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## Appendix A

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### **Key Person Interviews**

Key person interviews were conducted as telephone conversations, meetings, or forums with persons of similar interests. The following interview questions were developed as a guide and starting point to help draw out relevant information from each identified individual to determine their ideas regarding open space, parks, recreation, greenways, trails, and resource conservation and to identify issues, opportunities, and concerns.

#### **Interview Questions:**

1. What opportunities do you think exist in Cumberland County for open space, farmland preservation, greenways, trails, and/or parks?
2. What concerns do you have about the above?
3. Do you have any specific ideas for the protection of open space?
4. What kinds of parks do you think should be in Cumberland County?
5. What special places are you aware of in the county (historic, cultural, etc.)?
6. Are you aware of any special needs that should be address in the planning process?
7. How do you envision a successful open space system in Cumberland County and your community?
8. What do you think we need to do in order to develop a successful plan that will be implemented?

#### **Interviewees:**

1. Farmers: held the agricultural forum to bring the farmers together; ran forum and had individual discussions with participants.
2. Municipalities: held the livable communities forum and had discussions with individual municipal representatives there.
3. York County Director of Planning
4. York County Planning Commission
5. Adams County Director of Planning
6. Franklin County Director of Planning
7. Central Pennsylvania Conservancy
8. Yellow Breeches Watershed Association
9. Yellow Breeches Watershed Association – Trout Run Initiative
10. Cumberland County Agricultural Preservation Board

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11. York County Parks Department
  12. Cumberland County Conservation District
  13. PA Audubon
  14. DCNR
  15. Bloss Associates
  16. Carol Witzeman, Central Pennsylvania Conservancy
  17. Central Pennsylvania Conservancy Administrative Staff
  18. Cumberland County Agricultural Preservation Coordinator  
(former coordinator)
  19. Dan DiNunzio, Park and Recreation Professional, Carlisle
  20. Jerry Angulo, CVRTC
  21. Bill Forrey, Camp Hill Borough
  22. Michael Eschenmann, Park and Recreation Professional,  
Committee Member, South Middleton
  23. Diane Kripas, DCNR
  24. Paul Zeph, Kittatinny Ridge Project
  25. Robert Gill, Township Manager, East Pennsboro
  26. Helen Griffith, Park and Recreation Director, East Pennsboro
  27. Tonya Brown, Upper Allen Township
  28. Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office
  29. Wormleysburg, Council Member, Riverfront
  30. Bud Cook, Nature Conservancy
  31. Pennsylvania Downtown Center
  32. West Shore Parks and Recreation
  33. Pennsylvania Environmental Council
  34. Pat Vance's Office
  35. Perry Albert, West Shore COG
  36. Fred Potzer, Western Cumberland County COG
  37. David Frazer, Upper Allen Township
  38. Beth Helterbran, Silver Spring Township, Parks and Recreation  
Director
  39. Ed Charles, Environmental Education Specialist
  40. Capital Area Visitors Bureau
  41. Pennsylvania Environmental Council
  42. Kent Baird, Open Space Coordinator, Bucks County
  43. John Wood and Beth Pilling, Montgomery County Open Space  
Program
  44. Michael Frank, Heritage Conservancy
  45. Christine Laytos, Monroe County Planning Commission

## Public Opinion Survey

Following contains a summary and detailed tables and analysis of the questionnaire results for the survey conducted in the fall of 2003. Only significant differences among sub-groups are reported, as the findings among sub-groups were fairly consistent. A separate report contains the detailed survey data tables and the responses of the open-ended questions.

### Introduction

The countywide survey was part of an extensive public participation process in the development of *Land Partnerships*. The survey involved residents who otherwise might not participate in the planning process. The respondents validated key plan findings through a statistically representative sample of Cumberland County's citizenry. Questions focused on public attitudes regarding open space, growth in the county, planning efforts, governmental and non-governmental responsibilities, use of public funds and level of support through financing. The planning team used the findings of the survey to develop and refine policy directions, goals and strategies in open space planning.

### Sample Design and Selection

A random sample of 1,500 households was selected from households in Cumberland County generated from a list of governmental sources such as tax records, subscriptions, memberships, mailing lists and other sources that are updated every two weeks. The survey was designed to achieve a statistically reliable result for the planning area. For the size of the sample, responses were needed to achieve a confidence level of 95 percent with a margin of error no greater than 5 percent. The survey sample was also tracked to look at three regions in the County: eastern, central and western Cumberland County.

### Survey Methodology

The planning team in conjunction with the Cumberland County Planning Commission staff and the Steering Committee developed the survey instrument, pre-survey letter, survey cover letter and follow-up questionnaire. One week before the survey, respondents received a pre-survey letter announcing their selection to participate and the importance of their responding as soon as they received the survey package. The following week, they received the survey package containing the questionnaire, cover letter and postage paid stamped envelope for returning their survey. All letters and envelopes were personalized with the respondents name directly typed onto their correspondence. The next week, the selected respondents received a follow up postcard thanking them for returning the survey or urging them to return it if they had not done so. Surveys were then tabulated by a professional data tabulation service within ½ of 1 percent accuracy. A computer software program was developed for the survey and all data were

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entered into the program. Survey reports were generated for the sample as a whole, as well as for identified sub-groups.

### Survey Return

The survey produced 659 completed questionnaires, exceeding the required number by 48 percent. After eliminating the non-response surveys due to non-deliverable addresses or deceased individuals, the survey yielded a 47 percent return. This is a statistically reliable return for the County as a whole. Returns from the eastern and central portions of the county were exceptional while the western end had notably limited returns. Based upon that, the planning team sent out a second round of questionnaires trying to generate a greater response from the western end of Cumberland County. This second pass yielded only ten additional questionnaires completed.

### Key Findings

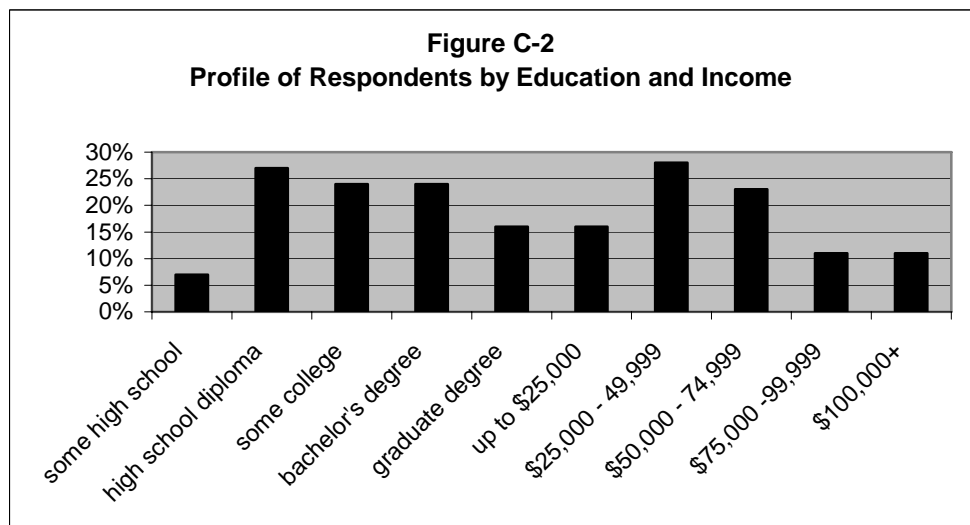
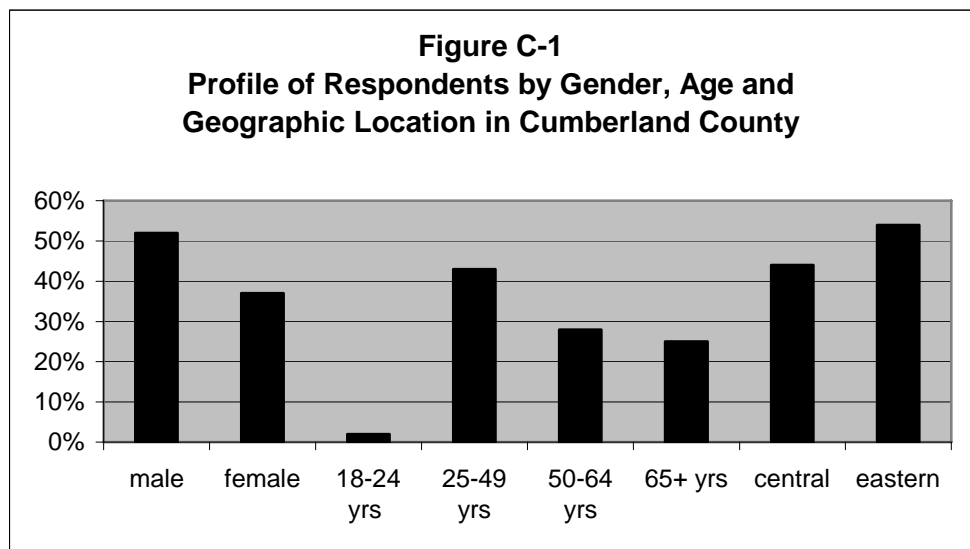
The following key findings emerged from the survey:

- Three out of four respondents are willing to pay an additional amount of money every year for open space preservation. Over 60 percent of the respondents overall stated that the use of public funds is appropriate for open space, natural resource protection, farmland, greenways, trails and parkland.
- Farmland, streams and mountains emerged as the top three “Critically Important” resources. In terms of overall importance, as defined by a minimum of 9 out of 10 respondents (the choices of critically important, very important and important combined), the following resources rose to the top: forests and mountains at 95%, farmland and streams at 94%, nature preserves at 91% and parks at 90%.
- 60% of survey respondents believe that there is too much development in Cumberland County. Only 3 percent believe there is too little.
- 91% of the survey respondents are interested in open space preservation with about one out of two being “very interested”.
- Nine of 10 respondents stated that it is important for both Cumberland County and their community to preserve open space. Of these respondents, the people who “strongly agree” outnumbered those who “agreed” by a margin of two to one.
- The respondents indicated that using public funds for the following is appropriate: natural resource protection (79%), open space preservation (72%), parkland (71%), farmland (63%), trails (60%), and greenways (54%).

