



The Centre Region



Comprehensive Plan

November 2013

Table of Contents

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

1.	Acknowledgements.....	4
2.	Introduction.....	6
3.	Land Use.....	16
	• Region-wide Planning and Community Development • Regional Growth Boundary • Sustainable and Smart Development Practices • Rural Residential Areas and Rural Centers • Agriculture Viability • Agricultural Land Preservation • Agricultural and Urban Area Compatibility	
4.	Transportation.....	30
	• Mobility and Safety • Mode Choice • Transportation and the Environment • Land Use and Transportation • Transportation Funding	
5.	Open Space, Conservation & Recreation.....	44
	• Open Space • Conservation • Parks and Recreation	
6.	Housing.....	52
	• Supply • Variety/Affordability • Location • Design • Independence	
7.	Community Services & Facilities.....	64
	• Water • Wastewater • Refuse and Recycling • Utilities • Emergency Services (Law Enforcement, Fire Protection, Medical) • Schools and Libraries	
8.	Sustainability.....	82
	• Water and Sewer Services • Transportation • Energy Efficiency • Municipal Resources • Communications	
9.	Natural, Environmental, Cultural & Historic Resources.....	94
	• Natural Resources • Environmental Resources • Cultural and Historic Resources	

10.	Community & University Relations.....	102
	• Transportation • Land-Use Integration • Student Housing • Communications • Contributions to the Community	
11.	Economic Development.....	112
	• Centre Region Economic Development Assessment Recommendations – Short-term Recommendations – Mid-term Recommendations – Long-term Recommendations – Phasing • Goals, Objectives, and Policies – Economic Sustainability	
12.	Implementation.....	118
	• The Implementation Strategy – Strategy – Implementation Timeframes – Implementation Responsibility • Measuring our Progress – Establishing Metrics – Progress Reports – Periodic Assessment	

Map Index (located in back of document).....M1 - M18

M1 - Centre Region Overview
M2 - Future Land Use The Centre Region
M3 - Future Land Use College Township
M4 - Future Land Use Ferguson Township
M5 - Future Land Use Halfmoon Township
M6 - Future Land Use Harris Township
M7 - Future Land Use Patton Township
M8 - Future Land Use State College Borough
M9 - Transportation Inventory - Road, Rail & Air Facilities
M10 - Transportation Inventory - Bicycle Facilities
M11 - Transportation Inventory - Mass Transit
M12 - Open Space & Parks Inventory
M13 - Conservation Inventory
M14 - Utilities Inventory
M15 - Septic Suitability
M16 - Emergency Facilities & Coverage Areas
M17 - Educational Facilities
M18 - Natural Resources & Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Acknowledgements

2013 GENERAL FORUM

CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

James C. Steff, Executive Director
Cathy Prosek, Assistant to the Executive Director

COLLEGE TOWNSHIP

David P. Fryer, Council Chair
David W. Koll, Vice-Chair
Forrest J. Remick, Ph.D
Mary C. Shoemaker
L. Eric Bernier

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP

George Pytel, Chair
Dick Mascolo, Vice-Chair
William Keough
Drew Clemson
Elliott Killian

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP

Mark J. Stevenson, Chair
Andrew G. Merritt
Benjamin P. Pisoni
Barbara H. Spencer, Vice-Chair
Todd D. Kirsten

HARRIS TOWNSHIP

Paul Rittenhouse, Sr., Chair
Charles (Bud) Graham, Vice-Chair
Dennis Hameister
Clifford Warner
Nigel Wilson

PATTON TOWNSHIP

Elliot Abrams, Chair
Bryce Boyer, Vice-Chair
Jeff Luck
Josh Troxell
Walt Wise

STATE COLLEGE BOROUGH

Donald M. Hahn, President
Thomas E. Daubert
Ronald L. Filippelli
Catherine G. Dauler
Sarah Klinetob
Peter Morris
James L. Rosenberger
Elizabeth A. Goreham, Mayor

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

Dan Sieminski

STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Jim Pawelczyk

TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE COMMITTEE

Jeff Luck, Chair
George Pytel, Vice-Chair
David W. Koll
Todd Kirsten
Paul Rittenhouse, Sr.
Thomas E. Daubert
Rob Cooper

Patton Township
Ferguson Township
College Township
Halfmoon Township
Harris Township
State College Borough
Penn State University

CENTRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

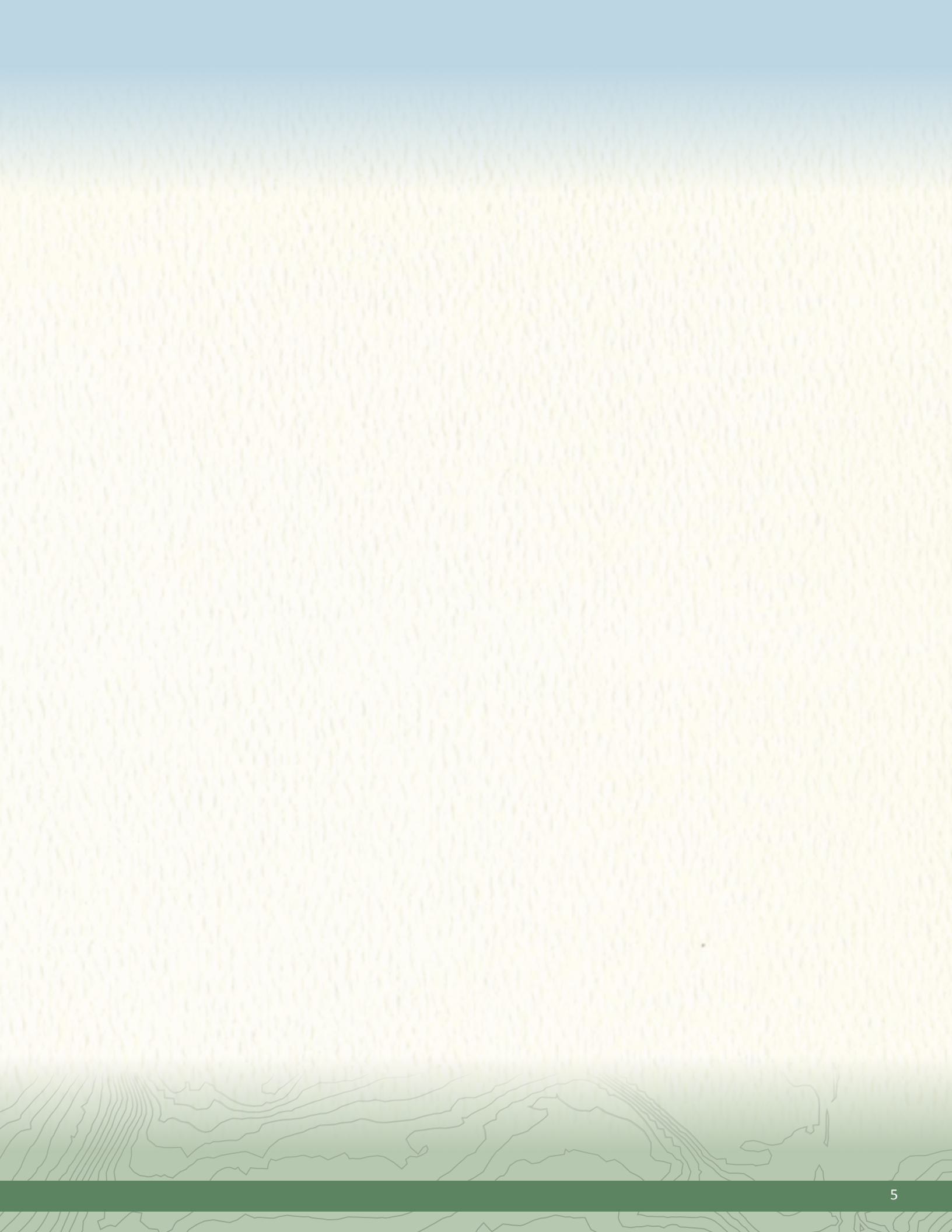
Danelle Del Corso, Chair
Janet Sulzer, Vice Chair
Richard Killian
Bob Igo
Kate Domico
Jon Eich
Steve Watson

Halfmoon Township
College Township
Ferguson Township
Harris Township
Patton Township
State College Borough
Penn State University

CENTRE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

James J. May, AICP, Director
Lyssa Cromell, Office Manager
Steve Arnold
Mark Boeckel
Sarah Fournier
Mark Holdren, AICP
Greg Kausch
DJ Liggett
Trish Meek, AICP
Joe Price, AICP
Eric Vorwald, AICP
Tom Zilla, AICP

The Centre Regional Planning Agency would like to extend a special thank you to Sally Heffentreyer for providing an independent review of the final document for consistency between the various elements to ensure a seamless document has been presented to the residents of the Centre Region.



Introduction & Document



INTRODUCTION

The Centre Region has a long history of comprehensive planning that has emerged over the past five decades. Comprehensive planning is a dynamic process, and the plans that result from this ongoing process should be updated to reflect changes over time. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code recommends updating comprehensive plans every 10 years. The Centre Regional Planning Commission also recognizes that it is good practice to update the plan on a regular basis to ensure that adopted goals, objectives, and policies remain relevant and address issues in the region. The Centre Regional Planning Commission was established in 1960 to assist the Centre Region municipalities with local and regional planning activities. The first Centre Region Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1976, and the plan has been updated twice since initial adoption, once in 1990 and once in 2000.

The primary purpose of any regional comprehensive planning activity is to develop a plan for the physical growth of the region; to prepare goals, objectives, and policies; and to set forth a program to implement those goals, objectives, and policies. Historically, comprehensive plans have been referred to as “blueprints” for the future. Over the past 10 to 20 years, however, planners have increasingly recognized that this characterization can suggest a rigidity and inflexibility to change. The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan needs to express the basic values the community wants to see maintained or achieved in the future, while accommodating unanticipated changes or trends in the economy, energy supply and demand, public policy, housing, demographics, and other variables.

Overview

The Comprehensive Plan update takes a long-range perspective and provides an opportunity for the six Centre Region municipalities to continue a coordinated approach to land use decision making in the region. The Comprehensive Plan is one of the primary tools the Centre Regional Planning Commission and municipal planning commissions will use to guide decisions and make recommendations regarding growth and development to the municipal governing bodies in the region. Municipalities, in turn, are the primary unit of government responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan through their regulatory authority.

It is important to recognize that the Comprehensive Plan is a multi-municipal, regionally adopted policy plan that will be used to identify a wide variety of issues important to residents in the region. Actions to address detailed policies and specific issues will be included in the implementation program of the Comprehensive Plan. These actions are expected to be accomplished through many activities, including municipal ordinances and programs developed over a number of years outside the broad framework of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan is intended to preserve the characteristics that make the region unique, while guiding and shaping future growth and expansion. Simply stated, municipalities in the region are determined to shape their future by embracing a regional approach to frame issues and to implement regional policies through their municipal authority to manage growth. The Centre Region maintains both a friendly urban and rural atmosphere that residents want to protect for the enjoyment of future generations. The Comprehensive Plan embraces a multi-jurisdictional approach that recognizes the interrelationships between regional land use, transportation, open space, and economic development policies, and municipal actions that implement those regional policies. The Comprehensive Plan is:

A Guide for Decision Making

A guiding principle of decision-making in the Centre Region is the consensus-based approach to regional issues. This approach fosters a regional perspective that is primarily implemented at the municipal level. In fact, for more than five decades, region-wide growth and development policy for the Centre Region has been implemented by the six municipal governing bodies and the municipal authorities, boards, and commissions. The Comprehensive Plan has, and should continue to provide, the long-range perspective and general policy framework within which the governing bodies and the municipal authorities, boards, and commissions make growth, development, service delivery, and budgeting decisions that will shape the future of the Centre Region.

A Statement of Regional Policy

The Comprehensive Plan is a statement of what the region wants to achieve and wants to become. Planning policies provide the basis for coordinating the decisions of the governing bodies and authorities, boards, and commissions involved in the growth and development of the Centre Region, and offer opportunities for dialogue to ensure consistency with one another over time. Policies in the Comprehensive Plan will allow decision makers to move from very general statements about what the Region wants to be (goals), to more specific objectives and policies designed to achieve these goals. The regional-level policies that emerge from the Comprehensive Plan are influenced by many factors, including community values, long-range goals, short-range objectives, economic and financial feasibility, political reality, and expected outcomes.

You know you are in Ferguson Township when...“you see waves of corn, soybeans and hay”.

~ Ferguson Township resident, 2012
Centre Region Community Survey

A Map for Detailed Planning & Implementation

One purpose of the Plan is to guide private and public investment and growth decisions; however, the Plan will also provide a framework for the more detailed studies and additional planning activities that serve to implement the Plan's recommendations. Because the Comprehensive Plan will not be able to address every issue in as much detail as everyone might like, many issues will require more detailed follow-up work after the Plan has been adopted.

These issues might include the revision of municipal zoning or subdivision regulations or the preparation of more detailed plans on specific topics, such as sustainability and community/university relations, or specific plans for sensitive areas or redevelopment areas for previously developed and underutilized sites. These follow-up studies can be thought of as part of the ongoing Comprehensive Plan refinement and implementation process—a process that should include metrics, annual monitoring, and periodic reevaluation of the Plan—and which will provide the basis for future Plan updates that are essential if the Comprehensive Plan is to remain relevant and effective over time.

Imagine you came back in 30 years, what would you hope to see be the same?
“Small town feel.”

~ College Township resident, 2012 Centre Region Community Survey

A Reflection of the Values and Public Interests of the Region

It is important that the planning process encourage and recognize the active participation of individuals, businesses, institutions, and special-interest groups within the community. The Comprehensive Plan must balance the interests of many different individuals and groups, and be a reasonable reflection of the shared goals and values of the entire region.

A Tool to Communicate with Citizens, Businesses, and Institutions

The Plan can serve as an informational and educational tool for those involved in making decisions that affect the future of the community. It should help guide public and private sector investment decisions, and add predictability to the decision-making process for development projects that should be consistent with the Plan's recommendations.

Consistency in Making Growth and Development Decisions

The Comprehensive Plan has legal standing as defined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and will be a policy document used by the The Centre Regional Planning Commission and municipal planning commissions in making recommendations to municipal governing bodies. Through the regional adoption process, the Plan offers opportunities for dialogue and consensus to ensure consistency when the policies articulated in the Plan are implemented at the municipal level. In the Centre Region, certain proposed actions by a governing body of a municipality or school district relating to physical development or ordinance changes are reviewed by the The Centre Regional Planning Commission to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

When asked what do you hope to see changed by the Plan? “Redevelopment of existing commercial properties”.

~ State College Borough resident, 2012 Centre Region Community Survey

A Document that will be Flexible and Realistic

The Plan should articulate a picture of what the region wants to be in 25 to 30 years, and should include recommended policies, strategies, and an implementation strategy. The Plan should be realistic in the sense that it reflects the values of the community, the region's long-range goals, municipal financial capability, and political realities. The Plan must balance adaptability and specificity. While the Plan includes background information regarding development and socio-economic trends and projections for the future, planners and decision makers recognize that 30-year projections and forecasts often need to be monitored and adjusted over time for a variety of reasons. Rather than providing specific direction for each and every decision, the Plan should provide general guidance and flexibility to respond to unanticipated changes that may occur in the future.

DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

The remainder of this introduction summarizes the following components:

- Comprehensive Plan Themes
- Comprehensive Plan Background Documents
- Comprehensive Plan Organization
- Comprehensive Plan Implementation
- Relationship to other Planning Documents
- Interrelationship among Plan Elements

Comprehensive Plan Themes

Themes are fundamental ideas that represent the Centre Region's beliefs about future growth, development, and sustainability. These themes represent broad ideas that guide the Region throughout its decisions about the formation and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. All Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, policies, and implementation programs should be generally consistent with, and support, the themes. The themes primarily came from feedback provided by participants in the Comprehensive Plan update process.

A series of preliminary policy decisions were also identified during the Comprehensive Plan update. The preliminary policy decisions were generated by the Centre Regional Planning Agency staff as a means to identify major issues, in conjunction with the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee. Collectively, how these policy decisions are addressed influences the content of the Comprehensive Plan.

How Themes are Formulated and Used

Themes are based on the results of the community outreach efforts conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. The effort included stakeholder meetings, community meetings, a region-wide random sample community survey, meetings with the Centre Regional Planning Commission, meetings with the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee, and reviews with municipal planning commissions and governing bodies. The seven preliminary themes below represent a general consensus about the basis for Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and policies. The Comprehensive Plan contains a variety of issues; however, the following seven themes capture the core issues that should remain in the forefront as the Plan is implemented.

Preliminary Comprehensive Plan Update Themes

1. **Neighborhood Quality** – Diverse, well-planned neighborhoods are essential to a strong region. Protect established neighborhoods and build new neighborhoods that support community.
2. **Environmental Quality** – Protect natural resources, including air, water, energy, wildlife, and wetlands, in the Centre Region.
3. **Multi-municipal and Agency Cooperation** – Continue to maintain and improve multi-municipal solutions to issues that transcend municipal boundaries.
4. **Sustainable Region** – Plan for social, environmental, and economic sustainability at a regional level.
5. **Mobility and Connectivity** – Provide multiple options for residents to travel and connect neighborhoods, businesses, schools, and parks.
6. **Agriculture** – Agriculture is an important part of the economy and the heritage of the region. Protect and support this way of life to ensure the viability of agriculture in the region.
7. **Economic Development** – Expand and diversify the local economy to provide jobs for existing and future residents.



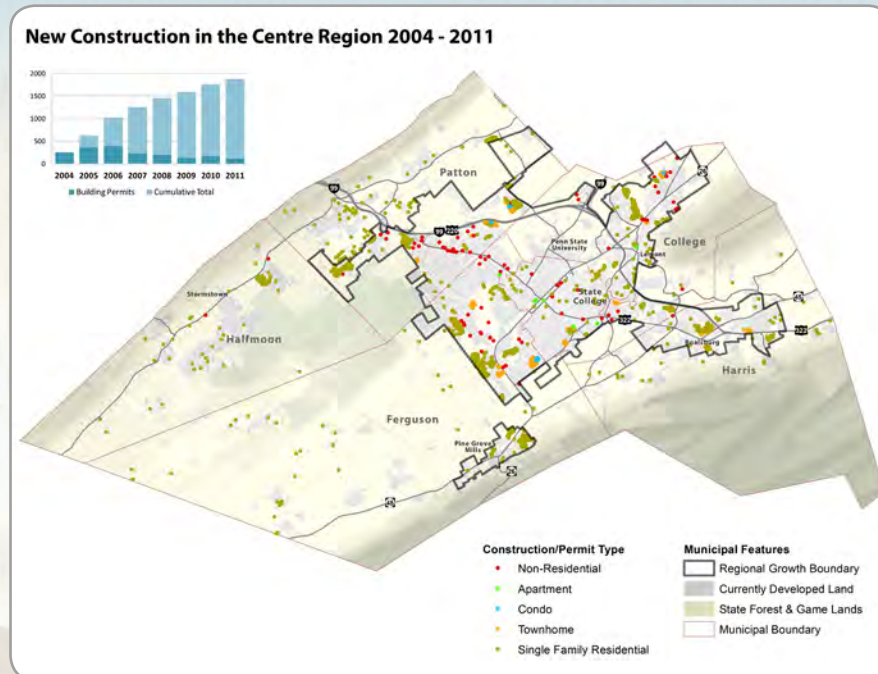
Comprehensive Plan Survey respondents overwhelmingly support strong coordination between land development activities and the transportation system. This example of automobile, bus, pedestrian, and bicycle integration in the busy Colonnade Shopping Center in Patton Township is a good example of this practice.

How Key Policy Decisions are Formulated and Used

The key policy decisions identify the policies that most influence the content of the Comprehensive Plan. The 2010 Comprehensive Plan update contains dozens of goals, objectives, and policies that address a multitude of issues and topics relevant to conservation, transportation, housing, land use, growth, and development in the region over the next 20 to 30 years. Each policy in the Comprehensive Plan has a particular purpose and addresses a specific, important subject. A few of these policies address pivotal issues that collectively define how the region approaches and implements the Comprehensive Plan. These policy decisions were used by the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee to shape the direction of future growth.

Comprehensive Plan Update Policy Decisions

1. **Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area** – The Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area is the one tool that may have the most influence upon where growth occurs in the Region. Although the location of the Regional Growth Boundary appears as a boundary on a map, it is more. It informs a growth management strategy designed to direct growth that requires urban services to those areas currently served by infrastructure, and to use existing infrastructure in a fiscally sound manner. Growth may currently occur outside the Regional Growth Boundary, but public sewer will not be provided unless unanimously approved by the General Forum. Currently, any property owner outside the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area can request an expansion of the boundary. Policy issues for the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee to consider are (1) if and when the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area should be expanded and (2) how to balance proposed expansions of the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area with agricultural preservation, natural resource preservation, energy efficiency, workforce housing, redevelopment, residential density, and neighborhood protection.



Nearly 72 percent of the Comprehensive Plan Survey respondents indicated the Centre Region should continue to direct the majority of growth into the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area. This exhibit shows that 90 percent of the building permits issued for new construction between 2004 and 2011 were located within the Regional Growth Boundary.

- 2. Preservation of Agricultural Industry** – Long-term effective protection of the agricultural industry is an important policy issue in the Comprehensive Plan update. Agricultural land protection has a direct influence on the regional economy, job and economic growth, the location of future development, and the overall quality of life. Protection of agricultural land is a central policy focus in the existing Comprehensive Plan and previous plans. Some agricultural lands in the region are very well protected by zoning regulations or conservation easements, while other agricultural lands are not well protected. It may be appropriate to consider additional policies that go beyond land protection to encourage and support the agricultural industry. A key policy issue will be how to effectively preserve prime agricultural lands and to what extent regional policy can keep the agricultural industry viable in the long term.



Agricultural heritage provides the ties that bind many people to the Centre Region. Over 80 percent of Comprehensive Plan Survey respondents support preservation of prime farmland for agricultural use.

- 3. Economic Development** – The recently completed Centre Region Economic Development Assessment includes a number of recommendations to help support and further a vibrant local economy. These recommendations should be an obvious part of the Comprehensive Plan update. Not so obvious are the questions of where and what type of economic growth should occur, and what the Region can realistically do to influence that growth. Key policy decisions include how to stimulate effective long-term growth in sectors that are good “fits” with the region, and the extent to which the region wants to work toward the retention and expansion of existing businesses.

- 4. Protection of Natural Resources** – Air, water, wildlife habitat, soil, forest, and mineral resources represent important natural elements of the environment that may be affected by human activity. Protection of natural resources continues to be a high priority of residents in the region. How development and agricultural practices are balanced with natural resource protection is an important focus of the Comprehensive Plan update. Regional Comprehensive Plan policies and implementation programs have significant influence on the protection of natural resources. A challenge in the Comprehensive Plan will be to find a workable balance among resource protection, agricultural production, economic growth, and community growth.
- When asked what distinctive features of the Township matter most? “The natural beauty of the setting”.

~ Harris Township resident, 2012 Centre Region Community Survey
- 5. Transportation** – A number of important transportation-related issues were identified during outreach efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update, including traffic congestion, bike and pedestrian pathways, and access to other cities in the state. The existing Comprehensive Plan contains many transportation-related policies; however, a broader range of policies to address the most pressing issues was presented to the Centre Regional Planning Commission and COG Transportation and Land Use Committee for consideration. These included multiple and interrelated policies regarding implementation of a “Complete Streets” approach, where vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists are all accommodated in roadway corridors; safety and operational improvements is the focus instead of widening roads; and the public transportation system expands to give residents of all ages more options.
- 6. Protection of Established Neighborhoods** – A fundamental building block of any community is quality neighborhoods. The region contains many mature, diverse, and unique neighborhoods that vary in size, character, and composition. Many mature neighborhoods reflect the more traditional neighborhood model, wherein some commercial, educational, and recreational services are either integrated into residential areas or located in convenient proximity to those uses. Many of these single family neighborhoods are threatened by nearby or adjacent incompatible uses, lack of investment, encroachment of student housing, and the condition of aging housing stock. One policy issue the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee considered is the extent to which the region should conserve, revitalize, redevelop, and reinvest in mature neighborhoods. Another consideration was how to best protect established neighborhoods from the adverse impacts of more intensive or higher-density projects near or adjacent to these neighborhoods.
- 7. Location of Residential Development** – Another consideration was the impact that suburban and large-lot residential subdivisions have on development patterns in the region. This issue is also related to and may influence transportation, housing, energy efficiency, and land use issues (like other policy issues). The ability to have a rural lifestyle within a few minutes of Penn State University and other amenities is highly valued by many residents in the region. Others believe that residential lots of an acre or more disrupt the traditional rural development pattern and diminish the viability of the agricultural heritage of the region. The Centre Regional Planning Commission and the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee considered policies that continue this pattern as well as those that direct growth into the existing Regional Growth Boundary, reducing impacts on prime agricultural areas and natural areas.
- 8. Housing** – Home ownership and rental housing in the region are becoming increasingly expensive for existing and new residents. Some municipalities have developed local ordinances to assist with the development of new affordable housing in the region. At this time, however, a regional approach has not been formulated. The Centre Regional Planning Commission and the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee considered the merits of a regional approach to affordable housing versus a municipal approach and considered voluntary versus mandatory approaches.

Comprehensive Plan Background Documents

Inventory and Assessment of Existing Conditions

The *Inventory and Assessment of Existing Conditions* provides a generalized summary of existing conditions in the region. This information serves as the baseline conditions for long-range planning and is used to frame the context for planning in the Centre Region.

Comprehensive Plan Resident Survey

The Centre Regional Planning Agency conducted this survey in the summer of 2011. The Resident Survey provides an understanding of citizen attitudes toward growth and development, and provides a strong foundation upon which to build regional policy for the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan. The survey serves as a key public participation component of the Comprehensive Plan update. Elected officials and staff chose the resident survey as a cost-effective method to ask for resident opinions regarding a number of issues in the Centre Region to inform the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan update. The survey contained 43 questions regarding land use and development, housing, community services and facilities, transportation, the environment, economic development, and government and resident communication.

Centre Region Economic Development Assessment

The Centre Region Economic Development Assessment contains a series of recommendations and implementation actions that help define a cohesive regional economic development policy for the Centre Region. The report provides a series of recommendations to implement over a number of years.

Comprehensive Plan Organization

The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan includes the following sections:

Comprehensive Plan Elements

Each of the Comprehensive Plan Elements contains a summary of key issues and findings, and the goals, objectives, and policies that the Centre Region will use to guide future growth and development decisions.

