



Northwest Clearfield County Region Comprehensive Plan

Brady Township, City of DuBois, Falls Creek Borough,
Huston Township, and Sandy Township

Prepared by
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2009

**This project was funded, in part, by a grant from the
Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic
Development, Land Use Planning and Technical
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The Northwest Clearfield County Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan

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The Northwest Clearfield County Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan

The Municipalities of Brady Township, the City of DuBois,
Falls Creek Borough, Huston Township, and Sandy Township

Community Development Objectives

As defined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PaMPC, or MPC):

“A statement of the municipalities concerning their future development, including, but not limited to, the location, character, and timing of future development . . .”

Overall Plan Goals

Each of the five municipalities is unique in size, population, and characteristics. Together, they share many problems and needs as well as aspirations. This Plan promotes the combining of resources, talents, and expertise to enable each municipality to maximize its future potential in a cooperative fashion.

Why cooperate? The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Intergovernmental Cooperation Handbook (2006) asks that very question, and supplies the following answers:

- **Interdependence:** Boundaries are not walls. Persons living in one community often work, shop, seek medical assistance, or access numerous other services in another municipality.
- **Efficiency:** Many operations, purchases, and services operate in a more efficient manner when costs are spread or quantities increased. Examples of efficiency vary, but few can dispute that buying a case of paper is more economical than purchasing a single sheet.
- **Effectiveness:** To be effective, most municipal services require a trained, capable staff, which smaller municipalities often cannot afford.

But, cooperation is not just a theoretical “feel good” policy from State agencies. It is a local priority. Many of the comments in the Citizen Survey called for greater cooperation, especially between DuBois and Sandy.

This Plan is founded upon the premise that cooperation is good and sets forth, as the preferred option, cooperative solutions. As a result, the Plan is divided into three primary elements:

- The Statement of Community Development Objectives
- Regional, Cooperative Plan Options
- Individual Needs*

**Typically, this is where most detail will be found relative to individual municipal problems or actions.*

Community Development Objectives

The purpose of community development objectives is to set forth a framework for the comprehensive plan and to provide policy guidance for its major elements. This Plan sets forth the following objectives:

There are three major objectives of the Plan:

- Foster positive cooperative action between the five Plan participants.
- Protect the quality of life locally. Essentially, this involves respecting the rural setting and natural resources of the region.
- Economic Development: Keeping and attracting young people to assure a healthy and vigorous community means creating good, head-of-household jobs.

Categorical Objectives

Future Land Use

The plan for land use has, as its core, the following principal concepts:

- Protection of existing and future residential areas
- The preservation of Rural Resource Areas
- The preservation of land essential for current and future economic development

Housing

- Preserve the existing housing stock
 - Protect via zoning
 - Adopt property codes
 - Initiate housing rehabilitation and demolition programs to prevent or remediate blight
- Encourage first-time homebuyers
- Encourage open discussions between builders, real estate professionals, and local government

Transportation (see also separate report)

- Oppose tolls on I-80
- Support bike/hike paths as enhancement projects

Historic Preservation

- Encourage the DuBois Historical Society to educate the public on the value of local history and historic preservation tools

Preservation of Natural and Agricultural Resources

- Identify Rural Resource Areas in the Land Use Plan and reflect them in the Community Facilities Plan (water and sewer service)
- Include an element in zoning and the SALDO to preserve agriculture, especially in southern Sandy and Brady townships
- Recommend improved gas well drilling practices to the Department of Environmental Protection to protect groundwater sources
- Limit development in floodplains, wetlands, and on steep slopes

Community Facilities and Services

Sewer and Water Services

- Focus on regional solutions, as a priority
- Focus on new service in those areas identified by the comprehensive plans
- Initiate a regional Capital Improvement Program
- Public Safety
 - Short Term: Explore the possibility of a regional police service (DuBois and Sandy)
 - Long Term: Monitor volunteer fire departments' viability
- Recreation
 - Coordinate municipal recreation planning and activities
- Schools
 - Volunteer assistance via the region relative to school closures and building re-use

Economic Development

- Support traditional manufacturing to foster head-of-household jobs
- Recognize the retail sector as important to the real estate tax base
- Recognize and foster the healthcare sector as the single largest employment base for the region
- Transportation – Use the transportation assets of the region to foster economic growth
- Promote tourism, recreation, and retirement living—capitalize on the Pennsylvania Wilds efforts of the Commonwealth
- Understand the importance of mineral extraction/timbering while respecting the natural environment

Regional Actions in Land Use

Summary

Future Land Use

The plan for land use has, as its core, the following principal concepts:

- Protection of existing and future residential areas
- The preservation of Rural Resource Areas
- The preservation of lands essential for current and future economic development

In the Northwest Clearfield County Region, there are five municipalities. Of these, three have current zoning ordinances and one is interested in adopting zoning. Three have subdivision and land development ordinances and two rely on the Clearfield County ordinance. Some ordinances are dated, while all need only limited updating. Existing land use is quite varied between these municipalities.

Certainly, the area and intensity of some uses are focused, but all the communities have at least some commercial, residential, and industrial land use. Agriculture uses are primarily found in southern Sandy Township, but are most pervasive in Brady Township.

Land Use Policies

- The protection of existing, viable, residential neighborhoods as well as new developments is the area's primary land use goal.
- Commercial and industrial uses are recognized as important contributors to the local tax base.
- Commercial and industrial development will be focused along, or near, major transportation corridors (rail or road).
- Intensive land uses of any kind will be located in areas where sewer and water services now exist, or where they are planned in the near future.
- All existing land use ordinances should be updated to current standards, and zoning maps should reflect the Future Land Use Plan.
- The unified administration of the land use ordinance is a short-term goal.
- Rural Resource Areas will be identified. These are areas where public water and sewer services are not planned.

It is the formal policy of this Plan that any significant additions (over 50 acres) to State-owned land shall require consultation with, and concurrence by, the host community.

Recommended Regional Activities

1. Land Use Ordinances

- Brady Township: Develop a new zoning ordinance and zoning map.
- DuBois City: Develop a new zoning ordinance to replace the current one, rationalize the zoning map, and update the SALDO*.

- Falls Creek Borough: Develop a new zoning ordinance to replace the current one, rationalize the zoning map, and update the SALDO*.
- Huston Township: Due to its rural nature, presence of extensive public lands (State forests, parks, and game lands), and low-level development, no action is recommended at this time.
- Sandy Township: Update both the zoning ordinance, review the zoning map, and update the SALDO*.

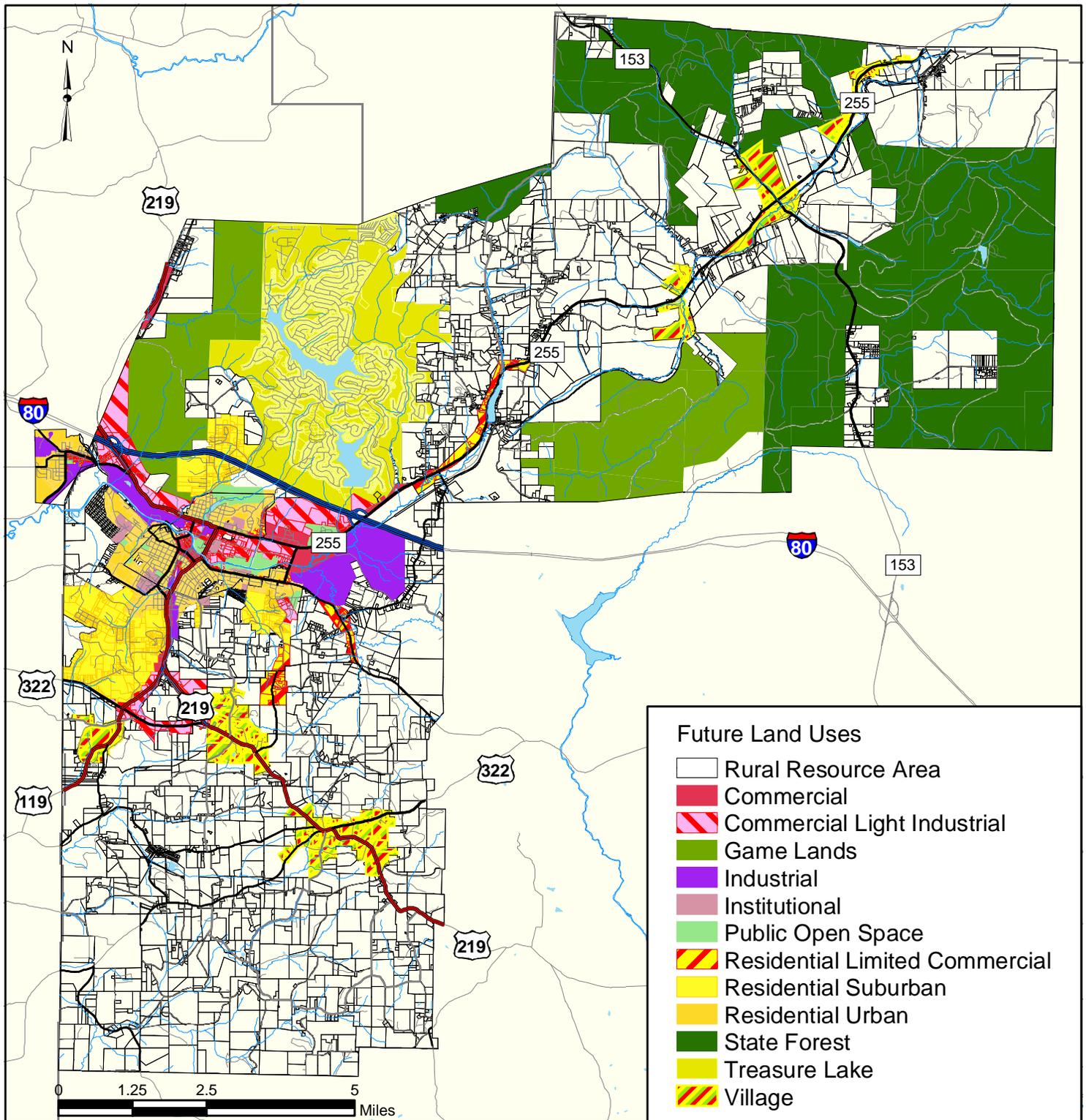
**Every effort should be made to make the Land Development sections of the individual SALDOs consistent within the region. The Clearfield County SALDO should be a reference source in this effort.*

2. **Stormwater Management**: Stormwater management is of increasing importance with local leaders across Pennsylvania. It is clear that a standard approach is needed for the Northwest Clearfield County area. In both counties (Clearfield and Jefferson), an Act 167 Countywide Watershed Plan is underway. Clearfield County is now in Phase I while Jefferson is in Phase II. When completed, the respective plans will provide a countywide approach with stormwater ordinances to be administered by local municipalities. This will provide for a unified response to this issue.
3. **Shared Land Use**: As the Northwest Clearfield County Region Comprehensive Plan qualifies as a multi-municipal plan under the PaMPC, land-use sharing is an option. Due to the existing land use and zoning patterns, however, this option is not now recommended.
4. **Land Use Administration**: The capable, impartial, and professional administration of land use administration is critical. For both zoning and SALDO administration, Brady, DuBois, Falls Creek, and Sandy should develop a process for the joint administration of all land use ordinances.

Future Land Use Designations

- **Residential**: For all residential developments, this Plan stresses the need to protect residential neighborhoods. To do this:
 - Incompatible uses will be discouraged.
 - Any intense use will be buffered where it abuts residential developments.
 - Multi-family developments will be located in community sewer and water service areas and will be set back from single-family development, as needed, to protect such units. Low-rise, elderly developments should be designed to fit in single-family areas.
- **Residential Urban**: City-type residential development which can include multi-family developments on smaller lots. Single-family development is at a density of 4 to 7 units per net acre.
- **Residential Suburban**: This designation is for newer and future residential development. This use may or may not have water and sewer at the present time, but could be serviced in the future. Sewered development should have a density of 3 to 5

- dwelling units per acre – limited areas of multi-family is expected where sewer and water is present.
- Residential/Limited Business: Essentially designed for residential neighborhoods in transition along busy streets and roads.
 - Village: Smaller rural developed areas where mixed use (i.e., residential, light retail, small office and possible light industrial) is present or planned. Generally, the Village designation assumes current or future sewer and water services. Residential density at 4 to 7 dwelling units per acre.
 - Treasure Lake PRD: The Treasure Lake development.
 - Commercial
 - Commercial: Retail, office, and service business
 - Commercial/Light Industrial: Areas where highway commercial and light industrial uses are located
 - Industrial: Land for all types of industry—current and future
 - Institutional: Land for colleges, schools, hospitals, and similar institutions
 - Rural Resource: Includes uses such as agriculture, timbering, mining, extractive industries, forestland, outdoor recreation, and tourism, with adequate design and buffering standards.
 - State Land: State holdings compose much of the land north of I-80 and therefore are given separate categories. Considered as a Rural Resource Area.
 - State Game Lands
 - Moshannon State Forest



Regional Future Land Use Northwest Clearfield County Region

This map was financed, in part, by a Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development



Source: Pennsylvanian Department of Transportation (PennDOT), 1998, 2001 and 2006,
U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 2005
Clearfield County GIS, 2007
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic, North American, 1983

GCCA
2007

A Regional Housing Plan

The overview of housing essentially pictures a fairly stable housing market but one with certain issues, some current and others insipient. Based on these findings, the following regional activities are suggested:

- A. The preservation of the existing housing stock.
 - 1. Land Use: Under the land use element, zoning should be keyed to protect new and existing residential neighborhoods.
 - 2. Adoption of Appropriate Codes or Ordinances: The removal of dilapidated structures is facilitated by the presence of adequate codes. For the Northwest Clearfield County Region, there are two options recommended: the adoption of a dangerous structure ordinance or the adoption of a property maintenance code. Either approach will provide the legal tools needed to remove blighted structures. Code enforcement is a citizen survey priority.
 - 3. A housing demolition program can be started *after* the preferred ordinance (item 2) is adopted. Though public grants are possible for this activity (HRA, CDBG, CRA), it is not a politically popular activity. Initially, local participants should consider providing funding themselves or from a CRA grant.
 - 4. A Housing Rehabilitation Program: Details of this program are given in the detailed Housing Plan. Simply stated, all that is needed is for formal participants and the selection of an agency or consultant to prepare the HOME application and to administer the program. The City of DuBois has used the program in the past.
- B. First-Time Homebuyer Program: Though a regional priority, this activity need not involve any new formal program. It can be set in motion by the private sector via the “Housing Summit” set forth in the detailed Housing Plan. Given the age trends locally, the “First-Time” program will be of increasing importance.

