

# 2017 Annual Report

## Mifflin County Planning Commission

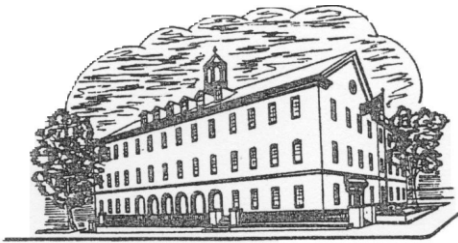


***MIFFLIN COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
2017 ANNUAL REPORT***

Prepared by

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April 5, 2018



# MIFFLIN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Courthouse, 20 North Wayne Street, Lewistown, PA 17044 (717) 242-0887

April 5, 2018

Mifflin County Board of Commissioners  
Mifflin County Courthouse  
20 North Wayne Street  
Lewistown, PA 17044

Dear County Commissioners:

The Mifflin County Planning Commission is pleased to submit to you and the citizens of Mifflin County our 2017 Annual Report. For over 45 years, the Planning Commission has been actively involved with planning and community development projects throughout Mifflin County and the surrounding region. Our report for 2017 describes new projects of broad community interest and reports progress on continuing projects.

Since the adoption of *Visions for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, the Planning Commission members and Planning and Development Department staff have focused on implementing recommendations outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. We have partnered with diverse groups to advocate sound land use, sustainable economic development, responsible environmental stewardship, and a better quality of life for the residents of Mifflin County.

As always, our accomplishments would not have been possible without the continued support and assistance of the County Board of Commissioners. In consideration of this, and in fulfilling our obligation under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247 as amended, it is with great pleasure that we present you with the 2017 Annual Report.

Thank you again for your invaluable help throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Kay Semler  
Chair

MIFFLIN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION



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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Mifflin County Board of Commissioners

Kevin P. Kodish, Chairman  
Stephen T. Dunkle, Vice Chairman  
Robert P. Postal, Jr., Secretary



The Board of Commissioners is the County's chief governing body. The Commissioners appoint the Planning Commission as an advisory board, which is provided for in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC).

### 1.2 Mifflin County Planning Commission

Kay Semler, Chair  
Dan Dunmire, Vice Chair  
Neal Shawver, Secretary  
Michelle Bair  
Jason Cunningham  
\*Alternate Member

Thomas Lake  
David Pennebaker  
James Spendiff  
Kent Spicher  
\*Cyle Vogt

Linus Fenicle, Solicitor  
Reager & Adler, P.C.

The mission of the Mifflin County Planning Commission is to provide strategic, coordinated and objective guidance and oversight to the growth, planning and development activities of Mifflin County. In doing so, it is the goal of the Planning Commission to ensure Mifflin County's future is characterized by a healthy environment, economy and society achieved through proactive planning, citizen representation, effective communication and the provision of professional services from the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department.

### 1.3 Mifflin County Planning and Development Department

William Gomes, AICP, Director  
James Lettiere, AICP, Community Development Administrator/Assistant Director  
Douglas Marks, Housing Rehabilitation Specialist/Construction Manager  
Stacey Herman, CDBG Fiscal Manager  
Chastity Fultz, Office Manager/Grants Manager



The Planning and Development Department is responsible for providing staff assistance to the Mifflin County Planning Commission; administering the Mifflin County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, Home Investment Partnership Program, Act 137 (The Affordable Housing Fund Program) and Housing Rehabilitation program; maintaining the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan; and coordinating with other agencies in the areas of transportation, housing, economic development, municipal waste management, hazard mitigation, recreation and tourism.

In addition to the projects outlined in this report, staff members of the Planning and Development Department were active in several community groups and committees to support efforts to improve the quality of life for residents of Mifflin County. Some additional activities of the staff include involvement with and participation on the SEDA-COG Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Council, Mifflin County Internet Advisory Committee, Juniata River Valley

Visitors Bureau, Mifflin County Agricultural Preservation Board, Downtown Lewistown, Inc. (DLI), Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association, Juniata Valley Behavior and Developmental Services Citizen Advisory Board, PA County Planning Directors Association, YMCA, PA Municipal Planning Education Institute, Call-A-Ride Services Local Advisory Committee and the Mifflin County Housing Coalition.

## 1.4 Planning and Development Committees

The following committees were active in 2017:

CDBG/Housing Rehabilitation Advisory Committee: The CDBG/Housing Rehabilitation Advisory Committee provides guidance on policy and programmatic issues to the Planning and Development Department staff. The committee reviews the annual proposals for CDBG funds and makes funding recommendations to the Mifflin County Board of Commissioners, as well as resolves program issues that require policy interpretation or policy revision.

Neal Shawver      William Gomes      James Lettiere      Doug Marks      Kay Semler

Subdivision and Land Development Review Committee: The Subdivision and Land Development Review Committee reviews subdivision and land development plans and provides recommendations to the Mifflin County Planning Commission regarding approval of these plans. This committee meets monthly.

Daniel Dunmire      David Pennebaker      James Spendiff

Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Committee: The Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Committee provide recommendations concerning recreational policies, facilities, finances and programs. The Committee works with municipalities throughout the county and provides assistance to Mifflin County in reviewing projects submitted under the Marcellus Shale Legacy Fund program for open space and recreation.

Clint Aurand      Jamie Fultz      Ron Napikoski      Amy Smith      Cyle Vogt  
David Bolger\*\*      Ann Kanagy      Kevin O'Donnell      Ann Thompson      Mark Zong  
Ron Colwell      Marie Mulvihill      Venus Shade\*\*

\* Oksana DeArment and William Gomes serve as ex-officio members

\*\*Venus Shade replaced Matthew Moore

\*\*David Bolger replaced Eric Rhodes

Mifflin County Internet Advisory Committee: The Mifflin County Internet Advisory Committee seeks to develop options and opportunities to improve broadband internet service in Mifflin County through a collaborative effort that includes residents, businesses, internet providers (Atlantic Broadband, Century Link, Comcast, Nittany Media, and Verizon), Mifflin County School District, local government, and Juniata County. Effectively addressing both the existing and future telecommunication needs of the County is the central goal.

Clint Aurand      Michael Hain      Matthew Moore      Kristen Ritchey      Nathan Smith  
Craig Bubb      Barb Harer      John Rhone      Kay Semler      Michael Tate  
Scott Kramer\*      William Gomes\*\*

\*advisory representative from SEDA-COG

\*\*advisory representative from Planning and Development Department

## SECTION 2: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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### 2.1 Planning

#### Comprehensive Plan

The Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Mifflin County Commissioners on April 24, 2014. The Comprehensive Plan examines population trends and long term needs for housing, transportation, community facilities, economic development and natural resource protection and recommends changes or continued efforts in county policy and regulations.

Several key recommendations in the Plan included:

- Coordinate among economic development organizations to prepare and market new business and industry sites and re-establish a collaborative economic development partnership in the County.
- Continue housing rehabilitation and accessibility efforts and encourage affordable housing options for seniors and housing choices for the general population.
- Support better connectivity to Centre County, and seek funds to improve bridges, rail crossings, interchanges and access roads to improve public safety.
- Strengthen the County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and assist municipalities in updating their subdivision and zoning ordinances.
- Consolidate community facilities and services where appropriate.
- Protect natural resources and expand community recreational opportunities.
- Ensure local utility representatives have an understanding of the growth areas so that the county's development demands are met.

Since the Plan's adoption, the Mifflin County Planning Commission decided to work annually toward implementing some features in the plan. This past year, the focus was on transportation related issues. One of the Plan's objectives deals with access and connectivity, specifically, to "encourage the planning, provision and maintenance of a complete surface transportation system to interconnect community and employment destinations in areas of existing and planned development." Examples of this effort include working with the County Commissioners to address structurally deficient bridges in the county, as well enhance coordination with the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization to improve access between Centre and Mifflin Counties.

#### ***Electric Avenue/Mill Road Intersection Improvement Study***

Associated with the aforementioned objective in Comprehensive Plan is to support mobility and safety improvements across the transportation system. In the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan (2014), as well as the SEDA-COG Long Range Transportation Plan (2016), the Electric Avenue /Mill Road intersection was identified as a safety concern. In December of 2016, Mifflin County submitted an application to PennDOT for Supplemental Planning funds as part of SEDA-COG's Unified Planning Work Program to develop a study of the Electric Avenue /Mill Road intersection. PennDOT approved Mifflin County's proposal in February of 2017.



The overall purpose of the Electric Avenue /Mill Road Intersection Improvement Study was to undertake a transportation and land use study to address an intersection deficiency, conflicts and safety



issues just off of the U.S. Route 322 corridor, as well as develop an action strategy for implementation. The focus of the study was to: characterize the land use pattern that generates traffic volumes in the study area; review previous transportation assessments; recommend appropriate access control measures; develop traffic control and intersection design alternatives; recommend appropriate access control measures; and engage local and regional planning agencies, officials, and the public seeking to understand local needs and priorities. An advisory committee representing major stakeholders was established in August of 2017 by the Mifflin County Commissioners and met up through January 2018 to review and develop preferred alternatives.

The study area encompasses the Electric Avenue corridor from Ort Valley Road north to Kish Pike and focuses on the intersection of Electric Avenue and Mill Road. Notably, this corridor includes the intersection of the US 322 westbound off or exit ramp with Electric Avenue, within 100 feet from the Mill Road intersection, as well as numerous access points (driveways) to businesses. There were three alternatives considered, as well as potential US 322 ramp realignment, with no one proposal completely eliminating all issues related to this intersection. The recommendations included: traffic control improvements at the US 322 westbound off ramp; intersection improvements that would restrict left turns to and from Mill Road; encourage enhanced police enforcement at the US 322 west bound exit ramp; propose to McDonalds' to relocate their All Traffic Must Turn Right sign; and share with PennDOT a proposed realignment alternative for the US 322 west bound off ramp.

The study was completed in early 2018 with recommendations that were accepted by Derry Township and Mifflin County. Matching funds for this study were provided by Mifflin County and Derry Township. The project consultants were The EADS Group, Gannett Fleming, Inc. and Vernon Land Use.

### **SEDA-COG Natural Gas Cooperative – Mifflin County 2018 Activities**



The SEDA-COG Natural Gas Cooperative, Inc. was incorporated in June 2016. The vision of the Cooperative is to “provide Pennsylvania’s Natural Gas to Pennsylvanians”, and its mission is to “support and establish new and upgraded natural gas service to central Pennsylvania businesses and residents in an environmentally responsible and cost-effective manner to promote economic growth, cost savings, and the use of cleaner energy.” The Cooperative expects to fulfill its mission through facilitating, supporting, and developing natural gas infrastructure throughout its service area by pursuing grant and loan funding and building and working through partnerships with private and public partners.

