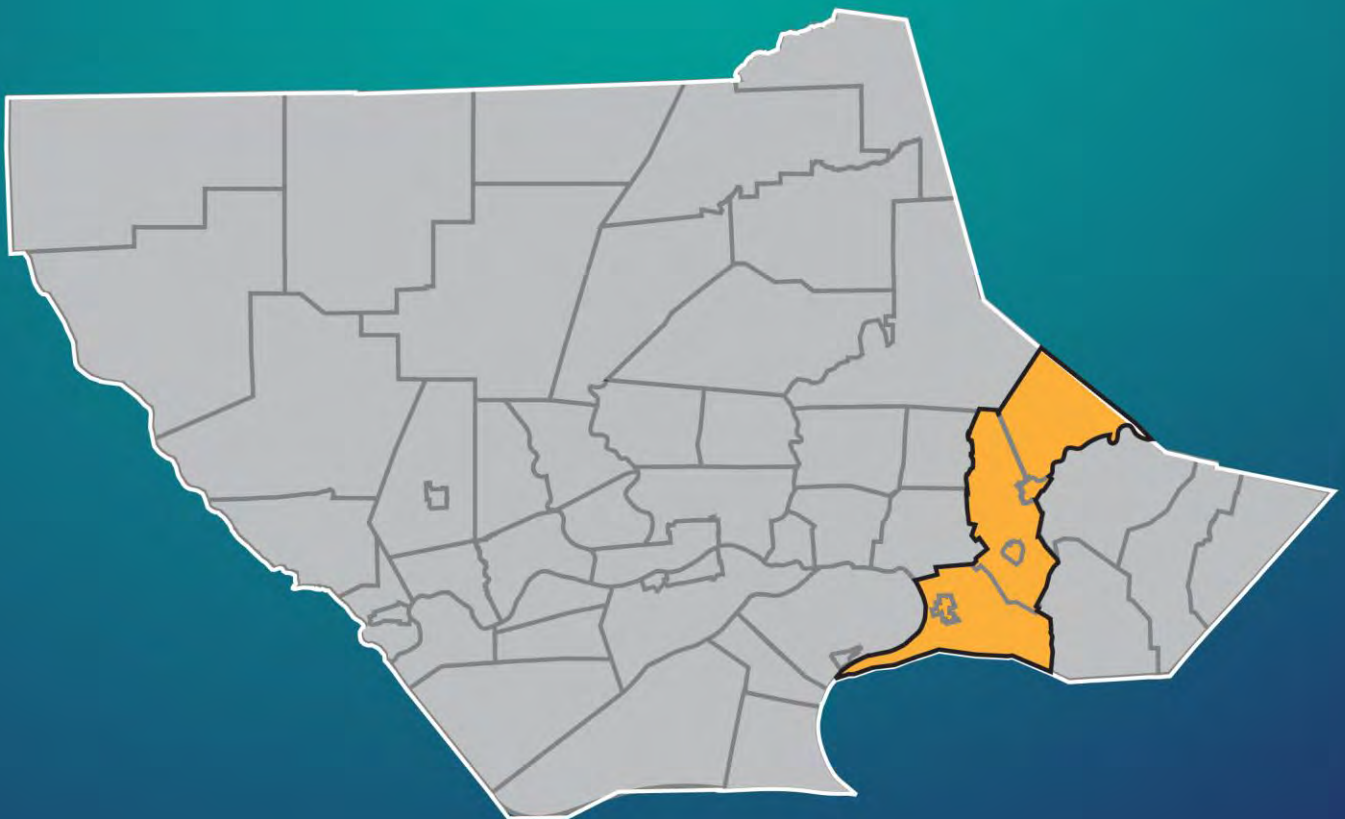




2017 MULTI-MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Muncy Creek Planning Area
Lycoming County, Pennsylvania



Plan Adoptions

HUGHESVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL – Adopted October 23, 2017

MUNCY BOROUGH COUNCIL – Adopted August 17, 2017

PICTURE ROCKS BOROUGH COUNCIL – Adopted September 5, 2017

MUNCY CREEK TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS – Adopted August 21, 2017

SHREWSBURY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS – Adopted September 12, 2017

WOLF TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS – Adopted August 14, 2017

*Please refer to Appendix G for the Adopted Municipal Resolutions

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Chapter 1: Plan Overview

Introduction

This 2017 Muncy Creek Planning Area Comprehensive Plan Review and Implementation Strategy has been shaped by the issues currently identified as priorities within this multi-municipal planning area.

THIS 2017 MUNCY CREEK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

is the culmination of months of planning, information and data gathering, trend analysis, collaboration, deliberation, task coordination, visioning, and prioritization that teamed dozens of public- and private-sector leaders and stakeholders from within and beyond the Muncy Creek Planning Area. Their skill sets, expertise, and institutional and individual insights have resulted in this focused, collaborative blueprint for both growing and preserving quality of life in this area of Lycoming County, Pennsylvania.

The Muncy Creek Planning Area consists of six municipalities: Hughesville, Muncy and Picture Rocks Boroughs, and Muncy Creek, Shrewsbury, and Wolf Townships.

These municipalities are home to three of eastern Lycoming County's community

centers and comprise a significant portion of the Muncy Creek watershed. PA Route 405 and US 220 are the major interconnecting routes within this Planning Area. Interstate 180 connects this planning area to Williamsport and I-80.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, Hughesville, Muncy, and Picture Rocks Boroughs developed from crossroads settlements along the Muncy and Little Muncy Creeks into prosperous small towns. From historical times to present day, these have been centers of local business and trade, and of social and educational activity. Townships in this planning area have traditionally been locations of agricultural production and forestry activities. Muncy Creek and Wolf Townships have undergone various types of commercial developments over the past 10-20 years, particularly along major travel corridors. Residential subdivisions have also developed along rural routes, especially in upland areas with accessible scenic valley views. Shrewsbury Township is the most rural of the six municipalities. Its rugged topography and distance from community centers and services have protected it from significant development pressure.

An exhaustive comprehensive planning effort for the Muncy Creek Planning Area last occurred 10 years ago and resulted in a multi-municipal plan completed and adopted in 2004. During the 2016 review process, the issues, priorities, and key recommendations in the 2004 document were revalidated as a planning baseline for the 2017 update. The 2017 Plan translates the adopted 2004 Plan into a set of achievable goals by providing a succinct implementation strategy to address current priorities of the Muncy Creek Planning Area.

Since adoption of the 2004 Muncy Creek Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan, this planning area has faced some significant challenges and changes, notably:

- Impacts of creek and river flooding on residences and businesses alike
- Effects of increased flood insurance premiums
- Impacts of Marcellus Shale natural gas development

- Addition/expansion of water and sewer infrastructure
- Completion of major transportation improvements
- Initiation of revitalization and resiliency efforts in community centers.

Because a concentrated portion of the Muncy Creek Planning Area is within floodplains of the West Branch Susquehanna River, Muncy Creek, and their tributaries, the threat of river and creek flooding has been ever-present. Communities in the Muncy Creek Planning Area were heavily affected by flooding from Tropical Storm Lee in 2011. Compounding the physical impact of flood damage, this area has also faced the financial challenge posed by passage of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012. That legislation has resulted in dramatic increases in flood insurance premiums required for mortgaged properties within areas of defined flood risk—especially detrimental to Muncy Borough and Muncy Creek Township, where approximately 42% and 35%, respectively, of their properties are within the regulatory floodplain boundary. While effective floodplain management strategies were identified in the 2004 Plan as a priority, a sense of urgency has increased to develop flood mitigation efforts and a greater community resiliency initiative.