The Regional Transportation Plan

The Regional Transportation Plan is being prepared as a separate Plan document.

A Regional Historic Preservation Plan

Summary

The histories of the five municipalities have many similarities. Timbering, lumber mills, mining, and heavy industry all played important roles in the development of this area. Yet, the histories of individual settlements are quite diverse.

The DuBois Area Historical Society, Inc. is the only formal historic society established within the region. And, fortunately, their service area includes the entire DuBois Area School District. The purpose of this agency is to promote the study, appreciation, and preservation of history.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the five constituent municipalities invite the active participants of the Historical Society in the following areas:

1. Designation of potential historic districts or structures on the National Register.
2. Provide local property owners in potential historic areas information about the Historic District Act (Act 161 of 1961).
3. Provide information on tax credits which may be available for some restoration or rehabilitation of some income properties.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission can provide technical assistance for these functions.

The **biggest challenge** for the Historical Society is information and education. The Citizen Survey demonstrates that historic preservation is *not* a local priority. Programs on local history for schools, service clubs, and local citizens are vitally needed to make the Northwest Clearfield County Region conscious of its vibrant history.

Please Note: See also the detailed Land Use Plan.

A Program for the Preservation of Natural Resources and Agricultural

The preservation of natural resources and support of agriculture is seen both in Article III and Article VI of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. But, beyond these legal mandates, it is obvious that the citizens of this region are keenly interested in preserving the rural character of this area.

The primary vehicle of preserving these features is local land use ordinances. As four of the five municipalities are projected to have local land use ordinances, the following policies are appropriate:

- A. Identify Rural Resource Areas in the Land Use Plan and reflect them in the Community Facilities Plan (water and sewer service).
- B. Include an element in zoning and the SALDO to preserve both agriculture and open space, especially in southern Sandy and Brady townships.
- C. Recommend improved gas well drilling practices to the Department of Environmental Protection to protect groundwater sources.
- D. Limit development in floodplains, wetlands, and on steep slopes.
- E. As noted in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code:
 - 1. Lawful activities such as extraction of minerals impact water supply sources and such activities are governed by statues regulating mineral extraction that specify replacement and restoration of water supplies affected by such activities.
 - 2. Commercial agriculture production impact water supply sources.

Please Note: See also the detailed Land Use Plan.

Regional Approach to the Basic Utilities Water and Sanitary Sewer Systems

This section is written with one basic premise—the current water and sewer facilities will need to grow, be maintained, and improved. It needs viable economic growth if it is to prosper. And, that growth is directly tied to these essential utilities. It faces formidable challenges:

- Delayed maintenance and improvements make this a “multi-million” dollar issue.
- Increased operational costs are expected, especially for energy.
- Increased regulatory oversight.
- A history of territorialism.

It also faces human challenges. Many of the key operational persons may be gone in ten to fifteen years. Their knowledge cannot be replaced.

Based upon these considerations, this Plan suggests a planned approach to collaboration among these utilities. As all of the municipalities involved in this multi-municipal plan have such utilities, such collaboration should be beneficial. It is acknowledged that the City of DuBois will not participate in the formation of a joint water or sewer authority. Those remaining municipalities that wish to pursue a more formal collaborative strategy should consider the following five steps:

Step 1: Form the Northwest Region Water and Sewer Steering Committee. In Year 1, this committee would be charged to develop the following information:

- A physical description of each system. Of key importance will be the availability or creation of accurate maps of the collection and distribution systems as well as treatment plants. Missing information (line locations, valves, and manholes, etc.) should be marked on “paper” maps. All information should be transferred to a GIS or CAD system.
- An overview of current operations, including:
 - Personnel, duties, and certificates (water, sewer operators)
 - Current income, expenses, and billing practices
- Current debt—direct or via an authority.
- Establish current needs. Needs must be identified by project and with a budget.
- Future needs, including the estimated costs of planned expansions (minimum of 5 years).

Time: Six months, including organization

Step 2: An independent engineering firm should be retained to help the committee examine the results of Step 1. The task will be to:

- Review current needs, set rough capital priorities (\$ by year), and identify current problems not set forth in Step 1.
- Review future needs and establish priorities (\$ by year).

- Estimate current future cash flow; compare it to costs, current debt, and future capital needs.
- Do a general evaluation of the net value of each system.

Time: One year

Step 3: After the forgoing analysis of two or more municipalities desire to form a regional authority, Steps 4 and 5 should be implemented.

Time: Six months

Step 4: Determine the process to acquire all assets and to develop a responsible, affordable 10-year capital budget for the water and sewer systems of the three key municipalities. Enter into discussions with TESI to possibly acquire their systems.

Time: One year

Step 5: Do the detailed budget analysis (debt and service income) necessary to finance these acquisitions and finance needed current and future improvements.

Time: Six months

Step 6: Acquire the individual systems and begin operations.

General Principles to Guide These Steps

- All current and future costs must be founded on acceptable engineering standards.
- All key reports (engineering and fiscal) must be impartial and fair.
- Current employees of the various systems should be protected and, to the maximum extent possible, brought into the new operating authority. To be successful, the knowledge of key operational personnel is a must.

A Regional Capital Budget/Project System

Currently, each of the five communities is essentially self-contained relative to their capital needs and operation. This element of the Northwest Clearfield County Region Comprehensive Plan recommends the creation of a voluntary consortium to develop a cooperative capital improvement budget and a system to track budgets. This approach would entail the following primary processes:

- A. Communities opt in the process.
- B. A standard CIP form is developed. Though this form would be standardized, it could be adjusted per community. For example, one community may list projects of \$50,000 or more on their budget; another may use a cutoff of \$10,000.
- C. This budget process would be computerized and would further be worked into a GIS system. All CIP projects, from roads to sewer lines, would be identified. *Note: The GIS system would link to a database listing the projects. In five years' time, all of the CIP systems involved would be fully on the GIS system.**
- D. Individual communities would develop their own CIP projects and priorities.
- E. The communities would meet quarterly, discuss projects, and, where feasible, jointly bid projects to affect cost savings.
- F. As a companion to this program, a plan for a regional system for equipment and rolling stock is needed.

**Please note, the GIS system would be used to track such items as roads, storm drains, etc.; rolling stock and municipal buildings do not require the GIS system.*

The Regional Economic Development Plan

Any comprehensive plan that ignores the economy fails to recognize the importance of this sector. This is especially true in western and central Pennsylvania.

The region's economy has the following strong sectors:

- Traditional Manufacturing
- Health Services
- Transportation
- Retail
- Tourism/Recreation
- Extractive Industries and Timbering

To address economic issues on a regional basis, an economic development committee is recommended. An overview of programs is listed below:

- A. Traditional Manufacturing – support from:
 - Below-market loans
 - Training
 - Improved infrastructure
 - Industrial parks
- B. Health Services: As the single largest employer, DRMC should be a partner in economic development discussions. The five municipalities should support expansion, new ventures, and expansion of this regional asset.
- C. Transportation:
 - See separate Plan element
 - Opposition to the I-80 toll
 - Expansion and improvement of the B&P multi-modal facility
- D. Retail:
 - New outlets (market-driven)
 - Assistance programs – focus on the traditional downtowns, DuBois and Falls Creek
- E. Tourism/Recreation
- F. Extractive Industries/Timbering: Recognize these activities as important.

Future Land Use Plan

The five municipalities that comprise the Northwest Clearfield County Region present a real diversity of land uses. The City of DuBois is a typical, small western Pennsylvania city. Falls Creek functions as a separate entity, more than a DuBois suburb. Conversely, Sandy Township is true land use mix. Some of Sandy is essentially an extension of DuBois; other areas quite suburban, extensive retail is found along its major roads, yet there are also large sparsely settled rural sectors. Finally, in the center of Sandy, north of I-80, is the Treasure Lake PRD.

Huston and Brady have similarities. Both are essentially rural, with some village developments. Intensely developed areas are generally found with either water, or both water and sewer services. Both have seen extensive mining, drilling, and timbering. The primary difference is in the extent of public ownership. In Huston, approximately 50% of the land is in public ownership (State Forest and Game Lands), and that proportion is increasing. The presence of such extensive public ownership limits the viability of land use ordinances.

In order to set forth coherent land use policies, a set of definitions is necessary. Below are listed outline policies and definitions for the Future Land Use Plan.

Future Land Use Designations

- **Residential:** For residential areas, the protection of current and future residential neighborhoods is essential. This is to be accomplished by:
 - Limiting incompatible, non-residential uses. Where such uses are allowed, size, hours, and parking issues must be carefully addressed. Buffering between homes and higher-intensity uses is needed.
 - Allowing flexibility. This will be especially necessary in older, densely developed areas, and for residential neighborhoods along busy streets and roads. These areas often lack the appeal to the broad real estate market. Options to maintain market viability is found under the Residential/Limited Commercial heading.
 - Residential/Limited Commercial: These are primarily intended for older areas and development along higher volume streets and highways. Essentially, such districts are primarily residential, with densities either at urban or suburban levels (see the following), depending on location. In urban areas, this designation would allow for service and office uses that are primarily day-time activities, generate little traffic, and have low parking needs. In rural areas, some controlled retail could be allowed with suitable restrictions (size, buffering, hours of operating, lighting).
 - Residential Urban: City-type residential development which can include multi-family developments. Single-family developments at 4 to 7 units per net acre and multi-family at 12 to 14 units per acre.
 - Residential Suburban: This designation is for newer and future residential development. This designation may or may not have water and sewer at the present time, but could be serviced in the future. Sewered development densities are recommended at 3 to 5 dwelling units per acre – limited areas of multi-family

is expected only where sewer and water is present. For multi-family development, a density of 10 to 12 units per acre is recommended.

- Treasure Lake PRD: The Treasure Lake development (a planned residential development).
- **Village:** Smaller, rural, densely developed areas where mixed use (i.e., residential, light retail, small office and possible light industrial) is present or planned. Though the Village designation assumes mixed use, future development should focus commercial and industrial uses along primary transportation corridor, reserving less traveled regions for residential uses. Generally, the Village designation assumes current or future sewer and water services. Residential density at 4 to 7 dwelling units per acre.
- **Commercial**
 - **Commercial:** Retail, office, and service business. In older downtowns, any newer development should be consistent with existing patterns. New businesses in older downtowns should not be required to provide parking; however, public parking is a critical need. Local commercial areas should provide on-site parking. Lot sizes in older downtowns should follow historic development patterns. Where a commercial area has adequate open areas, lot sizes of 7,500 to 10,000 square feet are recommended.
 - **Neighborhood Commercial:** Dormant for many years, may see a modest recovery with current gas prices. People may not travel as far to shop. This use could best be included in some residential zones with limits on size, hours, and at least modest parking requirements.
 - **Commercial/Light Industrial:** Areas where highway commercial and light industrial uses can be located. Historically, such uses can function well together, as evidenced by Beaver Meadows. However, districts which abut residential areas must provide adequate buffering. In these districts, lot sizes should be a minimum of 20,000 square feet, with one-acre minimum for industrial uses.
- **Institutional:** Land for colleges, schools, hospitals, comprehensive care facilities, and similar institutions. This use is particularly important for the DuBois Regional Medical Center.
- **Rural Resource:** Uses such as agriculture, timbering, mining, extractive industries, forestland, outdoor recreation, and tourism are encouraged. The primacy of State agencies is recognized for mining and drilling, but, within such limits, suitable design and buffers are recommended. Many farmers are part time and need income supplements to keep farms viable. This Plan recommends farms be allowed to have small businesses on the land, but only on large-lot operations and by providing buffering (at least 500 feet) to the nearest property line.
- **State Land:** State holdings compose much of the land north of I-80 and therefore are given separate categories:
 - State Game Lands
 - Moshannon State Forest

- **Growing Greener:** In the Background section, a short paragraph on the “Growing Greener” land use approach is given. This Plan does not propose any traditional “Growing Greener” land use ordinances. It does, however, fully support such goals. Elements of this concept can be introduced into SALDOs and zoning ordinances, using the following guidelines:
 - **Bonuses:** Use the “carrot,” not the “stick,” to award developers who voluntarily set aside permanent open space by awarding density bonuses.
 - **Make site visits a must for all major subdivisions.** Maps are no substitute for “walking the site.” Such visits must include both the developer and the municipality. The purpose is to visually assess the site and determine if any special conditions are needed.
 - **Require riparian buffer areas based upon stream-side slope.** Such buffers should range from 25 feet to 75 feet. Buffer areas should be natural and not “landscaped.”
 - **Consider a “net area” approach for determining development densities (i.e., deduct areas for floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes).**
 - **Be flexible.** “Green space” can be permanent open space. But, it could also be a managed forest, a golf course, or even certain farm activities.
- **Agricultural Zoning:** This Plan uses the “Rural Resource” designation in lieu of formal agricultural zoning.
- **Planned Residential Developments (PRDs):** Not all PRDs need to be as large as Treasure Lake. Developing areas in such active residential markets as southern Butler County are finding the PRD allows for a unified design of mixed-density developments on sites as small as 10 to 15 acres. PRDs can be coupled with Growing Greener goals.
- **Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs) and Form-Based Codes:** New concepts that allow for a close relationship between existing development patterns and new construction. Such an approach would be especially useful in DuBois, Falls Creek, and some of the more urbanized areas of Sandy.
- **Land Development Standards:** This too often ignored element of SALDOs can provide needed guidelines for intense single-lot developments (from Wal-Mart to Sheetz).
- **Access Management:** Any type of intense development should be subject to access management standards. The goal of access management is to locate driveways that provide a safe entry and exit from developments while minimizing the impact on the highways. Access management is particularly critical along major roads (routes 119, 219, 255, and 322). The Commonwealth provides model standards for local municipalities to use. In fact, all land use ordinances should include standards for driveways, the distance between driveways, access between contiguous commercial lots, standards for traffic impact studies, and similar regulations.

In the prior section, certain regional concerns were addressed. In the following section, future land use, by municipality, is discussed.

Brady Township

Currently, the Township has no land use ordinances and relies solely upon the Clearfield County SALDO. However, a 537 Sewage Facilities Plan is underway. When sanitary sewer service is available, Brady can anticipate future growth. In the Future Land Use Plan, the following designations are seen for Brady:

- **Rural Resource Area:** This includes most of the Township and includes farmland, open land, and mineral extraction use.
- **Village:** This is a mixed-used designation centered on the Luthersburg and Salem areas.
- **Commercial-Light Industrial** uses are along Routes 322 and 219, and complement similar uses in Sandy Township.
- **Residential/Limited Commercial** is along the Oklahoma-Salem Road; again, a complement to land use patterns in Sandy.