Currently, the Cooperative has a 16-member Board of Directors from the six member counties and SEDA-COG. Mifflin County Directors include Bill Gomes, Rob Postal, and Michael Tate. During 2017, Juniata and Perry Counties also were admitted as members of the Cooperative, and Northumberland County joined in early 2018.

The Cooperative also has a Capital Projects Committee (CPC), which is responsible for evaluating, rating, and ranking potential projects associated with the priority TIAs (targeted investment areas) identified in the Regional Gas Utilization Initiative (RGUI) studies. Mifflin County is represented on this committee by Bill Gomes and Craig Bubb. The CPC has worked on providing recommendations back to the Board on projects to be addressed and their order for development, including Mifflin County.

During 2017, the Cooperative also completed an initial version of its Business Plan, funded in part with a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, and compiled with assistance from consultant contractors. The Business Plan sets direction for future Cooperative operations, including methodology that can be used to perform cost-benefit and cost analyses of potential projects. One such project area examined as a case study in the Business Plan is the US 322-Milroy/Armagh Township

interchange and surrounding area. This location was identified in the Regional Gas Utilization Initiative study in 2016 as a targeted investment area. The study stated this area has significant potential for providing virtual pipeline-based natural gas delivery services to support business-related operations, as well as new service for residential areas. During 2017, the Cooperative met several times with representatives from Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc. and Standard Steel to discuss the potential for constructing a new natural gas delivery line instead of a virtual pipeline to Hawbaker's Naginey quarry and/or extending/upgrading service to the Standard Steel plant in Burnham. While funding arrangements have not been successful to this point to bring this proposal to fruition, the virtual pipeline proposal still remains a viable option. It is hoped that funding for a virtual pipeline option can be procured in 2018 and at a minimum begin design and engineering work for the US 322-Milroy/Armagh Township area.

Finally, in January 2018, the Cooperative received a \$1 million grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development through its PIPE program to be used in developing a natural gas delivery system for the Centre Hall area of Centre County. This project is an excellent example of leveraging enabling funds through a public-private partnership to meet the costs and needs of providers and customers that will include Columbia Gas, Hanover Foods, 100 residential users, and several smaller businesses. The project will also help to build credibility and a track record of success for the Cooperative so that funding can be procured for additional projects in Mifflin and other member counties.

For more information on these initiatives, please contact Don Kiel at SEDA-COG at [dkiel@seda-cog.org](mailto:dkiel@seda-cog.org).

### **Open Space and Rural Recreation**

The Mifflin County Planning and Development Department continued its collaboration with the United Way of Mifflin-Juniata, by working with the Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Council to promote the goals and objectives of the Juniata-Mifflin County Greenways, Open Space and Rural Recreation Plan. The Plan, which was adopted by the Mifflin County Commissioners in 2010, encourages the expansion of recreational opportunities and advancing active healthy lifestyles for residents in the community.

The Council, with the assistance of the Planning and Development Department and the United Way, focused on three projects including the completion of the Juniata River Boat Launch in the McVeytown/Mattawana area, a follow-up grant and final design for the Juniata River Trail project and surveying playground interests and needs among the municipalities in Mifflin County.

The Juniata River Boat Launch, developed with the assistance of YSM Landscape Architects and The EADS Group, is a joint project between Mifflin County, Bratton Township, Oliver Township and McVeytown Borough and was conceived over 5 years ago. This project involved financial support from the National Park Service, the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Mifflin County.

After several years of planning, securing grant approvals and coordinating permit requirements, the project was officially opened on April 25, 2017. The facility was inaugurated with a keynote presentation by Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn, of the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, who spoke of the 22 mile stretch between Newton Hamilton and Granville where no other public access exists and how this facility will address this. Other speakers included Robert Campbell of the National Parks Service, Rhonda Moore of the Juniata Valley Chamber of Commerce



and County Commissioner Kevin Kodish. All parties who brought this project together were represented at the grand opening.

In September of 2017, United Way Day of Caring conducted a landscaping project at the facility to further enhance the site. Since the grand opening, there has been some seasonal flooding, which has affected trees that were planted at the site, but it continues to be well used by the public. This project would not have occurred without the assistance of the property owners, Raymond and Arlene Byler, who agreed to lease the property to Mifflin County.

Another priority has been trail development. Mifflin County does not have any multi-purpose recreation trails along the Juniata River to provide residents and visitors a facility for walking, jogging and cycling. In December 2017, the Borough of Lewistown was awarded \$250,000 from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to develop the Juniata River Trail. These funds will complement the \$230,000 awarded to Mifflin County received in 2016 for the trail from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development. The funds from these two funding sources will match each other to help complete this phase of the project. Financial assistance to design this project is being provided by the Borough of Lewistown through their CDBG program, as well as private contributions. According to the project engineer, The EADS Group, construction is proposed to occur during the summer of 2018.



Phase I of this project will develop a trail approximately 3/4 of a mile in length, extending from Victory Park, and west along the north shore of the river to Crystal Springs Avenue. The trail will be located on the towpath of the old Juniata Canal, extending from Victory Park, all of which are currently owned by the Borough of Lewistown. The Juniata River Trail will have a positive economic impact on the community by encouraging healthful activity, providing access to the river, and drawing visitors to the area. As part of the project, the existing parking area in Victory Park will be upgraded to ensure ADA accessibility and connections to the existing boat launch and proposed trail. The improvements will include a ten foot wide paved walking path, signage, solar lighting around the parking area, a guiderail to separate trail users from vehicles at the boat launch, benches and trash receptacles. The project is consistent with the Juniata/Mifflin County Greenways and Open Space Rural Recreation Plan, which led to the development of the Juniata River Trail Feasibility Study. This Juniata River Trail Feasibility Study was completed in 2015 and recommends this section of the Juniata River Trail as the first phase for development. The future second phase will hopefully extend onto the property owned by Juniata Concrete and the State Fire Academy.

Another project undertaken in 2017 was to assist the Parks and Recreation Council to determine the playground program needs in Mifflin County. Mifflin County has had a playground program since 1957, but over the past few years the number of playground programs has dropped from 13 down to 5. Although a Summer Playground Sustainability Plan was developed in 2014, the recommendations were not well received. The Council has explored other ways to revitalize the overall playground program, including trying to secure assistance through Penn State's Recreation program. Although this outreach was not successful, the Planning Department developed a short survey that was submitted to each municipality with the help of a summer intern to see what interest there was in reviving the playground program. The majority of municipalities responded to the survey, which showed that only 20% of the municipalities had an active playground program, with the majority of lost programs taking place over the past 5 years. The survey showed that at one time 60% of the communities had such a program. The results of the survey determined that some municipalities have an interest in resurrecting an organized playground program while others had no interest. Those communities that do want to have a playground

program would like to see the Parks and Recreation Council help to restore the program and assist with more coordination of playground programs in the county.

Other ongoing trail proposals under review in 2017 by the Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Council include a community trail in Menno Township and looking at a feasibility study to connect the proposed Juniata River Trail with the Kish River Walk. Also initiated in 2017 is the Huntingdon County and Mifflin County Trail Feasibility Study for the Main Line Canal Greenway. This Trail will form part of the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Main Line Canal Greenway, a 320-mile corridor that follows the historic path of the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal. The Trail will also be part of the 1,300-mile long 911 National Memorial Trail linking the three major memorials associated with the September 11th tragedy. This study will be developed on behalf of the Allegheny Ridge Corporate, in coordination with Mifflin and Huntingdon Counties, and consultants Campbell Thomas & Co. and Laird LA.

### **Mifflin County Internet Advisory Committee**

In 2017, the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department continued to work with the Mifflin County Internet Advisory Committee on a monthly basis. The committee began to engage with other providers as well as the Public Utility Commission to learn what others are doing in this area. A major undertaking was the development of a county wide survey to determine the needs of the residents in Mifflin County.

During the summer of 2017, the Mifflin County Internet Advisory Committee completed a residential survey of 2,000 households in Mifflin County. The response rate was approximately 28% with a margin of error of less than 4%. Approximately 54% of the respondents stated that they need service or improved service while 34% of the households responding were satisfied with their current service. As a result of survey, the Committee, with the help of the Mifflin County GIS Department, was able to map internet service throughout the county. One of the maps developed clearly delineates where service problems exist in the county while another map produced depicts service provider information for the main carriers, including Century Link, Verizon, Comcast and Nittany Media. The survey also showed that the primary reasons for using the internet were for accessing the general web and email followed by social media. As a result of the survey and the work of the Committee, this information was shared with providers and some have already starting improving service, including Atlantic Broadband and Nittany Media. Copies of the maps and survey results are available at the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department. This survey has been recognized by state agencies as a good vehicle to better determine broadband needs in a rural area. Further, the Committee has become a vehicle to help with contacting providers by being more responsive to resident needs.

A smaller survey was also sent to local businesses first through a broadcast email submitted through the Juniata Valley Chamber of Commerce and later through a postcard outreach. Although responses were more limited, most businesses felt that their current internet service was adequate, but raised concern about the adequacy for future service.

The Committee's next step was to outreach to both the Mifflin and Juniata County School Districts to survey the needs of students in the area with results anticipated in early 2018. Also, the Committee is working in conjunction with SEDA-COG and four other counties to secure funding to conduct an overall feasibility study with a potential pre-implementation feature that will hopefully help improve broadband service in our area.

## **Planning Services**

The Planning and Development Department provides planning services to Derry Township to assist the Derry Township Planning Commission with reviewing their subdivision and land development plans and regulations, as well as zoning ordinance changes. Professional planning staff in the department attend regularly scheduled Derry Township Planning Commission meetings and keep the Township informed of important matters. Over the past sixteen years, the Planning and Development Department has assisted the Township with reviewing approximately 186 subdivision or land development plans.

The Mifflin County Planning and Development Department also provides planning services to the Borough of Lewistown Planning Commission. Like Derry, these services include review and recommendations for subdivision and land development plans, zoning changes and proposed updates to their zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances. Since 2011, the Planning and Development Department assisted the Borough with reviewing 33 subdivision or land development plans.

This type of contract service agreement is available to municipalities in the County. In addition to the services mentioned above, the Planning and Development Department can also provide assistance with comprehensive planning, Capital Investment Program/Budget reviews and planning commission training and education.

