing, and distribution facilities. Several of the major employers within the region were interviewed to understand the business perspective about current and future economic growth and activity. Some of these businesses indicated that they are now entering a period of growth and expect to be hiring more employees. Companies interviewed included BASF Chemical, PGT Trucking, First Energy, and NOVA Chemicals. The companies provide a range of services, mostly regional in nature. Below is a brief overview of the businesses interviewed.

BASF Chemical

BASF Chemical is the largest chemical company in the world. One of the factories is located in Potter Township off Route 18. The company manufactures functional polymers. They continue to invest in the current site and have a good working relationship with the local communities.

First Energy

First Energy is the tenth largest privately owned utility company in the country. The electric generating plant is in Shippingport. First Energy is a national company, yet has a strong presence with the local municipalities. The company participates in the Annual South Side Community Day. They also participate in Raccoon's Annual Fall Festival.

PGT Trucking

PGT Trucking is a flatbed motor carrier company, which opened its site on Route 18 in Potter Township in 1991. The company is currently in a growth phase. They have 145 employees at the site in Potter Township. The company has a close working relationship with the local community, yet the business is regional in nature.



PGT Trucking, Potter Township

NOVA Chemicals

NOVA Chemicals employs approximately 400 people that work at the site. The international company's headquarters are in Canada, with the United States headquarters located in Moon Township. NOVA Chemicals chose the Pittsburgh metro region for the U.S. headquarters due to its proximity to the international airport and being a one-hour flight to many key cities. The site was formerly owned by the Koppers Company and used to produce rubber for the government. NOVA purchased the site in 1996.

Zinc Corporation

Zinc Corporation of America (ZCA) is the largest zinc producer in the United States. The company also manufactures value-added zinc products including zinc oxide, zinc dust, and zinc powder. Zinc Corporation of America is headquartered in Potter Township, where the manufacturing plant is located. In operation since 1931, the plant is recognized as one of the world's most modern and efficient value-added zinc manufacturing facilities. The 350-acre plant site is powered by its own 110-megawatt power station and is complete with rail and adjacent highway access. Zinc Corporation is the largest division of New York based Horsehead Industries. Horsehead Industries is one of the largest privately held manufacturing companies in the United States.



Zinc Corporation, Potter Township

The businesses and industries located along Route 18 in Potter Township have formed a Route 18 Customer Advisory Panel. The committee addresses the needs of the businesses along the corridor, improve communications

among the businesses, as well as maintain community relations. All five companies stated that they are now in a growth phase. Some are in a more moderate phase and others a more aggressive phase, yet they all are coming off stagnant business period. Some see themselves employing more workers over the next six months.

Other major employers and employment centers near the planning area include Shippingport Borough (power plant facilities), the Pittsburgh International Airport and USAIR, and various healthcare facilities located in Beaver County and the Pittsburgh metropolitan region.



Route 18 Industrial/Commercial Corridor,

Labor Force Characteristics

Labor force characteristics were analyzed using United States Census data. An overview is provided of employment status, occupations types, and employment by industry.

Employment/Unemployment Status

Table 1-27 shows the employment status for the labor force (employed versus unemployed) in the planning area, Beaver County, and Pennsylvania. The overall planning area has a very low unemployment rate at 3.5%. This is comparable to unemployment on the county and state level. However, unemployment ranges greatly within the planning area, from 1.5% in Potter Township to 6.2% in Greene Township. Both Independence and Greene Townships' unemployment rate (6.2% and 3.7%, respectively) exceed the county and state unemployment rates of 3.2% and 3.5%, respectively.

Table 1-27 Employment Status

	Percent Employed	Percent Unemployed
Greene	93.80%	6.20%
Independence	96.30%	3.70%
Potter	98.50%	1.50%
Raccoon	97.60%	2.40%
Regional Average	96.50%	3.50%
Beaver County	96.80%	3.20%
Pennsylvania	96.50%	3.50%

Source: United States Census, 2000

Occupation Type

Table 1-28 is a breakdown of the type of occupations in which the labor force is employed for the planning area, the county, and state. The two highest occupation types the planning area, Beaver County, and Pennsylvania are 1) management and professional; and 2) sales and office occupations. However, the planning area overall has slightly less of its labor force in these two occupations compared to the county and state. The same holds true for the service occupation. Employment in the construction, extraction, and maintenance occupation and the production, transportation, and materials moving occupation is higher in the planning area overall compared the state and county.

Occupation	Greene	Independence	Potter	Raccoon	Regional Average	Beaver County	PA
Management/ Professional	22.40%	25.80%	23.50%	22.80%	23.60%	26.20%	32.60%
Service Occupations	14.60%	15.30%	11.10%	13.90%	13.70%	17.10%	14.80%
Sales and office	23.50%	22.40%	27.00%	26.40%	24.80%	27.90%	27.00%
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.70%	0.40%	0.00%	0.30%	0.35%	0.20%	0.50%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	20.00%	18.70%	14.90%	19.70%	15.10%	10.40%	8.90%
Production, transportation, and material moving	18.80%	17.30%	23.50%	16.90%	19.10%	18.10%	16.30%

Source: United States Census

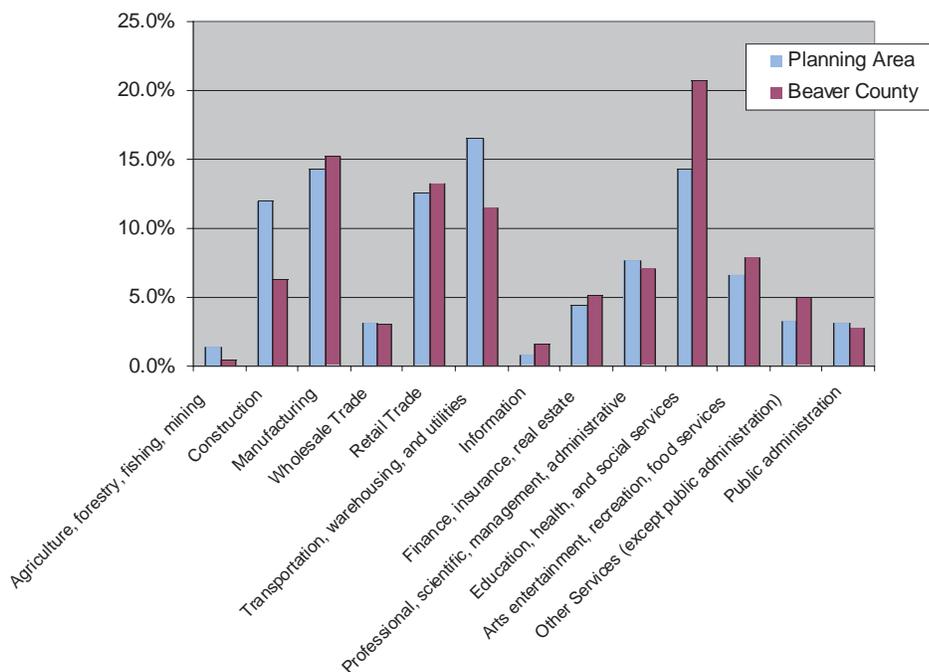
Employment by Industry

Figure 1 shows employment by the type of industry in the planning area and Beaver County. The largest industry employers for the planning area are: 1) transportation, warehousing, and utilities; 2) manufacturing; and 3) education, health, and social services.

A greater portion of the labor force in the planning area is employed in transportation/warehousing/utilities and construction industries compared to Beaver County. However the county and state exceeds the overall planning area in the percent of the labor force employed in the education, health, and social service industry.

Figure: 2

Employment by Industry Type



Journey to Work Analysis

The following tables on pages 96 and 97 provide information on the top ten workplace locations by municipality for each municipality in the multi-municipal plan. The tables show the number and percent of workers that are living in one municipality and traveling to another municipality for employment. This information gives each municipality an idea of where their residents are working and the type of commuting patterns that are taking place in the municipality. The data was gathered from the United States 2000 Census. The last table is a compilation of all the municipalities in the planning area and their top ten work locations. The following are observations regarding the Journey to Work Tables:

- A large percentage of people work outside the municipality they live in
- Common municipal workplaces for the planning area are Findlay Township, Moon Township, Robinson Township, Center Township, and the City of Pittsburgh
- Greene Township is the largest workplace employer of people living in Greene Township
- Moon Township is the largest workplace employer of people living in Independence Township, followed by Independence Township
- The City of Pittsburgh is the largest workplace employer of people living in Raccoon Township
- Center Township is the largest workplace employer of people living in Potter Township
- Potter Township has the greatest proportion of its population working within the township compared to the other municipalities in the planning area
- The City of Pittsburgh, Moon Township, and Hopewell Township are the largest workplace employers for the entire multi-municipal planning area.

Municipal Workplace	# Residents Working in Municipality	% of Total Residents Working in Municipality
Greene Twp. Beaver Co. PA	94	8%
Findlay Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	64	5%
Moon Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	63	5%
Brighton Twp. Beaver Co. PA	58	5%
Pittsburgh city Allegheny Co. PA	56	5%
Hopewell Twp. Beaver Co. PA	54	5%
Center Twp. Beaver Co. PA	53	4%
Aliquippa city Beaver Co. PA	50	4%
Hancock Co. WV	45	4%
Robinson Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	41	3%

Municipal Workplace	# Residents Working in Municipality	% of Total Residents Working in Municipality
Moon Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	172	13%
Independence Twp. Beaver Co. PA	144	11%
Hopewell Twp. Beaver Co. PA	138	11%
Pittsburgh city Allegheny Co. PA	118	9%
Findlay Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	97	7%
Shippingport bor. Beaver Co. PA	55	4%
Robinson Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	47	4%
Coraopolis bor. Allegheny Co. PA	44	3%
Aliquippa city Beaver Co. PA	28	2%
Ambridge bor. Beaver Co. PA	24	2%

Municipal Workplace	# Residents Working in Municipality	% of Total Residents Working in Municipality
Pittsburgh city Allegheny Co. PA	138	8%
Center Twp. Beaver Co. PA	118	7%
Hopewell Twp. Beaver Co. PA	111	7%
Aliquippa city Beaver Co. PA	90	5%
Raccoon Twp. Beaver Co. PA	86	5%
Moon Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	81	5%
Findlay Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	73	4%
Brighton Twp. Beaver Co. PA	61	4%
Robinson Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	57	3%
Potter Twp. Beaver Co. PA	57	3%

Municipal Workplace	# Residents Working in Municipality	% of Total Residents Working in Municipality
Center Twp. Beaver Co. PA	48	17%
Potter Twp. Beaver Co. PA	39	14%
Pittsburgh city Allegheny Co. PA	19	7%
Beaver bor. Beaver Co. PA	18	6%
Brighton Twp. Beaver Co. PA	13	5%
Hopewell Twp. Beaver Co. PA	10	4%
Findlay Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	9	3%
Beaver Falls city Beaver Co. PA	9	3%
Chippewa Twp. Beaver Co. PA	9	3%
Midland bor. Beaver Co. PA	8	3%

Municipal Workplace	# Residents Working in Municipality	% of Total Residents Working in Municipality
Pittsburgh city Allegheny Co. PA	331	7%
Moon Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	322	7%
Hopewell Twp. Beaver Co. PA	313	7%
Findlay Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	243	5%
Center Twp. Beaver Co. PA	236	5%
Aliquippa city Beaver Co. PA	173	4%
Independence Twp. Beaver Co. PA	155	3%
Brighton Twp. Beaver Co. PA	155	3%
Robinson Twp. Allegheny Co. PA	147	3%
Potter Twp. Beaver Co. PA	137	3%



Community Facilities

Raccoon Elementary School

This section inventories community facilities and provides an overview of public services, including police, fire, and emergency medical services. The Community Assets Map shows the location of school facilities, municipal buildings, police stations, and fire stations. Utility providers are identified in this section as well. Nearby higher educational institutions, libraries, and medical facilities are also identified.

Public services are essential to maintaining and protecting the health and safety of the community. This section pays particular attention to police protection, fire protection, and emergency medical services. The primary services providers for each township are outlined, including information on staff, equipment, facilities, and funding. Public services are costly for municipalities to provide and many municipalities do not have the resources to support their own police, fire, or EMS providers. In some instances a municipality will rely on the state police or contract to an adjacent municipality for service. Services can also be regionalized among a group of adjacent municipalities.

Schools and Educational Institutions

The municipalities in the planning area fall into three public school districts: the Center Area School District, the Hopewell Area School District, and the South Side Area School District. The following is a brief description of each school district.

Center Area School District

The Center Area School District includes the municipalities of Center and Potter Townships. Schools in the District include the Center High School, Center Middle School, and Todd Lane Elementary School. The schools are co-located on 120 acres of land on Baker Road in Center Township. There are approximately 2,025 enrolled students in the district, the majority of which come from Center Township.

Hopewell Area School District

The Hopewell Area School District includes the municipalities of Independence, Raccoon, and Hopewell Townships. There are 2,900 students enrolled in the school district and school enrollment remains stable. Schools in the district include the following:

- Hopewell Memorial Junior High School - Brodhead Road, Hopewell Township
- Hopewell Senior High School - Longvue Avenue, Hopewell Township
- Hopewell Elementary - Kane Road, Hopewell Township
- Independence Elementary - School Road and Route 151, Independence Township
- Raccoon Elementary - Patterson Road, Raccoon Township
- Margaret Ross Elementary School - Maratta Road, Hopewell Township



Independence Elementary School

Of the six schools in the district, only two are located in the planning area - Independence Elementary and Raccoon Elementary.

South Side Area School District

The South Side Area School District includes the municipalities of Hanover Township, Greene Township, Hookstown Borough, Shippingport Borough, Georgetown Borough, and Frankfort Springs Borough. A total of 1,390 students are enrolled in the district schools. Enrollment is expected to remain stable over the next five years. The schools are currently operating at capacity. Therefore, any increase in enrollment will require the district to identify new facility options.

Schools in the district include the South Side Elementary School, the South Side Middle School, and the South Side High School. The three schools are co-located on the school complex on Route 151 in Greene Township. Included in the complex is the Richard J. Ashcroft Stadium, multiple athletic fields, a community built playground, and a community built nature trail with outdoor class areas. The school is presently planning some renovation and repairs to the elementary school.

Colleges/Universities

There are no colleges or universities in the planning area. The closest college is the Penn State Beaver Campus located in Center Township. The University's campus is located less than five miles from Potter Township. The Penn State Beaver Campus offers bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, and master's degrees in select curriculums. The University also offers adult and continuing education programs. Included in the complex is the Richard J. Ashcroft Stadium, multiple athletic fields, a community built playground, and a community built nature trail with outdoor class areas. The school is presently planning some renovations and repairs to the elementary school.

The Community College of Beaver County is the closest two-year community college to the planning area, located less than five miles from Potter Township off Poplar Avenue in Center Township. The Community College offers a range of two-year degrees in Arts and Sciences, Aviation Sciences, Business, Health Services, Human Services, and Technologies.

Libraries

There are no public libraries in the planning area. Nearby public library facilities include the Beaver Area Memorial Library in Beaver, the Carnegie Library of Midland, Monaca Public Library, the B.F. Jones Memorial Library in Aliquippa, and the Coraopolis Memorial Library.

PUBLIC SERVICES

An inventory of police, fire, and EMS services was conducted for the municipalities in the planning area. Information was collected on personnel, funding, and areas of joint cooperation or sharing of services.

Police Services

Raccoon and Independence Townships are the only two municipalities in the planning area with their own police department. Police services in Greene Township are provided by the Pennsylvania State Police and Potter Township contracts with the Center Township Police Department for service. The following is a description of police service for each municipality, including staffing, facilities and equipment, and coverage. The police departments participate in the Beaver County Mutual Aid Agreement under which they provide additional assistance to neighboring municipalities on an as needed basis.



Raccoon Municipal Complex and Police Department

Greene Township

Greene Township does not have a police department. The Township relies on Pennsylvania State Police, Troup D for law enforcement, 911 response, and area patrol. Troup D has stations in Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Mercer and Lawrence counties. The Beaver County station is located on Brighton Road in Brighton Township.

Independence Township

The Independence Township Police Department provides police service to Independence Township. The department is located in the Independence Municipal Building on School Road. It employs four full-time officers and one part-time officer and is completely funded through the Independence Township municipal budget. The patrol area includes 80 miles of state and township roads, for which two patrol vehicles are available. The department provides twenty-four hour coverage to the township, with the exception of Sunday and Monday evenings after midnight.

Potter Township

Police services in Potter Township are provided by the Center Township Police Department under a contractual agreement. Potter Township entered into the arrangement with the Center Township Police Department in 1998. Under the arrangement, the department provides 24-hour coverage to Potter Township with one patrol car assigned to the Potter Township zone at all times. A minimum of three and a maximum of five officers are on duty and available for responses throughout the Center/Potter area at any given time. The Center Township police station is located in municipal complex on Center Grange Road.

The Center Township Police Department includes a total of ten police vehicles. The department is specializing in narcotics enforcement and has established a drug hotline. The department also supports a D.A.R.E (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) officer and a School Resource Officer (SRO) that work closely with the local schools. The overlap between the police services and schools benefits Potter Township as well because Potter is part of the Center Area School District along with Center Township.

With nearly 12,000 residents and an increasing population, Center Township is one of the fastest growing areas in Beaver County. Transportation improvements and expansion of the Beaver Valley Mall are indicative of the growth that is occurring and may continue in the future. As Center Township grows, the Police Department expects to

continue increasing the quality of services for the community. This includes offering more specialized services and acquiring additional equipment. It is also expected that Potter Township will benefit from the growth of the department, given that Potter will have access to all the programs and services provided in Center Township.

Raccoon Township

The Raccoon Township Police Department provides service to Raccoon Township. The department is located in the Raccoon Municipal Building on Route 18. It employs a full-time Police Chief, Sergeant, two Corporals, and three part-time patrol officers.

Fire Services

The municipalities in the planning area have their own volunteer fire departments, with the exception of Greene Township, who shares services with Georgetown and Hookstown Boroughs. All the fire departments are volunteer-based and operate in an environment of mutual cooperation and support. They rely on a combination of municipal funding and donations to cover operation and maintenance expenses, as well as equipment purchasing. The volunteer fire departments participate in a county-wide Mutual Aid Agreement. Under the agreement fire departments will provide their services to neighboring municipalities that request additional assistance.

The volunteer fire departments in the planning area also participate in the Southwestern Tanker Association. Given that the majority of the planning area is not serviced by public water, the volunteer fire departments rely on tanker trucks to haul water for fighting fires. The departments can request assistance from members of the association should the need arise for additional tanker truck support. If significant growth takes place in the area, the ability to fight fires with tanker trucks under the current volunteer levels should be re-evaluated.

Greene Township

The Hookstown Volunteer Fire Department has been in existence since 1961. It provides fire service to Greene Township, Georgetown Borough, and Hookstown Borough. The department consists of twenty active volunteer fire fighters from the three municipalities. The main fire station is located on Silver Slipper Road in Greene Township. A second small station with a garage and mini-pumper truck is located in Georgetown Borough. The Silver Slipper Station houses a tanker truck, a pumper truck, and a brush truck. The department relies on a combination of municipal funding from Greene Township, Georgetown and Hookstown, and donations to operate and maintain the department. However, fundraising has been increasingly challenging for the department.

The Hookstown Volunteer Fire Department works closely with neighboring municipalities through mutual aid and the South Side Tanker Association. The lack of public water hook-ups for fire fighting is an issue for protecting the South Side School District. Even with assistance from mutual aid and the South Side Tanker Association, the department lacks the resources required to protect the school complex from fire. However, a hydrant at the Ambridge Reservoir in Raccoon Township would supplement water required should a fire occur at the school complex.

Independence Township

The Independence Township Volunteer Fire Department provides both fire response and Quick Response Service (QRS) in Independence Township. The department operates out of one station located adjacent to the Independence Township municipal building on School Road. The volunteer corps consists of six first responders and three emergency medical technicians (EMTs) trained in Basic Life Support (BLS), sixteen active fire fighters, and two junior fire fighters (age 14-17).

The Independence Township Volunteer Fire Department is the only department in the planning area with QRS capabilities. They respond to emergency medical calls and are available to assist Medic Rescue, the designated EMS

responder for the township. The department will provide QRS to nearby municipalities at the request of the County and have responded to calls in Hanover and Hookstown in the past.

The fleet includes an ambulance (used for responses only), a tanker truck, a fire truck, a brush truck, and a pick-up truck. The department is partially funded by the township, which enacted an emergency services tax to cover police and some fire expenses. The department relies on donations for the remainder of their operation, maintenance, and equipment costs. However, it is becoming increasingly challenging for the department to raise the resources they require to operate in the community. In addition, if there is significant growth in the township, the department may require more manpower to continue providing sufficient services to the community.