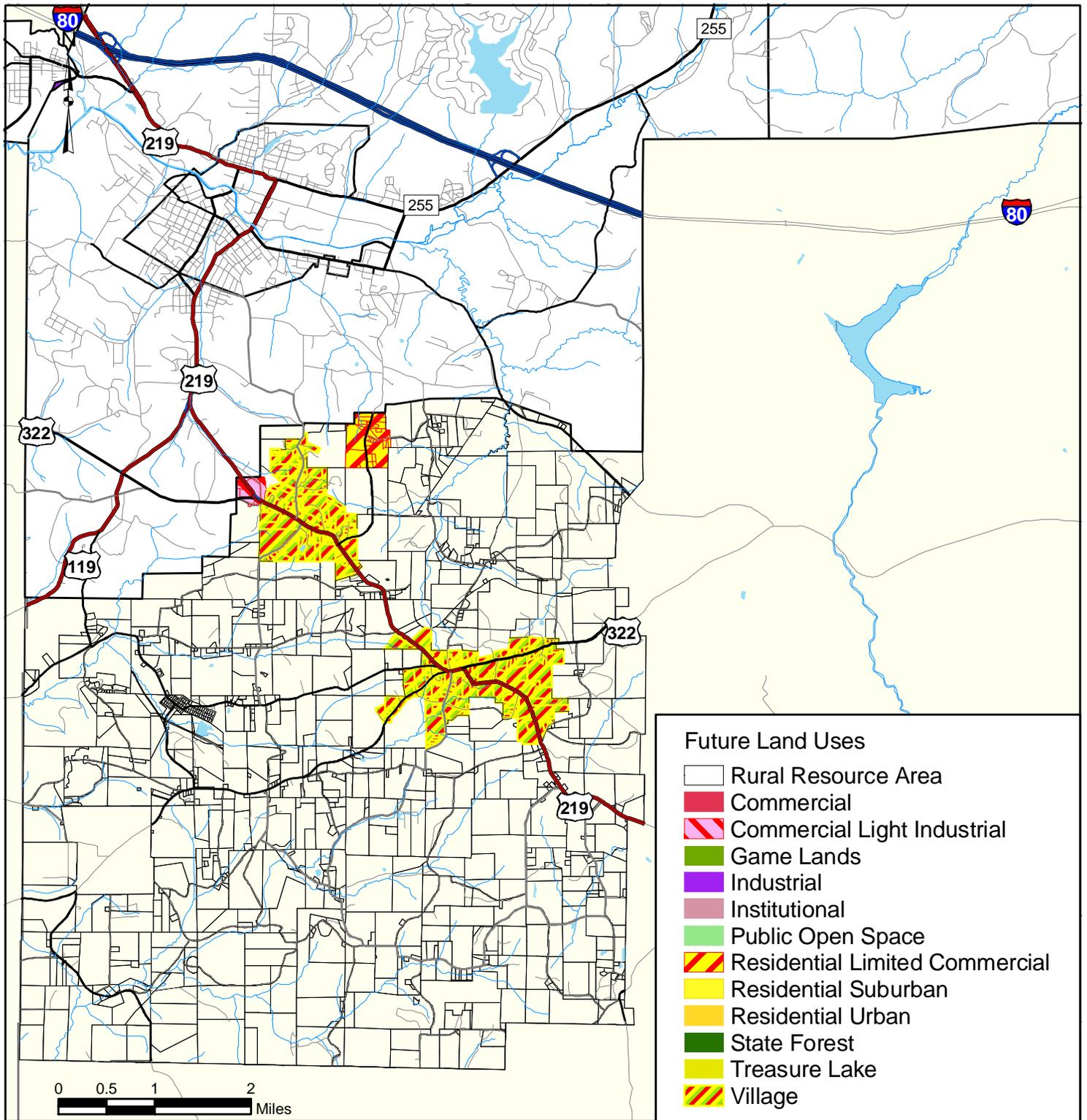
A zoning ordinance is recommended for Brady, before sewer service becomes a reality. Continued reliance upon the County SALDO makes sense, unless major subdivisions are experienced regularly.

City of DuBois

Future land use in DuBois generally follows the pattern of existing use and current zoning policy:

- **Commercial** areas are focused along Liberty Boulevard and in the traditional downtown area.
- **Commercial Light Industrial** is found in Beaver Meadows and in the mixed use area west of the downtown.
- **Industrial:** This includes the Rescar and Sensus locations, as well as the area long the B&P trackage, which includes the industrial land off Brady and east of Main. This area is constrained from the existing zoning scheme, due to long-term land use patterns.
- **Institutional:** This is a reflection of existing land, except for an increase along South Main tied to the DRMC.
- **Public Open Space:** This is not expected to change. This includes parks and special wetland areas.
- **Residential Limited Commercial** areas are seen along South Brady, Maple, Park, McCracken Run Road, and the Route 219 area.
- **Residential Urban:** Reflects existing use patterns, with additional development anticipated north of the Penn State DuBois campus and high school grounds.

It is recommended that the City prepare a modern zoning ordinance. As noted in the Background Report, the current document has many shortcomings. As befits an essentially developed municipality, zoning flexibility is advisable. In addition, there is a need to better “fit” between both the ordinance and the zoning map to the DuBois built environment. For example, some of the “industrial” zoning off of South Main Street is totally inappropriate.



Brady Township Future Land Use

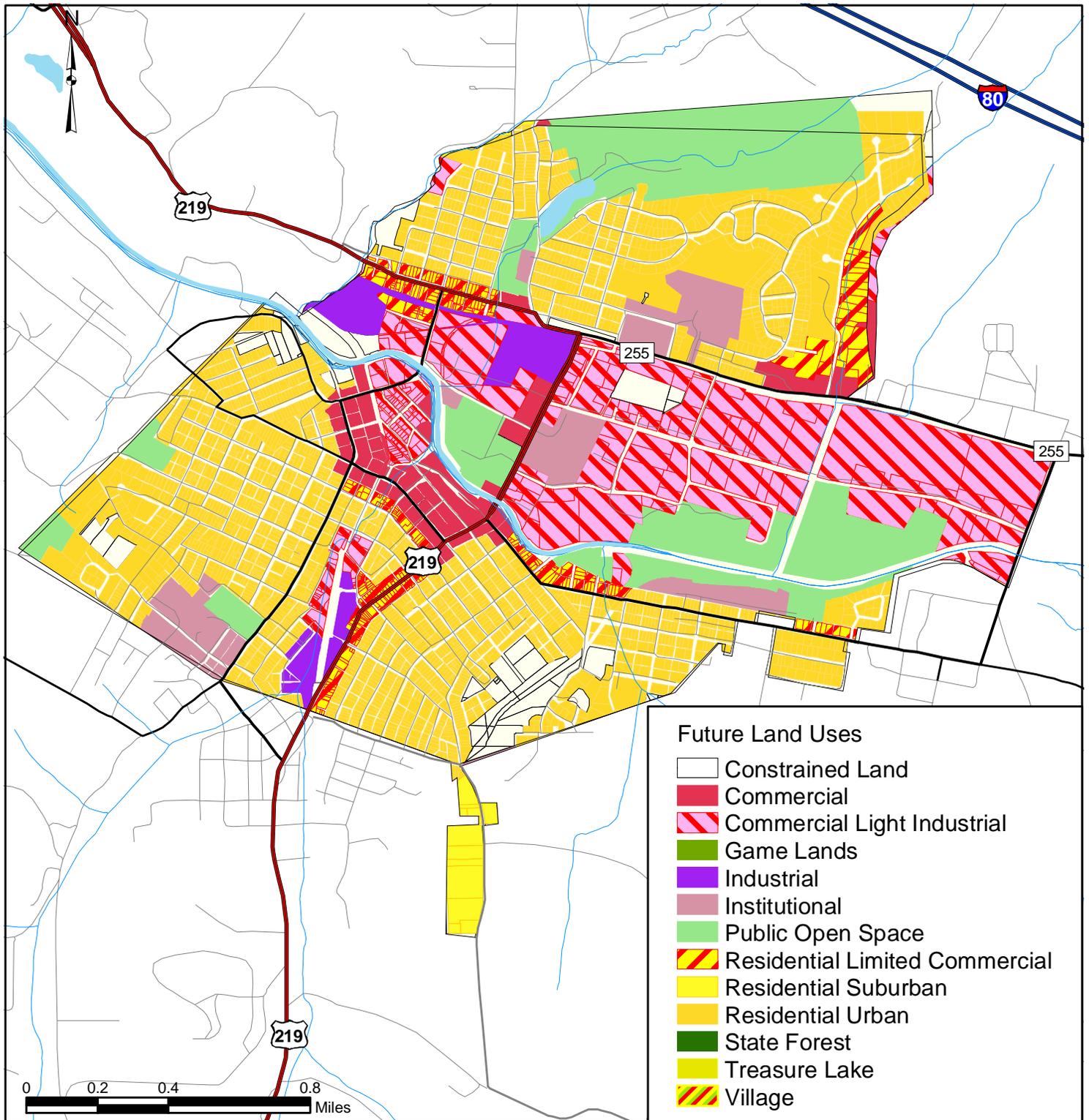
Northwest Clearfield County Region

This map was financed, in part, by a Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development



Source: Pennsylvanian Department of Transportation (PennDOT), 1998, 2001 and 2006,
 U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 2005
 Clearfield County GIS, 2007
 Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic, North American, 1983

GCCA
 2007



Du Bois City Future Land Use

Northwest Clearfield County Region

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The City should also update its SALDO, especially relative to land development standards.

The modernization of the DuBois land use ordinance is the priority land use activity in the region.

Falls Creek Borough

The Future Land Use Plan reflects current land use and zoning as well as projected growth in the Borough:

- **Industrial** development is expected along the traditional railroad corridor as well as at the Falls Creek Industrial Park.
- **Commercial** use is focused along Main Street (Route 830).
- **Residential/Limited Commercial** is seen south of the commercial area and east of 3rd Street (Route 950).
- **Public Open Space** is the current Borough Park off of Taylor, as well as Memorial Park along Main.
- **Residential:** The balance of the community is residential, with growth anticipated in the southwest quadrant.

There are some wetlands which will inhibit development along the eastern edge of Falls Creek.

Based upon the ordinance review, a new zoning ordinance is recommended for the Borough. A “rationalization” of the map and existing development pattern of the Borough is needed. The SALDO is also in need of updating, especially the Land Development section. Though essentially an urban area, some access management standards are recommended in Falls Creek.

Huston Township

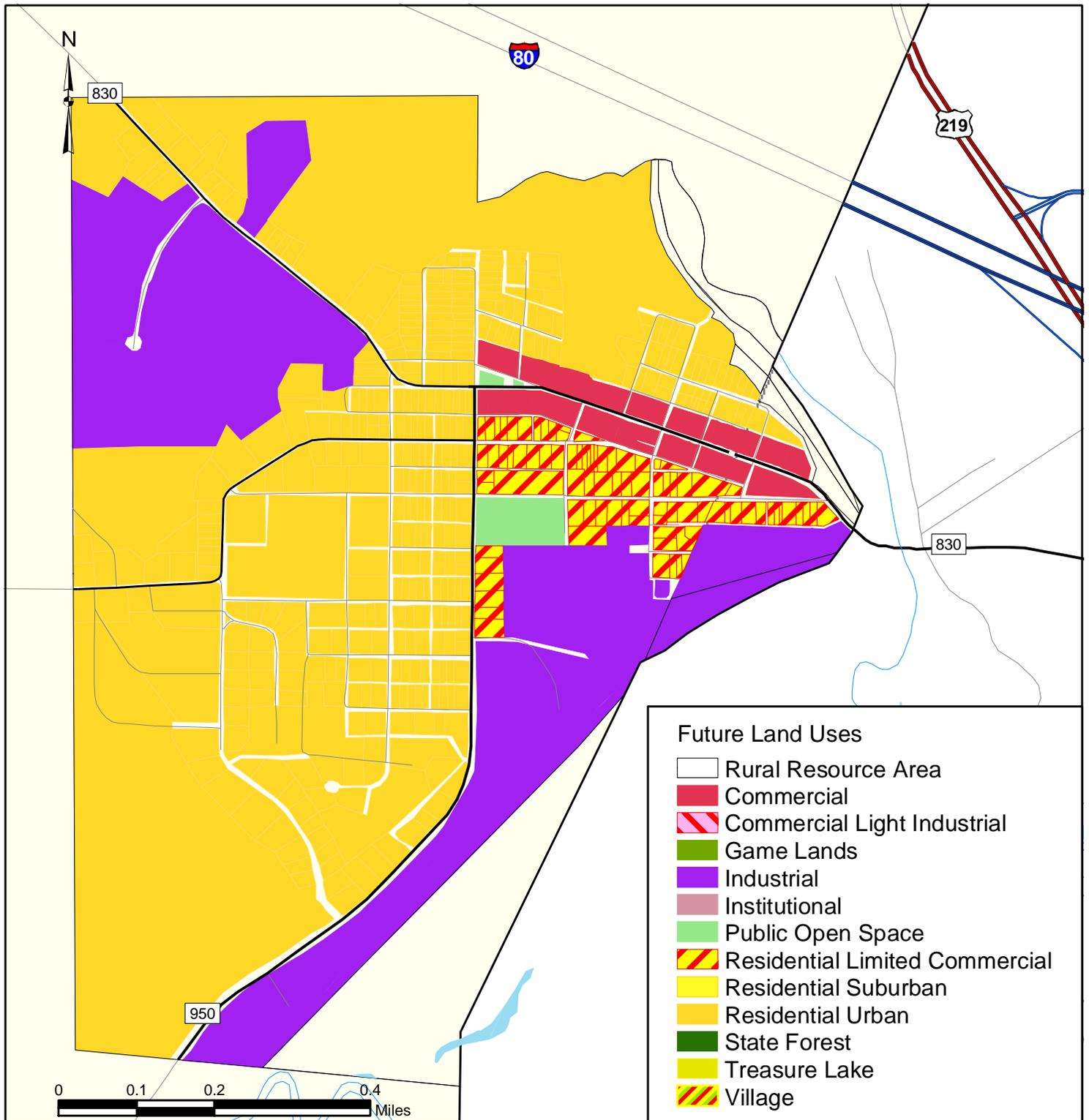
The Future Land Use Map for Huston Township envisions modest growth over the next decade. This growth will be a natural extension of the Village pattern centered on Penfield, Hollywood, and Winterburn. As can be seen on the map, the primary uses will be: Village, Rural Resource, State Forest (Moshannon), and the State Game Lands.