The following Plan Elements are included:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation
- Housing
- Community Services and Facilities
- Sustainability
- Natural, Environmental, Cultural, and Historic Resources
- Community and University Relations
- Economic Development
- Implementation

Summary of Key Issues and Findings

This section includes issues that emerged as part of the public participation process, resident survey, and reviews with the Centre Regional Planning Commission, municipal planning commissions, governing bodies, and the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee.

Centre Region Comprehensive Plan

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The goals, objectives and policies form the heart of the Comprehensive Plan. Goals, objectives, and policies are defined as:

Goal: *A goal is a target or end to which planning activity is directed. Goals are not quantifiable or time dependent.*

The terms “goals” and “objectives” are used interchangeably in some comprehensive plans. Goals in the context of the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan will generally be broad, unquantifiable statements. Goals should be expressed as ends, not actions.

Objective: *A specific statement or method of action that addresses a goal and if pursued and accomplished will ultimately result in achievement of the goal to which it is related. An objective should be achievable and, when possible, measurable and time specific.*

An objective may pertain to one particular aspect of a goal or it may be one of several successive steps toward goal achievement. As a result, each goal may have more than one objective.

Policy: *A specific statement that guides decision making to achieve Plan implementation.*

Policies are specific statements that guide decision making and are carried out by implementation programs. They indicate a commitment of the governing body (as identified in the Implementation Strategy) to a particular course of action. Policies are based on and help implement the Comprehensive Plan objectives. A policy must be clear and unambiguous to be useful as a guide to action.

Consistency among Individual Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The Comprehensive Plan sets forth a number goals and policies that address a broad range of topics over a long period. The Centre Regional Planning Commission, the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee, municipal planning commissions, governing bodies, and in some instances the COG General Forum and Centre Regional Planning Agency staff have strived to prepare goals, objectives, and policies that are consistent with each other. No project or decision can satisfy every Comprehensive Plan policy. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires that municipal actions be “generally consistent” with Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and policies. Actions by a municipality should generally further, or not contradict, the goals, objectives, and policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan. The municipal planning commissions and governing bodies decide which goals, objectives, or policies would best implement the Comprehensive Plan, based on the concept of “general consistency.”

Relationship to Other Planning Documents

Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code requires that comprehensive plans provide a statement indicating that the existing and proposed development in the comprehensive plan area is compatible with the existing and proposed development and plans in contiguous portions of neighboring municipalities. Comprehensive planning efforts in municipalities surrounding the Centre Region include the Centre County Comprehensive Plan and the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan.

Relationship to Centre County Comprehensive Planning and Planning Efforts

The Centre Region will continue to maintain a close and long-term cooperative planning effort with Centre County. Centre County has designated seven geographic planning areas within the County, some of which have adopted

regional comprehensive plans. These adopted plans include the Nittany Valley Comprehensive Regional Plan and the Penns Valley Comprehensive Regional Plans. Both planning areas are located east of the Centre Region. The Centre Region is also bordered by the Upper Bald Eagle Planning Area, which does not have an adopted Comprehensive Regional Plan.

The Nittany Valley Comprehensive Regional Plan borders the northeastern portion of the Centre Region Planning Area. This portion of the Centre Region Planning Area is characterized by a variety of existing and future land uses, including farms, mixed-use development and single-family neighborhoods.

The Penns Valley Comprehensive Regional Plan borders the southeastern portion of the Centre Region Planning Area. This area is largely rural, composed of farms with scattered residential land uses. The border also includes portions of Rothrock State Park. Compatibility between the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan and the Penns Valley Comprehensive Regional Plan is achieved primarily through compatibility in existing and future land uses.

The Upper Bald Eagle Valley Regional Planning Area borders the northern portion of the Centre Region Planning Area. The Bald Eagle Valley and the Centre Region are physically separated by the Bald Eagle Ridge. The ridgeline is a distinct geographic feature that provides compatibility in this area through the conservation of Bald Eagle Ridge.

Relationship to the Huntingdon County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Efforts

The border between the Centre Region Planning Area and Huntingdon County are separated, to a great extent, by the Rothrock State Forest lands. Coordination between the two planning agencies is minimal because land bordering each planning area is preserved as a state forest on respective planning documents. The Centre Region will continue a long-term cooperative planning effort with Huntingdon County.

Interrelationship among Plan Elements

Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code requires that comprehensive plans provide a statement of interrelationship among the various plan components. This requirement is intended to ensure that the components of the plan are integrated and do not present conflicting goals, objectives, or policies. The Comprehensive Plan themes and policy decisions are the broad statements upon which goals, objectives, and policies in the Comprehensive Plan Elements rest. During the preparation of the Plan, each draft Element was reviewed several times by professional planning staff from the CRPA, Ferguson Township, and the Borough of State College. Additional reviews were completed throughout the planning process by the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the COG Transportation and Land Use Committee. During these reviews, inconsistencies among individual Plan Elements were noted and corrected with the intent of providing decision makers, the residents of the Region and others clear direction regarding the future physical development of the Centre Region.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation

If the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan is to serve its purpose effectively, it must be reviewed, maintained, and implemented in a systematic and consistent manner. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code states that Comprehensive Plans must include a discussion of short- and long-range plan implementation strategies. To address this requirement, the Implementation Element of the Plan will outline the framework that will allow the Centre Region to implement the plan's policies, while measuring their success at achieving goals and objectives. The implementation program will identify necessary actions that must take place to implement the plan, the timeframe in which those actions should be completed, and those entities that will be responsible or best suited to complete the action. The Implementation Element of the plan does not seek to answer these questions, but to provide the framework for an implementation program that can be created and considered for approval either concurrently with the Comprehensive Plan or after the plan is approved.

Land Use

INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element provides the policy context for the Centre Region to achieve its goals for the preservation and future development of rural, suburban, and urban land uses. This Element includes a description of the key issues and findings and the goals, objectives, and policies for future land use, development, community design, agriculture protection, and resource protection in the Centre Region. This Element also includes a detailed description of the Future Land-Use Map and the related land-use designations and standards. The Land Use Element is organized into the following sections:

- **Key Issues and Findings**
- **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**
 - **Region-wide Planning and Community Development**
 - **Regional Growth Boundary**
 - **Sustainable and Smart Development Practices - Maps M2 - M8**
 - **Rural Residential Areas and Rural Centers**
 - **Agriculture Viability**
 - **Agricultural Land Preservation - Map M13**
 - **Agricultural and Urban Area Compatibility**



KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

The following issues and findings emerged as a result of the *Inventory and Assessment of Existing Conditions* and act as a basis from which goals, objectives, and policies are identified:

1. Approximately 20% of the land area in the Centre Region is classified as developed. The remaining land is classified as undeveloped, and includes forest, vacant land, and water features, or is designated as agricultural land. The proximity and vast expanses of agricultural lands and protected natural areas, such as Rothrock State Forest, Mount Nittany, State Gamelands 176, and the Bald Eagle Ridge, indicate a fairly compact development pattern throughout the Centre Region.
2. The opening of Interstate 99 has influenced the location and the extent of new commercial development in the Centre Region.
3. Between 2000 and 2010 industrial land uses increased from 305 to 343 total acres. Approximately 94% of the Centre Region's industrial land uses are located in College, Ferguson, and Patton Townships.
4. Agricultural land use decreased by 1% between 2000 and 2010. Nearly half of all agricultural land zoned for agriculture in the Centre Region is located in Ferguson Township (11,857 acres or 46%).
5. The *2012 Regional Development Capacity Report* and *Centre County Growth Forecast 2040* indicate that land within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area is sufficient to accommodate growth within the planning period of the Comprehensive Plan.
6. A combination of factors that include the location of prime agricultural soils, the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area, natural features, geology, environmental awareness, lifestyle choices, and access to open space have contributed to the development pattern in the Centre Region.
7. According to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Centre Region Geographic Information System, the number of people supported per acre of land decreased 35%, from 14 people per acre in 1980 to 8 per acre in 2010. In 1980, the Centre Region had a population of 62,015 people, who occupied 4,383 acres of residentially developed land, or 14 people per acre. The 2010 U.S. Census Bureau population count for the Centre Region is 92,906. There are approximately 10,680 acres of residentially developed land in the Centre Region, equating to only 8.6 people per acre of land.



Cherished landscapes and places in the Region often transcend municipal boundaries and require regional cooperation to protect for the future.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Region-wide Planning & Community Development

This section addresses Region-wide planning and community development efforts to address growth and development patterns in all areas of the Centre Region. Regional planning has a direct role in shaping the general character of urban and rural development that transcends municipal boundaries. This section addresses goals, objectives, and policies that encourage regional planning and community development efforts to provide a quality living environment for all existing and future residents of the Region.

GOAL 1 - Inter-municipal and inter-agency cooperation is necessary in the planning and community development decision-making process.

Objective 1.1

Coordinate regional land-use policy with implementation actions at the municipal level.

Policy 1.1.1

Explore the development of uniform and complementary zoning designations and criteria for interested Centre Region municipalities.

Policy 1.1.2

Encourage the continued use of the official map to identify and preserve future open space areas. Create a regional working map that illustrates municipal official maps to clearly show regional connections or gaps among municipalities.

Policy 1.1.3

Identify sites for schools and parks in safe and convenient locations.



The complexity and dynamics of regional planning has evolved substantially over the past 50 years. Planning and preparing in a cooperative manner for the future has resulted in a "We are in it together" philosophy in the Centre Region.

Regional Growth Boundary

The Regional Growth Boundary is one of the most effective land-management tools to guide growth in the Centre Region. The Regional Growth Boundary limits urban expansion onto farm and forest lands. Land inside the Regional Growth Boundary supports urban services such as roads, water and sewer systems, parks, schools, and fire and police protection that create places to live, work, and play. Land outside the Regional Growth Boundary is generally used for farming, forests, or large-lot single-family development at a density that does not require public sewer.

The Regional Growth Boundary limits urban sprawl and promotes the efficient use of land, public facilities, and services inside the boundary. Other benefits of the boundary include encouraging efficient land use and directing development to areas with existing roads and infrastructure required to serve new development.

GOAL 2 - A Regional Growth Boundary allows the Centre Region to continue to guide growth.

Objective 2.1

Maintain a Regional Growth Boundary within which development is encouraged and urban sprawl is minimized.

Policy 2.1.1

Continue to identify environmentally sensitive areas during the land development review process and locate development where there is minimal impact to environmental quality.

Policy 2.1.2

Provide updates the Regional Development Capacity Report in the CRPC Annual Report and conduct a detailed analysis every five years.

Policy 2.1.3

Periodically review the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) process for potential changes and use the process to determine if the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area should be amended.

Policy 2.1.4

Determine if there should be a minimum density inside the Regional Growth Boundary that supports efficient use of infrastructure.

Policy 2.1.5

Locate future growth areas to avoid adverse impacts on identified source water protection areas for public wayer supplies.



The RGB/SSA allows efficient use of land, transportation and other public services, while helping to preserve farmland.

Objective 2.2

Actions related to zoning and land development must recognize the close relationship between land use and transportation impacts.

Policy 2.2.1

Municipalities should require regulations to provide site design features such as pedestrian and transit amenities, parks, woodland protection, landscaping, and building construction consistent with the character of the site location.

Policy 2.2.2

Municipal subdivisions and land development ordinances must require adequate transit facilities for all proposed development within the Regional Growth Boundary.

Policy 2.2.3

Require pedestrian and bikeway trail connections as part of the land development approval process when existing trails are adjacent or nearby a future land development site.



Sidewalks, like this one recently completed in Boalsburg encourage walking, and provide safe pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and the Village.

Sustainable and Smart Development Practices

Sustainable and smart development practices encourage a variety and mix of land uses, such as residential, commercial, retail, office, and other uses that are increasingly viewed as an asset in many communities. Sustainable and smart development practices can contribute a number of benefits to a community, including an increase in the use of alternative transport, provision of entry-level and workforce housing, co-generational housing opportunities, and a more lively and diverse urban environment.

GOAL 3 - Sustainable and smart development characteristics are incorporated into residential neighborhood and building designs.

Objective 3.1

Municipalities should consider the following points in planning for and developing new projects, and should consider retrofitting existing development to assure walkable neighborhoods, a mix of residential densities, a strong sense of place, and a mix of land uses. To achieve this, municipalities should ensure compact development plans, discourage sprawl, encourage infill, and provide a range of housing opportunities and choices.

Policy 3.1.1

Modify selected zoning districts to allow for a variety of land uses.

Policy 3.1.2

Develop mixed-use zoning districts and Planned Developments to allow appropriate redevelopment of strip commercial areas.

Policy 3.1.3

Integrate residential and commercial uses at densities that support continued transit access and usage.

Objective 3.2

Locate the majority of industrial development within the Regional Growth Boundary in accordance with sound land planning principles and the needs of industry.

Policy 3.2.1

Encourage the clustering of industrial land uses in locations with appropriate infrastructure.

Policy 3.2.2

Revise zoning regulations to allow municipalities the opportunity to share zoned lands and withstand legal challenges.

Policy 3.2.3

Develop adequate buffers between non-compatible land uses in the Region.

Policy 3.2.4

Primary uses in industrial zoning districts should be consistent with the purpose of the industrial zoning district, including the character of existing building(s) and the surrounding area.

Policy 3.2.5

Secondary uses in industrial zoning districts should be consistent with the purpose of the industrial district and be limited to those uses necessary to support the primary industrial use, such as administrative offices and retail sales of product.

Objective 3.3

Balance the amount of vacant commercially zoned property with the needs of the Centre Region.

Policy 3.3.1

Provide a detailed report at least every five years regarding the availability of vacant, developable land within the Regional Growth Boundary.

Policy 3.3.2

Provide an updated Zoning District Analysis every five years regarding changes in zoning and land development regulations outside the Regional Growth Boundary.

Policy 3.3.3

Provide a summary of land developed on an annual basis in the CRPC Annual Report.

Policy 3.3.4

Given the adequacy of the existing amount of commercially zoned land, the Centre Region municipalities should encourage the redevelopment of existing commercial property and the development of vacant commercial lands that have appropriate infrastructure.

Objective 3.4

Identify and develop strategies to encourage redevelopment and revitalization of under-utilized commercial properties within the requirements of redevelopment authorities in Pennsylvania.

Policy 3.4.1

Consider expansion of the State College Borough Redevelopment Authority to other Centre Region municipalities.

Policy 3.4.2

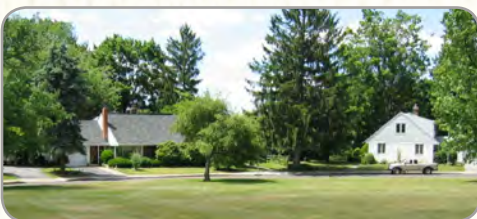
Continue to implement the recommendations of the Best Practices for Development Review and Permitting report.

Policy 3.4.3

Continue to strongly support efforts to direct the majority of growth into the Regional Growth Boundary and potentially incentivize redevelopment projects in the Region.



GOAL 4 - New residential development is located in areas suited to establishing neighborhoods.



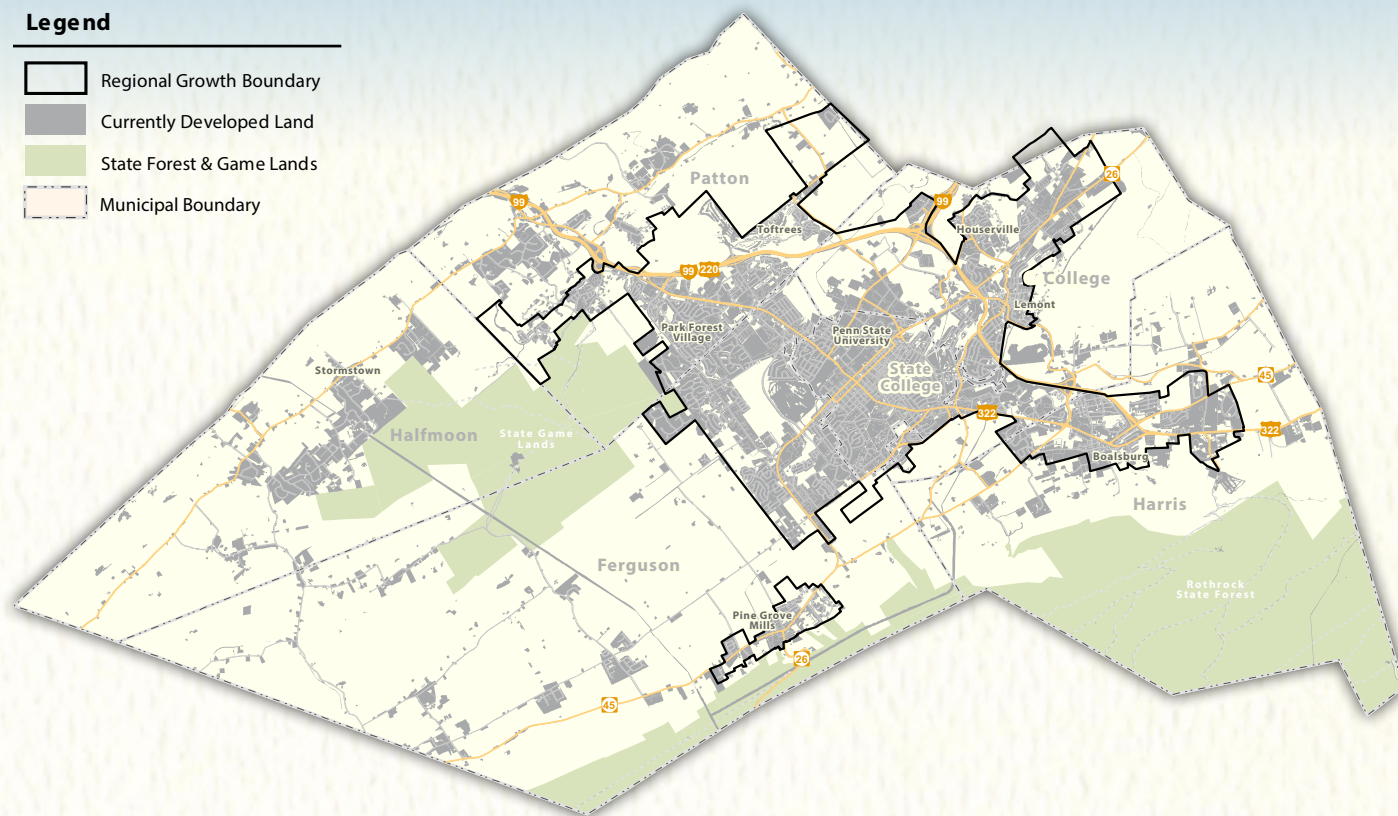
As land uses in the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area evolve over time, it becomes increasingly important to pay attention to the physical relationship between lower and higher density uses.

Objective 4.1

Maintain established single-family neighborhoods and buffer them from negative impacts of nearby higher-density housing.

Policy 4.1.1

Encourage residential in-fill development near established neighborhoods, villages, and planned communities in order to improve and expand parks and hike/bike trails, and reduce the costs of sprawl development.



Currently developed land in the Centre Region based off 2010 Land Use Inventory.

Policy 4.1.2

Continue neighborhood planning efforts with the public that will identify favorable site design features and limit environmental impact.

Policy 4.1.3

Modify zoning and subdivision regulations to require sidewalks and multiple street accesses, and to limit cul-de-sacs.

Objective 4.2

Locate higher-density housing in areas zoned for intense mixed-use development where commercial, civic, and recreational opportunities are available.

Policy 4.2.1

Revise the commercial and office zoning districts where appropriate to permit higher-density housing opportunities that will reduce traffic volume and improve transit accessibility.

Policy 4.2.2

Locate new housing concentrations within the Regional Growth Boundary to minimize cost and impacts on the Centre Region municipalities and residents.

Policy 4.2.4

Consider revising zoning regulations to allow municipalities to share areas zoned for higher-density housing and prevent legal challenges.

Objective 4.3

Maintain a strong, diverse, and vital urban core and Downtown State College as the focal point of the Centre Region.

Policy 4.3.1

Implement the existing and future downtown and neighborhood plans that strengthen the downtown area as the cultural, educational, commercial, and tourism focal point of the Centre Region.

Objective 4.4

Encourage mixed-use development opportunities in appropriately identified areas of the Centre Region.

Policy 4.4.1

Encourage municipal regulations that apply to identified commercial centers throughout the Centre Region to provide for commercial, residential, and office uses adjacent to or on the same property.



Rural Residential Areas & Rural Centers

Rural residential areas consist of areas that are developed with single-family homes on parcels that are more than one acre and generally fewer than five acres in size. These areas are characterized by large homes, narrow roads with no sidewalks, on-lot or community sewer systems, and private water wells or public water. Projects such as Trotter Farm Estates in Halfmoon Township and Aspen Heights in Harris Township are examples of this pattern of development.



Rural Centers consist of those areas outside the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area where there is a higher concentration of residential and/or commercial development that supports the rural area. Examples of Rural Centers include Stormstown, Linden Hall, Baileyville, and Fillmore.

GOAL 5 - Rural residential development and rural centers are consistent with traditional rural lifestyles and rural character.

Residents of the Centre Region enjoy rural centers that are easily accessible and convenient to jobs in the Region.

Objective 5.1

Designate rural residential lands where low densities can be sustained by infrastructure improvements such as on-lot septic systems, individual wells, and rural roads, without significantly changing the rural character, degrading the environment, or creating the necessity for urban services.

Policy 5.1.1

Work with municipalities to identify areas that are appropriate for rural residential development.

Policy 5.1.2

Ensure zoning is appropriate for rural residential development patterns including adjacent zoning districts.

Objective 5.2

Designate rural centers planned for a mix of residential and commercial uses to meet the needs of rural residents while retaining rural character and lifestyles.

Policy 5.2.1

Rural centers should be limited to rural communities and be defined by a logical outer boundary that considers the following:

- Preservation of the character of neighborhoods and communities
- Preservation of natural systems and open space
- Physical boundaries, such as streams, streets and highways, and land forms
- The ability to provide public facilities and public services in a manner that does not permit low-density sprawl

Policy 5.2.3

Commercial developments within rural centers should be of a scale and type to be primarily patronized by local residents and in some instances to provide support for resource industries, tourism, and the traveling public.

Policy 5.2.4

Encourage developers to work with local residents within rural centers to develop plans that satisfy concerns for environmental protection, historic preservation, quality of life, property values, and preservation of open space.



Agriculture is an industry and should be recognized as such.

Agriculture Viability

Agriculture plays a key role in shaping the heritage and the unique character of the Centre Region. A top priority in the Region is to protect existing agricultural uses while finding ways to expand the agricultural economy in the future. The goals, objectives, and policies in this subsection address the protection, expansion, and diversification of agriculture and its support industries.

GOAL 6 - The Centre Region has a viable agricultural industry.

Objective 6.1

Encourage the continued development of agricultural activities throughout the Centre Region.

Policy 6.1.1

Coordinate with and support local, regional, and state agencies to encourage new economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable agricultural industries in the Centre Region.

Policy 6.1.2

Support the development of high-value food processing industries and the production of emerging crops and animal products that can lead to new markets for local products.

Policy 6.1.3

Identify locations where on-site farm product sales have good economic potential, such as on major roadways, and support the creation of agricultural tours and trails that promote agricultural tourism.

Policy 6.1.4

Support private and public farmers markets and produce stands that sell locally grown farm products by working with local Chambers of Commerce and agricultural groups.

Policy 6.1.5

Promote the connection between local farmers and consumers by enhancing access for local farmers to local markets, including restaurants, institutions, and schools.

Policy 6.1.6

Create municipal regulations that permit diversified farm-based uses, such as farm-based retail and agritourism, in agricultural zones as a means to promote economic viability while preserving the Region's agricultural heritage.

Policy 6.1.7

Evaluate and revise municipal regulations to ensure that farming activities are promoted and not hindered in appropriate districts.

Policy 6.1.8

Promote the use of community gardens, CSAs (community supported agriculture), Buy Fresh Buy Local programs, programs that connect farmers with schools and restaurants, and farmers markets to improve the growth, sales, distribution, and consumption of healthy, locally grown foods.

Agricultural Land Preservation

The Centre Region is committed to protecting productive agricultural land and the agricultural industry. This subsection includes goals, objectives, and policies that address various agricultural land preservation and conservation strategies as well as farmland conservation programs managed by other agencies that acquire and hold conservation easements.

GOAL 7 - Preserve and conserve land used for productive agriculture, potentially-productive agricultural land, and agricultural-support facilities over the long term.



Objective 7.1

Encourage enrollment in Agricultural Security Areas and participation in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program in appropriate locations.

Policy 7.1.1

Update Centre Region municipal Agricultural Security Area maps every seven years.

Policy 7.1.2

Support the efforts of public, private, and nonprofit organizations to preserve agricultural areas in the Region through dedicated conservation easements.

Policy 7.1.3

Collaborate with landowners, cities, state and federal agencies, colleges, Penn State University, stakeholders, and community-based organizations to continue and expand agricultural preservation in the Region.

Policy 7.1.4

Consider reasonable minimum permitted parcel size in areas designated agricultural to discourage land divisions for rural residential purposes and maintain parcels large enough for efficient commercial agriculture production.

Objective 7.2

Encourage municipal regulations that support agriculture as the primary use on property that has prime agricultural soils and is planned for and zoned as agriculture.

Policy 7.2.1

Continue to review existing zoning districts for compatibility with the future land-use designations.

Policy 7.2.2

Review subdivision and land development ordinances for compatibility with future land-use designations.



A 3-D model showing a before (top) and after (bottom) scenario of how a proposed development could shape the landscape in an agricultural area in the Centre Region.

Agricultural and Urban Area Compatibility

Reducing urban and agricultural land use conflicts plays a critical role in maintaining productive agriculture in the Region. Farming is considered an industrial activity, and the expansion of urban uses adjacent to farmland often creates conflicts that threaten the viability of existing agricultural uses. To combat this problem, the state adopted a Right-to-Farm Act, which requires prospective residents of new development near agricultural areas to be notified that inconveniences and discomfort associated with normal farming activities may occur, and that any established agricultural operations will not be considered a nuisance. The Agriculture Community and Rural Environment program (Act 38 or ACRE) may also be utilized to improve compatibility between land uses.

In addition to nuisance issues, residential development in rural areas and the parcelization of agricultural lands into smaller properties reduces the efficiency and viability of commercial farming. The policies in this section seek to minimize land-use conflicts between urban and agricultural uses, reduce farmland conversion, limit further parcelization of farmland, and establish adequate buffers between agricultural and urban uses.

GOAL 8 - Conflicts between agricultural practices and land development activities are minimized.

Objective 8.1

Minimize conflicts between productive agricultural areas and urban land uses, and discourage the “parcelization” and conversion of large agricultural holdings into rural residential parcels or urban uses.

Policy 8.1.1

Require buffers between proposed non-agricultural uses and adjacent productive agricultural operations to protect farms, dairies, and agriculture-related production facilities from conflicts with non-agricultural uses, specifically residential development.

