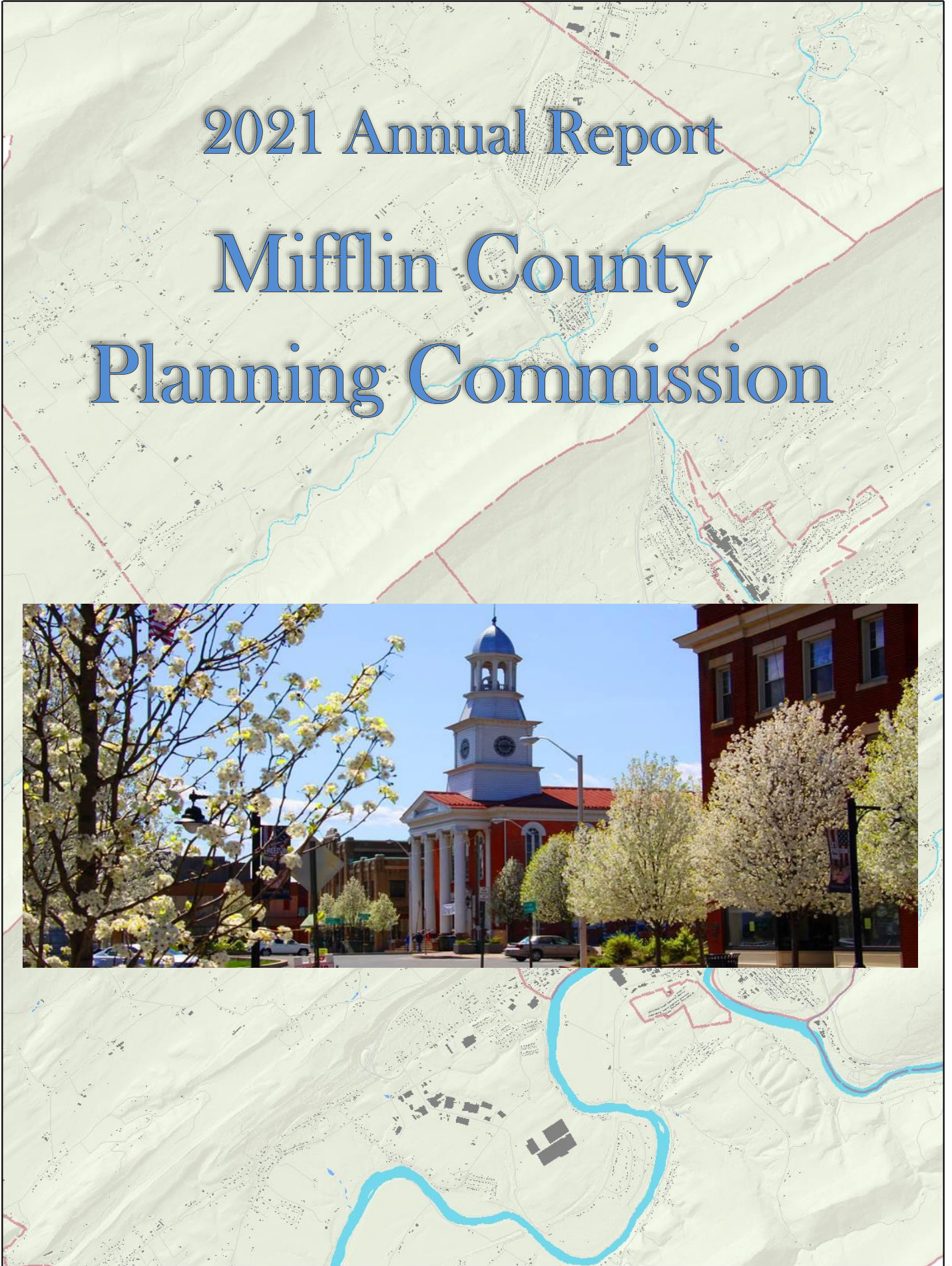


2021 Annual Report
Mifflin County
Planning Commission



***MIFFLIN COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION
2021 ANNUAL REPORT***

Prepared by

Mifflin County Planning and Development Department
Mifflin County Courthouse
20 North Wayne Street
Lewistown, PA 17044
Phone (717) 242-0887 Fax (717) 242-5460
Email mcplanning@mifflinco.org

<http://www.co.mifflin.pa.us/dept/PlanningDev/Pages/default.aspx>

May 11, 2022

MIFFLIN COUNTY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



20 North Wayne Street
Lewistown, PA 17044
Phone (717) 242-0887
Fax (717) 242-5460
mcplanning@mifflinco.org

Mark A. Colussy
Director

Chastity D. Fultz
Community Development Administrator

May 4, 2022

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 2021 Annual Report. For over 50 years, the Planning Commission has been actively involved with planning and community development projects throughout Mifflin County and the surrounding region. Our report for 2021 describes new projects of broad community interest and reports progress on continuing projects.

As we started into 2021, it was the goal to continue to implement our various plans, including our Comprehensive Plan, *Visions for the 21st Century*. Planning Commission members and Planning and Development Department staff have focused on implementing recommendations outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. We were able to get back to our key focus areas after a difficult prior year, which is why we are furnishing this report to you.

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 to you the 2021 Annual Report.

Thank you again for your invaluable help throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Tom Lake
Chair



Progress through Planning

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Mifflin County Board of Commissioners

Kevin P. Kodish
Mark Sunderland
Robert P. Postal, Jr.



The Board of Commissioners is Mifflin 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

Thomas Lake, Chair
Cyle Vogt, Vice Chair
Kent Spicher, Secretary
Michele Bair
Robert Nulton

David Pennebaker
Neal Shawver
Dan Dunmire
Dan Firth
Kay Semler, Alternate

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. This goal can be 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

Mark Colussy, Director
Chastity Fultz, Community Development Administrator
Douglas Marks, Housing Rehabilitation Specialist/Construction Manager
Tiffany Brought, Grants Fiscal Manager
Tiffany Parkes, Planning Technician
Candace Rager, Planning Secretary



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, PA County Planning Directors Association, PA Municipal Planning Education Institute, Area Agency on Aging/Call-A-Ride Services Local Advisory Committee, and the Mifflin County Housing Coalition.

1.4 Planning and Development Committees

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 Mark Colussy Chastity Fultz Doug Marks Robert Nulton

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 Dan Firth

Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Council: The Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Council 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. Each municipality has the opportunity to appoint a member to the Committee.

Clint Aurand Ronald Napikoski Cyle Vogt Kevin O'Donnell Oksana DeArment
Steve Dunkle James Peachey Marie Mulvihill Venus Shade Mark Colussy

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, Centre WISP, Century Link, Comcast, Mifflin County Wireless, Nittany Media, Verizon, Zito), Mifflin County School District, and local government. Effectively addressing both the existing and future telecommunication needs of the county is the central goal. Note: the Internet Advisory Committee did not meet in 2021, but remained as a standing committee.

Clint Aurand Michael Hain Matthew Moore Kristen Ritchey Michael Tate
Craig Bubb John Rhone Kay Semler Gene Wolfkill Mark VanOuse
Doug Cunningham Mark Colussy* Candace Rager* Chastity Fultz* Scott Kramer**

*Staff from Planning & Development Department

**Staff from SEDA-COG

Mifflin County Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee: The Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee is responsible for updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan and evaluating the plan annually. Note: the Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee did not meet in 2021, but remained as a standing committee.

Brenda Aumiller Sharina Harshbarger Paul Maidens Ronald Napikoski Matt Stringer
Craig Bubb Bob Henry Matt Moore Pat Shoop Ann Thompson
Rex Fink *Phil Lucas *Mark Colussy *Chastity Fultz

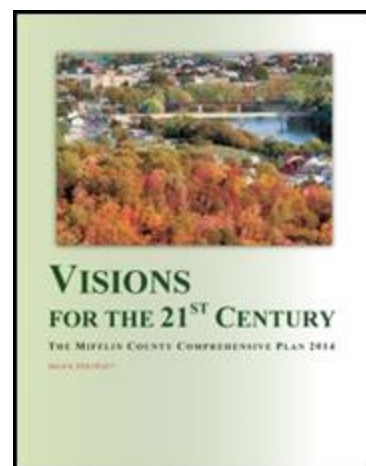
*Mark Colussy and Chastity Fultz serve as staff representatives from the Planning and Development Department. Phil Lucas represents the Public Safety Office.

SECTION 2: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1 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.

Since the Plan’s adoption, the Mifflin County Planning Commission decided to annually work toward implementing some features in the plan. This past year, the focus was to follow-up on activities related to transportation, connectivity, open space/recreation and natural/manmade resource protection and development.



2.2 Covid-19 Relief

On March 11 2021, the President of the United States signed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) into law. Where the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act fell short in 2020 in giving funds to local governments, ARPA starts to fill the gap to local governments starting in 2021.



Municipality	Max Total Allocation
Armagh Township	\$ 397,743.00
Bratton Township	\$ 133,871.92
Brown Township	\$ 426,945.72
Burnham Borough	\$ 208,605.74
Decatur Township	\$ 322,590.52
Derry Township	\$ 764,189.92
Granville Township	\$ 521,880.70
Juniata Terrace Borough	\$ 55,998.02
Kistler Borough	\$ 33,075.48
Lewistown Borough	\$ 850,437.34
McVeytown Borough	\$ 34,645.50
Menno Township	\$ 200,441.54
Newton Hamilton Borough	\$ 20,619.84
Oliver Township	\$ 226,608.84
Union Township	\$ 368,749.64
Wayne Township	\$ 262,824.40
Mifflin County	\$ 8,961,766.00

Figure 1: Total County ARPA Allocations

Within the new law, \$362 billion would be put into a State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) to allow for local governments to receive relief from the Covid-19 pandemic. The Rescue Plan will provide needed relief to local governments to enable them to continue to support the public health response and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable economic recovery. In addition to helping these governments address the revenue losses they have experienced as a result of the crisis, it will help them cover the costs incurred due to responding to the public health emergency. The ARPA dollars can then be used to provide support for a recovery, including resources to invest in infrastructure, including water, sewer, and broadband services.