It is the formal policy of this Plan that any significant additions (over 50 acres) to State-owned land shall require consultation with, and concurrence by, the host community.

Currently, Huston Township has no local land use regulations. This Plan recommends they continue to rely on Clearfield County’s SALDO, as the County staff provides professional administration. The Township is interested in a possible zoning ordinance but believes further investigation is needed. This Plan recommends the Board of Supervisors appoint a citizens committee to examine this question and report their recommendations to the Board.

Sandy Township

Additional growth is expected in Sandy Township: residential, commercial, and industrial. In the next decade, the following growth is projected, consistent with this Plan:



Falls Creek Future Land Use

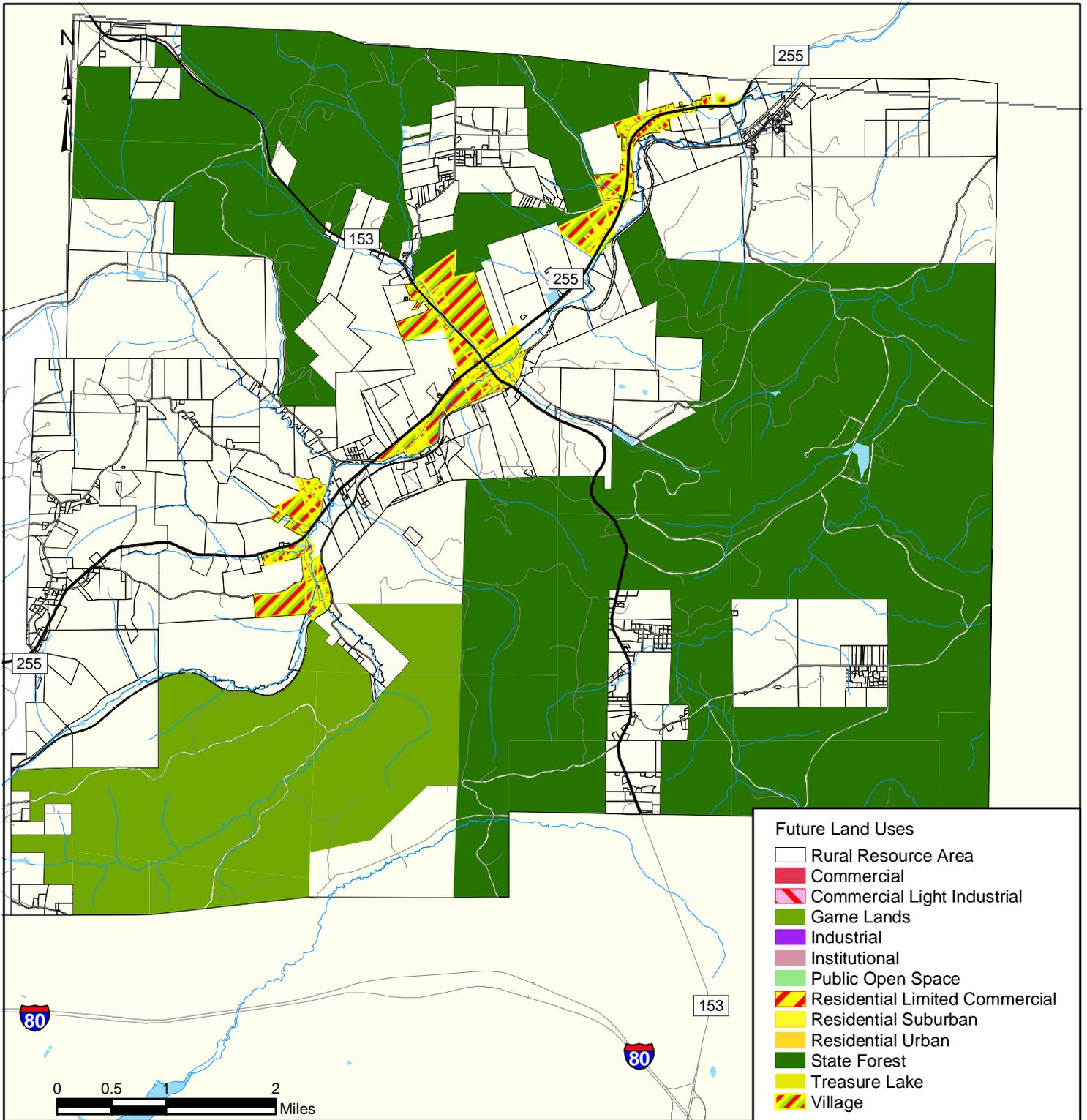
Northwest Clearfield County Region

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Huston Township Future Land Use

Northwest Clearfield County Region

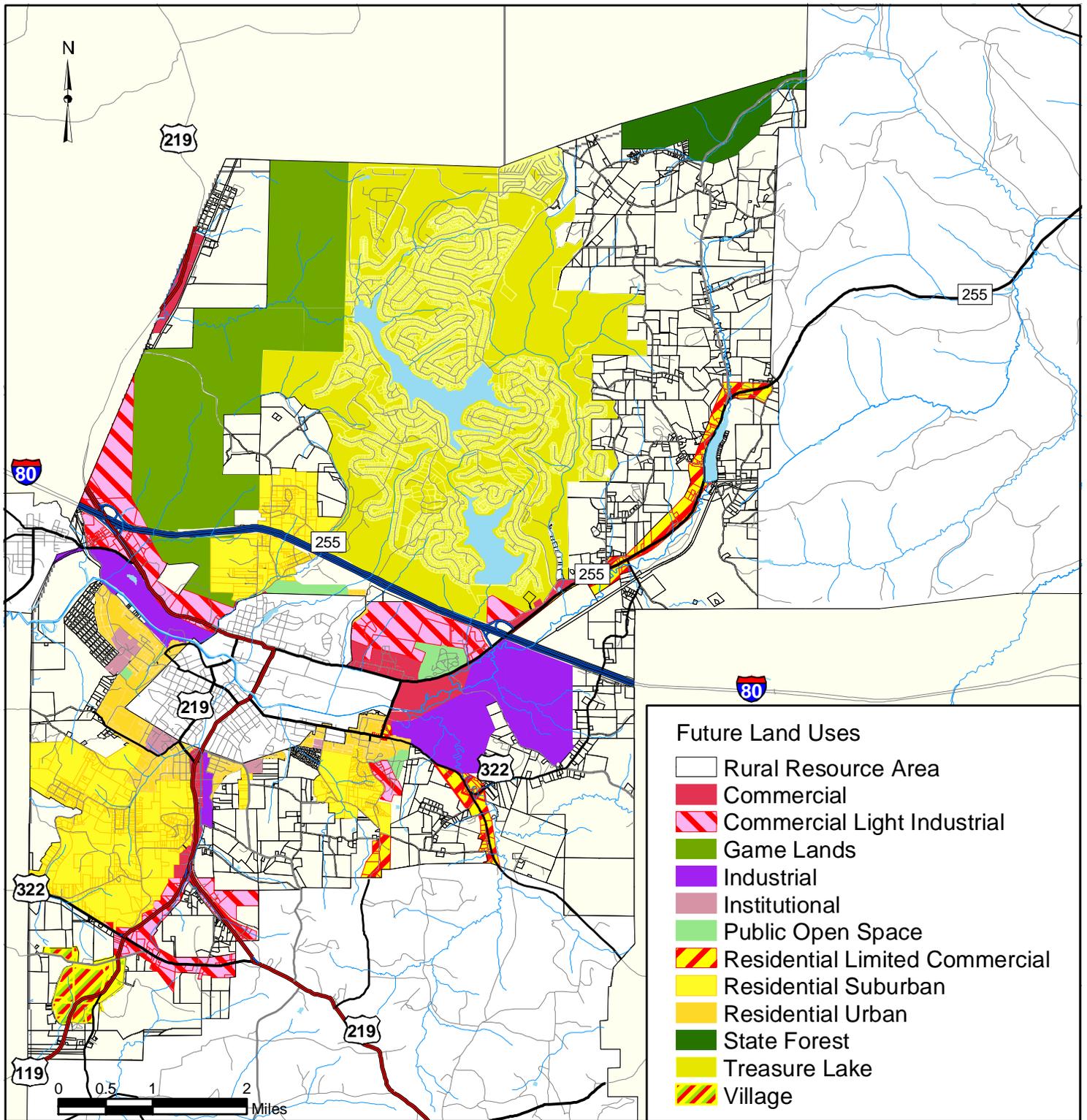
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- **Commercial:** Traditional retail, service, and office areas are focused along major road corridors. This includes Shaffer Road and Route 255, south of I-80. Other commercial concentrations are seen along Route 255, north of I-80; Route 219 in West Sandy; and along Route 219, north. Most of this growth will be in the form of the expansion of existing uses, the redevelopment of existing properties, with some limited new construction.
- **Commercial Light Industrial:** This land use designation is based upon the past success of the Beaver Meadows development. To a large extent, much of this designation abuts major highways (routes 219 and 119, and the Interstate), industrial land, public areas, or mixed commercial regions. Where this land use abuts residential or rural resource areas, buffering and access control requirements are critical.
- **Game Lands:** It is the formal policy of this Plan that any significant additions (over 50 acres) to State-owned land shall require consultation with, and concurrence by, the host community.
- **Industrial:** The current and future industrial areas shown are both east and west of DuBois, south of the Route 255 corridor. To the west, it includes a portion of the Rescar operation and the Larkeytown rail yards. This latter area has some wetlands along its margins. Wetland mitigation is recommended here to allow for a logical expansion of industrial land.
- **Institutional:** Much of the land designated as institutional reflects current use, with additional development expected. The major change is the projected expansion of the DuBois Regional Medical Center along South Main Street.
- **Public Open Space:** No significant changes are expected.
- **Residential Limited Commercial:** This designation is seen along Route 255, north; Route 219, west of DuBois; a small area in Oklahoma; and along the Oklahoma/Salem and Rockton roads. As previously noted, this designation is aimed at current residential areas along busy roads. The designation is primarily aimed at day-time, non-retail activities, mainly office and light services.
- **Residential Suburban:** Growth areas for this land use are projected for:
 - Kiwanis Trail, South Main
 - The Oklahoma-Salem Road area
 - The Indian Hills-Lundgren area
 - The Greenwood, Hetrick, Juniata Street Extension area
- **Residential Urban:** No significant change in this land use is forecast.
- **State Forest:** The Moshannon State Forest. It is the formal policy of this Plan that any significant additions (over 50 acres) to State-owned land shall require consultation with, and concurrence by, the host community.
- **Treasure Lake:** The existing PRD. No major changes are projected.
- **Village:** A mixed-use area in West Liberty.



Sandy Township Future Land Use

Northwest Clearfield County Region

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Sandy currently has a zoning ordinance and a SALDO. The zoning ordinance needs some updating (see the Background Report), and the addition of the new use classifications recommended by this Plan, Commercial/Light Industrial, and Residential/Limited Business. In addition, a Village zone is needed for West Liberty. Finally, a zoning map “rationalization” is appropriate. That requires a close relationship between the current land use, the future Land Use Plan, and the zoning map. The final step in zoning, for Sandy, is the inclusion of access management standards.

Though Sandy’s SALDO is basically sound, the land development element does need modernization.

Other Land Use Concerns

In Pennsylvania, zoning ordinances and SALDOs can play more roles than their regulation of new development. There are issues of farm land preservation, protection of natural resources, and historic preservation. Land use ordinances can address these concerns:

- **Farm Land Preservation:** At this time, agriculture is not intense enough to warrant traditional agricultural zoning. However, this Plan believes the farming community deserves support and recommends the following policies:
 - Individual lots in farm areas should be at least from 1 to 2 acres, with the 2 acres favored to discourage sprawl.
 - As many local farmers need other income sources, zoning should permit some small-scale business on farmsteads. Larger lots and generous isolation distances from other residences are a must (see Regional Plan).
- **Protection of Natural Resources:** This Plan recommends:
 - A “Growing Greener” PRD approach. Reward those who preserve primary conservation land.
 - Require riparian buffer strips (see prior discussion).
 - Control growth on steep slopes. Any development on land with a slope above 16% should be supported by engineering data.
 - A Greenway Plan has been suggested. This could help preserve Rural Resource Areas and complement Pennsylvania Wilds involvement. Part of a *de facto* “Greenway” already exists in eastern and southern Huston Township, with a State Forest and Game Land. In both Sandy and Brady townships, lands along their eastern boundaries could also be considered for this designation.
- **Historic Preservation:** Any municipality with important historic resources should consider National Register designation, a historic zone, or the adoption of a historic district per the Act of 1961. The DuBois Area Historical Society should be involved as a technical advisor for any of these initiatives.

Detailed Housing Plan

A Housing Program for the Northwest Clearfield County Region

This section contains the following elements:

- A Recap of Housing Facts
- Projected Housing Needs
- Protection of Existing Residential Areas
- Housing “Rehab” Program: Focused on areas identified by the housing surveys.
- Institute a Problem Housing Program using two approaches, or a combination of both.
- Physical and Mental Health/Mental Retardation Housing Needs
- Housing for Older Citizens: Allows older local residents to stay in their homes longer.
- First-Time Homebuyers Program
- Entrepreneurial Homestead Program

A Housing Overview

The Northwest Clearfield County Region

- Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units increased twice the change in population.
- The increases are primarily driven by population gains in Sandy Township and a steady decline in household size.
- About 76% of all housing units are owner-occupied.
- Rental units are focused in DuBois and Sandy
- Vacancy rates (Census 2000) were highest in Huston (38.4%) and Sandy (12.7%), these rates are primarily due to seasonal homes.
- According to Census 2000, local home values are typical for west-central Pennsylvania.
- Per Census information, housing value appreciation (1990-2000) roughly kept pace with the cost of living.
- Again, per Census data, area rents increased (1990-2000) much above the cost of living.
- Local homeownership is more affordable than the State norm (Census 2000).
- The local housing market, thus far, appears to have avoided the boom-and-bust problems that the National market has experienced.
- Treasure Lake is a separate housing market in the Northwest Clearfield County Region; however, it likely is more sensitive to the National economy.
- According to the local Multi-List Service, 412 homes sold in 2007 in the DuBois area, at an average price of \$95,281. In Treasure Lake, there were 173 sales, at an average price of \$118,562.
- The Region's housing stock is sound, but there are pockets of deteriorated homes.
- The DuBois Housing Authority has 421 units of rental housing in its inventory, with waiting lists for all its development. St. Michaels Terrace adds 102 units.
- There are needs for MH/MR units.