Independence Township Municipal Building

Potter Township

The Potter Township Volunteer Fire Department includes ten active volunteer fire fighters. The department is building a new

five-bay fire station on Mowry Road, which will be complete in the spring of 2004. The existing fire station is located adjacent to the Potter Township municipal building. In addition to the fire station, the department is acquiring a new fire engine. The rest of the fleet includes a tanker truck, a brush truck, and a rescue vehicle that is used for river rescue and off-road rescue (due to the high use of all-terrain vehicles in the area). The department coordinates with Monaca and Ohioville, both of which own boats, for river rescue operations.



Potter Township Volunteer Fire Department Station Under Construction on Mowry Road

Parts of Potter Township are connected to a public water supply (including the upper half of Pleasant Drive and all of Mowry Road). This places less dependence on the need for tanker trucks. In addition, the industrial sites along Route 18 have private water systems, which include hydrants for fire fighting. Should additional development take place in the township, the ability of the department to fight fires using limited public water and tanker trucks alone should be evaluated.

The department receives a yearly financial allotment from the township to be used at the department's digression. To date, resources from the township have been used to support the building of a new fire station and the purchase of a new engine. The department relies on donations for the remainder of their operation, maintenance, and equipment costs. Potter Township is a small municipality and as a reflection, the volunteer fire department is small. However, the department would like to see more people interested in volunteering and becoming a member. Recruiting new members may be a challenge as the community continues to age.

Raccoon Township

The Raccoon Township Volunteer Fire Department consists of approximately thirty volunteer fire fighters. The department operates out of two fire stations, one of which is located on Patterson Road and the other in the Raccoon Township Municipal Complex on Route 18. The department currently utilizes five fire trucks, including a tanker truck. However, the department is currently in the process of purchasing a new truck and downsizing the fleet to four trucks. The majority of the financial resources required to support the volunteer fire department are provided through community fundraising events. Raccoon Township provides a small portion of the department's funding from the municipal budget.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Medic Rescue, a non-profit EMS provider headquartered in Bridgewater, Pa, provides emergency medical services (EMS) to 93% of Beaver County (46 municipalities) including Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships. Medic Rescue has 120 employees including paramedics, emergency medical technicians, wheelchair van personnel, and administrative staff. They operate twenty-one (21) ambulances and fifteen wheelchair vans that are strategically positioned along with crews throughout the county in order to reduce emergency response times. Medic Rescue is financially supported by membership fees (individuals and families in Beaver County) and transport service fees collected from non-members and/or insurance companies. Individuals and families that are members qualify for unlimited emergency transports at no cost and discounted stretcher van and wheelchair van services.

The closest hospital facilities for the municipalities include Aliquippa Community Hospital in Aliquippa, The Medical Center in Beaver, Sewickley Valley Hospital in Sewickley Borough, and the Gateway Rehab Center in Center Township. In addition, there are a number of major hospital facilities in the City of Pittsburgh that are within twenty miles of the municipalities in the planning area.

Many EMS providers rely on a combination of membership dues, donations, and insurance reimbursements. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult for independent non-profit ambulance companies to cover their costs due to increasing equipment and operational expenses. This may be one area in which municipalities will increasingly be required to assume more fiscal responsibility in order to sustain quality service to their residents.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Electric: Duquesne Light Company
Gas: Dominion People's
Phone: Verizon and Armstrong
TV Cable: Adelphia and Comcast
Heating Fuel
Propane

Public Water Authorities

The Aliquippa Municipal Water Authority provides public water to portions of Potter and Raccoon Townships, which are outlined in the Infrastructure section. The remainder of the planning area relies on private wells.

Public Sewer Authorities

There are no public sewer authorities in operation in the planning area. All businesses, industries, and residences rely on privately maintained treatment plants or private on-lot systems including sand mounds and septic fields.



Potter Township Municipal Building

Government Operations and Intergovernmental Cooperation

This section is an overview of the existing local government structure and administrative function in the four municipalities in the planning area. Areas of intergovernmental cooperation are identified, and an overview of existing land use tools and ordinances is provided as well.

TYPE OF GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

Greene Township

Greene Township is a township of the second-class, with a three-member elected Board of Supervisors. Other elected positions include three Auditors, the Tax Collector, and Constable.

The township employs the following positions:

- Road Foreman (1)
- Heavy Equipment Operators (2)
- Dumpster Attendants (2)
- Administrative Secretary/Treasurer (1)
- Administrative Assistant (1)
- Planning Commission Secretary (1)
- Code Enforcement (1)

The township contracts out the following services: Solicitor, Engineer, Earned Income Tax Collection, Sewage Enforcement Officer, and Building Code Inspections/Zoning Officer.

The township has a Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board that oversee planning and zoning functions, in addition to a Recreation Events Committee.

Independence Township

Independence Township is a second-class township with a three-member Board of Supervisors, elected to six-year terms. The Tax Collector is also an elected position.

The township staffs the follow positions:

- Secretary/Treasurer (1)
- Zoning Officer (1)
- Police Department (4 full-time/1part-time officers).
- Road Crew (4 people)

The engineering, wage tax collection, sewage enforcement officer (SEO), and solicitor services are contracted to local firms.

The Township has a Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board that oversees planning and zoning function. There is also a Recreation Board.

Potter Township

Potter Township is a second-class township with a three-member Board of Supervisors elected to six-year terms. The other elected positions include three Auditors the Property Tax Collector.

The township staffs the following positions:

- Secretary/Treasurer (1)
- Roadmaster (1) and Road Crew (3 part-time)
- Custodian (1 part-time)
- Wage Tax Collector (part-time)
- Zoning Officer
- Road Employee
- Building Inspector

The township contracts the following services on an as needed basis:

- Solicitor
- Building Inspector
- Engineer
- Sewage Enforcement Officer
- Wage Tax CPA

Potter Township has a Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board that oversee planning and zoning function. They also have a Recreation Board.

Raccoon Township

Raccoon Township is a second-class township with a three-member Board of Supervisors elected to six-year terms. Other elected positions include three Auditors, a Property Tax Collector, and Constable.

The township staffs the following positions:

- Public Works Director (1), skilled laborers (2), part-time laborers as needed (3)
- Secretary/Treasurer (1)
- Police Department (Police Chief, Sergeant, Corporal, and 3 part-time officers)
- Part-time Clerk (1)
- Cleaning person (1 p/t) and trash bin attendants (2 p/t)

The township has a Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board that oversee planning and zoning functions. There is also a Park and Recreation Board, and an Emergency Operations Committee.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The municipalities involved in this multi-municipal comprehensive plan have entered into existing cooperative agreements to minimize the cost of services, enhance productivity, and maximize existing resources in order to benefit their residents.

One or more municipality in the planning area is currently implementing the following joint programs:

- Joint Recycling Program: Greene, Hanover, Independence, Raccoon
- Joint Public Works, Municipal Road Maintenance, and equipment purchasing: Greene, Hanover, Potter, Raccoon
- Uniform Construction Code (UCC) Enforcement (Greene, Independence, Potter and Raccoon)
- All four municipalities are part of the Southern Beaver Valley Council of Governments (COG).

Greene, Hanover, Potter, and Raccoon Township also coordinate on park and recreation efforts.

LAND USE TOOLS AND ORDINANCES

The municipalities currently utilize a combination of zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances to manage land use, as authorized by the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Table 1-34 provides information the land use tools and ordinances each municipality has adopted and implements. All the municipalities in the planning area have adopted a comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, and sub-division and land development ordinance.

Table 1-34 Land Use Implementation Tools

Municipality	Comprehensive Plan	Zoning	Subdivision / Land Development
Greene	Yes (1994)	Yes (1993)	Yes (1996)
Independence	Yes (1990)	Yes (1992)	Yes (1999)
Potter	Yes (1971)	Yes (1972)	Yes (1972)
Raccoon	Yes (1990)	Yes (1999)	Yes

The zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances are the primary land use ordinances used to implement the comprehensive plans in each township. The designated zoning districts identified in each zoning ordinance are listed in Table 1-35 on the following page. The zoning ordinances are reviewed below, highlighting the types of districts and differences between zoning districts within the planning area.

All zoning ordinances cite Community Development Objectives that are consistent with their existing municipal comprehensive plans.

Greene, Independence, and Raccoon Townships have agricultural districts. The stated purpose of the agricultural districts, to preserve productive agricultural land and provide sites for low density residential development, is consistent throughout the municipal ordinances. Minimum lot areas for agricultural uses and single family residential uses are also consistent throughout the ordinances with a two-acre minimum lot size for single family residential (including mobile homes) and a minimum ten-acre lot size for agricultural uses. Greene Township does allow a minimum lot size of one-acre per dwelling with public sewer or community treatment systems. Potter has a rural residential district that allows agricultural uses, single family dwellings, and mobile homes. The minimum lot area with no public sewer is 20,000 square feet (just under 1/2 acre).

All four municipalities have a designated suburban residential district that allows single family dwellings and duplexes (in Independence and Raccoon Township only). Minimum lot sizes for single family residential dwellings are standard with two-acres per dwelling, with the exception of Potter Township with a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet. Minimum lot sizes for duplexes range from 3.5-acres to 4-acres.

Raccoon and Greene Township also have a General Residential District that permit single family dwelling, duplexes, and multi-family dwelling units. Both Townships permit multi-family dwelling units with a minimum lot size of 34,000 square feet with the provision of public sewer service or a private sewage disposal system. All the zoning ordinances include provisions for planned unit developments and mobile home parks.

Each zoning ordinance designates two different commercial districts that vary in name and intensity of uses. Only Greene and Potter have designated industrial districts. However, the highway commercial districts do permit some light industrial uses.

Table 1-35 Zoning Districts Table

Greene	Independence	Potter	Raccoon
A-1 Agricultural District	A Agricultural District	R-1 Rural Residential District	A Agricultural District A-1 General Ag A-2 Prime Ag
R-1 Suburban Residential District	R-1 Suburban Residential District	R-2 Suburban Residential District	R-1 Suburban Residential District
R-2 General Residential District	NA	NA	R-2 General Residential District
C-1 Light Commercial District	C-1 General Commercial District	G-C General Commercial District	C-1 Light Commercial District
C-2 Highway Commercial District	C-2 Highway Commercial District	S-C Special Commercial District	C-2 Highway Commercial District
I - Industrial District	NA	G-I General Industrial District	NA

REVIEW AND CONSISTENCY OF PLANS

The four municipalities have completed comprehensive plans in the past. A summary of relevant information from the previous plans and the Beaver County Comprehensive Plan are presented below.

Greene Township

The Comprehensive Development Plan Review and Update for Greene Township was completed in 1994. The three-part plan reviews background information and growth influences, describes a future development outlook, and outlines program implementation for the plan. The plan updates and builds on the original comprehensive plan for Greene Township. It recognizes that change is inevitable in the township, but that the basic values inherent to community need not be sacrificed to accommodate new growth.

The plan states that the lack of development in Greene Township over the last fifty years has resulted in the preservation of large tracts of open space and farmland, which enhance the economic and environmental attributes of the township. It notes that similar resources have been depleted throughout Beaver County.

The Plan Goals and Objectives include:

- **Conservation of natural resources and environmental qualities:** To provide for the preservation, protection, management, and enhancement of Greene Township's natural resources and environmental qualities for present and future generations.
- **Housing:** To encourage and promote the provision of a wide variety of decent, safe, and sanitary housing to meet the needs of all township residents compatible with the limitations afforded by the environment, transportation network, and community facilities
- **Land Use:** To create the best possible living environment by establishing a harmonious land use pattern
- **Community Facilities and Services:** To provide facilities and services necessary to meet the needs of the community, compatible with the natural and manmade environment
- **Transportation:** To provide a road system that maximizes the efficient, safe, and convenient movement of good and people while minimizing adverse impacts on the natural and manmade environment
- **The Local Economy:** To encourage opportunities for economic growth and development in the township compatible with the community's natural and manmade environment

Developments of regional influence identified in the plan include the expansion of the Pittsburgh International Airport and the completion of the Beaver Valley Expressway (Route 60). Both were expected to generate residential and commercial development in Hopewell and Center Townships, with some residential development in Greene Township.

Plan Recommendations

Infrastructure

Transportation: Design local land use regulations to control growth consistent with the highest and best uses of land along the major transportation corridors. Mandate design standards to mitigate problems associated with traffic safety and congestion and encourage PennDOT to maintain the physical condition of Route 168 and Route 30. Plan for periodic upgrading; and build local roads to specifications that protect the long terms needs and interests of the community.

Utilities - Water: The provision of public water is cost prohibitive given the current levels of development and available resources. However, growth trends make it inevitable that a public water supply will be required at some point in the future. The provision of public water connections to the South Side School complex is an issue given the lack of on-site water sufficient to support the school and protect the school in the event of a fire.

Utilities - Sewer: The regulations regarding septic tanks are becoming increasingly stringent as enforced by the PA DEP, which is forcing people to higher cost alternatives. Control development to minimize uses that cannot be adequately accommodated by available wastewater collection and treatment systems.

Land Use

Agriculture: Continuation of agriculture to maintain the rural character and local economy (contiguous ASA north of Route 30 and west of Route 168)

Residential: Promote a range of housing types from rural to suburban housing densities. Careful consideration should be given to the impacts of new development on traffic, roads, public safety, municipal services, and the overall character of the area.

Industrial: Limit industrial development to the previously designated industrial river oriented sites due to the lack of water and sewer infrastructure and the desire to maintain the rural character in the area.

Public Facilities: Acquire land adjacent to the municipal complex in order to centralize public facilities

Conservation: Use zoning regulations to protect steep slopes, floodplains, and areas around the Little Blue Dam and Lake due to uncertainties of the environmental condition of the lake and adjacent land

Public Services

Public Safety: A growing population with new residential development will generate the need for a higher level of police service. Possibilities for police service include establishing an independent local department or a joint program with adjacent communities

Recreation: Establish and operate a municipal recreation program

Independence Township

The Independence Township Comprehensive Plan was developed in 1990. It consists of two sections including a review of background information and an assessment of the outlook for growth.

The plan states that Independence Township will experience an increase in the type and amount of development in the township based on regional influences, specifically the Beaver Valley Expressway and the expansion of the Pittsburgh International Airport. The plan anticipates that low density residential land use will continue to grow, especially in areas accessible to Route 151, along with agricultural uses.

The following community development objectives are identified in the plan:

- Creation and maintenance of orderly development patterns, and the coordination of inter-relationships between residential and business areas of the community to provide for functionally distinguishable but complimentary districts
- Maintenance and improvement of the aesthetic qualities of the community
- Protection of the natural environmental quality and significant open space features throughout the township
- Preservation of viable agricultural pursuits and areas devoted to such purposes
- Protection of the residential character of the community consistent with the need for a variety of housing types and densities and the ability of the community to expand in an orderly manner
- Preservation of property values and encouragement of the highest and best use of developable land areas
- Maintenance and expansion of the municipal economic base
- Development of accessways, utility systems, municipal services, and community facilities consistent with local needs
- Coordination and cooperation with area and regional development programs and trends that are consistent with the type and quality of growth necessary to achieve the community development objective of the township

Plan Recommendations

Infrastructure

Transportation:

- Identify access management standards and appropriate land uses of highway frontage to reduce impacts on the function and safety of Route 151.
- Direct attention to the environmental and aesthetic qualities of the Route 30 corridor given the proximity to the State Park and Wildflower Reserve and encourage a high level of aesthetic control to complement and preserve the natural quality.
- Monitor traffic volumes to ensure adequate maintenance and safety along the roads and make improvements as necessary; establish capital funding programs to finance road improvements; strict standards for minor street construction should be established and new local roads should be constructed to Township specifications and coordinated with the overall municipal circulation system

Utilities - Water: Local officials should continually monitor development trends to ascertain the need for public water supplies and feasibility to proceed with detailed project analysis. The plan identifies the Creswell Heights Joint Water Authority as one possible option for the expansion of public water to the township.

Utilities - Sewer: The regulations regarding septic tanks are becoming increasingly stringent as enforced by the PA DEP, which is forcing people to higher cost alternatives. As the density of development in the township increases, the need for public sewer will become more critical. The plan identifies the Hopewell Township Sewer Authority as the nearest public sewer service and the most likely to accommodate service for the township.

Land Use

Agriculture/open space: Implement policies, programs (ex. farmland preservation), and land use ordinances to protect the existing inventory of open space and farmland as a means of preserving the rural character.

Residential: New single family neighborhoods should be located in clusters in the southern and eastern portions of the township, yet the township should identify the housing needs of an expanding population to determine to determine if a more inclusive residential zoning category is needed that permits medium density housing.

Commercial: Retain and expand existing commercial areas and encourage local convenience retail to provide for the needs of residential growth, targeting Route 151 for highway commercial uses.

Public and Related Uses: Expand the existing site of the municipal building, volunteer fire department, and police department into a municipal complex based on foreseeable community needs and coordinate expansion plans with the Hopewell Area School District and reserve a portion of the site expansion for recreation purposes.

Community Facilities

Public Services: Anticipate future space requirements for the municipal building and offices.

Recreation: Develop land near the municipal complex and the school playground for community recreation activities and work with developers to set aside land for parks and recreation development as part of the development process.

Implementation guidelines are outlined at the end of the plan. Relevant guidelines identified in the plan include:

- Undertake a fiscal analysis to estimate future revenue levels and sources
- Development of a long range capital improvements plan
- Periodically revise the zoning and subdivision ordinances
- Develop and adopt building and housing codes

Potter Township

The Potter Township General Development Plan was completed in 1971. The plan summarizes existing conditions in the township, outlines a general development plan for the future, and lays out a capital improvements program, finance, and budget analysis for the short- and long-term.

At the time of writing, Potter Township was relatively undeveloped, with some residential development and an industrial base along the Ohio River. The plan anticipates that the Beaver Valley Expressway would create additional residential development in the township. Given the age of the plan, a good deal of information is outdated. The plan finds that there is a significant need for land use controls, which has since been enacted but have not been significantly revised or updated since the 1970's. The plan promotes a consolidation and urbanization concept to discourage development and certain land uses activities in areas that are unsuitable for development.

Goals and objectives of the plan include:

Community Identity

- reestablishment of an improved township image as a community of well-planned and interrelated residential, recreational and commercial areas
- Strengthen this identity by encouraging larger scale, well-designed residential, commercial, and industrial development projects.

Stable Development Pattern

- Insure a stable tax base
- Encourage pride of homeownership and good maintenance practices
- Maintain stability in each neighborhood and commercial area through an overlay general development pattern.

Orderly Community Development

- Assure development that is of good design and maximum value to the community and its citizens
- Prevent scattered and haphazard growth that interferes with the most economic use of the land and the provision of public services
- Rejuvenation and creation of commercial areas
- Complement orderly land development with an efficient thoroughfare system and an adequate level of community facilities and services

Conservation of Resources

- Preservation of the township's natural resources by encouraging development to recognize and avoid the use of steep topography and flood areas
- Protection of the natural atmosphere and environmental qualities by preserving open space and natural amenities.

Plan Recommendations

Infrastructure

Transportation: Make necessary improvements to the roadway system for those areas requiring increased levels of service in the future and provide adequate highway systems for improved access to developable land areas.

Water and Sewer Service: Not included as part of the scope of the plan, but the plan suggests that the affect of public utilities on residential growth be considered with respect to the provision of community facilities.

Land Use

Residential Land Use: Encourage concentrations of residential development and discourage ribbon-patterned development with in both rural and suburban residential areas. Planned Unit Development is illustrated as a residential development style appropriate for the township.

Commercial: Target commercial development at the intersection of Mowry Road East and Old Township Road and along the Route 18 corridor.

General Industrial: Expansion of the existing industrial areas along the Ohio River and Raccoon Creek should be adequate size to accommodate building and parking needs on relatively flat lands with good soil conditions.

Conservation Uses: Conservation areas should include the floodplains of the Ohio River and Raccoon Creek and the rugged, inaccessible land in the township.

Public Facilities

Many aspects the of the public facilities plan with respect to educational facilities, police protection, and public buildings are out of date and irrelevant, with the exception of the recreation recommendations to provide for small neighborhood recreation areas in addition to the community park.

Raccoon Township

The Raccoon Comprehensive Plan was completed in 1990 as a review and update of the original comprehensive plan of 1975. The plan includes a summary of background information, a statement of purpose, goals, and objectives, a future development plan, and implementation recommendations.