## **Revolving Loan Fund Program**

Mifflin County established its Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) in 2005 based on a grant provided to the County of \$99,000 and authorized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program. The purpose of the Revolving Loan Fund Program is to encourage business retention and expansion for new and existing businesses in the Greater Lewistown area (Burnham and Lewistown Boroughs and Derry and Granville Townships). The goal is to create or save one job for each \$10,000 loaned with a maximum loan amount of \$50,000. The program is set up in collaboration with participating local lending institutions. If the local bank is comfortable with the loan, they partner with Mifflin County in overseeing the loan, which results in reduced loan costs for the local business. Three banks have agreed to participate in the program including Kish Bank, Juniata Valley Bank and Mifflin Savings Bank. At the end of 2017, the Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation (MCIDC) requested a loan from the RLF for renovations in the MCIDC Plaza. Approval is anticipated in early 2018. Over the past twelve years, Mifflin County has provided four loans through the RLF to area businesses.

The Planning and Development Department has one active loan. Revolving loan funds are available for interested businesses in the greater Lewistown area.

## **Transportation Planning**

### **Monument Square Phase V Streetscape Project**

The Monument Square Streetscape Project Phase V is part of a multi-phase project started in 2004 that furthers the goals of Mifflin County and Lewistown Borough to create a safe and welcoming environment coming into Downtown Lewistown for both residents and visitors. An application to PennDOT seeking funding through the Transportation Alternatives Program was approved on January 10, 2017. Mifflin County was awarded \$608,000 to construct Phase V and these funds will be complemented with \$82,000 from the Borough of Lewistown's CDBG program for final engineering design. This will



bring the total project cost to \$690,000, excluding preliminary design work developed as part of the application process.

This phase includes South Main Street below the Embassy Theatre and then turns east at the intersection of Water Street and extends one block to meet the Mann Edge Terrace II senior housing project. Existing conditions in this area include unsafe sidewalks, overgrown trees that are heaving up sidewalks and poorly delineated crosswalks.

During 2017, much of the engineering for the project was completed. Following a field visit with PennDOT in January 2018, it was determined that the proposed pocket park adjoining Mann Edge Terrace II apartments would not be feasible with the approvals required for an easement. Instead, benches will be placed in the same area, but will be along the right-of-way. Bidding for Monument Square Phase V will be done in the late summer of 2018 and construction will take place in the fall and late winter of 2018. The EADS Group continues to be the designer/engineer for this project. This project will further enhance ongoing improvements taking place in the downtown area.

### **Mifflin County Applies for Funds for a Streetscape Project in Reedsville**

For the past two years, Brown Township and a local citizens group, the Reedsville Community Association, have been working to improve the appearance and restore the vitality of downtown Reedsville. This effort has resulted in the mini-park, Brown's Mills Square, and ADA improvements along Main Street. However, a complete, unobstructed sidewalk system is missing, and is important in the township's effort to improve pedestrian access. Main Street has overgrown trees in some places that



are heaving up sidewalks, while the rest of the corridor has either deteriorating sidewalks, or no sidewalks other than gravel areas. One of the main attractions in downtown Reedsville is the Reedsville Youth Park where the annual youth fair for the county takes place, as well other community events during the year. Easy access to the facility is difficult for pedestrians forcing most to drive even for what would normally be considered an easy walking distance. These unsafe conditions pose potential problems for pedestrians. The existing conditions can likewise make travel quite difficult for disabled pedestrians.

Considering this situation, Brown Township requested that Mifflin County assist them with an application to PennDOT through the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds to assist with this project. The application was submitted in September 2017, requesting \$834,610 with the township being responsible for all engineering design costs. A preliminary design and cost estimates were prepared by The EADS Group.

The primary goal of this project is to replace deteriorated sidewalks along North and South Main Street and install new sidewalk where none exists. The Reedsville Streetscape project will improve the pedestrian access and walking experience for area residents with the proposed improvements. Aside from sidewalk replacement or installation, the project will include trees, pedestrian level lighting, improve stormwater facilities and better delineate crosswalks where appropriate.

This is a very competitive application with 172 applications submitted across the state and only \$55 million dollars available. A decision on successful applications is anticipated in the Spring of 2018.

### **SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization**

The Planning and Development Department continued to represent Mifflin County on the SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which guides the transportation planning and programming process in Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union counties.

The MPO is responsible for recommending projects for the Commonwealth's Twelve-Year Transportation Plan and assisting in the development of the SEDA-COG Regional Transportation Improvement Program and Long-Range Transportation Plan. The last update to the Long Range Plan was completed in 2016, and work on the next update is anticipated to begin in 2019. The Long Range Plan is a multi-modal plan, which covers a twenty-year planning horizon for the SEDA-COG planning region. The plan describes performance measures, assesses the transportation needs and recommends a list of projects to be developed and delivered over the life of the plan. Projects listed in the plan for Mifflin County include a number of studies developed in the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan, including a Corridor Study of SR 22/522, an interchange study on SR 322 and a study to limit conflicts at the intersection of Mill Road and Electric Avenue. Financial assistance for the Mill Road/Electric Avenue Interchange Improvement Study was awarded to Mifflin County in February of 2017 through PennDOT's Supplemental Planning funds as part of SEDA-COG's Unified Planning Work Program, as well as support from Mifflin County and Derry Township. The study began in August of 2017 and was completed in March of 2018.

The MPO also reviews and recommends projects submitted for the Transportation Alternatives Program and ARC Local Access Roads funds. The types of projects evaluated include bicycle, pedestrian, historic preservation, public transit and roadway access enhancements. In 2016 Mifflin County submitted an application to PennDOT for Transportation Alternative Program funds for Monument Square and was successful. In 2017 Mifflin County submitted a similar request for the Reedsville Streetscape Project and it is under review by PennDOT. Mifflin County also worked with Derry Township, Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation and SEDA-COG in 2016 in submitting an application for ARC funds for infrastructure improvements for what was the Derry Heights project and is now the site for the Primary Health Network Facility. A related project is the traffic signal and intersection improvements at the corner of Ferguson Valley Road (SR 1007) and Freedom Avenue. (SR 4013) through the Automated Red Light Enforcement Program (ARLE), which was also submitted in 2016. Both projects were approved in 2017 and construction is anticipated between 2018 and 2019.

### **State Transportation Commission**

Every two years the State Twelve Year Plan (TYP) is updated. Unfortunately, no projects submitted by Mifflin County over the past two years were included in the 2017 Twelve Year Plan of the State Transportation Improvement Program. However, one proposed project, the Belltown Run Bridge (T-391) in Decatur Township will be evaluated by PennDOT as a potential candidate for their retroactive program.

A Retroactive Bridge Project is one in which the municipality takes the initiative to complete the project with the assistance of an engineer with minimal oversight by PennDOT. However, all pertinent PennDOT requirements are applicable with the municipalities picking up all upfront costs. Upon completion of the project, the municipality submits all documentation and invoices to PennDOT for review and if approved, can be reimbursed for up to 80 percent of the total project cost. However, reimbursement is not guaranteed.

Projects on the proposed 2019 TYP are primarily carryovers from the 2017 TYP and include: the Monument Square Phase V Streetscape Project; a safety project to install cable median guide rail on SR 322; paving of SR 322 from Reedsville to Burnham and through the Seven Mountains Section;

resurfacing of Business Route 22; a safety project to upgrade traffic signals on SR 1005 in Lewistown; bridge preservation projects along SR 2008 over Jacks Creek and SR 3002 over Kish Creek; bridges along SR 2004 in the area of Jacks Creek and SR 3017 and the Juniata River; and a bridge along SR 3001 over Kish Creek. A bridge along SR 22 over Musser Run was in the 2017 TYP and was completed at the end of 2017. Two other major projects that will begin in 2018 are the Burnham interchange improvements off Route 322 and the signal upgrades along Market and Third Streets in Lewistown Borough.

The process to update the current Twelve Year Plan (TYP) began in March 2017, and a new TYP will be adopted in the summer of 2018. As part of the process, The EADS Group, which is under contract to do bridge inspections, provided input into the county's submittal to PennDOT. During their review of bridges 20 feet or longer, The EADS Group developed recommendations based on safety and traffic concerns, the project location, and specific needs of the community.

The bridge recommendations submitted for the 2017 TYP, and included in the 2019 TYP submission, include the replacement of the Kishacoquillas Creek Bridge on West Railroad Street (T-439) in Brown Township, which is listed as the number one project based on the use and impact it will have in the area. Other priority projects include the Hickory Lane Bridge (T-464) over Little Kishacoquillas Creek in Menno Township and the Renno Road Bridge (T-453) over Little Kishacoquillas Creek in Union Township. In order to extend the useful life of the bridge, the following bridges were submitted as priority maintenance projects: the Jacks Creek Bridge on Jacks Creek Road (T-315) in Derry Township, the Kishacoquillas Creek Bridge on Chestnut Street Extension (T-480) in Derry Township; Treaster Run Bridge on Barefoot Road (T-465) in Armagh Township, the Walnut Street Bridge (T-350) over Kishacoquillas Creek in Union Township and the Kishacoquillas Creek Bridge on Spring Run Road (T-368) in Union Township. The Belltown Run Bridge on Ertley Road (T-391) in Decatur Township was recommended by the county as a retro-reimbursement project. In an effort to assist municipalities with funding for local bridges, the County will submit a request for \$350,000 to fund a bridge maintenance program that will bundle various local bridges throughout Mifflin County. A map of these bridges can be found on page 13. However, three of these bridges were addressed by Mifflin County in 2017 with the assistance of The EADS Group, Nittany Engineering Associates and the Municipal Services office of PennDOT. Those three bridges included the Jacks Creek Bridge (T-315), the Kishacoquillas Creek Bridge (T-480) and Treaster Run Bridge (T-465). At this time, based on estimated PennDOT funding, we do not anticipate any of these projects being funded on the 2019 TYP. The County will continue to explore other funding sources, including participation in the retroactive program as an alternative. One potential funding avenue is the five dollar fee that Mifflin County adopted in the fall of 2017 to assist with transportation related needs in the county.