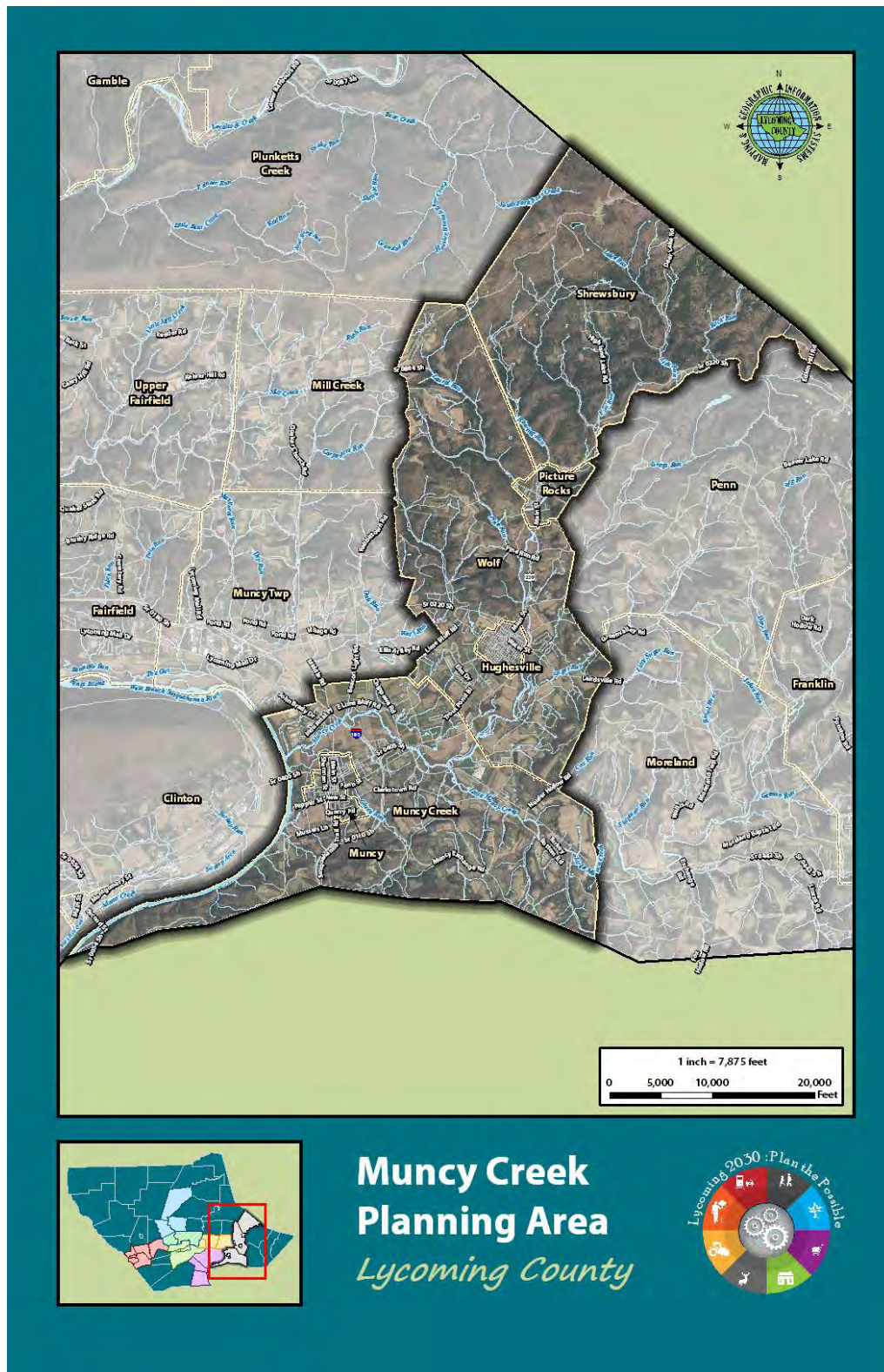
This 2017 Muncy Creek Comprehensive Plan Review and Implementation Strategy is a living document, intended to capture current desires of our communities and provide targeted implementation strategies to achieve those goals. It satisfies the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC - Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247 as reenacted and amended) requirement for reviewing the existing, adopted comprehensive plan every decade.

Key features of this 2017 document are the set of well-defined priority issues and key projects that best address those issues.

Municipal governments in the Muncy Creek Planning Area include:

- Borough of Hughesville
- Borough of Muncy
- Borough of Picture Rocks
- Township of Muncy Creek
- Township of Shrewsbury
- Township of Wolf

Muncy Creek Planning Area Map



Muncy Creek Summary Profile

GEOGRAPHY

Location: Lycoming County, Northcentral Pennsylvania, USA

Total Area: 62 square miles or 39,680 acres

Floodplain Area: 6.4 square miles

Major Watersheds: West Branch Susquehanna River Basin and Muncy Creek Watershed

Land Cover as Percentage of Total Area (University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Laboratory): 62% tree canopy, 32% otherwise vegetated, 5% developed, 1% water and wetlands

POPULATION

Population (2010 Census): 12,073 persons; 1.1% decrease since 2000

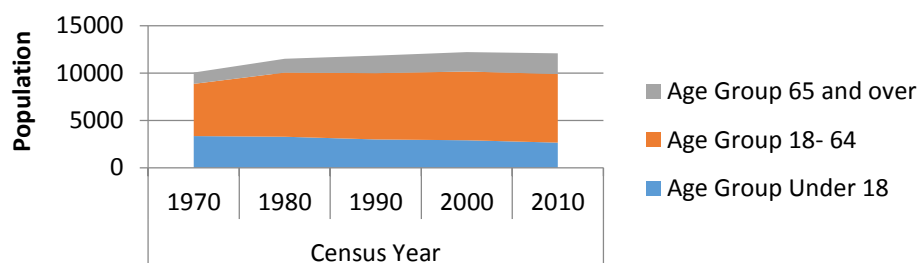
Table 1. Median Ages, 2014 American Community Survey Estimates

Borough of Hughesville	42.5
Borough of Muncy	41.2
Township of Muncy Creek	46.7
Borough of Picture Rocks	40.5
Township of Shrewsbury	42.7
Township of Wolf	41.9

Table 2. Population in Each Census, 1960-2010

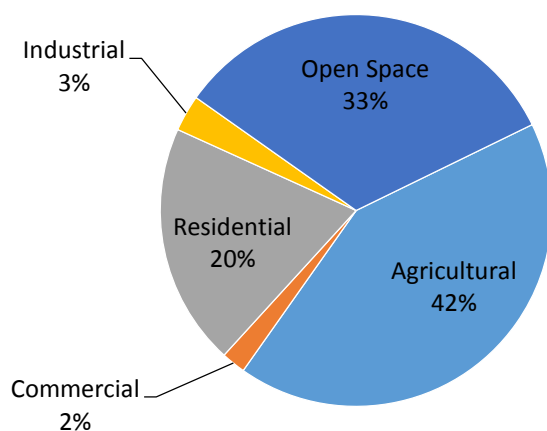
Year	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Hughesville	2,218	2,249	2,174	2,049	2,220	2,128
Muncy Boro	2,830	2,872	2,700	2,702	2,663	2,477
Muncy Creek	2,070	2,473	3,427	3,401	3,487	3,474
Picture Rocks	594	570	615	660	693	678
Shrewsbury	347	406	436	402	433	409
Wolf	957	1,473	2,147	2,617	2,707	2,907
TOTAL	9,016	10,043	11,499	11,831	12,203	12,073

Figure 1. Population Composition by Age, 1960-2010



ZONING

Figure 1. Current Zoning as Percentage of Total Area



INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

Locally-Owned Roads (Pennsylvania Department of Transportation [PennDOT] data): 339.6 miles

State-Owned Roads (PennDOT data): 156.1 miles

Major Transportation Routes: I-180, US-15, US-220, PA-405

School Districts: Muncy, East Lycoming

Water and Sewer Providers: Lycoming County Water and Sewer Authority, Hughesville Borough Water Authority, Hughesville/Wolf Sewer Authority, Muncy Borough Municipal Authority, and West Branch Regional Authority

Housing Units (2014 American Community Survey Estimate): 5,410

ECONOMY***Table 3. Median Household Income, 2014 American Community Survey Estimates***

Borough of Hughesville	\$45,893.00
Borough of Muncy	\$51,193.00
Township of Muncy Creek	\$48,403.00
Borough of Picture Rocks	\$68,375.00
Township of Shrewsbury	\$45,313.00
Township of Wolf	\$57,049.00

Top Lycoming County employers with a presence in this Planning Area (PA Department of Labor and Industry):

- University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC)/Susquehanna Health
- CSGroup Payroll Services
- Andritz Inc.
- East Lycoming School District

Plan Organization

The plan is designed to be succinct, focused, and action-oriented with emphasis placed on implementation steps.