The plan anticipates that Raccoon Township will remain a semi-rural community dominated by single family residential and agricultural land uses. Limitations to development include steeply sloped terrain, lack of public sewerage, and large amounts of land in Agricultural Security Areas. However, regional influences like the Beaver Valley Expressway are expected to generate residential growth in the northeastern part the township.

The following community development goals and objectives are identified in the plan:

- Protection, management, and enhancement of natural resources and environmental qualities
- Maintenance and improvement of aesthetic qualities throughout the municipality
- Preservation of viable agricultural areas
- Encouragement and promotion of a range and variety of decent, safe, sanitary housing to accommodate the particular needs of current and anticipated inhabitants
- Maintenance and expansion of the local economic base consistent with the area and regional business climate and the local capability to support and nurture appropriate economic activities
- Creation and maintenance of orderly land use patterns in distinguishable but complimentary districts to encourage the highest and best use of developable land
- Development of a program to provide facilities and services to meet current and projected municipal needs
- Provision of an efficient, safe, and convenient road system to serve local and regional access needs

Infrastructure

Highway Systems: Continued maintenance and upgrading of existing local roads expected to be directly impacted by new development. A capital improvements program and schedule should be adopted to meet the continuing maintenance and improvement needs of the local street system.

Utilities - Water: The rate of growth should be closely monitored and appropriate action initiated to insure the delivery of water throughout the township. Options to expand the supply of water include purchasing from the Aliquippa Water Authority, or establish interconnections with the Center Township Water Authority.

Utilities - Sewer: The township should continually monitor the community to identify specific problem areas and discourage development practices that perpetuate problems with on-lot systems. The service areas of the Hopewell Township Sewer Authority and the Center Township Sewer Authority are the nearest public sewer service providers. However, the plan finds that it is unlikely that they can accommodate service expansion in Raccoon due to capacity limitations.

Land Use

Agriculture: Local officials should encourage the continued preservation of prime agricultural land for farming and related purposes.

Residential: The northern part of the township will continue to be targeted for new single family residential growth given the relatively flat terrain, the availability of public water service, and the access to collector highways.

Commercial: Convenience commercial facilities should be encouraged to serve expanding areas of residential development. Development of commercial areas should take place contiguous to existing commercial sites rather than proliferating at random. Heavy commercial activity may be appropriate along Route 18 and Green Garden Road where adequate highway access exists.

Public Use: Future upgrading or expansion of any public facilities should take place at existing sites. Large tracts of privately owned open space (such as the Ambridge Reservoir) should be closely monitored to protect against environmental degradation.

Public Facilities

Recreation: Developers should be encouraged to set aside public use areas in neighborhood plans to ensure that recreation is available to serve the future population.

Municipal services: Current levels of government activity are adequate, but additional growth will require expanded public facilities and services.

Beaver County

Beaver County completed its comprehensive plan, *Horizons: Planning for the 21st Century, A Comprehensive Plan for Beaver County*, in 1999. It was the second comprehensive planning process the county conducted, the first taking place in the 1960's. The plan is intended to be a starting point for an overall development strategy for the county and its municipalities. It lays out a general land use plan to focus future development.

The five growth areas identified in the plan include:

1. The intersection of PA Route 60 and PA Route 151 in the southern part of the county. The Pittsburgh International Airport is located along this corridor and additional development is expected to take place in conjunction with the airport.
2. The Aliquippa/Hopewell exit along PA Route 60, which is influenced by a new airport terminal complex
3. Route 60 extending along PA Route 51, occupying portions of Chippewa and Brighton Townships, where current development is attributed to the new PA Route 60 toll road.
4. The portion of the county east of PA Route 989 in southeastern New Sewickley Township and Economy Borough, where growth is associated with adjacent development in Cranberry Township.

5. The northern part of the county including portions of North Sewickley Township, northwestern Franklin Township, Big Beaver, Homewood, Koppel, and Ellwood City, which are all influenced by the nearby location of the intersection of the PA Turnpike and PA Route 60.

The Route 60 growth areas identified above could potentially influence development in the planning area. The intersection of PA Route 60 and PA Route 151 is within a few miles of Independence Township and Route 151 serves as primary access point to Independence Township from Route 60.

Land Use

The land use plan identifies areas for urban development, rural development, and natural landscapes. Land uses and densities, recommended infrastructure, and applicable development practices are outlined for each of these areas. The general land use plan for Beaver County designates land use in Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships as rural development and natural landscapes. The plan does not designate urban development areas within the four municipalities. However, the neighboring municipalities of Center, Hopewell, and Monaca Townships are designated primarily urban development area. The definitions of urban development, rural areas, and natural landscapes according to the Beaver County Comprehensive Plan follow:

1. **Urban Development:** Should be strengthened to serve as mixed-use centers including concentrated commercial activity, employment opportunities, institutions, and diverse residential areas. Urban centers should provide a sense of community. The recommended land uses include a diversity of housing types, industries, warehouses, retail centers, offices, community facilities, transportation facilities, and parks, recreation, and open space areas. Public water and sewer should be available in these areas and densities should be 4-6 dwelling units/acre for single family homes, 8-16 dwelling units/acre for townhouses, and 8-50 dwelling units/acre for apartments. Urban in-fill development should be promoted.
2. **Rural Areas:** The rural areas are designated to preserve the rural character of Beaver County and enhance existing villages located in the rural areas. Housing should consist of single family dwellings at densities of 1-5 dwelling units per acre in agricultural or cluster zones. Agriculture, agriculture-related businesses, recreation/open space, and other uses that by nature require a rural area are recommended. Mining, quarries, landfills, and power plants should be buffered. Infrastructure includes on-lot systems or central systems for public uses.
3. **Natural Landscapes:** The natural landscapes include areas where development should be restricted due to natural features including steep slopes, wetlands, stream corridors, woodland areas, groundwater recharge areas, and prime agricultural lands. The recommended land uses include single family homes, agriculture, and parks and open space. Development should be prohibited in floodplains and steep slopes over 25%. Densities should be one dwelling unit per 3 acre in areas with on-lot systems and one dwelling unit/acre in areas with public utilities. Performance zoning is recommended for the natural landscape areas.

Goals and Objectives

The Comprehensive Plan includes an Action Plan for land use, economic development, transportation, recreation and open space, cultural and historic resources, community facilities, and environmentally sensitive areas. The following strategies are particularly relevant to the planning area:

Land Use Action Plan: Preserve the open, rural character of Beaver County by supporting the maintenance of prime agricultural uses and protect villages. Prepare in-depth corridor plans for Route 60 corridor

Economic Development: Promote and enhance the development and expansion of existing local businesses.

Transportation: Provide highway, bridge, pedestrian, bicycle, and trail systems with a high degrees of mobility and accessibility in order to enhance the economy and support future land use. This includes promoting the use of the

river and rail systems as alternative modes of transportation, and creating livable communities with pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

Recreation and Open Space: Promote the development of waterways and waterfront districts for recreational purposes, especially along the Beaver and Ohio Rivers. This includes encouraging riverfront property owners to use land for recreation, increasing access to the river, and undertaking a greenways study.

Cultural and Historic Resources: Promote the use of the county's historic resources and the existing cultural landscape as a basis for creating strong community character.

Housing: Provide a broad range of housing opportunities for diverse income levels, while preserving the existing housing stock. Encourage municipalities to adopt land uses practices that discourage sprawl.

Community Facilities: Enhance police, fire, and EMS by supporting regional cooperative efforts and initiatives that promote consolidating local resources to maximize efficiency. Provide high-quality water supply and sewage facilities to meet county needs, protect the environment and public health, and support development consistent with the land use plan. Promote and maintain high quality educational facilities.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas: Sustain and enhance environmentally sensitive areas; protect and manage soils and natural vegetation; maintain and enhance water bodies and watersheds; encourage municipal programs for natural resource protection; preserve and properly manage prime agricultural soils.



The Citizen's Perspective

Public Input: The Citizen's Perspective

Public involvement is essential in a multi-municipal planning process as it helps foster a sense of ownership and understanding of the plan. More importantly, the vision, goals, and objectives are developed with public input to ensure that the plan reflects issues important to residents. Doing so will improve support for the plan and lead to successful implementation. Below is a summary of public comments received from the initial public input meetings that were held during the first two months of the planning process.

Public Input Meetings

The planning process was introduced at two public input meetings held in January of 2004. During the public meetings, residents were asked to identify issues that are important to be addressed in the plan. The comments from the public also focused on strengths and weaknesses of the community and assets that are important to be preserved.

At each meeting, citizens were asked the following questions:

1. What elements of the region or your local community do you like, and would like to see continue into the future?
2. What elements of the region or your local community would you like to change?
3. What issues, needs, challenges, or opportunities do you see facing the region or your local community (now and in the future)?

At the end of the public meeting, all attendees had the opportunity to prioritize their top five issues raised at the meeting. The following are the highest priority comments made at the two public input meetings.

**Table 1-36
Top Public Meeting Comments in Order of Prioritization (# of votes)**

Raccoon Fire Hall (Raccoon Township, 01/14/04)	Hookstown Fire Hall (Greene Township, 01/21/04)
Keep farms and agricultural community throughout the region – Agricultural Security Areas are important (29)	Regionalize police services (27)
Need to coordinate future growth and development with utilities improvements (sewer, water, electric) to enable some development and increase the tax structure; upgrade water and sewer infrastructure (28)	Put final plan up for vote by the whole region – all the participating municipalities (23)
Encourage business development in existing areas to create jobs and appeal to young people (21)	Like the rural atmosphere – want to stay the same (17)
Promote and market the area to increase awareness of what the area has to offer – need a mechanism (ex. joint web site for the communities) (21)	Improve emergency and police services – provide additional resources to support the police, fire, EMS (14)
Like the quality of life in Raccoon and Potter Townships; the area should stay the same (14)	Need more recreational facilities for various age groups (13)
Create a regional recreational facility for seniors – designated building and director of programs (14)	Include Boroughs in Area (Georgetown and Hookstown) in planning efforts and keep them informed (12)
Need financial resources to implement the plan (14)	Need more apartments, condos, etc. & senior housing (smaller and more affordable housing options) (11)
Improve existing park facilities in Raccoon Township – shelters and programs (13)	Economic development is needed to increase the tax base and improve services, pay for additional projects (11)
Improve the safety of the roadways and intersections in all municipalities (speeding, signage, etc.) (13)	Need a regional form of government (11)

Key themes emerged from the public comments that related to the plan elements. The following list is a break down of the comments based on those themes and plan elements identified and discussed in the plan:

Community Image:

- Encourage property maintenance and good aesthetics along commercial corridors
- Better marketing of the area through web site and newsletters

Economic Development:

- Economic development is desired to provide a tax base for programs/services
- Target major transportation corridors for economic development opportunities
- Coordinate economic development opportunities with infrastructure improvements
- Encourage business development in existing developed areas to create jobs/appeal to young people
- Identify tourism opportunities
- Need more commercial, retail, and lodging to make tourism viable

Environment and Natural Resources:

- Preserve natural resources and the environment
- Limit development in the biodiversity areas

Government Operations and Cooperation:

- Need a regional form of government
- Include Boroughs in area in planning efforts and keep them informed
- Need financial resources to implement the plan

Historic Preservation:

- Link cultural and historic sites through walking trails
- Link educational opportunities with historic and cultural resources in the area
- Preserve historic resources and support local historic preservation groups (ex. South Side Historic Village Association)

Housing:

- Provide for a range of housing types (senior housing) and affordability levels
- Poor housing conditions on Mowry Road in Potter Township

Infrastructure:

- Address water and sewer needs on a regional level
- Address the condition of failing on-lot septic systems and contaminated wells
- Decision for tapping-in to public water and sewer infrastructure should be left to the landowner

Land Use:

- Ensure consistency between land uses in each municipality
- Create consistent municipal ordinances (ex. zoning, subdivision/land development)
- Conserve open space through residential development design; target existing commercial/industrial areas for growth

Parks/Recreation:

- Need more recreational facilities for varying age groups
- Improve the number and condition of recreational facilities
- Identify trail connections with connections with Ohio River
- Consider creating a regional recreational facility for seniors and designate a building and director of programs
- Link recreational opportunities with cultural and historic resources
- Link recreational opportunities with tourism
- Explore and promote volunteer opportunities

Public Services:

- Regionalization of police services
- Consolidate municipal services (police, fire, public works)
- Additional resources to support police, fire, EMS
- Desire for local library or satellite center and access to local health care
- Need facilities and affordable health care for seniors and the entire community

Rural Character/Quality of Life:

- Would like to see the area stay predominantly rural
- Protecting agricultural areas and farms is important
- Concentrate new development in order to preserve open space

Transportation:

- Safety of roads and intersections and improvements for access
- Support extended public transit connections
- Route 30 improvements needed
- Key Person Interviews

Key Person Interviews

Twenty-five key person interviews were conducted with stakeholders in the area representing a variety of interest and viewpoints relevant to the plan. Stakeholders interviewed include elected officials, environmental professionals, farmers, business owners, churches and historic preservation groups, and the school districts. The following is a summary of the main issues identified during the interviews. The key person interviews also shed light on the strengths and weaknesses of the area.

Land Use: Interviews suggest that residents are attracted to the area for its rural character and quality of life. They would like to see some new residential and local commercial development, but avoid large-scale developments. New development in the area should be consistent with existing patterns and densities including low density rural residential and local commercial. Developments of regional impact for this area may include the Airport Corridor and the shopping complex in Center Township.

Economic Conditions: Businesses interviewed identified various types of support that would be helpful to operating and maintaining a business in the area, including tax breaks, improving transportation logistics, maximizing use of the Ohio River for transport. Amenities such as restaurants and a car wash are needed to meet small business needs.

Farming/Agriculture: The key issues with respect to farming and agriculture include overcoming challenges to maintain and support agricultural livelihoods. Key challenges include attracting interest from young people, high cost of operation and maintenance such as insurance and labor, government regulations, and market demand.

Environment: Key issues with regard to the environment that were identified through interviews include losing habitat and prime farmland to future development. Timber harvesting was also identified as an issue. In addition, Beaver County has not developed a stormwater management plan and therefore the municipalities cannot adopt a plan, so measures need to be taken to manage stormwater and prevent environmental degradation.

Cultural and Historic Resources: Interviews with local churches and historic preservation groups revealed a strong cultural and historic identity to the area. Some issues that were identified are the need for additional resources and support for local historic preservation groups to continue to preserve historic structures in the area. In addition, local volunteer groups are stretched in terms of available labor and capacity.

Recreation: The key person interviews revealed that there is a desire for more passive recreational trails for hiking and biking throughout the region and there is an interest in greenway development and planning on a regional level. Build off the recreational assets that already exist in the area and make additional recreational and economic linkages through multi-municipal cooperation and recreation planning.

Water and Sewer Infrastructure: The water and sewer infrastructure issues identified include the need to address failing on-lot septic systems and annual water shortages by developing a plan for water and sewer infrastructure in the region. It was noted that each individual municipality cannot afford water and particularly sewer infrastructure alone and future planning should be done on a multi-municipal level. It was also noted that the lack of water and sewer infrastructure is a deterrent for large developers to work in the area. Therefore, the majority of development is on a smaller scale

Planning and Government Cooperation: Municipal officials generally feel that multi-municipal cooperation is beneficial to their communities. There are potential areas for increased coordination and cooperation among the police and fire departments. A visible police force is a reassuring presence to the community, which offers a sense of security and enhances the quality of life. Would like to see more involvement from the county and information sharing from both sides between the county and local municipalities.

Section II: Where Do We Want to Be? Creating the Vision

“You must first see a thing in
your mind before you can do it”
- Alex Morrison



The Vision Statement

What is a vision?

- A mental image that empowers communities by giving them foresight to make events happen and projects possible.
- Specific images of places and landscapes that are positive and acceptable to the community.
- A statement of what is valued in a community, formed through consensus.
- A clear and concise statement that sets the tone for future land use in a community.

The purpose of this section is to answer the question, “Where do we want to be in the future.” In order to do so, the strengths and weaknesses of the municipalities are assessed, and feedback is gathered from the project steering committee and members of the public to create the following elements of this section:

- 1) The Vision Statement
- 2) Community Goals and Objectives
- 3) The Future Land Use Scenario and Map
- 4) Relationship of Future Land Use to Surrounding Municipalities

A “vision” is a mental image that empowers individuals and communities by giving them the foresight to make events happen and projects possible. In other words, the vision lays the groundwork for the goals, objectives, and action plan, by identifying what it is the municipalities are working toward.

The vision, goals, and future land use scenario build on the strengths of each municipality and outline how land use and community assets can complement one another. The future land use map illustrates land use types and intensities, as well as development concepts that reflect the overall vision and goals for the planning area.

PUBLIC INPUT

The vision statement, goals, and future land use scenario were developed with input from the public. Two visioning workshops were conducted (one in Independence Township and one in Raccoon Township) to give 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 what type of development should be encouraged and promoted to support the vision. In doing so, community members identify the unique aspects of their community that they would like to retain, and those things that they would like to see changed in order to improve the quality of life for the residents.

THE VISION STATEMENT

The vision describes the type of place the residents of Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships want the area to become fifteen to twenty years from now. It touches on the all aspects of community, including the social, economic, and environmental conditions. The main themes from the vision for this area include:

- Maintaining the rural character and sense of place
- Developing and supporting a strong local and regional economy
- Attracting people to the area to live, work, and recreate
- Balancing economic and environmental needs
- Enhancing the community image
- Protecting and promoting important community and environmental assets
- Providing residents with a safe and enjoyable place to live

A Vision for Our Future...

In the future, the municipalities of Greene, Independence, Raccoon, and Potter Townships are scenic rural townships with a balanced mix of housing, businesses, industries, farmland, and open space. There is a strong sense of place in the community that is rooted in the rural legacy of the region. People are attracted to the area for the rural living it provides to those looking to get away from busy lifestyles and urban living. Young people and families come to the area for employment, recreation, and education opportunities, as well as the affordable life styles and a high quality of life that exists in the area.



Economic and Employment Base

The local economy is rooted in agriculture, recreation-related tourism, small businesses, and regional industries. Family farms and tree orchards produce goods for local markets in the region. Residents frequent farmers' markets and actively support community-based agriculture initiatives to ensure that farming remains a viable way of life. The Route 18 corridor in Potter Township is a regional employment center that provides good jobs for people living in the area and surrounding communities. Industrial, manufacturing, and high-tech businesses and office parks are located along the well-designed corridor. Landscaping, design standards, and access management principles ensure that businesses and industries fit within the overall rural character of the area. The area is also attractive to people working in and around the Pittsburgh International airport due to the close proximity and ease of access to the airport.



Recreation Related Tourism

The area is a regional tourist destination for outdoor recreational pursuits. People travel from throughout southwestern Pennsylvania for active and passive recreation in Raccoon Creek State Park, the State Game Lands, wildlife preserves, and designated recreation areas along Raccoon Creek and the Ohio River. Recreation and tourism activities are sensitive to the environment and natural features that resident's value. There is a good balance between resource conservation and active recreation areas. Locally owned businesses, such as restaurants and cafes, are located near parks and in village centers to cater to vacationers and residents.



Neighborhood Design and Housing

A range of affordable housing exists to serve the needs of young people, families, retirees, and senior citizens, including single-family homes, condominiums, townhouses, and senior living facilities. Residential development styles complement and respect surrounding natural features and scenic views. Homes are tucked in wooded lots, or concentrated in clustered developments, with the surrounding open space preserved as wildlife corridors, greenways, and resource conservation areas. Village centers located along Route 18, Route 168, and Route 151 include a mix of housing, shopping, and service establishments within close proximity of schools and parks. People living in the villages regularly use the sidewalks and bicycle paths to travel to and from schools, parks, and homes. Bus connections at employment and shopping centers in Hopewell Township, Center Township, and Beaver service the village centers, providing alternative transportation options for residents.



Environment, Natural Resources, and Recreation

Raccoon Creek, the Ohio River, and the Ambridge Reservoir are regional assets that anchor a greenway network and a trail system that connect the municipalities. Residents take advantage of the trail network for daily exercise and community interaction. Likewise, state of the art recreation facilities at the Greentfields Municipal Complex, Raccoon Community Park, Independence Community Park, and Potter Township Park are places where the community gathers to recreate and socialize. An intergovernmental park and recreation program supports a regional community and recreation center that facilitates programs for all ages, with specific activities designed for senior citizens and youth.