- The western portion of the County had an extremely low response rate despite the pre-survey letter, questionnaire packages, second package mailing and follow-up postcard. Only ten responses were completed and returned. This is a highly unusual response that will merit special consideration in future work.

**Respondents**

A total of 659 completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 47.5 percent. Tabulation included 635 responses while another 24 came in after the tabulation. The response exceeded 437, the required number to achieve a high level of confidence with a margin of error of about 5 percent in the survey findings. Figures C-1 and C-2 present the demographics of the respondents.



## Responses to the Questions and Interpretation

### 1. What best describes the amount of open space in Cumberland County?

- 2% - too much open space
- 46% - about the right amount of open space
- 46% - not enough open space

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**Interpretation** - The important finding of this question is that only 2 percent of the respondents feel that there is too much open space.

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### 2. How interested are you in preserving open space in Cumberland County?

- 48% - very interested
- 43% - interested
- 6% - not interested

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**Interpretation** - About nine out of ten respondents are interested in open space preservation in Cumberland County. This question ties with question nine in which the respondents were asked if they would be willing to pay an additional amount annually for open space preservation: more than three out of four said they would.

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### 3. How important are the following types of open space to you?

The following chart presents the respondents' ratings.

Open Space Type	Critically Important %	Very Important %	Important %	TOTAL IMPORTANT	Of Little Importance %	Not Important %
Farmland	44	34	16	94	3	.6
Streams & access to streams	42	36	16	94	2	.9
Forests	41	39	15	95	2	.5
Mountains	38	36	21	95	2	.8
Nature preserves	31	39	21	91	3	1
Wetlands & floodplains	31	30	26	87	7	2.5
Meadows and unfarmed fields	25	40	23	88	7	3
Tree-lined streets	20	31	33	84	10	3.6
Parkland	19	37	34	90	5	1.6
Trails	19	36	34	89	7	2.0
Greenways	16	34	38	88	7	2.5

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**Interpretation** - While all of the types of open space were important to about nine out of 10 respondents, the top three critically important types were farmland, streams and mountains, the essential landscape of Cumberland County. In terms of overall importance the top five were: forests, mountains, farmland, streams and nature preserves.

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**4. What is your opinion about the following statements?**

a. It is important for my community to preserve open space.

- 59% - strongly agree
- 33% - agree
- 5% - neutral
- 1% - disagree
- .5% - strongly disagree

b. It is important for Cumberland County to preserve open space.

- 60% - strongly agree
- 31% - agree
- 4% - neutral
- 1% - disagree
- .6% - strongly disagree

c. I support open space preservation even if it is not in my community.

- 52% - strongly agree
- 37% - agree
- 8% - neutral
- 1% - disagree
- .6% - strongly disagree

d. It is important to protect open space even if it were not open to the public.

- 36% - strongly agree
- 42% - agree
- 13% - neutral
- 5% - disagree
- 1% - strongly disagree

e. I think parks improve the quality of life in a community.

- 49% - strongly agree
- 40% - agree
- 7% - neutral
- 1% - disagree
- .6% - strongly disagree

f. My community should work in partnership with neighboring communities to preserve open space.

- 51% - strongly agree
- 38% - agree
- 7% - neutral



- 2% - disagree
- .5% - strongly disagree

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**Interpretation** - The purpose of these opinion questions was to gauge the perceived value of open space whether open to the public or not, as well as the role of the county, municipalities and partnerships in preserving open space. About 90 percent of the respondents agree that it is important for Cumberland County, their own municipality and their community to work in partnership with neighboring communities to preserve open space. Nearly four out of five agree that it is important to preserve open space that might not be open to the public. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the respondents think that parks improve the quality of life in a community.

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**5. What is your opinion about the rate of growth in Cumberland County?**

- 61% - too much development
- 34% - amount of development is about right
- 3% - not enough development

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**Interpretation** - Development is a concern among the respondents of this survey with 61 percent stating that there is too much development. The implication of this finding is that while dealing with open space preservation is important, it is equally important to deal with development. Only three percent of the respondents think there is not enough development.

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**6. How would you rate the level of planning for open space preservation in Cumberland County?**

- 70% - more planning for open space preservation needs to be done
- 22% - current planning efforts are fine
- 2% - less planning should be done

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**Interpretation** - The finding that 70 percent of the respondents think that more planning should be done for open space preservation is important. This warrants the provision of funding for open space planning at both the county and municipal levels

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**7. What organizations do you think should be responsible for the following?** (For question 7, respondents could select as many answers as desired.)

**LAND ACQUISITION**

- 65% - Cumberland County
- 33% - your township or borough
- 22%- non-governmental organizations

**NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION**

- 75% - Cumberland County
- 28% - your township or borough
- 21%- non-governmental organizations

**GREENWAY PLANNING**

- 58% - Cumberland County
- 40% - your township or borough
- 19%- non-governmental organizations

**TRAIL DEVELOPMENT & OPERATION**

- 57% - Cumberland County
- 34% - your township or borough
- 27%- non-governmental organizations

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION**

- 72% - Cumberland County
- 26% - your township or borough
- 21%- non-governmental organizations

**PARK DEVELOPMENT & OPERATION**

- 43% - Cumberland County
- 62% - your township or borough
- 15%- non-governmental organizations

**EDUCATION ABOUT OPEN SPACE**

- 52% - Cumberland County
- 36% - your township or borough
- 35%- non-governmental organizations

**PROVIDING RECREATION SERVICES**

- 38% - Cumberland County
- 66% - your township or borough
- 19%- non-governmental organizations

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**Interpretation** - The results of this question indicate clear roles for county and municipal government in the area of open space preservation, parks and recreation. Clearly, the respondents indicated that **Cumberland County** should be natural resource protection (75%), farmland preservation (72%), land acquisition (65%), greenway planning (58%), trail development and operation (57%), and education about open space (52%). About 43% of the respondents indicated that park development and operation should be a County function. The main roles for **municipal government** were providing recreation services (66%) and park development and operation (62%). Greenway planning at the local level emerged 40% indicating that this is an important role for municipalities. The most important role that the respondents saw for **non-governmental organizations** was education about open space (35%).

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**8. Do you think the following are an appropriate use of public funds?**

**OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION**

- 72% - Yes
- 10% - No
- 13% - Undecided

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION**

- 63% - Yes
- 18% - No
- 15% - Undecided

**NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION**

- 79% - Yes
- 7% - No
- 10% - Undecided

**PARKLAND**

- 71% - Yes
- 10% - No
- 14% - Undecided

**GREENWAYS**

- 54% - Yes
- 19% - No
- 22% - Undecided

**TRAILS**

- 60% - Yes
- 17% - No
- 19% - Undecided

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**Interpretation** - Question 8 began a series of questions about paying for open space preservation. The majority of the respondents indicated that it is appropriate to use public funds for all six categories of open space shown in Question 8: natural resource protection (79%), open space preservation (72%), parkland (71%), farmland (63%), trails (60%) and greenways (54%). Overall only about 13% on average said that the use of public funds for these purposes was not appropriate with a range of only 10% for parkland to 18% for farmland.

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**9. Would you be willing to pay an additional amount to preserve open space in Cumberland County?**

- 26% - Yes, another \$10 per year
- 18% - Yes, another \$20 per year
- 6% - Yes, another \$35 per year
- 16% - Yes, another \$50 per year
- 23% - No
- 8% - Other ranging from \$5 to \$500 more per year

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**Interpretation** - Three out of four respondents were willing to pay an additional amount annually for open space preservation. In an area and a time with concern about increasing taxes, this is a strong positive finding. When used in combination with question eight, it appears that there is public support for investing in open space, farmland, parkland, natural resource protection, greenways and trails. Conservation organizations such as the Sierra Club use 60 percent support as the benchmark for a voter referendum on a funding issue.

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**10. If we could do one thing to improve the quality of life for our residents through open space preservation, what would you want that one thing to be?**

There were 417 total written responses to the “one thing preference” distributed over 312 items suggested. The comments were recorded verbatim and then grouped by topics that emerged. These included general undecided, planning, development, parks, agricultural preservation, natural resources, and services/education. Overall most of the comments development comment dealt with opposition to the large warehouses and truck stops. Concern about traffic and congestions was identified frequently. Over development tied to the loss of open space was a major concern. Respondents are interested in slowing development, reducing traffic congestions, creating parks and trails and preserving natural resources. There were fewer than five comments that dealt with anti-tax sentiment. Asterisks after items indicate identical responses by other respondents.