This document incorporates a review of the 2004 Muncy Creek Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan with emphasis on developing implementable strategies to address the current set of prioritized issues. This review is organized into three sections:

The Plan Overview section presents background of the Muncy Creek Planning Area including highlights of its 2004 Comprehensive Plan, geography, and demographics.

The Implementation Strategy section identifies six priority issues determined to be the most important within the Muncy Creek Planning Area out of the top 14 thematic issues

commonly identified across all multi-municipal planning areas during the 2015-2017 comprehensive planning process.¹ Following each priority issue is the PAT's "top viable project" and implementation plan, as well as a list of additional projects chosen by the PAT to be highlighted in the plan. The PAT will continue to meet at least twice a year to evaluate implementation progress. After a top project is completed under one or more of the priority issue categories, the PAT will have the opportunity to complete an implementation plan for the other projects on the list and create specific Project Delivery Teams (PDT) to begin implementation of the additional project(s). The PDT will include those individuals responsible for planning and executing a particular project. The PDT will be prepared to provide status updates on project implementation at each PAT meeting.










The Growth Area and Future Land Use Maps section provides a detailed look at any areas of the multi-municipal planning area for which the PAT has recommended changes in the designated growth area boundaries, future growth area boundaries, and/or future land uses.

The Appendices are the final section of this document and include the following items:

- A. Plan Process
- B. Planning Advisory Team Meeting Summaries and Reports
- C. Results of Research and Analysis
- D. Reference Maps
- E. Plan Consistency and Plan References
- F. Acronyms
- G. Resolutions

¹ See Thematic Issues List at the end of Appendix A

Current Priority Issues

Issue		Comprehensive Plan Topical Areas								
		Agriculture	Community Development	Community Facilities & Infrastructure	Economic Development	Heritage, Culture & the Arts	Land Use	Natural Resources	Public Safety	Transportation & Mobility
										
1	Water Quality	X	X	X	X		X	X		
2	Flooding Impacts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Multi-modal Transportation System Deficiencies	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Fragmentation of Local Government	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
5	Downtowns and Village Centers Not Thriving, and Changing Economy Versus Local Work Force	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
6	Current Land Use Regulations and Enforcement Versus Community Visions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Chapter 2: Implementation Strategy

Priority Issue #1



Water quality is vital, but is vulnerable to a multitude of threats.

Back Story Groundwater is the primary source of drinking water, also referred to as source water, for residents in the Muncy Creek Planning Area. Communities and residents within this Planning Area have access to an ample supply of high-quality groundwater from one of three sources:

- One of the three public water suppliers
- One of the five permitted private water systems
- Privately drilled and maintained water wells

The three public water suppliers in the Muncy Creek Planning Area are regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP), and provide high-quality water for drinking and industrial uses. The Hughesville Borough Water Authority owns and operates its own water system serving Hughesville Borough and Wolf Township, and has approximately 1,110 customers. The West Branch Regional Authority (WBRA) operates and maintains the Muncy Borough Water Authority system and serves approximately 2,900 residents in Muncy Borough and Muncy Creek Township. The Lycoming County Water and Sewer Authority (LCWSA) serves approximately 1,372 residential and industrial customers with water purchased from the Muncy Borough Water Authority. These three public water systems have PADEP-approved source water protection plans in place that delineate groundwater supply areas and identify potential sources of contamination to the water supply.



Residents outside of the public water suppliers' service areas obtain their drinking water from either one of five PADEP-permitted private water supply systems in the planning area or rely on private residential drinking water wells. These five PADEP-permitted private water supply systems must adhere to PADEP drinking water standards. The quality and supply of water in these wells varies.

Private, domestic water wells are not regulated by PADEP or by local governments, and conditions of these wells are largely unknown. Moreover, no statewide or local well construction standards apply to these wells. Residents are solely responsible for maintaining their own wells and performing recommended water testing.

Priority Issue Overview Muncy Creek PAT members' primary concern is to maintain the quality and supply of drinking water resources within the Planning Area. Given the wide array of water sources and providers, potential threats to water quality can vary, with potential for contamination or depletion from:

- Agricultural fertilizer/nutrient runoff
- Leaking/failing septic systems
- Gas drilling operations
- Fire protection
- Traffic accident spills of chemicals
- Commercial or industrial activities adjacent to source water protection zones
- Loss of groundwater recharge areas

This is not a new concern. The 2004 Muncy Creek Planning Area Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan identified water supply and water quality protection as a key issue in Chapter 3, the Land Use and Resource Management Plan section of that plan, and in Chapter 5, the Community Infrastructure section. Many Strategic Actions called for in those chapters include land use best practices for development, infrastructure upgrades, and conservation of natural resources to protect groundwater recharge and filtration areas. Groundwater resources are also discussed in depth in Lycoming County's 2001 Water Supply Plan.

Although the public water suppliers have approved source water protection plans in place that outline source water protection measures, members of the 2016 Muncy Creek PAT determined that additional measures are necessary to safeguard the water supply in the Planning Area. Specifically, the PAT members identified a number of strategic approaches to address source water protection:

- Develop a wellhead/source water protection program (SWP) for all water systems
 - Include mobile home parks and other small systems such as those servicing developments or restaurants
 - Explore funding and technical expertise to implement source water protection measures through PADEP and the Water Resources Education Network (WREN) program
- Amend municipal zoning ordinances to protect source water areas
- Enact land use regulations that support municipal system wellhead protection
- Provide financial support for conservation easements in critical areas
- Identify growth areas for development of larger residential subdivisions where infrastructure is available
- Leverage public infrastructure improvements and extensions as tools to guide development to appropriate and desirable areas
- Encourage service improvements within designated growth area, and discourage extension of public water and sewer service to rural areas
- Utilize municipal and multi-municipal zoning to:

- Protect large and contiguous agricultural regions through designation of rural resource protection area
 - Designate approximate districts for concentrated animal feeding operations
- Develop zoning ordinances compatible with land use patterns and densities that complement/support local characters of communities
- Utilize land use controls to provide community facilities and infrastructure to support planned growth.

Key Implications Local municipal governments are responsible for health, safety, and welfare of their residents. This includes provision of safe and clean drinking water. Providing high-quality water is directly related to:

- Ensuring physical/medical well-being of residents
- Supporting an essential element of safe housing
- Attracting new businesses and industries
- Maintaining existing businesses
- Providing medical care at the Muncy Valley Hospital
- Providing recreational activities
- Promoting eco-tourism

If source water protection is not addressed holistically, private and public water systems could become more vulnerable to contamination and may face significant increases in costs associated with water treatment.