Section 2

The Vision Statement

Intergovernmental Cooperation, Services, and Infrastructure

Community leadership and cooperation among the four municipalities is the key to improved public services and consistency in land use across the area. The local governments work together to provide and maintain infrastructure and public services that protect the public health, serve residents' needs, and support a rural-based economy. Government services, including police, fire, parks and recreation, and public works, are well run, efficient, and effective. Examples of rural "green buildings" integrate energy efficiency and environmental design features in community facilities and services. A safe and reliable transportation system brings people in and out of the area, utilizing multiple modes of transportation. The overall quality of life in the area is the result of cooperative government efforts that foster high-quality affordable housing, available jobs, good education facilities, and recreation opportunities that complement the rural character and natural beauty that makes the area unique and special.



*“Imagination gives you
the picture, vision gives you
the impulse to make the
picture your own.”*

- Robert Collier



Community Goals and Development Objectives

The community goal statements are broad in nature and reflect the key themes identified in the vision. Goal statements articulate to the communities what is important to the residents and how they plan to make the vision a reality. The community objectives support the development of land use tools and implementation strategies to achieve the overall desired character of the area. The goals and objective should guide local officials and decision makers in developing and implementing land use and community development policies. Community goals that were identified in the planning process are included on the following page.

Goals and objectives should guide officials and decision makers in developing and implementing land use and community development policies.

The community goals and objectives related to the following topics:

- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Economic Development and Tourism
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Community Image
- Housing
- Transportation
- Parks and Recreation
- Land Use and Growth Management
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Public Services and Facilities

“A goal is an ideal future condition to which the community aspires.”

“An objective is an intermediate step toward attaining a goal.”

Table 2-1

Community Goals and Development Objectives

Goals	Development Objectives
Farming is a viable way of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and preserve the rural character and farmland in the area so that agricultural production is a viable economic component of the community. • Specifically target designated rural resource areas for farmland preservation efforts**
Residential, commercial, and industrial developments are well -designed and attractive to residents and workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote an aesthetically pleasing community image that is characteristic of the rural nature of the area • Enhance the aesthetics and improve access management along the Route 18, Route 151, and Route 168 corridors
A strong sense of place rooted in the rural culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and promote the historic and cultural assets in the area by engaging local historic preservation organizations and identifying recreational linkages
State of the art park and recreation areas/facilities that cater to residents and tourists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade and enhance recreational facilities in existing and planned community parks to provide additional active and passive recreational opportunities, programs, and events • Explore recreation opportunities along the Ohio River and Raccoon Creek including an interconnected system of trails throughout the four municipalities
Scenic rural townships with a balanced mix of housing, businesses, farmland, and open space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote consistent land use types , development styles, and densities within and between the four municipalities • Establish future growth areas and rural resource areas to define areas appropriate for growth and development and areas to focus resource conservation and farmland preservation efforts * • Ensure that future growth is coordinated and consistent with utilities improvements (water, sewer, electric) in areas appropriate for development (those areas designated as future growth areas*)

Goals	Development Objectives
A healthy environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve, protect, manage, and enhance woodlands, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, and other sensitive environmental features that support a healthy environment • Encourage the concept of greenways that provide passive and active recreational functions and preserve natural areas • Balance the preservation of land and sensitive environmental features/areas with residential development by promoting environmental design standards and site planning that preserves open space
A strong local economy rooted in agriculture, industry, and recreation - related tourism that provides good jobs for the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support economic development in existing business and industrial areas by: 1) retaining existing businesses and industries; and 2) attracting new businesses and industries • Identify recreation -related tourism opportunities and recreation-related businesses
People are attracted to the area for the high quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jointly market the area to increase knowledge of what the area has to offer , specifically targeting young people and families
Community leadership and cooperation among the four municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage cooperative efforts in planning, public services, and economic development among the four municipalities , as well as with neighboring boroughs and townships , to adequately respond to and meet community needs
High-quality affordable housing in neighborhoods that preserve surrounding natural areas and scenic views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a variety of housing types, styles, and affordability levels within designated growth areas to meet the housing needs of all people, including housing for persons with disabilities and senior citizens • Improve the condition of the existing housing stock
Well run, efficient, and effective public services that protect the public health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address local water and sewer infrastructure needs on a multi-municipal level to protect community and environmental health • Provide efficient and effective public services, including police, fire, EMS, and community health care, by coordinating municipal efforts to reduce financial and administrative costs while maintaining and improving levels of service

Section 2

Goals	Development Objectives
A safe and reliable transportation system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the transportation infrastructure to be safe and reliable and ensure proper use of existing roadways to meet the transportation needs • Explore the feasibility of transit connections with nearby municipalities • Create pedestrian and bicycle connections within neighborhoods and between schools, parks, and village centers

* Future Growth Area: An area of a municipal or multi -municipal plan outside of an d adjacent to a designated growth area where residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses and development are permitted or planned at varying densities and 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. (PA MPC)

** Rural resource areas: an area described in a municipal or multi -municipal within which rural resource uses including, but not lim ited to, agriculture, timbering, mining, quarrying, and other extractive industries, forest and game lands and recreation and tourism are encouraged and enhanced, development that i s compatible with or supportive of such uses is permitted, and public infrastructure services are not provided except in villages. (PA MPC)



The Future Land Use Scenario

The Future Land Use Scenario translates the vision for the four municipalities into a visual image using a future land use map. The basic idea behind the future land use scenario is to ensure that land use across the four municipalities and within the region fit together in an integrated and harmonious manner that is consistent with the vision and community goals. The future land use scenario is intended to assist municipal officials in making policy and land use decisions over the next fifteen to twenty years.

The discussion of the future land use scenario includes the following:

- What is a future land use scenario
- How to use the future land use scenario
- How the future land use map was created
- Overview of the future land use scenario and land use classifications
- Description of the conservation subdivision design approach

The basic idea behind the future land use scenario is to ensure that land use across the four municipalities and within the region fit together in an integrated and harmonious manner.

WHAT IS A FUTURE LAND USE SCENARIO

What is a future land use scenario and how should it be used? The future land use scenario is a conceptual guide for establishing land use policies that direct land use and development practices. The main component of the future land use scenario, the future land use map, identifies the type of land uses and development patterns that are appropriate and desired in the townships. It targets areas for future growth, reinvestment, and conservation of natural assets. The future land use map is not meant to be a zoning map. For this reason, parcel boundaries are not shown and land use classifications are generalized on the map to particular areas where that type of use is appropriate given existing land use patterns and development constraints.

HOW TO USE THE FUTURE LAND USE SCENARIO

The future land use scenario is a conceptual guide for establishing growth management policies. It will assist the townships participating in this plan in making decisions about growth and development and identifying the appropriate land use tools to implement the plan. Therefore, it is not meant to be a zoning map, which is a specific land use tool that delineates land uses into districts and outlines permitted uses for those districts. However, the future land use scenario should serve as a guide for zoning and subdivision ordinance amendments.

The future land use scenario provides a foundation and standard for new development. When considering a proposed development, the important questions to ask a developer during plan review include: “How will the proposed development impact an adjacent site? Does the proposed building fit the scale and intended character of a particular streetscape and neighborhood? How will adjacent streets and sidewalk connections fit together? How much traffic will be generated? Where and what type of landscaping is proposed? How will stormwater run-off be handled? What effect will this plan have on the future development of the area?”

Many times a proposed development will be designed by examination of the site only. It is the responsibility of the municipality to examine the context within which a site is proposed and determine the level of continuity and compatibility between the uses. Ultimately, municipal officials, developers, and planners should answer the question, “Does this development plan fit into the vision, goals, and desired land use pattern as stated in this scenario?”

CREATING THE FUTURE LAND USE SCENARIO

The future land use was developed by synthesizing information from the vision and goal-setting process and translating the vision into an illustrative map. The future land map was created with input from the project steering committee and members of the public. One of the key goals is to reach consensus among all the participating municipalities on the land use patterns, types, and areas targeted for future development and preservation of land. In order to do so, two visioning workshops were held with the municipalities to get feedback from the townships on the vision and future land use map. The workshops were designed as joint Planning Commission meetings between Independence and Greene Townships, and Raccoon and Potter Townships. Both meetings were open to the public.

At the workshops, participants were divided into groups to review and discuss future development types, locations, and intensity of uses. Groups were asked if future development is desired and if so, what type and where. The groups were asked to think about and react to the following questions and outline their responses on maps provided:

1. Where do you feel residential development should be targeted for growth or reinvestment?
2. What areas do you feel are most appropriate for commercial or mixed-use development?
3. Where do you feel manufacturing and industrial development would be most appropriate?
4. What natural areas and historic resources within the region do you feel should be preserved or enhanced (ex. river corridors, agricultural lands, woodlands, parkland, historic buildings and landscapes)?
5. Do you want to promote enhancements or special districts in certain areas?

Each group was provided a base map showing municipal boundaries, roads, and major waterways in addition to a conservation map that identified sensitive environmental features (steep slopes, wetlands, hydric soils, and floodplains). Maps showing existing land use and existing water and sewer infrastructure were also provided to the groups so that they could formulate their responses to the questions listed above. The conservation lands map was provided so that groups could identify areas appropriate for preservation and where additional development can fit within existing development patterns.

Visual Preference Boards

Visual preference boards were used to assist workshop participants in answering the questions listed above and help them assess the appropriate development styles and densities for the townships (ex. low versus high density residential development). The visual preference boards shown on the following pages provide examples the following types of development:

- Residential (low, medium, and high-density, conservation subdivision design)
- Industrial and Manufacturing
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use (residential and commercial)
- Service, civic, and institutional
- Agriculture
- Open Space
- Parks, recreation, and greenway opportunities
- Enhancement Areas - gateways, corridors, neighborhood amenities, signage, and special districts (village, hamlet, and historic districts)

OVERVIEW OF THE FUTURE LAND USE SCENARIO

The future land use scenario includes provisions for the amount, intensity, and character of differing land uses. The location of future land uses, identified on the Future Land Use Map, take into consideration the location of infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer), existing development styles and densities, and the presence of environmentally sensitive areas including conservation land, open space, and parks.

This is a critical time for Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships to be thinking about future land use patterns given the potential for development pressure due to increased suburban and big-box development taking place in the bordering municipalities of Center, Hopewell, and Findlay Townships. In addition, it is important for the four municipalities to plan for future populations. As Table 2.1 illustrates, the 2000 population for the planning area (9,484 people) is projected to decrease by 354 people by 2020 (SPC). However, the population of both Greene Township and Potter Township is projected to increase, generating additional need for housing and supporting services.

Table 2-2 Population Projections for 2020

Township	2000 Population	2020 Population	# Change	% Change
Greene	2,705	3,021	316	12%
Independence	2,802	2,514	-288	-10%
Potter	580	612	32	6%
Raccoon	3,397	2,983	-414	-12%
Planning Area Total	9,484	9,130	-354	-4%
Beaver County	181,412	171,582	-9,830	-5%

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation, June 2003

The future land use scenario reflects the townships' desire to continue to foster a strong and viable community that accommodates future population growth, while preserving rural land and open space. To that end, the designation of future development areas and rural resource areas will help maintain the rural character while expanding existing residential areas to meet the housing needs of future residents.

According to the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), which allows for the designation of rural resource areas and future growth areas, the definitions include:

Land Use Categories

High Density Residential



Medium Density Residential



Low Density Residential



Industrial and Manufacturing



Regional Commercial



Small - Medium Scale Commercial



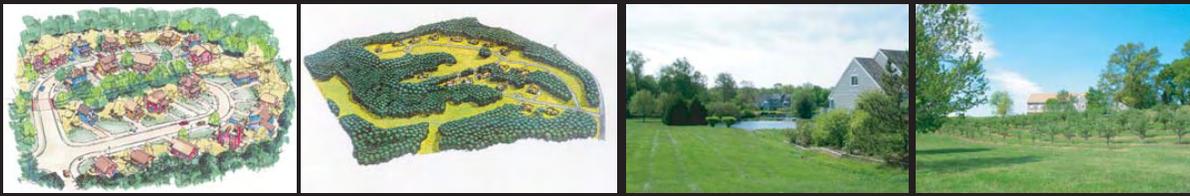
Mixed Use Areas



Service, Civic and Institutional



Conservation Approach



Agricultural Areas



Open Space



Section 2

The Future Land Use Scenario

Enhancements

Trails



Greenways



Signage

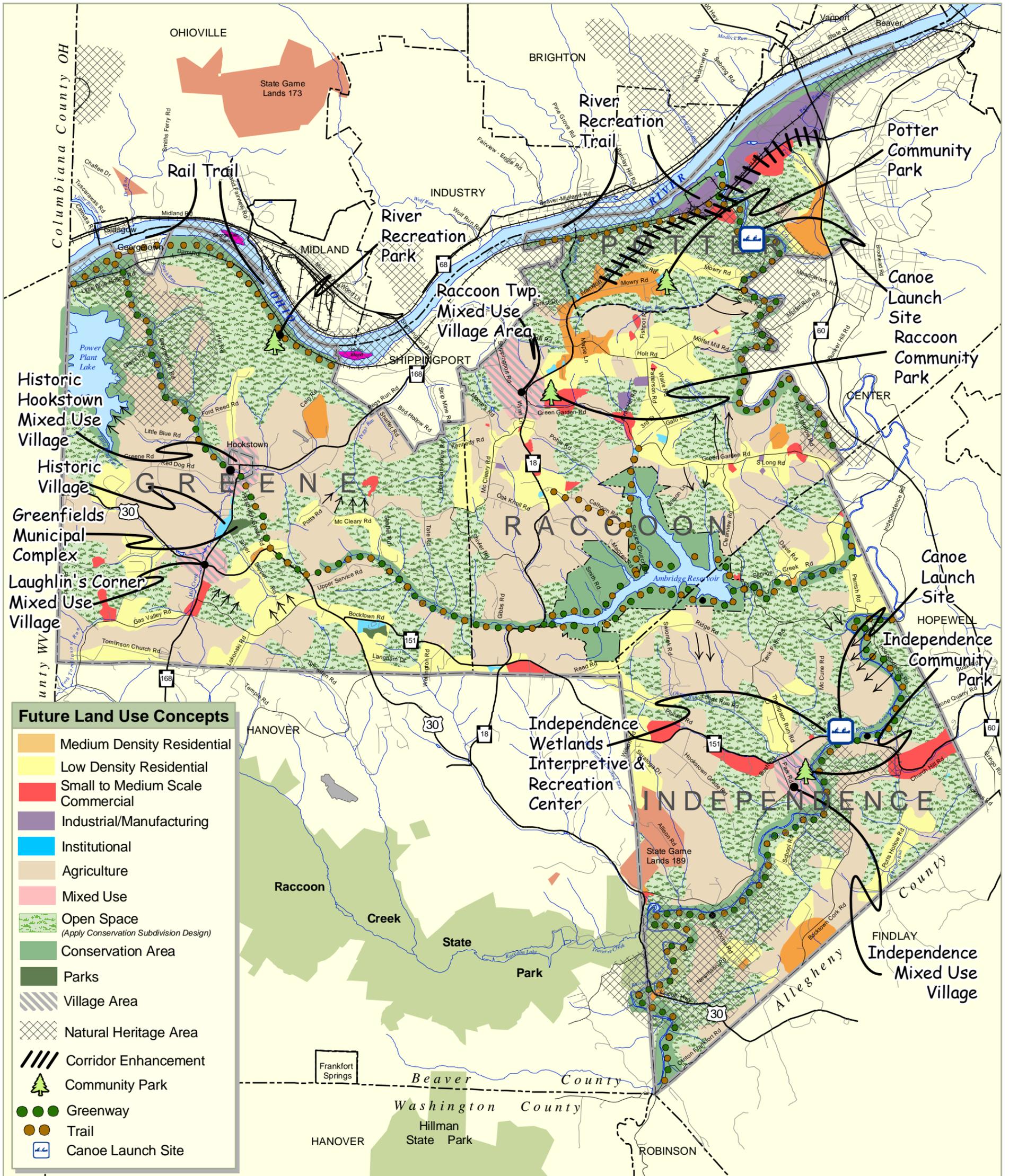


Special District



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





Future Land Use Concepts

- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Small to Medium Scale Commercial
- Industrial/Manufacturing
- Institutional
- Agriculture
- Mixed Use
- Open Space
(Apply Conservation Subdivision Design)
- Conservation Area
- Parks
- Village Area
- Natural Heritage Area
- Corridor Enhancement
- 🌲 Community Park
- Greenway
- Trail
- Canoe Launch Site

Legend	Map Notes	Area of Detail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US/State Route Legis Route Local Road Railroad Airport State Park State Game Land U.S. Fish & Wildlife Forest Reserve ↑↑↑ Scenic Views 	<p>Information used to produce this map was provided by Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation.</p> <p>Additional sources include: State managed lands—Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access Pashek Associates makes no claims to the accuracy of this data.</p> <p>Existing land use digitized from an analysis of USGS orthophotos, land use coverages provided by Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation, and a field analysis conducted by Pashek Associates in December 2003.</p> <p>Projection: State Plane NAD 1983, Units—feet</p> <p>The project is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program and the Local Government Academy Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Grant Program</p>	

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 and 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, forest 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.

The following land use categories directly relate to the areas shown the the Future Land Use Map.

Low Density Residential (rural resource area)

This area provides for the expansion of low density residential development that is consistent with existing residential land use patterns at 1 unit per 2-acres or more, densities that are conducive to on-lot sewage disposal systems. Residential types consist primarily of single family detached units. Residential design should include sidewalks, shade trees, and shorter setbacks, where appropriate.

Medium Density Residential (future growth area)

This area provides for medium density residential development at 4-8 units per acre, including single family detached homes, townhouses, condominiums, and mobile home courts. Medium density residential development is contingent on the provision of adequate public services and infrastructure. It is targeted in areas with existing water service and in close proximity to sewer service. Development patterns and design should include sidewalks, shade trees, and streetscape enhancements, on-street parking, and an interconnected street system.

Open Space with Conservation Subdivision Design (rural resource area)

This area consists primarily of undeveloped open space and forested lands that characterizes the rural countryside. It also includes environmental features where development should be prohibited, including floodplains, steep slopes over 25%, hydric soils, and wetlands. Any residential development in this area should be consistent with conservation subdivision design principles in order to preserve primary conservation lands (steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains), secondary conservation lands (agricultural land and orchards, mature tree stands, historic features, scenic views, hedgerows, etc.), and ensure a connected system of open space in the planning area. At a minimum, primary conservation lands should be preserved throughout the planning area (see Environmental Features Map). All future development should identify and preserve these areas on a site level when land development does occur.

Conservation Buffer (rural resource area)

This area provides for the protection and conservation of land along the Ohio River, Raccoon Creek, Mill Creek, and Service Creek and around the Ambridge Reservoir. This area also provides for a natural landscaped buffer around the Power Plant Lake (“Little Blue”) to minimize the negative impacts of the lake and its contents on surrounding land uses.

Small to Medium Scale Commercial (future growth area)

This area provides for retail stores, restaurants, health care facilities, small businesses, and other small to medium commercial uses (ranging from 1,000 to 40,000 square feet). Commercial uses are located in close proximity of major transportation corridors in order to serve local residents’ needs. The designation also promotes design standards to encourage landscaped and buffered parking lots to the side or rear of buildings, stormwater management practices, signage standards, access management, and pedestrian

linkages, where appropriate. Implement design standards and land use discourage strip style development patterns.

Industry and Manufacturing (future growth area)

This area provides for light to heavy industrial operations, manufacturing, research, and high-technology uses along the Route 18 corridor in Potter Township. Future industrial development will be targeted in this corridor through infill and redevelopment opportunities. The types of uses allowed should produce minimal externalities through nuisance performance standards that prevent light, noise, and odor pollution. The designation encourages green campus design, buffering of adjacent land uses, landscaped parking lots to the side or rear of buildings, signage design standards, and controlled site access.

Institutional (future growth area)

This area provides for public institutions including schools, churches, municipal buildings, public service buildings, and government buildings.

Agriculture (rural resource area)

This area provides for the continuation of existing agricultural land uses including grazing and pasture lands, cropland, orchards, tree farms, and farmland enrolled in agriculture security areas. The designation also includes agriculture-related uses such as scattered residential farm sites, farm structures, agriculture related businesses, and farmer's markets.

Mixed-Use (future growth area)

This area provides for a mix of low to medium-density residential uses, small-scale commercial uses, institutional (schools, municipal buildings, public services), and recreational uses. Residential development can include single family detached homes, duplexes, and townhouses. Recommended site design standards include sidewalks, street trees, interconnected streets, parking and sign standards, and pedestrian orientation of buildings.

Parks

Areas designated for active and passive public recreation including such regional parks, community parks, and tot lots. Parks are generally owned and managed by municipalities, counties, or the state.