**GENERAL UNDECIDED**

1. Undecided\*
2. No Opinion
3. Unsure\*
4. Not sure- can't just say one
5. I do not know\*\*\*\*\*
6. - -----
7. ????
8. The thing you achieve first
9. All areas are important

**PLANNING**

10. Intermunicipal county-wide planning
11. Work with county municipalities to plan with foresight and consideration of long term implications of plans
12. Greenway planning
13. More development planning
14. Improve Route 81 and Harrisburg Pike

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15. More planning for open space
  16. Eliminate DEP from the process
  17. Plan
  18. Achieving the process of preservation is the accomplishment
  19. Planning to maximize available open space
  20. Create a land preservation policy and prioritize the efforts
  21. Planned communities, not sprawl – see Tom Hylton’s book Save our Lands, Save our Towns
  22. Take private landownership and future development into account
  23. Work with private landowners in an effort to get them to allow access to wooded areas for walking and hiking
  24. Planned growth – growth of communities and industry should be accompanied by infrastructure such as roads!!

#### DEVELOPMENT

25. Control development of rural areas
26. Keep certain undeveloped areas out of the hands of developers
27. Stop destroying open space for our future generations
28. Fewer parking lots, more trees and open fields
29. Not allow development of orchard for residential use
30. Enhanced control of development with potential for decreased traffic congestion
31. Complete halt of development along the Rt 81 corridor
32. Commercialize it!
33. Stop developing both businesses and housing  
\*\*\*\*\*
34. Stop building so many homes and townhouses. We need space to feel less congested
35. Keep out big warehouses
36. Slow the destruction of farms\*\*\*
37. Less building on the mountain sides
38. Buffer zones along highways to separate residential and highways. Combine the efforts of school, parks and open space to share space, cost and upkeep. Use schools on a 12 month basis,
39. Better planning of housing developments
40. Preserve open space in and out of communities before they are occupied by developers and businesses
41. Stop allowing townships to put up housing developments anywhere they want
42. Stop over development\*

43. Control the development of residential and commercial centers. Cumberland County is already overdeveloped.
44. Too many housing developments
45. Reduce the rate of unplanned sprawl\*\*
46. Reduction of urban sprawl
47. Reduce urban sprawl in Hampden Township
48. No future building
49. No more large highways going through small towns
50. No more shopping centers
51. Slow the rate of development
52. Stop large development areas
53. Limit new development
54. Limit building
55. Stop suburban sprawl
56. Less sprawl and development\*\*\*
57. Control commercial development and urban sprawl
58. Place a cap on sprawl\*
59. Less retail space
60. Not selling land to multitude of trucking companies or storage companies (i.e. along I-81) - setting some sort of limitations
61. Stop building truck stops & warehouses!\*\*\*\*\*
62. Stop turning open spaces into mammoth warehouse farms
63. No more land sold for warehousing
64. No more warehouses in Cumberland County
65. No warehouses in good farming ground, dumps, large developments
66. Prevent building more warehouses or big manufacturers - no more development in these areas
67. No more allotment to trucking terminals/warehouses
68. Prevent the expansion of giant warehouses in open space
69. Reduce congestion on Carlisle Pike by truck stops
70. Congestion and traffic
71. No huge monster buildings, towers truck warehouses etc.
72. I would stop the development of farmland for monster warehouses
73. Less crowding, less development
74. Strictly limit new home construction
75. Slow down rate of development and increase the number of trees in Cumberland County
76. Slow down development of land for warehouses\*\*\*\*\*
77. No more truck terminals
78. Less warehouses\*
79. Fewer huge warehouse areas!

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- 80. Less congestion traffic, trucks, lights. I don't want to see Cumberland County become like northern Virginia
  - 81. Less traffic
  - 82. A little less traffic congestion
  - 83. I am very concerned about congestions in Carlisle Pike, Camp Hill By-Pass etc.
  - 84. Less traffic congestion and truck traffic/partners with the community to educate people about open spaces for public use.
  - 85. Traffic congestions creates more air pollution as well s accidents; therefore less traffic would reduce both of these problems
  - 86. Relieve traffic congestion
  - 87. Less traffic- keep individual community identities when spaces merge through development you lose community.

### SUGGESTIONS

- 88. Locate development where services already are!!  
Look at Maryland's Smart Growth Law!
- 89. Revitalize and renew vacant urban areas to reduce sprawl i.e. downtown Mechanicsburg re-development
- 90. More trees and landscaping in strip malls
- 91. Vote the right people into elected office to keep and improve open space
- 92. Mountain the sense of community and neighborhoods without the congestion of truck traffic and corporate greed
- 93. Keep development in previously developed areas or at least in areas that have access to water/sewer.\*
- 94. Make rate and type of growth make sense together - open space planners should be a natural part of that
- 95. Strict limitation on building in undeveloped woodlands
- 96. Reduce number of warehouses being permitted to be built and encourage more business areas with planned green areas
- 97. More space between homes
- 98. Stop the townhouses & developments and have more ground between houses
- 99. Take out warehouses
- 100. Reduce the number of truck terminals in the county
- 101. Promote redevelopment of existing sites within boroughs rather than permitting additional farmland to be used\*
- 102. Stop large development and use existing empty sites including buildings etc.\*\*

- 103. All residential areas should have a minimum of one acre per lot not ¼ acre lots
- 104. Regulate industrial development
- 105. Support policies that encourage sustainable development and community
- 106. Immediate passage of ordinances preventing *any* future warehouse development
- 107. We would have to enact new legislation-due to the fact that the open land is now being sold for one purpose - money. It's more profitable to develop open land than it is to let it undeveloped
- 108. Planned communities like Reston VA, Columbia, MD. This means creating suburban centers reachable safely on foot or by bicycle.
- 109. Make sure we keep green areas even where we build new homes
- 110. Clean quiet, safe, no bicycle routes on busy roads, properly line intersections
- 111. Keep out of the private sector

**PARKS**

- 112. I believe that parkland and trails are very important
- 113. Maintain parks and recreation for future generations
- 114. County park system like the one in York County
- 115. County Parks with lakes, streams, trails - Allegheny County is a good example of county parks
- 116. Park development
- 117. Parkland, trails, greenways
- 118. Parkland\*\*
- 119. Parks\*
- 120. Need more parks\*\*\*\*\*
- 121. Renovation of existing parks
- 122. More & enhances parks
- 123. Golf courses
- 124. Create more/improved parks
- 125. Nature preserves\*
- 126. Additional parts for recreation
- 127. More parks and trail systems
- 128. Build more walking areas
- 129. Trail development\*\*\*\*
- 130. Open spaces do need to be preserved but trails should not cross private property - it puts the owner at a liability
- 131. More recreational space
- 132. More parks/less warehouses
- 133. More parks and recreation areas
- 134. Parks & nature preserves
- 135. Parklands and natural resource protection
- 136. Public parks
- 137. Community parks
- 138. Place for recreation



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139. We need more recreation facilities
  140. Proper public use of open space within reason
  141. More dog parks and nature trails
  142. Dog Parks
  143. We have no county parks unlike other states and counties
  144. Parks for community use
  145. Open space available for public use
  146. Increase and preserve access
  147. Greater walkability
  148. More parks with walking trails
  149. More parks & walking and bike trails
  150. Park and trail development
  151. Parkland or trails
  152. More multi-use trails and rails to trails
  153. Hiking, jogging, walking trails\*\*
  154. More trails for hiking
  155. Trails and access to open space\*\*
  156. More trails with parks
  157. More trails for off road vehicles/recreation (i.e. hunting, camping, fishing, hiking)
  158. Better access to public land for hunting and fishing
  159. I'd like access to local water bodies for canoeing and enjoying nature
  160. Keep and improve parks and recreation areas
  161. Community swimming pool and less development
  162. Improve quality and access for outdoor activity example: improved boat launch
  163. Recreational parks with undeveloped land
  164. Parks with trails and natural wildlife
  165. Purchase of tracts of land for planning recreational areas
  166. Close proximity of some open space to every resident
  167. Develop more parks and preserve natural beauty
  168. Parks in every neighborhood
  169. Preserve and maintain parkland so children have a safe place to play
  170. More parks for children
  171. More places for kids to play and be safe
  172. More open spaced preserved for educational and recreational purposes
  173. Access for seniors and handicapped to outdoor activities
  174. Drive through zoo to see animals free
  175. Our residents need access to open space areas so that we and our *future* children can relax and enjoy the tranquility these areas give to us in our fast paced lives!
  176. Parks, lakes, forest
  177. Create more parks and bike trails
  178. Additional trails for biking and running

- 179. Paths and trailways for recreation and alternative transportation routes (i.e. being able to bike to work)
- 180. Increase the number of public parks
- 181. Better soccer, basketball, baseball parks for kids
- 182. Less truck stops & warehouses - more parks
- 183. Improve and utilize the Susquehanna River
- 184. A comfortable place to set and just reminisce
- 185. Quiet refuge