Future Housing Needs

In order to forecast future housing needs, it is necessary to

- Estimate future population
- Determine the general population to be housed
- Estimate average household size
- Estimate units lost by fire, abandonment, or change of use

With these factors established, a reasonable estimate on future housing can be predicted. The first item is to select a population projection series to use. For these projections, the “Fixed” migration rate is used. This is the highest of the projections, but is the only one based upon the actual demographic experience of the study area.

Table 1: Population Projections				
Year	2000	2010	2020	2030
Population	24,130	26,171	27,961	29,545
Source: Census 2000 and consultant calculations				

The next important number is that portion of the population needing housing. To arrive at that figure, the percentage of the population in group quarters is deducted from the total population. Locally, most persons in group quarters are in nursing homes. Census 2000 estimated that 2.6% of the total population was in group quarters. Traditionally, it is assumed that most persons in group quarters will be the elderly. Yet, National studies by HUD believe that the emerging elderly (the Baby Boomers) will more likely be in better physical condition, and remain independent longer than the current seniors.

According to the projections by 2030, the number of those over 65 will increase from approximately 4,500 to about 8,000. In 2000, this age group was 18.8% of the total population; in 2030, they will be 26.8 percent. In 2000, 14% of the 65-plus population was in group quarters. If National trends are accepted, we can expect that proportion to decrease to about 10 percent. For the sake of clarity, the following values will be used:

Estimated Persons in Group Quarters			
2000	2010	2020	2030
627	690	740	800

The next question is the size of the typical household in the area. This is important as the average household size varies greatly within the study area. It ranges from 2.23 in DuBois to 2.71 in Brady. To determine this for the entire area, the total number of households (9,764) was divided into the total population in households, 23,513. The result was an average household size of 2.4.

In west-central Pennsylvania, the size of households has been declining over the past two to three decades. Between 1990, the average household in the Northwest Clearfield County Region dropped from 2.53 persons to 2.41, a loss of 4.8 percent. Given the general demographics of the

region, this pattern is expected to continue, though at a lessening pace. For household size projections, the following values will be used:

Household Size Projections			
2000	2010	2020	2030
2.41	2.31	2.25	2.21

The last two issues are to estimate housing lost to fire, abandonment, etc. This is a difficult number to establish, as there is little reliable research on this subject. Consequently, 10 units annually will be the factor used. Finally, in any housing market, people are buying, moving, and selling. To account for this, a nominal vacancy rate of 5% was used.

These considerations resulted in the following table.

Table 2: Projected Households for the Northwest Clearfield County Region				
	2000	2010	2020	2030
Population	24,130	26,171	27,961	29,545
Group Quarters Population	627	690	740	800
Population in Households	23,503	25,481	27,221	28,745
Average Household Size	2.41	2.31	2.25	2.21
Net Unit Need	9,752	11,031	12,098	13,007
Total Need*	10,345	11,687	12,808	13,762
*As noted above, this includes units lost and a nominal 5% vacancy rate.				
Source: Census 2000 and consultant calculations				

Due to the large number of seasonal homes in Sandy and Huston townships, these figures should be viewed with some caution; yet, at the same time, with some optimism. If current trends continue, the area will average 135 homes annually until 2010; for the next decade, about 110; then 2020 to 2030, about 95 units. Please remember, much of that demand will be driven by market conditions of Treasure Lake.

Protection of Existing Housing Resources

The purpose of this element of the Northwest Clearfield County Region Comprehensive Plan is to set forth policies to preserve existing residential areas.

Strategy 1 – Land Use Ordinances

For this element, see the Land Use Plan.

Strategy 2 – Remedial Actions

This segment is intended to address areas where problem homes exist, and is divided into three basic elements:

- Assistance
- Prevention and Intervention
- Blight removal

Assistance

One method to improve neighborhoods is through housing rehabilitation programs. As housing rehabilitation programs are Federally funded, income guidelines are used and recipients must meet HUD “LMI” standards. For the initial application, the areas set forth by the Plan should be used to establish geographic priorities. Furthermore, it is suggested that any housing assistance program be envisioned as at least a three-phase program to address the majority of homes needing assistance. In Pennsylvania, “rehab” programs are typically funded through either the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or HOME programs. In recent years, the HOME program has become the primary funding resource. Though this is a Federal program, monies are allocated to Pennsylvania, and Commonwealth communities can then apply for funds from the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).

When awarding housing rehabilitation HOME grants to local municipalities, DCED has established certain priorities. Following these priorities are necessary to obtain financial assistance for housing rehabilitation. Priorities include:

1. **Targeting:** Targeting can be to a single area or to multiple geographic areas. The housing survey work already done as part of this Comprehensive Plan can be used to fulfill the targeting criteria.
2. **Leverage:** This can be from a variety of sources. It means adding resources to the project. Generally, cash funds are the most effective means of leverage. For the typical HOME grant, a local input of \$50,000 to \$100,000 would make the application competitive.
3. **Impact:** This is measured in a variety of ways. The following are examples:
 - Part of well-planned strategy (again, this Plan can be used for this element)
 - Housing sustainability, including energy considerations and education
 - Community stability
 - Lasting economic, job, or other improvements

Recommended Procedures

Step 1: Those communities interested should meet to determine joint participation in a HOME application. Participants should know that this process takes some time, and may well involve some resources.

Step 2: Serious participants must then determine the following:

- Estimated units for rehabilitation*
- Units by municipality
- Obligation by municipality

**Generally, applications request for the maximum grant amount (\$500,000). Such funds normally can “rehab” 15 to 20 homes.*

Step 3: Select a consultant/agency to prepare the application.

Step 4: Determine the amount of local “match.” This can come from:

- Certain improvements which will benefit the same homes to be improved under the HOME application (new streets, water/sewer lines, etc.).
- Any possible documented “in-kind” contributions.
- Cash to the project. Each participating municipality must consider a reasonable cash contribution.

Other sources of match can include:

- Act 137 funds
- Banks
- Non-profit agencies

Step 5: Submit grant.

Step 6: Response to DCED – questions and clarification.

Step 7: Implementation, either by local agency or contract. It is critical this element be capably accomplished if follow-up grants are requested.

Usually, “rehab” programs are grants to households subject to a minimum residency required (5 years is typical). Though limited in its application, due to income limits, this program often engenders private repair programs.

Code Enforcement

The repair and rehabilitation of homes is a worthy undertaking, but the available resources will never equal the need. Therefore, it is sometimes necessary to take actions that will forestall the recurrent need for “rehab” programs. The only effective process is via code enforcement programs. Such programs can be difficult to administer. As evidenced by the Citizen Survey, there is, however, public support for it. Ideally, code enforcement must be:

- Impartially administered
- Have objective standards

- Provide for legal due process/appeal
- Be consistent throughout the area

What is needed is some type of code which addresses property condition. The most popular code, of this type, is the International Property Maintenance Code (International Code Council, Inc.). This code covers not only structures, but includes the exterior, housekeeping, even outdoor pools. A second option is a dangerous structure ordinance. However, dangerous structure ordinances are primarily aimed at demolition and not remediation, so its effectiveness is limited. The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors has a model “dangerous structure” ordinance on their website.

Currently structure deterioration is not a pervasive problem, but it is present and visible. If ignored, it will grow. Blight spreads. Blight must be removed before it grows.

This Plan recommends:

- Step 1:** All interested parties meet and select a desired approach (property maintenance code, dangerous structure).
- Step 2:** All adopt the necessary ordinance.
- Step 3:** A single agency (public or contract) be selected for enforcement in all participating municipalities.

Demolition

Once a property is found to be dilapidated, it should be demolished. The traditional way is via an ordinance or code, as outlined above. Though effective, code demolition can create orphan properties. In selected cases, another option may be used:

- Using a municipal authority, purchase dilapidated properties that have resale potential.
- After purchase of the property, demolish the structure, and resell the lot.

Usually, this approach is only successful if a market for the site is identified and if the cost of acquisition and demolition can be recovered by the sale. Seed money for such an operation should be secured either from a foundation or local sources. Usually, Federal and State funds have “strings” that increase program costs. The use of nongovernmental funds will also ease administration. The use of a redevelopment authority facilitates the resale of the lot. Though this program may be a challenge to set up, it can be very beneficial to the immediate neighborhood.

Assisted Housing

In discussions with both the DuBois Housing Authority and St. Michaels Terrace personnel, it appears that these units are in approximate equilibrium with the market. True, there are waiting lists; yet, such developments usually need a 95% plus occupancy rate to operate successfully. As such, no short-term projects for “assisted units” are recommended.

Special Needs Housing

Within the 20,000-plus residents of the Northwest Clearfield County Region, there are those with special needs. Some are physically handicapped, and some have mental health issues. According to the regional MH/MR organization, there is a local waiting list of 13 persons needing housing. In addition, there is some indication that certain MH/MR persons have poor living conditions.

The provision of housing for persons with MH/MR issues is beyond the scope of this Plan. Though these persons deserve the support of the region, housing alone is not the answer. Housing resources must be matched with support services, and that is tied to MH/MR budgets.

The local policy should rely upon code enforcement as well as actively presenting unmet special needs housing to the Clearfield/Jefferson MH/MR groups. Where MH/MR persons are found in poor housing circumstances, case workers, in combination with code enforcement, are needed.

Meeting Future Housing Needs

The Housing Summit

In the first few pages of this section, future housing needs were estimated. These needs will primarily be met by the private market—that is the local builders and developers. However, there are ways the constituent municipalities in the Northwest Clearfield County Region can facilitate the market process.

It is a Plan recommendation that the Plan implementation committee, in combination with the Chamber, have an annual Housing Summit. Local realtors and builders should be invited to the Summit. It should be a mutually beneficial event.

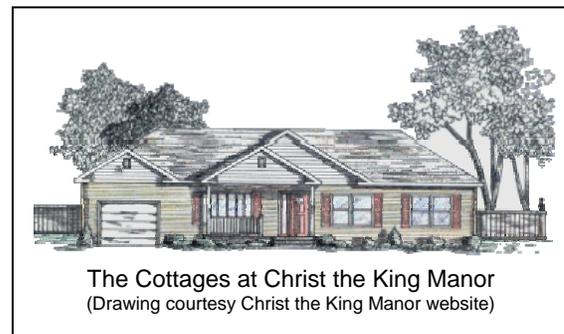
As envisioned, this would be a sharing of information. Builders would be asked for a market overview, to describe both problems and positive trends they see. On the public side, demographic trends, school enrollments, building permit data, and future plans (land use ordinances, water and sewer extensions, etc.) would be discussed. Good rapport should benefit both sides of the local development community. One of the elements to be discussed is the “Changing Needs,” covered in the next paragraph.

Changing Needs

If the population projections prepared as part of this Plan are correct, the percentage of older householders will increase in the future. In 2000, 18.8% of the total population was age 65 or over. However, they represented 22.8% of all homeowners. By 2030 (just 22 years hence), the 65-plus segment of the population will likely represent 28% to 32% of all homeowners.

This change will be incremental, but, given current demographics patterns, it is inevitable.

Such changes call for actions—one public and one private, and one combination. Certainly, the private market in the region will need to respond to new demographics. The proposed “Housing Summit” is an excellent venue to provide builders/developers age trends in the market. In the future, condominiums, smaller homes on smaller lots, and “low” or “no” maintenance options will become much more popular. Currently, this market is primarily addressed by the DuBois Housing



Authority, St. Michael’s Terrace, and specialized housing provides, such as Christ the King Manor, which offers independent living cottages, along with its assisted living facilities. These providers address special market sectors, not the general housing needs. In larger housing markets, condominiums and townhouses aimed at the 55-plus market are becoming popular.

The public side also can have a role. As homeowners age, the need to make homes more accessible increases. Keeping older citizens in their homes is a good strategy for the entire community. This does not mean a complete makeover, but often entails more than installing a few grab-bars. AARP, the PHFA, and the National Association of Home Builders provide guidelines for making existing homes more accessible. And, for some income-eligible homeowners, financial assistance may be available via the HOME program. A second aspect to

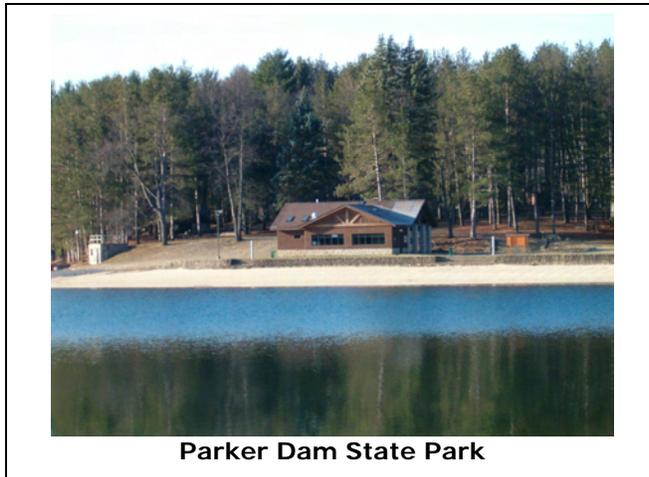
consider is the need for additional units for older citizens in the future. Historically, older residents have had limited choices. For those on a limited income, high-rise units built with public subsidies were available. For more affluent households, continuing care communities with several amenities are available.

In the past few years, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Authority (PHFA) has helped to sponsor attractive townhouse-type development. Though these are “assisted” units, the income limits under PHFA are more liberal than those used for the Federal programs. While not needed in the short term, elderly townhouse developments can fill an important local niche in the future (5 to 10 years).

Finally, there is another important role for a public/private partnership. As local homeowners seek housing options, with less maintenance options, their existing homes will come on the market. Some of these units could be “starter” homes. A “First-Time Homebuyer’s” program can help in such a market. “First timers” need not be “sub-prime” risks. Various agencies (PHFA) and banks offer such loans; and with **proper counseling**, these mortgages are standard risks.

Community Facilities and Services Plan

Recreation



Parker Dam State Park

The Northwest Clearfield County Region has an abundance of recreational facilities. For the outdoor enthusiasts, there are two Game Lands: the Moshannon State Forest, and the Parker Dam complex for hiking, hunting, and similar pursuits.