Policy 8.1.2

Establish agricultural buffer standards based on the type of agricultural operation to be applied to development proposals adjacent to productive agricultural land and agriculture-related facilities.

Policy 8.1.3

Require a minimum buffer between new residential development and existing agricultural operations, and establish design/maintenance guidelines for developers and property owners.

Policy 8.1.4

Encourage clustering of homes on rural parcels to minimize interference with agricultural operations.

Policy 8.1.5

Consider updating the municipal zoning ordinances to properly designate and provide minimum lot standards for agricultural districts that promote farming. Some A-1 zoning districts imply agriculture is the primary and desired use, when in fact large-lot residential can be the primary and desired use.

Objective 8.2

Use rural preservation techniques for developments outside the Regional Growth Boundary.

Policy 8.2.1

Revise zoning regulations to encourage the preservation of open space, stream corridors, sensitive natural features, protection of public water supplies, and continued agricultural activity while allowing property owners to develop homes on a portion of their land.

Policy 8.2.2

Protect and encourage agricultural productivity outside the Regional Growth Boundary.

Transportation

INTRODUCTION

This Element provides guidance about policies and practices that can be used to maintain and improve the transportation system serving the Centre Region. Many public and private entities are involved in the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the transportation system, including the Region's municipalities. The policies and practices are intended to provide the framework for a transportation system that meets the current and future needs of the Region's residents and visitors.

The Transportation Element is organized into the following sections:

- **Key Issues and Findings**
- **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**
 - **Mobility and Safety - Map M9**
 - **Mode Choice - Map M10**
 - **Transportation and the Environment - Map M11**
 - **Land Use and Transportation**
 - **Transportation Funding**



KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

The transportation system serving the Centre Region has expanded its focus from rural roads and railroads to a system that includes modern roadways, bus service, air travel, pedestrian/bike facilities, and rail freight service. The following issues and findings emerged as a result of the Inventory and Assessment of Existing Conditions and form the basis from which goals, objectives, and policies are identified:

1. The opening of Interstate 99 reduced travel time and relieved traffic congestion for travelers to the Centre Region from distant areas. The opening of I-99 also changed traffic patterns on certain roadways, either reducing or increasing traffic volumes. However, vehicular traffic volumes on most roadways in the Region have changed very little in recent years.
2. Rail freight service along the Region's only railroad line declined to only occasional use after the closing of the Corning manufacturing facility in College Township.
3. Commercial air travel and general aviation activities at the University Park Airport continued to grow, resulting in expansion of services and facilities and plans for additional expansion in the near future.
4. Expansion of the pedestrian/bicycle system provided more links between residential areas and employment centers and more links to recreation and open space areas.
5. Trends in CATA's public transportation passenger trips, revenue miles of service, revenue hours of service, and rising carpool and vanpool participation suggest that a preference is growing for transportation options other than single-occupant vehicles.
6. The supply and use of CATA's public transportation service is growing faster than the transit fleet size, placing additional burdens on an aging fleet.
7. The supply and use of CATA's public transportation service is gradually overtaking the space available for storing and maintaining the transit fleet, increasing storage and maintenance challenges.
8. Public transportation, pedestrian, and bicycle accommodations are important elements in land use decisions made by the Region's municipalities.
9. Pennsylvania Act 44 of 2007 increased the amount of state funding for roadway and bridge improvements, and improved the equity of state funding for public transportation systems. However, rejection of the Interstate 80 tolling proposal left Act 44 underfunded, reducing the amount of funding available for roadway and bridge projects, and keeping the full potential of state funding for transit projects from being realized.
10. Limits on the amount of federal, state, and local funding for transportation improvements focused scarce resources on the maintenance and preservation of existing roadways, bridges, public transit routes and facilities, and pedestrian/bicycle amenities. The fiscal constraints resulted in more focus on small-scale projects, including implementation of safety improvement projects. Fewer investments in new and/or expanded facilities were made in recent years.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Mobility & Safety



The primary purpose of any transportation system is to provide safe and efficient ways of traveling. The focus of this goal is to collect data on the demand and performance of the transportation system, give a high priority to maintaining the system in good condition, and involve multiple stakeholders in the delivery of transportation services. In the Centre Region, this goal is particularly important given that many residents choose to travel on foot or bicycle, or use public transportation, in addition to using private automobiles. Air travel has grown in terms of both demand and importance. Although rail freight service on the Region's only active rail line in College Township has declined, preservation of this rail line may provide opportunities for businesses to move materials and goods in the future.

GOAL 1 - The Region's transportation system provides mobility for people and goods in a safe and efficient manner.

Objective 1.1

Collect and evaluate data about the purpose and function of the transportation system.

Policy 1.1.1

Evaluate all available crash data at least every four years during the federally required update of the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Long Range Transportation Plan to identify intersections and roadways that need safety improvements.

Policy 1.1.2

Evaluate traffic operations to determine changes in volume and levels of service that warrant improvements.

Policy 1.1.3

Evaluate public transit ridership data, public input, land-use patterns, and financial capacity to implement changes in the level and frequency of public transportation service.

Policy 1.1.4

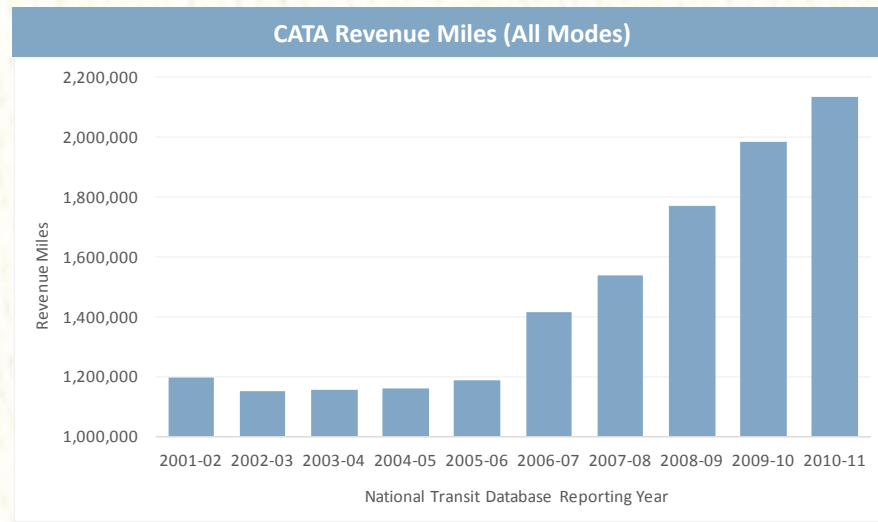
Monitor enplanements, general aviation operations, and demand for other air services at University Park Airport during standard operations and special events.

Policy 1.1.5

Collect data on bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Policy 1.1.6

Use information collected by the Nittany and Bald Eagle Railroad and the SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority to review usage of the railroad line in College Township, and to review maintenance and operations activities that may impact the College Township rail line.



Objective 1.2

Work proactively with public and private stakeholders to facilitate improvements to the transportation system.

Policy 1.2.1

Coordinate with the Nittany and Bald Eagle Railroad and the SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority to evaluate the potential for new rail service relative to potential users along the railroad line in College Township.

Policy 1.2.2

Work with producers and shippers of freight to identify and implement improvements that allow for safe and efficient movement of goods.

Policy 1.2.3

Monitor and evaluate ongoing changes in the freight and passenger rail industries to identify opportunities and implement improvements relative to the movement of people and goods by rail.

Policy 1.2.4

Coordinate with Penn State University, the Centre County Airport Authority, providers of air transport, and Benner Township to identify and implement improvements in commercial and general aviation services and facilities at the University Park Airport.

Policy 1.2.5

Work with the Centre County MPO, PennDOT, and operators of transit, rail, and air modes of travel to advance transportation improvement projects and programs for all modes through the Centre County MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program, and other federal, state and local implementation programs.

Objective 1.3

Maintain and improve existing transportation infrastructure to preserve the system for the foreseeable future, consistent with PennDOT's "maintenance forever" policy.

Policy 1.3.1

Adopt and use a municipal multi-year Capital Improvement Program and infrastructure management systems (e.g., pavement, bridge, drainage, traffic control/signing, etc.) to guide investments that prolong the useful life of municipal transportation assets, including preventative maintenance activities, roadway pavement and bridge rehabilitation projects, and traffic sign and signal improvements.

Policy 1.3.2

Use the Capital Improvement Program and Centre County MPO Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program to fund safety-related improvements that reduce the number of crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

Policy 1.3.3

Update CATA's Capital Improvement Program to guide investments in rehabilitating and replacing public transportation vehicles, and to make improvements in CATA's operations facility and infrastructure.



The Route 26 truck pull-off and escape ramp on Pine Grove Mountain were constructed in 2012. Projects such as these are important to improving safety and preserving the existing road system in the Centre Region.

Mode Choice

Providing travel choices for all residents of the Centre Region is a key factor in sustaining a growing community that continues to change in its demographic identity. One example of the challenges facing local officials is managing demand for different types of transportation services from diverse users such as students at the Penn State University and a growing population of older residents. The focus of this goal is to ensure that travel choices are available and accessible to all users by providing several modes of transport and interconnecting those modes as much as possible.

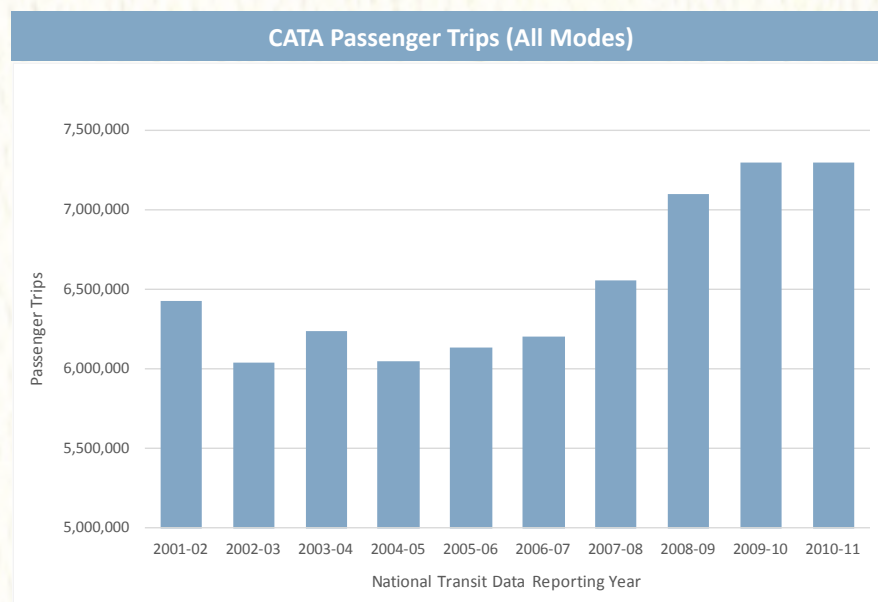
GOAL 2 - All users are afforded choices for means of travel via multiple, interconnected modes of transportation.

Objective 2.1

Deliver transportation projects and programs that support a broad range of transportation options.

Policy 2.1.1

Continue implementing and expanding **CATABUS**, **CATARIDE**, and **CATACOMMUTE** services that provide affordable transportation choices for residents and commuters from surrounding areas, and help to reduce peak-hour commuter trips and mitigate demand for parking from single-occupant vehicles.



Policy 2.1.2

Provide transit and paratransit service through **CATARIDE** and the Centre County Office of Transportation Services to meet the demand by citizens for access to employment centers, medical services, retail and other commercial services, and recreation areas.

Policy 2.1.3

Encourage the private sector, public entities, and Penn State University to institute parking and commuter-oriented strategies that promote the use of multiple modes of travel.

Policy 2.1.4

Develop a continuous, interconnected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, of all types (designated route, on-road, off-road, etc.) that can be implemented in phases, linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, open space, and commercial and employment centers.

Centre Region Comprehensive Plan

Policy 2.1.5

Conduct winter maintenance of existing and proposed shared-use paths where appropriate and within fiscal constraints established by the municipalities.

Policy 2.1.6

Advance roadway projects and improvements in other travel modes that improve safety for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and reduce congestion where possible.



CATA's buses and paratransit vehicles are fully accessible to persons with disabilities.



In 2012, the League of American Bicyclists awarded the Centre Region a Bronze Level designation as Bicycle Friendly Community. The League designated Penn State University as a Bicycle Friendly University in 2012.



Objective 2.2

Improve connections among roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit routes, and intercity bus connection locations.

Policy 2.2.1

Plan the interconnection of streets and other bicycle and pedestrian facilities between neighborhoods in a manner that ensures connectivity while minimizing undesirable through traffic.

Policy 2.2.2

Establish, maintain, and improve facilities at locations where connections between modes of travel are made, including material loading/unloading infrastructure, crosswalks and sidewalks, bus shelters, bicycle racks and storage lockers.

Policy 2.2.3

Facilitate pedestrian travel through improved signage, design of sidewalk and crosswalk areas, establishment of safe walking routes to schools, and increased awareness of pedestrians by motor vehicle operators.

Policy 2.2.4

Support training opportunities, special programs such as activities associated with the Bicycle Friendly Community designation, and public education efforts for municipal officials and residents about laws and best practices regarding bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Policy 2.2.5

Work with CATA, the private sector, Penn State University, and providers of intercity bus service to give residents safe and accessible waiting areas and connections among intercity buses, local buses, and taxi service.

Objective 2.3

Design the alignment and profile of streets to be consistent with PennDOT's Smart Transportation Guidebook, and the fundamental principles of the Complete Streets approach to provide access for pedestrian, transit, and vehicular traffic.

Policy 2.3.1

Adopt a Complete Streets policy that encourages use of all modes of travel, and monitor the ongoing development of Complete Streets principles in order to update the policy.

Policy 2.3.2

Adopt ordinances stipulating that bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit facilities be required in land-development plans where appropriate.

Policy 2.3.3

Consider alternative design solutions such as traffic-calming measures (e.g., curb extensions, speed tables, chicanes, roundabouts, etc.) and innovative traffic control and operations devices (e.g., interconnected signals, adaptive signal systems, transit signal priority, etc.).

Objective 2.4

Use aggregated and real-time data to optimize the operation of the transportation network, and to inform travelers about routes and modes of travel.

Policy 2.4.1

Continue development of CATA's Advanced Public Transportation System to enhance the accuracy and usability of information available to the public about operation of the bus system, and to assist in making operational and management decisions regarding transit service.

Policy 2.4.2

Extend coordination of roadway traffic control devices to additional corridors and areas, with a long-term goal of moving toward Region-wide coordination.

Policy 2.4.3

Optimize real-time data resources and make them available publicly to encourage private-sector development of applications that use the data.

Number of Traffic Signals in the Centre Region			
Municipality	1990	2000	2010
College Township	13	21	25
Ferguson Township	4	8	16
Halfmoon Township	0	0	0
Harris Township	2	2	4
Patton Township	3	10	21
State College Borough	27	30	33
Centre Region Total	49	71	99
Centre County Total	67	91	130

Source: PennDOT Signal Permit Data

Policy 2.4.4

Develop systems and processes that allow real-time public feedback on the performance of the transportation network.



CATA was one of the first public transportation providers to convert its entire fleet of buses from diesel fuel to Compressed Natural Gas.

Transportation and the Environment

Residents of the Centre Region enjoy a high quality of life, with good air and water quality, a growing system of parks, an expanding network of sidewalks and trails, and accessible state forest and game land areas that afford many opportunities to enjoy natural resources. As a result, it is important that future transportation facilities and programs have minimal negative impacts on the natural and built environment. The focus of this goal is to ensure that transportation facilities and programs improve the quality of life by complementing, protecting, and enhancing the natural and built environment.

GOAL 3 - The Centre Region's transportation system supports good air and water quality, minimizes impacts to natural features, and complements the built environment.

Objective 3.1

Facilitate use of alternative fuels and energy conservation practices that help to minimize the Region's carbon footprint when planning and implementing transportation system improvements.

Policy 3.1.1

Maintain and expand CATA's Compressed Natural Gas bus fleet and fueling infrastructure through periodic rehabilitation and replacement of rolling stock, purchase of additional vehicles when warranted by an increase in demand for transit services, and upgrades to fixed infrastructure elements.

Policy 3.1.2

Maximize the fuel efficiency of vehicles, for both conventional and alternative fuels, when considering purchase of CATA, Centre County Office of Transportation Services, COG, municipal, State College Area School District, Penn State University, and other fleet vehicles.

Policy 3.1.3

Encourage public and private sectors and fleet operators to use alternative fuels and means of propulsion, such as Compressed Natural Gas, hydrogen fuels, electric, and hybrid technologies—including using local resources, if appropriate—and to make available fueling stations for alternative fuels and charging stations for electric vehicles.

Policy 3.1.4

Work with the Centre County MPO to evaluate locations with recurrent congestion and implement operational and management strategies that may optimize the flow of vehicular traffic and reduce vehicle emissions.

Policy 3.1.5

Evaluate and implement strategies such as work-at-home options, flexible work hours, and rideshare incentives that reduce the impact of peak-hour vehicular traffic on roadway congestion.

Objective 3.2

Promote the improvement of air quality in the Region.

Policy 3.2.1

Coordinate planning and construction of transportation and other infrastructure systems with utility and service providers.

Policy 3.2.2

Encourage the expansion of transit services, ridesharing, and modes of transportation other than single-occupant automobiles to reduce the impact of greenhouse gasses.

Policy 3.2.3

Support municipal and regional efforts to implement actions recommended in the Centre Region Greenhouse Gas Pilot Project.

Policy 3.2.4

Work with the Centre County MPO to implement transportation projects and programs to maintain conformity with federal air-quality standards, as determined through the Air Quality Conformity Analyses that are required to be completed for the Centre County MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program.

Travel to Work 2005 - 2009 Estimates								
2005-2009	Centre Region	College Township	Ferguson Township	Halfmoon Township	Harris Township	Patton Township	State College Borough	Centre Region
Drove Alone	21,892	69%	69%	83%	76%	73%	37%	59%
Carpooled	3,544	12%	9%	10%	14%	9%	9%	10%
Public Transportation	1,979	2%	6%	0%	2%	7%	6%	5%
Bicycle/Walk	7,928	9%	10%	0%	3%	7%	45%	21%
Worked at Home	1,629	6%	5%	6%	5%	4%	3%	4%
Motorcycle/Other	280	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Objective 3.3

Avoid and mitigate negative impacts to endangered or threatened species, key natural habitats, agricultural lands, water resources, and historic and cultural resources.

Policy 3.3.1

Use information from federal, state, and local sources to identify public water supply areas and natural, agriculture-related, historic, and cultural features early in the process of evaluating solutions to transportation problems.

Policy 3.3.2

Consider context-sensitive approaches, mitigation strategies, and innovative designs to mitigate the unavoidable impacts of transportation solutions on sensitive resources.



The Science Park Road Corridor in Ferguson Township includes a shared-use path, sidewalks, and transit stops to facilitate travel by multiple modes.

Land Use & Transportation

The need to coordinate land use and transportation planning is one of the basic premises of comprehensive planning, and has been a fundamental part of the Centre Region's planning efforts for decades. As sustainability and quality-of-life factors grow in importance to the Region's residents, more emphasis is being placed on the need for progressively closer coordination in making land-use and transportation decisions. The focus of this goal is to ensure that transportation services are planned hand-in-hand with desired future land uses in a manner that promotes a compact, cost-effective, and efficient development pattern, and maintains the community's status as a great place to live, work, and visit.

GOAL 4 - Transportation projects and programs, and the Region's future land-use plan are consistent.

Objective 4.1

Plan and implement transportation improvements and investments in all modes that are appropriate to accommodate future land uses identified by the municipalities.

Policy 4.1.1

Use tools such as PennDOT's statewide travel demand model, the Centre County MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan travel-demand model, travel-demand models developed for multi-municipal and municipal projects; traffic-operations modeling; data from CATA and the Centre County Office of Transportation Services about public-transportation demand; and projections of air travel and freight movements from operators of these modes,



The Curtin Road Transit Center on the University Park Campus serves many bus riders.

identifying needs for increased capacity and evaluating the effects of those potential changes on service levels.

Policy 4.1.2

Analyze potential transportation improvements to evaluate whether the benefits outweigh impacts to the natural and built environment.

Policy 4.1.3

Work with the Centre County MPO to ensure that transportation improvements on the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program are consistent with the future land-use plan.

Policy 4.1.4

Use municipal Official Maps to identify rights-of-way and guide a regional approach to planning and implementing future roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

Policy 4.1.5

Work with the Centre County MPO, SEDACOG Joint Rail Authority, Chamber of Business and Industry of Centre County, and Moshannon Valley Economic Development Partnership to identify opportunities to coordinate transportation investments with development, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse activities.

Objective 4.2

Consider the transportation system's capacity to accommodate changes in travel demand when considering land use, zoning, and proposed land-development activities.

Policy 4.2.1

Require that the transportation impact of proposed rezoning requests, master development plan proposals, and land development activities be documented prior to municipal action.

Policy 4.2.2

Work with PennDOT on Highway Occupancy Permit requests and Traffic Impact Studies to ensure that proposed changes in access on state roadways are consistent with municipal zoning and subdivision regulations, and are coordinated with publicly funded improvements.

Policy 4.2.3

Promote the positive impact of mixed-use development on traffic congestion by providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and transit service where supported by the appropriate land use densities, and as promoted by Complete Streets principles and the Smart Transportation Guidebook.

Policy 4.2.4

Review and update municipal corridor overlay access regulations to ensure that vehicular and pedestrian traffic safety considerations are being addressed.

Policy 4.2.5

Consider non traditional methods of mitigating the impact of development and redevelopment activities on the transportation network (e.g., reduction in vehicle trips by the provision of transit, reducing onsite parking requirements, enhancing pedestrian facilities, and making interconnections between modes, etc.).



The State Route 3011 Branch Road Bridge was replaced in 2012. The rehabilitation and replacement of structurally-deficient bridges is a primary focus of state and local officials.

Transportation Funding

As the Region continues to grow, and with it the need to maintain and improve the transportation system, municipal officials will face challenges when committing the financial resources to maintain existing facilities and address future needs. Given the current limitations on state and federal funding, and similar limitations on county and municipal resources, local officials must be creative in identifying and developing sustainable sources of funding to maintain the transportation system. The focus of this goal is to identify and maximize use of existing sources of funding, as well as to research and evaluate non-traditional methods of financing transportation projects and programs.

GOAL 5 - Sustainable funding sources are available to make transportation improvements.

Objective 5.1

Investigate alternative strategies for funding and implementing transportation improvement projects and programs.

Policy 5.1.1

Work with PennDOT and the Centre County MPO to identify funding for transportation improvement projects on the Federal-Aid System (higher classification state-owned and locally owned roadways), and for other transportation improvement projects and programs that are not on roadways.

Policy 5.1.2

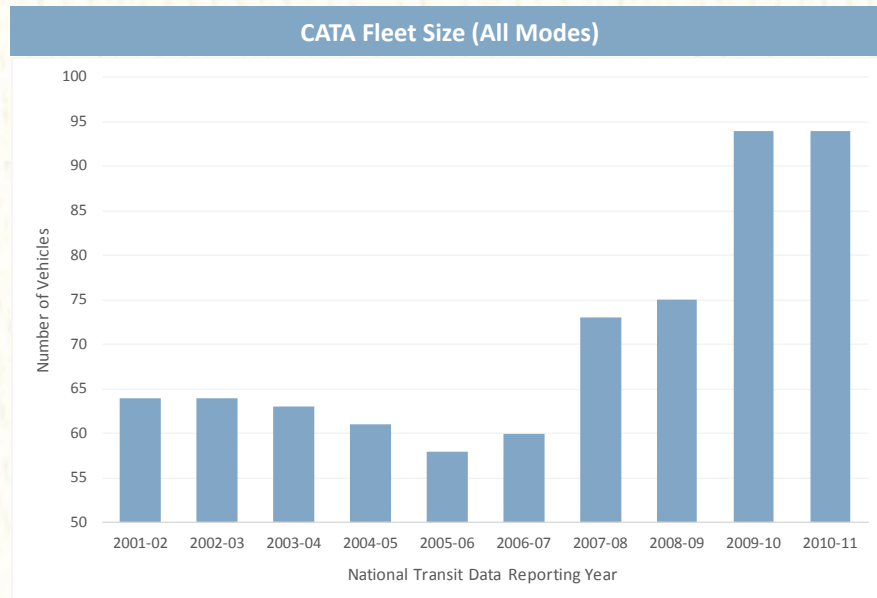
Evaluate tools available to municipalities, CATA, and Penn State University for generating funds or using cooperative services that can be allocated to transportation improvement projects (e.g., public/private partnerships, potential roadway turnback and partnership opportunities with PennDOT, partnership opportunities with other public agencies, impact fees, tax policies, etc.).

Policy 5.1.3

Assist CATA, the municipalities, Penn State University, and the Centre Region Council of Governments to develop periodic updates to the “Miller Formula,” which is used to allocate municipal contributions in the annual CATA Budget.

Policy 5.1.4

Assist CATA, the municipalities, and Penn State University to prepare and periodically update a strategic plan for the **CATABUS**, **CATARIDE**, and **CATACOMMUTE** programs that will establish public policy regarding priorities for the delivery of public transportation services within changing fiscal constraints.



The size of CATA's bus fleet has grown substantially as ridership has increased. Obtaining funds to rehabilitate and replace buses will be an ongoing challenge for CATA.



The Bellefonte Central Rail Trail provides connections to several parks in Patton, College and Ferguson Townships in the Centre Region and also serves persons commuting to Penn State University.