**AGRICULTURAL**

- 186. Preservation of farmland \*\*\*\*\*
- 187. Preserve farmland and the way of life of the same
- 188. Maintain the presence of farms
- 189. Fewer houses, more farmland
- 190. Prohibit the development of prime farmland\*
- 191. I want to see the good farmland preserved
- 192. Keep the agriculture economically viable and an integral part of the community
- 193. Stop the development, keep the farms
- 194. Stop using farms to plant housing developments & strip malls
- 195. Keep topsoil and land viable for farming to feed future generations
- 196. Keep open space and not develop good farmland
- 197. More farmland\*
- 198. Farm life
- 199. Maintain farmland
- 200. Preserve small farms!
- 201. Need to find ways to keep the small farmer in business
- 202. Limit development of farmland and meadows
- 203. Slow down development of farmland which would help population in communities from exploding
- 204. Reduce the amount of farmland lost to development
- 205. A convenient place for farmers to farm and families to raise their children
- 206. Keep government out of farmland preservation
- 207. Farmland preservation & forest preservation

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

- 208. Guarantee open space for future generations so that this legacy is never lost
- 209. Preservation of natural land by denying development. State games land preservation.
- 210. Preservation of dark, non-light polluted areas
- 211. We need to preserve the plant/tree life as well as the wildlife for the children of the future
- 212. Have enough open spaces to support wildlife
- 213. Preserving habitats

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214. Provide linked green space to afford habitat for wildlife
  215. Protection of threatened and endangered plants and animals
  216. Increase wildlife preservation and stop residential development. Keep the beautiful green land of Pennsylvania
  217. Maintain the integrity of the few open spaces that remain in our county
  218. Have enough trees to clean the air and produce oxygen
  219. The beauty of the mountains, rivers, streams and wildlife
  220. Preserve the stream of LeTort headwater and do not allow huge building and asphalt at Rapid Square
  221. Being able to look at nature and wildlife instead of houses on top of each other
  222. Save the local mountains from development
  223. Preservation of forests, old growth trees, nature habitats
  224. Keep clean and trash free
  225. Healthy and maintained eco-systems –clean air and water
  226. Protect our natural resources\*\*\*
  227. Streams, creeks and lakes – no more state gamelands!
  228. Protection of natural resources and habitats
  229. Preservation of wildlife\*\*
  230. Plant more trees and plants where others have been removed and never replanted
  231. Less pollution
  232. Natural resources
  233. Wetland preservation & undeveloped land preservation
  234. Need more wetlands
  235. More natural resource protection
  236. Provide clean unharmed land
  237. Natural beauty rather than blacktop and warehouses
  238. Peace and quiet from the noise and traffic from developed and overdeveloped areas
  239. To be clean\*
  240. Clean air\*
  241. Cleaner air
  242. Cleaner air and less congestion
  243. Air quality
  244. Improved air quality
  245. Fresh air
  246. Preserving land, trees, plants and wildlife without polluting their environment
  247. Access to views

- 248. Let people live their lives without more government interference
- 249. Land to help bring back the small game population
- 250. Keep wild natural spaces clean and preserved, especially all water e.g. LeTort
- 251. Clean water
- 252. Stop development of wetlands
- 253. Water conservation, wildlife preservation, space for future needs
- 254. Improvement of stream quality
- 255. Improve waterways
- 256. Cleaner rivers
- 257. Clean up the streams and lakes in the county
- 258. Forest preservation\*\*\*
- 259. Plant more trees
- 260. Tree stands
- 261. Greenways
- 262. Greenway planning
- 263. Clean up junk
- 264. Stop the raping of our land by Mennonites

#### **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

- 265. Historical Sites

#### **EDUCATION AND SERVICES**

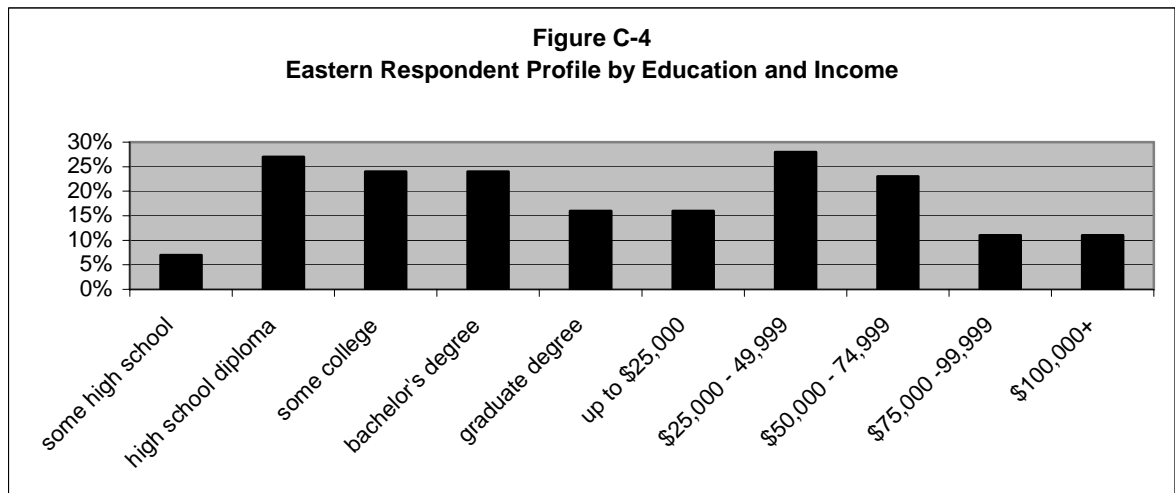
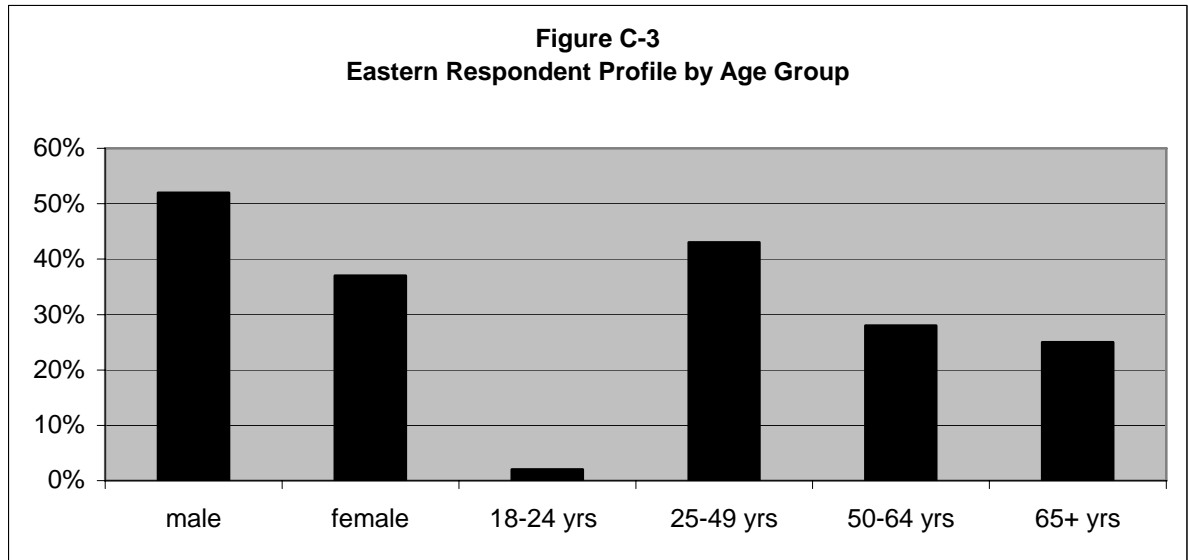
- 266. More programs and community “togetherness”
- 267. I think I would just like more people to understand and therefore appreciate the value of open space preservation
- 268. Nature education
- 269. Not to take nature for granted!
- 270. Privacy
- 271. More space and opportunity to learn about the wildlife in Cumberland County
- 272. Respect for animals
- 273. Reduced stress and greater appreciation for our children
- 274. Instill a feeling of pride for our state, county and towns.
- 275. Realize that once our open spaces are gone, there’s no turning back
- 276. Provide recreation services\*
- 277. Respect for other people’s property
- 278. Develop an Open space Trust a not-for-profit corporation – in part sponsored by the county.
- 279. Lower taxes, more input for the people who give you the money – more responsibility (fiscal management) from the commissioners
- 280. Eliminate property taxes and build more trails for all
- 281. Not to raise our taxes
- 282. No increase in spending

- 
283. Focus on creating initiatives that promote eco-tourism.
  284. Well maintained
  285. Pursue rail service as an alternative to highway construction
  286. Increase awareness of current parks, trails, and scenic areas historical sites and continue preservation of these areas.
  287. An awareness that open space preservation benefits all by increasing desirability/property values in area
  288. People to appreciate it
  289. Maintain and preserve present conditions with more public awareness
  290. Keep land clean and open to the public
  291. The state, county townships/local government should inform the public of what regulation govern the process. *Explain why!* Open meetings.
  292. Work together as a team for a common goal not against each other whether it be for a community park or trails
  293. Our future is tied to open space
  294. Education\*
  295. Education at the high school level including open space visits and learning about how it is being preserved
  296. That our children see the importance and continue the preservation
  297. Get everyone involved especially the landowner
  298. More families taking advantage of parks and nature trails
  299. Family oriented events; care for the environment
  300. Appreciation of nature and God
  301. Be able to observe nature the way intended
  302. It's God's creation; let's take care of it!
  303. Keep current employment, get rid of giant warehouses
  304. That future children can see what was once
  305. To let them remember how it was before we built everywhere
  306. Educating residents on *why* this is important
  307. The understanding of the meaning of "Penns Woods"
  308. Provide free and easy access to open spaces
  309. Give them confidence that the county would be as attractive to the next generation (our children) as it was to us
  310. Get government out of the pockets of "overtaxed" taxpayers
  311. Keep life less complicated
  312. A chance for everyone to stop and smell the roses

**Profile of the Eastern Portion of Cumberland County**

**Respondents**

The eastern portion of the County survey generated 348 completed responses. Figures C-3 and C-4 present the demographics of the respondents for this region.