For traditional recreation, each community, except Huston, has a municipal park. These vary from the DuBois City's Memorial Park and outdoor pool to Falls Creek's Park and Recreation Area. All of these facilities appear to be generally meeting the needs of their residents.

What is needed? This Plan recommends the following steps:

- **Step One – Form a Regional Park and Recreation Committee.** The purpose of this committee would be to share information on programs, planned improvements, and just to establish a liaison between various recreation providers.

Who should be included? As a start:

- City of DuBois
- Brady Township
- Falls Creek Borough
- Sandy Township
- The DuBois Area School District
- The Spider Lake Soccer Association
- The DuBois YMCA
- Boy Scouts, Mountain Run Camp
- Huston Township
- PA Wilds



In addition to an informal sharing of information, this group should be asked to:

- Develop a process for sharing resources
- Explore cooperative purchasing
- Consider cooperative programming
- Determine the need for a regional park study to evaluate how well the individual parks meet contemporary needs. Of special concern should be the following groups:
 - In-line skating
 - Deck hockey
 - Hike/bike trails

- Skateboard facilities
- Recreation for the 55+ population

Recreation is part of the tourist business, and is covered in the economic portion of the Plan.

Municipal Recreation

In addition to the regional concerns, four of the five municipalities have recreational facilities. Specific recommendations are found below:

Brady Township: The Township Municipal Park is located on the same campus as its Community Center. These extensive resources are well kept and provide Brady residents with facilities that most communities lack. This Plan endorses the continued use, maintenance, and improvement of the park and Community Center.

City of DuBois: The City of DuBois has a fine park facility in its 26-acre Memorial Park and walking trail along Sandy Lick Creek. Recently, they completed a master plan for the trail and an adjacent facility, Showers Field. The Plan envisions access to both the Spider Lake soccer complex as well as Memorial Park. Improvements to Showers Field are also planned. In the future, loop trails through wetlands and pedestrian bridges across Sandy Lick are part of this design. Some work has already been placed under contract. This Plan endorses the Sandy Lick Creek Recreation Area Plan.

Falls Creek Borough: Though the smallest of the municipalities, the Borough has a gem of a municipal park in the center of the Borough, with easy access to its residents. Its continued excellent maintenance and improvement is recommended. Also endorsed are the planned Memorial Gazebo and Park in the Falls Creek's downtown.

Sandy Township: The 13-acre township recreation park has been well developed over the years and features play apparatus; outdoor volleyball and basketball courts; as well as restrooms, picnic areas, and ball fields. This Plan recommends the continued maintenance and improvement of this impressive facility.

Other Resources: The Spider Lake Soccer complex and the DuBois Area YMCA both are important local resources for the community. Likewise, the State Forest, Game Lands, and Parker Dam State function as immediate resources for area residents. The missing link is a comprehensive bike, pedestrian trail system which this Plan recognizes as an unmet need.

Safety Services

Police

There are two municipal police departments in the region. In combination, these two agencies provide protection for DuBois City and Sandy Township. Together, they comprise just over 80% of the area's population. In addition, the Treasure Lake development employs its own private security personnel.

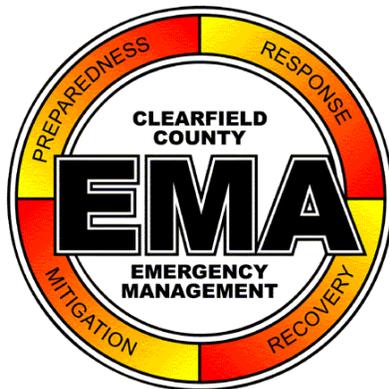
Currently, the police service in the area appears adequate. Police, however, have traditionally been a heavy expense for municipalities, often taking a major portion of general tax revenue. In

fact, many smaller communities in western Pennsylvania, including Falls Creek, have given up municipal police services due to cost. Based on the concern of cost, this Plan suggests the following actions:

- **The City of DuBois and Sandy Township Conduct a Formal Study on Police Service Consolidation:** The purpose of this study would focus on two qualities. First is the effectiveness of police protection under a consolidated department. The second consideration would be the relative cost, comparing the current approach versus a consolidated system.
- **Explore Alternative Service Options Between Those Communities With No Local Service and Those With a Police Department:** Traditionally, this option has entailed full-time service, patrols, etc. at a relatively high cost. An alternative may be to provide limited service for a limited fee. All fine income, however, would be paid to the municipality providing the service.

Fire

There are currently thirteen volunteer fire companies that provide service in the Northwest Clearfield County Area. At this time, each organization appears to have adequate staff and funding through their own resources and municipal contributions. In addition, there appears to be a positive relationship between local volunteer companies and with the Clearfield County EMA operation. There are no changes suggested.



Yet, statewide, problems with volunteer fire companies have been identified. In a 2002 study, the problems of recruitment were especially highlighted. Many reasons were cited as primary issues: changes in volunteerism, different work-home patterns, cost, continuous fund raising, and time. This may not yet be the case locally. Within the past year, however, the nearby community of Clearfield Borough has seen a consolidation of their departments.

A second consideration is the cost of equipment. Fire-fighting apparatus is expensive. If staffing or costs become a problem, the County EMA office should be asked to provide advice. This study does not recommend consolidation, but it does suggest these volunteer fire companies be aware of such difficulties and take action when, and if, needed.

Schools and Cultural Resources

Schools

The DuBois Area School District appears to be a well-run system that has recently completed major upgrading of its physical plant. Between the 2002-2003 and 2006-2007 year, however, there was a loss of 352 students. And, over the next ten years, the Pennsylvania Department of Education projects an additional loss of 458 students. If this projection is accurate, it is very likely at least one school building will be



closed, probably one of the elementary schools. Such closings are always difficult. The five municipalities representing this Plan are all part of the DuBois Area School District. They should take the following steps:

- Volunteer to meet, and work, with the school district, on a purely advisory basis, to assist in any closure strategy.
- To advise on re-use possibilities of any structures that may be closed, as a result of declining enrollment.
- To explore use of existing facilities for continuing education and workforce development, especially as it relates to local employer needs.



Paul G. Reitz Theater

Cultural Resources

The primary cultural amenities of the area are the DuBois Library, the Paul G. Reitz Theater, and the DuBois Area Historical Society. All appear to be functioning adequately at this time, and no structural changes are recommended. There is a definite need to make the local citizens more conscious of their history and the key historic structures of the region. *Please also see the section on historic preservation.*

Municipal Buildings

Currently, all five municipalities have a municipal building, with Huston slated to construct a new facility in 2008. Other needs are discussed below:

- Brady Township: No change is recommended.
- DuBois City: No change is recommended.
- Falls Creek Borough: The current structure, though adequate, is small. In addition, the Borough operations are scattered. This Plan recommends the:
 - Expansion of the current building
 - Relocation of the Borough garage and the construction of a new facility on the Borough building campus
- Huston Township: The new facility is under construction.
- Sandy Township: The Sandy Township Municipal Building has been expanded piecemeal over the past several years. It currently is in need of more space. The addition of a new meeting room would allow the current meeting space to be converted into offices. Over the longer term, a formal space study is needed as well as a more rational expansion approach. All operations should remain consolidated at the current location.

Individual Water System Needs

In the “Regional” approach, an overview of needs is presented along with cooperative solutions. In this section, detailed needs are presented.

Brady Township

Currently, this system is in generally good condition, though there are some areas of concern. The recommended short-term projects are set forth below:

- Water Tanks: In the next five years, replace two and refurbish one tank.
- Rehabilitate or develop new wells to resolve mineral content problems of the water.
- If the water quality issue cannot be solved soon, there is the problem of excessive backwash sludge. Current facilities are inadequate to handle the volumes being produced.

Beyond these major items, the only need for this system is scheduled line replacement and maintenance. If not completely now available, the system should be documented “on plan” with a listing and description of its mechanical/treatment facilities. A CAD or GIS electronic file is also needed. No significant expansion of the service area is recommended.

City of DuBois

The City of DuBois has a large water system that provides water for its citizens as well as portions to the township of Sandy and Union and Sykesville Borough. Their source is an impoundment on Anderson Creek in Union Township. The treatment plant is in Sandy Township, along Home Camp Road. The DuBois system has a long list of needs.

In the 2005 Clearfield County Water Report, various issues were raised; some have been resolved and others have not. These are enumerated below:

- Explore supplemental/alternative water sources. This was primarily in the event of larger than anticipated water demand, coupled with a prolonged drought. Though not mentioned in the County report, the issue of spills on I-80 must also be considered. This system has approximately four million gallons of storage—about four days’ water supply. Any long-term problem due to a spill could create a serious supply problem. These factors argue for a backup supply.
- Leakage (an ongoing problem—current water loss is reported at over 40% of finished water).
- Service area loops (see also the next paragraph).
- Overall system plan (including the water treatment plant).

It must be noted that study included a comment that the water treatment plant “facilities are in good condition, but are aged and will have to be soon upgraded or replaced.” That plant rehabilitation has already occurred.

However, there are many other issues with the water system. The DuBois Public Works Department has completed a detailed analysis of water system needs. In a report to City Council (2007), the principal elements were:

- Looping of water mains to improve flow
- Replace 4-inch waterlines with 8-inch lines
- Replace lead services with cooper
- Replace valves, as needed
- Access roads to waterlines
- Dredge the DuBois Reservoir
- Repair reservoir spillway
- Install fire breaks (reservoir watershed)
- Line and paint the two water tanks
- Replace valves on main transmission lines

The estimated costs of these improvements are quite high—about \$13.6 million. At this time, priorities have not been assigned to these needs.

Though not directly related to its function as a water supply resource, there are issues at the DuBois Reservoir. A State inspection has determined the current spillway of the reservoir dam is inadequate. Officials are examining various options. One involves increasing the dam height, the other dredging the reservoir, and enlarging spillway capacity. A recent engineering study provided some preliminary cost estimates for projects relating to the dam:

Raise embankment one foot – \$854,281

Dredging – \$1,850,827

Spillway improvements – \$2,565,937

In summary, the City is looking at some \$14 million to \$16 million (minimum) to renovate its water system. Adding to this, the system leakage issue reported in the 2005 Plan (now at 40%+ of production, according to recent newspaper reports) persists to this day. If not completely now available, the system should be documented on plan with a listing and description of its mechanical/treatment facilities. A CAD file should also exist.

Given the scope of its problems facing the DuBois water system, it is difficult to prioritize them. This Plan recommends the following short-term steps:

- Secure the dam, as needed, and dredge
- Replace main valves, as needed
- Replace raw and finished waterlines, as needed
- Initiate an aggressive leak-detection program
- Monitor the political and regulatory issues of the watershed transfer issue (Susquehanna and Ohio)

In combination, these improvements will incur at least \$6 million, but could be as much as \$8 million to \$10 million in costs. It still leaves other major problems that will require both money and timely attention.

Falls Creek Borough

Falls Creek provides water to Borough residents as well as to approximately 100 users in Washington Township, Jefferson County. The system draws its water from a small impoundment just west of the Borough, off Route 830. The general system appears to be in good condition. This Plan does make the following recommendations:

- Leak Detection Program: Based on the 2006 DEP water report, the system's water loss is about 24% per day. Though not an alarming rate, it does call for an aggressive leak-detection program.
- The Falls Creek Reservoir is now in good condition, but siltation is an ongoing process. Reservoir dredging in the next ten years is recommended.
- Due to the relatively small size of the reservoir, the Borough should negotiate a formal emergency backup water supply agreement with another area system.

If not now available, the system should be documented on paper plans with a listing and description of its mechanical/treatment facilities. An electronic CAD or GIS drawing should be developed.

Huston Township

This system is operated by the Huston Township Municipal Authority, and uses bulk water purchased from the Jay Township Authority in Elk County. The 2005 County Water Study suggests the replacement of the system's asbestos/concrete pipe (AC) and cited deficiencies in its fire service. Currently, the Authority has undertaken projects to replace AC pipe with PVC, install additional fire plugs, and provide some valving on mains to facilitate repairs and maintenance.

This Plan recommends the completion of its water line replacement program, the continued installation of fire plugs, and new valving.

Beyond physical improvements to the existing system, there are some short- and long-term service extension potentials. In the short term, a service extension to the Woodward Avenue should be considered. In the long term, a further extension to the Winterburn area is recommended. A complete "as-built" set of plans for the system should be on file at the Authority offices with an electronic CAD or GIS file also available.

Sandy Township

The Sandy Township water system purchases its water from the City of DuBois, at eight separate take points. Though operated by the Township, it is owned by the Sandy Township Water and Sewer Authority. This operation has slowly grown through the acquisition of smaller distribution systems. It has been Township policy to upgrade these acquisitions as made. Old, often undersized, lines are replaced with new PVC pipe sized for modern needs. As the system is relatively new, it is assumed plans, drawings, and a description of these lines are available. If not, system mapping and a description are needed.

In general, the distribution system is now in good condition, with an estimated 20% or less unaccounted water (leakage) factor.

For Sandy Township, the primary issue facing it is system growth.

Short-term projects include three primary areas: the Kiwanis Trail project, and extensions to both Exit 97 and Exit 101 on I-80.

Kiwanis Trail is a project primarily designed to serve a residential area on the western side of the Township, south of the City of DuBois. Some 256 new connections are anticipated, and the project includes the construction of a new 250,000-gallon water tank and water booster pump stations. Project costs are estimated at \$3.6 million.

The other two major short-term projects are the expansion of water service to the full Interchange areas of both Interchange 97 and 101. Preliminary design and costs are not available.

The second initiative is the development of an alternate water source for the area. The current primary water sources for the core DuBois-Sandy-Falls Creek area are surface impoundments. As mentioned previously, the DuBois Reservoir is in Union Township, just east of the project area. The smaller Falls Creek Reservoir is just west of the Borough. The 2005 Clearfield County Water Report recommended an alternate water source as a backup in times of long-term drought. The Township is investigating possible groundwater sources in the Adrian Furnace area, and should continue that effort then determine the feasibility and cost of a water well source. If feasible, this could be both a source for some of Sandy's future needs and be an available alternative/backup source for the City and Borough. (A CAD system map is available.)