When the ARPA was passed, the Commissioners and Planning Staff anticipated a need to get information out to the municipalities. As information was released by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Planning Staff sent notices out to municipalities regarding the funds and their need to apply for the funds via DCED’s Single Application process. Each of the county’s municipalities successfully applied for the allocated funds. The total allocation for each municipality in the county is listed in *Figure 1*, with half of the funds distributed in the Summer

of 2021 and the final 50% approximately a year later. Funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31, 2026. Once information was released, County officials then acted quickly to organize and host a municipal outreach workshop, and invited all municipal officials in the county to attend the event.

County officials and staff teamed with SEDA-COG to provide information at the workshop, held on August 26, 2021 at the Derry Township Municipal Building.

As the first tranche of funds were released to the counties and municipalities, the U.S. Dept. of the Treasury released an Interim Final Rule to guide the use of the funds. At the time, it was unknown when the Final Rule would be released, thus it was advised at the time to wait until the Final Rule was released to spend any of the funds. Additional illumination to the Final Rule and planning for the use of the funds would continue into 2022.

Another grant source to be released to aid the Commonwealth with Covid-19 relief is the Covid-19 Hospitality Industry Relief Program (CHIRP). On February 5, 2021, the Governor signed into law legislation that set aside \$145 million in funds to aid hospitality industry businesses adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the program required counties to establish grant programs for eligible businesses. In order to be eligible for the use of the CHIRP funds, all counties needed to contract with one or more Certified Economic Development Organization (CEDO) or Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). Once under contract, the CEDO or CDFI in turn disbursed the funding through grant agreements with eligible businesses, subject to requirements set forth in Section 134-C of the Act 1 of, 2021. Businesses considered eligible were what was considered in the hospitality industry, mainly overnight lodging businesses and restaurants. The Mifflin County Commissioners signed an agreement to work with SEDA-COG to administer the program. By March 15, 2021, the contracted CEDO(s) or CDFI(s) must then process the applications from eligible businesses within the county on a rolling basis until the county's block grant funds were exhausted by or before June 15, 2021. County Planning staff coordinated with SEDA-COG staff to ultimately put 20 grants in front of the commissioners to approve, totaling \$512,576.

2.3 Open Space and Rural Recreation

The Mifflin County Planning and Development Department continued 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.

Throughout 2021, the council, with the assistance of the Planning and Development Department and the United Way, focused on completing the Juniata River Trail project, developing a trail feasibility study to connect Victory Park with Rec Park and Kish Park and initiated investigations of recreation related wayfinding signage throughout Mifflin County.

In 2019, County officials decided, with the support of the Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Council, the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau and Lewistown Borough, to expand its first multi-purpose recreation trail, the S.H. Rothermel Trail (Juniata River Trail), along the Juniata River. Phase I of the trail, within Lewistown Borough, was completed in November of 2018. It provides walking, jogging and cycling opportunities and covers a three-quarter mile area. Phase II of the trail, which is also within the Borough of Lewistown, will continue work completed with Phase 1 by providing an ADA accessible trail approximately half mile in length extending from Crystal Springs Avenue west along the north shore of the Juniata River to the border between the Borough of Lewistown and Granville Township in the area of State Street, as depicted in *Figure 2*. The trail will be located on the towpath of the old Juniata Division of the Pennsylvania Canal. Phase II of the trail will also create a western trailhead at the State Fire Academy property. Currently, there

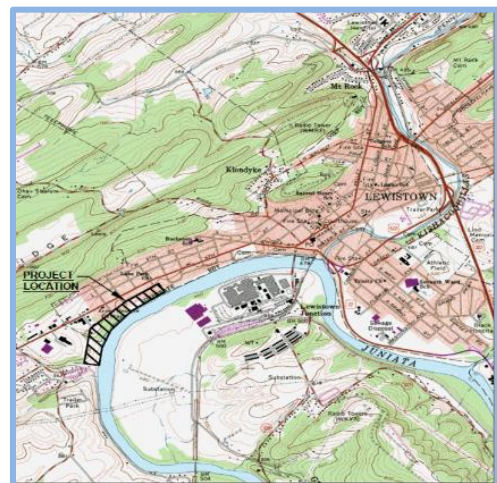


Figure 2: River Phase II Trail Location

is only one entrance and exit for Phase I and this phase will provide a secondary point of access to the trail. This action will also greatly improve ADA accessibility. The Borough of Lewistown has signed a memorandum of understanding with Mifflin County to maintain this new trail segment once constructed.

Unlike Phase I, where the entire trail length is owned by the Borough of Lewistown, Phase II will cross private property owned by Juniata Concrete Company and state owned land used by the State Fire Academy. Outreach began to the two property owners following the completion of Phase I. Both property owners were positive about the proposed half mile extension and required property easements. An easement across the Juniata Concrete Company property was signed on July 8, 2019. An easement across the Fire Academy property was more involved with the first step being state legislative approval that also occurred in the summer of 2019. The Fire Academy easement was drafted by the Department of Government Services in October of 2019 and executed in March 19, 2021.

Plans to extend the trail involved the same two grant agencies as Phase I, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). An initial application to DCED in May for \$250,000 and a revised second application to DCNR was submitted for \$295,000. The grant applications are complemented by financial assistance from Mifflin County Act 13 funds and the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau. Mifflin County was awarded funding from both DCED and DCNR. The project went to final design and permit submission by the Mifflin County Engineer, the EADS Group, in 2021. Depending upon securing of a Joint Permit from DEP will dictate when the project can go to bid and construction, which is still pending at the time of this report. With the

eventual completion of Phase II of the River Trail, the new section will connect to a continuous loop of just over three (3) miles in a one-way direction, including the R.H. Rothermel Trail, Victory Park, the Downtown Connector along Water Street, the Kish Riverwalk, and then the walking loop around Rec Park as shown in *Figure 3*. The expanded length gives hope to the possibility of future 5 or 10k runs, with the majority of the route being off of the typical street alignment, apart from the Downtown Connector, which is specifically aimed at bringing individuals off of the trail and into the downtown merchants and vice versa.



Figure 3: River Trail individual sections from Phase II to Rec Park

As a continuation of the efforts to extend the trail network, the Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Council also began working with the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department on developing a feasibility study that would connect Victory Park, the Kish River Walk, Rec Park in Lewistown Borough and Kish Park in Derry Township. This trail connection was a recommendation in Mifflin County's Greenways, Open Space and Rural Recreation Plan (2010) and the Lewistown River Walk Trail and Feasibility Study (2005). In order to move the project forward, a partnership was required to fund the development of the study, which included Mifflin County, the Mifflin County Parks and Recreation Council, Derry Township, Lewistown Borough, the Victory Park Association, and the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society. The study will explore if and how this trail would work as well as a possible connection with the Stone Arch Bridge. The firm of YSM, Landscape Architects, was hired to undertake the study. A draft of the study was completed in January 2020 and finalized in August 2020.

Another joint project that ties all of the other trail projects together is the consideration of a naming and signage convention that can be expanded upon with additional development of the trail network. As discussed at a Park & Rec Council meeting, connections could possibly be made with Penn State to see if any professors or students would be interested in taking on such a design challenge. Planning Staff was then able to connect with a Graphic Design professor, who was teaching a course to take a real world problem and suggest a solution graphically. A Spring 2021 class would allow a masters level graphic design student to design a logo for the trail network, prompt discourse on an inclusive naming strategy, and suggest wayfinding and trailhead signage along the new River Trail Phase II area. One naming convention that was discussed was the ‘Three Chiefs’ Trail’ since eventually the trail network could deviate from the Juniata River greenway, and into further reaches of the county. The Three Chiefs’ Trail concept would pay homage to the variety of Native American history and the colorful stories of the famous Chiefs that called Mifflin County home. After the section of the course was complete, all design elements were submitted to the Planning office for possible use, as shown in *Figure 4*.



Figure 4: Trail Logo Concept

2.4 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 eighteen years, the Planning and Development Department has assisted the township with reviewing approximately 221 subdivision or land development plans.

This type of contract service agreement is available to any municipality 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.

As part of the land development review process, a plan was submitted on behalf of the Mifflin County School District to install a \$26 million solar system, with the largest array being proposed behind the high school at Highland Park. The School District was contracted with the McClure Company to develop a Guaranteed Energy Savings Agreement in 2008, which at the time, was expected to look at improvements such as ventilation, smart temperature controls, roofing, windows, classroom enhancements, as well as space planning. The current scope to install the solar system was part of a fourth amendment to the agreement, with the goal to provide a net savings to the district of \$8.9 million. Considering that neither the Land Development Ordinance, nor the Zoning Ordinance has many specific provisions regarding solar development, County staff provided the township with a variety of model ordinances for consideration. Secondly, County Planning staff partnered with the Penn State Sustainable Communities Collaborative personnel to find a professor and class at the University that wanted to assist the county with some possible new solar ordinance provisions. Working with Penn State, a Law Class was assigned to the project, which would explore both stand-alone ordinances, as well as a possible amendment to a Zoning Ordinance. The project was broken into two parts, with part one in the Fall 2021 Semester looking at the background of the community and need for solar, and part one in the Spring of 2022 to explore an actual product for Zoning. Director Colussy was able to attend the first semester’s work during student presentations on December 1, 2021. The final product is expected at the end of the Spring 2022 semester.

2.5 Revolving Loan Fund Program

In 2005, Mifflin County established its Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) 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 was to create or save one job for each \$10,000 loaned with a maximum loan amount of \$50,000. Funding for this program is based on a grant provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program.

The program guidelines were established 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 MCS Bank. Over the past fourteen 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.

2.6 Transportation Planning

Monument Square Streetscape Project - Phase VI

The Monument Square Streetscape Project is part of a multi-phase project started in 2004 to further the goals of Mifflin County and Lewistown Borough to create a safe, attractive and welcoming environment coming into Downtown Lewistown for both residents and visitors. The most recent phase of the project to go to construction, Phase V, wrapped up with the installation of decorative light standards in January of 2020. Phase V of the project included South Main Street below the Embassy Theatre and then turns east at the intersection of Water Street and goes one block to meet the Mann Edge Terrace II senior housing project.

Monument Square Phase VI is the latest phase of the Monument Square streetscape project to go through preliminary engineering and design. Phase VI is focused on the streetscape along North Wayne Street along the properties owned by the county to tie in the “governmental complex” to the downtown, as shown in *Figure 5*. Numerous pedestrians are walking to and from the courthouse on any given business day, thus the concept of Phase VI was born. Director Colussy had attended a Borough Planning Commission meeting on September 2, 2020 and a council meeting on September 14, 2020 to get the buy-in and support of the borough, and got it. Timing wise, the county was hopeful to connect the new streetscape work to the renovation project happening at the Annex building. The county ultimately put in a Multi-Modal Transportation Fund (MTF) application to DCED, and was given a partial award of \$500,000. This project is expected to go to final design in the beginning of 2022.