Protecting source water now will help eliminate or substantially reduce the possibility of contamination that would degrade the quality of water throughout the Muncy Creek Planning Area.

Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue**SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM**

Develop and implement a multi-faceted source water protection program that includes:

- Identification of source water protection needs in the Muncy Creek Planning Area
- Appropriate land use policies and best management practices (BMP) to protect source water, including public and private water wells. Such policies and BMPs may include:
 - Riparian buffers
 - Conservation easements
 - Municipal zoning
- Source water protection public education programming

HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE

This project will identify source water protection needs in the Muncy Creek Planning Area. Source water protection measures will be implemented by application of combined regulatory and non-regulatory methods to be developed in further detail by the PDT. This project will build upon work already completed by partners both in this Planning Area and throughout the surrounding region.

A component of this project is a proposal to enact land use policies that protect source water by providing the necessary legal tools for municipal governments to:

- Guide development toward optimal areas within the Planning Area
- Reduce the opportunity for possible contamination of source water
- Organize a coordinated effort to encourage each water provider to implement voluntary BMPs

This coordinated approach will ensure maximum protection of source water in the Planning Area. This program will also engage private well owners, residents, and the public in source water education and protection because everyone in the planning area has a role in protection of the water supply.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Lead Agency – WBRA

Other Partners – PADEP, North Central Source Water Protection Alliance (NCSWPA), Hughesville Borough Water Authority, LCWSA, Lycoming County Department of Planning Community Development (PCD), private well owners, and individual municipalities within the Muncy Creek Planning Area as needed.

STEPS FOR SUCCESS

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	Form a PDT to explore source water protection opportunities in the Muncy Creek Planning Area	2018	WBRA
2	Seek funding and resources for actions that advance the project, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studies and research Public education and outreach 	2018-ongoing	WBRA and PDT
3	Engage public and private water supply system owners and municipalities to determine long-term water supply needs; explore alternative water connections and public water system expansion, if needed	2018-ongoing	PDT, public water suppliers; municipalities
4	Develop source water protection public education programming	2018-2022	WBRA, PDT, NCSWPA, and other project partners
5	Identify source water protection measures for public and private water systems and stakeholders	2018-2022	WBRA and PDT
6	Develop, adopt, and implement source water protection plans for public and private water systems where appropriate Note: Muncy and Hughesville already have PADEP-approved source water plans in place; implementation still needed	2020+ (implementation would be ongoing)	WBRA, PDT, private water systems, and consultant

7	Develop appropriate land use policy templates and BMPs to protect source water	2018-2020	WBRA and PDT
8	Provide support for technical solutions for water quality improvements and physical wellhead protection	2018-ongoing	WBRA and PDT

FUNDING RESOURCES

Grants, loans, and/or technical assistance may be available for this project through the following agencies:

- PADEP grants:
 - WREN Grants
 - Growing Greener Watershed Protection and Education grants
- Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PennVEST): Grants and low-interest loans
- Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy (conservation easements)
- Lycoming County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds

Priority Issue #2



Flooding is a threat to life, property, and communities throughout the County

Back Story Flooding is the number one natural threat to the Muncy Creek Planning Area. This area has undergone significant damages from flooding throughout the years, with major floods in 1889, 1936, 1972, 1996, 2004, 2009, 2010, and most recently in 2011 due to Tropical Storm Lee.

Within this Planning Area, Muncy Borough and Muncy Creek Township have undergone the most severe and repetitive flooding of all the municipalities because of their location at the convergence of Glade Run, Muncy Creek, and the West Branch Susquehanna River. The extent of flood-related damage within these two municipalities is also affected by three other contributing factors:

- 1,296 properties in these two municipalities are within the 100-year floodplain and include regulatory floodplain (25% of total properties)
- 90% of structures in the floodplain were built before 1980, thus do not meet current flood-proofing design guidelines, and are more susceptible to flood damages
- A large portion of Muncy Borough's historic district and downtown are within the floodplain

Shrewsbury Township, Wolf Township, and Hughesville and Picture Rocks Boroughs have floodplain areas as well, but flood impacts in these municipalities are not as severe or repetitive.

Flooding exerts significant community and economic impacts in the Planning Area. Since 1978, of \$9,459,819 in flood insurance claims within the Planning Area, \$8,944,470 (95%) of these claims have come from Muncy Borough and Muncy Creek Township (see Table 1).



Muncy Creek and Glade Run flooding around Muncy Borough during the 2011 Tropical Storm Lee Flood



North Main St. north of Glade Run, Muncy Creek Twp., 2004 Flood

Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

Table 1: Total Flood FEMA Insurance Claims in the Muncy Creek Planning Area Since 1978

Municipality	Claims Paid	Current Policies in Force	Amount Insured	Premiums	Average Insurance Value	Average Sale
Muncy, Borough of	\$5,545,457.61	145	\$17,226,000.00	\$211,237.00	\$118,800.00	\$86,173.33
Muncy Creek, Township of	\$3,399,012.89	93	\$14,300,400.00	\$92,256.00	\$153,767.00	\$100,309.62
Wolf, Township of	\$306,908.02	16	\$2,700,700.00	\$9,458.00	\$168,793.00	\$135,366.67
Shrewsbury, Township of	\$149,442.24	10	\$1,304,400.00	\$6,937.00	\$130,440.00	\$72,000.00
Picture Rocks, Borough of	\$72,222.21	9	\$969,900.00	\$3,427.00	\$107,766.00	Not applicable (N/A)
Hughesville, Borough of	\$58,998.88	9	\$1,702,100.00	\$4,418.00	\$189,122.00	\$79,500.00

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Lycoming Countywide Statistics, as of December 31, 2016, <https://bsa.nfipstat.fema.gov/reports/1040.htm> and Lycoming County Assessment Database 2017, <https://www.fema.gov/policy-claim-statistics-flood-insurance>

Flooding had long been an issue in this region, and had been identified as such in the 2004 Muncy Creek Multi-Municipal Comp Plan, as well as in the 2004, 2010, and 2016 County Wide All Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMP). In the 2004 Multi-Municipal Plan, the issue of flooding was characterized as follows: “Floodplains – A large portion of the Planning Area is located in the floodplains of the Susquehanna River, Muncy Creek, and their tributaries. While protection of existing development remains a constant challenge, accurate delineation of the floodplains and appropriate regulations will help ensure that new development is sensitive to this hazard.”

As documented in the 2004 Multi-Municipal Plan and the HMP, flooding remains the basic threat to this Planning Area. But, changes to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) have increased the urgency to address mitigation and remediation in a more meaningful way. In the past, flood insurance was structured in a way that provided little incentive for property owners to remediate their homes to reduce damages to their property from future floods.



Main Street, Muncy Borough, 2011 Tropical Storm Lee Flood

Passage of the Biggert Waters National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and the Homeowners’ Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 will soon result in significant flood insurance premium increases, and will greatly impact property owners within the Planning Area. More property owners are now looking to their municipal leaders and the County for assistance. A new sense of urgency to resolve this issue has arisen as area residents face:

- Continued flooding risk
- Increased financial burden of flood insurance
- Deterred redevelopment and investment in the community

Priority Issue Overview

This issue must be addressed from four different but related perspectives:

- Ensure floodplain mapping is accurate
- Acquire and remove floodplain properties that are repetitively and severely damaged
- Mitigate and flood-proof properties suitable for rehabilitation
- Adopt a communitywide resiliency plan to address flooding holistically

Mapping. In 2016, Lycoming County updated the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) through the Risk Map Project, which directly addressed the issue raised in the 2004 Multi-Municipal Comp Plan. This update reviewed flood maps of areas throughout the County; within the Muncy Borough/ Muncy Creek area, boundaries were redrawn and the base flood elevation was reduced by 2 feet, from 204 to 202 (Elevation Datum, North America Vertical Datum of 1988 [NAV 1988]). The outcome of the project was a more refined flood boundary and better understanding of flooding effects at individual properties.