TESi (Total Environmental Solutions, Incorporated)

A private firm, TESI operates the water systems for the Treasure Lake PRD in Sandy Township, north of I-80. Beyond disclosing their current user base—2,034 domestic and 57 commercial—the firm refused any other information, citing security (FEMA) constraints. The 2005 Clearfield County Water Report made the following recommendations:

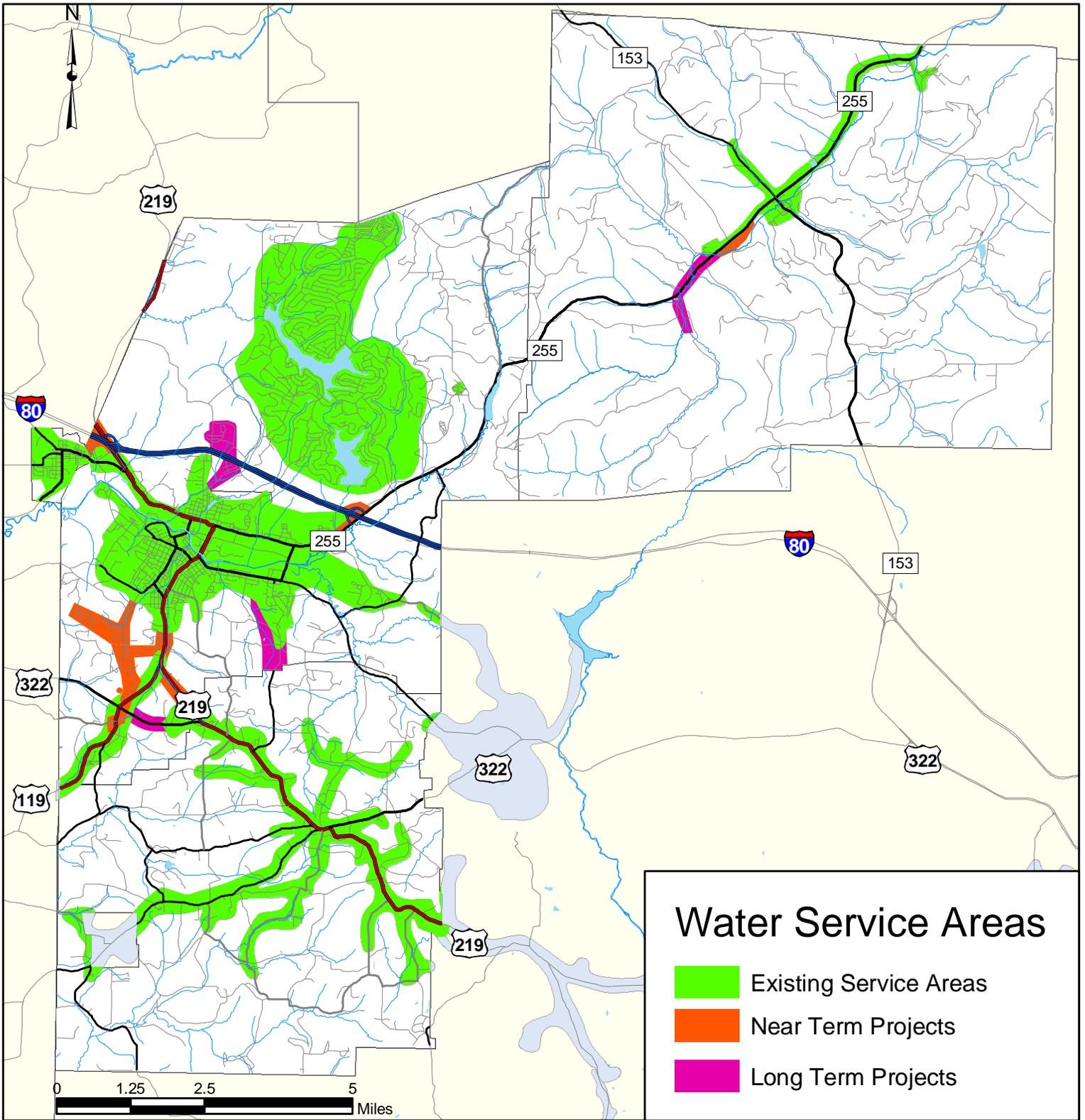
- Replace A/C pipes
- Construct a treated water storage tank
- Install a fire hydrant network

TESi indicated that the suggested new water tank was primarily for fire service. As they do not intend to provide fire service, they relate the additional tank is not needed. They also stated that the A/C pipes are sound and leakage is not now an issue.

If possible, the Township should consider the acquisition to acquire this system.

As required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Section 301(b):

- This Plan is designed to be generally consistent with the State water plan.
- This Plan is designed to be generally consistent with any water resources plan of a river basin commission.
- Lawful activities such as extraction of minerals impact water supply sources and such activities are governed by statutes regulating mineral extraction that specify replacement and restoration of water supplies affected by such activities.
- Commercial agriculture production can impact water supply sources.



Future Water Projects

Northwest Clearfield County Region

This map was financed, in part, by a Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), 1998, 2001 and 2006,
 U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 2005
 Clearfield County GIS, 2007
 Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic, North American, 1983

GCCA
 2007

Individual Sewer System Needs

Brady Township

At this time, there is no sewer system in Brady Township, except for a short stretch of Route 119 between Sandy Township and Sykesville. That is part of Sandy's West Liberty collection service area; treatment is via the Sykesville Sewer Treatment Plan (STP).

Brady is, however, preparing an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan as the comprehensive plan is being prepared. At this writing, Plan recommendations are not available. Short- and long-term sewer service area recommendations are shown on the Future Service Area map. Brady and Sandy should coordinate their efforts to provide service along Route 219.

DuBois City

The City of DuBois STP provides treatment for the residents of DuBois, Falls Creek (including about 100 customers in Washington Township, Jefferson County), and portions of Sandy Township. Its sewer treatment plant was constructed in 1960 with a plant upgrade in 1989, and is in general compliance with DEP regulations. Due to past problems, however, the plant had to construct an overflow equalization facility and undertake actions to correct the collection system's inflow and infiltration (I & I) issues. Sandy Township had problem (I & I) areas, but has replaced its leaky lines.

This Plan recommends the following future activities for the City system:

- Continuing the DuBois I & I remediation program
- Adding another digester unit at the STP
- Improving the dechlorination process to be in compliance with DEP standards

Falls Creek Borough: The Borough's sewerage collection system appears in good repair and is adequate for this Plan's horizon. In addition, they have adequate reserved capacity at the DuBois sewer treatment plant. This system should be sufficient to accommodate any needed growth in the Borough.

Huston Township

The Huston system is owned and operated by the Township Sewer Authority. The plant is situated along Route 255 in the Hollywood-Tyler area. Currently, the system is in compliance with DEP standards and in 2006, its average hydraulic flow was about 26% of the plant capacity. Under an already programmed expansion project along Mountain Run Road, an additional 110 EDUs will be added. Future extension to service the Winterburn area is recommended (see plate).

Sandy Township

Currently, Sandy Township has three separate sewer systems. One element, which abuts the City of DuBois, flows to their STP. The Township operates the Slab Run plant, and, finally, the West Liberty service area flows into Sykesville Borough.

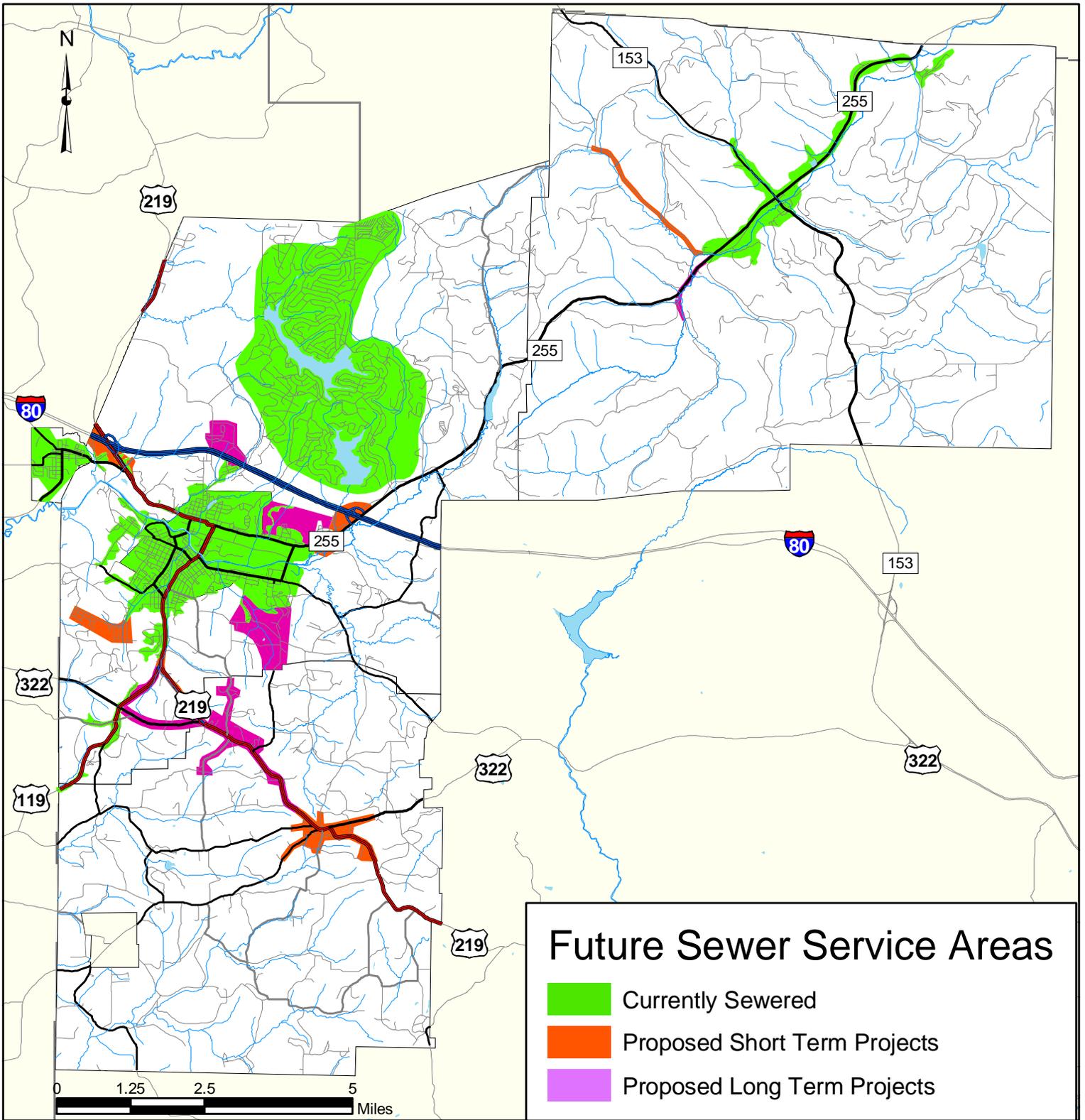
This Plan recommends service extensions as follows:

- Kiwanis Trail – Short term
- Extension to the I-80 Interchanges, Exists 97 and 101
- Extension to Route 219 South
- Extension along Route 119 South, from the Route 219 intersection
- Extension along Route 322, from Route 119 to Route 219

In its plans to foster development at the I-80/Route 219 Interchange, the Slab Run plant is essential. A major recent I & I source has been discovered and when re-mediated, will increase available plant capacity of Slab Run beyond the EDUs now available.

TESi

This organization provides for sanitary sewer service to the Treasure Lake PRD. They report they are in full compliance with DEP regulations and do not anticipate any new projects. Once again, the purchase of the system by Sandy Township, if feasible, should be considered.



Proposed Sewer System Projects Northwest Clearfield County Region

This map was financed, in part, by a Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), 1998, 2001 and 2006,
U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 2005
Clearfield County GIS, 2007
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic, North American, 1983

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The Economic Development Plan

Even though the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code specifies the elements of a comprehensive plan, surprisingly, it does not include economic development. Yet, the economic activity of the region “pays the bills.” This sector generates wage taxes, a significant portion of real estate values, and creates the disposable income that the region depends on. In an area which has seen economic reserves, the economy simply cannot be taken for granted.

As a quick review of the economic background information reveals, the local economy is not monolithic. It is composed of many facets. Likewise, this strategy has many elements. The summary and rationale for the selected sectors are as follows:

- Traditional Manufacturing and Related Supportive Services – This sector has traditionally supplied good “head-of-household” jobs and demonstrated a surprising vigor as evidenced by recent employer surveys.
- Health Services – This sector is the area’s largest employer and has an average wage somewhat higher than the county average. Its importance is more than simply an employment base. The Citizen Survey showed local citizens truly value the services provided at the DRMC.
- Transportation – The region is at the nexus of three key transportation assets: the multi-modal rail yards at Larkeytown, I-80, and the DuBois Regional Airport. This give the region advantages which, if used, can prove economically advantageous to job growth.
- Tourism, Recreation, Retirement Living – These elements are loosely related. Although tourism and recreation do not typically create head-of-household jobs, they do provide secondary employment; they support the retail sector. It also takes advantage of the promotions of the Pennsylvania Wilds program. Including retirement living in this sector recognizes the value of active retirees to the region.
- Retail – According to State statistics, this is the region’s second largest employment base, though its average wages area well below the county average wage. However, this sector makes up a significant element of local real estate values and in consequence, real estate tax revenues.
- Extractive Industries and Timbering – these are historic pursuits in the region, with mining providing well-paying jobs. The Plan also recognizes that these sectors must also respect the rural, natural environment valued by local residents.

The problem with a strategy that embraces so many divergent elements is how to sustain an ongoing active and cooperative program. Why cooperative? A brief look at all too many Pennsylvania communities shows the industrial, tourist, service, and retail sectors splintered. Each does their “own thing” and too often actually competing. The Northwest Clearfield County Region *must* dare to be different. To foster cooperation, this Plan intends to capitalize on the recently approved Enterprise Program. That program can fund an economic professional and, through that professional, provide enough staff support to foster a Regional Economic Development Committee.

The Regional Economic Development Committee should include:

- An economic development professional, specializing in manufacturing

- A representative of the Greater DuBois Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Corporation
- The DuBois Regional Medical Center
- The DuBois Main Street Manager
- A B&P Railroad representative
- A trucking representative
- Representatives of the three EZ municipalities
- Representatives of the real estate sector
- Ex-officio representatives:
 - County EDC
 - North Central
 - DuBois Area School System
 - Jeff Tech
 - Penn State DuBois
 - Triangle Tech
 - DuBois Business College
 - PA Wilds

The Committee should be convened as soon as possible; and, to the extent possible, set its own agenda. Yet, the research completed in the preparation of this Plan suggests certain activities, and these are itemized below:

Traditional Manufacturing and Industry: As noted, the quality of industrial jobs makes it an essential element of any economic strategy.