*Treaster Run Bridge (T-465) on Barefoot Road Before and After*

Also of importance to Mifflin County was the proposed improvement to State Route 322 in Centre County. A ground breaking ceremony was held in the fall of 2014 for the Potters Mills Gap Project, after PennDOT received a finding of no significant impact on the final environmental impact

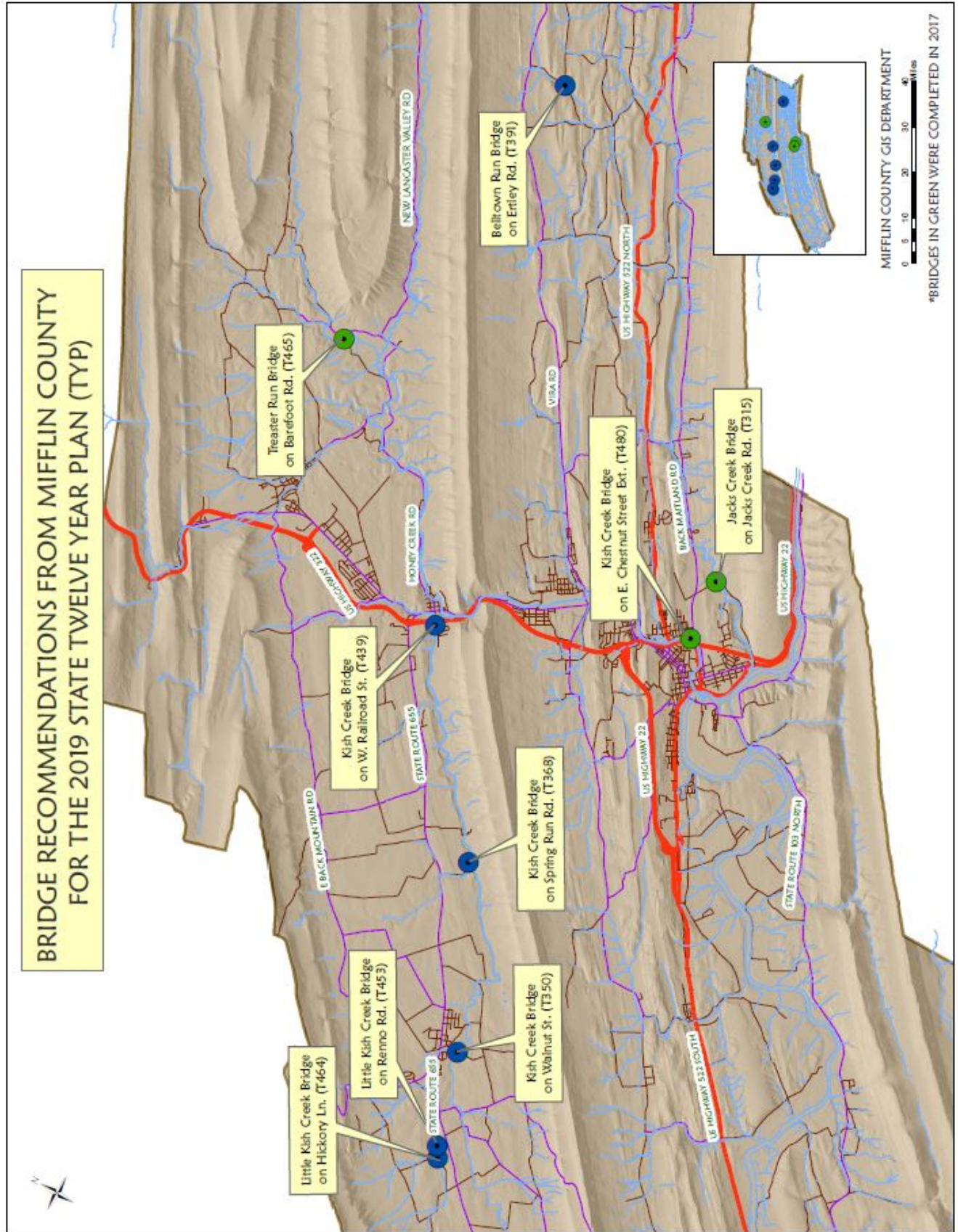


statement for the project. The Potters Mills Gap project is a three phase project with the first two sections, B04 and B05, completed in 2016 and 2017. The remaining section, Section B06, began in late fall of 2017 and included tree removal. Bidding for the final phase is to take place in March of 2018 and construction is anticipated to begin during May of 2018. This is a three year project.

In order to further review the Route 322 corridor needs, PennDOT also began working in 2017 to update information about crashes, travel patterns, environmental and community features in the Route 322, Route 144, and Route 45 corridors between Potters Mills, State College and Centre Hall. Based on the updated information, a “Needs Analysis” is scheduled to be completed in 2018. The Needs Analysis is intended to lead to the identification of potential improvements in this area. No funding is allocated at this time to advance potential improvements.



*Work at Jack's Creek Bridge (T-315) and Kishacoquillas Creek Bridge (T-480)*



## **2.2 Community Development**

### **Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)**

The CDBG program helps strengthen the community by improving housing and public facilities to provide suitable living environments for citizens, principally those with low-moderate incomes. The program can support a range of activities from housing rehabilitation, public services, community facilities, infrastructure improvements, economic development and planning and administration. Projects must benefit low/moderate-income people, through the elimination of community slum and blight, or meet an urgent need in the community.

The Planning and Development Department administers the CDBG programs for Mifflin County, Derry and Brown Townships and since 2015, the Borough of Lewistown and Granville Township. This change is in accordance with the PA-Department of Community and Economic Development's (PA-DCED) direction and Act of 1984, P.L. 906 No. 179. This DCED directive shifts the responsibility from borough and townships, with populations under 10,000 persons to county governments.

Derry, Granville and Brown Townships Boards of Supervisors and the Lewistown Borough Council, direct the use of the funds in their respective municipalities. However, agencies desiring to apply for non-County CDBG funds may petition those municipalities for CDBG funds. The municipalities other than Mifflin County have the sole discretion to allocate their CDBG funds to eligible and fundable projects. The County's role for these municipalities is planning and administrative grant management functions. Ultimately, the County is responsible for all County wide CDBG funds, which includes those entitlement municipalities.

### **Mifflin County 2017 Application Status**

Each year, local municipalities, authorities and agencies are invited to submit proposals to the Planning and Development Department for funding only for Mifflin County CDBG funds. The Mifflin County CDBG Advisory Committee, comprised of Planning Commission members and staff of the department, reviews the proposals and ranks them based on a rating system according to established criteria. These include community needs, economic distress, leveraging other funding, project initiation, program priorities and previous CDBG experience. The Mifflin County Commissioners make the final determination of which projects to fund for submission to the PA-DCED.

The Planning and Development Department received four applications for funding for Mifflin County's 2017 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The first public hearing was held August 24, 2017 for applicants to present their proposals to the Mifflin County Planning Commission. In addition to the presentations, the public hearing also provided an opportunity to receive citizens' views, comments, and suggestions for consideration by the County Planning Commission on the 2017 CDBG application and prior years funding. Following the first public hearing, the CDBG/Housing Rehab Advisory Committee met to prioritize projects that were submitted to the Mifflin County Commissioners to consider prior to a second public hearing. The second public hearing was held on October 5, 2017 by the Mifflin County Commissioners who approved funding three of the four original applications submitted, and also included funding for the Countywide Housing Rehabilitation Program. Public hearings were also held in Derry Township, Granville Township, Brown Township, and Lewistown Borough resulting in a total of nine projects, which are shown in Tables 2B, 2C, 2D and 2E on the following pages. The governing body of each municipality decides which projects to fund and they do not have a formalized application process.

On October 5, 2017, the County Commissioners adopted a Resolution recommending approval to DCED for the projects and funding amounts listed on Table 2A-2E inclusive on pages 15 and 16. The

County’s CDBG application was submitted to the PA-DCED on December 1, 2017. This application was made for Mifflin County and on behalf of Derry, Granville and Brown Townships and the Borough of Lewistown.

The County’s 2017 CDBG allocation is \$217,052.00. The following tables delineate the recommended funding amounts for each project for the County’s 2017 CDBG application and on behalf of Granville, Brown, and Derry Townships and the Borough of Lewistown, which are currently under review by the PA-DCED. A contract has not been entered into for 2017 funding with DCED. The cumulative total of CDBG funds for the County and on behalf of those entitlement municipalities is \$616,394.00.

Table 2A MIFFLIN COUNTY			
1.	Borough of Juniata Terrace, Mifflin County	Road reconstruction of Wagner Avenue	\$ 72,765.00
2.	Armagh Township, Mifflin County	Architectural barriers elimination project-modification to the Armagh Township municipal building	\$ 28,000.00
3.	Single-family housing rehabilitation	Housing rehabilitation for single-family, owner occupied, income eligible households	\$ 77,218.00
4.	Planning and Administration	Planning and administration activities	\$ 39,069.00
	<b>Total Mifflin County CDBG Funding:</b>		<b>\$217,052.00</b>

Table 2B LEWISTOWN BOROUGH			
1.	Spring Street	Road reconstruction project and delivery costs	\$ 85,170.00
2.	Grand Parkway North	Road reconstruction project and delivery costs	\$ 14,220.00
3.	Planning and Administration	Planning and administration activities	\$ 17,539.00
	<b>Total Lewistown Borough CDBG Funding:</b>		<b>\$116,929.00</b>

Table 2C BROWN TOWNSHIP			
1.	Single-family housing rehabilitation	Housing rehabilitation for single-family, owner occupied, income eligible households	\$65,740.00
2.	Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Juniata Valley	Fair share project for salaries and benefits for the youth mentoring program	\$ 1,938.00
3.	Planning and Administration	Planning and administration activities	\$14,855.00
	<b>Total Brown Township CDBG Funding:</b>		<b>\$82,533.00</b>

Table 2D DERRY TOWNSHIP			
1.	Lewistown Heights-Ridge, Fox, Roosevelt, Mifflin and Lincoln Avenues  This is the Lewistown Heights road reconstruction project. All roads are contiguous.	Road reconstruction (project and delivery)  *This will be completed as one project and is a continuation from 2016.	\$ 85,809.00
2.	Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Juniata Valley	Fair share project for salaries and benefits for the youth mentoring program	\$ 3,498.00
3.	Planning and Administration	Planning and administration activities	\$ 19,603.00
	<b>Total Derry Township CDBG Funding:</b>		<b>\$108,910.00</b>

Table 2E GRANVILLE TOWNSHIP			
1.	Slum/Blight Spot Basis	Demolition of 144 Klondyke Drive (project and delivery costs)	\$10,360.00
2.	Slum/Blight Spot Basis	Demolition of 15 and 17 Henrietta Street (duplex) (project and delivery)	\$54,235.00
3.	Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation	Housing rehabilitation for an income eligible single-family home owner	\$ 7,550.00
4.	Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Juniata Valley	Fair share project for salaries and benefits for the youth mentoring program	\$ 2,451.00
5.	Planning and Administration	Planning and Administrative Activities	\$16,374.00
	<b>Total Granville Township CDBG Funding:</b>		<b>\$90,970.00</b>

### **Mifflin County Community Development Plan – Three-Year Plan**

Mifflin County’s Three-Year Community Development Plan (CDP) is based on the goals and objectives included in the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan: Visions for the 21st Century. The Three-Year Community Development Plan is evaluated annually and priorities are adjusted to reflect work completed and new community needs. The plan has been updated with 2010 United States Census data and 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) data. Moreover, all CDBG municipalities, including Brown, Derry and Granville Townships and Lewistown Borough, must maintain and update separate three-year plans. The County is ultimately responsible for these updates. Additional updates will be made based on more recent American Community Survey (ACS) data as it becomes available.