Acquisition. Since 2005, both Muncy Creek Township and Muncy Borough have participated in the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) as available. This program has been prioritized by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) to focus primarily on acquisition of properties repeatedly damaged by flooding. Muncy Borough has acquired seven properties within the severe repetitive loss area of the borough, and Muncy Creek Township has acquired two. Because of the presence of multiple flooding sources—Glade Run, Muncy Creek, and the West Branch Susquehanna River—this area undergoes a damage-causing flood about every five to seven years.

Rehabilitation. An important goal is to implement a Lycoming County “Floodplain Housing Remediation” program to mitigate properties by either rehabilitating or elevating them to withstand a 100-year flood. Also important is to promote a countywide flood mitigation technical assistance program (by offering technical assistance to commercial and residential properties including flood proofing standards, floodplain regulations, and financial/funding options).

Resiliency Plan. Although acquisition of properties repetitively damaged by flooding has been an effective strategy for flood mitigation, the effect of flood insurance reform will require a much broader set of actions in the future. Development of a more strategic plan is needed that will address the downtown, community gateways, and brownfield locations. These concerns expand the flooding issue beyond the traditional view of the floodplain to a much broader perspective of the municipality as a whole, with the ultimate goal to build resilience within the community. Responding to this need, PAT members and County officials seek to develop and implement a Greater Muncy Resiliency Plan to address redevelopment, infrastructure investments, flood proofing of structures, education, and technical assistance. See Priority Issue 5 for further reference to downtown and brownfields as elements of the Resiliency Plan.

Additional initiatives discussed include:

- Revising local ordinances to regulate new or expanded floodplain development
- Flood-proofing commercial structures in Muncy’s historic district
- Conducting stream restoration of Glade Run and Muncy Creek

Key Implications Flooding is a regular occurrence in this Planning Area. Absent development and implementation of a comprehensive plan and strategy to mitigate the impact of flooding and reduce flood damages, this Planning Area will inevitably undergo the following impacts:

- Major disruption of public services
- Extensive damages to municipal infrastructure
- Financial and physical damages to businesses—potential for permanent closures
- Destruction, damages, or loss of residential structures
- Environmental degradation and erosion of stream banks
- Financial burden to home owners due to rising flood-insurance premiums
- Potential loss of tax base if/when home owners and businesses fail to restore/rebuild

A multi-faceted and strategic plan to improve resilience of this area to flooding could also render the area more able to face inevitable economic challenges resulting from national factors far removed from the boundaries of this Planning Area or even Lycoming County or the State of Pennsylvania.

Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue**GREATER MUNCY RESILIENCY PLAN**

This project would develop and implement a Resiliency Plan for the Greater Muncy area. The project would holistically address effects of flooding and associated impacts in Muncy Borough and a portion of Muncy Creek Township. Components of this project include:

- Identification of redevelopment potential, infrastructure investments, flood-proofing of structures, education, and general technical assistance
- Understanding of and response to increasing threat of flooding in the community
- Development of best practices for building community resilience within the floodplain

HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE

This project involves a comprehensive, community approach to develop a plan integrating flood mitigation and resilience into all aspects of the community. The plan would include strategies for:

- Capturing economic development/redevelopment potential
- Repairing, enhancing, and hardening infrastructure through investments
- Installing green infrastructure
- Strengthening the housing stock and expanding housing options
- Flood-proofing structures and other flood mitigation activities
- Incorporating energy-efficiency options into existing and new buildings
- Offering education and technical assistance to local officials and the general public

The plan would also provide opportunities to share new and innovative resilience ideas and research, green building design best practices, examples of inter-agency cooperation among various levels of government, and opportunities to build private/public partnerships for project implementation with other local governments across Pennsylvania.

To achieve the goal of rendering the Greater Muncy Area more resilient, the plan would identify specific projects, define potential benefits, include a definition of required steps for success, provide estimates of project costs, and specify project timelines and regulatory requirements. Also as part of this plan, a funding strategy (federal, state, non-profit, private, and institutional sources) would be developed including types of funds, eligible activities for each program, requirements for submission of an application, and applicable special conditions.

For successful implementation of this plan, Muncy Borough and Muncy Creek Township would have to coordinate efforts of all partners, promote inter-agency cooperation, and establish timelines for completion of each project so these are complementary and result in projected benefits to the Greater Muncy Area.

The desired outcome of this plan is for the greater Muncy area to serve as a model for community resilience in Pennsylvania—to showcase how small-scale, rural communities situated along rivers and creeks can successfully

leverage a whole community approach and incorporate best practices of resiliency in developing their long-term recovery plans.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Lead Agency – Lycoming County PCD, Borough of Muncy, and PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

Other Partners – Muncy Creek Township officials plus any agencies, non-profits, or private enterprise that could have a stake in the project, including PEMA, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

STEPS FOR SUCCESS

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	Create PDT	Team established January 2017	PCD, DCED, Muncy Borough, Muncy Creek Township
2	Develop Greater Muncy Area Resiliency Plan Scope of Work	Summer 2017	PCD, DCED, Muncy Borough
3	Secure Resiliency Planning Grant and associated grant(s)	January 2017-ongoing	PCD, PDT
4	Hire consultant firm to assist with Resiliency Plan development	Winter 2018	PCD, Muncy Borough, PDT
5	Develop Resiliency Plan	2018-2020	PDT, consultant
6	Implement Resiliency Plan and associated project recommendations	2018-ongoing	PDT, project partners

FUNDING RESOURCES

- PA DCED (\$250,000 secured for plan)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) – floodplain modeling
- PADEP
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Private foundations

Additional Projects, Programs, and Initiatives for this Issue**GLADE RUN AND MUNCY CREEK STREAM RESTORATION**

Glade Run and Muncy Creek are tributary streams to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, and contribute to flooding in Muncy Creek Township and Muncy Borough. Restoration work to improve these waterways would include streambank and habitat restoration—notably in the Glade Run stream segment in Muncy Borough and in Muncy Creek north of Muncy Borough.

Priority Issue #3



Our multi-modal transportation system has deficiencies in safety, physical condition, and availability of facilities in some areas of the County

Back Story The Muncy Creek Planning Area is served by the well-defined transportation corridors of Interstate 180, State Route 405, and State Route 220. These corridors provide access to Muncy Creek Planning Area communities, and connect to industrial corridors in Muncy Creek Township and in neighboring Clinton Township and Montgomery Borough.

The Route 405 and State Route 220 intersection will be improved as part of a planned intersection improvement project by PennDOT. This project involves installation of a traffic signal and turning lanes, and realignment of the intersection to improve safety. Construction is anticipated to begin in early spring 2018.



Photo Credit: Muncy Borough

Main and Water Street—a bumper-to-bumper intersection

Major Businesses or Entities using the Water Street – Main Street Intersection:

- Panda Patriot Power
- Wenger Feeds LP
- West Branch Regional Authority
- Tura Inc.
- Halliburton
- Women's State Correctional Institute (Muncy)
- Construction Specialties
- Kiddron Div Specialized vehicles
- Koppers Industries
- Kellogg's
- Advanced Drainage Systems
- Charlotte Pipe & Foundry Co.
- Muncy Valley Hospital

Priority Issue Overview

The Muncy Creek Planning Area's primary concern is the flow of traffic and increasing delays along I-180 and from Clinton Township through Muncy Borough along State Route 405 (Water Street). The intersection of Water Street and Main Street in the heart of downtown Muncy Borough is the most frequently cited location of traffic impacts. At this intersection, residential and commercial traffic converge to create a multitude of issues. This intersection is a primary choke point on major arteries leading to the Muncy Valley Hospital, which provides the region with essential medical care including access to emergency services.