Open Space, Conservation

INTRODUCTION

This Element provides the policy context for the Centre Region to achieve its vision for active recreational facilities such as sports fields, including facilities for organized sports such as baseball/softball, tennis, soccer, lacrosse, and basketball. This Element also provides policy guidance for conservation of open spaces used for passive recreation such as hiking, bird watching, and hunting. Open space resources may also include conservation of unique natural habitats that may or may not be used by people. Developed parks, active recreation areas, natural resource areas, and open spaces provide economic, health, and aesthetic benefits to residents and help preserve the unique character of the Centre Region. Goals, objectives, and policies in this Element are organized under the following headings:

- **Key Issues and Findings**
- **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**
 - **Open Space - Map M12**
 - **Conservation - Map M13**
 - **Parks and Recreation - Map M12**



n & Recreation

KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

The Centre Region's parks and open space facilities provide residents of the Centre Region with access to active and passive recreational opportunities while having positive impacts on the local environment and economy. As demand for sports fields and other recreation opportunities have increased, additional parklands have been dedicated to meet that demand. Examples of this are the recently approved Whitehall Road and Oak Hall Regional Parks as well as the purchase and improvements to the John Hess Softball Complex. The following issues and findings emerged as a result of the Inventory and Assessment portion of the Comprehensive Plan and act as a basis from which goals, objectives, and policies are identified. Key findings from the Inventory and Assessment portion of the Comprehensive Plan include:

1. Access to open spaces, conservation, and recreation activities that are highly valued by residents of the Centre Region.
2. Nearby state-owned facilities provide substantial opportunities for outdoor activities, including hiking, fishing, and hunting.
3. Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, particularly between residential areas, schools, and neighborhood or community parks should be strengthened to promote alternative modes of transportation.
4. There is a shortage of play fields, which is currently being addressed by the construction of several regional park facilities.
5. Partnering opportunities with State College High School for use of diamond fields should continue to be explored.
6. Sustainability design criteria have been considered in the development of new regional parks.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Open Space

Providing adequate open space is essential to allowing residents of the Centre Region to continue enjoying a high quality of life. Open space provides various recreational opportunities that can help residents lead healthier lives, stabilize and improve property values, act as natural buffers between land uses, help reduce noise pollution, and strengthen the local economy. Open space includes undeveloped public or private property that may or may not be accessible to the public for active or passive recreation and other uses. Open space may also include undeveloped land that contains natural or environmental resources, greenways, and parks and recreation areas. Open space also serves a vital function in preserving the natural ecosystem, which in turn provides the Centre Region with cleaner air to breathe and water to drink. The goals, objectives, and policies of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are focused on providing an interconnected open-space system to meet the needs of the Region and adequate access to open space.

GOAL 1 - The Centre Region has an interconnected open-space system based on existing open space, sensitive natural resources, and projected future development and open-space conservation plans.

Objective 1.1

Provide an interconnected open-space system throughout the Region that incorporates and preserve existing open space and natural resources.

Policy 1.1.1

Develop a Regional Open Space Plan that identifies open space and natural resources as well as potential methods to connect open space throughout the Region.

Policy 1.1.2

Incorporate elements from existing municipal and county recreation, open space, and greenway plans into a Regional Open Space Plan.



The Haugh Family Preserve, located in Patton Township, is an open space resource that is available for use by the public. Its many uses include walking and hiking trails, sports fields and community gardens.

Policy 1.1.3

Maintain the existing inventory of open space and important natural features located throughout the Region. Identify potential methods that could be used to preserve significant open-space resources.

Policy 1.1.4

Identify open-space corridors on the Official Maps of Centre Region municipalities.

Policy 1.1.5

Identify strategies for developing greenways and other open-space connections among natural areas and developed park and open-space facilities.

Policy 1.1.6

Review and update municipal ordinances, official maps, and open space plans to ensure consistency with Regional and County Open Space and Greenway plans.

Objective 1.2

Provide a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that link public and private open space, parks, and recreation facilities.

Policy 1.2.1

Coordinate the planning of bicycle and pedestrian networks with public and private open space conservation.

Policy 1.2.2

Provide safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities from neighborhoods to open space areas and schools.

Policy 1.2.3

Create bicycle and pedestrian connections to existing trails when new residential neighborhoods are developed.

Policy 1.2.4

Provide necessary infrastructure in open space areas and parks to support alternative modes of transportation (for example, bicycle racks, signage, and trails).



The Bellefonte Central Rail Trail is one of many trails in the Centre Region connecting parks, open space and neighborhoods.



Millbrook Marsh Nature Center is a 62-acre site consisting of a 12-acre farmstead area plus an adjacent 50-acre wetland area. The 50-acre wetland area also hosts a Conservation Easement between Penn State and ClearWater Conservancy of Central PA.

Conservation

Identification and conservation of the Centre Region's significant natural and open-space resources ensures that such resources will be available for future generations. Conserving open-space resources helps ensure that growth in the Region takes place in a more orderly manner and protects resources that could not be recovered once developed. By conserving open-space resources, open and natural areas continue to benefit Centre Region residents and visitors. The Centre Region, its municipalities, and other organizations have been preserving open space in the Region primarily through the establishment of conservation easements. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are focused on continuing existing conservation efforts by identifying significant resources and establishing methods of conserving them.

GOAL 2 - Significant natural and open spaces resources are conserved and preserved to provide continued benefits to the Region.

Objective 2.1

Encourage the establishment of conservation easements and the application of conservation zoning districts on significant natural and open-space resources.

Policy 2.1.1

Coordinate activities with property owners, municipalities, and environmental organizations in establishing conservation easements.

Policy 2.1.2

Consider the creation of conservation zoning districts in municipalities in order to protect natural and open space resources.

Objective 2.2

Provide ongoing information on the benefits of conserving open space and natural habitats.

Policy 2.2.1

Continue to utilize the Millbrook Marsh Nature Center and any future educational facilities at the Kissinger Meadow wetlands as a means to educate and demonstrate the value and benefits of conserving unique environmental habitats and open space.

Policy 2.2.2

Support the creation of materials and programs to educate Centre Region residents on the importance of preserving open space that contains wooded areas, steep slopes, streams, and other natural features.

Parks & Recreation

Parks and recreation facilities give residents and visitors of the Centre Region a variety of recreational opportunities. Parks also provide residents with a place to relax and participate in community gatherings and events. Adequate parklands are essential to maintaining a high quality of life for residents. The Centre Region currently has an extensive supply of parklands and public open-space areas for a variety of recreational opportunities with more parks under construction. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are focused on ensuring that residents of the Centre Region are provided with an adequate number of easily accessible parks, recreation facilities, and programs to meet their needs.

GOAL 3 - An adequate supply of parks, open space, and recreation facilities are provided to meet the needs of the Region.

Objective 3.1

Maintain up-to-date information on the supply, demand, and use of public parks and open space.

Policy 3.1.1

Identify the types and locations of parks and recreational facilities needed to serve current and future residents.

Policy 3.1.2

Proceed with the development of regional parks and their accompanying master plans. Document the use of these facilities once completed.



There are over 1,000 acres of parkland within the Centre Region, including neighborhood, community, and regional parks..



The Hess Softball Field Complex in Harris Township is an example of parklands resulting from regional collaboration.

Objective 3.2

Encourage sharing facilities and costs, when possible, among municipalities, Penn State University, the State College Area School District, and private recreation and sports organizations.

Policy 3.2.1

Support a business plan for the use, operation, and management of regional parks and recreation facilities.

Policy 3.2.2

Expand and maintain cooperative partnerships with the State College Area School District for the use of athletic fields and facilities for recreational purposes.

Objective 3.3

Provide information to the public about the availability of parks, recreational facilities, open space, and recreation programs.

Policy 3.3.1

Maintain a Regional Parks Map that shows the proximity of residential neighborhoods to parks, recreational facilities, and public open space locations.



Park Forest pool in Patton Township is one of two pools operated by Centre Region Parks & Recreation department.

Objective 3.4

Provide adequate parks and recreational facilities to meet community needs while ensuring the long-term vitality and quality of parks and open space.

Policy 3.4.1

Provide connections from passive recreation and open spaces to community and regional parks.

Policy 3.4.2

Continue municipal and State College Area School District support for recreational programs as a vital means for improving health and well being of children and adults.



A small courtyard outside local businesses on College Avenue in downtown State College.

Policy 3.4.3

Revise municipal regulations to incorporate requirements for small, public open spaces, such as plazas, courtyards, community greens, and playgrounds into subdivision and land development regulations to serve the recreational needs of the community as described in municipal parks plans.

GOAL 4 - Well-designed and -maintained park facilities and infrastructure support the recreational functions of the Region's park systems.

Objective 4.1

Develop new facilities and manage existing facilities in a manner that promotes responsible environmental practices while providing benefits to all residents in the Region.

Policy 4.1.1

Implement best management practices and policies in parklands. Best practices can include but are not limited to reducing impervious surfaces with porous concrete/asphalt, harvesting rain water, minimizing skyglow light pollution through the use of flat-lens light fixtures, providing parking for carpools and park-and-ride programs, bicycle parking, and ensuring accessibility.

Policy 4.1.2

Encourage parkland designs that minimize impacts to private property adjacent to parklands and do not create adverse environmental impacts.

Policy 4.1.3

Ensure that existing facilities comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Municipality or Agency	Acres of Parkland
College Township	180
Ferguson Township	189
Halfmoon Township	19
Harris Township	68
Patton Township	172
State College Borough	115
Recreation Authority/Regional	267
	Total 1,010

Source: Centre Regional Planning Agency

2012 Parkland by Municipality in the Centre Region

Housing

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Element includes policies to ensure the availability of safe, affordable, and accessible housing for all current and future residents of the Centre Region. The provision of an adequate supply of housing for current residents and future populations is an important municipal responsibility and is a requirement of the Municipalities Planning Code. Activities to ensure an adequate supply of housing may include conserving the existing housing inventory, rehabilitating older or run-down housing stock in declining neighborhoods, coordinating and linking housing with transportation, and providing opportunities for new housing of varied types and densities. Municipalities are assisted in their housing responsibilities by local, county, state, and federal government agencies, as well as nonprofit and private contractors.

There is no single solution for providing safe, affordable, and accessible housing opportunities in the Centre Region, and this plan recognizes that housing issues transcend jurisdictional boundaries. Meeting the housing needs for all residents will require close coordination, cooperation, and communication among municipalities and other public and private entities. This Element of the Comprehensive Plan has been prepared in that context.

The Housing Element is organized into the following sections:

- **Key Issues and Findings**
- **Goals, Objectives and Policies**
 - **Supply**
 - **Variety/Affordability**
 - **Location**
 - **Design**
 - **Independence**



KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

Adequate housing is a basic need for the health, safety, and welfare of residents in the Centre Region. In preparing the Inventory and Assessment of Existing Conditions, the following issues emerged as key findings regarding the current status of our housing stock. These key findings point the way to the development of goals, objectives, and policies that will ensure a continued supply of safe, accessible, and affordable housing for all.

1. The Centre Region is home to 92,000 residents and contains over 34,000 housing units. Housing stock is fairly evenly divided between rental housing (55%) and owner-occupied housing (45%) across the Centre Region; however, in State College Borough, the mix is approximately 75% renter occupied and 25% owner occupied. This fact drives many of the priorities in the Borough with respect to land use, enforcement, and other programs and services. Population growth in the community has been steady since the 1970s, at approximately 1% per year, and construction of new housing units has kept pace with that growth. Until the recent recession of 2008, the Centre Region's housing inventory was absorbed as it was built.
2. The housing market has fluctuated significantly in the last decade. In the early to mid-2000s, a strong housing market caused a surge in home prices and building activity in the Centre Region. Household incomes during this period did not keep pace with rising home costs, resulting in an affordability gap for many families. Municipalities responded by exploring regulations intended to encourage the development of new affordable housing.
3. In 2009, the Centre Region began to feel the effects of the national recession on the housing market. A decline in the local real estate sales market resulted in a higher inventory of available homes and a slow-down in new home construction. Yet housing affordability continued to be an issue, particularly for those seeking affordable rental housing.
4. The Centre Region offers a wide variety of housing opportunities, from single-family homes to apartment units, and many choices in between. Diversity in housing type, price, and style varies by proximity to the urban core and Penn State University. The outlying areas of the Centre Region are typically characterized by large-lot, single-family homes, while areas closer to the urban core include a higher percentage of apartments and townhomes.
5. From 1970 through 2010, the Centre Region experienced a steady increase in its housing stock, from 13,675 housing units in 1970 to 34,000 in 2010. The greatest increase in housing stock occurred between 1970 and 1980, with over 6,000 new units added.
6. Compared with Pennsylvania and Centre County, the Centre Region has a relatively high percentage of rental housing units. In Pennsylvania, 29% of housing is occupied by renters, compared with 40% in Centre County and 55% in the Centre Region. The cost to build a new home in the Centre Region escalated rapidly in the early to
7. mid-2000s, as prices for materials, infrastructure, and site development rose, and the size of new homes grew. Construction costs for a new single-family home—excluding land—were \$171,000 in 2000 compared with \$258,000 in 2010. Annual Median Income is not keeping pace with housing costs, making housing affordability an on-going challenge for many who want to live near employment and services in the urban core of the Centre Region.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES



"Housing is affordable when a family pays no more than 30% of its monthly income for total housing costs (rent or mortgage, taxes, insurance)."

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Housing Supply

An adequate supply of safe, affordable, and accessible housing is an essential component of a healthy community, and is a reflection of the economic and social condition of a community. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines housing as being affordable if a family pays no more than 30% of its monthly income for total housing costs (rent or mortgage, taxes, insurance). Housing supply is often the key driver in any decision to locate to or within a community or neighborhood. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are to ensure that residents of the Centre Region have an adequate supply of housing to meet their needs.

GOAL 1 - There is an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of existing and future Centre Region residents.

Total Housing Units by Municipality	
State College	13,007
Ferguson	7,501
Patton	7,306
College	3,907
Harris	2,148
Halfmoon	963
Centre Region	34,832

Source: US Census Bureau 2010

Objective 1.1

Ensure that sufficient, appropriately zoned land is available within the Centre Region to serve the forecasted population growth and housing demand for the next 20 to 30 years.

Policy 1.1.1

Regularly update the Regional Development Capacity Report to identify the location and amount of land available for new construction of single-family, two-family, and multi-family development.

Policy 1.1.2

Using U.S. Census, American Community Survey, Building Permit, and other available data, monitor population and housing statistics for the Centre Region to determine the ability to meet future housing demand.

Policy 1.1.3

Evaluate municipal zoning regulations and recommend changes where necessary to ensure that a sufficient amount of land is available and zoned at appropriate locations and densities for residential development, redevelopment, and mixed-use opportunities.

Policy 1.1.4

Develop a methodology for projecting future population at specific points in time to assure that a sufficient supply and type of housing are available to meet future needs of the community.

Objective 1.2

Revitalize existing neighborhoods through infill, rehabilitation programs, and other techniques, such as conversion to owner occupancy from student rentals, to enhance the quality of the existing housing stock, maintain an adequate housing supply, and expand housing choice.

Policy 1.2.1

Protect established single-family neighborhoods from conversion to multi-unit rentals.

Policy 1.2.2

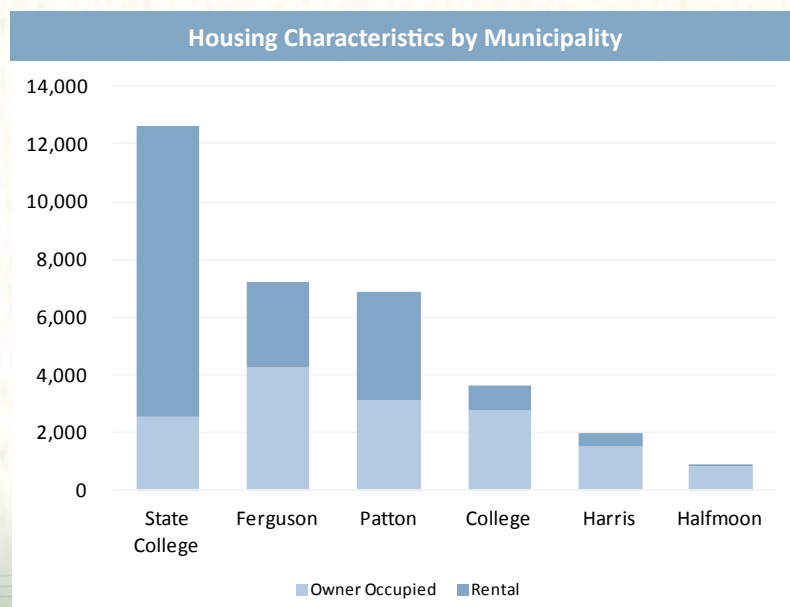
Encourage a higher level of publicity regarding housing loans and other programs, such as the Centre County and State College Borough First Time Homebuyer Programs, the State College Community Land Trust and the Centre County Housing and Land Trust programs, and others offered by municipal and non-profit agencies that support reinvestment and homeownership opportunities within existing neighborhoods.

Policy 1.2.3

Encourage student rentals in higher-density districts as a strategy for preserving existing neighborhoods.

Policy 1.2.4

Promote policies and codes that require regular maintenance and rehabilitation of rental properties to conserve the current housing stock.



Source: US Census Bureau 2010

Housing Variety & Affordability

A healthy and vibrant community offers a range of housing types, sizes, and prices to appeal to residents at various stages of life. Housing that is affordable to local workers and close to work directly impacts the ability of employers to recruit and retain staff. Housing that is close to schools and parks is an attractive option for families with young children. Housing that is safe and comfortable appeals to older residents who seek the opportunity to age in place, in close proximity to family and in-home support services. The variety and affordability of housing options enhances the livability and diversity of the community. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are to foster the development of and to maintain a variety of housing types at prices that are attractive to a diversity of ages, incomes, and household types.



Housing variety in State College Borough Neighborhoods.

GOAL 2 - In the Centre Region, a variety of housing types and prices is available to give current and future residents greater choice in both ownership and rental opportunities.

Objective 2.1

Promote strategies for development of residential neighborhoods that incorporate an integrated mix of dwelling types and prices.

Policy 2.1.1

Encourage residential development proposals to offer a variety of rental and for-sale housing and to provide a mix of market rate and affordable prices.

Policy 2.1.2

Identify vacant or underutilized structures that have the potential for redevelopment as medium to high-density housing, and explore incentives to encourage redevelopment of such structures.

Policy 2.1.3

Include higher-density housing in areas where jobs, services, and recreational opportunities are accessible by transit, bicycle, and walking.

Policy 2.1.4

Encourage municipalities to reduce regulatory barriers and incorporate innovative design concepts for street standards, lot sizes, storm water facilities, and other residential site development features to encourage the development of new affordable housing and to ensure the integration of affordable and market rate housing units within all residential zoning districts.

Policy 2.1.5

Encourage municipalities to incorporate incentives, such as density bonuses, smaller lot sizes, reduced street widths or reduced parking requirements, in exchange for the inclusion of a minimum percentage of affordable housing units in all residential zoning districts.

Policy 2.1.6

Investigate strategies that can be implemented on a regional basis to address housing affordability. Examples include expanding existing programs such as the State College Community Land Trust, the Centre County Housing and Land Trust and local first-time homebuyer programs, establishing a regional clearinghouse to identify resources and assets available at the local or regional level to meet housing needs, exploring approaches for municipalities to establish a dedicated funding source for land trusts and other affordable housing initiatives, and exploring interest in creating a regional housing authority.

Policy 2.1.7

Identify affordable housing alternatives to assist residents in the transition from aging mobile home parks to rental or home-ownership opportunities in close proximity to daily services, transit, and employment.

Policy 2.1.8

Study mechanisms, including use of the State College Borough Redevelopment Authority, for providing municipal funding to local community land trusts to address acquisition, rehabilitation, and administration of affordable housing.

Policy 2.1.9

Develop a regional strategy for identifying and prioritizing areas that are suitable for redevelopment and revitalization as future mixed-use neighborhoods.

Policy 2.1.10

Develop a process to assure that housing units that are built as a result of municipal inclusionary and workforce housing ordinances remain in the affordable housing inventory.

Objective 2.2

Promote federal, state, county, and municipal programs that facilitate the availability of affordable homeownership and rental housing options.

Policy 2.2.1

Support the efforts of the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition to provide continuing education for elected officials, planning commissioners, community leaders, and developers regarding the need for and benefit of affordable housing development.

Policy 2.2.2

Continue to support affordable housing initiatives, such as the State College Borough Community Land Trust, the Centre County Housing and Land Trust, and other first-time homebuyer programs that offer rental and ownership opportunities for a wide segment of the population.

Policy 2.2.3

Promote financial literacy programs offered by local lenders and non-profits that help prepare residents for future homeownership.

Policy 2.2.4

Explore and promote opportunities for employer-assisted housing programs that offer incentives to employers who establish programs to assist new recruits and existing employees seeking affordable housing within close proximity to their workplace.

Policy 2.2.5

Assist the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition and other non-profit housing agencies in educating landlords regarding the benefits of existing programs to help meet demands for affordable rental housing.

Policy 2.2.6

Identify opportunities to improve efficiency of the land-development review process by implementing the Best Practices Manual for Development Review and Permitting and encouraging design professionals to submit complete, accurate proposals in order to reduce costs and minimize delays for residential projects that include a minimum percentage of affordable units.

Policy 2.2.7

Increase awareness of existing housing voucher programs and support the efforts of the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition to educate landlords about their programs and encourage them to rent to voucher holders.

Average Square Footage New Single Family Home		
1950		983 sq. ft.
1970		1,500 sq. ft.
1990		2,080 sq. ft.
2000		2,438 sq. ft.
2010		2,505 sq. ft.

The average single family home has more than doubled in size since the 1950s.

Source: National Association of Home Builders.

Housing Location

Housing that is located in close proximity to employment, public transportation, community facilities, and essential services contributes to the quality of life for all residents of the community. Residential neighborhoods that provide easy access to daily services broaden affordability for residents by reducing the costs of automobile maintenance and gasoline, as well as time spent in transit. Employers may also realize benefits in hiring and retention efforts when employees live near the workplace. The focus of this housing goal is to ensure that residents have an opportunity to live near employment and have convenient access to daily services.



GOAL 3 - Housing in the Centre Region is located near employment, transportation facilities, and daily services, such as schools, medical offices, grocery stores, and pharmacies.

Objective 3.1

Direct new residential development to sites within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area to facilitate convenient access to schools, jobs, medical facilities, shopping, and public transit services.

Policy 3.1.1

Integrate housing with retail, office, and institutional uses in order to share infrastructure costs among uses and reduce transportation costs.

Policy 3.1.2

Ensure through the Official Map and plan review process that new developments offer opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian access within and among neighborhoods, schools, parks, transit, employment, and shopping.

Policy 3.1.3

Encourage development of diverse and affordable housing options near public transportation and employment centers.

Policy 3.1.4

Evaluate opportunities for municipalities to revise zoning ordinances where appropriate to broaden the list of permitted uses within non-residential zoning districts to allow a mix of uses, including a variety of residential uses.

Policy 3.1.5

Promote limited mixed-use development in rural villages to expand the range of services available to rural neighborhoods and to reduce transportation costs.

Housing Design

The benefits of good residential site design and construction are not always obvious, but are nonetheless important to the community. Well-designed structures minimize the impact on the environment, both during and after construction. They are more energy efficient, affordable, and healthier for residents. The focus of this housing goal is to ensure that municipalities and developers employ best management practices in residential site design and construction.



Conservation or Rural Preservation techniques protect natural resources such as floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, hedgerows and agricultural lands by incorporating them into permanent open spaces within development projects. The preserved land offers opportunities for inter-connected networks of open space for public or private use.

GOAL 4 - New residential developments in the Centre Region are designed to make efficient use of resources.

Objective 4.1

Encourage innovative concepts in residential site design to ensure that new development is compatible with the proposed site rather than manipulating the site to fit the development.

Policy 4.1.1

Prepare revisions to municipal land development regulations to incorporate innovative design concepts for street standards, lot sizes, storm-water facilities, and other residential site development considerations.

Policy 4.1.2

Develop and recommend adoption of neighborhood planning guidelines that encourage creativity in design, minimize disturbance to sensitive natural features, and reduce impervious coverage.

Objective 4.2

Encourage resource conservation and energy efficiency in new and renovated residential development.

Policy 4.2.1

Promote and identify incentives to encourage energy efficiency, alternative energy sources, and energy-efficient building-design standards in the construction of housing to improve long-term affordability and sustainability.

Policy 4.2.2

Revise municipal land-use regulations to permit the onsite generation of alternative energy such as wind, solar, geothermal, or other alternative power in residential zoning districts.



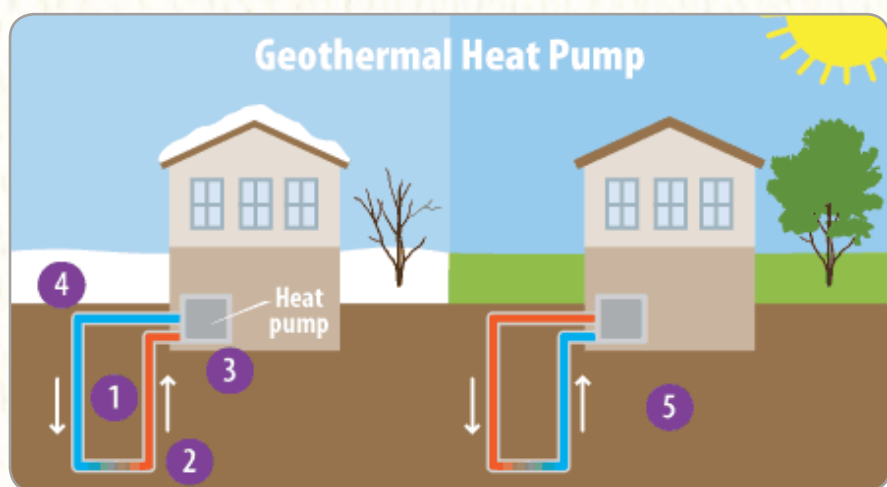
Solar roof panels help reduce energy costs and improve affordability

Policy 4.2.3

Identify vacant or underutilized structures that have the potential for redevelopment.

Policy 4.2.4

Encourage construction practices that result in resilient housing to withstand the effects of natural disasters, such as hurricanes and other weather events, and enable residents to be self-reliant and shelter in place until emergency responders can report to the scene.



Geothermal Heat Pump

1. Water moves through a loop of pipes.
2. When the weather is cold, the water heats up as it travels through the part of the loop that's buried underground.
3. Once it gets back above ground, the warmed water transfers heat into the building.
4. The water cools down after its heat is transferred. It is pumped back underground where it heats up starting the process again.
5. On a hot day, the system can run in reverse.

Source: U.S. Department of Environmental Protection

Housing Independence

Data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Centre Region Code Agency, and the Centre Regional Planning Agency indicate that over the last several decades, the Centre Region's new residential developments have consisted mostly of moderately priced, single-family homes built in traditional suburban and rural subdivisions. Looking forward, the Centre Region should encourage development of a wider variety of housing types to meet the needs of a diverse population and changing demographics. Reflecting national trends, the population of the Centre Region is aging. As a result, the need for affordable and specialized housing for older residents will continue to grow. In addition, many residents with physical and/or mental challenges are living independently or semi-independently. The focus of this housing goal is to ensure a range of housing choices to support all segments of the population.

GOAL 5 - A wide range of housing opportunities is available for Centre Region residents with physical and/or mental challenges, older residents who want to age in place, and residents who require continuous care.

Objective 5.1

Encourage residential development that offers independent living options in close proximity to supportive services, transportation, shopping, and jobs for older residents and people with physical and/or mental challenges.