### **Mifflin County Project Status**

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2017. The projects were possibly funded in previous funding years.

- A. *SEDA-COG Mann Edge Terrace Phase II Project* –A ribbon cutting and open house ceremony was held in early October of 2017. It is currently fully occupied. Mifflin County used \$140,000.00 of their CDBG funds to assist in property acquisition only. Funds came from FFY’s 2013 and 2014 funds.



- B. *McVeytown Borough Authority Sewer Rehabilitation* – This project consists of open cut trench repairs and cured in place pipe (CIPP), public lateral replacement, as needed, throughout areas of McVeytown Borough and a small portion of Oliver Township. The existing line was videoed and areas needing repair/replacement were identified by the engineer, Gwin, Dobson & Foreman, Inc. of Altoona. Bids were due in early-August, 2017 and a total of four were received. The low bidder was State Pipe Services, Inc. of Cranberry Township, PA with a bid amount was \$846,375.00. A contract was signed in early October and the Notice to Proceed was issued on October 16, 2017. Work began in late October and as of March 2018, approximately 75% of the construction work has been completed and all final work is anticipated to be completed by the end of June 2018. This project, including engineering, is funded in FFY’s 2014, 2015 and 2015 competitive funds.



- C. *Countywide Housing Rehabilitation Program* – One house has currently been inspected and is the process of the Lead Based Paint Risk Assessment, Asbestos and Radon Testing and the electrical inspection. Following all of these processes, the project will go out for bid. This project will be funded with CDBG FFY’s 2014 and 2015 funds.

### **Derry Township Project Status**

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2017. The projects were possibly funded in previous funding years.

- A. *Pinewood Road, Sawmill Road & Rosemont Avenue, Yeagertown Street Reconstruction Project* – In August, 2017, two bids were received for this road reconstruction project. The project consisted of storm water improvements and road reconstruction. Jay Fulkroad & Sons, Inc. of McAlisterville was the low bidder in the amount of \$112,723.19. Work began in late October and was completed by late November. Engineering was completed by Buchart-Horn, Inc. of State College. This project was funded with FFY's 2014 and 2015 funds.



- B. *Habitat for Humanity Land Acquisition* – In June, 2017, Habitat for Humanity of Mifflin County acquired property along Lindy Lane in Derry Township. Construction of the new single family house started shortly thereafter and was completed in mid-December. The total cost of the property acquisition was \$36,000.00. This project was funded from FFY's 2013, 2014 and 2015 funds. A family of six now calls this place home.



### **Brown Township Project Status**

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2017. The projects were possibly funded in previous funding years.

- A. *ADA Ramps, truncated domes and related sidewalk project in Reedsville* – This project took place in September and October of 2017 and is now complete. A total of 11 new ADA ramps were installed at various intersections throughout Reedsville to eliminate architectural barriers in the area and to improve access for handicapped or elderly individuals. The low bidder and contractor for the project was Mid-State Paving, LLC of Middleburg, PA. The engineer for the project was Nittany Engineering and Associates, LLC of Centre Hall, PA. The construction cost was \$49,980.00. This project was funded with Federal Fiscal Years (FFY'S) 2013 and 2014 funds.



- B. *Woodland Road and East Back Mountain Road waterline extension project in Reedsville* – Currently, six families in this area are not served by a nearby public water line. Some of their wells are contaminated by the close proximity of neighbors' septic systems. In late 2016 and early 2017, an income survey was conducted in the area to determine eligibility and following the survey, it was determined that 70% of the residents within the service benefit area had low/moderate incomes. The piping and related fittings were purchased through COSTARS dealer: L/B Water Service, Inc. of Selinsgrove, PA. The stone for the project was purchased through COSTARS dealer: Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc., Milroy quarry. The Municipal Authority of the Borough of Lewistown completed the installation of the line and provided manpower and

equipment for the project. The funds were used for materials and equipment rental costs only. This project began in November of 2017. This project is being funded with FFY's 2014 and 2015 funds.

Following completion and testing of the main line, which occurred in late March of 2018, the residents may connect their private laterals to the main line and begin using the public water. CDBG funding reimbursement is available to qualifying residents for their lateral connection. Income interviews have been completed to determine qualification of residents. This project is being funded with FFY 2015 funds.

- C. *Demolition of a blighted structure (145 Franklin Street) in Lumber City, Reedsville* – This project removed a blighted structure, which was having an adverse impact on the surrounding properties. In late summer of 2017, Brown Township gained a temporary conservatorship of the property. An asbestos inspection was completed and results determined the presence of asbestos. A request for proposal was then completed for the demolition of the house, foundation and related outbuildings, including the asbestos removal. Mike's Landscaping and Excavating, Inc. of Reedsville was the successful contractor. A contract was signed in the amount of \$18,800.00 in late December and asbestos removal occurred in late February and demolition of the structure, trees, brush and outbuildings occurred in March of 2018. Final site work dressing will need to be completed later in the spring of 2018. This project is being funded with FFY 2014 and 2015 funds.



### **Granville Township Project Status**

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2017. This project was possibly funded in previous funding years.

- A. *Snook's Hill Bridge Replacement in Granville* – In July, two bids were received for the replacement of the deteriorated bridge with a new pre-cast concrete box culvert near the intersection of Snook's Hill and Granville Roads in the village of Granville. The pre-cast box culvert has been built and is being stored offsite and is ready for installation. Construction is anticipated to begin on April 2, 2018, weather depending, with final completion by June of 2018. This road will be closed during the construction phase and reopened as soon as possible following completion. The low bidder was Kevin E. Raker Construction, LLC of Sunbury in the amount of \$281,866.76. The engineer for the project is The EADS Group, Inc. of Lewistown. This project is being funded with FFY's, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 CDBG funds.





### **Lewistown Borough Project Status**

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2017. This project was possibly funded in previous funding years.

- A. *Ridge Road and Marble Street Reconstruction* – In August, 2017, two bids were received for the road reconstruction project listed above. The project consisted of milling of Ridge Road and Marble Street and road reconstruction. Jay Fulkroad & Sons, Inc. of McAlisterville was the low bidder in the amount of \$44,054.16. Work began in late October and was completed by late November. This project was funded with FFY's 2014 and 2015 funds.



### **Mifflin County Microenterprise Loan Program**

During 2017, the County did not complete any loan transactions. The program began in 1997, as a collaboration between Mifflin County, Granville and Derry Township and Lewistown Borough using CDBG funds to encourage businesses to hire low to moderate income persons. The funds from this program have been recycled several times over the past few years through the repayment of loans.

### **Housing Rehabilitation Program**

The Planning and Development Department administers the housing rehabilitation program on behalf of the Mifflin County Commissioners. The County receives funding for the program from the CDBG program, the HOME program, and Act 137 funds, which is the County Housing Trust Fund.

Since 1984, Mifflin County has rehabilitated approximately 506 homes totaling more than \$4,900,000 in grants for qualified homeowners. The housing rehabilitation program provides grants to low and moderate income families, for certain types of home repairs. Emphasis is placed on repairs that will correct the most serious building code violations, i.e., health, safety and energy efficiency issues. Minor or cosmetic renovation activities are not normally undertaken. Examples of repairs made under the program are exterior and interior general construction, plumbing, heating and electrical. Repairs are limited to 75% of the home's fair market value.

The program is generally a first come, first served grant program and qualifying applicants are placed on a waiting list. It can possibly take up to four years or more before rehabilitation begins. Currently, 33 low/moderate income applicants are on the waiting list for housing rehabilitation.

Applicants are required to own their home and the property taxes must be current. A five-year conditional judgment is filed when the rehabilitation job is complete. Annual income guidelines are set by HUD at \$32,200/year or less for one-person households, plus at least \$4,600/year for each additional person depending on family size. The income limits change yearly. All homes built prior to 1978 must comply with lead-based paint requirements.

The 2015 HOME program consisted of a local target area of Juniata Terrace, Lewistown and Kistler Boroughs. These three boroughs have the highest concentrations of low/moderate income residents in Mifflin County. Currently, 14 clients are at some point throughout the rehabilitation process of their homes, ranging from initial interview, inspection, lead based paint risk assessment, asbestos and radon testing, electrical inspection, bidding and contracting. We will have 7-10 projects under construction in the coming year. The Department of Labor and Industry has recently required a hybrid version of the PA State Prevailing Wages to be included in rehab projects exceeding \$25,000.00 in costs. This, along with other factors, has diminished the total number of houses we can assist with funds. Our average rehab costs have increased to approximately \$37,000.00 per house. This cost per unit is primarily due to the state prevailing wage rates and is compounded by the requirement to complete Lead Based Paint Abatement on most of our homes, as well as completing Asbestos removal and Radon mitigation on some of the homes.

### **The Impact of Prevailing Wages on the Housing Rehab Program**

In July of 2016, the PA Department of Labor and Industry made a decision on housing rehabilitation that affects the use of HOME and CDBG program funds used for the rehabilitation of single family, owner occupied housing. The result of this decision is that projects costing more than \$25,000 in rehab assistance will now be subject to the state residential prevailing wage rates. The Mifflin County Planning and Development Department staff has been working closely with SEDA-COG staff to alter this position due to the negative consequences it was anticipated to have on the rehabilitation program that many of our communities operate.

On June 13, 2017, Mifflin County, in conjunction with SEDA-COG, held a forum on prevailing wages that was attended by 32 individuals representing Clinton, Columbia, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, Monroe Montour, Northumberland, Perry and Snyder Counties. The forum included State Representative Fred Keller who has attempted to introduce legislation in conjunction with State Senator John Gordner that would exempt housing rehab work over the \$25,000 threshold. Both bills are still in committee.