Over the years, traffic congestion has increased at this intersection, and has resulted in degraded level of service and growing delays. The intersection is an unavoidable choke point in the traffic network that connects industrial corridors in neighboring Clinton Township and Muncy Creek Township with Interstate 180. In its current state, the intersection does not have the capacity for safe conveyance of heavy truck traffic to the industrial parks in Muncy Creek Township and in Clinton Township. Large tractor-trailers have difficulty turning at this intersection and must

make four to six consecutive movements to negotiate the narrow intersection, thus creating additional delays and circulation challenges.

Chapter 4 in the 2004 Muncy Creek Multi-Municipal Plan identified the increase in truck traffic in Muncy Borough and deficiencies of the Main and Water Street intersection as top transportation concerns within the Muncy Creek Planning Area. The need for improvements at this intersection was also emphasized in the Muncy Area Corridor Access Management Plan (December 2015). In coordination with PennDOT District 3, Lycoming County has initiated a feasibility study to examine traffic improvements necessary throughout the Muncy corridor and municipalities adjacent to it, including specific improvements for the Main and Water Street intersection.



Main and Water Street intersection

The Muncy Creek PAT identified the following strategic approaches to help address transportation issues within the Muncy Creek Planning Area:

- Implement Muncy Borough's Main and Water Street intersection improvements
- Maintain existing transportation infrastructure
- Implement new rail sidings in support of the Muncy Industrial Park expansion
- Work with River Valley Transit to revise transit service schedule

Key Implications It is essential to provide a safe, well-functioning and interconnected transportation system to support residents, businesses, and industry in this region. A deficient transportation system has multiple consequences:

- Prohibits efficient movement of goods and services throughout the region
- Causes traffic delays
- Creates an unsafe environment for all modes of transportation, including pedestrians
- Deters continued investment in the region

Failure of this transportation corridor in the Muncy Creek Planning Area to function adequately and safely, and improper maintenance of it would pose broad, serious, negative implications for the economy, and quality of life in the Planning Area.

Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue**MUNCY MAIN AND WATER STREET INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

The Muncy Main and Water Street Intersection Improvement Project would reconstruct the Water and Main Street intersection to improve safety and help facilitate flow of traffic through the intersection. The project includes installation of traffic signal masts, mast arms, and new and repositioned directional signage and signalization equipment to reflect the new configuration of the intersection. The intersection would also be brought into full Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliance. The northeast corner of the intersection would be widened slightly to allow for reconfiguration of traffic signals and new signage, and to increase the turning radius to better accommodate truck traffic. To facilitate this project, Muncy Borough acquired the property at the northeast corner of the intersection in May 2015 and demolished the blighted structure on the site.

The project has received the necessary support and approval by the Williamsport Area Transportation Study (WATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Federal Transportation Improvement Program funding for the project has also been approved.

HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE

The Main and Water Streets Intersection Improvement Project would address several shortcomings at the intersection of Main Street (SR 2014) and Water Street (SR 405) in the Borough of Muncy. Traffic congestion at this intersection has increased, with resulting degraded level of service and growing delays. The Muncy Main and Water Street Intersection Improvement Project would reconfigure the intersection to enhance safety, reduce traffic delays, and increase the turning radius for truck traffic.

Allowing truck traffic to travel more freely and safely through the intersection would greatly improve safety and reduce congestion. Daily traffic would more easily and efficiently travel through this intersection. Reduction in traffic congestion would render the environment more inviting for residents and visitors to walk through the downtown and visit businesses. Improving travel times through the downtown would also improve the quality of life for most residents of this Planning Area who must travel through this intersection daily to their jobs, shopping, schools for their children, the hospital for medical care, and/or extra-curricular events. The intersection improvements would also improve handicap accessibility through the business district at this important intersection. All of these improvements would help resolve a fundamental safety problem that affects a major industrial corridor in Muncy Borough and an important intersection in the Muncy Creek Planning Area.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Lead Agency – PennDOT District 3

Other Partners – Muncy Borough and PCD are partnering with PennDOT District 3 to complete the project.

STEPS FOR SUCCESS

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	Project Kickoff Meeting	Kickoff meeting held in January 2017	Muncy Borough, Lycoming County, PennDOT
2	Secure project funding	PennDOT funding secured in 2017	Muncy Borough, Lycoming County, PennDOT
3	Project management and administration	2017-2020	PennDOT
4	Project design and engineering	2017-2020	PennDOT, consultant
5	Begin construction	2020	PennDOT
6	Complete construction	2020	PennDOT
7	Project completion and closeout	2020	PennDOT

FUNDING RESOURCES

Amount	Funding Source
\$ 2,800,000	Federal Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funds approved by WATS MPO and FHWA (<i>anticipated March 2017</i>)

Priority Issue #4



Fragmentation of local government in Pennsylvania is a barrier to efficient delivery of some public services.

Back Story Each of the six municipalities within the Muncy Creek Planning Area provides a wide variety of services to its citizens. While provision of some of these services is at the discretion of local municipalities, others such as Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are mandated by county and state governments. Most of these services are provided separately by each municipality, thus replicating services from one municipality to the next (Table 2). Providing these services separately can stress limited local staff capacity and fail to take advantage of numerous opportunities for improved cost efficiency and enhanced service delivery among neighboring communities.

This issue is not unique to the municipalities of the Muncy Creek Planning Area. In Pennsylvania, many government rules, regulations, and policies are left to the most local level of government to administer. With presence of 2,562 local governments in Pennsylvania, the full impact of this service-replication issue cannot be overstated. Moreover, the administrative/documentation/reporting burden associated with provision of these services has taxed scarce volunteer resources on which these municipalities depend.

Priority Issue Overview Within the Muncy Creek Planning Area, an evident example of this fragmentation is the provision of emergency services (including police, fire, and EMS) by a combination of paid and volunteer providers, although some of these services have regionalized since 2005 (see Table 2).

Table 2. Primary Muncy Creek PAT Public Safety Providers

Municipality	Police	Fire	Medical/EMS
Hughesville Borough	Hughesville Borough	Hughesville Volunteer Fire Department	Hughesville VFC/ELAA, SREMS/UPMC (ALS)
Muncy Borough	Muncy Borough	Muncy Area Volunteer Fire Company	Muncy Area VFC/ELAA (BLS) – SREMS/UPMC (ALS)
Picture Rocks Borough	Contract w/Hughesville	Picture Rocks Volunteer Fire Department	Picture Rocks VFC/ELAA (BLS), SREMS/UPMC(ALS)
Muncy Creek Township	Provided by State Police	Muncy Area Volunteer Fire Company	Muncy Area VFC/ELAA (BLS) – SREMS/UPMC (ALS)
Shrewsbury Township	Provided by State Police	Picture Rocks Volunteer Fire Department.	Picture Rocks VFC/ELAA (BLS), SREMS/UPMC (ALS)
Wolf Township	Provided by State Police	Picture Rocks Fire Volunteer Department and Hughesville Volunteer Fire Department	Picture Rocks Fire Volunteer Department and Hughesville Volunteer Fire Department
ELAA (BLS) = Eastern Lycoming Ambulance Association SREMS/UPMC (ALS) = Susquehanna Regional EMS EMS = Emergency Medical Services			

As in other small rural communities around the State, some municipalities have increasingly found it difficult to provide these services in a cost efficient and effective manner, particularly regarding the ability to provide fire and EMS services. Challenges include:

- Decreasing staff capacity—fewer volunteers available, and difficulty of recruiting new volunteers
- Increased volunteer training standards and time commitments
- Increasing costs to provide EMS certification due to changes in statewide requirements
- Limited available EMS funding
- Increasing equipment costs, especially for fire companies
- Increasing administration and operation costs
- Increasing insurance costs
- Growing administrative burden