Policy 5.1.1

Support and promote programs offered by federal, state, county, municipal, and non-profit agencies to assist physically challenged or elderly homeowners with maintenance and repair needs.

Policy 5.1.2

Support and promote housing opportunities for special-needs populations to assist with the transition to independent living.

Policy 5.1.3

Support and promote opportunities for permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless population.

Policy 5.1.4

Support and foster, where appropriate, innovative and non-traditional housing alternatives such as shared housing, live/work housing, and accessory dwelling units.

Policy 5.1.5

Encourage construction and design features in new and existing homes, such as zero-step entrances and wider interior doors/hallways, to improve accessibility and visitor convenience.



Foxdale Village and The Village at Penn State offer seniors independent, assisted and skilled care living.



Community Services & Fa

INTRODUCTION

This Element includes policies that will ensure the long-term operation and maintenance of community facilities that serve the Centre Region and its residents. The Element recognizes a long-standing policy in the Centre Region of directing the majority of future growth to areas within an established Regional Growth Boundary. The Regional Growth Boundary is a broad planning term, described in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code as a designated growth area to accommodate projected growth for the next 20 years. It is the boundary within which urban services, including public sewer, water, transportation, fire, police and schools, are typically provided or planned for and where a higher density of development is necessary to efficiently and economically support those services. By establishing and maintaining a Regional Growth Boundary, the Centre Region can protect valuable natural resources and important agricultural lands and reduce leap-frog development in outlying rural areas. The policy of directing future development to areas within a Regional Growth Boundary originated with the 1976 Comprehensive Plan, was carried forward with the adoption of the 1990 and 2000 Comprehensive Plans, and is incorporated within this document.

The community facilities listed here are provided as the result of efforts by a range of entities, including local municipalities, authorities, nonprofit organizations, or private entities. Thus, communication and cooperation among the operators is important to the ongoing provision of services to meet community needs.

The community services and facilities provided at the regional level are necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of the Centre Region's residents. The Centre Region's community facilities and services are in generally good condition, both in terms of maintenance and operations, and are adequate to serve the community for the 20- to 30-year timeframe of this document.

The Community Services and Facilities Element is organized into the following sections:

- **Key Issues and Findings**
- **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**
 - **Water - Map M14**
 - **Wastewater - Maps M14 and M15**
 - **Refuse and Recycling**
 - **Utilities - Map M14**
 - **Emergency Services (Law Enforcement, Fire Protection, Medical) - Map M16**
 - **Schools and Libraries - Map M17**



KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

The Centre Region's community facilities provide vital services, such as clean water, wastewater treatment and disposal, emergency management, and medical and educational opportunities. In preparing the Inventory and Assessment of Existing Conditions, the following issues emerged as key findings regarding the current status of our community facilities. These key findings point the way toward the development of goals, objectives, and policies that will ensure their long-term viability.

1. Adequate water supply is generally available from multiple providers to serve future development in the Centre Region; however, some smaller community water systems face supply challenges.
2. The University Area Joint Authority (UAJA) is limited with regard to the volume of reclaimed water that can be used for stream augmentation. However, based on UAJA estimates, treatment capacity is expected to be adequate for the 20- to 30-year timeframe of this plan. Stream augmentation capacity and capacity for reuse water customers is also expected to be adequate for the next 20 to 30 years, but upgrades planned for conveyance lines may be needed as development occurs.
3. The Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy may impact future expansion or development of wastewater treatment facilities. How this will influence development patterns in the region continues to evolve as new technologies and best management practices emerge.
4. The Centre Area Transit Authority (CATA) continues to be the primary public transit service provider in the Centre Region.
5. The Alpha, Boalsburg, Warriors Mark, and Port Matilda Fire Companies continue to be viable and successful volunteer fire companies serving the Centre Region municipalities.
6. Volunteers to support the fire companies and Centre LifeLink EMS are crucial to maintaining service to the Centre Region.
7. Multiple medical centers are available throughout the Centre Region to perform acute specialized procedures, and urgent and general medical care.
8. Discussions continue on locations and funding for future State College Area School District facility upgrades or replacement, including the State College Area High School.
9. Penn State University continues to provide state-of-the-art research and education worldwide. Future expansions in physical plant and student enrollment will continue to impact all Centre Region municipalities.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Water



An unnamed tributary to Tannery Run (top photo) and Slab Cabin Run are tributaries to Spring Creek. Many streams in the Centre Region are designated as high quality cold water fisheries.

Water is a critical resource for residents and businesses in the Centre Region and is necessary for the future growth and development of the community. Ninety-nine percent of the Centre Region's public and private water supply comes from groundwater sources. As a result, protection of the groundwater supply is a high priority and the focus of many regional initiatives, such as riparian buffer programs, well and borehole construction inspections, storm water management, and the on-lot sewage management program. The Centre Region currently enjoys an adequate water supply and good water quality. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are aimed at protection and conservation of water resources to ensure continued quality and supply for existing users and to support future growth.

GOAL 1 - A reliable, safe, and cost-effective water supply will meet the current and future needs of the Centre Region community.

Objective 1.1

Protect the high-quality surface and groundwater resources in the Centre Region.

Policy 1.1.1

Promote the Spring Creek Watershed Association's Water Resource Monitoring Project by assuring that regular reports on the program are provided to municipal planning commissions and governing bodies for their information and use.

Policy 1.1.2

Encourage educational and monitoring programs offered by the Spring Creek Watershed Commission and others within the Spring and Spruce Creek Watersheds.

Policy 1.1.3

Encourage efforts to identify and monitor groundwater contamination from specific and known pollutant sources and former land uses, such as Bathgate Springs, Nease Chemical, Erie Tech, Balfurd Cleaners, and the former State College Landfill.

Did you know?

- Protection of the Centre Region's water resources was identified as one of the highest priorities in a survey of residents conducted in 2011. Regional programs to address water resource protection include storm water management, riparian buffer regulations, on-lot sewage disposal management, and well and borehole construction standards.

Policy 1.1.4

Continue implementation of the municipal Well and Borehole Construction Ordinances and development of a well and borehole database.

Policy 1.1.5

Promote and assist with the implementation of the Sewage Management Program to ensure the continued maintenance and long-term operation of existing and future on-lot septic systems in the Centre Region.

Policy 1.1.6

Implement the municipal riparian buffer management ordinances through the land-development plan review process.

Policy 1.1.7

Encourage and support efforts to erect and maintain signage indicating the entrance to important watershed areas.

Objective 1.2

Ensure the efficient use of water supplies by encouraging water conservation, water reuse, and public education about local water resources.

Policy 1.2.1

Support marketing efforts by the University Area Joint Authority and others for high-purity (beneficial reuse) water to identify long-term customers along existing and proposed routes of the high purity (beneficial reuse) water lines.

Policy 1.2.2

Continue to support the University Area Joint Authority's efforts to advance future phases of the high-purity (beneficial reuse) water project to encourage groundwater recharge.

Policy 1.2.3

Support and promote the development of public education programs by water authorities, water companies, and private and non-profit agencies to increase public awareness of water conservation methods.



University Area Joint Authority's lavender hydrants indicate they are dedicated to beneficial reuse water. Lavender is the universal color for reuse water facilities. The hydrants are used by fire companies, landscapers and others who make use of high purity Beneficial Reuse water.

Policy 1.2.4

Prepare and maintain accurate growth forecasts and share data with water authorities and private water companies for use in estimating future water use in the Centre Region.

Policy 1.2.5

Encourage the installation of low-flow fixtures in existing structures, particularly in older multi-family buildings.

Policy 1.2.6

Encourage water providers to incentivize water conservation in multi-family structures by offering a cost-per-unit representation of water usage.

Policy 1.2.7

Ensure long-term water quality and quantity by requiring interconnections, where practical and feasible, of existing public water systems and of water systems in new developments meeting minimum thresholds for a community water system as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Policy 1.2.8

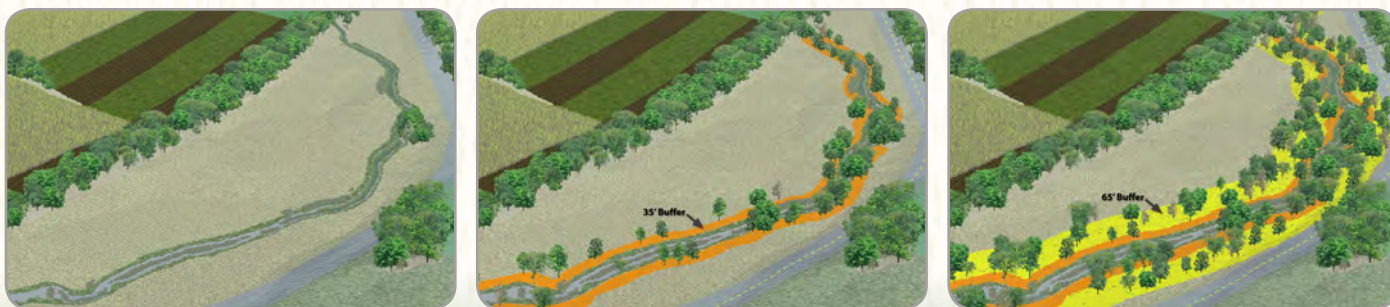
Ensure that proposed development of community water systems results in viable, self-sustaining systems capable of meeting state and federal mandates and providing fire protection.

Policy 1.2.9

Utilize available mapping to protect recharge areas during the land-development process to ensure the long-term availability, quality and quantity of groundwater.

Policy 1.2.10

Revisit, with the Public Services and Environmental Committee, the Source Water Protection Agreement signed by University Area Joint Authority, and the College Township and State College Borough Water Authorities, to address concerns regarding provision, distribution, and management of high-purity (beneficial reuse) water.



Riparian Buffers: The Centre Region municipalities have adopted riparian buffering requirements to protect ground and surface waters from contaminants caused by runoff. Riparian buffers can filter out contaminants, reduce flooding by slowing water flows, prevent erosion of stream banks and support aquatic life and biodiversity by providing a source of food and shade.

Objective 1.3

Support municipal, county, and state efforts to reduce the impacts of storm water runoff on water quality by assisting with implementation of storm water management regulations where appropriate, considering policies such as State College Borough's policy to reduce impervious coverage by 2%, and educating the public regarding the impacts of storm water on water quality.

Policy 1.3.1

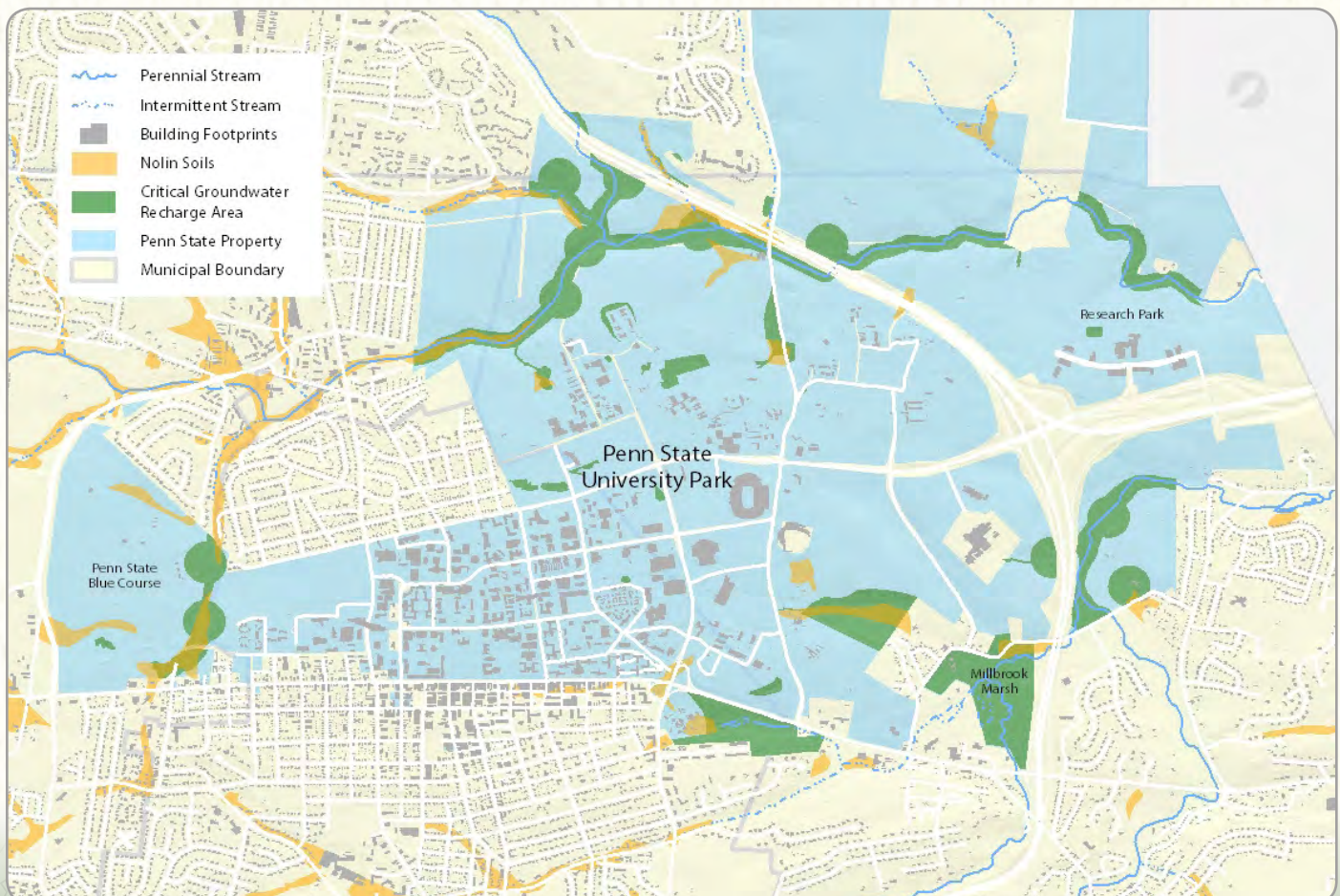
Encourage the adoption of regulations that would reduce impervious coverage and would allow pervious alternatives.

Policy 1.3.2

Encourage municipalities to incorporate low-impact design practices to infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source.

Policy 1.3.3

Support efforts by the Centre County Conservation District to educate farmers regarding the use of best management practices to minimize erosion and runoff from agricultural operations.



An example of “critical recharge” areas located in the Penn State University Park main campus.

Policy 1.3.4

Work with the municipalities to maintain and update the inventory of existing storm water facilities and their condition, and to identify options for long-term management of storm water basins.

Policy 1.3.5

Continue to ensure through the plan review process that storm water management requirements are incorporated in new development projects to address runoff and pollution concerns.

Policy 1.3.6

Continue to ensure through the plan review process that National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) plans to address non-point pollution from runoff are prepared and submitted when required.



Example of a green infrastructure project to filter storm water runoff from parking areas.

Policy 1.3.7

Encourage municipalities to work together to implement national best management practices for storm water, including public education about reducing storm water pollution, identifying and eliminating improper discharges and spills from storm drain systems, decreasing impervious coverage, and requiring property owners to address storm-water runoff before and after construction.

Policy 1.3.8

Encourage the development of a list of funding sources to assist in retrofitting deficient storm water facilities.

Wastewater

The Centre Region is located at the headwaters of two high-quality watersheds. As a result, proper conservation, wastewater treatment and reuse are critical to protecting groundwater quality for the Centre Region municipalities as well as downstream communities. Within the established Regional Growth Boundary, wastewater treatment is provided by the University Area Joint Authority and Penn State University wastewater treatment plants. The Sewer Service Area is identified in the Centre Region Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan. It describes the area within which a particular urban service (sewer) is provided or planned. Outside the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area, on-lot systems are used to treat wastewater. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are to ensure that there is adequate capacity available at the treatment plants to meet future development needs for the next 20- to 30-year timeframe of this document and to ensure the proper maintenance of the on-lot systems to ensure their long-term viability.

GOAL 2 - Sewer service in the Centre Region is efficient, cost-effective, and adequate to support future growth.

Objective 2.1

Implement the adopted Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan and Supplemental Plans to ensure the logical provision and extension of public sewer service.

Policy 2.1.1

Periodically review and update the process for considering expansions to the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area as well as increases in Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDU) within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area.

Policy 2.1.2

Periodically receive and review as necessary requests for the expansion of the existing sewer service area and facilitate discussion of the expansion applications through the Municipal, Centre Regional Planning Commission, and General Forum review process.

Policy 2.1.3

Work with the Public Services and Environmental Committee to study and evaluate the need for alternative technologies for wastewater treatment and reuse.

Policy 2.1.4

Continue to monitor on an annual basis the status of the collection and conveyance system projects that have been identified for upgrade as part of the Act 537 Sewage Management Plan.

Policy 2.1.5

Coordinate activities among Penn State University, State College Borough, and the University Area Joint Authority related to the diversion of wastewater from the Penn State Wastewater Treatment Plant to the University Area Joint Authority's Spring Creek Pollution Control Facility by 2016, as outlined in the Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan.

The Regional Growth Boundary:

- was established with the 2000 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan
- is a designated area intended to accommodate projected growth for the next 20-30 years
- is the boundary within which urban services, including public sewer, water, transportation, fire, police and schools, are typically provided or planned for
- is typically reserved for the higher density development necessary to efficiently and economically support urban services
- is roughly concurrent with the public sewer service area
- does not prohibit growth in outlying areas
- is used as a guide--it is not a law
- contains approximately 6,200 acres of developable land



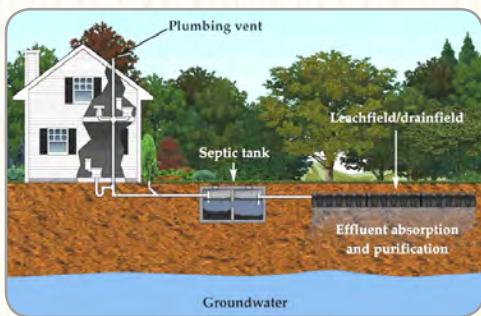
Aerial view of the University Area Joint Authority's Spring Creek Pollution Control Facility.

Policy 2.1.6

Continue to ensure that sewer planning is done for all new land-development activities through consultation with municipalities, developers, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the University Area Joint Authority.

Policy 2.1.7

Monitor activities associated with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy as they relate to regulations on stream discharge or augmentation from point sources and non-point sources, such as farm operations.



Did you know?

The Centre Region's 3,000 on-lot sewage disposal systems are actively managed to ensure their long term function and viability. All systems are inspected on a six year cycle and pumped out every three years. The sewage management program is administered regionally by the Centre Region Code Administration Agency on behalf of the municipalities.

Objective 2.2

Assure the long-term viability of on-lot sewage systems to protect surface and subsurface water to retain the high quality of water in the community.

Policy 2.2.1

Continue the Centre Region Code Agency's implementation of the municipal sewage management regulations, including routine inspection and pumping notifications for individual on-lot septic systems.

Policy 2.2.2

Use data collected through the sewage management program to map and identify clusters of problem areas with potential on-lot septic system failures to inform future planning efforts and implement cost-effective solutions.

Policy 2.2.3

Review planning modules submitted with land-development plans to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements of the municipality, the sewage enforcement officer, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection regarding the placement and percolation sites for on-lot wastewater treatment, reuse, and disposal systems.

Objective 2.3

Continue to support the University Area Joint Authority's efforts to expand the use of high-purity (beneficial reuse) water through recharge or by consumption in order to accommodate capacity limitations associated with future growth.

Policy 2.3.1

Work with the Public Services and Environmental Committee, the University Area Joint Authority, and the business community to identify long-term customers along existing and proposed routes of the high-purity (beneficial reuse) water lines.

Objective 2.4

Ensure that adequate wastewater treatment, conveyance, reuse, and discharge capacity is available for future growth within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area.

Policy 2.4.1

Conduct periodic build-out analyses and population forecasts to determine the need for and timing of projects to add wastewater treatment, conveyance, reuse, and discharge capacity.

Policy 2.4.2

Maintain an inventory of available properties within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area to assist municipalities in decisions regarding expansion requests.

Policy 2.4.3

Direct new development projects to available properties within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area where existing infrastructure is available.



Refuse & Recycling

Refuse and recycling collection is a basic service necessary to the health, safety, and welfare of visitors to and residents of the Centre Region. Sanitary disposal of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional solid waste in the Centre Region is provided in a cost-effective and efficient manner by public and private entities through joint contract, municipal service, or individual contract. As a result of municipal regulations requiring the proper disposal of all refuse, there are few incidents of environmental pollution caused by improper dumping. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are to enhance recycling and composting opportunities to conserve landfill space, and to maintain the high level of service offered by refuse and recycling providers.

GOAL 3 - Solid waste disposal and recycling collection is provided in a cost-effective and efficient manner to all residents and businesses in the Centre Region.

Objective 3.1

Reduce the waste stream to landfills by providing convenient and cost-effective refuse and recycling collection.

Policy 3.1.1

Assist the Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority in encouraging the state and county to expand the list of items regularly collected for recycling to include pharmaceuticals, household hazardous waste, oil, white goods, and plastics not currently accepted.

Policy 3.1.2

Through the land-development review process, continue to ensure that adequate space is provided for the installation of refuse and recycling receptacles, particularly for multi-family and non-residential development.

Policy 3.1.3

Assist organizations such as the Central Pennsylvania Builders Association and the Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority to develop programs that encourage the recycling and reuse of construction materials.

Policy 3.1.4

Assist the COG Refuse and Recycling Administrator to develop a targeted campaign to enhance and encourage recycling efforts of commercial property owners.

Policy 3.1.5

Work with the municipalities and the COG Refuse and Recycling Administrator to evaluate options for municipal collection of residential yard waste and disposal at DEP-approved, municipally designated locations.

Policy 3.1.6

Support and promote efforts to initiate or expand municipal programs for the composting of food waste.

Policy 3.1.7

Support markets for recycled products by utilizing recycled content materials, such as glass-phalt, in municipal operations.

Policy 3.1.8

Explore marketplace incentives to encourage a higher commitment to recycling.



Utilities

The Centre Region is served by all major utilities, including electric, natural gas, land and cellular telephone, broadband Internet, and satellite and cable television; however, some services are not available in all parts of the Centre Region. Rural areas outside of the Regional Growth Boundary may not have the same level or type of services as can be provided efficiently and cost-effectively in the high-density developments typically found within the Regional Growth Boundary. In addition, a limited number of providers and lack of competition can affect pricing and availability of services for all residents of the Centre Region. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are to identify opportunities for expanding utility services to areas of the community designated for future growth and to encourage a wider variety of choice for residents.

GOAL 4 - Public utilities are sited in a manner that will efficiently and economically serve the greatest number of residents of the community with minimal environmental impact.

Objective 4.1

Utilities, including electricity, natural gas, land and cellular telephone, broadband internet, and satellite and cable television facilities should be provided cost-effectively to new and existing developments.

Policy 4.1.1

Work with developers and utility providers to ensure that utility installations are designed and developed to minimize visual impact, to maximize reliability, and to avoid environmental degradation to the extent possible.

Policy 4.1.2

Work with utility providers to map the location of existing lines and/or service areas and to coordinate infrastructure expansions, upgrades, or replacements to coincide with future development and or maintenance projects, such as road construction.

Policy 4.1.3

Work with utility providers to encourage co-location of communication facilities on existing structures to increase coverage and to prevent unnecessary scattering of these facilities.

Policy 4.1.4

Explore opportunities for the extension of high-speed Internet and fiber-optic services to a wider area of the community.

Policy 4.1.5

Work with utility providers regarding the future location of lines and easements for transmission facilities to ensure a safe distance from development activities.

Policy 4.1.6

Create and maintain a list of alternative utility providers and services available to private citizens.



Fire protection in the Centre Region is provided by volunteers with the Alpha, Boalsburg, Port Matilda and Warriors Mark Fire Companies.

Emergency Services

Public safety is a high priority in the Centre Region. A range of emergency services, from volunteer firefighters to state and municipal police officers to non-profit medical care and transport providers to a regional emergency management coordinator ensure that the Centre Region's residents and visitors are adequately protected and safe. These providers are linked by the unified emergency communications (9-1-1) system operated by Centre County Government. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan aim to continue the high level of service currently available and to encourage opportunities for improvement where appropriate.

GOAL 5 - Police, fire, and emergency services are available and sufficient to serve all residents of and visitors to the Centre Region.

Objective 5.1

Maintain a high level of fire protection, delivered by a predominately volunteer service through inter-agency cooperation, training, recruitment, and retention efforts.

Policy 5.1.1

Work with the Alpha, Boalsburg, Port Matilda, and Warrior's Mark fire companies to improve access to GIS data and mapping for firefighting and emergency response purposes.

Policy 5.1.2

Assist the fire companies in identifying demographic trends that affect the future recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.

Policy 5.1.3

Assist the fire companies with exploring opportunities to increase public awareness and interest in the volunteer system to maintain the current levels of service and response times.

Policy 5.1.4

Ensure through the land development review process that new development provides adequate access for fire and emergency responders.

Policy 5.1.5

Continue to support the coordination of emergency services activities among the volunteer fire companies, the Emergency Management Operations Center, and Penn State University.

Policy 5.1.6

Support efforts to maintain the inter-operability of the 9-1-1 system.

Policy 5.1.7

Ensure that water systems installed to serve new development have the capacity to provide fire protection.

Objective 5.2

Prepare for emergencies through public education, emergency-responder training, and public/private sector cooperation and coordination.

Policy 5.2.1

Encourage fire companies and emergency responders to offer public education and awareness programs that advise residents, particularly those outside the Regional Growth Boundary, to have strategies in place for self-reliance until responders can report to the scene of an emergency, such as a fire or an extended power outage.

Policy 5.2.2

Assist the Centre Region Emergency Management Coordinator in the update of the Emergency Operations Plan and related documents for use by municipal officials and emergency-services providers.



The Centre Region Emergency Management program coordinates services among the six Centre Region municipalities and Penn State University, the Centre County Office of Emergency Services and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

Policy 5.2.3

Work with the Centre Region Emergency Management Coordinator to ensure that locations for new emergency shelters are identified as needed, based on population growth.

Policy 5.2.4

Assist the Centre Region Emergency Management Coordinator to ensure that emergency-services providers have adequate access to new development projects.

Objective 5.3

Maintain a high level of cost-effective public safety service from state and local police forces.

Policy 5.3.1

Monitor legislation that would require payment by municipalities for State Police services to local governments to assist in determining the best way of delivering police protection services in the future.

Policy 5.3.2

Encourage and facilitate collaboration and coordination among municipal police services providers to increase efficiency and maximize levels of service.



Mt. Nittany Medical Center (top) and Geisinger (bottom) provide quality medical care to the citizens of the Centre Region.

Objective 5.4

Ensure the continued availability of high-quality, cost-effective, medical care for residents and visitors to the Centre Region.