Although SEDA-COG and others have suggested alternatives, including the use of the Davis Bacon federal residential rates, this effort has been to no avail. The Federal Davis Bacon wage rates are not currently required for single family housing rehabilitation for eight or less units. Some of the immediate consequences were mentioned in correspondence to the Governor in August and have proved correct and include the following:

- The PA Department of Labor and Industry developed residential prevailing wage rates for all single family, owner occupied housing rehabilitation in excess of \$25,000 and have gone into effect.
- The hybrid PA rates are higher than the Davis Bacon residential rates and have increased housing rehab costs. Based on Mifflin County's experience, housing rehab costs have risen by \$10-15,000.
- The increased rehabilitation costs have reduced the number of homes our current programs are able to rehabilitate.
- The additional paperwork required by this decision has discouraged many of our small local contractors from participating in the program. At this time, we only have one contractor willing to participate in the program.

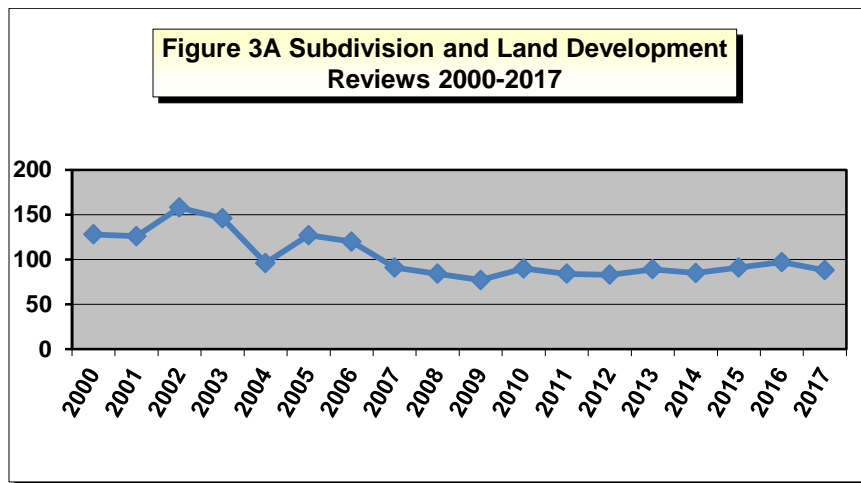
The Planning and Development Department staff continues to work with SEDA-COG to seek a change in this policy.

## SECTION 3: LAND USE

### 3.1 Subdivision and Land Development

An important function of the Mifflin County Planning Commission is the review and approval of subdivision and land development plans, as authorized by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act of 1968, P.L. 805 No. 247 as amended. The County Planning Commission approves, approves with conditions, or denies subdivisions and land developments that occur in the municipalities without a Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which includes: Bratton Township, Juniata Terrace Borough, Kistler Borough, McVeytown Borough, Newton Hamilton Borough and Wayne Township. Reviews and decisions for these municipalities, are carried out according to the Mifflin County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, adopted in 1995, updated in 2003 and amended in 2006.

The Planning Commission reviews and provides comments and recommendations to the municipalities with a Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and/or a zoning ordinance which includes: Armagh Township (no zoning ordinance), Brown Township, Burnham Borough, Decatur Township (no zoning ordinance), Derry Township, Granville Township, Lewistown Borough, Menno Township (no zoning ordinance), Oliver Township (no zoning ordinance), and Union Township. The aforementioned municipalities have final approval making powers for plans submitted within their municipalities.



**Figure 3A** above shows the number of plans reviewed since 2000. The trend since 2005 has been a decreasing number with minor increases in 2010, to a slightly lower consistent number of plans during 2011-2015. However, in 2015 and in 2016, the number of plans rose slightly each year above the 2011 level and slightly decreased during 2017. The Mifflin County Planning Commission reviewed a total of 88 plans in 2017.

**Table 3A** below shows the number of plans reviewed from 2012 through 2017, with lot additions and lot line adjustments, which are considered minor subdivisions. Of the plans reviewed in 2017, 29 new residential lots were created, covering 440.77 acres. Among the land development plans proposed, 10 new commercial or industrial lots were created, accounting for 101.73 acres of developed land, or 4,431,358 square feet of new commercial/industrial land.

<b>Table 3A Subdivision and Land Development Plan Reviews 2012-2017</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Minor Subdivision</b>	<b>Major Subdivision</b>	<b>Land Developments</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>535</b>

**Figure 3B** below shows the percentage of plans submitted by type. Of the 88 plans that were submitted for review, a number of plans contained multiple types within one plan (e.g., a minor subdivision with a lot addition, or a subdivision with a land development). However, the percentages in Figure 3B do not reflect duplications. Therefore, the 88 plans reviewed consisted of 5 types as noted within the legend in Figure 3B. The majority of plans (50%) were minor subdivisions of one to six lots. There were no major subdivisions during 2017. Major subdivisions include more than 6 lots. Lot additions accounted for 22%, while lot line adjustments accounted for 2% of the total plans reviewed. A lot addition involves adding a portion of land from one lot to another lot. A lot line adjustment involves adjusting a lot line between two lots. Land development plans, which are plans for constructing buildings and developing property, accounted for 26% of plans reviewed in 2017.

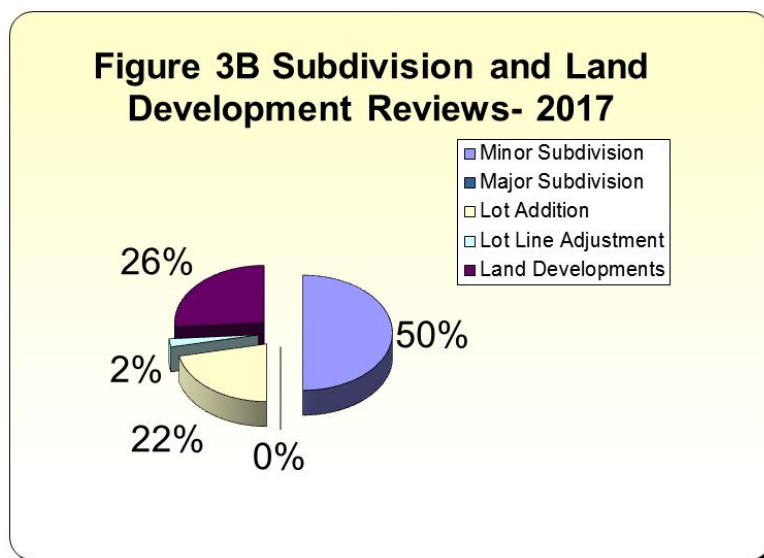
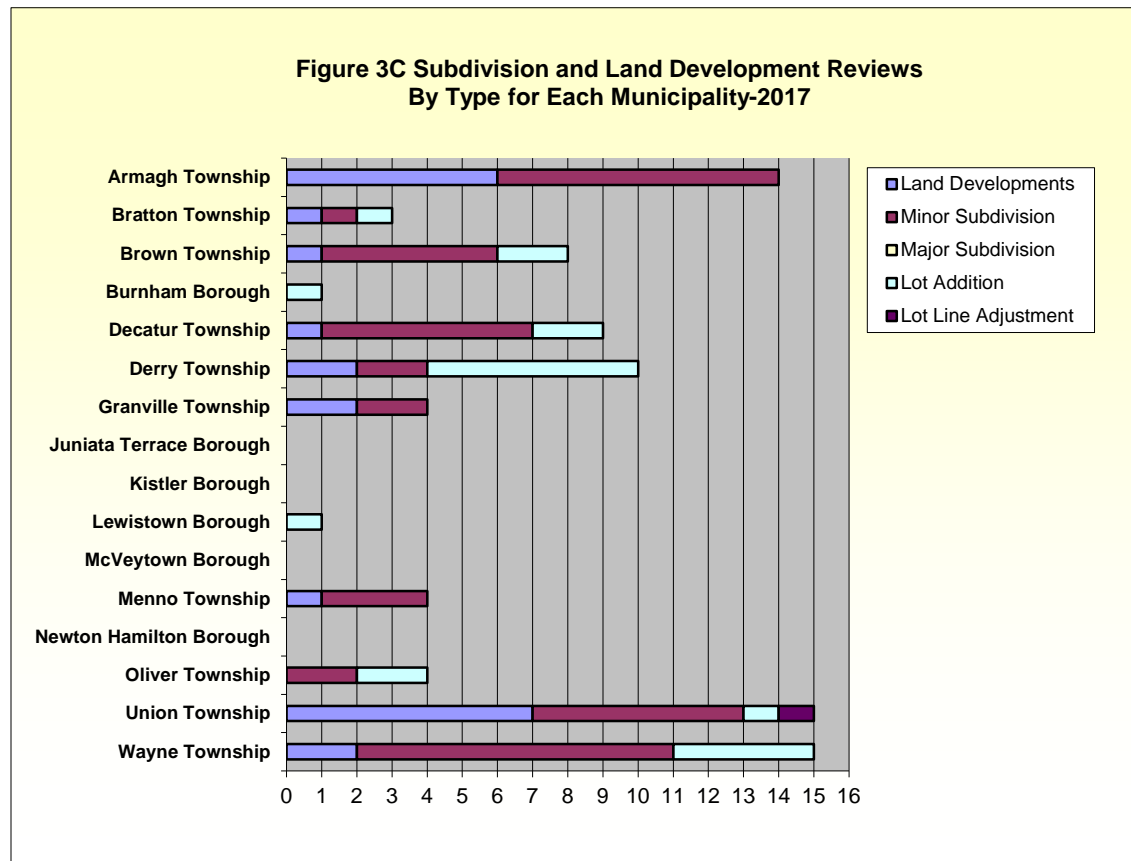