Village Area

Applies to areas where village-style development standards should be applied to create a walkable neighborhood with a mix of residential, commercial, recreational, and institutional uses. Village style development patterns include an interconnected street pattern, a variety of lot sizes and housing types, streetscape enhancements, public greens and commons, innovative housing placement and design, and a defined edge between the village and the surrounding countryside. Senior housing, including assisted living facilities, are encouraged to provide seniors with housing in close proximity to services and social opportunities.

Natural Heritage Area

Applies to land defined as a Natural Heritage Area by the Beaver County Natural Heritage Area Inventory. This includes areas recognized for their unique biodiversity and ecological integrity. Conservation standards that minimize the impact of development and prevent fragmentation of the unique natural habitats should be applied in this overlay.

Corridor Enhancement Overlay

This overlay is designated along Route 18/Frankfort Road in Potter Township. The designation encourages development of additional design standards that promote a strong sense of place and provide for a safe community. Design standards may include access management, signage standards, building material preferences, screened and landscaped parking lots, and buffering of adjacent land uses.



Pedestrian Linkages and Trails

This concept supports the development of a network of sidewalks and trails that connect open space, parks, recreational areas, village centers, residential areas, Raccoon Creek, and the Ohio riverfront.



Greenway and Blueway Network

This concept applies to natural areas along stream and river corridors and around the Ambridge Reservoir that make up a connected open space network. Greenways provide opportunities for both active and passive recreational pursuits and connect recreational assets such as parks, forest reserves, and waterways.

REGIONAL AND MUNICIPAL TARGETS

The following is a description of the main land use concepts shown on the future land use map. This includes land use trends that apply to the entire planning area, as well as highlighting land uses specific to each municipality.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Residential densities should generally reflect existing densities throughout the planning area (low density rural residential) and extend from existing residential areas.
- Promote conservation subdivision design throughout the planning region in areas designated for low density residential in order to conserve environmentally sensitive features, open space, and agricultural lands that are common throughout the area. Conservation subdivision design is particularly appropriate in areas surrounding the village area in Independence Township, and the Southside School Complex.
- Continue to support agricultural land use in areas with existing farms and land designated as Agricultural Security Areas.
- Designate mixed-use development in areas where a mix of institutional (schools, services, municipal buildings), recreational, commercial, and residential uses currently exist or can potentially be expanded. Direct small to medium-scale commercial development to the mixed-use areas and promote village style residential development with pedestrian connections to schools, parks, and community facilities.
- Small to medium-scale commercial is most appropriate for the entire planning area, including locally-owned businesses, and in keeping with the rural development pattern that is desired.
- Explore greenway and trail opportunities along Raccoon Creek, the Ohio River, and the Ambridge Reservoir, all major environmental assets to the entire planning area.
- Link Raccoon Creek State Park, Independence Community Park, and the Ambridge Reservoir using greenways and trails.
- Explore the designation of blueways along Raccoon Creek for recreational canoeing, kayaking, and fishing, but designate specific pull-out areas for canoes and kayaks.
- Highlight connections with cultural and historic assets throughout the planning area, including Service United Church and Cemetery and the Southside Historic Village.

Section 2

GREENE TOWNSHIP

- Designate medium density residential along Cain Road where development opportunities exist for well-designed higher density development (in keeping with the rural character) and the close proximity to Shippingport may support infrastructure expansion.
- Designate mixed-use village areas around Hookstown Borough and Laughlin’s Corner (intersection of Route 30 and Route 168).
- Designate commercial extending south along Route 168 from Laughlin’s corner where some businesses currently exist.
- Designate and explore river recreational opportunities for the township owned property along the Ohio River.
- Explore rails to trails opportunities along the Ohio River.
- Designate a Natural Heritage Area Overlay for the Georgetown Island, Phillis Island, and Mill Creek Biodiversity Areas.

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP

- Designate medium density residential along Bocktown Cork Road and bordering Findlay Township from which infrastructure could potentially be expanded
- Designate mixed-use village areas around Independence Elementary and the Independence Municipal Building (and future site of the Independence Community Park).
- Designate commercial along Route 151 at the entrance of Independence from Hopewell Township, which is in close proximity to Route 60 and some existing commercial establishments exist.
- Create pedestrian connections between the Independence Community Park and Independence Wetlands, to be designated a recreation and interpretive site.
- Designate a Natural Heritage Area Overlay for the Wildflower Valley and School Road Slopes Biodiversity Areas.

POTTER TOWNSHIP

- Designate medium density residential along Pleasant Drive and Mowry Road - this is one area that may be appropriate for medium density residential development given the existing residential densities and the close proximity to Center Township from which infrastructure could potentially be expanded.
- Residential development should be limited to expansions from Mowry Road and Pleasant Drive.
- Designate commercial along Route 18 where business development that fits within the industrial character of the corridor is appropriate.
- Explore tourism and recreation related business opportunities along Raccoon Creek Road taking advantage of the close proximity to Raccoon Creek.
- Direct light to heavy industry and manufacturing to where it currently exists in Potter Township through redevelopment and reinvestment into existing sites.
- Pursue trail opportunities along the Ohio River and Squirrel Run Road to the Montgomery Dam
- Designate a corridor enhancement overlay along Route 18 in Potter Township to address access management and corridor planning standards, including screening, buffering, traffic calming, and parking lot placement and design.
- Designate a Natural Heritage Area Overlay for the Lower Raccoon Creek and Monaca Bluffs Biodiversity Areas.

RACCOON TOWNSHIP

- Designate medium density residential in the east corner of the township off Green Garden Road where potential exists for a mobile home park.
- New residential development should be targeted in the northern half of the township and directed away from the area surrounding Ambridge Reservoir (water supply watershed protection area)
- Designate mixed-use village areas around the intersection of Route 18 and Green Garden Road in close proximity to the Raccoon Township Community Park.
- Designate a Natural Heritage Area Overlay for the Creek Bend Slopes Biodiversity Area.

GROWING GREENER SUBDIVISION DESIGN

A recent trend in residential subdivision design is being promoted by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Growing Greener Program is the concept of Conservation Subdivision Design.

The main objective of this approach is to preserve open space and environmentally sensitive lands through the land development process, uses the zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance as the key implementing tools. This approach has been displayed as one method to preserve the rural character and open space areas while allowing for residential development to meet the housing needs in the region.

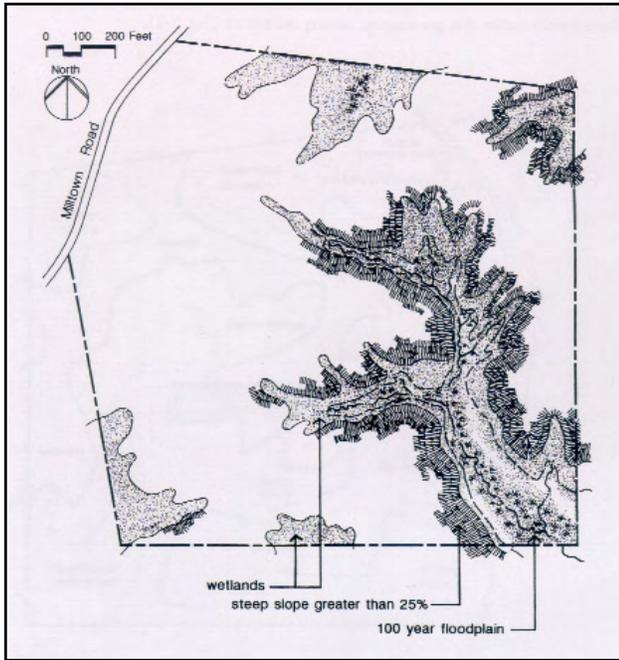
An important feature of conservation subdivision design is the separation of lot size from density. Traditionally, many municipalities have used a minimum lot size to establish the number of dwelling units permitted to be developed on a given parcel. This method, known as conventional subdivision design, promotes the covering of the total parcel with house lots and/or streets. Conservation Subdivision Design assumes a density-neutral approach that yields the same number of lots attainable under the conventional design, yet arranges the layout of each parcel so that minimum of 50% is preserved as open space over and above those area that are floodplain, wetlands, or steeply sloped.

Some of the benefits of conservation subdivision design include:

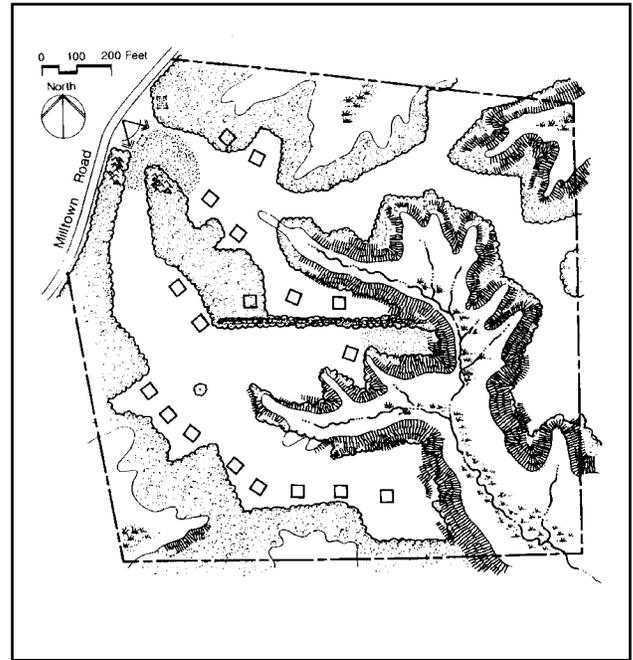
1. Lower cost of development: conservation subdivision design provides opportunities to reduce infrastructure, engineering, and construction costs. For example, conservation subdivision design will utilize less land for building roads due to the more compact layout.
2. Marketing Advantage: The homes in conservation subdivisions back natural areas and open space and can front public greens. People tend to pay more to live in park-like settings. Home buyers value the privacy the layout provides and the scenic views.
3. Wildlife Management: Conservation subdivision design promotes preserving open space that can be connected to a green network outside the subdivision. This helps in protecting contiguous land as habitat for wildlife.
4. Protecting Water Quality: The approach protects water quality and groundwater through improved stormwater management, buffering of streams, and preserving wetlands.

Conservation subdivision design uses a four-step process in lot layout that help to preserve the natural features. The process is outlined on the following page.

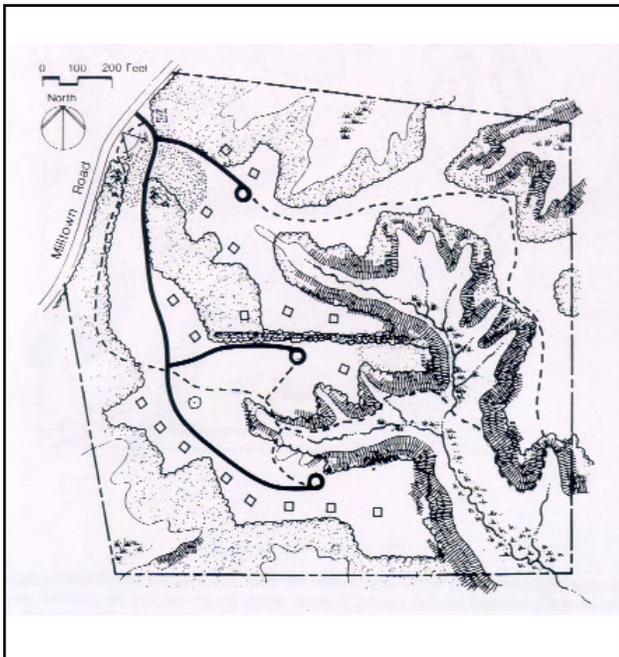
Step 1: Identifies land that should be permanently preserved, e.g., wetland, flood prone areas, steep slopes, mature woodlands, stream corridors, prime farmlands, etc.



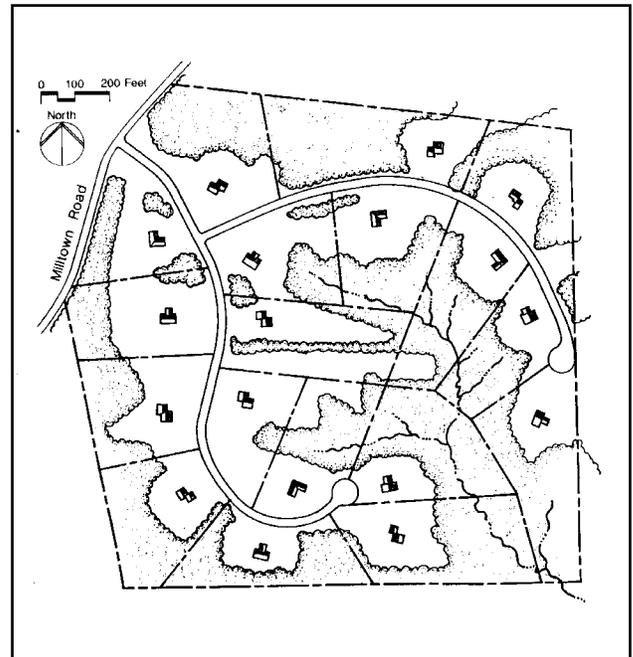
Step 2: Locates the individual home sites to maximize the open space, maintain view, and preserve the character of the area.



Step 3: Involves drawing in the potential streets and trails to connect the home sites



Step 4: Concludes with drawing of the lot lines.





Relationship to the County and Adjacent Municipalities

The following is a discussion of the relationship of the future land use scenario to land use patterns in the surrounding municipalities. It is important to understand the regional context within which the future land use plan fits, and to identify land use patterns in adjoining municipalities that could potentially conflict with or negatively impact the planning area. Land use planning should take place within a regional framework in order to avoid such impacts and ensure that municipalities are planning according to similar regional goals and objectives.

The Beaver County Comprehensive Plan

The General Land Use Plan for Beaver County designates land use in Greene, Independence, Potter, and Raccoon Townships as rural development and natural landscapes. Rural development areas are designated to preserve the rural character of Beaver County and enhance existing villages located in rural areas. Natural landscapes are areas where development should be limited due to natural features (floodplains, slopes, wetlands, stream corridors, prime agricultural lands, woodlands, etc.).

The vision and community goals of the Multi-Municipal Plan, which emphasize the desire to maintain the rural character of the planning area, are consistent with this designation by Beaver County. The plan looks to enhance and direct development to mixed-use village areas that include community amenities, shops, and homes. This plan also seeks to preserve existing agricultural areas and recommends residential development design options, such as conservation subdivision design, that is consistent with agriculture and cluster zones (recommended density of 1-5 dwelling units/acre) recommended by the Beaver County Comprehensive Plan. The Beaver County Comprehensive Plan also recommends that mines, quarries, landfills, and power plants be buffered from adjacent uses, which is consistent with designation of a buffer around Power Plant Lake (“Little Blue”), an impoundment lake for industrial waste from the First Energy power plant in Shippingport.

Land use planning should take place within a regional framework to ensure that municipalities are planning according to similar regional goals and objectives.

Section 2

Relationship to Surrounding Municipalities

Located along the Ohio River, Georgetown Borough is embedded within Greene Township. The small village character of the Borough is complemented by the open space designated along the Ohio River in Greene Township and surrounding agricultural land.

Hookstown, also embedded within Greene Township, is similar to Georgetown in its small, residential village atmosphere. This plan views Hookstown as an asset to the area and seeks to expand on the village style development pattern and historic features of the borough. It is surrounded by agricultural land and open space.

Shippingport Borough, surrounded by Greene, Raccoon, and Potter Townships is more developed than the planning area. The land use in Shippingport is heavily industrial with two power plants (one owned by Duquesne Light and the other by First Energy). A mixed-use village connection to Shippingport Borough is proposed in Raccoon Township. Other surrounding land uses include open space and agricultural land. All efforts should be made to reduce conflicts between future development in the planning area and the industrial land uses in Shippingport Borough. In addition, all municipalities should be aware of proper evacuation procedures in the event of a potential incident at the power plants that could threaten the health and safety of nearby residents.

Center Township is a fast growing municipality located to the east of Potter and Raccoon Townships. Expansion plans for retail space around the Beaver Valley Mall abut against the northeastern corner of Potter Township. Commercial land uses are larger in scale and residential densities are higher than indicated for the planning area on the future land use map. Efforts should be made to properly direct spillover suburban development to appropriate village locations and residential areas that have been identified for future growth. Raccoon Creek forms the western boundary of Center Township. Therefore, coordinated efforts to maintain and enhance Raccoon Creek should be a coordinated effort.

Hopewell Township and Findlay Townships are the closest municipalities to the Pittsburgh International Airport (located in Findlay Township). The two townships surround Independence Township to the east and south. Like Center Township, Hopewell and Findlay are suburban in nature, with higher density residential development and businesses-oriented land uses that take advantage of the proximity to the airport.

The existing land use in Hanover Township, located to the west of Independence Township, is primarily low-density residential development, farmland, and parkland (Raccoon Creek State Park). Land uses surrounding the State Park in Independence Township include open space, conservation, and agricultural land. Proposed developed areas are minimal in order to buffer the park and protect the wildflower preserve.

Finally, planning for the Ohio Riverfront should be closely coordinated with the riverfront municipalities to the north of the Ohio River (across from the planning area), including Ohioville, Midland, Industry, Beaver, and Brighten.



Relationship of the Future Land Use Scenario to Existing Land Use Regulations

Below is a description of the relationship of the future land use scenario to existing zoning regulations and districts in each municipality. Section III -- the Action Program outlines detailed strategies to consider when updating the zoning and subdivision and land development regulations to meet the goals and vision of the plan. It also outlines the steps to take for developing joint ordinances, should the four municipalities opt to pursue joint implementation of the future land use plan. Under joint zoning, the municipalities are not required to provide for every land use type of each municipality, but only throughout the entire planning area. Given the current similarities in the municipal zoning ordinances and districts, and the cooperative effort in joint land use planning, it is strongly recommended that the municipalities jointly implement the land use plan.

Greene Township

The Greene Township Zoning Ordinance includes six zoning districts: Suburban Residential District (R-1), General Residential District (R-2), Light Commercial District (C-1), Highway Commercial District (C-2), and Industrial District (I).

The following are recommended changes to the Greene Township Zoning Ordinance to improve consistency with the Future Land Use Map:

- Designate a medium-density residential district along Cain Road at appropriate, developable areas
- Designate a mixed-use zoning district at Route 151 and Route 168 (Laughlin's Corner), and extending outward from Hookstown Borough
- Develop village design standards for the mixed-use districts
- Incorporate Conservation Subdivision Design as a permitted use in all residential districts
- Designate a Conservation Area District along Mill Creek, Service Creek, and the Ohio River with floodplain and riparian buffer standards
- Designate a Natural Heritage Area Overlay with development standards for sensitive environmental features
- There is no industrial designation for the Township on the Future Land Use Map

Section 2

Independence Township

The Independence Township Zoning Ordinance includes four zoning districts: Agriculture (A), Residential (R-1), General Commercial (C1), and Highway Commercial (C2).

The following are recommended changes to the Independence Township Zoning Ordinance to improve consistency with the Future Land Use Map:

- Designate a medium density residential zoning district along Bocktown Cork Road
- Designate a mixed-use zoning district at Route 151 and Park Road (area surrounding the school, municipal building, and community park)
- Expand the highway commercial designation along Route 151 from the Independence Township municipal border with Hopewell Township to the intersection with Independence Road and adopt access management standards for new commercial development along Route 151
- Develop village design standards for the mixed-use districts
- Incorporate Conservation Subdivision Design as a permitted use in all residential districts
- Designate a Conservation Area District along Raccoon Creek with floodplain and riparian buffer standards
- Designate a Natural Heritage Area Overlay with development standards for sensitive environmental features

Raccoon Township

The Raccoon Township Zoning Ordinance includes five zoning districts: Agricultural (A), Suburban Residential (R-1), General Residential (R-2), Light Commercial (C-1), and Highway Commercial (C-2).

The following are recommended changes to the Raccoon Township Zoning Ordinance to improve consistency with the Future Land Use Map:

- Designate a medium density residential district along the northern portion of Route 18
- Designate a mixed-use zoning district at Route 18, Green Garden Road, and Shippingport Road
- Develop village design standards for the mixed-use districts
- Incorporate Conservation Subdivision Design as a permitted use in all residential districts
- Designate a Conservation Area District along Raccoon Creek with floodplain and riparian buffer standards
- Designate a Natural Heritage Area Overlay with development standards for sensitive environmental features

Potter Township

The Potter Township Zoning Ordinance contains five zoning districts: Rural Residential (R-1), Suburban Residential (R-2), General Commercial (G-C), Special Commercial (S-C), and General Industrial (G-I).