- **Loans:** Traditionally, below-market loan rates that will take junior lien positions facilitate capital investment for industry. And continued investment is critical to remain competitive.
- **Training:** All types of training are needed for industry, from basic welding to advanced manufacturing skills. In recent business surveys, the lack of such skills was identified as a major problem. Such training would need to be coordinated through the North Central WIB. The Northwest Clearfield County Region should be proactive in this field and do everything possible to bring such training to a local facility.
- **Infrastructure:** Any industrial areas that lack infrastructure should be identified and priorities for projects set.
- **Industrial Parks:**
 - Existing properties should be promoted using joint advertising. These would include:
 - The Falls Creek Industrial Park
 - The Doan Property
 - Developac Properties

- A public/semi-public industrial park near the Interstate, where all utilities are needed and are essential. About 60 net acres are suggested. The land should be priced to compete with similar developments along I-80.
- Special Initiatives:
 - Recruiting Students: Students in junior and senior high should be shown that technical training can promise a good future.
 - The issue of drugs and their effect on the workplace is real, and must be addressed.

Heath Services: The DuBois Regional Medical Center (DRMC) is the second largest employer in Clearfield County as well as the largest single employer in the Northwest Clearfield County Region. And, they are growing. DRMC is a truly regional resource providing services to four counties (Clearfield, Jefferson, Elk and Cameron). Beyond serving the traditional medical needs of the community of in-patient acute care, and behavioral services, its Hahne Regional Cancer Center is a unique asset of the hospital. In the period 2001-2006, Hahne's cases grew by 12.7 percent. With their role as a top employer, and given their future potential, DRMC must be a central part of the region's economic growth strategy.

Transportation:

- Continue opposition to the I-80 toll proposal. Currently, the area enjoys a unique transportation advantage with I-80—a toll-free road—and the multi-modal B&P rail yard at Larkeytown. It is important to keep this advantage.
- Work cooperatively with the B&P Railroad to expand their multi-modal facility. A “piggyback” facility may be appropriate. Possible rail freight assistance grants from PennDOT are possible. Given the current energy crisis and rails energy advantage, the Larkeytown Yards could become a major rail-truck center.

Retail: For the most part, new retail development should remain market-driven, and any significant public initiative should be supported by objective market studies. As noted, retail jobs may not pay as well as other sectors, but these developments generate needed real estate taxes.

The exceptions to this rule are the older downtowns. DuBois now has a Main Street Manager, and the program deserves support. Careful attention to the retail mix and missing resources (parking, etc.) is suggested. Now is an excellent time to examine the transportation, parking, and retail relationships in downtown DuBois (Transportation Study). The proposed façade program deserves support.

Tourism: Geographically, the region is, in fact, a major Gateway to the Pennsylvania Wilds. But to really capitalize on this asset, bold and imaginative action is needed. Some ideas are:

- Encourage new Wilds-related tourist businesses. Tourists need guidance. Where can budding entrepreneurs go to find out how to start a “tourist” business? Could not the “Wilds” effort support eco-friendly tourist business training, etc.?

- Develop a Wilds center to facilitate the connection of the tourist to regional restaurants, motels, events, and guides. Computer linkages are suggested at an attractive, physical location near I-80. Consider a Greenway Plan as a positive element of this effort.

General: Plan for full water and sewer services to Exits 97 and 101. At a minimum, complete schematic engineering and preliminary cost. Look for opportunities to link these projects to potential grant sources.

Extractive Industries/Timbering: Recognize these pursuits as important economically to the area. As long as environmental and local laws are respected, provide public support to these activities.

Entrepreneurial Homesteading Initiative: New entrepreneurs are needed for the region. For years, there have been government programs to rehabilitate homes. The guidelines are simple. The house needs the work; the family is income-eligible; and they must live in the house for five years, or pay a pro-rata share of the cost of the “rehab” back. Why not take that very same concept and apply it to economic development? Each year, advertise locally and in the major state newspapers for an entrepreneurial homesteader. In exchange for a home, the entrepreneur would agree to live locally for five years and start up a business. For the first year, the budding business person would pay only utilities and taxes. For the next year, rent equal to 20% of the mortgage would be charged. This would increase to 100% after five years. If the business was successful, and the person so desired, the house would be deeded over. This is certainly an “off-the-wall approach,” but new thinking is needed. The program should run for five years.

Flexibility: Economic development demands flexibility. Is the “mom and pop” store going to make a comeback? Will new industrial plants be needed? Will buses replace cars? Who knows? The Economic Development Committee must be willing to be flexible. Take a few flyers; maybe even look foolish occasionally. But, times always change, and successful programs must recognize that fact.

The Economic Plan must be regarded as a full partner in the Northwest Clearfield County Region Comprehensive Plan.

First Steps

Now that we have a comprehensive plan, what do we do? The role of the Plan Committee is to prepare a draft plan and to submit that plan for review to the individual municipalities. After these individual reviews and the necessary adjustments are accepted, the multi-municipal draft plan is ready. However, a series of required actions are needed, as covered by the section on adoption.

Adoption

The process for the adoption of a comprehensive plan is set forth by Section 302 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Individual municipal solicitors must advise municipalities on this process. The following is an outline of the steps needed:

1. Each municipal planning commission (or agency) is to review, and *must* hold “at least one public meeting before forwarding the proposed plan to the governing body.”
2. Many agencies must receive a copy of the plan and are given 45 days to review the plan. If no comments are received in 45 days, the formal plan adoption can proceed.

Plans *must* be sent to the following agencies for review*:

- The Clearfield and Jefferson County Planning Commissions
- The DuBois Area School District
- To contiguous school districts:
 - Clearfield Area
 - Curwensville Area
 - Purchase Line
 - Punxsutawney Area
 - Brockway Area
 - Ridgway Area
 - Saint Marys Area
- To contiguous municipalities:
 - Lawrence (CC)
 - Pine (CC)
 - Union (CC)
 - Bloom (CC)
 - Penn (CC)
 - Bell (CC)
 - Horton (EC)
 - Fry (EC)
 - Jay (EC)
 - Washington (JC)
 - Winslow (JC)
 - Henderson (JC)

Note: CC = Clearfield County, EC = Elk County, JC = Jefferson County

**To save on excessive printing costs, copies of the Plan can be submitted electronically, or in a PDF format.*

3. The governing bodies of Brady Township, DuBois City, Falls Creek Borough, Huston Township, and Sandy Township can then review the comments of these various agencies. Any needed adjustments can be cooperatively made. Then, each municipality can adopt the Plan. Prior to Plan adoption, the governing body *must hold at least one public hearing, pursuant to public notice*. (Notice in a newspaper of general circulation, published once each week, for two successive weeks. The first publication not more than 30 days and the second publication not less than seven days from the date of the hearing.)

Plan adoption shall be by resolution, carried by the affirmative votes of not less than a majority of all the member of the governing body.

Compatibility and Interrelationships

Compatibility/Consistency

Section 301(a)(5) requires a statement of compatibility. The proposed developmental elements of this Plan were examined for its compatibility and consistency with the Clearfield County Plan and those for Elk and Jefferson counties.

Based upon the Clearfield County Plan's "Future Land Use" and "Potential Target Areas for Development" maps, the proposed development and future land use patterns contained in this Plan are compatible. A similar comparison was made with the Elk County Plan, specifically Jay Township, which borders Huston Township. Proposed land use is compatible. In Jay, the abutting land is "Rural Conservation Areas" and State forests are similar to the recommendations of this Plan.

The Jefferson County Plan was completed in 2005, and the proposals of this document are consistent with its future land use scheme.

Interrelationships

No single element of a comprehensive plan stands alone. This is certainly true for the Northwest Clearfield County Region. Many policies flow into multiple plan sections. The following is an overview of the primary Plan relationships:

- **Land Use:** This represents one of the primary tools of the Plan, as shown by the comments for other Plan elements.
- **Transportation:** The Plan focuses on future growth areas around primary roads. This is to take advantage of the existing road network. (See also the separate Transportation Plan.) It also calls for access management to preserve road capacity and promote highway safety.
- **Housing:** A primary goal of this Plan is to use zoning for the protection of existing and new residential development. Future land use recommendations set forth not only future residential growth areas, but also address some incompatible land use problems in DuBois and Falls Creek.
- **Community Facilities and Utilities:** Future development patterns, recommended in the Land Use section, are reflected by the future water and sewer plans. Economic development priority areas are also reflected as places designated for future water and sewer services.
- **Natural Resources:** The primary linkage is with the Future Land Use Plan. This deals not only with spatial considerations but also with components of land use regulations. Restrictions on environmentally sensitive lands are included.
- **Historic Resources:** Once again, covered under the Land Use Plan.
- **Economic Development:** This Plan links prime economic development locations to the Future Land Use Plan and transportation. Enhancement of the Larkeytown rail yards is a key recommendation.

Consolidation

The Municipal Consolidation or Merger Act, Act 90 of 1994, provides statutory procedures for the merger or consolidation of two or more municipalities. The Act covers only merger and consolidation—that is the combination of two or more entire units of local government. The initiative and referendum procedure in the Constitution remains the only method to annex territory. In many respects, the Act parallels the initiative and referendum procedure of the Constitution, but there are some significant changes. All counties and municipalities except Philadelphia and Pittsburgh are eligible to use the procedures. The definitions distinguish between merger and consolidation. Merger happens when one municipality is absorbed into another, with the surviving municipality maintaining its continuous existence. Consolidation happens when two or more municipalities go out of existence and a completely new government is created. There are no restrictions on the number or type of municipalities that can be combined, but they must be contiguous to at least one other of the municipalities included in the proposal. There is a wide range of possibilities for the type, class and form of government of the resulting municipality.

There are four basic phases in the process established by the Municipal Consolidation or Merger Act. First, the issue of merger or consolidation can be placed on the ballot either by joint agreement of the governing bodies of the municipalities or by voter initiative petition. Second, the proposal must be submitted to the voters of each municipality. The question must be approved by a majority of voters in each municipality involved. Third, where a voter-initiated question has been approved in the election, the governing bodies must adopt a consolidation/merger agreement. Finally, a newly consolidated municipality begins to function after new officers are elected and take office. The former municipalities consolidated into it are abolished. A newly merged municipality continues to function under its existing officers and the former municipality merged into it is abolished on the effective date.

Special Note: This Plan recognizes the need for reasonable mineral extraction and commercial agricultural production as required by Section 301(b) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

Implementation

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to set forth a path for action. This section outlines Plan implementation and prioritizes activities. Such action is particularly critical for the Northwest Clearfield County Region. There are great opportunities, and, there are very serious problems. To realize opportunities and to overcome problems, active regional cooperation is needed. **The critical first step** is to fashion an agreement between the five participating municipalities to start them on the path of action.

The agreement’s primary function should be to:

- Get all municipalities at the table.
- Start some activities all can agree on.
- Agree to disagree. Some activities may not achieve unanimous support at first. Focus on common needs. Successes in one effort are essential to foster future victories. It is important to realize that Pennsylvania has a history of small, independent local governments. This Plan recommends some departures from that practice. Such changes will take time, diplomacy, and patience.

Specific activities are included in the following chart. The following code is used in this table:

A – Immediate

B – Short Term (2 to 4 years)

C – Long Term

Any activities with an “O” appended are “ongoing.”

Implementation Table			
Activity	Participants	Comments	Priority
Prepare and adopt an Implementation Agreement	All five municipalities	First priority	A
Land Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brady Township: Zoning* • DuBois: Zoning* and SALDO • Falls Creek: Zoning* and SALDO • Huston: Investigate zoning • Sandy: Zoning* and SALDO 	Brady, DuBois, Falls Creek, Huston, Sandy	Eligible for LUPTAP funds	A
<i>*Including special protection of residential areas, agriculture, and natural resources</i>			
Stormwater Ordinance	All municipalities	Counties doing studies	B
Ordinance Administration (Land Use and Housing/Structure Codes)	Brady, DuBois, Falls Creek, Sandy	Eligible for Shared Services funds	A
Housing Codes and Ordinances	All municipalities Adopt and enforce	Possible Shared Services funds	A
Housing Rehabilitation Program <i>*Likely a multi-year effort</i>	All municipalities	Possible HOME funds	A*
Historic Preservation Education	DuBois Area Historical Society		B
Consideration of a Regional Water and Sewer Authority	Voluntary <i>Note: The City of DuBois will not participate.</i>	A five-year endeavor, if desired	A

Implementation Table			
Activity	Participants	Comments	Priority
Capital Budget System	All municipalities	Possible Shared Services funding	B
Housing Summit	Chamber – all municipalities		A
Economic Development Industrial	Primarily DuBois, Sandy, and Falls Creek	Use EZ and other programs to grow local businesses	A-O
Tourism/Recreation, Greenway Plan, Bike Trail	Chamber – all municipalities	Should work with PA Wilds program	B
Enhance B&P Multi-Modal Facility <i>Note: This activity could be driven by opportunity.</i>	Railroad – local support Use EZ coordinator	Possible State Rail funding	B
Downtown DuBois	DuBois and possibly Falls Creek	Main Street	A-O
Growing Greener Land Use	Sandy and Brady	Possible LUPTAP funds	C
First-Time Homebuyers	Private sector	Use Summit to promote	B-O
Regional Park and Recreation Committee	All municipalities, YMCA, Boy Scouts, Spider Lake Soccer, PA Wilds	Voluntary cooperation	B
Police Study	DuBois and Sandy	Possible DCED funds	A
Volunteer Fire Department Viability	All municipalities	Long-term issue	C
School Closures	All municipalities, School District	Volunteer to help	B
Municipal Building – new structures or expansion	Falls Creek, Sandy, Huston* <i>*Huston should start in 2008</i>	Individual initiatives	Varies A to B
Improve well water quality*, water tanks <i>*If not possible, enlarge sludge facilities</i>	Brady	5-Year Plan	A and B
Alternate Water Source	DuBois, Falls Creek, Sandy	Additional hydrological study needed	B
Huston Water	Continued improvement Extension to Woodward Road	Revenue funding	B to C
Construct Sanitary Sewer System	Brady	Need Final 537 Plan	B
Huston – Extension of Sewer System	Cover Winterburn area	Revenue funding	B to C
Sewer Extension	Sandy	Interchange area and extensions	A and B
Sewer System Rehab	DuBois	Ongoing	O
Water System Improvements	DuBois	Ongoing	O
Water System Extensions	Sandy	Interchange area	O
<i>See also Regional Water and Sewer Authority</i>			