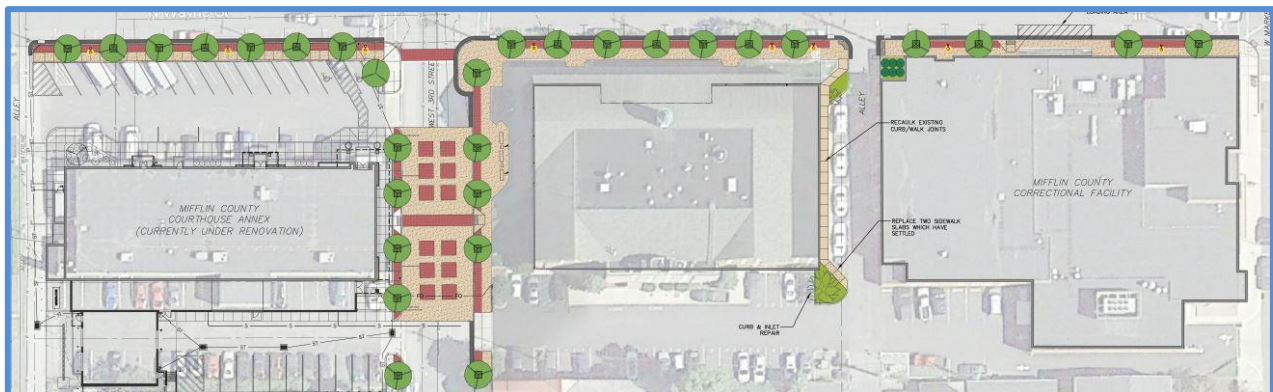


Figure 5: Monument Square Streetscape Phase VI – North Wayne Street along Governmental Complex

Reedsville Streetscape Project

Brown Township continued to work with the county on their streetscape project for Reedsville in 2021. Previously in May of 2018, PennDOT awarded \$834,610 to Mifflin County through the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Transportation Block Grant program to assist in the development of the Reedsville Streetscape Project. This project was designed to encompass three blocks along Main Street in Reedsville from Tony Street to near the old fire house. Aside from sidewalk replacement or installation, the project will include trees, pedestrian level decorative lighting, improved stormwater facilities and better delineated crosswalks where appropriate. The EADS Group was chosen as the project engineer.

Following the kick-off meeting in 2018 involving PennDOT staff, township officials and the consulting engineer, it was determined that a significant portion of the existing sidewalks were on private property instead of in the public right-of-way. The township had to work through acquiring additional right-of-way for the areas the sidewalks would be improved. This process was completed in February of 2020. The project could then go to final design, and final construction plans were developed by the EADS Group and approved by PennDOT in the first half of 2020 and put out for bid via PennDOT's ECMS system. The contract was awarded to G&R Charles Excavating, LTD on February 4, 2021. The construction began in the Spring of 2021 and is expected to wrap up in the Spring of 2022, with the decorative lighting being the last key elements to be installed, as shown in *Figure 6*.

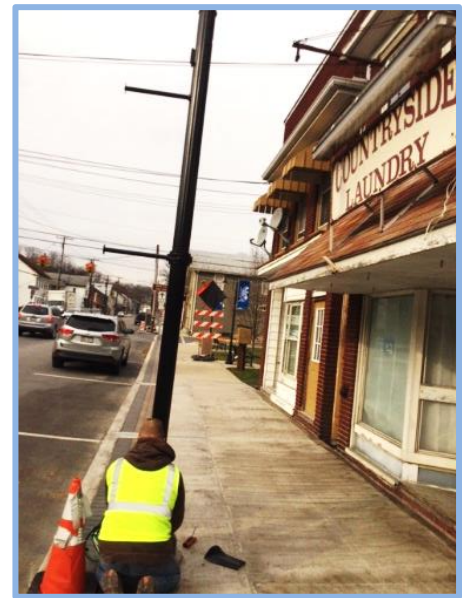


Figure 6: Reedsville Streetscape

Mifflin County Active Transportation Plan

PennDOT Deputy Secretary Jennie (Granger) Louwerse helped secure funds to develop a train station feasibility study in 2019. The overall goal of the Lewistown Train Station Improvement/Feasibility Study was to address expanded use of the facility to make it into a potential transportation center and to address ADA accessibility issues. The results of that study were finalized in a report on August 14, 2020, which is available in the planning office. Not only did the study examine improvements to the train station building itself, but it also looked at safe multi-modal connections to Delaware Avenue towards the Memorial Bridge over the Juniata River. After Deputy Secretary Granger saw the county's interest in looking at improving active transportation connections from the Train Station to the Downtown, she helped secure funds to develop an Active Transportation Plan for Mifflin County.

People walk, bicycle, and otherwise use their own power to travel around Mifflin County for a variety of reasons. They do so for their health, for the environment, to save on transportation costs, or to make ends meet. This kind of non-motorized, human-powered travel is also known as "active transportation." Having dedicated places for people to walk and bike makes a difference to all travelers and has broader benefits to the community. Dedicated places to walk and bike improve safety, help non-drivers of all ages reach their daily destinations, and provide routes to tour the town and countryside. These features help retain and attract residents seeking communities where the outdoors is an accessible part of everyday life.

PennDOT approved a contract with McMahon Associates, Inc. as the supervising firm for the development of an Active Transportation Plan for Mifflin County on October 8, 2021. McMahon utilized Gannett Fleming, Inc. and Sowinski Sullivan Architects, PC as sub-consultants. County officials were then tasked with the formation of a Steering Committee, thus an open house was scheduled for January 25, 2022 to seek possible interested individuals to commit to participating in the development of the plan. The plan is expected to be developed beginning in 2022 and wrap-up by the end of the year.

SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Mifflin County 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 County Commissioners appointed Planning Director Mark Colussy to serve on the MPO board.

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 (LRTP). The LRTP is a multi-modal plan, which describes performance measures, assesses the transportation needs and recommends a list of projects to be developed and delivered over the life of the plan. This plan is linked to the SEDA-COG Unified Planning Work Program that in the past provided financial assistance toward the development of the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan and the Mill Road/Electric Avenue Interchange Improvement Study.

The MPO also reviews and recommends projects submitted for the state Multimodal Transportation Fund, federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA Set-Aside) program, federal Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Local Access Road, and program funds. The types of projects evaluated include bicycle, pedestrian, historic preservation, bridge, public transit, and roadway access enhancements. Examples of recent TA Set-Aside program funds impacting Mifflin County are the Monument Square Streetscape Project – Phase V in Lewistown that was completed in early 2020 and the Reedsville Streetscape Project in Brown Township that was completed in early 2022. Additional projects include the ARC funded Commerce Drive Expansion project in Armagh Township, which is seeking additional funding, and hopes to begin construction in 2022.

Other recent MPO planning activities have included a Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and implementing an Active Transportation Committee. There is also an updated Strategic Plan and an updated Long-Range Transportation Plan. These plans assess regional transportation needs and prioritize strategies for enhancing the region's transportation system, economic development, and quality of life. The plans are all available for download on SEDA-COG's website at <https://seda-cog.org/departments/transportation/>.

State Transportation Commission

Every two years the State Twelve Year Program (TYP) is updated. The current 2021 TYP was adopted in the summer of 2020 and is part of a systematic way to prioritize state transportation resources/funds. It is very competitive to get new, local projects added to the TYP, particularly the first four years of the program. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is considered the first four years of the TYP. Mifflin County decided to take a more proactive position in late 2017 to assist municipalities with bridges by authorizing the collection of a five-dollar fee tied to vehicle registrations. You can see a visual depiction of current and future transportation projects on the *TIP Map* on page 13, courtesy of PennDOT's online One Map, which can be accessed at gis.penndot.gov/OneMap/.

In 2018, Mifflin County developed a program to address both the large and small structurally deficient municipal bridges throughout the county. The Local Use Fee, collected by PennDOT when vehicles are registered, provided the impetus for a larger infrastructure initiative that will total over \$3.5 million. The county will be using approximately \$200,000 per year generated from the Local Use Fee to pay off a Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank loan from PennDOT. The loan, plus the PennDOT grant of up to \$2 million and a 10% contribution from the participating municipalities will finance the municipal bridge program. To date, the following bridges have been completed within the Local Bridge program: Strodes Run Road Bridge between Granville and Oliver Township, a bridge bundle of Hickory Lane – Renno and Renno Road in Menno and Union Townships, Loop Road in Wayne Township and Shindle Road in Decatur

Township. The county also competed work on the Dorcas Street bridge. The county also has agreements in place to do the following bridges: Brown Township's West Railroad St, Derry Township's Nolan Drive, Union Township's Mechanic Street and Kish Street.