Policy 5.4.1

Direct new medical services facilities to locations within the Regional Growth Boundary.

Policy 5.4.2

Monitor the availability of land that is appropriately zoned for health care facilities to ensure adequate opportunity for expansion of existing facilities and the addition of new facilities as needed.

Policy 5.4.3

Encourage medical facilities to work with the local transit provider to ensure that health care services are accessible to all residents.

Policy 5.4.4

Encourage the co-location of health care facilities and health care-related businesses to improve access and choice of services for residents.

Public Schools & Libraries

The Centre Region is served by a first-class school system and an outstanding public library. The State College Area School District's 6,900 students score significantly higher than state and national averages in critical reading, writing, and math. In recent years, local tax dollars have facilitated multimillion-dollar construction or renovation projects for elementary and middle school facilities to prolong their useful service to the community. Plans for improvement or replacement of the existing high school are on the horizon. Public schools are supported by a variety of parochial, private, and charter schools. In the future, school alternatives may expand to include online options, rather than bricks-and-mortar facilities.

The Schlow Centre Region Library serves as a popular community gathering place, offering books, magazines, newspapers, and other media for loan, as well as access to public computers, Wi-Fi, and meeting rooms for civic, cultural, and educational activities. When compared with libraries in communities with similar population and budget, Schlow's checkouts and program attendance consistently show above-average performance.

The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are to sustain, promote, and encourage the high-quality services provided by the State College Area School District, including charter schools, technical schools, business schools, and parochial schools, and Schlow Centre Region Library.

GOAL 6 - High-quality educational facilities and opportunities are available for all residents of the Centre Region.

Objective 6.1

Ensure the continued wide variety of educational opportunities and facilities.

Policy 6.1.1

Meet annually with school officials to exchange information on development trends and demographic changes that may impact the timing and need for future school facilities.



From top to bottom: State College High School, Mount Nittany Elementary and Gray's Woods Elementary School.

Policy 6.1.2

Actively engage with school officials to identify appropriate locations within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area for new or expanded school facilities and, in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, review and provide recommendations regarding any proposed action by the school district to locate, demolish, remove, sell, or lease any school structure or land.

Policy 6.1.3

Assist school officials with planning for the reuse of existing surplus school sites.

Policy 6.1.4

Explore opportunities for increasing coordination between employers and educators to ensure a supply of workers with the occupational skills to attract innovative businesses.

Policy 6.1.5

Advocate for educational services and facilities, both public and private, that address current needs and changing technology.

Objective 6.2

Ensure continued availability of programs and materials provided through the Schlow Centre Region Library.



The Schlow Centre Region Library located in downtown State College has been called “the community’s living room.”

Policy 6.2.1

Provide information to assist the Schlow Centre Region Library Director and Board with development of the long-range strategic plan for the library.

Policy 6.2.2

Work with the Schlow Centre Region Library Director as requested to monitor community growth to assess needs for branch libraries or additional access points to collections and computers.

Policy 6.2.3

Encourage the state to provide the funding needed to comply with library service requirements or to grant flexibility to reduce hours or services based on the funding provided.

Policy 6.2.4

Support and encourage the expansion of public and private support for the Schlow Centre Region Library and its outreach programs.

Policy 6.2.5

Facilitate opportunities for expanded access to computer and Internet at the Schlow Centre Region Library to serve residents of the Centre Region.

Policy 6.2.6

Encourage and promote access to Schlow's electronic collections to meet changing demands for e-materials and to reduce costs of homebound delivery, when possible.



Schlow Centre Region Library's annual "Polar Express" reading program is eagerly anticipated by children and parents.

Sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is one of the most difficult Elements of the Comprehensive Plan to quantify because it means different things to different people and is a part of every Element in the plan. A conscious decision was made to have a separate section on sustainability instead of incorporating aspects of sustainability into each section. This will provide the framework for the general ideas of sustainability to be incorporated and tailored to fit each Element as necessary.

For the purposes of this section and this overall document, sustainability will be defined as:

The use of public facilities, infrastructure, and resources in an efficient and cost-effective manner to extend their usable life span and limit capital impact on the residents of the Centre Region.

The Sustainability Element is organized into the following sections:

- **Key Issues and Findings**
- **Goals, Objectives and Policies**
 - **Water and Sewer Services - Map M14**
 - **Transportation - Maps M10 and M11**
 - **Energy Efficiency**
 - **Municipal Resources - Map M12**
 - **Communications**



KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

Through the development of the Inventory and Assessment of Existing Conditions on sustainability, several items were noted as the key findings. These facts will be used as the basis to determine the most appropriate goals, objectives, and policies for the 2012 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan.

1. Land-use consumption per capita has increased since 1980
2. The Centre Region's municipalities are working to adopt regulations to protect critical resources such as riparian areas and ridges from development pressure.
3. The Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area continue to be key growth management tools to help encourage density, prevent sprawling development patterns, and concentrate urban services such as commercial centers and public transit.
4. Current trends in neighborhood development call for greater residential density through smaller lot sizes as well as the mixing of uses, such as single-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, commercial, and office; and transportation options such as bicycle routes and transit stops. This trend has been identified at state, local, and national levels.
5. Providing options for all forms of transportation will help maintain and extend the usable life of the existing infrastructure network by helping to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips and encourage alternative transportation methods that are less distressing to the existing transportation network.
6. Continued demand to purchase locally grown foods and locally made products may increase the need for urban agriculture or more permanent space for farmer's markets to help reduce the distances needed to acquire local foods and products.
7. Increased, updated, and emerging technology will expand the variety of communication options to include a wider variety of digital options for distribution and storage, reducing the need for physical documents.

This Element will address a variety of topics and how sustainability relates to each one. In some cases, information intentionally overlaps with other sections of this document to ensure issues related to sustainability are identified.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Water & Sewer Services

The Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area have been established to identify where growth and development should occur to take advantage of existing infrastructure and services such as public transit, public water, public sewer, and retail centers. By encouraging growth and development within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area, the Centre Region can limit the need to expand services prematurely and protect sensitive resources outside of the established growth areas. Additional goals, objectives, and policies related to water and sewer services can be found in the Community Facilities and Services Element.



The State College Borough Water Authority is one of three entities that provide public water service to the Centre Region. The College Township Water Authority and Upper Halfmoon Water Company serve portions of College Township and Patton Township respectively.

GOAL 1 - Adequate supply and infrastructure for water service is available within the Centre Region to support growth and development for the foreseeable future.

Objective 1.1

Ensure a safe and efficient water supply is available prior to land development.

Policy 1.1.1

Consultation with the relevant public water service providers should be done prior to land-development activity to ensure service is available.

Policy 1.1.2

Interconnection of water systems should be explored to limit interruption in service for all customers within the Centre Region, where practical.

Policy 1.1.3

Coordination among the water-service providers should be done to ensure that overlap in service areas is limited.

Policy 1.1.4

Where appropriate and permitted by the local municipalities, signage identifying watershed boundaries and their tributary streams should be installed to raise awareness to the various watersheds and waterways throughout the Centre Region.

Policy 1.1.5

Public and private water supplies should be protected by minimizing encroachment of land uses and development that are incompatible with source water protection areas based on local ordinances and PA DEP guidance to ensure quality and quantity will remain viable for the future.

Policy 1.1.6

Periodically provide educational materials about wellhead protection and groundwater resources to Centre Region residents through municipal newsletters and websites, new homebuyer information, and other appropriate formats.

Objective 1.2

Water conservation efforts for homes, businesses, and industrial users should be incorporated throughout local development or code requirements where appropriate.

Policy 1.2.1

Encourage high-efficiency fixtures and accessories to help reduce water usage in homes and businesses.

Policy 1.2.2

Evaluate strategies for redevelopment or adaptive reuse that takes advantage of existing water service and infrastructure as an alternative to new development.

Policy 1.2.3

Consider gray water from the beneficial reuse water system for use in homes or businesses for non-potable water needs where practical and available.

GOAL 2 - Adequate infrastructure for sewer service is available within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area to support growth and development for the foreseeable future.



The University Area Joint Authority provides centralized sewer treatment to the Centre Region's municipalities. Properties within the Sewer Service Area as defined by the Centre Region Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan are eligible for public sewer service while properties outside of the Sewer Service Boundary must utilize on-lot sewage disposal methods.

Objective 2.1

Adequate wastewater collection, conveyance, and treatment capacity is available for all properties within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area prior to land development.

Policy 2.1.1

Periodic reviews of available wastewater capacity at the University Area Joint Authority should be conducted in conjunction with updates to existing planning documents such as the Regional Development Capacity Report once every five years.

Policy 2.1.2

Consultation with the Centre Regional Planning Agency and the University Area Joint Authority should be done prior to land development approval to ensure collection and conveyance capacity is available.

Objective 2.2

The Centre Region municipalities should continue to support the University Area Joint Authority's efforts to identify customers for the Beneficial Reuse water.

Policy 2.2.1

Support the Centre Region marketing efforts to recruit businesses that can utilize the Beneficial Reuse water.

Policy 2.2.2

Identify long-term customers for the Beneficial Reuse Water provided by the University Area Joint Authority along the existing route of the water line.

Objective 2.3

Future developments that take advantage of existing infrastructure within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area, such as transportation routes, community services and facilities, or land-use patterns while minimizing land disturbance activities should be encouraged.

Policy 2.3.1

Encourage development regulations that provide creativity in design, including, but not limited to, clustering; provide alternative modes of transportation; and minimize impervious areas.

Policy 2.3.2

Consider vacant or underutilized properties within the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area for development or redevelopment, depending on the availability of existing infrastructure.

Policy 2.3.3

Consider redevelopment or adaptive reuse of properties where wastewater service currently exists in lieu of new developments that require services to be extended.

Policy 2.3.4

Follow the Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) process for properties requesting expansion of the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area to demonstrate that centralized sewer service and infrastructure is warranted or necessary beyond the existing Sewer Service Area.

Policy 2.3.5

Evaluate local regulations to provide expedited reviews of developments that take advantage of existing infrastructure in accordance with the Best Practices Manual for Development Review and Permitting.

Transportation

Transportation options for Centre Region residents are paramount to providing variety in daily travel and allowing residents to choose sustainable options for their trips. Establishing a connected network that includes safe, convenient, and sustainable options, including bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities, will encourage alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips. Additional goals, objectives, and policies related to transportation can be found in the Transportation Element.



Multiple modes of transportation provide options for residents to travel around the Centre Region. Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit amenities provide safe and convenient access connecting neighborhoods with retail centers and activity nodes.

GOAL 3 - Safe and efficient transportation options exist for all residents of the Centre Region.

Objective 3.1

Transportation options such as walking, bicycling, and public transit are encouraged to reduce the source of greenhouse gases and should be incorporated into the overall transportation network to help improve air quality and overall public health.

Policy 3.1.1

Municipalities should incorporate requirements for sidewalks in new land developments and redevelopment projects where appropriate.

Policy 3.1.2

Add bicycle facilities to new land developments and redevelopment projects where appropriate and give priority to locations where bicycle facilities will provide logical connections to existing paths; activity centers; and community amenities such as schools, libraries, parks, or other municipal facilities.

Policy 3.1.3

Winter maintenance of existing and proposed multi-use paths should be conducted where appropriate and within fiscal constraints of the municipalities.

Policy 3.1.4

Consult with the Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA) to help identify any gaps in service delivery that could be accommodated through new land development.

Policy 3.1.5

Periodically evaluate existing transportation systems to ensure they meet current demands for transportation alternatives.



Walkers on a shared use path in Slab Cabin Park.

Energy Efficiency

Providing municipal services such as waste collection, brush collection, road maintenance, and similar services will ensure the citizens of the Centre Region maintain a high standard of living. These services, however, require a significant expense in terms of energy consumption to operate and maintain the various systems. While it may cost more financially, establishing renewable or alternative fuel sources may help offset the impacts of these services on the environment and help ensure the Centre Region will continue to receive high-quality services.

GOAL 4 - The Centre Region utilizes a variety of renewable or alternative sources to meet its energy needs, such as wind, solar, geothermal, nuclear, hydrogen, or similar sources.

Objective 4.1

Alternative energy sources that take advantage of renewable or alternative technologies should be considered for the Centre Region when practical.

Policy 4.1.1

Encourage the Centre Region to explore a diversity of options for energy that includes renewable or alternative sources such as wind, solar, nuclear, or geothermal.

Policy 4.1.2

Encourage municipalities or vendors serving the municipalities to use alternative fuel sources such as electricity, compressed natural gas, or other alternative fuel technology in their vehicles to help mitigate issues related to air quality when appropriate.

Policy 4.1.3

Encourage community service organizations such as the State College Area School District and associated schools, Centre LifeLink, and the Alpha Fire Department, as well as private-sector companies to consider using alternative-fuel vehicles where practical.

Policy 4.1.4

Encourage techniques or practices that support conservation of resources where practical.

Policy 4.1.5

Encourage residents to explore alternative energy sources in accordance with accepted emergency management practices that can help them be self-reliant during times of limited emergency services after natural disasters or other emergencies when extended electrical outages are expected.



Penn State University's Center for Sustainability runs the Ecological Systems Laboratory at the University Park Campus' Site for Ecological Technologies. Here, various technologies that address sustainability are tested. The solar tracker array pictured above follows the sun's path throughout the day to collect the maximum possible sunlight for use as a power source.

Objective 4.2

The Centre Region municipalities should work to reduce barriers to alternative energy uses to help decrease dependence on finite natural resources.

Policy 4.2.1

Review and update land-development ordinances when appropriate to allow for alternative energy options to be incorporated into land uses. This should include, but not be limited to, wind, solar, geothermal, or other advanced technologies.

Policy 4.2.2

Encourage existing businesses, new businesses, or redevelopment opportunities that use alternative energy sources in their day-to-day operations to locate in the Centre Region through the use of land-development incentives or standards and other techniques that recognize alternative energy use.

Policy 4.2.3

Establish best practices to address the inclusion of alternative energy infrastructure such as geothermal in land developments where appropriate.

Policy 4.2.4

Encourage municipalities to amend land development ordinances as appropriate to allow for the necessary density that is conducive to alternative energy infrastructure, such as natural gas or similar resources.



Municipal Resources

The Centre Region Council of Governments was formed in an effort to reduce or eliminate the duplication of services among the Region's six municipalities. To this end, the Centre Region municipalities share multiple services, including land-use planning, code administration, parks and recreation, refuse and recycling, library services, and several other community services. The sharing of these services allows for the municipalities to limit their overall impact on individual resources and community resources that may have environmental implications. Conservation, protection, and sharing of resources can help ensure the longevity and continued availability of sensitive local resources that are used or impacted by the Centre Region municipalities. Additional goals, objectives, and policies related to environmentally significant resources can be found in the Natural, Environmental, Cultural, and Historic Resources Element and the Community Facilities and Services Element.

GOAL 5 - The Centre Region's conservation efforts continue to reduce adverse impacts on community resources and services.

Objective 5.1

Sharing of services should be explored or maintained when practical to reduce duplication of efforts, increase efficiency, and reduce the economic impacts to the Centre Region.

Policy 5.1.1

Centre Region municipalities should support the Regional Planning Agency, Regional Parks and Recreation, Regional Code Administration, Schlow Centre Region Library, regional refuse collection, Alpha Fire Company, and other multi-municipal initiatives, consistent with Objective 5.1.

Policy 5.1.2

Identify additional areas where cooperative engagement will be beneficial to the community.



The Whitehall Road Regional Parklands is being developed as a cooperative effort among the participating members of the Centre Region Parks & Recreation Authority to provide additional playing fields and recreational facilities for the Centre Region's residents.

Objective 5.2

Conservation efforts, including protection of sensitive environmental areas, natural habitats, hydric or colluvial soils, or other environmentally significant resources, should be incorporated into municipal ordinances to ensure the long-term protection of resources.

Policy 5.2.1

Evaluate and amend, as necessary, municipal ordinances and regulations to ensure they do not adversely impact natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.

Policy 5.2.2

Identify environmentally significant resources throughout the Centre Region to ensure a comprehensive inventory exists and is updated as appropriate.



Natural habitat area of the Millbrook Marsh Nature Centre in College Township.

Objective 5.3

The Centre Region community should be encouraged to use locally sourced goods and services.

Policy 5.3.1

Encourage farmer's markets or other outlets that provide opportunities for locally grown produce and locally made products to be sold to be in convenient locations that are accessible to the residents of the Centre Region.

Policy 5.3.2

Update land-use regulations to ensure agricultural areas that are actively farmed remain protected from incompatible uses, as appropriate.

Policy 5.3.3

Encourage urban agriculture or community gardens on vacant, underutilized, or neglected lots within the Centre Region with the property owner's permission.

Communication

The Centre Region has maintained a significant structure whereby communication among the six municipalities exists on an open and regular basis. This occurs through the various COG committees, the COG General Forum, and participation in C-NET. The COG structure also allows for the inclusion of other significant community representatives, such as Penn State University and the State College Area School District.



Government and Education Access for Centre County, also known as CNet, is local public access programming that broadcasts community meetings including municipal elected official meetings, planning commission meetings, school board meetings, and other special interest meetings throughout Centre County. Streaming video of all the meetings taped by CNet can be viewed at <http://cnet.pegcentral.com/index.php>.

GOAL 6.0 - Communication among the Centre Region municipalities is a cornerstone to successful coordination and implementation of regional initiatives.

Objective 6.1

Maintaining communication among the Centre Region municipalities will ensure sound planning and coordination of projects to maximize community resources and reduce duplication of services.

Policy 6.1.1

Continue to involve major community partners such as Penn State University, the State College Area School District, and the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office in the COG General Forum, Centre Regional Planning Commission, and COG Committees such as the Transportation and Land Use Committee; the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization; the Office of Emergency Management; and other offices or organizations, as appropriate.

Policy 6.1.2

Continued support and participation in the various COG committees and COG General Forum should be a priority for the Centre Region municipalities.

Policy 6.1.3

Significant discussion and communication should be facilitated by the COG committees to provide guidance on policy issues that impact the Centre Region.

Objective 6.2

Utilizing alternative communication techniques that take advantage of advanced technologies should be a priority for the Centre Region municipalities.

Policy 6.2.1

Utilize electronic communications to reduce the number of printed materials being distributed for municipal meetings where appropriate.

Policy 6.2.2

Support the use of electronic communications for inter-office and inter-agency correspondences, as appropriate.

Natural, Environmental, Cu

INTRODUCTION

This Element provides policies related to the preservation and protection of the Centre Region's natural, environmental, cultural, and historic resources. This Element provides policy guidance for the continued identification and protection of significant natural and environmental resources. Natural and environmental resources in the Centre Region provide significant natural habitats for wildlife but also provide the region with clean air, clean drinking water, and recreational space as well as other benefits. This Element also provides policy guidance for the identification and preservation of important cultural and historic resources that help maintain the culture and character of the Region. Goals, objectives, and policies in this Element are organized under the following headings:

- **Key Issues and Findings**
- **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**
 - **Natural Resources - Map M18**
 - **Environmental Resources**
 - **Cultural and Historic Resources**



Natural & Historic Resources

KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

The Centre Region is home to a variety of natural, environmental, cultural, and historic resources. These resources provide an array of benefits and are essential to maintaining a high quality of life for Centre Region residents. The following issues and findings emerged as a result of the Inventory and Assessment portion of the Comprehensive Plan and act as a basis from which goals, objectives, and policies are identified. Key findings from the Inventory and Assessment portion of the Comprehensive Plan include:

1. The Centre Region's prime agricultural soils help sustain its thriving agricultural community.
2. The Centre Region has a rich and diverse mix of natural, environmental, and historic resources, including state forests and parks, Biological Diversity Areas, Audubon Important Bird Areas, wetlands, and groundwater recharge areas.
3. Protection of the diverse and fragile natural, environmental, and historic resources will help ensure their continued sustainability.
4. The Centre Region's agricultural heritage is still present in and around the community through local farms as well as agricultural research efforts of Penn State University.
5. Determining what natural, environmental, and historic resources are important to the Centre Region will help shape and guide future protection and preservation efforts.
6. Extensive programs exist for the protection and preservation of historic and archaeological resources.



Preservation of prime agricultural soils helps maintain agricultural production in the Region.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Natural Resources

The Centre Region has a diverse variety of natural resources that provide the Region with numerous benefits and opportunities. Surface resources include timber and prime agricultural soils, both of which were instrumental in development of the Centre Region. The region is also home to extensive subsurface resources, such as limestone, shale, and clay. Natural resources provide a variety of benefits to the Centre Region, including economic viability, recreational opportunities, and health benefits. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are focused on identifying and preserving the Centre Region's natural resources to ensure their continual benefit to the Region.

GOAL 1 - The Centre Region's natural resources, which include agricultural soils, surface and groundwater quality, and forests, are protected and preserved, and restored to continue providing Region-wide benefits.

Objective 1.1

Encourage the preservation of prime agricultural soils and farmland.

Policy 1.1.1

Promote farm enrollment in the Agricultural Security Area and Clean and Green Programs in appropriate locations.

Policy 1.1.2

Update municipal Agricultural Security Areas as required by law.

Policy 1.1.3

Consider creating and supporting Agricultural Conservation Easement Programs in appropriate locations.

Objective 1.2

Protect groundwater resources and minimize property damage by identifying geologic features within the Centre Region and preserving their natural functions.

Policy 1.2.1

Utilize existing sinkhole inventories to notify property owners of potential risks when developing property.

CENTRE REGION AGRICULTURAL SECURITY AREAS	
MUNICIPALITY	TOTAL ACRES
College Township	1,304
Ferguson Township	15,918
Halfmoon Township	5,353
Harris Township	3,014
Patton Township	2,993
Centre Region Total	28,582

Policy 1.2.2

Identify areas that may be prone to sinkholes and other natural drainage features. Provide information to property owners regarding the natural functions of sinkholes, closed depressions, and natural drainage ways; the importance of their protection; and the potential risks of developing near them.

Policy 1.2.3

Discharge of pollutants to sinkholes should be minimized to protect groundwater quality.

Policy 1.2.4

Utilize existing mapped public source water protection areas as a factor when considering significant new or proposed development and infrastructure to evaluate potential risks to groundwater quality.



Minimizing surface water discharge to sinkholes helps protect groundwater resources.

Objective 1.3

Ensure that negative impacts related to any future natural resource extraction activities in the Centre Region are minimized.

Policy 1.3.1

Identify areas of the Centre Region where Utica Shale is present and monitor activities related to Utica and other shale industry development.

Objective 1.4

Protect the quality of the Region's groundwater resources.

Policy 1.4.1

Continue to support the creation and implementation of water protection programs and well and borehole ordinances that seek to protect groundwater resources.

Policy 1.4.2

Discourage intensive development activities from occurring in close proximity to groundwater recharge areas through effective land-use management.

Policy 1.4.3

Continue to support and develop programs that educate the public about the importance of protecting groundwater resources as well as methods and benefits of water conservation.

Policy 1.4.4

Discourage intensive development activity from occurring on highly erodible soils and steep slopes to prevent excessive erosion that can affect groundwater quality.



Protection of surface water resources, like this reservoir in Shingletown Gap, ensures that clean drinking water can be provided to Centre Region residents.

Policy 1.4.5

Create and implement municipal regulations that protect groundwater resources from stormwater discharge.

Policy 1.4.6

Work with the agricultural community to promote agricultural practices that help protect and improve groundwater quality where practical.



Environmental Resources

The Centre Region has numerous environmental resources that provide both challenges and benefits to the Region as a whole. Environmental resources include important habitats that support biodiversity, wetlands, protected open space, groundwater recharge areas, steep slopes, floodplains, and high-quality streams. These environmental resources provide habitats that support a variety of flora and fauna, provide educational and recreational opportunities for Centre Region residents, and help to provide cleaner air and water for the Region. Environmental resources can also create challenges for development and should be protected to ensure that the benefits they provide will continue for future generations. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are aimed at protecting important environmental resources located throughout the Region and ensuring their long-term sustainability.

GOAL 2 - The Centre Region's diverse and fragile environmental resources are preserved, restored and responsibly managed.

Objective 2.1

Identify and protect significant natural habitats of threatened and endangered plant and animal species in the Centre Region.



Protection of wetlands and other natural areas provides habitats for a variety of wildlife.

Policy 2.1.1

Assist in any updates to the 2002 Centre County Natural Heritage Inventory.

Policy 2.1.2

Develop and implement programs that educate residents about the location of significant natural habitats and the importance of preserving them.

Policy 2.1.3

Revise municipal regulations to provide adequate development buffers adjacent to important ecological areas in the Centre Region.

Objective 2.2

Protect and preserve wetlands and surface-water resources throughout the Centre Region.

Policy 2.2.1

Continue to implement municipal regulations and assure compliance with state and federal regulations that restrict development activity within 100-year floodplains.

Policy 2.2.2

Continue to support and implement educational programming at the Millbrook Marsh Nature Center and future programming at the Kissinger Meadow Wetlands about the importance of preserving wetlands.

Policy 2.2.3

Implement riparian buffer ordinances in Centre Region municipalities to help create and protect environmental habitats.

Policy 2.2.4

Create and implement educational programs about protecting Spring Creek, Spruce Creek, and their tributaries from pollution and invasive species.



Objective 2.3

Protect and preserve ridges and areas with steep slopes.

Policy 2.3.1

Implement municipal regulations that protect ridges, steep slopes, colluvial soils, and highly erodible soils from intensive development activity.

Policy 2.3.2

Create municipal regulations that promote best-management practices for forests located on mountains and ridges.



Protecting steep slopes from intensive development activity promotes soil stability and creates habitat for threatened and endangered plants and animals.

Cultural & Historic Resources



The Rock Hill School in Harris Township is located in the Linden Hall National Historic District.

The Centre Region is fortunate to have a variety of historical and cultural resources that date from multiple periods in the Region's history. Historic resources include structures, districts, and landmarks. Cultural resources include archaeological sites that may be either historic or prehistoric. Historic and cultural resources serve as reminders of the Centre Region's past, connecting it with its cultural heritage and allowing a better understanding of the people and events that shaped the patterns of its development. Preservation of these resources ensures that they continue to play an integral and vital role in promoting the culture and character of the community. The goals of this Element of the Comprehensive Plan are focused on identifying and actively preserving historic resources throughout the Region as well as educating the public about the significance of such resources.

GOAL 3 - The Centre Region's community identity, history, and culture are maintained.



The Centre Furnace Mansion in College Township once served as the Centre Furnace ironmaster's residence. Today it is home to the Centre County Historical Society and is open to the public for tours.

Objective 3.1

Identify significant historic resources located throughout the Centre Region.

Policy 3.1.1

Assist local historical societies and groups in conducting and updating surveys of historic resources in the Region.

