





Big Spring Creek , North Newton Township



Introduction

The planning team evaluated a variety of demographic information and land development data to help quantify the need for agriculture preservation, natural resource protection, and parks, trails & greenways in Cumberland County. In turn, this chapter summarizes population trends, development activity, existing land preservation efforts and municipal land use planning practices that directly affect the need for farmland preservation, natural resource protection, and parks, trails & greenways. This assessment, together with the public participation findings, will serve as the basis for the goals and policies of Land Partnerships.

Population Trends

Population growth is an important demographic trend to be considered in this plan. Increasing populations place greater pressures on important agricultural and natural resources and require increased park and recreation services.

Table 2-1 depicts Cumberland County’s population growth for 1930-2030 and pertinent population trends are summarized below:

- Between 1940 and 1970 the county’s population doubled and since 1970 it has grown by nearly 50%
- Since 1980, the county has experienced a consistent growth rate of about 10% per decade
- Cumberland County’s 2010 population was 235,406
- The county is projected to continue its 10% per decade growth through 2030

**Table 2-1
Population Growth 1930-2030**

Year	Total Population	Population Increase	
		Number	Percent
1930	68,667	NA	NA
1940	74,806	6,139	8.94%
1950	94,448	19,642	26.26%
1960	124,816	30,368	32.15%
1970	158,177	33,361	26.73%
1980	178,541	20,364	12.87%
1990	195,257	16,716	9.36%
2000	213,674	18,417	9.43%
2010	235,406	21,732	10.17%
2020*	258,880	23,474	9.97%
2030*	282,921	24,041	9.29%

Source: 1930-2010 US Census Data
*Population projections by PA State Data Center (2008)



Development Trends

Cumberland County is a diverse county with varying development patterns from the east to the west. In order to effectively plan for the County's needs it is important to understand and acknowledge the character and type of development in each region of the County.

Contemporary development in the County occurs markedly in the vicinity of employment centers and along major transportation corridors, and particularly where the two conditions coincide. Carlisle, Mechanicsburg and Shippensburg areas are the current growth centers in Cumberland County, though residential subdivisions are dispersed across the regions.

The eastern region of Cumberland County stretches from the Susquehanna River west to Mechanicsburg and contains the densest development of the County. The boroughs in this region – Camp Hill, Lemoyne, New Cumberland, Wormleysburg, Shiremanstown and Mechanicsburg – are approaching a completely developed condition. Residential lots are typically less than one acre, buildings are multi-story and street and sidewalk patterns are well connected. Housing is often smaller in size than in other regions. The townships in this region – East Pennsboro, Hampden, Lower Allen and Upper Allen – are accommodating growth and nearing build out as well. Commercial strip development is common along major road corridors, while residential subdivisions front minor arterials and connectors.

Corridor type growth extends south and west along US Routes 11/15 from the Susquehanna River. These routes have become major commercial corridors between Camp Hill and Carlisle (US Route 11) and between Camp Hill and Dillsburg (York County, US Route 15).

Growth centers in the eastern region include East Pennsboro, Hampden, Lower Allen and Upper Allen Townships. Frontage along US Route 15 is developing as a major commercial use, while residential subdivisions are locating along connecting roadways. Residential development is scattered along PA Route 944 at the base of Blue Mountain and connecting local roadways.

The central region is focused around the County seat of Carlisle and the transportation nexus of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, Interstate 81 and US Route 11. Carlisle is the largest borough and Mount Holly Springs and Boiling Springs provide well-developed small town environments. The neighboring townships – Middlesex, Silver Spring, North Middleton and South Middleton have received significant residential development in the past ten years; Dickinson and Monroe Townships have remained relatively rural to date. Commercial and industrial development remains in the vicinity of



the highway interchanges. Development in this region swells outward from Carlisle along the major thoroughfares.

In the central region, growth is occurring throughout the townships adjacent to Carlisle, particularly along US Route 11 and PA Route 641. Warehousing and related development continues to thrive in the Carlisle area where companies have access to east-west and north-south mid-Atlantic distribution corridors, as well as, driver services.



The western region of Cumberland County is characterized by crossroads, villages and rural landscapes with agriculture as the primary land use. The boroughs of Shippensburg, Newburg, and Newville, as well as Shippensburg Township are more densely developed and distinguish themselves from the rural landscapes of the remaining townships – Cooke, Hopewell, Penn, Upper and Lower Frankford, Upper and Lower Mifflin, North and South Newton, Southampton and West Pennsboro Township. The road network is sparse in some areas, where agriculture clearly dominates the scale of land use patterns. Large lot residential development with onsite water and sewer characterizes housing patterns in this region. Development pressure is centered in the Shippensburg area where sewer and water infrastructure attracts denser residential development and commercial and industrial services.