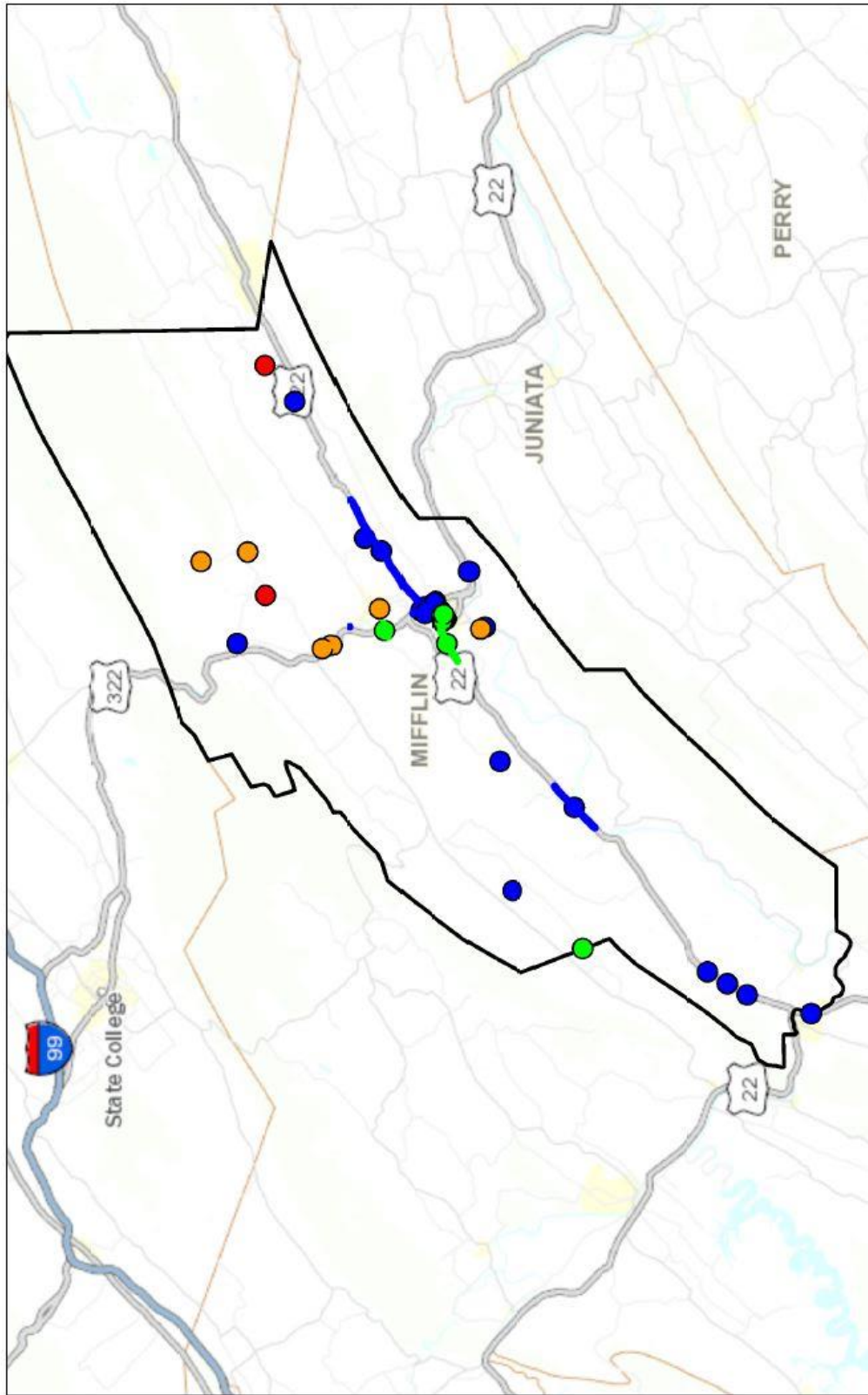
As progress was made on advancing local bridge repairs, additional municipal outreach was needed as the set of bridge inspection reports were completed. To parallel the outreach needed for the newest Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), County Planning staff sent a questionnaire out to all the municipalities asking for input on transportation needs, including traditional roadway improvements, safety concerns, local bridge priorities, and bike and pedestrian concerns. Municipal feedback and inspection reports resulted in the top two priority bridges over 20 feet in length to be recommended by Mifflin County for inclusion in the 2023 TYP. Other bridges less than 20 feet in length will be targeted through this initiative at a later date.

The process to update the next TIP began in March 2021, and a new TYP will be adopted in the summer of 2022. As part of the process, Keller Engineers, which is under contract to do bridge inspections, will work with county representatives and SEDA-COG in developing a new list to submit to PennDOT. During their review of bridges 20 feet or longer, Keller Engineers will develop recommendations based on safety and traffic concerns, the project location, and specific needs of the community.

Also of importance to Mifflin County are the ongoing improvements along State Route 322 into Centre County. A groundbreaking ceremony was held in the fall of 2014 for the Potters Mills Gap Project, which is part of a three-phase construction project. Phase III began in 2018 and was completed at the end of 2020. As part of this process, a "Needs Analysis" of the Route 322 corridor was completed in 2018. In February of 2019, Governor Wolf announced a \$5 million dollar award in order to begin preliminary engineering design that will ultimately lead to the completion of the rest of the work needed for the Route 322 corridor. As part of the announcement, additional funding over the next 10 years will be provided to complete this "missing link", entitled the State College Area Connector (SCAC). The SCAC would ultimately connect Mifflin County to Centre County with a four lane divided highway for the entire length of the route. In order to move this initiative forward, PennDOT began to undertake an innovative and new approach to pre-planning the route as part of a new type of study entitled a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL). The PEL would look at a variety of alternatives and decide on the top one or two best routes that had the least social, cultural and environmental impact to expand the balance of the 322 corridor from the newly completed Potters Mills Gap project to where the four-lane highway begins again near the Route 45 interchange. The results of the PEL is expected to be released to the public sometime in 2022.



Mifflin County TIP Map



May 11, 2022



- TIP - Completed
- TIP - Completed
- TIP - Under Construction
- TIP - Under Construction
- TIP - In Development
- TIP - In Development
- TIP - In Development
- TIP - Future Development

PennDOT

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Mifflin County Community Development Block Grant

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, Brown, Derry and Granville Townships and Lewistown Borough.

Derry, Granville and Brown Townships Boards of Supervisors and the Lewistown Borough Council direct the use of the funds in their respective municipalities and have the sole discretion to allocate their CDBG funds to eligible and fundable projects. However, agencies desiring to apply for non-county CDBG funds may petition those municipalities for CDBG funds. 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 2021 Application Status

Each year, local municipalities, authorities and agencies are invited to submit proposals to the Mifflin County 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, objective 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 through Mifflin County's 2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. A public hearing was held June 24, 2021 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 Mifflin County Planning Commission on the 2021 CDBG application and prior years' funding. Following this public hearing, the CDBG/Housing Rehabilitation Advisory Committee met to prioritize projects that were submitted to the Mifflin County Commissioners to consider. The final public hearing was held on September 30, 2021 by the Mifflin County Commissioners who approved funding single family, owner occupied housing rehabilitation. Public hearings were also held in Brown, Derry, and Granville Townships, and the Borough of Lewistown resulting in the approval of a total of six projects, which are shown in Tables 3B, 3C, 3D and 3E on the following pages. The governing body of each municipality decides which projects to fund and do not have a formalized application process.

On October 7, 2021, the Mifflin County Commissioners adopted a resolution recommending approval to DCED for the projects and funding amounts listed in Table 3A-3E inclusive. The county's CDBG application was submitted to the PA-DCED on October 28, 2021. This application was made for Mifflin County and on behalf of Brown, Derry, and Granville Townships and the Lewistown Borough. The cumulative total of CDBG funds for the county and on behalf of those entitlement municipalities is \$701,868.00.

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 2011-2015 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 community development 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 2021 CDBG Allocation

The county’s 2021 CDBG allocation is \$233,028.00. The following table, *Table 3A*, delineates the recommended funding amount for each project for the county’s 2021 aggregate CDBG application, not including the four separate entitlement communities that the application is filed on behalf of.

Table 3A MIFFLIN COUNTY			
		Project Activity	Funding Amount
1.	Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation	Housing rehabilitation for an income eligible single-family home owner (project and delivery costs)	\$191,083.00
2.	Administration	Planning and administration activities	\$41,945.00
	Total Mifflin County CDBG Funding:		\$233,028.00

Mifflin County Project Status

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2021.

Wayne Township – Cedar Crest Area Stormwater, Water and Sewer Improvement Project

This project consists of the replacement of existing tuberculed and undersized water lines in the area with the installation of new, upsized water lines, allowing for better water service. The installation of four new fire hydrants will allow for enhanced fire protection. Stormwater improvements include the replacement of existing and the addition of new stormwater inlets and piping to control stormwater. Installation of a new manhole and piping on existing sewer line will also occur. Lastly, new bituminous paving will be installed over all affected streets to control stormwater runoff and improve the roadway surface.

Engineering for this project was completed by the EADS Group, Lewistown/Altoona. A total of three bids were received. The low bidder for the project was HRI, Inc. of State College in the amount of \$1,022,252.00. A contract was signed on August 26, 2021. Actual construction began on November 15, 2021. Work progressed well over the winter with final paving to be completed in late April 2022.

This project was funded from FFY’s 2017, 2018 and a 2019 CDBG Competitive grant. Wayne Township is contributing a portion of their allotted American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to complete the contract. Due to product delivery setbacks related to the pandemic and supplier

backlog, Mount Union Municipal Authority contributed funds to change the main water line from PVC to Ductile Iron to ensure the project could begin in a timely manner.



3.2 Brown Township Community Development Block Grant

Brown Township 2021 CDBG Allocation

Brown Township’s 2021 CDBG allocation is \$93,876.00. The table below, *Table 3B*, delineates the recommended funding amounts for each project within the county’s 2021 aggregate CDBG application on behalf of Brown Township.

Table 3B BROWN TOWNSHIP			
		Project Activity	Funding Amount
1.	Walnut Street Sidewalk Project from Main to Maple Street	Installation of new and replacement of existing sidewalks along Walnut Street that includes construction, easements, engineering and delivery of \$4,000.00.	\$76,979.00
2.	Planning and Administration	Administrative salaries and benefits	\$16,897.00
	Total CDBG Funding		\$93,876.00

Brown Township Project Status

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2021.

Brown Township – ADA Ramp and truncated dome replacement project in Reedsville

This project consisted of removal and replacement of one ramp located at Walnut and Church Streets. The existing ramp and sidewalk were removed and replaced to meet current ADA standards. Patch paving around the ramps was also included. Requests for Proposals were sent to several contractors and two contractor firms submitted proposals. Solid State Masonry of Lewistown was the lowest bidder and a contract was entered into on January 10, 2022 to start work. The project was completed in February 2022. Engineering for this project was completed by the Buchart Horn, Inc. of State College and paid for by CDBG. This project was funded from FFY 2018.



3.3 Derry Township Community Development Block Grant

Derry Township 2021 CDBG Allocation

Derry Township’s 2021 CDBG allocation is \$129,448.00. The table below, *Table 3C*, delineates the recommended funding amounts for each project within the county’s 2021 aggregate CDBG application on behalf of Derry Township.

Table 3C DERRY TOWNSHIP			
		Project Activity	Funding Amount
1.	Derry Township Senior Center Improvements	Renovations at the Derry Township Senior Center to include flooring replacement, entry door replacement, countertop replacement in restrooms, replacement of hot water heater, and repairs to exterior. Estimate includes construction, engineering and delivery of \$5,500.00.	\$72,587.00
2.	Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation	Housing rehabilitation for an income eligible single-family home owner, which includes project and delivery costs.	\$33,561.00
3.	Planning and Administration	Administrative salaries and benefits.	\$23,300.00
	Total CDBG Funding		\$129,448.00

Derry Township Project Status

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2021.