The following are recommended changes to the Potter Township Zoning Ordinance to improve consistency with the Future Land Use Map:

- Designate a medium density residential district along Mowry Road and Pleasant Drive
- Limit the Industrial/Manufacturing District to the area surrounding the Route 18 corridor and apply access management ordinance standards for the Route 18 corridor
- Incorporate Conservation Subdivision Design as a permitted use in all residential districts
- Designate a Conservation Area District along Raccoon Creek and the Ohio River with floodplain and riparian buffer standards
- Designate a Natural Heritage Area Overlay with development standards for sensitive environmental features

Section III: How do We Get There? The Action Plan

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

- George L. Morrissey



Components of the Action Plan

The strategies presented provide guidance to decision-makers and implementers of the plan on the key issues identified throughout the process.

Section III answers the question "How do we get there?" by creating an action plan for implementation. It includes implementation strategies for achieving the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan with respect to the following topics:

- Agricultural Preservation
- Community Image
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Parks and Recreation Opportunities
- Land Use and Growth Management
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Economic Development
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Housing
- Public Services
- Water and Sewer Infrastructure
- Transportation

The action plan contains detailed tables that include categories for strategies, priorities, responsible and participating parties and potential funding sources. The following definitions aid in interpreting the action plan:

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

Priority: Categorized based on the importance of each strategy into high (h), medium (m), and low (l).

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 strategies presented provide guidance to decision-makers and implementers of the plan on the key planning issues identified throughout the planning process. In addition, it is the responsibility of all citizens to ensure that their objectives are met.

Section 3

The Action Plan

Continued citizen participation throughout the implementation process is essential. Furthermore, successful implementation will require continued cooperation among all stakeholders from the public, private, and non-profit sector. For this reason, the project steering committee should remain active participants in the implementation of the plan.

The Steering Committee should explore the possibility of creating action Committees to undertake implementation of strategies under specific goals. Action Committees should include representatives from each municipality, as well as representatives from key interest groups that are involved or affected by the tasks the Action Committee is undertaking. Action Committee tasks include coordinating efforts, planning events and meeting, meeting with interest groups and residents, and writing grants.

The municipalities should also consider establishing a Joint Planning Commission with formal representation from all four municipalities. A Joint Planning Commission will participate in the implementation of the multi-municipal plan, such as the development of joint or separate but consistent zoning ordinances. A Joint Planning Commission can operate in one of two ways. First, the participating municipalities may elect to supplant their individual planning commissions with the Joint Planning Commission, thereby centralizing planning functions in the region within a single body. In this case, the Joint Planning Commission would undertake all planning activities under the Municipalities Planning Code on behalf of the participating municipalities.

Alternatively, the municipalities may decide to retain their individual planning commissions. To avoid overlapping jurisdiction between the local and joint planning bodies, the Joint Planning Commission would be given authority for only those functions specified in Article XI of the Municipalities Planning Code. Such responsibilities would include assessment and approval of Developments of Regional Significance and Impact, as well as review of new or amended zoning ordinances, capital improvement plans, subdivision and land development ordinances and similar instruments for consistency with the Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan. Local planning officials, under this option, would retain responsibility for all other planning duties under the Municipalities Planning Code.

The responsibilities of the Joint Planning Commission should be explicitly defined in an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement for Implementation executed by the four participating municipalities.

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 municipal funds are required 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 is information on programs, contact information, and eligibility requirements.

The municipalities 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 municipalities in implementing the objectives.

Finally, the multi-municipal steering committee and or the Joint Planning Commission should meet on a regular basis to ensure intergovernmental cooperation throughout the implementation process. The Multi-Municipal plan should be reviewed and updated annually reflect the accomplishments of the plan and to identify new funding sources, assess municipal coordination and cooperation, and re-evaluate priorities.

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION

Throughout the planning process, it was clear that maintaining the rural character of the area is a high priority for the steering committee and area residents. What make up the rural countryside in this area of Beaver County are the small farms and tree orchards found throughout the townships. Therefore, the committee identified the following agricultural preservation objectives:

- Protect and preserve the rural character and farmland in the area so that agricultural production is a viable economic component of the community.
- Specifically target designated rural resource areas for farmland preservation efforts (agricultural land uses on the Future Land Use Map are identified as rural resource areas)

The agriculture preservation strategies are two-pronged. The first emphasis is placed on supporting the farmer and farming profession, so that agricultural enterprises remain viable in the planning area. This can be done through a variety of education and outreach mechanisms including Agriculture in the Classroom, 4-H programs, and the Hookstown Fair. Agriculture in the Classroom is a formal program that brings the agriculture and educational communities together to inform schoolchildren of the environmental, economic, and quality of life benefits of agriculture in the United State and elsewhere. Another appropriate strategy is the creation of community-supported agriculture (CSA) initiatives and retail outlets in which farmers can market and sell their produce directly to consumers.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA)?

CSA is a way to connect local farmers with local consumers and thereby sustain a strong local economy. CSA is a partnership between a farm and local supporters who cover a farm's yearly operating budget by purchasing a share of the season's harvest. In return, the farm provides a supply to each member of seasonal fresh produce throughout the growing season.

The second emphasis is on the protection of agricultural land through state and local programs including Agriculture Security Areas (ASA) and the Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Program (for which enrollment in an ASA is a requirement). It is also recommended that Greene, Independence, and Raccoon Townships update their municipal zoning ordinances to include Agricultural Districts with area-based allocations for subdividing land. The purpose of the Agriculture District is to encourage the development and continuing viability of agricultural operations by limiting building and structures that are incompatible with agricultural land uses and activities. The Agricultural District should apply to areas where agriculture has traditionally been present in the municipality, including prime agricultural soils. Lancaster County has developed a Model Agricultural Zoning Ordinance that can be used as an example for agricultural zoning districts.



Agricultural Preservation

Objective 1.0: Protect and preserve the rural character and farmland in the area so that agricultural production is a viable economic component of the community.					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
A1.1	Encourage landowners to enroll farmland properties in Agriculture Security Areas (ASAs) so that farms are protected from eminent domain and nuisance suits, and so that farms are eligible to participate 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.	H	Local landowners; Townships; Beaver County Agricultural Land Preservation Board	NA	
A1.2	Lobby Beaver County to continue to participate in and financially contribute to the Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Program. Provide education and outreach to local farmers on the program to promote interest and enrollment in the program. Conduct an inventory of farms in the townships that meet the eligibility criteria for the program.	H	Local landowners; Townships; Beaver County Agricultural Land Preservation Board; Pennsylvania Bureau of Farmland Preservation	Beaver County; PA Dept of Agriculture Bureau of Farmland Preservation	
A1.3	Develop community based agriculture initiatives where farmers can sell produce directly to consumers such as farmers' cooperatives, community-supported agricultural farms (CSA), and retail stores located on the farm.	H	Existing farmers' cooperatives; local farmers; participating community members	PA First Industries Fund for Agriculture	
A1.4	Increase local knowledge of the importance of agriculture and agriculture-related careers through school curriculums and 4-H programs, and the Hookstown Fair.	M	South Side School District; Center Area School District; Hopewell Area School District; 4-H programs; Hookstown Fair Board; Agribusinesses	Agriculture Awareness Foundation of PA; PA Grange	
A1.5	Explore the potential for developing a TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) program. TDR is a land preservation tool that has been used to preserve agricultural land. It involves purchasing development rights in "sending areas" in exchange for density bonuses in designated "receiving areas."	L	Townships; Private landowners; developers;		
A.16	Convene a group of practicing farmers to understand issues and help identify land use regulations that either threaten or support farming needs in the community	M	Beaver County Agricultural Preservation Board; Elected Officials; local farmers	NA	
A.17	Create a peer network of local leaders to have a better understanding of agriculture in the region and how to keep it viable.	M	Elected Officials; local farmers	NA	
Objective 2.0: Specifically target designated rural resource areas for farmland preservation efforts (agricultural land uses on the Future Land Use Map are identified as rural resource areas)					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source	Record of Action
A2.1	Update Agricultural Zoning Districts in the Greene, Independence, and Raccoon municipal zoning ordinances to include area-based allocation for the number of non-farming dwelling units that may be subdivided from an agricultural parcel (the size of non-farm dwelling unit parcels are based on the size of the original parcel).	H	Greene, Independence, and Raccoon Township Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	Local Government Academy; DCED LUPTAP	

COMMUNITY IMAGE

Creating and promoting an aesthetically pleasing community image in keeping with the rural character of the area emerged as an important during the planning process. Of particular concern to members of the public are property maintenance and well-designed transportation and commercial corridors. Given this, the following community image objectives were identified by the steering committee:

- Promote an aesthetically pleasing community image that is characteristic of the rural nature of the area
- Enhance the aesthetics and improve access management along the Route 18, Route 151, and Route 168 corridors

Specific strategies to improve and enhance the community image include ensuring that commercial and industrial developments are attractive, functional, and consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods and communities. To achieve this, design standards should address building placement and orientation, pedestrian and vehicular access, signage, landscaping, buffering of incompatible land uses, and traffic calming where needed. Signage along commercial and industrial corridors greatly influences the image of a community. Therefore, it is recommended that the four municipalities adopt consistent signage design standards for the size, height, structure, and placement of signs. For example, multi-tenant signs should be required at multi-tenant sites. Property maintenance codes should address both structural and non-structural maintenance including doors, windows, fences, landscaping, and general exterior maintenance for those aspects not covered by the Uniform Construction Code (UCC).



Community Image

Objective 1.0: Promote an aesthetically pleasing community image that is characteristic of the rural nature of the area					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CI 1.1	Incorporate streetscape design standards into zoning ordinances and subdivision & land development ordinances with specific standards and/or guidelines for street trees, street lighting, landscaping, parking lots, sidewalks, setbacks, and community oriented house placement and design.	H	Township Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP	
CI 1.2	Evaluate current sign standards in the existing zoning ordinances to ensure that standards reflect the multi-municipal vision to create a unified appearance throughout the area. Signage should be sensitive to the rural character including the scenic areas and vistas.	H	Township Municipal Officials and Planning Commissioners	DCED - LUPTAP	
CI 1.3	Adopt and enforce property maintenance codes (including junkyard maintenance), where none exist, for both residential and commercial properties to prevent conditions that contribute to blight and deterioration.	H	Township Elected Officials	Local Funding	
CI 1.4	Implement beautification projects, such as landscaping of common areas, park clean-ups, and trail maintenance by establishing and supporting community activities and working with local service organizations and youth groups.	M	Municipal public works; Community Groups; Boy and Girl Scouts; Business Owners; Schools; Environmental Organizations	PA DEP; PA DCNR	
CI 1.5	Implement a public education and relations campaign to discourage littering and dumping and to bolster pride in the communities. Organize dump and trash clean-ups in and around Raccoon Creek State Park, along Raccoon Creek and the Ohio River, and other targeted areas.	M	PA Cleanways - Beaver County; Independence Marsh Foundation; Raccoon Creek Watershed Association; Friends of Raccoon Creek State Park; Friendship Riders; School Districts	DCNR Forest Lands Beautification Program; PA DEP Earth Day Clean-up; PennDOT	
CI 1.6	Implement the new Uniform Construction Code in accordance with Pennsylvania law to ensure quality new construction. Continue to cooperatively administer the program through a joint municipal ordinance among the four municipalities and joint hiring of a certified code officer who has the appropriate training to enforce the code.	on-going	Township Elected Officials	Governor's Center for Local Government Services	
Objective 2.0: Enhance the aesthetics and improve access along the Route 18, Route 151, and Route 168 corridors					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source	Record of Action
CI 2.1	Encourage consistent design standards and guidelines along the Route 18, Route 151, and Route 168 corridors through zoning ordinances. Consider implementing through a corridor enhancement overlay in a joint zoning ordinance or consistent municipal zoning ordinances	H	Township Municipal Officials and Planning Commissioners	DCED - LUPTAP	
CI 2.2	see Transportation - T 1.1				

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Historic churches, fairgrounds, villages, and farms reflect the culture and history of the rural townships in Beaver County. Through the public process, it was clear that preserving and promoting these historic and cultural assets is important to the area. Therefore, the steering committee identified the following historic preservation objective:

- Protect and promote the historic and cultural assets in the area by engaging local historic preservation organizations and identifying recreational linkages

Given that historic preservation associations are already active in the planning area, the primary strategy is to continue to strengthen and support the existing associations. The historic preservation groups play an important role in staging cultural and historic events, such as the Louis and Clark exhibition reenactment, and preserving structures that reflect the heritage of the area. Several historic and cultural assets could serve as key points along a series of walking and biking trails that would serve to connect the various resources. Finally, it is recommended that the municipalities, historic preservation associations, and individual private property owners explore the listing of key historic sites on the National Register of Historic Places. Listing in the National Register contributes to preserving historic properties in a number of ways:

- Recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, the state, or the community
- Consideration in the planning for federal or federally assisted projects by the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Eligibility for federal tax benefits



Cultural and Historic Resources

Objective 1.0: Protect and promote the historic and cultural assets in the area by engaging local historic preservation organizations and identifying recreational linkages					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
CH 1.1	Continue to support the historic preservation associations including the Southside Historic Village Association and the Mill Creek Valley Historic Association in their efforts to acquire and preserve historic structures. Leverage state and federal funding for the preservation of historic buildings and sites in the area.	H	Local Municipalities	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; Preservation Pennsylvania	
CH 1.2	Explore ways to physically link cultural, historic, and recreational resources within the planning area (including Raccoon Creek State Park, Independence Marsh Wetlands, Ambridge Reservoir, Service United Church, and South Side Historic Village) through trails, pedestrian connections, and interpretative signage. Incorporate these connections within a greenways feasibility plan.	H	Local Municipalities; Park and Recreation Boards	DCNR Grants Program	
CH 1.3	Preserve the historic character and industrial heritage of the area by incorporating significant landmarks into new development site designs and neighborhood plans. Establish historic markers in specific places to highlight the history and culture of the site.	M	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	
CH 1.4	Explore listing key historic assets on the National Register of Historic Places.	M	Elected Officials and Historic Preservation Associations	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	

PARKS AND RECREATION

There is an expressed need for new and improved park and recreation facilities and programs to enhance the quality of life for all residents and attract people to the area. Therefore, the following park and recreation objectives were identified during the planning process:

- Upgrade and enhance recreational facilities in existing and planned community parks to provide additional active and passive recreational opportunities, programs, and events
- Explore recreation opportunities along the Ohio River and Raccoon Creek including an interconnected system of trails throughout the four municipalities

It is strongly recommended that residents have access to a variety of recreational facilities and opportunities. The parks system should be made up of neighborhood parks serving residents that live within walking distance, community parks that offer broader community-based recreational opportunities, and larger regional reserves that serve both environmental preservation and passive recreation needs, such as Raccoon Creek State Park. Both Raccoon and Independence Townships have recently complete park master plans for their community parks. Implementing the master plans should be a high priority for the two townships. A park master plan and feasibility study should also be conducted for a riverfront community park in Greene Township. Potter Township has a municipal park, which should continue to be maintained according to the National Recreation and Park Association standards.

The second component of the park and recreation plan is to identify options for creating walking, hiking, and biking trails for recreational purposes. Following recent trends in trail development and use in Southwestern Pennsylvania, it is recommended that the townships conduct feasibility studies for trails along the Ohio River and Raccoon Creek, two significant regional assets that offer untapped recreational potential for the area. Greene Township should also look at the potential for a rail-to-trail along the former rail line running from West Virginia to Shippingport. An end goal identified through the planning process is an interconnected series of trails that link all the municipalities in the planning area.



CONVERTING RAILS-TO-TRAILS

1. Create and/or strengthen a coalition of interested stakeholders
2. Develop a feasibility study for the potential as a multi-purpose trail
3. Work with landowners, business owners, elected officials, and other stakeholders
4. Work with all government entities that are affected by the potential trail
5. Determine the status of the corridor
6. Approach and negotiate with the railroad company
7. Implement a publicity campaign
8. Identify acquisition and development funds
9. Establish a formal "Friends of the Trail" group to act as an advocate for the trail

Parks and Recreation

Objective 1.0: Upgrade and enhance recreational facilities in existing and planned community parks to provide additional active and passive recreational opportunities, programs, and events					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
PR 1.1	Implement the recommendations of the Independence Community Park Master Plan and the Raccoon Community Park Master Plan to improve the park facilities	H	Independence and Raccoon Twps Elected Officials; Park and Recreation Boards	DCNR Grants	
PR 1.2	Develop a joint comprehensive park, recreation, and open space plan among the municipalities in the South Side School Area District, the Hopewell Area School District, and the Center Area School District. Plans should identify appropriate subdivision and land development regulations for dedication of land for parks and recreation facilities. Mechanisms include land dedication or payments of fee in-lieu to support the development of park facilities to serve new residential areas (ordinances must include standards for the proportion of dedication or fee in-lieu required from the development).	H	Elected Officials; Park and Recreation Boards	DCNR Grants	
PR 1.3	Develop a riverfront park feasibility study and master plan for the Greene Township property located near the Ohio River	H	Elected Officials; Park and Recreation Boards	DCNR Grants	
PR 1.4	Develop and support volunteer and recreational programs for senior citizens and youth. Identify an existing or new facility, as well as staffing, to support the programs. Build off of the successful efforts of the South Side Senior Citizens Program.	M	Park and Recreation Boards	DCNR Grants; Local Funding	
Objective 2.0: Explore recreation opportunities along the Ohio River and Raccoon Creek including an interconnected system of trails throughout the four municipalities					
PR 2.1	Develop trail feasibility studies for riverfront trails in Greene and Potter Township and for walking and river trails along Raccoon Creek. Explore designating and developing the abandoned railroad in Greene Twp that runs from the West Virginia border to Shippingport as a rail-to-trail.	H	Local Municipalities; Greene and Potter Township for Ohio River Trail opportunities; Independence, Raccoon, and Potter for Raccoon Creek Trail Opportunities	DCNR Grants and Rails to Trails Program; Technical Assistance from the Trails and Greenways Clearinghouse	
PR 2.2	Create a pedestrian connection between the Independence Wetlands /Beaver County Conservation Center and Independence Elementary School. Develop environmental education programs in conjunction with the Independence Wetlands and Raccoon Creek State Park (Wildflower Reserve).	H	Independence Township; Beaver County Conservation District; Hopewell Area School District	PennDOT Transportation Enhancements Program	
PR 2.3	Coordinate with Beaver County in the development of a County Greenways Trail Plan. Potentially use the planning area for a trail and greenways pilot project for the Beaver County Greenway Plan.	H	Local Municipalities; Beaver County	DCNR Grants	
PR 2.4	Create a multi-municipal hiking and biking trail that links all municipalities in the planning area	M	Local Municipalities	DCNR Grants	
PR 2.5	Approach the Ambridge Water Authority to discuss passive recreation opportunities around the reservoir, such as walking trails.	M	Local Municipalities	NA - Minimal Cost	
PR 2.6	Restrict the use of All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) on community trails and ensure that ATVs are only operated on municipal roads which are designated for ATV use using proper signage.	M	Local Municipalities; DCNR	PA DEPT and DCNR	

LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

One of the main thrusts of the multi-municipal plan is land use. The planning area consists of four municipalities that wish to maintain their rural character by protecting agricultural land and open space, while at the same time allowing some development to support the tax base and ensure efficient service delivery. Therefore, the steering committee identified following land use and growth management objectives:

- Promote consistent land use types, development styles, and densities within and between the four municipalities.
- Establish future growth areas and rural resource areas to define areas appropriate for growth and development and areas to focus resource conservation and farmland preservation efforts.
- Ensure that future growth is coordinated and consistent with utilities improvements (water, sewer, electric) in areas appropriate for development (those areas designated as future growth areas).

It is recommended that the four municipalities utilize a variety of land use tools to meet their land use objectives, starting with updating their zoning and sub-division and land development ordinances. The municipalities should explore the feasibility and acceptance to development of a joint zoning ordinance. The benefits of joint zoning are greater efficiency in achieving the goals of the comprehensive plan through municipal cooperation and coordination. If joint zoning is not feasible, municipal ordinances should be updated concurrently that are consistent with the future land use map and community goals and objectives.

The Municipalities Planning Code outlines additional planning tools available to municipalities including traditional neighborhood development and transfer of development rights. Traditional Neighborhood Development standards are applicable to the Mixed Use Village Areas identified on the future land use map. Development standards include variation of lot sizes and housing types, a mix of land uses, streetscape enhancements, an interconnected street pattern, homes facing a community green or park, and a defined edge between the developed village and the surrounding countryside.