In the western region, Shippensburg and Southampton Townships have carried the greatest proportion of residential growth. Commercial development has occurred throughout the area, though at a more limited rate. Strong growth south of the Mason Dixon Line has intensified development pressure in this area.

Development Activity

New development activity creates the homes and jobs that drive demands for agriculture production, natural resources consumption, and parks and recreation facilities. The demands of new development opportunities must be balanced closely with the conservation needs of the County. An analysis of subdivision and land development activity was conducted to assess development trends and the pace of development across the County. Table 2-2 represents all final subdivision and land development activity approved in Cumberland County between 1990 and 2012 for residential, commercial and industrial uses. (Note: Acreage shown in Table 2-2 represents total site acreage, not actual acres of earth disturbed or impervious cover.)



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- Current economic conditions have dramatically changed the amount and pace of the development in Cumberland County since the 2008 stock market crash and associated real estate crisis.
- Residential development activity has decreased substantially since 2007. Residential development decreased 54 percent between 2007 and 2008 and approximately 37 percent between 2008 and 2009. Residential development in 2010 and 2011 remained down, but on par with 2009 numbers. Total residential units decreased by 27 percent between 2011 and 2012, but the number single family residents more than doubled.
- Commercial and industrial activity experienced decreases similar to that of residential development activity between 2008 and 2012. Commercial activity was down nearly 42 percent between 2008 and 2009. Commercial activity remained down but level between 2009 and 2011 and then dropped 47 percent between 2011 and 2012. Industrial development decreased 68 percent between 2008 and 2009. Industrial development remained down, but fairly constant in 2010 through 2012.

Table 2-2
Approved Final Subdivision and Land Development Plans, 1990-2012, Units by Land Use Type

Year	Single Family	Multi Family	Town House	Total Residential Units	Commercial Units	Industrial Units	Other	Total Site Acreage
1990	837	831	494	2,162	76	24	146	3,226
1991	859	292	76	1,227	49	16	185	5,025
1992	781	12	427	1,220	71	15	115	2,344
1993	1,195	94	369	1,658	119	22	103	3,417
1994	851	311	173	1,335	100	32	111	3,347
1995	760	82	116	958	108	41	156	3,691
1996	938	552	678	2,168	114	35	151	3,865
1997	851	417	393	1,661	129	51	141	3,573
1998	999	45	475	1,519	134	34	223	3,994
1999	789	92	673	1,554	136	21	219	3,256
2000	1,111	237	416	1,764	102	29	235	5,166
2001	816	470	393	1,679	122	47	113	3,857
2002	883	123	258	1,264	69	25	144	4,295
2003	1,072	380	788	2,240	93	12	158	3,450
2004	836	276	113	1,225	70	8	155	3,481
2005	1,335	383	1,464	3,182	84	15	195	3,495
2006	1,537	7	265	1,809	50	21	190	3,628
2007	920	417	1,074	2,411	77	14	184	2,466
2008	625	58	417	1,100	72	19	197	2,634
2009	334	116	242	692	42	6	165	1,201
2010	250	190	242	682	41	7	119	1,203
2011	190	362	132	684	43	5	112	1,047
2012	401	-	100	501	23	4	67	1,260
Totals	19,170	5,747	9,778	34,695	1,924	503	3,584	72,921

SOURCE: CCPC Plan Review Submissions, 1990-2012

Status of Land Preservation

To establish a baseline of land protection for Land Partnerships, an inventory of developed and preserved land was prepared in 2004 and then subsequently revised for the plan update. Table 2-3 outlines land preservation status for 2004 and 2011.

Cumberland County is....

Developed	22%
Preserved	20%
Undeveloped	58%

Source: Tax Assessment & Existing Land Use Data, 2011.

The 2004 analysis of data from the Cumberland County Tax Assessment Office concluded that approximately 18 percent (63,000± acres) of the County was developed. For the analysis, developed land included all parcels identified as residential, commercial and industrial uses. 2011 land use data indicates approximately 22 percent (76,000 ± acres) of the County is currently developed. 13,000 acres or 4 percent of the County was developed between 2004 and 2011.