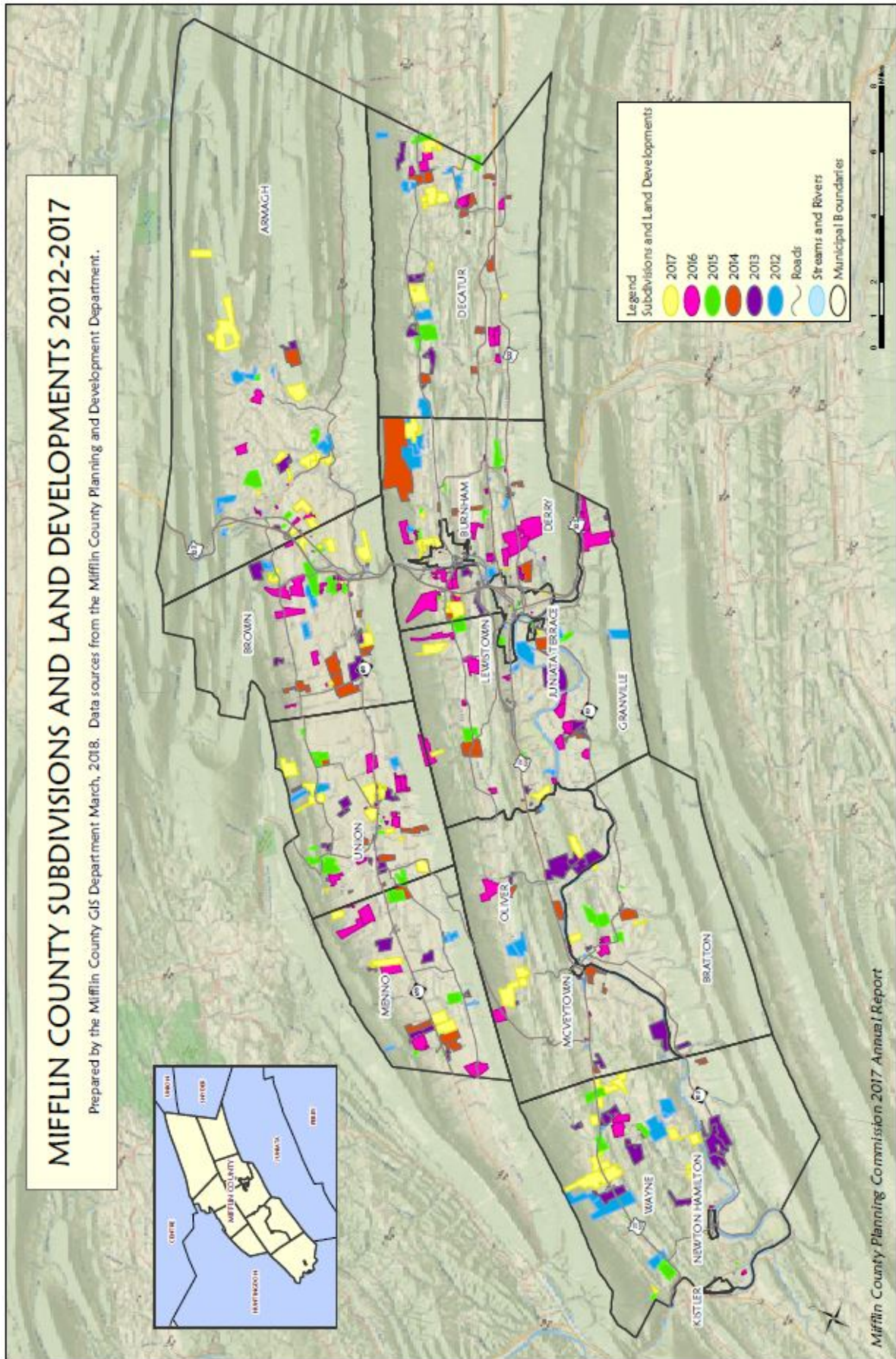
Table 3B below shows the number of plan types reviewed in each municipality during 2017.

<b>Table 3B Subdivision and Land Development Plan Reviews-2017</b>						
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Land Developments</b>	<b>Minor Subdivision</b>	<b>Major Subdivision</b>	<b>Lot Addition</b>	<b>Lot Line Adjustment</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Armagh Township</b>	6	8	0	0	0	<b>14</b>
<b>Bratton Township</b>	1	1	0	1	0	<b>3</b>
<b>Brown Township</b>	1	5	0	2	0	<b>8</b>
<b>Burnham Borough</b>	0	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Decatur Township</b>	1	6	0	2	0	<b>9</b>
<b>Derry Township</b>	2	2	0	6	0	<b>10</b>
<b>Granville Township</b>	2	2	0	0	0	<b>4</b>
<b>Juniata Terrace Borough</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Kistler Borough</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Lewistown Borough</b>	0	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
<b>McVeytown Borough</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Menno Township</b>	1	3	0	0	0	<b>4</b>
<b>Newton Hamilton Borough</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Oliver Township</b>	0	2	0	2	0	<b>4</b>
<b>Union Township</b>	7	6	0	1	1	<b>15</b>
<b>Wayne Township</b>	2	9	0	4	0	<b>15</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>88</b>

**Figure 3C** below shows a comparison of the number of plan reviews and types by municipality in 2017. Union and Wayne Townships had the most plans with a total of 15 each. The next highest number of plans received and reviewed were in Armagh Township with 14. In terms of the other municipalities, there were 10 plans reviewed in Derry Township, 9 plans in Decatur Township, 8 plans in Brown Township, 4 plans in Menno and Oliver Townships, 3 plans in Bratton Township, and 1 plan Lewistown and Burnham Boroughs. There were no land developments or subdivision plans submitted in the Boroughs of McVeytown, Newton Hamilton, Kistler, and Juniata Terrace.



Some areas of Mifflin County are experiencing faster growth than other areas. One way to pinpoint growth areas is to track the location of subdivisions and land developments looking for clusters of activity. The map on the following page illustrates the locations of parcels that have had subdivision and land development plan activity in Mifflin County from 2012 to 2017.



### 3.2 Municipal Building Permit Activities

Table 3C lists building permits issued in each municipality for 2015 to 2017. The *Other* category includes permits for renovations, additions, garages, barns, sheds, recreational camps, pools, decks, etc.

Table 3C Municipal Building Permits Issued, 2015-2017															
Municipality	Single/Multi Family Home			Manufactured Home			Commercial/ Industrial			Demolition			Other		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Armagh Township	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	5	6	48	42	32
Bratton Township	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	1	15	18	8
Brown Township	13	7	10	1	0	0	5	0	4	6	4	6	56	50	33
Burnham Borough	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	0	0	0	1	7	13
Decatur Township	1	1	3	1	3	3	0	0	1	0	1	2	14	21	19
Derry Township	15	13	11	1	0	1	7	11	5	1	1	2	83	61	35
Granville Township	5	7	7	2	2	8	12	16	3	2	6	9	28	26	18
Juniata Terrace Borough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Kistler Borough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Lewistown Borough	0	2	0	0	0	0	65	35	3	14	8	5	441	250	38
McVeytown Borough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Menno Township	0	1	2	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	1	3	18	21	21
Newton Hamilton Boro.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oliver Township	1	2	3	0	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	1	24	29	18
Union Township	6	4	13	3	0	2	13	8	5	7	8	10	43	45	35
Wayne Township	5	10	2	0	6	2	0	1	1	3	4	3	9	33	19
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>291</b>

Source: Mifflin County Tax Services Bureau

Note: New permit tracking system developed in 2017.

### 3.3 Residential Building Costs

Table 3D on the following page reflects average new residential single-family and multi-family home construction costs, excluding land, in the municipalities of Mifflin County. The total homes and the average estimated cost are based on the totals and average cost from 2015 - 2017. There were no single family (S.F.) homes or multi-family (M.F.) homes reported in any of the following Boroughs or Townships from 2015 to 2017: Burnham, Juniata Terrace, Kistler, McVeytown, and Newton Hamilton. There were four multi-family homes built in Brown Township and five in Union Township from 2015 to 2017. The average estimated new home cost throughout the county from 2015-2017 for a single family house was \$162,262.83 and for multi-family homes, \$265,533.33. It should be noted that the average cost amounts in Table 3D come directly from the building permit estimates and may not be a reflection of actual building costs.



**Table 3D**  
**Average Estimated Residential Construction Costs, 2015 – 2017**

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Single Family Homes</u>	<u>Total Value of S.F. Homes</u>	<u>Average Estimated Cost*</u>	<u>Multi Family Homes</u>	<u>Total Value of M.F. Homes</u>	<u>Average Estimated Cost*</u>
Armagh Township	2	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	0	\$ -	\$ -
Bratton Township	3	\$ 285,000.00	\$ 95,000.00	0	\$ -	\$ -
Brown Township	27	\$ 4,253,500.00	\$ 157,537.04	4	\$ 960,000.00	\$ 240,000.00
Burnham Borough	0	\$ -	\$ -	0	\$ -	\$ -
Decatur Township	5	\$ 698,000.00	\$ 139,600.00	0	\$ -	\$ -
Derry Township	38	\$ 6,739,864.00	\$ 177,364.84	0	\$ -	\$ -
Granville Township	19	\$ 2,952,930.00	\$ 155,417.37	0	\$ -	\$ -
Juniata Terrace Borough	0	\$ -	\$ -	0	\$ -	\$ -
Kistler Borough	0	\$ -	\$ -	0	\$ -	\$ -
Lewistown Borough	2	\$ 185,000.00	\$ 92,500.00	0	\$ -	\$ -
McVeytown Borough	0	\$ -	\$ -	0	\$ -	\$ -
Menno Township	3	\$ 371,000.00	\$ 123,666.67	0	\$ -	\$ -
Newton Hamilton Borough	0	\$ -	\$ -	0	\$ -	\$ -
Oliver Township	6	\$ 965,000.00	\$ 160,833.33	0	\$ -	\$ -
Union Township	18	\$ 3,516,783.72	\$ 195,376.87	5	\$ 1,429,800.00	\$ 285,960.00
Wayne Township	17	\$ 2,629,719.00	\$ 154,689.35	0	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Totals</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>\$ 22,716,796.72</b>	<b>\$ 162,262.83</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>\$ 2,389,800.00</b>	<b>\$ 265,533.33</b>

\*Costs are from estimates on building permit applications, excluding land.

Source: Mifflin County Tax Services Bureau

## **SECTION 4: MEMBERS AND STAFF**

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### **4.1 Planning Commission**

At the reorganization in January 2018, the officers of the Mifflin County Planning Commission were elected as follows: Kay Semler, Chair; Dan Dunmire, Vice Chair; and Neal Shawver, Secretary.

#### **Member Development**

Each year the Mifflin County Planning Commission is provided presentations of interest to assist them in better understanding programs that will have or may have a direct impact on the County. Below are a summary of those programs.

#### **Flood Insurance Update**

Dan Fitzpatrick, the state National Flood Insurance Coordinator, gave a presentation via teleconference at the January 2017 meeting of the Mifflin County Planning Commission. He provided an update to his presentation in 2015 on the 2014 Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act. This act was developed in response to the financial stress to the National Flood Insurance Program created by Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy. The subsidy provisions had to be altered and led to increases of 5% to 18% annually. He presented options to reduce premiums including getting an elevation certificate through a surveyor that would challenge the FEMA maps. This is known as a letter of map amendment and must be accepted by FEMA. He also discussed the savings municipalities can receive by participating in the Community Rating System.