STEPS FOR DEVELOPING A JOINT ZONING ORDINANCE:

1. Enter into an implementation intergovernmental cooperation agreement
2. Draft a joint zoning ordinance that incorporates a uniformly defined set of zoning districts and is consistent with the uses established in the multi-municipal comprehensive plan as shown on the future land use map; and
3. Establish a joint zoning hearing board to administer the joint zoning ordinance.

Innovative land use tools for residential development that preserve open space, agricultural land, and sensitive environmental features should be included in the zoning ordinances such as conservation subdivision design, residential performance zoning, clustering, and planned residential developments (PRDs).

In addition, it is recommended that rural development and rural zoning principles be applied as zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances are updated.

PRINCIPLES OF RURAL ZONING

1. Impact is more important than use - rural zoning should permit a wide variety of uses and subject them to performance standards.
2. Density is more important than lot size - lot sizes can vary as long as the overall density is maintained.
3. Design is more important than density - good design and flexible planning are often more important than density.
4. Countryside should remain largely undeveloped, but not at the expense the landowner. Rural zoning should contain land use options, such as density bonuses, for keeping private and undeveloped land.
5. Development should be concentrated in and near existing hamlet and village centers.
6. Development should meet design guidelines that maintain local community character.
7. Reviewing boards should have discretion to allow what fits into the community, to prohibit what does not, and to make sure proposed development is appropriate.

PRINCIPLES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT*

1. Wherever feasible, retain and re-use old farm roads and country lanes instead of constructing new roads or driveways. This minimizes clearing and disruption of the landscape and takes advantage of the attractive way that old lanes are often lined with trees and stonewalls.
2. Preserve stonewalls and hedge rows. These traditional landscape features define outdoor areas in a natural way and create corridors useful for wildlife. Using these features as property lines is often appropriate, as long as setback requirements do not result in constructing building in the middle of fields.
3. Avoid placing building in the middle of open fields. Place them at the edges of fields or in cleared areas next to the fields. Septic systems and leach fields, however, may be located in fields.
4. Unless buildings are designed traditionally and located close to the road in the manner historically found in the town, use existing vegetation and topography to buffer and screen the buildings.
5. Minimize clearing of vegetation at the edge of the road, clearing only as much as necessary to create a driveway entrance with adequate site distance. Use curves in the driveway to increase the screening of buildings.
6. Site buildings so that they do not protrude above treetops and crestlines of hills seen from public places and roads. Use vegetation as a backdrop to reduce the prominence of the structure. Wherever possible, open up views by selectively cutting small trees and lower branches of large trees, rather than by clearing large areas or removing mature trees.
7. Minimize crossing of steep slopes with roads and driveways. When building on slopes, take advantage of the topography by building multi-level structures with entrances on more than one level, rather than grading the entire site flat. Use the flattest portions of the site for subsurface sewage disposal systems and parking areas. Use best management practices for erosion and sedimentation control, as recommended by the County Soil and Water Conservation District or other natural resource agencies.

* Joel S. Russell, Chester E. Chellman III, and Anne Tate. Rural Development Guidelines, New York Planning Federation, October 1994.

Land Use and Growth Management

Objective 1.0: Promote consistent land use types, development styles, and densities within and between the four municipalities					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 1.1	Developing and implement a joint zoning ordinance that is consistent with the plan and the future land use map. Create a Joint Planning Commission to assist in development and implementation of the ordinance.	H	Township Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP; Local Government Academy; DCED - Shared Municipal Services and Code Enforcement Grants	
LU 1.2	If joint zoning is not desired, ensure that the municipalities update and adopt separate but compatible zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances that are consistent with the goals of the multi-municipal comprehensive plan and future land use map	H	Township Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP	
LU 1.3	Establish a village overlay district (corresponding with the future land use map). The purpose of the district is to implement traditional neighborhood development standards to encourage pedestrian-oriented development with a mix of uses including institutional, residential, commercial, and recreational. Encourage community-oriented development, particularly in mixed-use and village areas, by promoting design standards and features such as front porches, street benches, public squares, and plazas.	H	Township Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP	
LU 1.4	Update municipal zoning ordinances to apply innovative types of residential development tools to preserve the rural character while providing for a range of housing types, including Conservation Subdivision Design, Clustering (to set aside recreational land), Planned Residential Development (PRD); and residential performance zoning. Conservation subdivision design is the preferred approach to maximize open space and preservation goals. These types of residential development should be allowed without special exception or conditional use permits in order to reduce administrative barriers for desirable development types.	H	Township Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP; Local Government Academy; Natural Land s Trust Provides Technical Training on Conservation Subdivision Design	
Objective 2.0: Establish future growth areas and rural resource areas to define areas appropriate for growth and development and areas to focus resource conservation and farmland preservation efforts					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 2.1	Rural resource areas identified on the future land use map include Agriculture, Conservation, and Open Space. Update zoning ordinances to encourage and enhance appropriate uses in rural resources areas, including agriculture, timbering, mining, quarrying, and other extractive industries, forest and game lands and recreation and tourism. Development that is compatible with or supportive of such uses is permitted, and public infrastructure services are not provided except in villages. Encourage low impact residential development through conservation subdivision design, performance zoning, or clustering.	H	Township Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP; Local Government Academy	
LU 2.2	Future growth areas identified on the future land use map include residential, industrial, commercial, and mixed-use land classifications. Update zoning ordinances to reflect appropriate uses and densities for the future growth areas, where 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.	H	Township Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP; Local Government Academy	

Land Use and Growth Management

Objective 3.0: Ensure that future growth is coordinated and consistent with utilities improvements (water, sewer, electric) in areas appropriate for development (those areas designated as future growth areas*)					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
LU 3.1	Require sketch plans early in the site plan review process for subdivision and land development plans, as well as for zoning plans. Encourage developers to walk the site with municipal officials and planning commission members. The benefit of this process is to encourage development that minimizes impacts on natural, cultural, and historic resources and encourage high quality development. The process avoids delays at the preliminary plan review due to open communication early in the site planning process.	H	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	Local Funds	
LU 3.2	Apply Rural Zoning and Development Principles to new development in order to retain unique natural and historic features and retain the rural character (see text). Incorporate principles into subdivision and land development ordinances	H	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP; Natural Lands Trust provides technical assistance	
LU 3.3	Update subdivision and land development ordinances to promote residential development that is less costly to the developer (and thereby the homeowner) and to the municipality to maintain. Excessive standards for frontage, setbacks, and side yards, and street widths can increase development costs for service lines for sewers and water, driveway paving, site clearing, landscaping, stormwater control, curbs and sidewalks and maintenance costs.	M	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP	
LU 3.4	Explore the use of transportation impact fees by establishing an advisory committee to examine the feasibility of impact fees. An impact fee is a charge or fee imposed by a municipality against new development in order to generate revenue for funding the costs of transportation capital improvements necessitated by the new development. An adopted transportation capital improvements plan is required prior to the enactment of any transportation fee ordinance. Impact fees are administered through an impact fee ordinance. The impact fee ordinance must be developed according to the MPC Section 503-A. (ex. Cranberry Township, PA)	L	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	Local Funds	

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

One of the main reasons people are attracted to this area of Beaver County is that it offers rural lifestyles and an opportunity to "get away" from urban living. People come to the area seeking open space and a rural environment. It became clear through the planning process that it's important to maintain and protect the open space, forests, and natural environment that residents see as an asset to the area. Therefore, the follow objectives were identified in the planning process:

- Preserve, protect, manage, and enhance woodlands, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, and other sensitive environmental features that support a healthy environment
- Encourage the concept of greenways that provide passive and active recreational functions and preserve natural areas
- Balance the preservation of land and sensitive environmental features/areas with residential development by promoting environmental design standards and site planning that preserves open space

Several environmental strategies are proposed, including the designation of a Natural Heritage Area Overlay that identifies additional environmental standards to protect important Natural Heritage Areas identified by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

NATURAL HERITAGE AREA CONSERVATION STANDARDS:

- Development restrictions for floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, hydric soils, and mature woodlands
- Preserving existing vegetation on a site and minimize disturbance outside of a designated building envelope and lawn area (ex. <10,000 square feet)
- Stream buffers and impervious surface standards
- Trail use restrictions for all-terrain vehicles
- Low impact road maintenance and construction activities

It is also recommended that the municipalities encourage landowners to participate in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The objectives of CREP are to improve water quality, erosion control, and wildlife habitat related to agricultural use in the Ohio River Basin. CREP is a voluntary program that pays participants to implement conservation practices on environmentally sensitive lands in return for rental payments, cost-share assistance, and other financial incentives for the landowner. Conservation practices include restoring and protecting wetlands, wildlife habitat, erodible land, and riparian buffers.

Other important strategies include developing an open space and greenway plan for the area, supporting watershed level planning, protecting riparian buffers along Raccoon Creek, Mill Creek, Service Creek, and the Ohio River, and limiting development on floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes.



STEPS FOR DEVELOPING AN OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS PLAN:

1) Inventory and Analysis:

- Identify benefits, opportunities, and constraints for greenway and trails
- Identify recreation, cultural and historical resources, and conservation lands to be connected
- Identify and locate potential greenway and trail corridors.
- Identify connections to other greenway and trail efforts in Beaver County.

2) Recommendations Include:

- How greenways and trails can best compliment the existing environments.
- Property ownership and acquisition needs for greenway and trail corridors.
- Preliminary trail alignments and greenway locations
- Modifications to existing zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances
- Preliminary estimates of greenway and trail development, phasing and construction costs
- Sources of funding for acquisition and construction
- Management and maintenance responsibilities

Environment and Natural Resources

Objective 1.0: Preserve, protect, manage, and enhance woodlands, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, and other sensitive environmental features that support a healthy environment					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
Env 1.1	Develop a conservation overlay district for the municipal zoning ordinances that would apply to Natural Heritage Inventory Areas and sensitive environmental features (floodplains, steep slopes, wetlands). District standards should be developed in order to prevent fragmentation of the Natural Heritage Areas and minimize habitat loss to development. Explore acquisition options with local landowners and land trusts as an alternative to zoning designations.	H	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DECD - LUPTAP; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Allegheny Land Trust	
Env 1.2	Encourage participation in the Ohio River Basin Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). CREP is a joint, state and federal land retirement conservation program targeted to address agriculture-related environmental impacts on watersheds.	H	Local Landowners, Beaver County Conservation District, PA DOA, PA DEP, PA DCNR	USDA Farm Service Agency and NRCS (sign-up for the program began in the spring of 2004 and will continue through 2007)	
Env 1.3	Participate in watershed planning and develop watershed protection strategies for the Raccoon Creek Watershed, Mill Creek Watershed, and Service Creek Watershed along with other municipalities in Beaver, Allegheny, and Washington Counties.	H	Elected Officials; Raccoon Creek Watershed Association	PA DEP Growing Greener Program	
Env 1.4	Encourage protection of riparian areas along streams and rivers, such as the Ohio River, Raccoon Creek, Mill Creek, and Service Creek, in order to filter runoff, protect stream habitat, and improve water quality. Consider developing and implementing a riparian buffer ordinance to include all areas in the 100-year floodplain and a recommended base width (100 feet on each side of the waterway is a general standard)	H	Elected Officials; Planning Commissions	PA DEP Growing Greener Program; DCED - LUPTAP	
Env 1.5	Limit development in floodplain, wetlands, and on steep slopes (>25%) through zoning and floodplain management ordinances	H	Elected Officials; Planning Commissions	DCED - Floodplain Land Use Assistance Program; Governor's Center for Local Government Services	
Env 1.6	Work with the Department of Environmental Protection and First Energy Corporation to establish groundwater monitoring wells around Little Blue Run and air monitoring stations in Shippingport to analyze air and water conditions in and around the impoundment. The purpose of monitoring wells and stations is ensure the safety of the air and water through routine monitoring and early detection of potential public health risks posed by the disposal of fly ash in impoundment.	H	Elected Officials from all participating municipalities	PA DEP; First Energy Corporation	
Env 1.7	Reuse inactive mining areas and identify reuse and restoration opportunities, particularly along the Ohio River	M	Local Landowners	PA DEP Growing Greener and Land Recycling Program	

Environment and Natural Resources

Objective 1.0: Preserve, protect, manage, and enhance woodlands, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, and other sensitive environmental features that support a healthy environment					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
Env 1.1	Develop a conservation overlay district for the municipal zoning ordinances that would apply to Natural Heritage Inventory Areas and sensitive environmental features (floodplains, steep slopes, wetlands). District standards should be developed in order to prevent fragmentation of the Natural Heritage Areas and minimize habitat loss to development. Explore acquisition options with local landowners and land trusts as an alternative to zoning designations.	H	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DECD - LUPTAP; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Allegheny Land Trust	
Env 1.2	Encourage participation in the Ohio River Basin Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). CREP is a joint, state and federal land retirement conservation program targeted to address agriculture-related environmental impacts on watersheds.	H	Local Landowners, Beaver County Conservation District, PA DOA, PA DEP, PA DCNR	USDA Farm Service Agency and NRCS (sign-up for the program began in the spring of 2004 and will continue through 2007)	
Env 1.3	Participate in watershed planning and develop watershed protection strategies for the Raccoon Creek Watershed, Mill Creek Watershed, and Service Creek Watershed along with other municipalities in Beaver, Allegheny, and Washington Counties.	H	Elected Officials; Raccoon Creek Watershed Association	PA DEP Growing Greener Program	
Env 1.4	Encourage protection of riparian areas along streams and rivers, such as the Ohio River, Raccoon Creek, Mill Creek, and Service Creek, in order to filter runoff, protect stream habitat, and improve water quality. Consider developing and implementing a riparian buffer ordinance to include all areas in the 100-year floodplain and a recommended base width (100 feet on each side of the waterway is a general standard)	H	Elected Officials; Planning Commissions	PA DEP Growing Greener Program; DCED - LUPTAP	
Env 1.5	Limit development in floodplain, wetlands, and on steep slopes (>25%) through zoning and floodplain management ordinances	H	Elected Officials; Planning Commissions	DCED - Floodplain Land Use Assistance Program; Governor's Center for Local Government Services	
Env 1.6	Work with the Department of Environmental Protection and First Energy Corporation to establish groundwater monitoring wells around Little Blue Run and air monitoring stations in Shippingport to analyze air and water conditions in and around the impoundment. The purpose of monitoring wells and stations is ensure the safety of the air and water through routine monitoring and early detection of potential public health risks posed by the disposal of fly ash in impoundment.	H	Elected Officials from all participating municipalities	PA DEP; First Energy Corporation	
Env 1.7	Reuse inactive mining areas and identify reuse and restoration opportunities, particularly along the Ohio River	M	Local Landowners	PA DEP Growing Greener and Land Recycling Program	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Like in any community, access to nearby employment opportunities is important to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for residents. Furthermore, a healthy commercial, retail, and industrial base supports basic public services and sustains the local economy. Recognizing this, the steering committee identified the following economic development objectives:

- Support economic development in existing business and industrial areas by: 1) retaining existing businesses and industries; and 2) attracting new businesses and industries
- Identify recreation-related tourism opportunities and recreation-related businesses

The committee found that it is beneficial to all municipalities to strengthen the local economy by retaining existing industries and directing new business and industry development to the Route 18 corridor by promoting reuse of industrial sites and upgrading infrastructure. The strategy recognizes the benefits of Route 18 corridor to business and industry, including proximity to infrastructure and multiple modes of transportation including river, rail, and roadways. In addition, it is recommended that the local government forge partnerships with the major industries and employers located along the corridor in order to facilitate communications and coordination on issues that affect local residents.

The Lower Gwynedd Industrial Compact in Lower Gwynedd Township, Montgomery County is a model public/private partnership. As part of the partnership, the township developed an agreement with local businesses to bring in an outside consultant to inspect all plants in the township, such as chemical, manufacturing, and pharmaceutical operations. The purpose of the inspections is to determine what chemicals are being used in the plants and the safety procedures in place, in order to ensure the health and safety of local residents.



Economic Development

Objective 1.0: Support economic development in existing business and industrial areas by: 1) retaining existing businesses and industries; and 2) attracting new businesses and industries					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
ED 1.1	Meet with industry representatives, such as the Route 18 Customer Advisory Panel, to explore the feasibility of establishing a formal partnership between the four townships and local businesses and industries. Such a partnership would meet on a regular basis to share information and discuss relevant issues to the businesses and townships, such as emergency preparedness and public services. The partnership would serve to educate residents on issues that impact the community and maintain ties to key employers in the region	H	Elected Officials; Local Industries	Minimal Cost	
ED 1.2	Retain and attract small- to medium-sized businesses that can be supported by existing infrastructure. Discourage large retail businesses which are not compatible with the vision and future land use scenario, and for which the necessary infrastructure does not exist. Target the Route 18, Route 30, Route 151, and Route 168 corridors for small business development.	H	Local Municipalities; Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development	DCED - LUPTAP	
ED 1.3	Promote new business and high technology development in the existing industrial areas along Route 18 in Potter Township where access to infrastructure and multiple modes of transportation exists.	H	Local Municipalities; Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development	Business in Our Sites Program; CDBG Funding	
ED 1.4	Modify municipal zoning ordinances to allow no-impact home-based businesses in residential districts as a permitted use. Establish definitions for no-impact and intensive home-based businesses to prevent negative traffic, noise, and odor impacts on neighborhoods. Home-based businesses offer flexibility in employment and support a local economy.	M	Elected Officials	Minimal Cost	
ED 1.5	see Intergovernmental Cooperation - IC 1.7				
Objective 2.0: Identify recreation-related tourism opportunities and recreation-related businesses					
ED 2.1	Market community assets (ex. Raccoon Creek State Park, Raccoon Creek, and the Ohio River) for recreation-related tourism and encourage recreation-related business development in appropriate areas. Such businesses could include kayak and canoe rental, bicycle rentals, restaurants, cafes, and campgrounds.	H	Local Municipalities; Beaver County Department of Recreation and Tourism	PA First Industries Fund for Tourism	

MARKETING

Marketing the area and its assets is important in order to increase awareness and pride in the community among residents, as well as to attract outsiders to the area to live, work, and play. Cooperation among the four municipalities will reduce duplicative marketing efforts result in a more cohesive and effective marketing campaign. Therefore, the following marketing objective was established by the municipalities:

- Jointly market the area to increase knowledge of what the area has to offer, specifically targeting young people and families

The primary recommendation of the plan is to establish a committee to spearhead the marketing efforts and organize a marketing campaign. One of the main tasks of such a committee will be to develop marketing materials and identify a mechanism for display and distribution, such as a web site.



Marketing

Objective 1.0: Jointly market the area to increase knowledge of what the area has to offer, specifically targeting young people and families					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
M 1.1	Establish and support a joint committee with representation from all municipalities that is tasked to promote the area and seek funding to market the area's amenities.	H	Local Municipalities	NA - minimal cost	
M 1.2	Develop a joint web site and/or community newsletter among the four municipalities that provides information on living and working in the area – information to be disseminated includes public services available, school districts, local employers and businesses, and recreational opportunities. By developing and maintaining Web sites, the municipalities can provide better services to their communities.	H	Local Municipalities	DCED; Governor's Center for Local Government Services	
M 1.3	see Economic Development - ED 2.1				

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The creation of this multi-municipal comprehensive plan is a demonstration of the four municipalities ability to work together to outline a blueprint for their future. To that end, the four municipalities should work jointly to implement the plan and continue identifying areas in which coordination and cooperation is mutually beneficial to all municipalities involved. The committee identified the following objective to help guide their cooperative efforts:

- Encourage cooperative efforts in planning, public services, and economic development among the four municipalities, as well as with neighboring boroughs and townships, to adequately respond to and meet community needs

There are several smaller boroughs located within or adjacent to the planning area, which could potentially benefit from municipal cooperation given their small size and lack of resources. The plan suggests, therefore, that the municipalities reach out to the Boroughs of Hookstown, Georgetown, and Shippingport to identify areas for joint support and mutual effort.

In addition, the four municipalities should continue to pursue joint programming, purchasing, and planning for public works, water and sewer infrastructure, stormwater management, transportation improvements, and park facilities by creating a long-range capital improvements plan.

The municipalities should explore the use of tools that allow more flexibility in land uses within the planning area and facilitate a coordinated approach to economic development, public services, and land use. One such mechanism is tax-base or tax-revenue sharing. Tax-based sharing addresses the fiscal disparities created by land use patterns across a region by reducing incentives for competition among municipalities/counties for tax-base revenues from commercial/industrial uses and high-end residential. One advantage of tax based sharing is that municipalities retain their autonomy and they do not lose the ability to set their own tax rates and determine how their revenues are spent on public services.