**Responses to the Questions and Interpretation (“E” for Eastern)**

**E1. What best describes the amount of open space in Cumberland County?**

- 3% - too much open space
- 46% - about the right amount of open space
- 46% - not enough open space

## E2. How interested are you in preserving open space in Cumberland County?

- 48% - very interested
- 42% - interested
- 6% - not interested

## E3. How important are the following types of open space to you?

The following chart presents the respondents' ratings.

Open Space Type	Critically Important %	Very Important %	Important %	TOTAL IMPORTANT	Of Little Importance %	Not Important %
Farmland	39	40	18	97	1	1
Forests	39	42	15	96	2	.6
Streams & access to streams	38	36	16	90	2	.9
Mountains	34	38	23	95	2	.9
Wetlands & floodplains	31	30	26	87	9	2
Nature preserves	30	41	22	93	3	1
Meadows and Unfarmed Fields	24	41	24	89	7	3
Tree-lined streets	19	33	34	86	11	2.6
Parkland	18	40	34	92	5	1.4
Trails	18	38	34	90	6	2.0
Greenways	15	35	38	88	7	2.6

## E4. What is your opinion about the following statements?

a. It is important for my community to preserve open space.

- 58% - strongly agree
- 34% - agree
- 5% - neutral
- 1% - disagree
- .6% - strongly disagree

b. It is important for Cumberland County to preserve open space.

- 59% - strongly agree
- 33% - agree
- 4% - neutral
- 1% - disagree
- .9% - strongly disagree

c. I support open space preservation even if it is not in my community.

- 51% - strongly agree
- 38% - agree
- 9% - neutral
- .6% - disagree
- .6% - strongly disagree

d. It is important to protect open space even if it were not open to the public.

- 33% - strongly agree
- 44% - agree
- 14% - neutral
- 7% - disagree
- 1% - strongly disagree

e. I think parks improve the quality of life in a community.

- 55% - strongly agree
- 37% - agree
- 6% - neutral
- .3% - disagree
- .3- strongly disagree

f. My community should work in partnership with neighboring communities to preserve open space.

- 53% - strongly agree
- 38% - agree
- 7% - neutral
- 2% - disagree
- .9%- strongly disagree

**E5. What is your opinion about the rate of growth in Cumberland County?**

- 57% - too much development
- 36% - amount of development is about right
- 4% - not enough development

**E6. How would you rate the level of planning for open space preservation in Cumberland County?**

- 69% - more planning for open space preservation needs to be done
- 23% - current planning efforts are fine
- 2% - less planning should be done



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**E7. What organizations do you think should be responsible for the following?**

**LAND ACQUISITION**

- 68% - Cumberland County
- 30% - your township or borough
- 19%- non-governmental organizations

**NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION**

- 77% - Cumberland County
- 29% - your township or borough
- 21%- non-governmental organizations

**GREENWAY PLANNING**

- 59% - Cumberland County
- 42% - your township or borough
- 19%- non-governmental organizations

**TRAIL DEVELOPMENT & OPERATION**

- 59% - Cumberland County
- 36% - your township or borough
- 23%- non-governmental organizations

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION**

- 75% - Cumberland County
- 22% - your township or borough
- 21%- non-governmental organizations

**PARK DEVELOPMENT & OPERATION**

- 47% - Cumberland County
- 60% - your township or borough
- 12%- non-governmental organizations

**EDUCATION ABOUT OPEN SPACE**

- 52% - Cumberland County
- 38% - your township or borough
- 34%- non-governmental organizations

**PROVIDING RECREATION SERVICES**

- 36% - Cumberland County
- 67% - your township or borough
- 17%- non-governmental organizations

**E8. Do you think the following are an appropriate use of public funds?**

**OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION**

- 76% - Yes
- 9% - No
- 11% - Undecided

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION**

- 64% - Yes
- 17% - No
- 15% - Undecided

**NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION**

- 81% - Yes
- 7% - No
- 8% - Undecided

**PARKLAND**

- 73% - Yes
- 10% - No
- 13% - Undecided

**GREENWAYS**

- 56% - Yes
- 19% - No
- 20% - Undecided

**TRAILS**

- 61% - Yes
- 17% - No
- 18% - Undecided

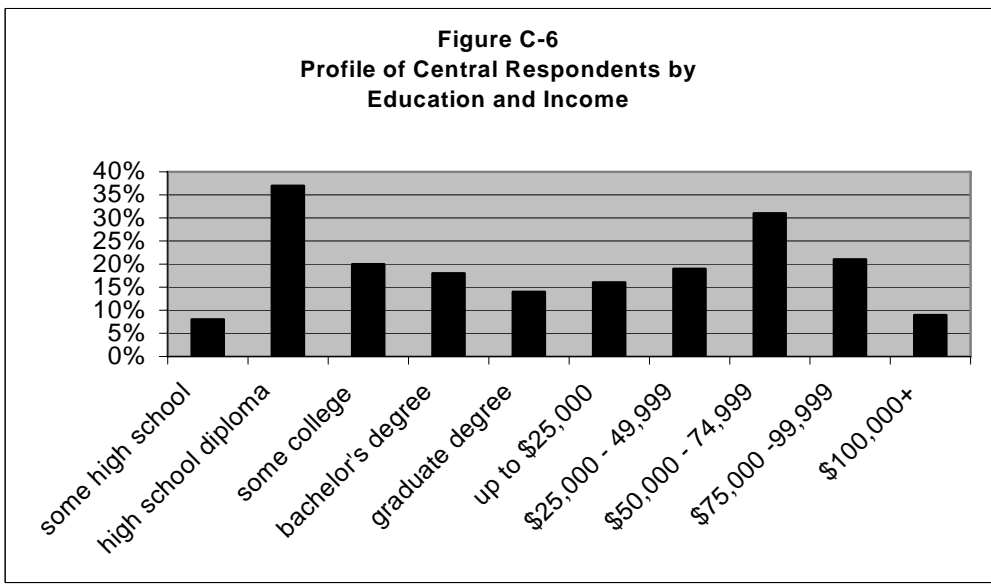
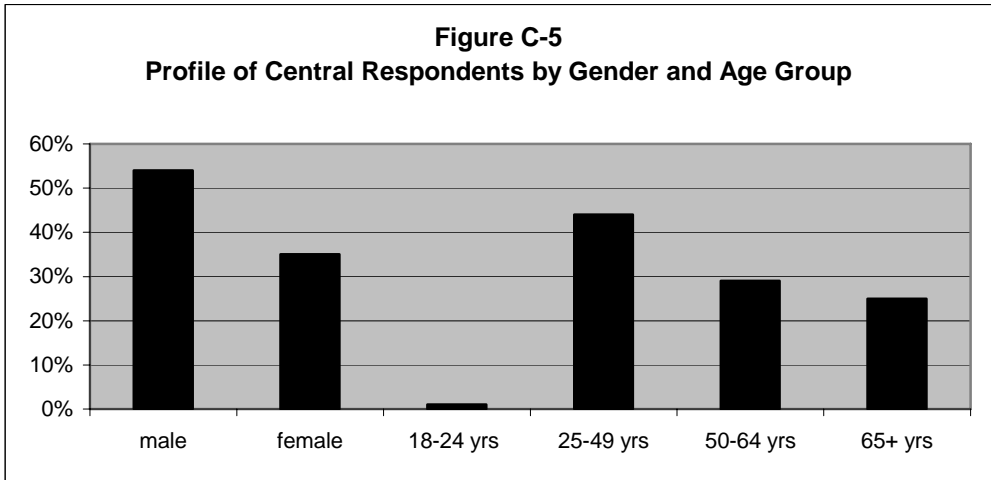
**E9. Would you be willing to pay an additional amount to preserve open space in Cumberland County?**

- 28% - Yes, another \$10 per year
- 21% - Yes, another \$20 per year
- 7% - Yes, another \$35 per year
- 15% - Yes, another \$50 per year
- 19% - No
- 8% - Other

**Profile of the Central Portion of Cumberland County**

**Respondents**

The central portion of the county survey generated 281 completed responses. Figures C-5 and C-6 present the demographics of the respondents for this region.



**Responses to the Questions and Interpretation (“C” for Central)**

**C1. What best describes the amount of open space in Cumberland County?**

- 2% - too much open space
- 47% - about the right amount of open space
- 46% - not enough open space

**C2. How interested are you in preserving open space in Cumberland County?**

- 48% - very interested
- 44% - interested
- 5% - not interested

**C3. How important are the following types of open space to you?**

The following chart presents the respondents' ratings.

Open Space Type	Critically Important %	Very Important %	Important %	TOTAL IMPORTANT	Of Little Importance %	Not Important %
Farmland	50	34	11	95	2	.4
Streams & access to streams	48	32	15	95	3	.4
Forests	45	35	15	95	2	-
Mountains	34	38	23	95	2	.9
Nature preserves	34	37	19	90	4	1
Wetlands & floodplains	33	31	26	90	5	4
Meadows and Unfarmed Fields	28	38	23	89	6	2
Tree-lined streets	22	29	31	82	10	5.0
Trails	21	33	34	88	7	1.8
Parkland	20	35	34	89	6	1.4
Greenways	16	34	37	87	6	2.1

**C4. What is your opinion about the following statements?**

a. It is important for my community to preserve open space.