Policy 3.1.2

Support efforts to nominate historic districts and qualifying properties, where appropriate, for inclusion in the Pennsylvania Inventory and National Register of Historic Places.

Objective 3.2

Protect historical and cultural resources that reflect the history and cultural character of the Centre Region.

Policy 3.2.1

Create municipal regulations that protect existing structures located in identified historic areas. Regulations should protect existing structures and encourage new development within or adjacent to existing districts to be consistent with the pattern and character of the original village or rural center that contain the resource(s).

Policy 3.2.2

Support the work of existing local preservation groups, as appropriate, that seek to preserve historic and cultural resources. Encourage the creation of new preservation groups.

Policy 3.2.3

Assist in the creation and implementation of public educational programs about the history of the Region, preservation techniques, and local historic and cultural resources.

Policy 3.2.4

Encourage the use of appropriate fire suppression systems in historic structures.

Policy 3.2.5

Modify municipal regulations to permit and promote the adaptive reuse of historic structures.

Policy 3.2.6

Encourage the protection of historic and cultural districts and sites from degradation, destruction, or demolition through neglect.

RESOURCES LISTED IN THE NATIONAL HISTORIC REGISTER			
RESOURCE NAME	MUNICIPALITY	YEAR BUILT	RESOURCE CATEGORY
Lemont Historic District	College Township	1850-1924	District
Oak Hall Historic District	College Township	1825-1874	District
General John Thompson House	College Township	1813	Building
Tudek Site	College Township	Unknown	Site
Felix Dale Stone House	College Township	1823	Building
Houserville Site	College Township	Unknown	Site
Bucher Ayers Farm	Ferguson Township	1858	Building
Abraham Elder Stone House	Halfmoon Township	1808	Building
George Wilson Homestead	Halfmoon Township	1810	Building
Boal Mansion	Harris Township	1789	Building
Boalsburg Historic District	Harris Township	1800-1899	District
Hill House	Harris Township	1830	Building
Linden Hall Historic District	Harris Township	1810-1919	District
John Gray House	Patton Township	1793	Building
Camelot	State College Borough	1922	Building
Centre Furnace & Mansion House	State College Borough	1830	Site
Farmer's High School (Pennsylvania State College)	State College Borough	1825-1974	District
Ag Hill Complex (Pennsylvania State University)	State College Borough	1900-1924	District
College Heights Historic District	State College Borough	1896-1944	District
Holmes-Foster/Highlands Historic District	State College Borough	1896-1944	District

Community & University R

INTRODUCTION

As home to the University Park campus of Penn State University, the Centre Region faces many challenges and enjoys many opportunities that are brought about by the university's presence. Balancing the needs of the community with the needs of the university can be a delicate mix that requires constant communication and cooperation from both sides. With about 45,000 students and about 24,000 employees living, working, and recreating in the Centre Region, Penn State University has a significant impact on the day-to-day activities of the community. This equates to 47% of the Centre Region's population and 43% of the Centre Region's total employment. To this end, open communication between the Centre Region's elected officials and Penn State University are a key ingredient to a successful, symbiotic relationship for everyone in the Centre Region.

The current relationship between the Centre Region and Penn State University can be described as positive and open. At some levels, constant communication takes place, which benefits the overall community. Resources available from the Centre Region and Penn State University help reduce redundancy and duplication of services within the community as well as allow for efficient use and strengthening of current systems.

For community and university integration, the overall theme will be:

Integration and communication between the Centre Region and Penn State University will continue to remain a core component to overall community values to ensure the needs of both the Centre Region and the university can be met in a way that provides the most benefit to all the citizens of the community.

The Community and University Relations Element is organized into the following sections:

- **Key Issues and Findings**
- **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**
 - **Transportation - Map M10**
 - **Land-Use Integration**
 - **Student Housing**
 - **Communications**
 - **Contributions to the Community**

KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

Through the development of the Inventory and Assessment of Existing Conditions on community and university relations, several items were noted as the key findings. These facts will be used as a basis to determine the most appropriate themes, goals, policies, and action items for the 2012 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan:

relations

1. The University Park campus of Penn State University is bound on all four sides by the state transportation corridors of Atherton Street, Park Avenue, University Drive, and College Avenue. These roadways have average daily traffic flows between 8,200 and 21,000 vehicles trips per day (depending on the roadway segment) according to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). These busy transportation corridors often act as barriers to the safe and convenient flow of pedestrians between the community and the university.
2. Public transportation from CATA provides consistent service to the university from locations throughout the community to reduce the need for personal automobile trips into the core campus.
3. Penn State University maintains multiple properties throughout the Centre Region, including academic, office, and research facilities that create activity centers throughout the community. These facilities are located throughout the Centre Region including Downtown State College and the rural areas of Ferguson Township.
4. Recreation and cultural amenities supported by Penn State University provide year-round activities for the entire community to participate in and benefit from, including sporting events, passive recreation, and theatrical performances. This includes intercollegiate athletic events, the Pennsylvania Centre Stage, and the Millbrook Marsh Nature Center.
5. Housing the full-time student population enrolled at Penn State University is an issue that should be addressed by both the university administration and the Centre Region as a whole to ensure that a diverse mix of housing opportunities exists throughout the community.
6. Open communication between the Centre Region's municipalities and Penn State University remains a key asset to ensuring issues and ideas are shared. This helps to limit conflicts and identify solutions that benefit the entire Centre Region community. This is accomplished through membership on standing committees, including the COG General Forum, Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Centre Regional Planning Commission, the COG Transportation and Land-Use Committee, the Emergency Management Council, the Intermodal Transportation Committee, the Penn State Bicycle Advisory Committee, and other committees or groups, as appropriate.
7. Penn State University enjoys tax-exempt status. However, the university contributes resources, including property, monetary support, and staff assets, to many Centre Region programs to help offset the needs for the Region's municipalities to shoulder the full burden of necessary community functions. This is most noticeable as it relates to emergency management and the Alpha Fire Company.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Transportation

Transportation issues impact the community and the university equally. Coordination and cooperation between the community and the university will help create a more consistent and cohesive transportation network that will benefit the entire Centre Region. This can include connecting transit routes, connecting bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and roadways, for the most comprehensive network of transportation options for the entire community.



The Information Sciences and Technology Building provides a safe passage over North Atherton Street for bicyclists and pedestrians. North Atherton Street sees an average daily traffic count of approximately 21,500 cars per day in this location.

GOAL 1 - Transportation connectivity should promote effective and efficient movements of bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles between the community and Penn State University facilities.

Objective 1.1

Ensure that adequate transportation alternatives exist to provide links between the community and the university.

Policy 1.1.1

Incorporate transit service, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian facilities into planning efforts as a primary alternative to individual vehicular trips for transportation on or around campus.

Policy 1.1.2

Connect routes that serve public transit as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities to create a transportation network that can safely serve the needs of the entire community with multiple travel options.

Policy 1.1.3

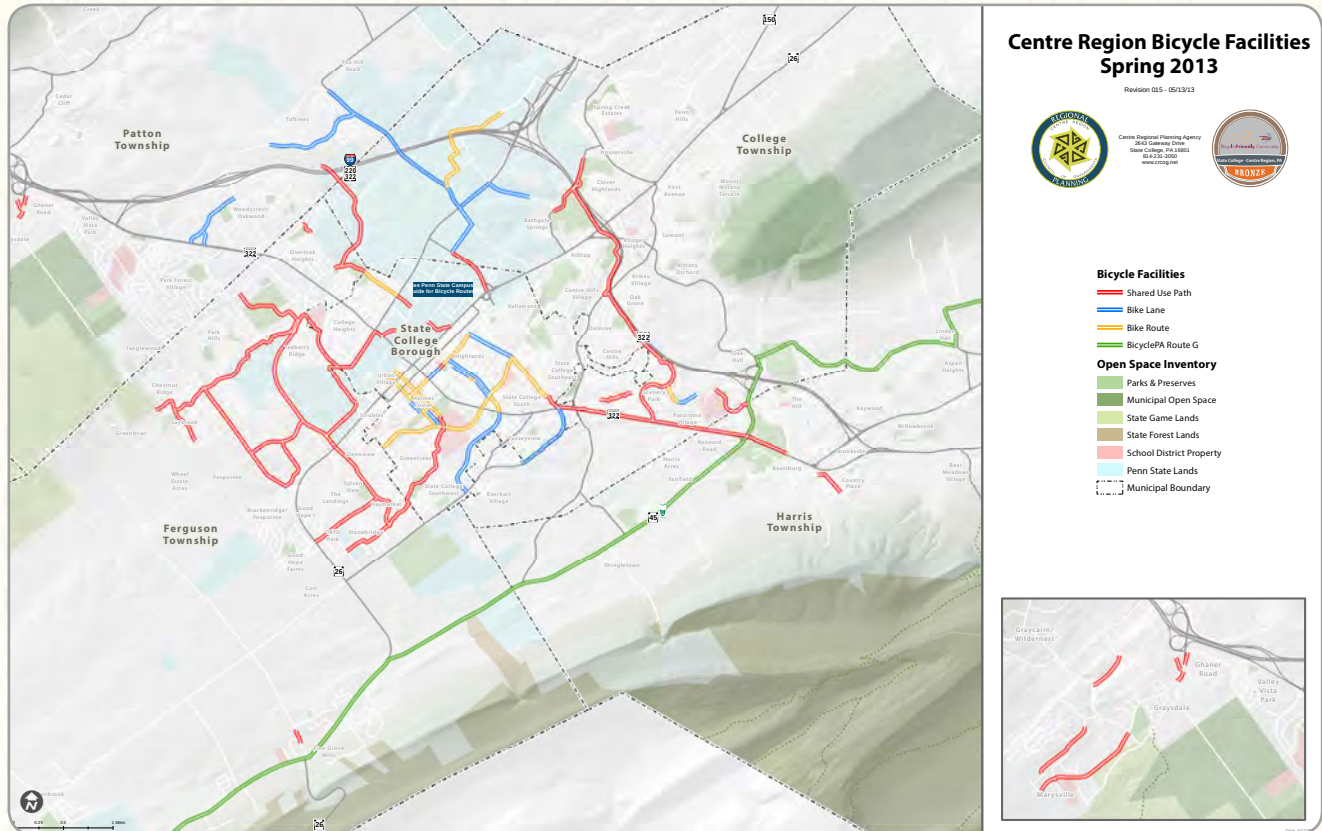
Ensure that bicycle and pedestrian routes throughout the community are sized and located to serve current and future needs of the community and the university.

Policy 1.1.4

Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle facilities and connections between the community and the university for all users.

Policy 1.1.5

Identify and use nontraditional methods to promote and publicize existing and proposed bicycle routes throughout the Centre Region through cooperative efforts among Penn State University, CATA, the Centre Region Bicycle Coalition, or other community groups.



Snapshot of the Centre Region Bike Facilities map. A detailed map of bike facilities can be found in the Transportation Element.

Objective 1.2

Reduce perceived or actual barriers that stifle the free flow of pedestrian and bicycle traffic between the community and the university, focusing on locations that experience significant concentrations of pedestrians and bicycles. These may include extensive cartway widths, limited access points, or similar barriers.

Policy 1.2.1

Minimize physical barriers between the community and the university whenever possible to allow for the free flow of bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Policy 1.2.2

Designate specific intersections along College Avenue, Atherton Street, University Drive, and Park Avenue for improved pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

Policy 1.2.3

Explore corridor plans for Park Avenue, College Avenue, University Drive, and Atherton Street to develop consistent and cohesive improvements that better accommodate bicycles and pedestrians while minimizing conflicts with vehicles.

Policy 1.2.4

Limit and reduce the physical barriers between the West End Neighborhood and West Campus.

Policy 1.2.5

Provide additional points of access between the community and West Campus that do not adversely impact the West End Neighborhood or the West College Avenue corridor. This may include vehicle routes, transit routes, bicycle routes, or pedestrian routes.

Objective 1.3

Explore ways to increase accessibility or add modes of travel from outside the Centre Region.

Policy 1.3.1

Encourage increased access to and from the University Park Airport for transit, taxi, or other modes of transportation.

Policy 1.3.2

Explore increased service from the intermodal transportation center to provide more access to the Centre Region.



The Elliott Building, located along Burrowes Avenue in Downtown State College is one of several Penn State University buildings located in the community. The Elliott Building provides office space for the Penn State University functions including accounting services, child care programs, employee benefits, financial reporting, and payroll.

Land-Use Integration

Integration of the community and the university can be greatly influenced by the existing land-use pattern. When university uses are integrated into the community and not isolated in a campus setting, the separation between the community and the university is reduced and cohesion grows.

GOAL 2 - University-related land uses are incorporated into the community to diversify the overall land-use pattern.

Objective 2.1

Integrate university-related land uses throughout the community in close proximity to the University Park campus. Create activity nodes that encourage complementary uses with the understanding that this may impact municipal tax revenues due to Penn State University's tax-exempt status.

Policy 2.1.1

Encourage office or similar uses affiliated with the university to be located in the community. This may create activity centers within the community and provide opportunities for complementary uses to occur.

Objective 2.2

Expand recreational and cultural opportunities within the community to offer a more diverse blend of activities and help expand the relationship between the community and the university.

Policy 2.2.1

Incorporate additional venues for cultural activities within the community that may include artistic and cultural events or community events, with space sponsored by public/private partnerships, when appropriate.

Policy 2.2.2

Explore opportunities to create pedestrian spaces or passive recreational areas in or around Downtown State College and Penn State University that conform to the objectives and recommendations outlined in the 2013 State College Downtown Master Plan, the State College Land Area Plan, the State College Borough Neighborhood Plan, the West End Revitalization Plan, the 2008 Penn State University Park Campus Master Plan, and other Penn State University planning efforts.

Policy 2.2.3

Investigate ways to limit the tax deficiency created by Penn State University's tax-exempt status for buildings that are located in the community.



The Penn State Downtown Theatre Center is a 150 seat theatre located in Downtown State College. This theatre is home to the Penn State Centre Stage, which is the professional theatre company at Penn State University. It was opened in 2003 and occupies a building that includes commercial and residential spaces.



Student Housing

Providing land-use options within the Centre Region to support the student population associated with Penn State University will help ensure that existing neighborhoods are not adversely impacted and housing options can be located where supporting land uses are in place to accommodate student housing.

GOAL 3 - Adequate housing opportunities and options exist within the Centre Region for Penn State University students who choose to live within the Centre Region.



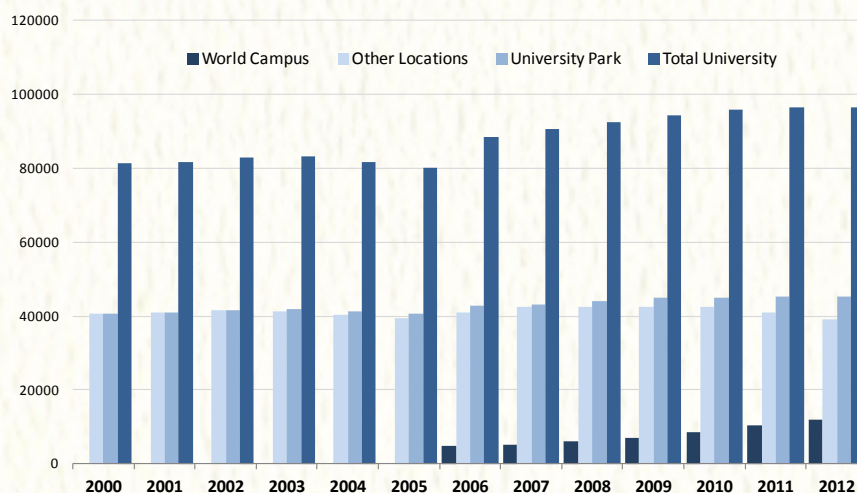
Large residential buildings in Downtown State College provide housing for students within walking distance of campus.

Objective 3.1

Provide opportunities for student housing that protect stable neighborhoods while allowing opportunities for establishing complementary land uses.

Policy 3.1.1

Locate housing for students appropriately throughout the Centre Region in accordance with local zoning ordinances and land development regulations to help limit potential adverse impacts on existing neighborhoods.



Source - Penn State Fact Book.

The above chart shows enrollment numbers for Penn State University from 2000 through 2012. Enrollment at the University Park Campus has been slowly increasing thus creating a need for housing opportunities throughout the community.

Note: World Campus enrollment was not tracked prior to 2006.

Policy 3.1.2

When located within existing neighborhoods, student housing should conform to the design, architecture, scale, density, and style of the surrounding dwelling units in order to more adequately blend into the neighborhood structure without adversely impacting the established neighborhood.

Policy 3.1.3

Locate off-campus housing, including large residential complexes that cater to students, in close proximity to commercial/retail centers, public transit routes, as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities, reducing the need for individuals to drive cars for daily activities, including trips to campus.

Communication

Open communication between the community and the university is critical to ensure coordination of activities and projects. Including university officials on COG committees and including community officials on university committees provides one outlet for regular interaction. Also, support from both the community and the university for specific programs such as emergency management helps keep the community and the university engaged in issues that impact the entire Centre Region.



GOAL 4 - The Centre Region and Penn State University have open communication and exchange of ideas that relate to and impact the community.

The COG General Forum meets once a month to discuss issues that are important to the entire Centre Region. The General Forum membership consists of all six Centre Region municipalities, Penn State University, and the State College Area School District.

Objective 4.1

Maintain, strengthen, and increase the existing communication between the community and the university to address specific goals and policies by making efficient use of existing relationships and channels of communication.

Policy 4.1.1

Open communication between the community and the university should occur when land-use changes or plans may affect the activities of either the community or the university.

Policy 4.1.2

Encourage multiple outlets for ongoing communication to provide an outlet for active and continued interaction between the community and the university.

Policy 4.1.3

Where appropriate, encourage and support municipal representation on Penn State University committees, boards, or similar groups.

Contributions to the Community

Penn State University supports various programs within the Centre Region, such as the Alpha Fire Company and the Centre Region Emergency Operations Center. This collaboration provides a substantial benefit to both the Centre Region and Penn State University.

GOAL 5 - The Centre Region municipalities and Penn State University continue to improve the overall community and strive for successful partnerships and community relationships.



The Alpha Fire Company operates out of three different stations to serve the Centre Region municipalities; College Township, Patton Township, and the Downtown Station (pictured above). This all volunteer fire company is supported by many of the Centre Region's municipalities and Penn State University.



The Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts takes place every July in Downtown State College.

Objective 5.1

Maintain and strengthen the relationship between the community and the university.

Policy 5.1.1

Continue to support the various programs between the community and the university including, but not limited to: Alpha Fire Company, volunteers serving the majority of the Centre Region; the Centre Region Emergency Operations Center on University Park campus; CATA, providing transit service to both the community and the university; and the Centre County Airport Authority.

Policy 5.1.2

Continue to encourage and support the artistic, cultural, and civic activities that occur throughout the year, including the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts, First Night State College, THON, Fourth Fest, and similar community activities that occur both on and off campus.

Objective 5.2

Promote the ongoing engagement of university students in the community.

Policy 5.2.1

The Centre Region municipalities and Penn State University work to promote opportunities within the community for students to be engaged during and after their time at the university.

Policy 5.2.2

The Centre Region municipalities and Penn State University should work with local businesses to provide workforce development opportunities for university students.

Policy 5.2.3

The Centre Region municipalities and Penn State University should work to identify the need for and help to establish independent cooperative working environments when appropriate.



Economic Development

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Development Element provides the policy context for continued economic development and prosperity in the Centre Region. In 2010 and 2011, the Centre Region, with the assistance of a consultant, BBP & Associates, prepared the Centre Region Economic Development Assessment for the Region. The COG Transportation and Land Use Committee provided oversight during preparation of the economic development assessment. The COG General Forum accepted the recommendations of the economic development assessment at its August 22, 2011, meeting.

This Plan Element incorporates the 12 short-term, mid-term, and long-term recommendations in the economic development assessment, as accepted by the COG General Forum. Short-term recommendations in the economic development assessment should be implemented with existing regional and municipal resources. Mid- and long-term recommendations may require additional resources, including additional staff expertise and financial resources. The economic development assessment requires additional deliberation with the COG General Forum prior to initiating any mid- or long-term recommendations. One goal, and supporting objective and policies have been added.

The Centre Region has the luxury of launching economic development efforts from a position of strength. The Region can build from a highly educated population, low unemployment rate, and high quality of life.

The recommendations from the Centre Region Economic Development Assessment are not included in this draft document because they previously were accepted by the COG General Forum. An electronic copy of the document is available for review at: www.crcog.net/planning. The Economic Development Element is organized into the following sections:

- **Key Issues and Findings**
- **Centre Region Economic Development Assessment Recommendations**
 - **Short-term Recommendations**
 - **Mid-term Recommendations**
 - **Long-term Recommendations**
 - **Phasing**
- **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**
 - **Economic Sustainability**

KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS *(from the Centre Region Economic Development Assessment)*

The objective of the Centre Region Economic Development Assessment was to prepare a series of recommendations and implementation actions that help define a cohesive regional economic development policy for the Centre Region. The report provides a series of recommendations to implement over a number of years.

Since its formation, COG has not been an active participant in economic development issues or policy in the Region. The economic development assessment was the first of its kind for the COG, and it attempts to forge a better-defined and more comprehensive regional approach to economic development in the Centre Region. Currently, some

municipalities have formed business associations or industrial development authorities to address individual needs. Others, such as the Borough of State College, have formed redevelopment authorities and downtown improvement districts to assist with specific development and redevelopment issues. These efforts have helped with individual municipal economic development goals, but do not address other gaps in the economic development system or practical implementation steps to achieve broader goals throughout the Region.

Some of the information collected for the economic development assessment along with stakeholder interviews revealed many strengths in the Region and many successful economic development endeavors. The information, however, also revealed that in practice, the economic development process at times was perceived as disjointed, inefficient, and often bureaucratic. It is important to build a path to economic success that embraces regional strengths and cooperation and recognizes implementation actions that can result in achieving the goals of the assessment.

CENTRE REGION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The economic development assessment broadens the approach and clarifies the path to successful economic development activities in the Region by addressing several specific areas where changes can improve existing practices to facilitate economic development. The results of the economic development assessment do not establish a grand vision for economic development but do provide a series of steps to identify strategies and provide an implementation program to accomplish the following four tasks.

1. Encourage the reuse, redevelopment, or revitalization of underutilized properties in the Region. This subtask identified specific sites, such as Hills Plaza, Westerly Plaza, Northland Center, West College, and North Atherton Corridors, or other commercial sites; and industrial sites, such as Corning, Murata Erie, and Rutgers-Nease. Existing regulatory barriers to revitalization efforts should be identified, as well as partnering opportunities for incentives, site improvements, and other methods of encouraging redevelopment.
2. Identify the key economic, natural, cultural, and demographic trends of the Region and prepare a list of businesses or business clusters that would leverage those trends to help create sustainable jobs over the next 30 years. Link those trends to strengths, such as education and research resources at Penn State University.
3. Identify ways to strengthen the working relationships among COG, Centre Region municipalities, Centre County, and Chamber of Business and Industry for Centre County and Centre County Industrial Development Corporation, specifically to standardize how business prospects are tracked and how specific information is collected and released to attract potential business prospects.
4. Identify potential businesses, business clusters, or users for the high-quality beneficial reuse water provided by the University Area Joint Authority.

The recommendations from the Centre Region Economic Development Assessment are divided into short-, mid-, and long-term priorities, and are summarized on the following page.

Short-term Recommendations

The short-term recommendations will have the most immediate and catalytic effect on cooperative economic development in the Centre Region. Nearly all the recommendations below are important tools to be used as the foundation for mid- and long-term goals and serve to broaden the Region's competitiveness in the economic development arena. These goals help to elevate the importance of economic development with COG members, begin to forge longer-term relationships and partnerships, and consider strengthening business retention and expansion efforts. Short-term goals also encourage the municipalities and COG to review the existing regulatory environment and customer-service practices in the context of improving the business climate in the Region.

The CRPA prepared a Best Practices Guide for Development Review and Permitting that provides municipal leaders with an assortment of tools, all aimed at making permitting more predictable, consistent, and efficient without compromising local jurisdiction or endangering the standard of review.

1. Optimize and articulate the land-development approval and permitting process.
2. Establish a single point of contact at the Centre Regional Planning Agency for new company prospects and a tracking system to monitor the disposition of prospects.
3. Participate in and support educational and training seminars covering economic development issues including, but not limited to: government's role in economic development, financing and funding mechanisms, value and strategies for public/private partnerships, and an overview of the development and permitting process.
4. Work with Penn State University, Chamber of Business and Industry for Centre County, municipalities, and others to encourage commercialization and technology transfer.
5. Establish a regular meeting of regional and municipal government representatives to identify and address regulatory, customer service, and business climate issues in the Region.

Mid-term Recommendations

The mid-term recommendations generally focus on geographic areas and tools where economic development initiatives could strengthen prosperity in the Region by redeveloping underutilized areas, preserving sensitive areas, improving educational opportunities relating to economic development tools, retaining and expanding existing businesses, and using existing infrastructure to attract business. Implementation of these recommendations will take longer because of the complexity of the public/private partnerships needed to make these efforts successful. Also, the Region has historically weathered economic downturns in good shape, resulting in fewer economic development resources and a lower priority for economic development issues on the public policy agenda.

6. Consider a comprehensive Business Retention and Expansion strategy.
7. Encourage the revitalization of aged commercial centers and brownfields.
8. Work with the Centre County Industrial Development Corporation to promote an inventory of buildings and sites, and develop a database to track them.
9. Preserve agricultural land, support the viability of agriculture, and recognize the importance of agriculture to a healthy and diverse economy.

Long-term Recommendations

These recommendations are important to the overall economic development strength and growth of the Centre Region, but will have the least immediate and direct impact on the community. Nonetheless, the recommendations are important projects that will contribute to economic prosperity in the Region. They are considered long-term goals only within the context of the other recommendations, not as individual recommendations. For example, improvement of technology transfer with Penn State University can have a long-lasting and positive influence in the Region. This recommendation, however, would potentially require staff capacity well beyond COG's current number and would require organizational changes requiring COG policy changes before key implementation actions could begin.

10. Pursue new business clusters, including those that can utilize beneficial reuse water from the UAJA.
11. Participate in and support the Downtown Vision and Strategic Plan.
12. Diversify the economic base and create employment opportunities for Penn State University graduates and faculty/staff family members (i.e., spouses of individuals who relocate with the University).

Phasing

The Centre Region Economic Development Assessment recommends a three-phase implementation of the recommendations, as described below. After each phase of implementation, COG, Centre Region municipalities, and other key stakeholders should reassess the priority of the recommendations, their timing, and the implementation strategy. An economic development plan is a living document that must be reviewed and revisited often as market and economic changes occur.