MODEL REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM

Waterfront Development (Homestead, West Homestead & Munhall) - tax revenues from the development are pooled and distributed based on the percent of the total development in each of the municipalities: 50% Homestead, 30% Munhall, 20% West Homestead. A portion of the revenue is directed to the Main Street Fund.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Objective 1.0: Encourage cooperative efforts in planning, public services, and economic development among the four municipalities, as well as with neighboring boroughs and townships, to adequately respond to and meet community needs

No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
IC 1.1	Increase communication and cooperation with local boroughs, including Georgetown, Hookstown, and Shippingport, through joint planning commission meetings - designate a contact person(s) to act as a centralized coordinator for meetings	H	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	NA	
IC 1.2	Continue to pursue joint programming, including purchasing and equipment sharing, among the four municipalities for public works, road maintenance, park facilities planning and maintenance, emergency preparedness, and solid waste and recycling services.	H	Elected Officials, Public Works, Road Crews, Park and Recreation Boards, and Planning Commissions	DCED - Shared Municipal Services Grants	
IC 1.3	Undertake a study among the municipalities in the South Side School District on the impact of the expansion of Little Blue Run Dam on the tax base and the ability of Greene Township and the School District to provide adequate public education and services.	H	Elected Officials, School Districts		
IC 1.4	Coordinate among the four townships, adjacent municipalities, and Beaver County in emergency management service and planning so that residents are educated on emergency management procedures and evacuation routes	H	Elected Officials, Beaver County	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)	
IC 1.5	see Public Services - PS 1.1				
IC 1.6	Coordinate among the four municipalities on long-term capital improvements planning for water and sewer infrastructure, transportation improvements, and park facility planning.	M	Elected Officials	Minimal Cost	
IC 1.7	Explore implementation of a tax base sharing structure among two or more municipalities or within a regional framework in Beaver County. Under tax base sharing, "local governments pool all or part of the revenues from their respective tax bases and then reallocate the revenues among them according to an agreed upon formula."	L	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	Technical Assistance is available from Sustainable Pittsburgh and Ray Reaves (412-422-7877)	
IC 1.8	Explore interest among residents/officials in municipal consolidation among two or more municipalities.	L	Elected Officials	NA	

HOUSING

The two main housing issues that emerged through the planning process include: 1) ensure that residents have access to safe and affordable housing that meets their needs, and 2) to maintain and enhance the neighborhood and community image by promoting housing maintenance and upkeep. To that end, the committee agreed on the following housing objectives:

- Provide a variety of housing types, styles, and affordability levels within designated growth areas to meet the housing needs of all people, including housing for persons with disabilities and senior citizens
- Improve the condition of the existing housing stock

There is an expressed need for affordable senior housing options. Therefore, the municipalities should work together to identify appropriate sites and proactively recruit such facilities to the area. Sites should be in close proximity to municipal centers and within mixed-use village areas to allow elderly to have easy access to goods and services and to maintain ties to their communities. The municipalities should also initiate a relationship with the Beaver County Housing Authority in order to identify senior housing options and financing.

The residents also expressed an interest in a variety of housing types, such as condominiums and townhouses, beyond the single-family residential developments that dominate. Appropriate locations for medium density housing include Pleasant Drive in Potter Township, Bocktown Cork Road in Independence Township, and Cain Road in Greene Township. Medium density development should be contingent upon the provision of necessary public services, neighborhood design features, and streetscape enhancements.

It is recommended that the municipalities improve the existing housing stock by helping homeowners take advantage of the Beaver County Home Improvement Program. The Home Improve Program provides financial assistance (in the form of a 0% interest loan/deferred payment grant) to eligible homeowners for the rehabilitation of their homes. Financial eligibility is determined based on the Section I income levels established by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Finally, it is important for the municipalities to understand the important linkage between housing development patterns and land use. Given that a top priority of the community is to maintain the rural character, the municipalities should look at establishing zoning regulations that enable housing development patterns that are consistent with rural development patterns by preserving open space and agricultural land.

INNOVATIVE LAND USE TOOLS FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT:

Conservation Subdivision Design: Preserves 50% or more of a site, including primary and secondary conservation lands, as an interconnected network of open space, agricultural land, and natural areas. Takes advantage of density bonuses.

Residential performance zoning: Requires natural resource protection and allows for developments with multiple housing types (single family, duplex, townhouse, etc.).

Clustering: Sets aside 30% or less of a site, primarily for recreational facilities or areas

Planned Residential Development: Permits a developer to increase density in return for reserving a certain percentage of the developable land for public open space.

Housing

Objective 1.0: Provide a variety of housing types, styles, and affordability levels within designated growth areas to meet the housing needs of all people, including housing for persons with disabilities and senior citizens					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
H 1.1	Address the need for additional senior and elderly housing by allowing the development of affordable independent living in condos and townhouses, transitional health care homes/facilities, assisted living facilities and nursing homes (continuing care)	H	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions; Beaver County Housing Authority	Private development funds	
H 1.2	Promote development of medium- and low-density housing that incorporates principles of conservation subdivision design, clustering, or planned unit developments (Land Use 1.4).	H	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP; Natural Lands Trust provides technical assistance	
H 1.3	Target appropriate locations for medium density housing (4-8 units/acre) and enable medium-density development through zoning (including townhouses and condos)	H	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP; Local Government Academy	
H 1.4	Update municipal zoning ordinances to apply innovative types of residential development tools to preserve the rural character while providing for a range of housing types (see Land Use 1.4)	H	Township Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP; Local Government Academy; Natural Land s Trust	
H 1.5	Consider implementing residential performance zoning in low-density residential areas. Performance zoning allows a range of housing types with reduced lot sizes in exchange for setting aside open space on a site. Three standards for residential performance zoning include: 1) density, 2) impervious surface ratio, and 3) open space ratio.	M	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP; Local Government Academy	
H 1.6	Update municipal zoning ordinances to allow for mixed use village nodes (to include commercial and residential land uses) at Green Garden Road and Route 18 in Raccoon Township, Route 151 and Park Road in Independence Township, and around Hookstown Borough and Laughlin's Corner (Route 30 and Route 168) in Greene Township. (Corresponds with Land Use - LU 1.3)	M	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	DCED - LUPTAP	
H 1.7	see Land Use - LU 3.3				
Objective 2.0: Improve the condition of the existing housing stock					
H 2.1	Work with Beaver County to identify funding sources such as Community Development Block Grants that can be used to improve the existing housing stock and provide additional, affordable housing to area residents.	H	Local Municipalities; The Housing Authority of Beaver County	Beaver County Home Improvement Program; Community Development Block Grants (administered through Beaver Co.)	

PUBLIC SERVICES

Local governments are tasked with protecting the health, safety, and welfare of their residents. Providing public services that accomplish this without straining municipal budgets and overburdening taxpayers is a major challenge. In particular, the lack of local police service in Greene Township was singled out as a concern of local residents. The that end, the following public services objective was identified by the steering committee:

- Provide efficient and effective public services, including police, fire, EMS, and community health care, by coordinating municipal efforts to reduce financial and administrative costs while maintaining and improving levels of service

Recommendations focus on identifying the costs and benefits of varying service delivery options for police and fire service, including: 1) maintaining independent police and fire services in each municipality; 2) consolidating such services in two or more municipalities into a regional authority; and 3) having smaller municipalities contract for such services from the larger municipalities. Other recommendations address public comments with respect to library services and community health care facilities.



Public Services

Objective 1.0: Provide efficient and effective public services, including police, fire, EMS, and community health care, by coordinating municipal efforts to reduce financial and administrative costs while maintaining and improving levels of service					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
PS 1.1	Perform a feasibility study among the four municipalities that compares the economic and social benefits of several service delivery scenarios. In particular, identify options and the feasibility for providing local police service to Greene Township (ex. through a joint police department or by contract). Where feasible, encourage equitable policies for sharing and financing these services among the four municipalities.	H	Elected officials	DCED - Shared Municipal Services Grant; Local Municipal Resources Development Program; Regional Police Assistance Grant Program; Governor's Center for Local Government Services (feasibility studies for fire service)	
PS 1.2	Provide additional support to police, fire, and EMS programs through fundraisers and volunteer recruitment for the volunteer fire departments	H	Municipalities; Service Providers	NA	
PS 1.3	Explore options with Beaver County for providing a satellite public library site, potentially at the South Side School Complex, Raccoon Elementary, or Independence Elementary. If a satellite center is not feasible, look at possibility of a used book sharing program. Continue to support existing library facilities.	M	Municipalities; School Districts	DCED - Local Municipal Resources Development Program	
PS 1.4	Explore options for providing local health care for the community (such as walk-in clinics), potentially in conjunction with a senior center, Volunteer Fire Department, and local churches.	L	Elected officials	DCED - Local Municipal Resources Development Program	

WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

The lack of infrastructure has restricted high-density development and helped the areas maintain its rural development patterns. However, the provision of adequate water and sewer infrastructure was identified as an important issue for the area during the public meetings and in discussion with the steering committee. As a result, the following objective was identified for the plan:

- Address local water and sewer infrastructure needs on a multi-municipal level to protect community and environmental health

The four municipalities recognize that they face similar infrastructure issues and that it is better to coordinate in their water and sewer planning, rather than pursue individual agendas. They also recognized the important connection between the adequate provision of public infrastructure in order to support economic development and public services.

Therefore, as a first step, it is recommended that the four municipalities complete a joint Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan. Required under state law, the purpose of the Act 537 Plan is to ensure that the municipalities address current sewage facilities deficiencies (including on-lot systems) and plan for future sewage disposal needs. The Act 537 Plan(s) should identify all on-lot systems and their operational status so that recommended joint programming and maintenance options area identified. The municipalities should consider creating a Multi-Municipal Local Agency to administer the Act 537 Plan.

STEPS TO CREATE A MULTI-MUNICIPAL LOCAL AGENCY INCLUDE:

1. Adopt a municipal ordinance to establish the agency
2. Designate a board of representative from each municipality and establishing operating procedures
3. Establish day-to-day operating and personnel policies
4. Hire staff to implement the Act 537 program (SEO, alternative SEO, and support staff)

While a similar planning process is not required by the state for water facilities planning, the municipalities should ensure that the expansion of public water service is coordinated with future growth and development by working with existing municipal authorities to identify service options to future growth areas (as identified on the future land use map), as the need arises.

Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Objective 1.0: Address local water and sewer infrastructure needs on a multi-municipal level to protect community and environmental health					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance	Record of Action
WS 1.1	Develop and/or update Act 537 plans for all municipalities in the planning area. Coordinate sewage facilities planning by developing a joint Act 537 plan among the four municipalities that identifies options for maintenance of on-lot systems and expansion of public sewer infrastructure to appropriate areas (areas only identified for future growth).	H	Elected Officials	PA DEP ACT 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Grants	
WS 1.2	Coordinate Act 537 Plans to be consistent with the land use goals identified in the multi-municipal plan. Educate municipal staff about the Act 537 requirements and provide for better communication among the municipalities about proposed developments that will impact water and sewer capacity.	H	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	PA DEP ACT 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Grants	
WS 1.3	Create a Multi-Municipal Local Agency among the four municipalities to administer the Act 537 Plan(s), oversee the permitting of on-lot sewage systems (through a joint SEO), work to eliminate malfunctioning systems, help the municipalities plan for adequate disposal capacity for future residential and business needs, and educate residents on sewage management issues	H	Elected Officials	PA DEP - multi-municipal agencies are eligible for up to 85% reimbursement of costs associated with permitting and sewage management programs	
WS 1.4	Coordinate the extension of public water infrastructure with future growth and development, consistent with the land use types, densities, and designation of future growth and rural resources areas identified on the future land use map.	H	Elected Official and Municipal Authorities	PENNVEST	
WS 1.5	Within the Act 537 Plans, explore the need for, feasibility of, and community support for, implementing a joint Sewage Management Program among the four municipalities. The purpose of the program is to ensure proper operation and maintenance of on-lot disposal systems and prevent problems that result in malfunctioning systems. Sewage management programs should be developed with public input through surveys, community meetings. Such programs may include the following services - Public and homeowner education - Recommended operation and maintenance procedures to prevent malfunctioning systems.	L	Elected Officials	PA DEP ACT 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Grants	
WS 1.6	Revisit existing public water studies to evaluate the technical and financial feasibility of public services to future growth areas, as the need arises	L	Elected Officials and Planning Commissions	NA	

TRANSPORTATION

Improving transportation conditions and safety were identified as priorities for the SHALE municipalities. The Steering Committee set the following goals aimed at achieving such improvements:

- Maintain the transportation infrastructure to be safe and reliable and ensure proper use of existing roadways to meet the transportation needs
- Explore the feasibility of transit connections with nearby municipalities
- Create pedestrian and bicycle connections within neighborhoods and between schools, parks, and village centers

The action plan recommends that all roadways identified with deficiencies in the transportation assessment be upgraded to meet PennDOT design standards. It also recommends creating a transportation capital improvements plan so that the townships can plan for and identify multi-year funding requirements for long-term transportation improvement projects.

The transportation action plan also recommends applying access management standards to the major transportation corridors that travel through the area in order to control traffic flow, reduce curb cuts, and maintain corridor aesthetics.

PRINCIPLES OF ACCESS MANAGEMENT:

- Provide a specialized roadway system
- Limit direct access to major roadways
- Promote intersection hierarchy
- Locate signals to favor through movements
- Preserve the functional area of intersections and interchanges
- Limit the number of conflict points
- Separate conflict areas
- Remove turning vehicle from through traffic lanes



The townships should not limit their transportation improvements to roadways, but public transit and bicycle and pedestrian alternatives were also identified as important considerations. Therefore, recommendations are made to incorporate pedestrian and bicycle features in transportation improvements and to incorporate sidewalk design standards in municipal ordinances.

Key to Potential Funding Sources for Transportation Strategies

1. Four-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The new program covers the years 2005 through 2008. A new program is adopted every two years. Candidate projects for the next program will be solicited in the spring of 2005 for the 2007 through 2010 program. The funding split would be 80% Federal Funds and 20% State or other local funds. Likely source of Federal would be STP Funds.
2. PennDOT Highway Restoration Program (also referred to as the Betterment Program). This could be either Federal Funds (80% Federal with 20% matching State funds) or 100% State funds.
3. PennDOT County Maintenance Funds. 100% State funds allocated out of the particular County Maintenance Budget in which the road is located.
4. Tax Increment Financing (TIF). This is for highway improvement projects that are the result of new development. The projected taxes of the new development are deferred by the local municipality, the local school districts and the County and are used to purchase bonds to finance the needed highway improvements.
5. PennDOT Enhancement Program.
6. Federal Critical Bridge Program. Part of the TIP program but funds can only be used to repair, rehabilitate or replace bridges.
7. PennDOT Bridge Bill. Can be a combination of State and/or Local funds but can only be used on a bridge that has been placed on the current bridge bill as passed by the State Legislature.
8. Congestion Management Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. Part of the TIP Program but can only be on projects proved to reduce congestion and improve air quality.
9. PennDOT School Walking Route Program.

Transportation

Objective 1.0: Maintain the transportation infrastructure to be safe and reliable and ensure proper use of existing roadways to meet the transportation needs					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source	Record of Action
T 1-1	Apply access management techniques to the major transportation corridors to reduce the number of curb cuts and manage site entry points located on high speed and/or high volume roadways. Changes can be made over time by incorporating design guidelines into municipal ordinances.	H	Townships, PennDOT, Beaver County	PennDOT Growing Smarter Transportation Initiative	
T 1-2	Replace/upgrade existing temporary bridge on Green Garden Road in Hopewell Township to meet current PennDOT design standards, as this roadway provides a critical connection between the study area and PA 60.	H	PennDOT, Beaver County, Hopewell Township	4-Year TIP, Federal Critical Bridge Program, PennDOT Bridge Bill	
T 1-3	Create capital improvements plans (CIP) to establish a five- to ten-year implementation schedule for roadway improvements. The CIP outlines timelines and prioritization for roadway maintenance, reconstruction, or enhancements, as well as financing. This plan can also be used to establish dedicated bike paths and enhance existing roads to provide bike lanes.	H	Townships	Local Townships and County	
T 1-4	Upgrade Raccoon Creek Road (SR 3019) in Potter Township to meet current PennDOT design standards and replace antiquated and falling down cable barriers with modern guide rail.	H	SPC, PennDOT, Beaver County, Raccoon Township	Congestion Management/Air Quality (CMAQ) Program	
T 1-5	Improve sight distance deficiencies at the intersection of Route 18 and Green Garden Road in Raccoon Township by upgrading the intersection to meet current PennDOT design standards.	M	PennDOT, Raccoon Township	4-Year TIP	
T 1-6	Improve narrow roadway conditions and sight distance deficiencies at the intersection of Route 18 and Route 151 in Raccoon Township by upgrading the intersection to meet current PennDOT design standards.	M	PennDOT, Hanover Township	4-Year TIP	
T 1-7	Improve sight distance deficiencies at the intersection of Route 30 and Route 168 in Greene Township by upgrading the intersection to meet current PennDOT design standards.	M	PennDOT, Raccoon Township	4-Year TIP	
T 1-8	Improve roadway pavement and drainage deficiencies on McCleary Road (SR 3018) in Raccoon Township to meet current PennDOT design standards.	M	PennDOT, Raccoon Township	4-Year TIP, PennDOT Highway Restoration Program	
T 1-9	Improve drainage deficiencies causing shoulder deterioration on Independence Road (SR 3013) in Independence Township to meet current PennDOT design standards.	M	PennDOT, Beaver County, Independence Township	PennDOT County Maintenance Funds	
T 1-10	Upgrade roadway conditions to current PennDOT design standards with construction projects and new development.	M	PennDOT, Beaver County, Municipalities	4-Year TIP, Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	
T 1-11	Upgrade Route 30 throughout the planning area to current PennDOT design standards, including the intersection of Route 30 and Route 18 in Hanover Township, as this is a critical connection for access between adjacent townships in the planning area.	M	SPC, PennDOT, Beaver County, Greene Township, Independence Township, Hanover Township	4-Year TIP	
T 1-12	Incorporate ADA standards into all transportation improvement projects to accommodate the handicapped and elderly population.	M	Townships	PennDOT Enhancement Program	

Transportation

Objective 2.0: Explore the feasibility of transit connections with nearby municipalities					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source	Record of Action
T 2-1	Contact Beaver County Transit Authority (BCTA) to discuss the possibility of providing transit services within the study area.	M	SPC, BCTA, Townships	Congestion Management/Air Quality (CMAQ) Program	
Objective 3.0: Create pedestrian and bicycle connections within neighborhoods and between schools, parks, and village centers					
No.	Strategies	Priority	Responsible & Participating Parties	Potential Funding Source	Record of Action
T 3-1	Develop a plan and perform a feasibility study for pedestrian and bicycle pathways along primary corridors to promote access between individual sites from adjoining streets and neighborhoods (ex. access to schools, parks, churches, etc.). As part of the plan develop map of proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities and connections.	H	PennDOT, Beaver County, Townships, SPC	PennDOT Enhancement Program, PennDOT School Walking Route Program	
T 3-2	Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities as standard features in all transportation improvement projects.	H	PennDOT, Beaver County, Townships	PennDOT Enhancement Program, PennDOT School Walking Route Program	
T 3-3	Provide appropriate signage for identified bicycle routes.	H	PennDOT, Beaver County, Townships	PennDOT Enhancement Program	
T 3-4	Contact and discuss the strategies in this plan with PennDOT District 11-0 Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator.	H	PennDOT, Beaver County, Townships	N/A	
T 3-5	Coordinate with PennDOT and SPC to include bicycle and pedestrian facilities projects on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).	H	SPC, PennDOT, Beaver County, Townships	N/A	
T 3-6	Update municipal ordinances and standards to be more pedestrian/bike friendly. Encourage development in areas within walking distance to shopping, work, or recreation. Promote sidewalks on roadway projects and all future developments.	H	Local Municipalities	PennDOT Transportation Enhancements Program, Safe Routes to School Program, Local funds	
T 3-7	Identify transportation projects that coincide with bicycle and pedestrian connections and identify corresponding agencies that should be involved.	M	PennDOT, Beaver County, Townships	PennDOT Enhancement Program, PennDOT School Walking Route Program	
T 3-8	Review PennDOT Surface Treatment Program to identify possible pavement/shoulder widening projects.	M	PennDOT, Townships	4-Year TIP, PennDOT Highway Restoration Program, PennDOT County Maintenance Funds	