- 61% - strongly agree
- 31% - agree
- 5% - neutral
- 1% - disagree
- 0% - strongly disagree

b. It is important for Cumberland County to preserve open space.

- 64% - strongly agree
- 28% - agree
- 5% - neutral
- 1% - disagree
- 0% - strongly disagree

c. I support open space preservation even if it is not in my community.

- 54% - strongly agree
- 35% - agree
- 7% - neutral
- 1% - disagree
- .4% - strongly disagree

d. It is important to protect open space even if it were not open to the public.

- 41% - strongly agree
- 40% - agree
- 13% - neutral
- 4% - disagree
- 1% - strongly disagree

e. I think parks improve the quality of life in a community.

- 43% - strongly agree
- 43% - agree
- 9% - neutral
- 2% - disagree
- 1%- strongly disagree

f. My community should work in partnership with neighboring communities to preserve open space.

- 51 - strongly agree
- 38% - agree
- 7% - neutral
- 2% - disagree
- .4%- strongly disagree

#### **C5. What is your opinion about the rate of growth in Cumberland County?**

- 66% - too much development
- 31% - amount of development is about right
- 2% - not enough development

#### **C6. How would you rate the level of planning for open space preservation in Cumberland County?**

- 74% - more planning for open space preservation needs to be done
- 21% - current planning efforts are fine
- 2% - less planning should be done

#### **C7. What organizations do you think should be responsible for the following?**

##### **LAND ACQUISITION**

- 61% - Cumberland County
- 36% - your township or borough
- 24%- non-governmental organizations

##### **NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION**

- 74% - Cumberland County
- 27% - your township or borough
- 21% - non-governmental organizations

**GREENWAY PLANNING**

- 57% - Cumberland County
- 38% - your township or borough
- 18%- non-governmental organizations

**TRAIL DEVELOPMENT & OPERATION**

- 55% - Cumberland County
- 32% - your township or borough
- 31%- non-governmental organizations

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION**

- 68% - Cumberland County
- 32% - your township or borough
- 21%- non-governmental organizations

**PARK DEVELOPMENT & OPERATION**

- 38% - Cumberland County
- 64% - your township or borough
- 18%- non-governmental organizations

**EDUCATION ABOUT OPEN SPACE**

- 53% - Cumberland County
- 34% - your township or borough
- 34%- non-governmental organizations

**PROVIDING RECREATION SERVICES**

- 38% - Cumberland County
- 64% - your township or borough
- 22%- non-governmental organizations

**C8. Do you think the following are an appropriate use of public funds?**

**OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION**

- 69% - Yes
- 12% - No
- 14% - Undecided

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION**

- 62% - Yes
- 19% - No
- 15% - Undecided

**NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION**

- 78% - Yes
- 7% - No
- 12% - Undecided

**PARKLAND**

- 69% - Yes
- 10% - No
- 16% - Undecided

**GREENWAYS**

- 53% - Yes
- 18% - No
- 24% - Undecided

**TRAILS**

- 59% - Yes
- 16% - No
- 20% - Undecided

**C9. Would you be willing to pay an additional amount to preserve open space in Cumberland County?**

- 25% - Yes, another \$10 per year
- 15% - Yes, another \$20 per year
- 5% - Yes, another \$35 per year
- 18% - Yes, another \$50 per year
- 28% - No
- 7% - Other

September 2003

# Natural Resources

*Our survival depends on the web of life created by the interactions of the millions of different animals, plants, fungi, and other microscopic organisms that share the Earth with us.*

**Biodiversity, our living world: your life depends on it!**

## Where We Are Now

Cumberland County is rich in natural resources: from the wooded ridges of Blue Mountain and South Mountain to the stream corridors of the Yellow Breeches Creek, Conodoguinet Creek and Susquehanna River, and the fertile valley in between. Several characteristics make the County unique: the limestone geology, the ridge and valley topography, and the abundant high quality water resources.

Population growth has occurred throughout the County through the expansion of small towns and creation of suburbs within previously rural areas. This ongoing industrial and residential development has encroached on natural areas throughout the County, especially stream corridors resulting in loss of natural areas, reduced quality and value of natural resources, and natural system fragmentation.

There is an ever-growing awareness of the importance of biodiversity for the health of the planet and the quality of life that we share with every living species. Our forestlands help to purify our air, provide water treatment, and stabilize our soils. Our wetlands are a natural filtration system for pollutants and help to control flooding. Natural resources provide habitat and shelter for wildlife and protect them from the impact of expanding development.

Residents value the County's natural resources for the scenic beauty and recreation opportunities offered in it's forests, streams, and wetlands.

The Cumberland County Open Space Preservation Plan offers the opportunity to target protection of the County's natural resources through a program to protect open space.

*Please attend and participate!*

Strategic Planning Forum  
Natural Resources  
6:30 P.M.  
September 18, 2003  
Cumberland County  
Planning Commission  
Business Central  
18 North Hanover Street  
Carlisle, PA

*Light refreshments will be provided!*

## Natural Resource Conservation

Natural resources are protected by state and municipal regulations and ordinances. The Commonwealth has comprehensive regulations that protect wetlands, streams, and endangered and threatened species and habitats. Floodplains are regulated locally by municipal ordinances and ridges and forestlands are not typically regulated but may be afforded some protection by municipal steep slope, riparian buffer, or other ordinance provisions.

Non-profit entities play significant roles in the protection and preservation of the

County's natural resources. The Central Pennsylvania Conservancy is a non-profit land trust dedicated to the preservation of lands and natural, scenic, cultural and agricultural values of Cumberland County. The LeTort Regional Authority serves to preserve and protect the LeTort Spring Run. The Yellow Breeches Watershed Association promotes sound management and environmental stewardship of natural resources in the Yellow Breeches watershed.



## Cumberland County

Cumberland County  
Planning Commission  
Business Central  
18 North Hanover Street  
Suite 102  
Carlisle, PA 17013

Contact:  
Stephanie Williams  
Greenway and Open  
Space Coordinator  
(717)240-5383  
sjwilliams@ccpa.net

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See us at:

[www.ccpa.net](http://www.ccpa.net)

## Natural Resource Data and Trends

Cumberland County has several streams listed as Exceptional Value Waters and High Quality Waters by the PA Department of Environmental Protection. The Yellow Breeches Creek and the LeTort Spring Run are designated as Pennsylvania Scenic Rivers.

The Natural Areas Inventory for Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry Counties lists nine sites that are critical for maintaining Cumberland County's biological diversity. These sites are located throughout the County and are associated with plant communities and animal habitats.

Blue Mountain in the northern portion of the County is part of the Blue Mountain - Kittatinny Ridge Conservation project to develop a long-term conservation vision for the ridge as a unique natural corridor. This regional project is exploring the importance of the ridge for bird migration, recreation, forest resources, and habitat for wildlife.

Cumberland County offers a diverse array of natural resources under varying

degrees of protection. Portions of the mountain lands in the western end of the County are protected as State Park and State Forest lands and municipal parks protect smaller tracts throughout the County. Significant resources such as the stream corridors are primarily under private ownership and protected by state regulations and ordinance provisions. Six municipalities in the western portion of the County do not have zoning to afford this minimum protection to natural resources in their jurisdiction.

Conservation Districts and municipalities require the implementation of Best Management Practices and environmentally sensitive solutions for erosion control and stormwater management to promote water quality and ground water recharge.

Fragmentation and disturbance of natural resources allow the introduction of invasive, non-native plants into natural areas. Aggressive invasive plants can negatively impact natural resources.

### Analysis

Natural resources are essential elements in the fabric of our environment. Conserving Cumberland County's natural resources is critical to maintaining the quality of life enjoyed by residents.

There is a vast body of information regarding the importance of natural resources. The resources of Cumberland County have been inventoried and continue to be studied. Moving to the next step, determining what to protect and how to protect it has proven to be a more challenging task.

### Top Issues

For the Strategic Planning Forum, five key issues will be discussed. The goal of the discussions is to develop potential actions and strategies that could focus conservation efforts through a county open space program.

1. **Prioritizing what to protect and how to protect it.**

2. **Outreach and Education** – Educating landowners and the general public about the importance of the County's natural resources and the interconnectivity between these resources and the quality of life enjoyed in the County. What effective methods can be used to get the word out regarding the importance of resource protection?
3. **Diversity of the County** – Resources, protected lands, sense of urgency and the conservation mindset vary across the County.
4. **Development Pressures** – Address issues related to preserving natural resources within a growing area.
5. **Funding** – The County does not currently have a program to protect sensitive habitat or significant natural resources through acquisition, purchase of easements, or partnerships. What programs would achieve conservation goals?

# Livable Communities

*The Future is not some place we are going, but one we are creating.*

## Where We Are Now

Livable Communities. Smart Growth. Sustainability. All are good words that describe ways that citizens across Pennsylvania are coming together to make their communities places where people want to raise their families, live, work, play, and retire in.

Livable communities build upon local strength and uniqueness. They:

- Sustain and restore historic neighborhoods and resources.
- Are thriving economic centers that attract business and a talented work force.