Road Reconstruction of East Walnut Street Extended, Lewistown

This project consisted of milling of the entire street and installation of a bituminous scratch/leveling course followed by a 1.5” topcoat of 9.5 mm bituminous paving. A concrete headwall and associated stormwater piping were also replaced. Bidding was conducted during July-September 2021, the project had to be re-bid several times due to a number of issues. A contract was entered into on October 15th with the low bidder, Jay Fulkroad & Sons, Inc. of McAlisterville in the amount of \$43,384.45. Work was completed on October 19, 2021. This project was funded with FFY 2018 funds. The engineer for this project was Buchart Horn, Inc. of State College and was paid for with CDBG funds.



3.4 Granville Township Community Development Block Grant

Granville Township 2021 CDBG Allocation

Granville Township’s 2021 CDBG allocation is \$105,253.00. The table on the following page, *Table 3D*, delineates the recommended funding amounts for each project within the county’s 2021 aggregate CDBG application on behalf of Granville Township.

Table 3D GRANVILLE TOWNSHIP			
		Project Activity	Funding Amount
1.	Hawstone Sewer Extension	Sewer line extension along Hawstone Road (SR 333) from approximately Tower Hill Road to Hilti House Lane. Estimate includes construction, engineering and delivery of \$5,000.00.	\$86,308.00
2.	Planning and Administration	Administrative salaries and benefits.	\$18,945.00
	Total CDBG Funding		\$105,253.00

Granville Township Project Status

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2021.

Granville Run Road –Road Reconstruction Project

This project consisted of reconstruction of the entire length of Granville Run Road (T-311). Road reconstruction included milling notches at existing driveways and the intersection with State Route 103, installation of a 3” base course of 19 mm bituminous paving followed by a 1.5” 9.5 mm topcoat of bituminous paving. A stone shoulder was installed on both sides of the roadway. The road was approximately 4092’ long by an average width of 15’. A total of three bids were received on June 30, 2021. The low bidder was Glenn O. Hawbaker of State College in the amount of \$136,860.00. A contract was signed on July 26, 2021. Construction was completed in late August 2021. This project was funded with CDBG FFY’s 2018 and 2019.





3.5 Lewistown Borough Community Development Block Grant

Lewistown Borough 2021 CDBG Allocation

Lewistown Borough’s 2021 CDBG allocation is \$140,263.00. The table below, *Table 3E*, delineates the recommended funding amounts for each project within the county’s 2021 aggregate CDBG application on behalf of Lewistown Borough.

Table 3E LEWISTOWN BOROUGH			
		Project Activity	Funding Amount
1.	Road Reconstruction of Various Streets on South Side of Lewistown	Road reconstruction of Lincoln Avenue, 700/800 block of South Wayne Street, 700 block of South Grand Street, 400 block of South Juniata Street, West Fleming Avenue (Main Street to UGI Facility), Washington Avenue (Main Street to South Grand Street), 200 block of South Wayne Street that includes construction and delivery of \$8,000.00.	\$119,224.00
2.	Planning and Administration	Administrative salaries and benefits	\$21,039.00
	Total CDBG Funding		\$140,263.00

Lewistown Borough Project Status

The following is a summary of work in progress during calendar year 2021.

Road Reconstruction and ADA Ramp and Truncated Dome Replacement Project

This project consisted of removal and replacement of approximately eighteen ramps located along South Wayne Street, South Grand Street, Susquehanna Avenue and West Wilson Street in Lewistown, followed by road reconstruction of these roadways. Engineering for this project was completed by the EADS Group, Lewistown and paid for by Lewistown Borough.

The curbs and existing sidewalks were removed and replaced to meet current ADA standards at each ramp location. Patch paving around the ramps was also included. Several of the ramps were in the PENNDOT right-of-way and required a Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP). This portion of the project was completed in mid-late September. The low bidder for the ADA ramp replacement portion of the project was Bowman Excavation/Paving/Concrete of Bellefonte in the amount of \$75,377.01.

The roadway reconstruction portion of the project consisted of milling of the existing road surface, followed by a bituminous scratch/leveling course and a final topcoat of 9.5 mm of bituminous paving. The low bidder for the road reconstruction portion of the project was Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc. of State College in the amount of \$196,017.50. This portion of the project was completed in late October 2021. The overall project was funded with FFY's 2018 and 2019 and Lewistown Borough Liquid Fuel funds.



3.6 Mifflin County Microenterprise Loan Program

The Microenterprise loan program began in 1997 as a collaboration between Mifflin County, Granville and Derry Townships, 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 several years. The county has not completed any loan transactions since 2016. However, the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department is exploring other options available for the reuse of these funds.

3.7 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 515 homes totaling more than \$5,000,000 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, 43 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 second mortgage is filed when the rehabilitation job is complete. Annual income guidelines are set by The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at \$36,500/year or less for one-person households, plus at least \$5,200/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.

SECTION 4: LAND USE

4.1 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 Mifflin County Planning Commission 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.

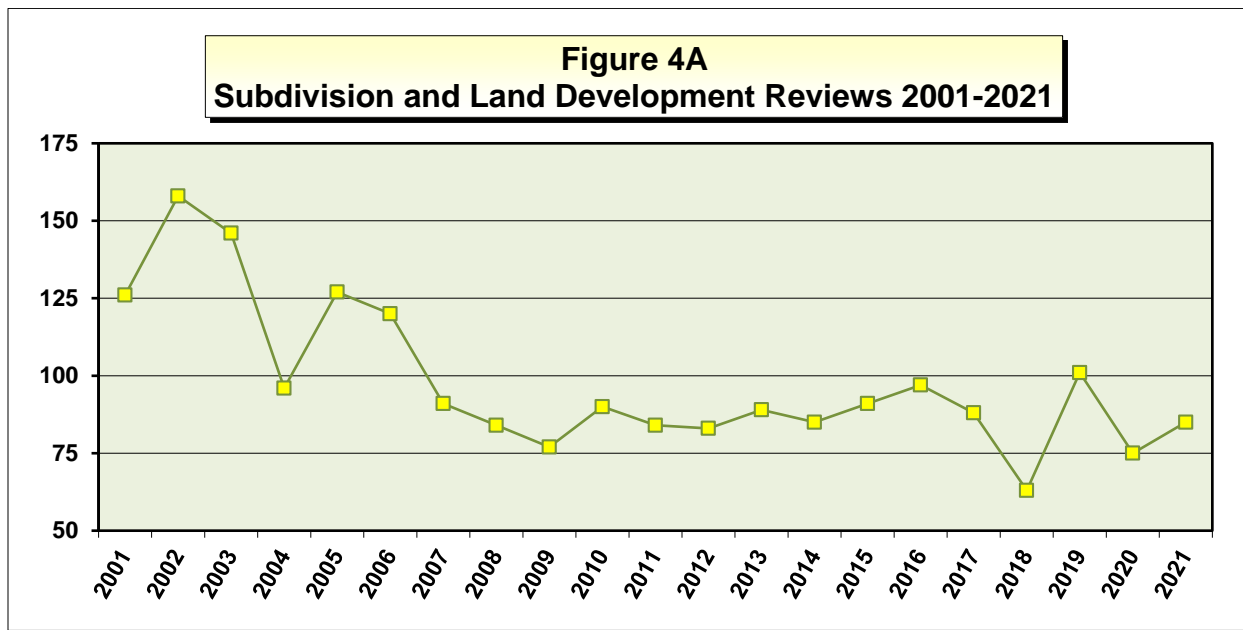


Figure 4A above shows the number of plans reviewed since 2001. The trend since 2005 has been a decreasing number with minor increases in 2010, to a slightly lower consistent number of plans during 2011-2015. However, in 2015 and in 2016, the number of plans rose slightly each year above the 2011 level, and then slightly decreased during 2017. Plan submissions significantly decreased by twenty-eight percent (28%) during 2018. In 2019, the number of plans reviewed increased by sixty-two percent (62%) to 101, which is the highest single year total in 10 years. In 2020, the total number of plans decreased by fourteen percent (14%) to 75. In 2021, the number plans increased to 85 to match the 10 year average of 85 plans a year.

Table 4A below shows the number of plans reviewed from 2013 through 2021, with lot additions and lot line adjustments, which are considered minor subdivisions. Of the plans reviewed in 2021, new residential lots were created, covering 117 acres. There were no major subdivisions submitted for review in 2021. Among the land development plans proposed, Ten (10) new commercial or industrial lots were created, accounting for 3 acres of developed land, and 139,130 square feet of new commercial/industrial building square footage.

Table 4A Subdivision and Land Development Plan Reviews 2013-2021				
Year	Minor Subdivision	Major Subdivision	Land Developments	Total
2013	70	1	17	88
2014	66	2	17	85
2015	76	1	16	93
2016	82	0	15	97
2017	65	0	23	88
2018	38	0	25	63
2019	77	0	24	101
2020	64	1	10	75
2021	73	0	17	90
Totals	577	5	164	780

Figure 4B below shows the percentage of plans submitted by type. Of the 85 plans 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 85 plans reviewed consisted of five types as noted within the legend in Figure 3B. The majority of the plans submitted accounted for 42% were minor subdivision plans, while 31% were lot additions. A lot addition involves adding a portion of land from one lot to another. Land Development plans accounted for 19%, which are plans for constructing buildings and developing property. Lot line adjustments were seven percent (7%). A lot line adjustment involves adjusting a lot line between two lots. Major subdivision plans were one percent (1%). Major subdivisions include more than six (6) lots.