The 2004 inventory of preserved land indicated that approximately 18 percent (62,790± acres) of the County is preserved. 2011 data reveals that 20 percent (69,700± acres) of the County is now permanently protected for public benefit. 2 percent (6,910± acres) of the County was preserved between 2004 and 2011. Preserved land included parks and natural areas preserved by public and non-profit entities as well as permanently preserved farmland. Accordingly, approximately 58 percent (213,000± acres) of the County is currently undeveloped.

Table 2-3				
Land Preservation Status, 2004 & 2011				
	Developed Acres	Developed %	Preserved Acres	Preserved %
2004	63,000	18	62,790	18
2011	76,000	22	69,700	20

The Protected Land/Water Map (Map 2-1) is a composite illustration of lands that are currently protected. Table 2-4 details protected lands by ownership status. Together these areas provide economic, ecological and social benefit to the community. The land in federal ownership includes the Appalachian Trail and its associated land holdings. Over 67 percent of the protected lands in the County are owned by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as State Forests, State Game Lands, State Parks, or Fish and Boat Commission lands. The primary function of these areas is natural resource protection. These natural areas provide limited, passive recreation opportunities. The Mount Holly Marsh Preserve, Cumberland County’s only open space area, is an important natural area and provides limited recreation. Municipal parkland accounts for 3



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percent of the preserved lands in the County and serves the local recreation needs of the community. Farmland preserved through the County agricultural conservation easement program does not provide for public access, but rather serves to protect and enhance the agricultural industry.

Ownership	Acreage
Federal - Appalachian Trail	3,584
State Parks	3,500
State Forests	38,477
State Game Lands	4,445
Fish & Boat Commission	815
Cumberland County	913
Municipal Parkland	2,168
Non-Profit Lands	508
Agricultural Easements	15,311
TOTAL	69,721
Percent of County Acreage	19.81%

Land Use Planning

Proactive plans and ordinances allow municipalities to promote agriculture preservation, natural resource protection, and parks, trails & greenways as a constituent part of municipal operations. Such plans must be current and reflect community priorities in order to be most effective. Inventory of municipal land use planning and regulatory documents was conducted to assess the current level of planning for agriculture preservation, parks, trails & greenways, and natural resource protection and to determine the need for additional planning assistance. Table 2-5 summarizes the pertinent planning documents for the 33 municipalities in the County. Table 2-6 provides detailed information on the plans and ordinances for each municipality in the County.

Planning Tool	Number of municipalities with planning tool	Number of planning tools under 5 years old	Number of planning tools 5-10 years old	Number of planning tools over 10 years old
Comprehensive Plan	32	8	16	8
Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance	33	11	4	18
Zoning Ordinance	29	12	9	8
Park & Recreation Plan	7	0	0	7

Municipality	Comprehensive Plans	Zoning Ordinances	S & LD Ordinances	Park/Recreation OR Open Space/Greenway Plan
Boroughs	Last Updated	Last Updated	Last Updated	Last Updated
Camp Hill Borough	2009 (1)	2007	1993	2013 (3)
Carlisle Borough	2002	2009	2009	2008 (4)
Lemoyne Borough	2009 (1)	1980	1966	-
Mechanicsburg Borough	2007	1991	2002	2013 (3)
Mt. Holly Springs Borough	2008	1976	1976	-
Newburg Borough	-	1985	1985	-
New Cumberland Borough	2004	1981	1997	-
Newville Borough	2007 (2)	2002	2002	1995
Shippensburg Borough	2005	2003	1993	-
Shiremanstown Borough	1975	2008	2008	-
Wormleysburg Borough	2009 (1)	2006	1998	-
Townships	Last Updated	Last Updated	Last Updated	Last Updated
Cooke Township	2000	-	2009	-
Dickinson Township	2008 (2)	2008	2007	-
East Pennsboro Township	2005	2007	2007	2005, 2013 (3)
Hampden Township	1994	2009	2008	2013 (3)
Hopewell Township	1990	2010	2001	-
Lower Allen Township	2006	2009	1990	2013 (3)
Lower Frankford Township	2007 (2)	1994	1993	-
Lower Mifflin Township	2007	1993	1979	-
Middlesex Township	2003	2008	2008	1995, 2008 (3)
Monroe Township	2007	2008	2008	1995, 2013 (4)
North Middleton Township	2008	2011	2011	2008 (4)
North Newton Township	2007 (2)	-	2009	-
Penn Township	2007	2006	2009	-
Shippensburg Township	2005	2008	2008	-
Silver Spring Township	1995	2009	2009	2005, 2013(3)
South Middleton Township	2007	2007	2001	1995, 2008 (4)
South Newton Township	2007 (2)	2007	1997	-
Southampton Township	2007	2007	1994	-
Upper Allen Township	1999	2006	2006	2002, 2013 (3)
Upper Frankford Township	2008 (2)	-	1999	-
Upper Mifflin Township	2007 (2)	-	2007	-
West Pennsboro Township	2009 (2)	2008	1998	-