To respond to these challenges and continue to provide high-quality services for residents, local governments within the Muncy Creek Planning Area are now searching for options to streamline costs and share services. Financial necessity dictates that local governments look for alternatives to the traditional patterns of independence. Clearly, the challenges associated with providing public safety services are not new to Lycoming County or the Muncy Creek Planning Area. These issues were identified in the 2004 Muncy Creek Multi-Municipal Plan in the following sections:

- **Chapter 2, Community and Economic Development Plan: Strategy #7** – Establish a Regional Cooperation Forum to focus on important issues requiring regional cooperation
- **Chapter 5, Community Infrastructure Plan: Strategy #1** – Promote Inter-municipal and Organization Cooperation
- **Chapter 5, Community Infrastructure Plan: Strategy #6** – Maintain Viability of Volunteer Fire Companies

Strategies laid out in the 2004 Muncy Creek Comprehensive Plan are still pertinent to the search for optimal solutions for promoting local government collaboration. Since 2004, some successes in sharing services and resources within the Muncy Creek Planning Area have been evident:

- Contracted police services across municipal lines among neighboring municipalities
- Merger of fire companies within this Planning Area, resulting in creation of the Muncy Volunteer Fire Company in 2011

Nevertheless, there is a continued need to build upon these successes by exploring new opportunities for additional shared services within the Muncy Creek Planning Area. Because of the stress factors and challenges

cited above, as well as the critical importance of emergency services for health and safety of the Planning Area's residents, the first priority is to address shared emergency service delivery on a regional level.

The Muncy Creek Planning Area Team identified two options in this regard:

- Create or develop an emergency services authority or umbrella organization with staff support for shared services (Finance/Planning/Bookkeeping/Auditing) for Law Enforcement, Fire, and EMS
- Expand the role of the West Branch Council of Governments (COG) to include services similar to those provided by the Pine Creek COG

Key Implications The issue of fragmentation of local government, specifically in provision of emergency services, is not unique to the Muncy Creek Planning Area. It has become a countywide priority issue. Ultimately, individual municipalities are responsible for providing emergency services to their residents. If municipal leaders fail to do so through volunteer operations, it may be necessary to hire emergency service personnel, which would impose a substantial cost burden on these municipalities. Thus, it is in the municipalities' best interest to work cooperatively to find and implement solutions to avoid a decline in the level of emergency services within these communities and an oppressive tax increase to local residents. In sum, the major implications of failing to address this issue are as follows:

- Further increases in program administrative costs for municipalities
- Failure to provide residents of these municipalities the required and adequate level of emergency services
- Possible failure of municipalities to meet legal requirements imposed by Pennsylvania and their respective Municipal Codes
- Possible requirement for municipalities to hire emergency service personnel, thus imposing a substantial cost burden and posing other related fiscal challenges
- Necessary cuts by municipalities of other existing programs and services on which local residents rely

Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue**EAST LYCOMING EMERGENCY SERVICES COOPERATIVE**

This project would explore the feasibility of creating an emergency services umbrella organization or coalition to facilitate delivery of emergency service resources to communities in the Muncy Creek Planning Area. Fire, medical/EMS, and, where appropriate, police services would be included in this assessment.

HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE

This project would assess current emergency service provider resources and needs within the Muncy Creek Planning Area and determine the feasibility of providing emergency services via a consolidated joint partnership among members of this Planning Area. The project may consider the following solutions under a cooperative agreement:

- Pursue shared purchasing arrangements to maximize benefits of economies of scale
- Consolidate services where appropriate to reduce operating costs
- Pursue shared or third-party contractual assistance and procurement of services for increased cost savings
- Create a paid or contract position(s) to act as a resource for multiple entities to assist with staffing, recruitment, retention, and administration services or other identified services
- Explore support for shared financial, planning, bookkeeping, auditing, and staffing through creation of a circuit rider position
- Work with Lycoming County to explore the option of creating a county-level position to facilitate delivery of emergency services to municipalities. This program could be modeled on the Lycoming County MS4 Coalition, whereby multiple municipalities share the cost of supporting a full-time staff position that manages the MS4 program and is housed in the Lycoming County Planning and Community Development Department. That Coalition allows MS4 members to share costs of permit fees, training, implementation of best management practices, and consultant fees. The Coalition has operated successfully since its formation, keeping participants in regulatory compliance, while maintaining effective economies of scale.
- Reassess emergency service resources and needs on an ongoing basis

The Muncy Creek PAT will also support efforts currently underway by the Lycoming County Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the EMS Response and Staffing Task Force to address requirements and challenges of providing sufficient emergency services throughout the County.

The 2009 Pennsylvania EMS System Act 37 (EMS Act) created 14 Regional EMS Councils. The Lycoming County Board of Commissioners holds the Pennsylvania Department of Health's contract for the Regional EMS Council that serves the Counties of Lycoming, Tioga, and Sullivan (LTS). The LTS EMS Council is a branch of the Lycoming County DPS, and serves the Counties of LTS and their municipalities. The LTS EMS Council created the EMS

Staffing and Resource Task Force to develop an EMS Response Plan for Lycoming County that would meet the requirements of the EMS Act. This legislation established requirements for service coverage and certification standards. The EMS Act also provided a blueprint for how each EMS Agency was to assist in meeting requirements to provide critically important EMS services. The EMS Response Plan for Lycoming County would provide a framework for how EMS agencies collectively provide services throughout Lycoming County, if or when member municipalities are unable to provide 24 hours a day and 7 days a week (24/7) staffing coverage.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Lead Agency – Municipal officials and emergency service providers in the Muncy Creek Planning Area.

Other Partners – PCD, Lycoming County DPS, LTS EMS Council, state officials and other experts as needed

STEPS FOR SUCCESS

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	Identify PDT/ Steering Committee	2018	Elected municipal officials and emergency service providers
2	Conduct assessment of existing resources (including equipment and staffing) and services provided within the Planning Area for participating municipalities	2018	Steering Committee PCD Staff, DPS, consultants if needed
3	Identify opportunities for streamlined operations and resources and other cost saving measures among EMS providers	2019	Steering Committee PCD Staff, DPS, Consultants if needed
4	Identify best way to obtain shared resources, including feasibility of forming an East Lycoming Emergency Services Cooperative to deliver or procure resources and services	2019	Emergency service providers, local governments, Steering Committee
5	Begin implementation of agreed-upon solutions	2019-ongoing	Emergency service providers, local governments, Steering Committee

FUNDING RESOURCES

Potential funding sources for this project include:

- PA DCED – Municipal Assistance Program (MAP)
- Susquehanna Economic Development Association (SEDA)-COG
- County of Lycoming
- Local municipalities

Additional Projects, Programs, and Initiatives for this Issue**EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND THE ROLE OF THE WEST BRANCH COG**

There may be opportunities to expand the role of services provided by the West Branch COG beyond the current bulk purchases scope of services. The Pine Creek COG can serve as a model of an expanded role for provision of coordinated/shared services in the Muncy Creek Planning Area. The Pine Creek COG offers intergovernmental cooperation opportunities including policy development, regional representation, planning, and project development and implementation. Representatives of the Muncy Creek Planning Area can coordinate with the Pine Creek COG and engage in a dialogue to acquire additional information. Pine Creek COG:

<http://www.pinecreekvalley.com/PCCOG/>

Priority Issue #5



Downtown and village center areas across the County are not thriving or achieving their maximum potential AND The economy is changing, and our communities and workforce are not optimally positioned to realize our untapped economic potential and become more resilient.