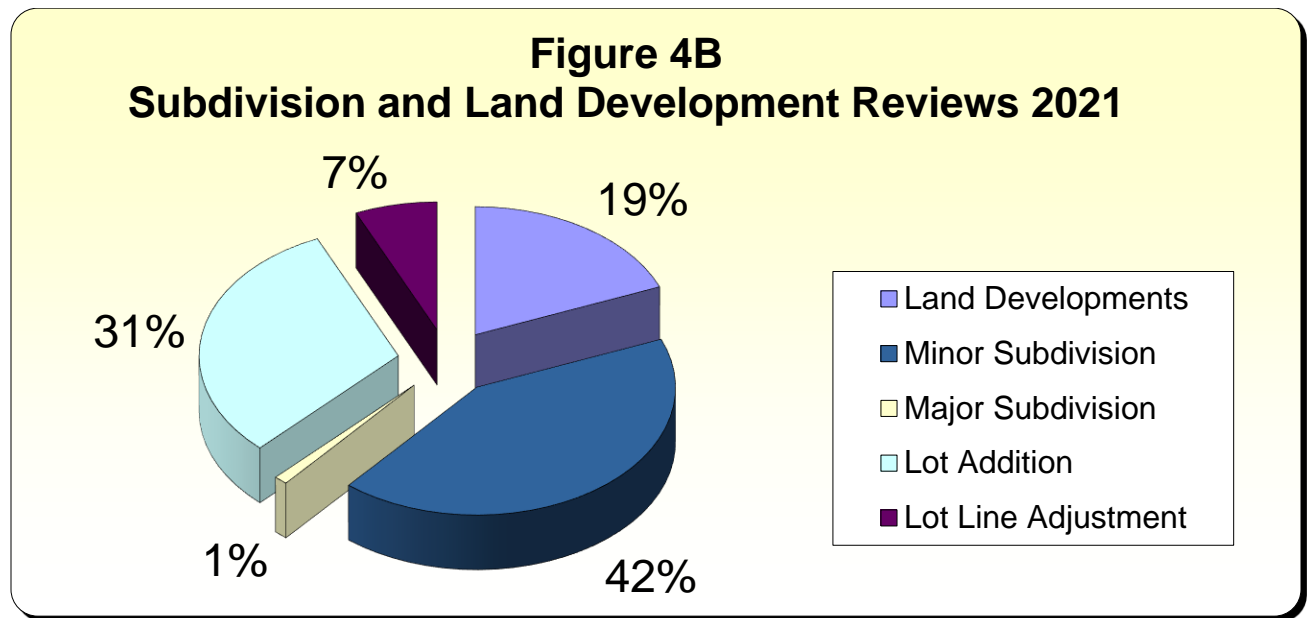
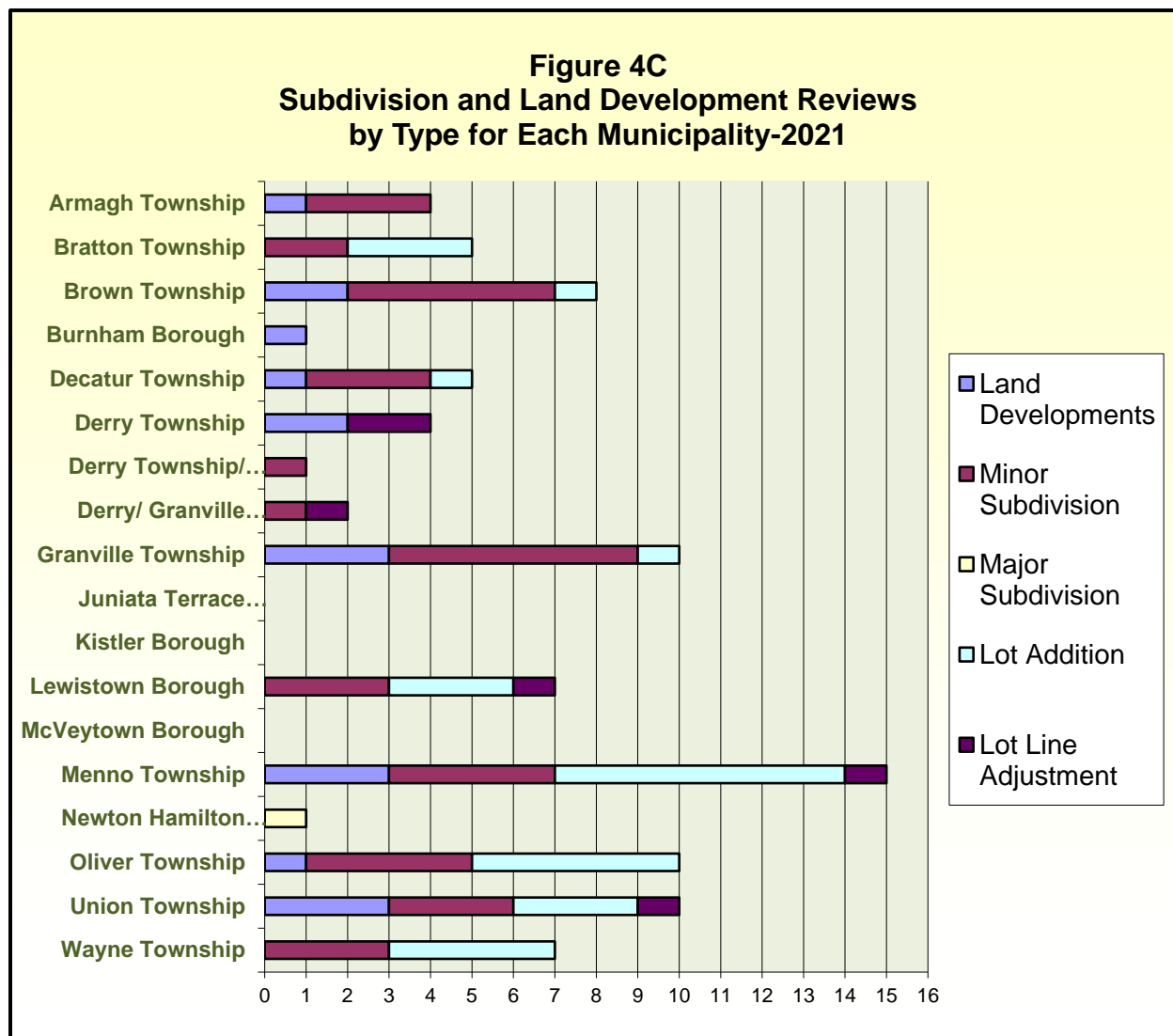


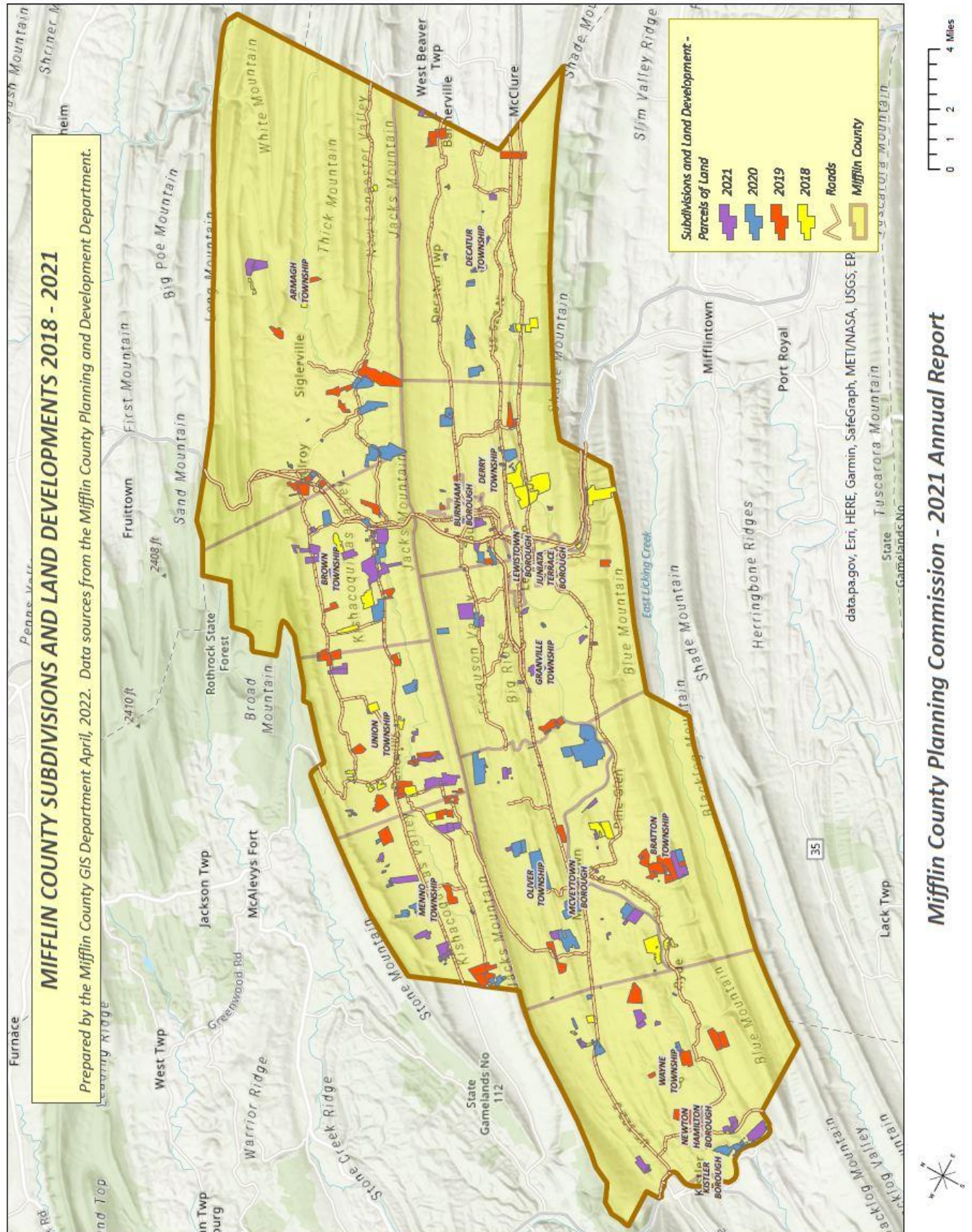
Table 4B below shows the number of plan types reviewed in each municipality during 2021.