#### **Mifflin County School District and The Academy Update**

Jim Estep, the Superintendent of the Mifflin County School District, and Dan Potutschnig, Administrative Director of the Academy of Science and Technology, gave a presentation to the Mifflin County Planning Commission at their March 2017 meeting. Mr. Estep is pushing elementary levels with guided reading. This is where smaller groups are developed to help them reach growth modules. They have also started a new report card system with Kindergarten through third grade and is standards based. Next year, fourth and fifth grade will begin this new system. Secondary students are showing improvement consistently across all AP subject areas. Mr. Estep is trying to get more students into trade and technical schools. He also spoke of cuts in the State budget and district expenses.

Mr. Potutschnig noted that last year a new mechatronics program was proposed and they discussed additional adult education classes. The mechatronics program, an industrial maintenance class for high school students and possibly adults, is a modest-sized class this year and the numbers look more promising next year. In the next 1-2 years, they are looking to establish a CDL and heavy equipment class and may look at welding and computer networking classes. Ag program enrollment has not been high and they have looked at options to improve the program.

Mr. Potutschnig is making positive strides in perceptions of The Academy and has support from the top down with Mr. Estep. He feels that parents still want their children to have college degrees, but the reality is fewer jobs are available for those with college degrees.

#### **Annual Economic Update**

Rob Postal, outgoing President of the Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporate (MCIDC) and incoming County Commissioner, made a joint presentation on economic development

activities in the County with the new MCIDC President, Nick Felice. This presentation was made at the May meeting of the Mifflin County Planning Commission.

Rob reviewed several projects MCIDC is currently working on, including locations at the Industrial Plaza, Asher's, the Industrial Park, and the Locust Road access area. There are currently 28 occupants of the Mifflin County Industrial Plaza of which Nittany Paper is the largest. Most occupants are small businesses, either local or regional. MCIDC has discovered that their niche is helping the local and regional businesses. MCIDC further owns a property in the Mifflin County Industrial Park consisting of 30 acres. He also discussed MCIDC's role with the Governor's Action Team concerning development opportunities, as well the other ongoing economic development related projects included the Primary Health Network building which is under construction, as well as the Mann Edge 2 senior housing project.

### **Annual Transportation Update**

In June of 2017, Tom Zurat, PA Department of Transportation Assistant District Executive for Design for District 2, provided an annual transportation update at the Mifflin County Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Zurat said that Mifflin County is situated in District 2-0, which contains 3,500 miles of roadway and 2,500 state owned bridges. Mifflin County contains 271.5 miles of roadway and 184 state owned bridges. Eighteen of those bridges are structurally deficient with 4.89% of the bridges structurally deficient by deck area. The state average of bridges structurally deficient by deck area is 8.9%.

Mr. Zurat went on to review the current construction projects. Bridge replacement projects include SR 2001 – A02 over a tributary of Jacks Creek in Derry Township costing \$700,000 and SR 22 – A12 at Messer Run in Oliver Township at a cost of \$1.5 million. Three bridge preservation projects are occurring, including SR 2008 in Decatur Township, SR 3002 at East Charles Street and SR 3017 in Wayne Township at a cost of \$4.3 million. The bridge at East Charles Street was scheduled to be a deck replacement, but is being reviewed for a replacement since they discovered a need for a longer turning lane at the nearby intersection. This discovery was made in part from the scoping meeting that included the County.

Mr. Zurat reviewed maintenance projects for 2017, including micro-surfacing of SR 522 from Lewistown to Snyder County, which was recently completed, and Kish Pike Road. Micro-surfacing adds a thin overlay to the road surface in order to put oil back into the roadway to extend the life of the road. Resurfacing of SR 333 from SR 103 to Juniata County, SR 1005 from Yeagertown toward Reedsville and SR 2005 from Electric Avenue to Walnut Street is also scheduled. The paving contract was awarded to Hawbaker at just under \$4 million in April 2017. The micro-surfacing costs just over \$2 million and started in May.

Mr. Zurat then reviewed current design projects that will move toward construction in 2018 including phase 3 of the Potters Mill Gap project in Centre County, the Burnham Interchange improvements for the westbound ramp, the traffic light and realignment project in Derry at Freedom Avenue and Ferguson Valley Road, the signal upgrades in Lewistown Borough along Market and Third Streets and the three bridge replacements in Burnham, Lewistown and Derry.

### **Passenger Rail Update**

In September of 2017, Mark Spada from Western Pennsylvanians for Passenger Rail and Lucinda Beattie from Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership provided an update to the Mifflin County Planning

Commission on passenger train service via conference call. Mark and Lucinda came to a Planning Commission meeting in 2016 to discuss their efforts to expand passenger rail service.

Lucinda began by discussing concerns over the current State budget including eliminating funds for the feasibility study in the multimodal program funds portion. She also expressed concern over the Pennsylvanian line itself as the budget process moves. Previously, the Senate passed a resolution that would authorize a study to review the existing plans that have been done to determine the feasibility of gaining additional passenger rail service. This is all dependent on financing from the revenue package of the budget. Mark echoed Lucinda's concerns and encouraged everyone to voice their concerns to their legislators. Lucinda hopes the legislature will look at short and long-term needs to improve service. The big question is Norfolk Southern's stance because their expectation is there would be public investment provided for improvements. She feels communities along the route should consider what they can do to assist in making improvements as well including Lewistown. Lucinda asked the Mifflin County Commissioners to talk to other Commissioners in neighboring counties about passenger rail service.

### **Natural Gas Cooperative Update**

In October of 2017, Don Kiel of SEDA-COG presented an update to the Mifflin County Planning Commission of the Natural Gas Cooperative, which includes Mifflin County. The cooperative now has membership representing five counties, which has increased from the three founding counties. Natural gas is an environmentally cleaner power choice, but better delivery systems are needed. A lot of Pennsylvanian natural gas production is sent out of state due to lack of access in Pennsylvania. Less than 25% of households have access to natural gas service in all SEDA-COG counties.

SEDA-COG performed regional gas utilization studies to find ways of expanding natural gas service and to identify potential target investment areas in each of the member counties. In Mifflin County, the Milroy interchange area of US 322 was initially identified as a potential investment area. The one project in the Cooperative that is the furthest along is in Centre Hall with Hanover Foods.

The Co-op can own and operate the system and contract out what they can't do. The Co-op could then sell the system to a utility company after the project is complete. The Co-op could also work with a gas company to get service up and running and not own the system. Potential funding sources include the USDA loan program, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the state through the Last Mile Extension Program also known as PIPE, and the Department of Agriculture. Other options being pursued where natural gas line installation is not economically feasible are virtual pipelines and route based delivery systems.

### **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**

In December of 2017, Louise Wyble and Kim Roush, Regional Directors for Associates for Training and Development (A4TD) made a presentation to the Mifflin County Planning Commission on the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).

SCSEP is a training program leading to employment that helps mature workers (55 and up) get back into the workforce. They provide training through host or partnering agencies. Approximately 70,000 mature workers are being trained through 30,000 agencies across the country through this program. The program is 50 years old and is funded by the Department of Labor. A4TD finds agencies to train people and recruit once a month through local Career Link offices. Participants in the program must complete an initial assessment when they first come on board. All participants must have basic computer skills. A4TD is looking for people to participate in Mifflin County and recruit through their mandatory partner, Career Link.

## **4.2 Planning and Development Department**

### **Staff Update**

In April of 2017, Donna Baer retired as the Fiscal Assistant from the Planning and Development Department. She was an important member of the Planning staff for over 17 years.

### **Staff Development**

Staff members of the Planning and Development Department have participated in conferences, workshops and other events through the year to continue their training and professional development.

### **County Planning Directors Association**

Planning Directors from counties throughout the Commonwealth meet several times a year to discuss issues affecting county planning offices and commissions. The County Planning Directors Association is affiliated with the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) and was formalized in 2004 as the County Planning Directors Association. Mifflin County is a member of this organization, and William Gomes has been attending these meetings. The association met four times during 2017 and reviewed and discussed the following: economic development and best practices; integrated water resource management; records retention; trail planning and zoning requirements; PennDOT Connects and planning; economic development and permitting; internet service in rural areas; PA Supreme Court Ruling involving environmental issues; and legislative updates.

### **CDBG: CD and H Practitioners Conference**

On March 20 and 21st, 2017 James Lettiere, Douglas Marks and Stacey Herman attended the Pennsylvania CD&H Practitioners Annual Conference at the Nittany Lion Inn, in State College, PA. This annual conference reviews compliance requirements for the effective and efficient use of Community Development Block Grant and HOME funds and provides updates on legislative actions that impact these programs. The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (PA-DCED) focused on the following financial and programmatic items:

- 2018 Federal CDBG and HOME budgets
- CDBG Program Income guidelines
- Fair Housing
- KPMG monitoring letters
- Language Access Planning
- Budget modifications and revisions
- Community Development and Housing Advisory Committee
- Federal labor standards
- Special assessments
- PA Department of Labor and Industry: PA Prevailing Wage Act and its impact on HOME and CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Programs

### **Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI)**

The Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI) is an affiliate of the PA Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA). The purpose of PMPEI is to provide, develop and promote planning education across Pennsylvania for the general public with specific attention to those involved with municipal planning and development.

The membership on the Board of Directors is composed of elected and appointed officials, members of municipal agencies and staff involved with planning and development, regulation of land uses, and administration of land use codes. Since 2000, William Gomes, has served on the board as one of the appointed members representing the PA Chapter of the American Planning Association. In 2017, he resigned and recommended to the PMPEI Board and the PA Chapter of APA that James Lettiere serve in his place. He was subsequently appointed to that board.

### **The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association 2017 Annual Conference**

From October 22-24, 2017, William Gomes and James Lettiere attended the PA Chapter of the American Planning Associations Annual Conference at the Penn State Conference Center in State College, PA. Sessions attended provided diverse information including topics on: Connecting with the Community; The Legal Aspects of Medical Marijuana in Pennsylvania; Planning for Private Drinking Water Supplies; Land Use Law Update, Trends in GIS for Planning, 2-D Maps to 3-D Thinking; Placemaking Using an Economic Development Strategy; Healthy Communities: Who What and Why; and The PA Ethics Act and its Relevance to Planners.