- **Short Term** – Initiate and carry out the Short-term Recommendations
 - Monitor and benchmark the effectiveness/success along the way
- **Mid Term** – Hold a “Decision Point” session to review the results of the Short-term and plan for the implementation of the Mid-term Recommendations
 - Re-rank (if necessary) the Mid-term Recommendations
 - Initiate and carry out the Mid-term Recommendations
- **Long Term** – Hold a “Decision Point” session to review the results of the Short- and Mid-term and plan for the implementation of the Long-term Recommendations
 - Re-rank (if necessary) the Long-term Recommendations
 - Initiate and carry out the Long-term Recommendations



There are a number of business assistance and funding/finance programs available for small businesses in the Region.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Economic Sustainability

The Economic Sustainability goal was developed after the Centre Region Economic Development Assessment was accepted by the COG General Forum. It is included here to reinforce the connection among economic development, land use, and sustainability of the Region.

GOAL 1 - A diversity of employment opportunities and economic generators support and sustain the Centre Region while minimizing the impact on community resources. [Source: New Goal, Centre Regional Planning Agency Staff]

Objective 1.1

The Centre Region municipalities should assist in the recruitment of businesses to the area that will make employment opportunities available to the Centre Region's residents.

Policy 1.1.1

Existing resources, such as available land, existing infrastructure, and Beneficial Reuse water, should be used to market the Centre Region to high-tech and environmentally conscious companies.

Policy 1.1.2

The Centre Region should work with existing agencies, such as the Chamber of Business and Industry for Centre County, the SEDA-COG, and local partners, to recruit environmentally conscious and high-tech businesses (such as nanotechnology, micro-electronics manufacturing, and pharmaceutical manufacturing) to the Centre Region.

Policy 1.1.3

The Centre Region should work with Penn State University to promote research that is being conducted to encourage environmentally conscious and high-tech businesses (such as nanotechnology, micro-electronics manufacturing, and pharmaceutical manufacturing) to locate in the Centre Region.

Objective 1.2

Barriers to job creation and economic development should be identified and remediated.

Policy 1.2.1

The Centre Region municipalities should work with the Centre Regional Planning Agency to implement aspects of the Centre Region Economic Development Assessment that was completed in 2011.



Implementation

INTRODUCTION

The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan comprises goals, objectives, and policies that help define a collective vision of the Region's future. It is the product of considerable effort on the part of the Centre Region municipalities, regional agencies and commissions, community leaders, and citizens. Implementation of the Plan will be crucial if it is to have a lasting impact on the Region's physical development.

The purpose of the Implementation Element is to define the strategy that will be used to implement the Plan and move the Region closer to achieving its goals. Implementation will occur through ongoing and day-to-day actions by the Region and its municipalities as well as through the completion of specific tasks that are identified to implement Plan policies. By using the implementation strategy outlined in this Element, tasks and priorities for implementation can be identified and placed into timeframes for completion. The strategy outlined in this Element will help ensure that necessary actions are taken to move the Region closer to achieving its goals.

This Element also defines the tools that will be used to measure the Region's progress in moving toward achieving the Plan's goals and objectives. The use of metrics, along with periodic assessment of our success, will allow the Region to determine if the goals that have been set are achieved and any new issues are addressed.

- The Implementation Strategy
 - Strategy
 - Implementation Timeframes
 - Implementation Responsibility
- Measuring our Progress
 - Establishing Metrics
 - Progress Reports
 - Periodic Assessment

The Implementation Strategy

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code states that Comprehensive Plans must include a discussion of short- and long-range implementation strategies. To address this requirement, this Element outlines an implementation strategy that will allow the Centre Region to implement the Plan's policies while measuring its success at achieving identified goals and objectives.

The implementation strategy identifies the steps that will be taken to establish implementation issues and priorities, when issues will be addressed, and those who will be responsible or best suited to complete any tasks identified. The strategy outlined in this Element should be carried out separately from the Plan itself, which will allow for greater flexibility and the ability to make amendments when necessary. The steps needed to carry out this strategy can be completed either concurrently with the Comprehensive Plan or after the Plan is approved.

The result of the proposed implementation strategy will be a list of implementation tasks, issues, and timeframes that can be used to guide the activities of the Region and its municipalities. The list should act as an addendum to the Plan and does not replace the need to continue using the Plan regularly as a guide and reference.

Strategy

The strategy that will be used to create a list of implementation tasks, issues, and timeframes involves several steps. Those steps are as follows:

STEP 1: Compile a List of Important Issues and Priorities

The first step of the implementation strategy will be to receive input from the municipalities on what they feel are the most important issues and priorities from the Plan and those that should be considered for implementation first. When compiling a list of issues and priorities that should be implemented first, Elected Officials may wish to consult their residents, Planning Commission, and other Boards and Commissions. This list of issues and priorities could include general ideas—for example, agricultural preservation—or specific policies or groups of policies.

STEP 2: Organization of Issues and Priorities into Timeframes

Regional and municipal planning staff will organize the issues and priorities identified in Step 1 into timeframes when they can be addressed. This list will consider available staffing and other resources as well as ongoing tasks that staff will also be required to do throughout the lifetime of the Plan. Specific tasks will be identified for issues that have been designated for short-term implementation. Any issues and priorities that are identified for mid- or long-term implementation would include less detail on potential implementation tasks. Staff will also create a list of ongoing tasks that will take place through the course of regular regional and municipal activities that will implement portions of the plan.

STEP 3: Review by the Centre Regional Planning Commission (CRPC) and the Transportation and Land Use Committee (TLU)

The CRPC and COG TLU Committee will review and provide comment on the tasks, issues, and timeframes identified by staff in Step 2. The list will be revised based on comments received.

STEP 4: List of Implementation Tasks, Issues, and Timeframes

The completed list of implementation tasks, issues, and timeframes will be provided to the COG General Forum for informational purposes. Tasks listed for short-term implementation will be incorporated into the COG Annual Program Plan. Short-term implementation tasks can also be incorporated by municipalities into any applicable municipal work programs.

STEP 5: Annual Review and Revision

The list of implementation tasks, issues, and timeframes will be reviewed, revised, and approved on an annual basis by the CRPC and COG TLU Committee. As tasks listed in the short-term category are completed, issues listed in the mid- or long-term categories will be moved to the short-term category and detailed tasks will be identified for any new short-term issue at that time. The mid- and long-term categories will be updated with issues from the Comprehensive Plan that have not been placed into a timeframe for implementation.

Implementation Timeframes

While the Comprehensive Plan contains hundreds of policies, implementation of these policies should occur over the lifetime of the plan, enabling the Region to move toward its shared goals at a steady pace. Establishing when issues and priorities related to the plan's policies will be addressed is crucial to ensuring that action steps can be adequately planned for by those responsible for implementation. Tasks may not be completed within the identified timeframe if they are large in scope or require ongoing updates. The timeframes refer to when a task will begin, rather than when it will be completed. The timeframes identified for tasks and issues can be amended as the implementation strategy is reviewed and revised on an annual basis. Implementation tasks and issues will initially be organized into one of the timeframes listed below.

Short Term (1-3 years)

Issues identified as “short term” are those that should be addressed, entirely or in part, within the first 1 to 3 years following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Specific tasks, along with those responsible to complete them, will be identified for issues listed in this timeframe.

Mid Term (4-6 years)

Issues identified as mid-term should be addressed entirely or in part between years 4 and 6 following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

Long Term (7-10 years)

Issues identified as long term should be addressed entirely or in part between years 7 and 10 following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Issues that remain unaddressed at the end of this timeframe as well as those that will require ongoing implementation should be considered for inclusion in the next Comprehensive Plan update.

Ongoing

Ongoing tasks are those that will be completed through the course of normal regional or municipal operations or activities and may occur multiple times throughout the lifetime of the Comprehensive Plan. These tasks often have a set deadline. Ongoing tasks can include activities such as reviewing subdivision and land development plans, updating the Long Range Transportation Plan, etc.

Implementation Responsibility

Responsibility for addressing the tasks identified through the use of the implementation strategy can be assumed by regional agencies, individual municipalities, regional authorities and commissions, participating service providers, and government agencies. In addition to primary responsibility, other government agencies, community groups, and organizations may provide assistance and support. In addition to determining implementation responsibility, the need to coordinate implementation throughout the Region is crucial. While primary responsibility for implementation may ultimately require municipal action, the need for regional discussion, coordination, and consensus will help to ensure that the Region is moving together toward achieving its goals.

Measuring Our Progress

As the Region moves forward with implementing the Comprehensive Plan, the ability to measure success in completing and achieving the Plan's objectives and goals is crucial. Measuring progress in achieving the vision laid out by the Comprehensive Plan should be accomplished through the use of metrics that measure indicators related to the plans goals and objectives. Metrics can determine if the objectives in the Plan have been met and whether the goals that have been outline are closer to being achieved. By measuring implementation progress, it is possible to make modifications to the plan as needed to ensure that the implementation continues toward achieving the goals.

Establishing Metrics

Identifying metrics to measure implementation progress is a task that should be completed within the first few years following the Plan's adoption. Identification of metrics should be completed by the CRPC and should be a recurring task listed for short-term implementation. The use of metrics should remain flexible; as they may need to be refined or changed altogether if new or more reliable data become available. Information used to measure the Plan's success can come from a variety of sources or can be collected, when possible. As metrics to measure the Plan's success are identified, it will be important to consider the following:

- Does the metric directly measure progress toward the goal or objective?
- Is the metric something that can be affected or influenced by regional or municipal action?
- How much time, effort, or expense is required to obtain the data?
- Does the metric allow for comparison over time and across geographies?

Metrics should provide a way to measure whether or not implementation of the Comprehensive Plan is moving the Region closer to achieving the Plan's goals. Metrics can be associated with the Plan's goals or the Plan's objectives, which are intended to support the goals. Metrics can also be used to identify thresholds when further implementation actions should be taken or reassessments should be made. One possible method of displaying and tracking metrics is through the use of a metrics table. An example is shown below.

GOAL 2: A Regional Growth Boundary & Sewer Service Area for the Centre Region to continue to guide growth.		
Metric	Desired Trend	Actual Trend
The percent of building permits issued for new construction inside the RGB/SSA.	To remain at or above 90%.	91% (2011)
The development potential of vacant land within the RGB/SSA.	To have adequate land to meet projected population growth for at least 30 years. (This should be calculated by using population projections and median household size and comparing this with development potential of vacant land.)	Current 2012 estimates (REDCAP) indicate that there is adequate land to meet this requirement

Progress Reports

The Centre Regional Planning Commission Annual Report will include a report on the previous year's Comprehensive Plan Implementation Actions as well as an analysis of the Plan's success through the use of identified metrics. Any unexpected deviations in metric results will also be explained thoroughly in the annual report. By periodically evaluating implementation progress and its success, necessary amendments can be made to the list of tasks, issues, and timeframes to ensure that the Region continues to move toward achieving its goals.

Periodic Assessment

As the Region moves forward with implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, the annual review of the implementation tasks, issues, and timeframes list and identified metrics will help to determine if Plan policies are effectively moving the Region toward its goals. If it is determined that desired trends are not being met or that particular implementation actions have not been effective, solutions and remedial actions should be identified.

If it is determined through the annual review process that minor updates to the Comprehensive Plan are needed, steps should be taken to amend the affected Elements as well as any related implementation tasks, issues, or timeframes. The amendment process is identical to that of the adoption process; however, updates could be targeted at specific Elements only, without the need to revise the entire document.



**COLLEGE TOWNSHIP
CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION R-13-22**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COLLEGE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL ADOPTING THE CENTRE
REGION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE, INCLUDING ALL MAPS, CHARTS, AND
TEXTUAL MATTERS CONTAINED HEREIN**

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as reenacted and amended, authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the College Township Planning Commission has worked with the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the Centre Region Council of Governments to prepare the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Centre Regional Planning Commission has recommended to College Township the adoption of the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, and the College Township Planning Commission has recommended adoption of the Plan by the College Township Council, and

WHEREAS, The Centre Region Municipalities have completed the necessary procedures outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code for adoption of Comprehensive Plans;

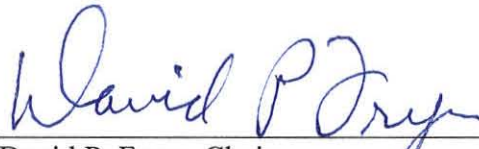
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the College Township Council does hereby adopt the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update, dated November 2013, consisting of all maps, charts, and textual matter including but not limited to the following delineated sections of the plan:

- The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update – Introduction
- The Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies
 - Land Use
 - Transportation
 - Open Space, Conservation & Recreation
 - Housing
 - Community Services & Facilities
 - Sustainability
 - Natural, Environmental, Cultural & Historic Resources
 - Community & University Relations
 - Economic Development
 - Implementation
- Maps
 - Centre Region Overview (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for the Centre Region (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for College Township (July 22, 2013)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT to the extent that they are consistent with the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, the 2000 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, the 1990 Comprehensive Plan, and the Background Studies related to Natural Features and Historic Preservation from the 1976 Comprehensive Plan are hereby officially adopted by reference.

Duly enacted this 25th day of November 2013.

COLLEGE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL



David P. Fryer, Chair

ATTEST:



Adam T. Brumbaugh, Secretary

[SEAL]

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2013 – 31

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FERGUSON, CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING THE CENTRE REGION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE, INCLUDING ALL MAPS, CHARTS, AND TEXTUAL MATTERS CONTAINED HEREIN

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as reenacted and amended, authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Ferguson Township Planning Commission has worked with the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the Centre Region Council of Governments to prepare the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Centre Regional Planning Commission has recommended to Ferguson Township the adoption of the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, and the Ferguson Township Planning Commission has recommended adoption of the Plan by the Ferguson Township Board of Supervisors, and

WHEREAS, The Centre Region Municipalities have completed the necessary procedures outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code for adoption of Comprehensive Plans;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ferguson Township Board of Supervisors does hereby adopt the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update, dated November 2013, consisting of all maps, charts, and textual matter including but not limited to the following delineated sections of the plan:

- The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update – Introduction
- The Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies
 - Land Use
 - Transportation
 - Open Space, Conservation & Recreation
 - Housing
 - Community Services & Facilities
 - Sustainability
 - Natural, Environmental, Cultural & Historic Resources
 - Community & University Relations
 - Economic Development
 - Implementation
- Maps
 - Centre Region Overview (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for the Centre Region (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for Ferguson Township (July 22, 2013)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT to the extent that they are consistent with the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan dated November 2013, the 2000 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, the 1990 Comprehensive Plan, and the Background Studies related to Natural Features and Historic Preservation from the 1976 Comprehensive Plan are hereby officially adopted by reference.

RESOLVED this 25th day of November 2013.

TOWNSHIP OF FERGUSON

By: 
George Pytel, Chairman
Board of Supervisors

[S E A L]

ATTEST:

By: 
Mark A. Kunkle, Secretary

**HALFMOON TOWNSHIP
CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION NUMBER 2013 – 09**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ADOPTING THE CENTRE REGION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE, INCLUDING ALL
MAPS, CHARTS, AND TEXTUAL MATTERS CONTAINED HEREIN**

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as reenacted and amended, authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Halfmoon Township Planning Commission has worked with the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the Centre Region Council of Governments to prepare the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Centre Regional Planning Commission has recommended to Halfmoon Township the adoption of the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, and the Halfmoon Township Planning Commission has recommended adoption of the Plan by the Halfmoon Township Board of Supervisors, and

WHEREAS, The Centre Region Municipalities have completed the necessary procedures outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code for adoption of Comprehensive Plans;

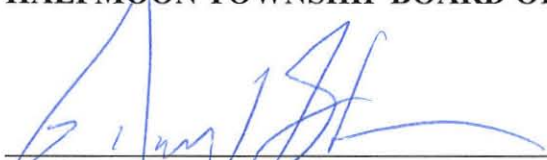
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Halfmoon Township Board of Supervisors does hereby adopt the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update, dated November 2013, consisting of all maps, charts, and textual matter including but not limited to the following delineated sections of the plan:

- The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update – Introduction
- The Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies
 - Land Use
 - Transportation
 - Open Space, Conservation & Recreation
 - Housing
 - Community Services & Facilities
 - Sustainability
 - Natural, Environmental, Cultural & Historic Resources
 - Community & University Relations
 - Economic Development
 - Implementation
- Maps
 - Centre Region Overview (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for the Centre Region (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for Halfmoon Township (July 22, 2013)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT to the extent that they are consistent with the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, the 2000 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, the 1990 Comprehensive Plan, and the Background Studies related to Natural Features and Historic Preservation from the 1976 Comprehensive Plan are hereby officially adopted by reference.

Duly enacted this 25th day of November 2013.

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



Mark J. Stevenson, Chair

Barbara H. Spencer, Vice-Chair

Andrew G. Merritt

Benjamin P. Pisoni

Todd D. Kirsten

ATTEST:



DEBRA L. STEELE, CLERK

Susan Steele, Secretary

[SEAL]

**HARRIS TOWNSHIP
CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION NUMBER 13 – 18**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HARRIS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPTING
THE CENTRE REGION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE, INCLUDING ALL MAPS,
CHARTS, AND TEXTUAL MATTERS CONTAINED HEREIN**

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as reenacted and amended, authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Harris Township Planning Commission has worked with the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the Centre Region Council of Governments to prepare the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Centre Regional Planning Commission has recommended to Harris Township the adoption of the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, and the Harris Township Planning Commission has recommended adoption of the Plan by the Harris Township Board of Supervisors, and

WHEREAS, The Centre Region Municipalities have completed the necessary procedures outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code for adoption of Comprehensive Plans;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Harris Township Board of Supervisors does hereby adopt the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update, dated November 2013, consisting of all maps, charts, and textual matter including but not limited to the following delineated sections of the plan:

- The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update – Introduction
- The Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies
 - Land Use
 - Transportation
 - Open Space, Conservation & Recreation
 - Housing
 - Community Services & Facilities
 - Sustainability
 - Natural, Environmental, Cultural & Historic Resources
 - Community & University Relations
 - Economic Development
 - Implementation
- Maps
 - Centre Region Overview (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for the Centre Region (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for Harris Township (July 22, 2013)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT to the extent that they are consistent with the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, the 2000 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, the 1990 Comprehensive Plan, and the Background Studies related to Natural Features and Historic Preservation from the 1976 Comprehensive Plan are hereby officially adopted by reference.

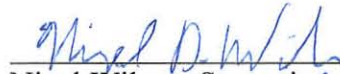
Duly enacted this 25th day of November 2013.

HARRIS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



Paul Rittenhouse, Sr., Chair

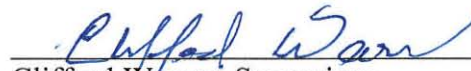
Charles E. Graham, Vice Chair



Nigel Wilson, Supervisor

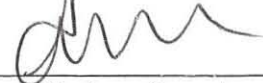


Dennis Hameister, Supervisor



Clifford Warner, Supervisor

ATTEST:



Amy Farkas, Secretary

**PATTON TOWNSHIP
CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION NUMBER 2013 – 015**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PATTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPTING
THE CENTRE REGION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE, INCLUDING ALL MAPS,
CHARTS, AND TEXTUAL MATTERS CONTAINED HEREIN**

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as reenacted and amended, authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Patton Township Planning Commission has worked with the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the Centre Region Council of Governments to prepare the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Centre Regional Planning Commission has recommended to Patton Township the adoption of the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, and the Patton Township Planning Commission has recommended adoption of the Plan by the Patton Township Board of Supervisors, and

WHEREAS, The Centre Region Municipalities have completed the necessary procedures outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code for adoption of Comprehensive Plans;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Patton Township Board of Supervisors does hereby adopt the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update, dated November 2013, consisting of all maps, charts, and textual matter including but not limited to the following delineated sections of the plan:

- The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update – Introduction
- The Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies
 - Land Use
 - Transportation
 - Open Space, Conservation & Recreation
 - Housing
 - Community Services & Facilities
 - Sustainability
 - Natural, Environmental, Cultural & Historic Resources
 - Community & University Relations
 - Economic Development
 - Implementation
- Maps
 - Centre Region Overview (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for the Centre Region (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for Patton Township (July 22, 2013)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT to the extent that they are consistent with the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, the 2000 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, the 1990 Comprehensive Plan, and the Background Studies related to Natural Features and Historic Preservation from the 1976 Comprehensive Plan are hereby officially adopted by reference.

Duly enacted this 25th day of November 2013.

PATTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



Elliot Abrams, Chair

ATTEST:



Doug Erickson, Secretary

[SEAL]

**BOROUGH OF STATE COLLEGE
CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION NUMBER 1096**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF STATE COLLEGE ADOPTING THE CENTRE
REGION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE, INCLUDING ALL MAPS, CHARTS, AND
TEXTUAL MATTERS CONTAINED HEREIN**

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as reenacted and amended, authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Borough of State College Planning Commission has worked with the Centre Regional Planning Commission and the Centre Region Council of Governments to prepare the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Centre Regional Planning Commission has recommended to the Borough of State College the adoption of the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, and the State College Borough Planning Commission has recommended adoption of the Plan by the State College Borough Council, and

WHEREAS, The Centre Region Municipalities have completed the necessary procedures outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code for adoption of Comprehensive Plans;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the State College Borough Council does hereby adopt the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update, dated November 2013, consisting of all maps, charts, and textual matter including but not limited to the following delineated sections of the plan:

- The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update – Introduction
- The Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies
 - Land Use
 - Transportation
 - Open Space, Conservation & Recreation
 - Housing
 - Community Services & Facilities
 - Sustainability
 - Natural, Environmental, Cultural & Historic Resources
 - Community & University Relations
 - Economic Development
 - Implementation
- Maps
 - Centre Region Overview (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for the Centre Region (July 22, 2013)
 - Future Land Use for the Borough of State College (July 22, 2013)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT to the extent that they are consistent with the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2013, the 2000 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, the 1990 Comprehensive Plan, and the Background Studies related to Natural Features and Historic Preservation from the 1976 Comprehensive Plan are hereby officially adopted by reference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT to the extent that the policies, goals and objectives within the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update, dated November 2013, are generally consistent with the goals and objectives of the 2013 Downtown Master Plan, the State College Neighborhood Plan and other State College Borough strategic goals, Borough Council, Planning Commission and staff should consider strategies for implementing these recommendations

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT adoption of the Implementation Element of the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update, dated November 2013, authorizes the Centre Region Council of Governments and the Centre Regional Planning Commission to prepare a list of implementation tasks, issues, and timeframes that can be used to guide the activities of the Centre Region and be incorporated into the COG Annual Program Plan.

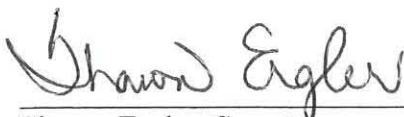
Duly enacted this 25th day of November 2013.

STATE COLLEGE BOROUGH COUNCIL



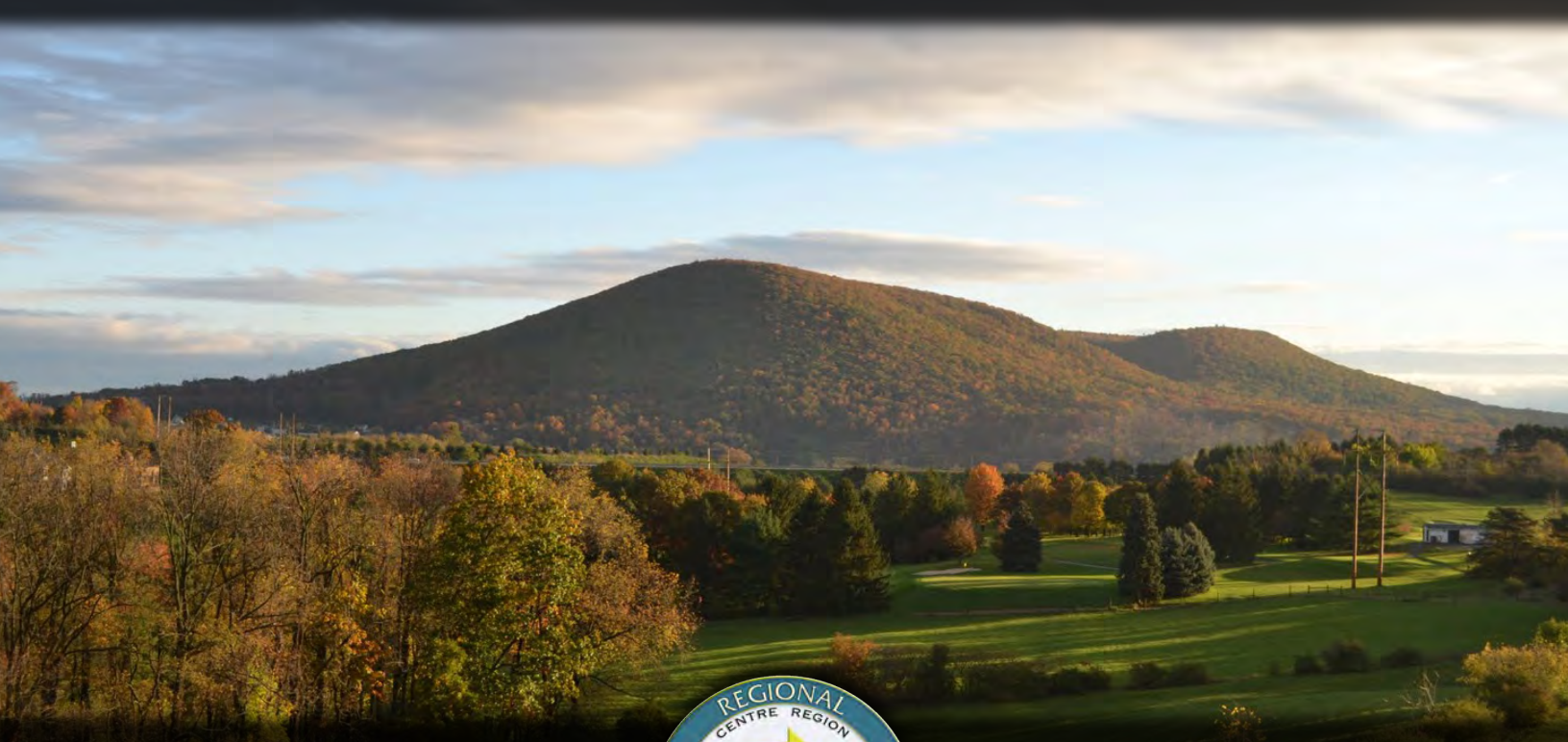
Donald M. Hahn, President

ATTEST:



Sharon Ergler, Secretary

[SEAL]



The Centre Region Planning Agency
2643 Gateway Drive
State College, PA 16803
814-231-3050
Fax: 814-231-3055
www.crcog.net/planning