Table 4B Subdivision and Land Development Plan Reviews-2021						
Municipality	Land Developments	Minor Subdivision	Major Subdivision	Lot Addition	Lot Line Adjustment	Total
Armagh Township	1	3	0	1	0	4
Bratton Township	0	2	0	3	0	5
Brown Township	2	5	0	1	0	8
Burnham Borough	1	0	0	0	0	0
Decatur Township	1	3	0	1	0	5
Derry Township	2	0	0	0	2	4
Derry Township/ Burnham Borough	0	1	0	0	0	1
Derry/ Granville Township	0	1	0	0	1	2
Granville Township	3	6	0	1	0	10
Juniata Terrace Borough	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kistler Borough	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lewistown Borough	0	3	0	3	1	7
McVeytown Borough	0	0	0	0	0	0
Menno Township	3	4	0	7	1	15
Newton Hamilton Borough	0	0	1	0	0	1
Oliver Township	1	4	0	5	0	10
Union Township	3	3	0	3	1	10
Wayne Township	0	3	0	4	0	8
TOTALS	17	38	1	28	6	90

Figure 4C below shows a comparison of the number of plan reviews and types by municipality in 2021. Menno Township had the most plans, with a total of 15. The next highest number of plans received and reviewed was Granville and Union Township with 10. Oliver Township with nine (9), and Brown Township with eight (8). In terms of the other municipalities, there were five (5) plans reviewed in Decatur Township and Lewistown Borough, four (4) plans in Armagh, Bratton, and Derry Township, one (1) plan in Burnham Borough, Derry Township/Burnham Borough, Derry/Granville Township, and Newton Hamilton Borough. There were no land developments or subdivision plans submitted in the boroughs of Juniata Terrace, Kistler, and McVeytown.



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 2018 to 2021.



SECTION 5: MEMBERS AND STAFF

5.1 Planning Commission

At the reorganization meeting in January 2021, the officers of the Mifflin County Planning Commission were elected as follows: Thomas Lake, Chair; Cyle Vogt, Vice Chair; and Kent Spicher, 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 and on the next several pages are a summary of those programs presented at the monthly meetings.

Downtown Lewistown Inc. Update

Jim Zubler, Executive Director of Downtown Lewistown, Inc. (DLI), gave a high-level overview of specific projects and information on the funding background for DLI during the January MCPC meeting. DLI was looking at re-designation as designation expired in 2020. In order to obtain re-designation from the state, proof of sustainability from businesses, organizations and individuals was required. Tax credit projects made this possible. There were three (3) specific areas the project targets: (1) support infrastructure (underutilized larger buildings), (2) municipalities (support entrepreneurship of new businesses), (3) embassy theatre project (open 100 days per year and support of local neighborhoods). Director Zubler indicated this project would go to bid spring of 2021. Director Zubler concluded by stating the importance of maintaining local, regional and national connections for the success of future DLI projects. Mark Colussy mentioned he will continue to work with Director Zubler on the trail network and that it is a very worthwhile project for the downtown area.

Mifflin County Wireless Development

At the February MCPC meeting, Cody Wian, owner and operator of Mifflin County Wireless (MCW), explained the commissioners have awarded his company some of the county relief block grant funds to be able to expand wireless broadband throughout the county. Mr. Wian gave a comprehensive presentation of MCW's current project and presented a comparison of services with other areas of the country. He exhibited maps and explained where their towers will be placed and the details of the packages offered. He stated their headquarters/warehouses are located in the MCIDC Industrial Park. The company will have no install fees or any contracts for customers. Their mission is to provide reliable, affordable equal access to all of Mifflin County residents, particularly in the hardest to reach areas that other companies have not been interested in developing. Mr. Wian indicated there is potential in the future for MCW to match up with other companies for phone service but is not a current priority. Mr. Wian assured the new 5G technology equipment would withstand much more than the previous canopy systems. MCW is strictly focusing on Mifflin County and providing comprehensive coverage from one end to the other. Mr. Wian indicated that other companies tend to over-subscribe heavily and bog down the system. MCW has the ability to add to their capacity and to expand based on the subscribers demand.

Transportation Improvement Plan

During the MCPC meeting in March, Planning Director Colussy presented some background information for the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and stated this program is updated every two years. SEDA-COG is the transportation planning partner, and Director Colussy provided an overview of the cycle in which the Planning Department is currently involved. PennDOT met with the municipal leaders to go over details of their projects proposed for being included on the TIP. The projects for 2021-2024 are

funded and ready for execution. The Planning Department sent out letters in February to all municipalities inquiring their transportation priorities, and received responses from four (4) municipalities. There are numerous funding sources for applying for transportation projects. One of the advantages of projecting ahead is that it is possible to submit tandem safety improvement projects along with improvement projects for local bridges and highways. There are several municipal projects moving forward currently. The Lumber City bridge project for Brown Township was already approved for funding and added to the TIP. Menno Township had a funded project, but they also have road culverts that needed repaired. Newton Hamilton had a bridge replacement need and funding sources were being explored. Wayne Township had a variety of different projects. These were the types of projects that could be filed into PennDOT. The ultimate intent is to get projects added to the TIP for funding to allow the bridges and road to be repaired or constructed. Better communication with the municipalities would aid the process of prioritizing projects as funding becomes available. There are future plans for PennDOT to attend a monthly meeting to offer information and answer questions. There is not enough money to fund all proposed projects, so it is imperative to be prudent with the monies granted to be used for the best projects.

DEP's Phase III WIP: Countywide Action Plan (CAP)

Planning Director Mark Colussy presented some background information and content at the April meeting for Pennsylvania's Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP). It was in the third phase and Mifflin County was participating in this phase by developing a Countywide Action Plan (CAP). HRG, Inc. was the consulting firm assisting with the plan. Erin Letavic from HRG, Inc. was project manager and worked closely with the Mifflin County Conservation District to implement the CAP. In addition, there was a specific group named 'Water for AG' who acted as a steering committee to help organize and move the project along. The importance of this plan not only impacts our area, but reaches as far as the Chesapeake Bay. Work on this plan could open up many avenues such as funding other projects, implementing best management practices, improving soil and water quality, achieving better health, expanding outdoor activities, and cleaning up waterways. The PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has developed a program called CAST (Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool) to allow modeling to be done to know what kind of water quality the county has. Using the CAST, the state has assigned key numbers to the county in regards to the amount of nutrients and loads we have in our waterways and what we are doing about it. This gives a forecast to how we can potentially clean up our waterways in the next five (5) years. The state also has developed a toolbox (part of CAST) which measures the pounds of phosphorous/nitrogen loads in the waterways. The state expected Mifflin County to reduce this load by a very aggressive degree. The Mifflin County CAP had a completion target for September of 2021.

Mifflin County Conservation Director, Trevor Weaver presented more detailed information to get everyone up to speed before any stakeholders were sought to get involved. He felt an important area to concentrate on was the timeline. He suggested stakeholder meetings would begin in May and that there would not be a lot of time to waste getting started. He went over the table/timeline and explained the steps of where the plan is headed and additional needs they have. Director Weaver explained BMP (Best Management Practices) reporting and suggested is the importance of credit being given for all the work that has already been done. Mifflin County is a Tier 3 county. Some of the larger counties that HRG, Inc. has worked with have completed this process and Mifflin County was guided by their models. Director Weaver stated the MCC District and Mifflin County were working on various plans (Watershed plans, Comprehensive plans, Water Management plans, etc.) since the early 2000s. They were all cyclical in the same ways – funding, implementation, reporting and tracking, and then back to planning. He believed Mifflin County had favorable positioning due to the amount of work completed to that point. Up to that time, they were working on the BMP scenario and would take the draft to the identified stakeholders. During June and July there would be a review to determine if the BMPs are implementable within a 4-year period. There were also goals beyond the nutrient sediment reductions such as recreation, preservation, water quality, economics, and other goals that the county wants to see achieved. He saw

good opportunities to partner different projects together to benefit the county overall. There were two major phases going forward with this project. The first phase required planning and expertise in equitable analysis to develop the vision for future improvement. The second phase required key stakeholders to participate and collaborate for funding mechanisms to be developed. Erin Letavic (HRG, Inc.) was invited to give a presentation at the June meeting to review the CAST analysis along with other key stakeholders to have better awareness of Mifflin County's goals. Director Weaver had information about the technical writing and planning team and stakeholders listing that was compiled at the time of the meeting. One of the biggest hurdles was staff and resources due to the number of ongoing projects. Director Weaver stated they wanted this plan to be in its optimum form, so when implemented, it is successful. Programmatic ideas were sited into reviews or comments placed into existing processes listed as an activity within the plans. These actions would potentially be helpful with meeting the project goals.

Centre WISP Broadband Update

Dave Gibbons, the owner of Centre WISP Broadband, who has been hard at work to provide broadband to areas identified by the Countywide Broadband study by NOVIS, delivered an update to the Planning Commission at the meeting in May. Mr. Gibbons presented some of Centre WISP background information and the steps for a typical installation. He described some of the internet access challenges in rural areas, explained the current status of WISP's Mifflin County Projects, including FTTH (Fiber to the Home). Centre WISP was awarded funding from SEDA-COG for the "Tri-County" broadband project in three areas in Perry, Juniata, and Mifflin Counties. The Tri-County award would see development in the River Road area of Bratton Township. Centre WISP will also be installing additional repeaters and were planning a fiber project related to RDOF (Rural Digital Opportunity Fund). They provided broadband service to approximately 70% of Mifflin County. There was an FCC incentive program through EBB (Emergency Broadband Benefit) for consumer accessibility and the EBB program provided multiple ways to qualify for assistance. Applicants could access the FCC webpage to determine if they qualify. Once the FCC gives the final approval for RDOF Funding the Fiber to the Home (FTTH), builds were planned to commence providing exponential broadband speeds. One other benefit was the consumer costs being capped by the program rules. Great strides were anticipated for upcoming fiber deployment to meet future needs and the next innovations.

Draft Countywide Action Plan (CAP)

At the MCPC meeting in July, Erin Letavic, Project Manager and CAP Coordinator with HRG, presented and explained her credentials, experience, and perspective working as a municipal civil engineer with storm water, land development projects, and water quality. The scope of her position encompasses 17 counties in Pennsylvania. She presented a PowerPoint presentation (available at <https://countywide-action-plan-dauphinco.hub.arcgis.com/>), which encapsulated the current ongoing Countywide Action Plan (CAP). The project website was GIS based, having lots of maps, data and other interesting information. There was a CAP survey (<https://arcg.is/1bGPOz1>) to complete which gave ideas and insight for shaping the CAP process as it moves forward. Project Manager Letavic shared she was doing similar types of projects in 14 other counties and that Mifflin County was very well positioned. Mifflin County was not starting from scratch, and had a great relationship with its partners. Education can help impact changes in behavior which leads to changes in load reductions and water quality downstream. Project Manager Letavic discussed some Best Management Practices (BMP's) within the plan, making sure they were realistic and cost effective so when explained to PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), they would be achievable between 2021 and the goal date of 2025.