- Strive to preserve farms and green space among new development.
- Are places that help you get where you want to be quickly and without traffic congestion.
- Enable people of all ages to walk, bike, shop, drive – and find a parking place.

**Open Space Planning and Livable Communities are linked.** For Cumberland County to have an effective Open Space Program, the plan needs to focus on the boroughs and adjoining townships as Livable Communities.

## Open Space Planning and Livable Communities

In 1970, 42 percent of the people in Cumberland County lived in the boroughs. In 2000, only about 27 percent did. The actual population declined from about 66,000 to about 58,000.

Growth has been highest in the central townships, dramatically altering the rural agrarian appearance that brought people there in the first place.

In the 2000 Census, Cumberland County was reclassified from a rural county to an urban county based upon population. And the growth hasn't stopped yet: an increase of 55,700 persons is forecast for the county through 2020. This growth will be highest in the western portion of the county. The trend of population decline in the boroughs and growth in

outlying rural areas is a factor in open space planning. **Making the urbanized population centers more "livable" and how a Cumberland County Open Space Program can help the boroughs to achieve this is a focus of the Open Space Preservation Plan.** While many factors make up the "livable communities" equation, we are only addressing open space, and planning.

Every municipality needs a current comprehensive plan along with an open space plan to work towards being a livable community. Only approximately one-third of the municipalities in the county have a Comprehensive Plan that is current. Many plans are more than 30 years old. Ten municipalities have park and open space plans. Lack of funding is the major block to municipal planning.

*Please attend and participate!*

Strategic Planning Forum  
Livable Communities  
9:00 A.M. to Noon  
September 12, 2003  
Camp Hill Borough Hall  
2145 South Walnut Street  
Camp Hill, PA

*Light refreshments will be provided!*

## Cumberland County

Cumberland County  
Planning Commission  
Business Central  
18 North Hanover Street  
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## Community Values and Opinions

Two public opinion surveys (Cumberland County Greenway Survey in 1999 and the Susquehanna Greenway Survey in 2003) found that the majority of those surveyed support greenways and open space as a way to improve their communities. They also indicated their concerns about development pressures and the loss of open space.

Interviews and meetings for the Open Space Plan identified sprawl and intense

development as major concerns with respect to the loss of open space in the county. Helping the population centers become highly desirable places in which to live could help to reduce the demand for residential development in the countryside. With an aging population, providing thriving downtowns will help draw people back into the towns where services are centralized and driving requirements are limited. Attractive communities with parks and amenities are key.

## Trends

If the trends of declining population in the boroughs and rapid development in the outlying countryside continue, the rural character and beauty of the County will be lost, natural resources degraded, and the quality of living reduced.

The lack of funding for municipal, open space, and park planning is hampering

open space preservation efforts. Cumberland County has stepped up to the plate by funding conservation planning and design in the municipalities.

Many jurisdictions have already accepted the County's assistance and have ordinances under review.

## Analysis

How to make the boroughs and adjoining townships more livable through open space planning is essential in the development of an open space preservation plan for Cumberland County. Should the county move ahead with county funding to support open space, that program needs to include components to assist communities that are already built out. This will make the communities more attractive places in which to live and perhaps reduce development pressures in the outlying areas.

The topic of Livable Communities addresses a host of factors ranging from transportation to jobs. For this project we are only to focus on parks, recreation, trails, beautification and related topics with respect to helping our boroughs and adjoining townships more livable. Planning efforts among municipalities have primarily been independent. A few regional planning projects have been undertaken.

## Top Issues

For the Strategic Planning Forum, five key issues will be discussed. The goal of the discussions is to develop potential actions and strategies that could help the boroughs and adjoining townships become more livable through a county open space program.

1. **Planning** – What is needed; regional planning potential, and funding.
2. **Achieving an effective urban park systems countywide.**
3. **Financing** – What financing would boroughs need for open space and parks.
4. **Open Space Program** – Address the issues related to preserving open space and acquiring land in rural areas of the county.
5. **Establishing the Boroughs as a tourism draw.**

September 2003

# Agricultural Preservation

*America's farms and ranches are important to the nation's voters, and not just for their locally grown food. A new poll released today shows that voters value farms and ranches for the conservation benefits they provide, such as cleaner air and water and wildlife habitat. American Farmland Trust*

## Where We Are Now

Cumberland County has been working on agricultural preservation for many years. The County has an Agricultural Land Preservation Coordinator and a Farmland Preservation Board. The *Future of Cumberland County Agriculture* is an active community-based program exploring the needs and future of farming in the County.

The **Cumberland County Open Space Preservation Plan** offers the opportunity to capitalize on this great work. Since agricultural preservation is a major component of open space preservation, we would like to:

- Tap into the work that has already been accomplished in agricultural preservation.
- Identify ways to support agricultural preservation through the Open Space Plan.
- Develop strategies and actions for agricultural preservation.
- Put those actions into the **Cumberland County Open Space Preservation Plan** as one more way to highlight agricultural preservation through recommendations in an official county plan.

## Agricultural Preservation Programs

Cumberland County has over 351,000 acres (550 square miles) distributed among 33 municipalities. Approximately 110,000 acres (31%) of the County's land area is defined as prime farmland according to the Soil Survey of Cumberland County. The 910 active farms in the County range in size from 10 acres to over 200 acres. Areas defined as prime farmland are generally located through the center of the County between the Conodoguinet and Yellow Breeches Creeks.

Cumberland County has three programs to promote the protection of agricultural lands and farming in the County.

- **Clean and Green Program** – Parcels within this program permit a differential property assessment based on the value of productive farmland, not development potential.

- **Agricultural Security Area Program (ASA)** – Parcels placed within this program receive a variety of benefits such as protection from certain ordinance restrictions, limited protection from condemnation of land, and eligibility for agricultural conservation easement programs. As of June 2003 Cumberland County had 63,832 acres (931 parcels) within the ASA in 17 Townships.
- **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program** – This program is run by the County and provides a mechanism for purchasing agricultural conservation easements from farmers in ASA's. County and State funds are used to purchase land development rights. The farmer maintains ownership of the land and can continue to farm it but cannot convert the land to non-farm use. The easement is held in perpetuity.

*Please attend and participate!*

Strategic Planning Forum  
Agricultural Preservation  
7:00 P.M.  
September 23, 2003  
Penn State Cooperative  
Extension Office  
1100 Claremont Road  
Carlisle, PA

*Light refreshments will be provided!*

## Cumberland County

Cumberland County  
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## Agricultural Preservation Data and Trends

Three municipalities within the County have agricultural preservation zoning (APZ). The intent of the various APZ provisions is to protect farming by designating areas where agriculture is the desired land use and discouraging other uses. Silver Spring Township, South Middleton Township, and Lower Mifflin Township have adopted a sliding scale for development within the agricultural district. Additionally, South Middleton Township allows Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's), but the strategy has not been widely used in the municipality.

Six municipalities in the western portion of the County do not have zoning. Two (Southampton and Penn Township) of the six municipalities have U.S. Route 81 interchanges that make them prime targets for industrial and residential development.

As of June 2003 Cumberland County had placed 9,094 acres into Agricultural Conservation Easements with a total investment of \$19,100,126. Currently there are 71 pending applications for easements within the target preservation area.

Cumberland County is continuing to experience development pressure and growth resulting in loss of farmland. The Tri-County Regional Growth Management Plan projects population growth for Cumberland County at over 26-percent between 2000 and 2020.

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania in 2003 adopted definitions of rural and urban based on population densities. For the first time, Cumberland County was classified as urban with a population density of 274 persons per square mile.

## Analysis

Retaining agricultural land provides important benefits to citizens of Cumberland County. The agricultural industry has historically been important to the culture and economy of Cumberland County and the Commonwealth. The landscape heritage of the County is tied to the farms and open space located on the fertile soils of the Cumberland Valley and is linked to the quality of life enjoyed by County residents.

Loss of farmland is a result of several dynamic factors to include: the higher value of land for development than continued farming, the generational shift away from the family farm, the limited funding available for popular programs that preserve farmland, and the limited use of land use controls to preserve farmland.

## Top Issues

For the Agricultural Preservation Forum, four key issues will be discussed. The goal of the discussions is to develop potential actions and strategies that could promote agricultural preservation through a county open space program.

1. **Outreach and Education** – Educate farmers about the programs that promote the preservation of farms and farming and the benefits that are available to landowners and farmers.
2. **Zoning that Preserves Farmland** – Integrate zoning provisions into existing ordinances and developing zoning ordinances in municipalities without zoning.
3. **Funding** – The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program is limited by the funds available to purchase easements. The pending applications equate to an additional 1,891 acres of Cumberland County farmland that could be preserved if funding was available.
4. **Competition for Land** – Major roadways that traverse the County make it a unique location for transportation and product-moving industries and provide easy access to nearby employment centers and the State capitol making the County attractive for industrial and residential development.

# Parkland and Trails

*If you can dream it, you can do it.*

Walt Disney

## Where We Are Now

**Municipal Parks** - Municipalities in Cumberland County have about 1,825 acres of public parkland in about 112 parks. The parks range in size from 0.2 acres to 127 acres.

**County Parks** – Cumberland County does not have a county park system. The County maintains the 913 acre Mount Holly Marsh Preserve and Cumberland County Hiker-Biker Trail for passive recreation and conservation.