SOURCE: Cumberland County Planning Commission, 2013
 (1) Imagine West Shore Joint Comprehensive Plan (2009) (3) Eastern Cumberland County Trail Plan (2013)
 (2) Western Cumberland County Joint Comprehensive Plan (4) Letort Regional Authority Trail/Urban Greenway Feasibility Study (2008)



Needs Assessment Findings

A review and analysis of Cumberland County's population trends, development patterns, development activity, land preservation status and municipal land use planning identified a variety of needs. A summary of findings is detailed below:

Population Expansion

Cumberland County has experienced significant population growth over the last 50 years and population projections indicate steady population growth will continue for the next 20 years. As a result, development of parks and trails must continue to expand in order to keep pace with the population expansion.

An increasing population and thriving economy also create additional pressure on agricultural resources and the natural environment. To ensure ample, clean drinking water, fresh air and plant and animal habitat diversity, natural resource protection must be increased and balanced with economic development needs. The amount of environmentally sensitive lands that should be protected is determined by natural systems, not by human needs. The more sensitive the land the higher priority it should have for preservation. Agricultural resources should be preserved to ensure an ample, safe food supply and to preserve the agricultural heritage of the County.

Pace of Development

The amount and rate of development has slowed significantly since development of the 2006 Land Partnerships Plan. While the pace of development has slowed, agriculture preservation, natural resource protection, and parks, trails & greenways initiatives should continue. Not only do these activities generate their own economic development opportunities, but their successful implementation also lays a solid foundation upon which future economic development opportunities can thrive in the future.



Adams Ricci Park, East Pennsboro Township



Ribbon Cutting for White Rocks Land Acquisition, Monroe Township

Status of Land Preservation

Cumberland County is fortunate to have the amount and diversity of public land holdings, yet extensive acreage is undeveloped, unprotected, and may contain significant natural resource characteristics. Approximately 58 percent of the County is currently undeveloped and unprotected. The ratio of developed land to preserved land has increased (from 1 acres developed to 1 acre preserved to 1.1 to 1) between 2004 and 2011, despite the slow economic growth. The slump in conservation can likely be attributed to decreased funding for conservation from government sources and a decrease in private contributions to non-profit conservation organizations.

Land Use Planning

A review of municipal land use plans and ordinances established that planning documents are in need of revision. Cumberland County is changing and plans and ordinances must be up to date to plan for growth.

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Article III, Section 301(c)) requires municipal comprehensive plans to be reviewed at least every ten years. At present, 25 percent are 10 or more years old and are in need of immediate review and 50 percent of comprehensive plans are 5 or more years old and a review will be necessary in the next several years.

Municipalities collecting recreation fees must have an adopted recreation plan (MPC Article V, Section 503(11)(iv)). Currently, only 21 percent of the municipalities in Cumberland County have an open space, park and recreation plan. Unfortunately, all of the adopted park and recreation plans in place are over 10 years old and are in need of immediate update.



There also appears to be a need for subdivision, land development and zoning ordinance assistance and revision. At this time, four municipalities lack zoning ordinances and 28 percent of all zoning ordinances are over 10 years old. Additionally, 41 percent of zoning ordinances are over 5 years old. The need for revised subdivision and land development ordinances appears even greater. Of these, 55 percent are over 10 years old and 12 percent are over 5 years old and likely not reflecting current planning trends and best management practices.

Summary of Findings

To conclude, the following needs were identified during the assessment process:

- The population of Cumberland County is expected to continue to grow steadily. Conservation efforts are needed to respond to the agriculture preservation, natural resource, and parks, trails & greenways needs of the increasing population.
- Important natural resources of the County lack permanent protection.
- Despite a slowdown in land development, the current pace of development exceeds the pace of land preservation efforts.
- Conservation and economic development are not mutually exclusive concepts. Agriculture preservation, natural resource protection and park, trails & greenways are integral components to a thriving economy.
- Many municipal land use plans and ordinances are outdated and do not reflect current planning trends and best management practices. Planning for agriculture preservation, natural resource protection and parks, trails & greenways is an immediate need.
- A balanced and diverse implementation approach is needed to respond to the unique needs of the County.