Director Weaver discussed some examples of successful projects that have been completed. He presented a farm project (Animal Waste Management Systems, Barnyard Runoff Controls, Livestock Exclusion, Fencing, Stabilized Crossing, Forested Riparian Buffer Planting, Fish Habitat/Bank Stabilization Structures, Cover Crop & No Till), and a stream project (Fish Habitat/Bank Stabilization Structures,

Streambank Regrading, Riparian Forest Buffer Planting, Waterfowl Management, Education & Outreach).

Director Weaver also presented a successful nine square mile watershed group project for Hungry Run. There were about a dozen farms involved in this total project. Evidence of the success of these projects show up in the Watershed IBI (Impairment Benchmark Indicators) increased score results. The draft CAP was drawing to a conclusion with the development of an action strategy and implementation steps. Additionally, there was a time crunch to present by August and then finalized by September. Contributing to this plan was a good opportunity for Mifflin County's quality of life to be preserved for future generations. There was also great importance put on educating the community at large for these projects to continue being successful.

SEDA-COG Program and Services

At the meeting in August, Kim Wheeler, Executive Director, SEDA-COG discussed working on a local level in Lycoming County and overseeing all the sections and initiatives of SEDA-COG and their vital partnerships. The scope of her position encompassed 11 Central Pennsylvania counties. The main SEDA-COG service areas consist of:

- FOR BUSINESSES: Business Loans, Economic Development, Export Assistance, Government Contracting Assistance, Natural Gas Service, Rail Service
- FOR COMMUNITIES: Community Development, Flood Resiliency, Information Technology, Transportation Planning
- FOR RESIDENTS: Elderly Rental Housing, Home Rehabilitation, Weatherization

Director Wheeler mentioned the stimulus project and discussed some points on where SEDA-COG can be a resource for Mifflin County using this opportunity to develop ideas to collaborate and how the CARES Act funding and dispersion helped small businesses and non-profits. Director Wheeler discussed the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding and what type of projects may be eligible. These projects consisted of Water/Storm Water/Sewer Infrastructure, Broadband, Public Health (HVAC, Park Enhancements, Outdoor Recreation), Negative Economic Impact, and continued revenue loss starting from March 3, 2021 thru 2024. Director Wheeler offered her office as a resource and encouraged the commission to engage in any future trainings/conferences that are offered.

September 11th National Memorial Trail

For the September MCPC Meeting, Jeffrey McCauley, Director of Trail Development for September 11th National Trail Alliance, explained his credentials and experience working with the Alliance and their vital partnerships. Mr. McCauley provided strategic help to counties in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Delaware and Washington D.C. for developing the 911 Trail. The scope of his position encompassed 1,300 miles, touching seven states. He presented a map, which gave an overview of the trail alignment and explained how it encompassed much of Central Pennsylvania including Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata and Perry counties. His tasks were divided into two areas, (1) advocacy for the trail and (2) actual trail development. The Advocacy was one county away from obtaining a resolution of support from PA DCNR for Mega Greenway Status. This acquisition would add 'points' to a counties grant application for scoring more competitively in the pool of grant applicants within the state. The Advocacy was also working with the US Congress to pass a House resolution (H.R. 2278) to have the National Park Service designate the 911 trail as a Memorial Trail with its own unique status. The trail development involves easement acquisition, fundraising, signage, and construction of the trail corridor itself. Mr. McCauley stated the Alliance was willing to extend help to Mifflin County as the trail project progresses along with continued networking to bring these projects to completion.

Final CAP Implementation

The Countywide Action Plan (CAP) was submitted to DEP in September of 2021. During the October meeting, Planning Director Colussy presented a breakdown of the items that were included in the CAP, which was done by project initiatives: (1) County Programmatic Initiative; (2) Recording and Tracking; (3) Achieving New Pollution Reductions; (4) Research and Education Training. The Initiative items would need to be completed within a five-year period. There were funds available for the projects, but there was also a concern that there would not be enough funds available to do everything for each county in Tier 3. Tier 3 was made up of 27 counties, including the four counties Mifflin, Perry, Juniata, and Dauphin that worked together on a CAP with HRG. Mifflin County preferred to work closely with the other four counties, as they did with the CAP, and submit collectively for the grant. The Conservation District worked on projects over the past couple of years that were potentially considered shovel ready. There was a total of eight projects selected, two from each county. The top two projects from each county were chosen because they were ready for implementation and will have minimal final engineering cost. This allowed about 25% of the grant to go towards engineering costs for the following year. The projects that were chosen for the following year required an engineering design cost.

The Mifflin County Conservation District worked with Western Conservation Conservancy on a Growing Green Application. The grant application was specifically written to allow more money to be granted to the county if the state looks at Mifflin County's application favorably and there are a few Tier 3 & 4 counties asking for money.

Mark Colussy has spoken with Erin Letavic from HRG and Trevor Weaver from the Conservation District about potential projects while developing the CAP. Hypothetically with 1000 projects, DEP had a short period of time to use up a large amount of funds and implement BMP's to reduce the nutrient levels. It was a possibility that more projects could be done, however, it also comes down to the administrative burden as well. The hope was through this particular grant application, the county can get some administration assistance through DEP.

Director Colussy discussed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) that is available for Stormwater management projects. The planning department has been implementing multiple stormwater management projects through CDBG funding, which is for principally only for low-income areas. However, there are many other stormwater projects in the area that can be developed. Director Colussy had spoken with Director Trevor Weaver from the Conservation District about some potential projects. One project was the wetland, stream restoration, and stream bank preservation along Kish Creek from Rec to Kish Park.

Mifflin County Academy Programs and Expansion

A presentation was given by the staff from the Mifflin County Academy of Science & Technology, *The Academy*, at the November meeting. Dr. Daniel Potutschnig, Administrative Director, gave opening comments, including the mission and vision of the Academy and then introduced the principal, Norma O'Brien. Principal O'Brien gave a program overview, outlining the programs offered and many of the merits of the students' performance and the academies successes. The Academy served approximately 350 students from Mifflin and Juniata Counties, offering eleven different programs including Electrical, Culinary, Medical and Machining. There was opportunity for students to earn college credits in a cooperative program with Penn College NOW, a free dual enrollment program which allows students to take college courses while in high school. There were over 144 different on-line courses in 12 categories.

Michael McMonigal, Supervisor of Adult & Post-Secondary Education discussed the programs offered at this level which include Nursing, CDL, EMT, Safety Inspection, Welding, Mechatronics, and Cosmetology. These courses served approximately 280 adults from surrounding counties. He stated the goals of the Adult program were to increase enrollment, increase the number of classes offered, and increase funding opportunities.

Dr. Potutschnig concluded by sharing a conceptual map for the next expansion phase(s) and how they were working to procure funding for their future projects. He stated his interest in meeting with stakeholders and the connections to local industry and businesses was to provide workforce employment opportunities. He stressed that the vision was to prepare each student for success and to excel in a technical career pathway with the confidence to face all challenges and opportunities.

5.2 Planning and Development Department

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.

Tiffany Parkes was hired as Planning Technician in January 2021. Candace Rager was hired as Department Secretary in February 2021.

Mark Colussy attended the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) Annual Conference, held at Station Square in Pittsburgh, PA from October 17 to 19, 2021. Mark was able to sit on the following sessions: Authentic Engagement is more than Just Outreach; Easy Rider: Your Guide to Comfort Bike Mapping; Where We Ride: For Bicycle and Pedestrian Networks and Improvements; Intergenerational Community Engagement and Planning; It doesn't have to be Hard...; Inequity in the Tax System and other Common Causes of Municipal Failure; and Form-Based Zoning on a Shoe-String Budget.

Mark Colussy also graduated from the Professional Development Academy's High Performance Leadership program, as sponsored by the National Association of County Officials (NACO) in June of 2021. The coursework was an intensive collection of classes, group breakout sessions, and overall class sessions from January to June of 2021. This 12-week course benefited from speakers such as General Colin Powel, Marshall Goldsmith, John Kotter, and Dr. Tim Rahschute. One memorable session included Colin Powell's "13 Rules":

1. It ain't as bad as you think. It will look better in the morning.
2. Get mad, then get over it.
3. Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, so goes your ego.
4. It can be done.
5. Be careful what you choose.
6. Don't let adverse facts stand in the way of a good decision
7. You can't make someone else's choices.
8. Check small things.
9. Share credit.
10. Remain calm. Be kind.
11. Have a vision.
12. Don't take counsel of your fears or naysayers.
13. Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.

On February 22, 2021, Mark Colussy, Chastity Fultz, Doug Marks and Tiffany Brought participated in a one-day environmental review training provided by SEDA-COG. Kristen Lloyd and Kristin McLaughlin provided detailed instruction on compliance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) requirements associated with NEPA Environmental Reviews. This training was crucial to allow CDBG projects to begin in a timely manner.

In February of 2021, Chastity Fultz, Doug Marks and Tiffany Brought participated in a series of CDBG Sub-Grantee training sessions provided by Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for new grants administrators. The training provided an overview of Federal and State statutory and regulatory requirements, which grant administrators need to know to carry out their responsibilities for administering the CDBG program for the local government.

County Planning Directors Association

Planning directors from counties throughout the Commonwealth traditionally meet quarterly to discuss issues affecting county planning offices and commissions. Over the past two years, the meetings have transitioned to being mostly virtual. 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 Mark Colussy has been attending these quarterly meetings. Director Colussy also serves as an at-large member of the Executive Committee, which discusses and organizes the agenda for all meetings. The association had four meetings during 2021 (February 5, May 14, August 20, and November 5). At the meetings, the following was discussed: ArcGIS Urban and Hub, Act 167 Roundtable, Professionalism and Navigating Political Waters, ARPA Roundtable, Broadband, Utility Scale Solar, DCNR Updates, Integrated Water Resource Management, APA-PA, State Planning Board, PMPEI, State Water Plan, and legislative updates.

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. Mark Colussy has served as an instructor for PMPEI since 2016. Director Colussy teamed up with former Assistant Director and current Huntingdon County Planning Director Jim Lettiere on teaching the Course on Community Planning in Mount Union on October 25, 27 and November 1, 2021. Directors Colussy and Lettiere were the first instructor duo to resume in-person PMPEI classes in Pennsylvania. Several other courses took place throughout the state afterwards and into 2022.