**State Lands** – The Commonwealth maintains approximately 47,436 acres of land for passive recreation and conservation purposes. Colonel Denning, Pine Grove Furnace and Kings Gap State Parks comprise about 2,423 acres. The four state game lands total about 4,445 acres. Michaux and

Tuscarora State Forests total 39,870 acres. The Fish & Boat Commission manages nearly 700 acres.

**Federal Lands** – The National Park Service oversees approximately 2,734 acres of land for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.

With 1,825 acres of local parks and a population of 213,674, there are about 8.5 acres of public parkland per thousand citizens. The MINIMUM standard for active parkland is 10 acres per thousand. Minimum parkland based on 2000 population would be 2,136 acres. Population forecasts project an additional 55,700 citizens by 2020, which would require an additional 557 acres for a total of 2,693 acres of parkland.

*Please attend and participate!*

Strategic Planning Forum  
Parkland & Trails  
9:00 A.M. to Noon  
September 19, 2003  
Cumberland County  
Planning Commission  
Business Central  
18 North Hanover Street  
Carlisle, PA

*Light refreshments  
will be provided!*

## Planning

Parks and Recreation Planning in Cumberland County includes: the County Greenway Plan, which spawned this county open space plan; reviews of municipal ordinances for conservation design and several local park and recreation plans. Ten municipalities have park and recreation plans: Newville, Monroe/Middlesex Joint Plan, Upper Allen Twp., Silver Spring Twp., South Middleton Twp., East Pennsboro and Shippensburg Regional Plan. Two related plans are underway including the Susquehanna Greenway Plan and the Kittatinny Ridge project. A private group also developed the Cumberland Valley Rail Trail Master Plan. All of these plans found/are finding the need for additional park and recreation lands, greenways, and conservation areas. They also

identified the need for additional financial resources for land acquisition as well as new planning tools for preserving open space by means other than outright purchase.

Every municipality needs a current parks, recreation and open space plan. Twenty-three municipalities should develop a plan while five are ready for an update. Consideration could be given to regional planning to facilitate conservation and park planning over larger areas as well as partnerships that maximize resources and reduce costs. This makes every dollar go a lot farther.

## Cumberland County

Cumberland County  
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Business Central  
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[www.ccpa.net](http://www.ccpa.net)

## Community Values and Opinions

Public opinion surveys conducted for several of these plans including Cumberland County; Monroe, Middlesex, South Middleton and East Pennsboro Townships; and the Susquehanna Greenway found public support for parks and recreation ranging from the willingness to pay higher taxes for parks to using greenways to improve community image and attract business.

**All of these surveys found overall public support for parks recreation and greenways as well as the need to**

**create more public awareness about parks, recreation, greenways and their benefits.** As expected, financing was viewed as a chief obstacle, especially related to taxes. Development and loss of open space and its related problems such as traffic congestion concern residents. Many organizations are "pitching in": the Cumberland Valley Rail Trail Council, Letort Regional Authority, Cumberland Valley Appalachian Trail Club and Audubon Pennsylvania.

## Trends

Urgency! Growth is obvious in just driving around. Population projections forecast an increase of 55,700 residents by 2020. As land is being developed, opportunities for preservation are decreasing while land costs are increasing. Cumberland County has made some bold decisions and undertaken major steps towards open space, parks and recreation through its

ongoing planning since 1998. The County established a planning department with a full-time greenway and open space coordinator.

Partnerships with the municipalities, other related organizations (Central PA Conservancy, Susquehanna Greenway, CVRTC and others) will help in creating a county wide system of parks, recreation facilities and open space.

## Analysis

Cumberland County is fortunate to have significant state park, forests, and fish and game lands. Protecting and connecting these areas is important. There are no county parks. There is a shortfall in close-to-home recreation areas. Open space, park and recreation planning is just beginning in the county. There are about nine parks and recreation departments in the county, including several fine examples of regional systems. There is a shortfall of local parkland of about 311 acres now and another 557 by 2020. Planning has been limited and funding is an issue. Harnessing the diverse resources for open space, conservation, parks, recreation and trails will empower the County to accomplish a great deal collaboratively.

## Top Issues

For the Strategic Planning Forum, four key issues will be discussed. The goal of the discussions is to develop potential actions and strategies for parks and recreation.

1. **Planning** – What is needed and regional planning potential.
2. **Funding** – Planning, facility development, land acquisition, open space protection and conservation.
3. **Role of the County and Municipalities** in parks and recreation, and open space.
4. **Partnerships** - Folding in the conservation organizations, trusts, conservancies, and community organizations.

# Open Space Forum Findings

## Open Space Forums

*In September and October of 2003 Cumberland County held a series of four public forums to gain input on the themes that had emerged in the Cumberland County Open Space Preservation Plan planning process. The themes were defined based on initial public input and assessment of open space issues in Cumberland County. The themes include agricultural preservation, natural resources, livable communities, and parkland and trails. These forums were designed to gather citizen thoughts and ideas. The generalized findings of the forums are described below.*

## Natural Resources

Cumberland County contains a diverse array of natural resources that add to the scenic beauty of the area. There is an ever-growing awareness of the importance of biodiversity for the health of the planet and the quality of life that we share with every living species. Residents value the County's natural resources for the scenic beauty and recreation opportunities offered in it's forests, streams, and wetlands.

Natural resources are protected by state and municipal regulations and ordinances. Conservation organizations in the County contribute to the protection of significant resources through environmental stewardship and promotion of sound management.

The Cumberland County Open Space Preservation Plan offers the opportunity to target protection of the County's natural

resources through a program to protect open space and expand upon existing conservation efforts.

Forum Findings:

- 1) Participants stress that natural systems and resources are interconnected and must be considered and protected.
- 2) Education on the importance of natural resources is critical to effective protection.
- 3) The mountains and forestlands are valued for their visual aesthetic from the valley.
- 4) Create a consortium organization at the County-level to coordinate environmental education, public outreach, and conservation initiatives.

## Livable Communities

In 1970, 42 percent of the County 's population lived in the boroughs. In 2000, only about 27 percent did, and there was an actual decline in borough population from about 66,000 to about 58,000 residents. Growth has been highest in the central township of the County, altering the rural agrarian landscape forever.

Addressing the population decline of the historic communities of Cumberland County must be part of the mix in creating a viable open space preservation program. Enhancing existing communities through investments in open space, parks, trails, and beautification of amenities contributes to the livability and quality of life afforded in a community. Maintaining and enhancing the livability of the urbanized population

centers of the County can contribute to the preservation of open space and perhaps reduce development pressures on the outlying areas of the County.

Forum Findings:

- 1) There as a disconnect between retaining boroughs as desirable living areas and open space preservation.
- 2) It is important to involve representatives of borough and developed townships in the planning process.
- 3) The open space plan initiatives should not duplicate existing programs such as Main Street and beautification projects.



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## Agricultural Preservation

Cumberland County contains over 351,000 acres distributed among 33 municipalities. Approximately 31% of the County is defined as prime farmland based on soil criteria. Currently the County has three programs to promote the protection of agricultural lands and farming in the County: *Clean and Green Program*, *Agricultural Security Area Program*, and *Agricultural Conservation Easement Program*.

As of June 2003, Cumberland County had placed 9,094 acres into Agricultural Conservation Easements. This equates to approximately 8-percent of the County's prime farmland with the remaining lands unprotected or already developed.

The landscape heritage of the County is tied to the farms and open space located on the fertile soils of the Cumberland Valley and is linked to the quality of life enjoyed by residents.

Loss of farmland is a result of several dynamic factors: the higher value of land for development than continued farming,

the generational shift away from the family farm, limited funding available for programs that preserve farmland, and the limited use of land use controls to preserve farmland.

Forum Findings:

- 1) Create a County agricultural land preservation program. The new program's criteria should align with Cumberland County's goals.
- 2) Involve municipalities in the agricultural land preservation program design and review process.
- 3) Address zoning issues and solidify agricultural land preservation goals through effective zoning. Implement zoning where it does not exist and eliminate anti-farming provisions and restrictive farm requirements. Educate local officials and the general public on zoning issues and provisions.
- 4) Consider the goal of preserving 25-percent of the County's prime farmland within 5 years.

## Parkland and Trails

Cumberland County is fortunate to have significant lands set aside as parks, preserves, and game lands. Residents who participate in passive and active recreation pursuits, enjoy spending time outdoors, and value the County's scenic beauty benefit from these protected lands.

Municipal, county, state, and federal preserves, parks, and trails protect almost 53,000 acres of the County. Although the County does not have a county park system it does maintain the 913-acre Mount Holy Marsh Preserve and the Cumberland County Hiker-Biker Trail for passive recreation and conservation.

Throughout the County there are over 1825 acres of municipal parkland. This equates to approximately 8.5 acres of public parkland per 1,000 citizens. This amount of parkland falls below the recommended minimum acreage standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents. This shortfall of 311 acres

will be increased by an additional 557 acres by 2020 based on County growth projections.

As the County grows it will be important to continue the investment in parkland, preserves, and trails and to protect these lands for future generations.

Forum Findings:

- 1) Use the County as a facilitator and coordinator of park resources.
- 2) A County parks system should initially provide coordination and would not own significant parkland.
- 3) Buy-in from each area of the County is critical to the success of the open space plan. Use a variety of outreach methods to involve municipalities, school districts, and citizens.
- 4) Include something for everyone in the open space program.