Back Story The Muncy Creek Planning Area consists of a combination of three small boroughs and three rural townships. The character and culture of this Planning Area are reflected in the agrarian countryside and village centers that have served for many decades as community gathering points for social interactions and commerce. For the past 200 years, each of these three boroughs has served as a village center. Today, Hughesville, Muncy, and Picture Rocks Boroughs still retain the charm of their intimate neighborhoods and small town character, resisting the growth that has developed in the surrounding townships.

Borough	Settled	Incorporated
Picture Rocks	1773	1875
Muncy	1797	1826
Hughesville	1816	1852

Despite modest growth of the three townships of Muncy Creek, Wolf, and (to a lesser extent) Shrewsbury, vitality and economic well-being of the downtown areas of the three neighboring boroughs have decreased. In short, efforts to revitalize these downtowns must be creatively and aggressively pursued. This issue is further exacerbated by the growing disconnect between the local economy and the Planning Area's workforce. Because downtown revitalization and workforce development are interconnected, these issues are best addressed together.

Downtown revitalization is a long-term commitment and includes a number of factors:



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

Downtown Hughesville Borough



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

Entering Picture Rocks Borough

- Branding—what a community is known for
- Number and type of vacant properties
- Condition of existing and vacant buildings
- Desired mix of professional offices and retail
- Small business outreach plan
- Streetscape opportunities
- Gateways and village greens
- Foot traffic after 5 p.m.
- Downtown living
- Walkable communities
- Marketing to support the vision



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

Main Street Muncy Borough

Regarding the potential workforce/local economy disconnect, a comprehensive strategy to support a thriving economy must consider many factors, including:

- Availability of a quality workforce
- Family-sustaining jobs
- Suitable locations for employment centers supported by infrastructure
- Economic diversification among job sectors

Vibrant downtown districts and economies are attractive to businesses and industries and are a draw for a diverse workforce. According to the PA Department of Labor and Industry, 55,100 persons are employed in Lycoming County, with an unemployment rate of 6.7% as of 2016. The County unemployment rate is higher than the current Pennsylvania average of 5.5%. Lycoming County has a lower income level than the Pennsylvania average as measured by per capita personal income, median household income, and median family income indicators:

<u>Income</u>	<u>Lycoming County</u>	<u>Pennsylvania</u>
Per Capita Personal Income	\$23,531	\$28,912
Median Household Income	\$45,877	\$53,115
Median Family Income	\$57,739	\$67,521

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

These statistics pose two challenges for Lycoming County, as well as the Muncy Creek Planning Area:

- How to improve a community's economic strength or vitality
- How to support a community's local economy to withstand impacts of unexpected factors or forces

The response to both challenges will require a shift in the traditional mindset. A better-educated workforce is crucial. Public school districts, institutions of higher learning, and workforce training centers must focus on

providing the necessary tools to produce skilled workers better prepared to hold family-sustaining wage jobs or salaried positions.

Priority Issue Overview

Members of the Muncy Creek PAT have identified downtown revitalization as a primary focus for the next 10 years. To that end, PAT members identified three key obstacles to revitalization of village centers:

- Continued population loss in the boroughs
- Lack of affordable and diverse housing options
- Larger economic challenges that would render downtown districts less viable in the future

Although residential and commercial development in Wolf and Muncy Creek Townships has modestly increased, population of the Muncy Creek Planning Area as a whole slightly decreased from 2000 and to 2010, according to the census. The population decline occurred primarily in the three boroughs.

At key locations of the downtown central business districts of Muncy and Hughesville Boroughs, a large number of storefronts are vacant and properties are underutilized. Picture Rocks Borough is also affected by this issue, though to a lesser extent.

Clearly, concern for health of these downtowns is not new to the Muncy Creek Planning Area. This issue was identified in the 2004 Muncy Creek Multi-Municipal Plan in the following sections:

- **Chapter 2, Community and Economic Development Plan: Strategy #2** – Implement a Central Business District Revitalization and Community Gateway Initiative
- **Chapter 2, Community and Economic Development Plan: Strategy #5** – Undertake specific actions or programs to promote development of housing to support community goals and objectives identified in the Comprehensive Plan

The Muncy Creek Planning Area can boast a number of achievements since 2004 regarding the goal of promoting downtown revitalization:

- Main Street Programs: Participation by Hughesville and Muncy Boroughs in the PA DCED Main Street Program to revitalize storefronts with focus on improving the downtown experience
- Streetscapes improvements in Muncy and Hughesville Boroughs
- Intersections improvements in Hughesville
- New community events, such as Fourth Friday in Muncy
- Brownfield revitalization²: Partnership of Muncy Borough in Lycoming County's Brownfield Coalition—a 2012 EPA-funded project promoting reuse and redevelopment of properties through identification of

² A brownfield is any property underutilized for various reasons such as abandonment, obsolescence, tax delinquency, and/or blight, and whose redevelopment is inhibited by real or perceived presence of hazardous substances and environmental contamination.

potential environmental concerns via environmental assessments. The Brownfield Program is an economic development and community revitalization tool.

Muncy Creek PAT members want to build upon the success of these five programs. The members have recognized that additional efforts are needed to continue to attract visitors and reinvestment in these downtown centers and core communities. These additional downtown improvement efforts are discussed in greater detail in two planning reports:

- Creating Safe, Walkable, and Healthy Communities in the Middle Susquehanna Region. SEDA-COG, December 2010
- A Plan for Muncy Recreation Sites with Connecting Street Designs for Downtown Muncy. SEDA-COG, March 2013

Based on these reports and extensive discussions during the 2017 Comprehensive Planning process, the Muncy Creek PAT has identified the following initiatives to help achieve community revitalization:

- Develop additional activities in the downtown area that will increase pedestrian activity during daytime, evening, and weekend hours
- Ensure mixed use zoning in the downtown business area
- Create downtown living opportunities for seniors
- Develop zoning ordinances compatible with land use patterns and densities, and that define/reflect local characters of communities



Picture Rocks Veterans Park



Key Implications The downtown districts in these boroughs remain viable locations for residential and commercial redevelopment. Downtowns in the boroughs could be shopping destinations for people from surrounding townships, as well as locations of professional services. Keys to achieve economic resiliency and maximization of economic potential of the downtowns and village centers are to connect residents to the downtown and attract visitors to downtown centers but also creating investment opportunities.

Failing to address this issue will result in further deterioration of these village centers. Equally alarming is potential decline of the boroughs due to decreased tax base, shrinking revenues, and loss of market share to outlying areas.

Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue**EAST END DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE**

This project addresses revitalization in the East Lycoming downtown boroughs of Muncy, Hughesville, and Picture Rocks. The project would utilize strategies outlined in prior planning efforts, including those documented in the 2005 Muncy Creek Multi Municipal Plan. Muncy Creek PAT members would implement a multifaceted approach involving three main initiatives for achieving downtown revitalization. These main initiatives and their components include:

- Promote East Lycoming communities as destinations:
 - Coordinate and expand efforts of the business community to bring people to downtown centers through events such as Muncy's 4th Friday, etc.
 - Develop additional activities in the downtown areas that will increase pedestrian activity during daytime, evening, and weekend hours
 - Improve walkability and promote walk downtown initiatives
- Explore downtown improvements:
 - Construct and expand streetscape enhancements
 - Provide pedestrian and cycling facilities in new and redevelopment projects
 - Attract developers to build residential units in upper floors of the downtowns
 - Pursue reuse of vacant and/or underutilized properties, including opportunity to work with landowners to pursue funds for environmental assessment, clean-up, redevelopment, and marketing of brownfield sites
- Develop and adopt land use polices to implement downtown revitalization:
 - Adjust zoning ordinances for compatibility with local character
 - Adjust zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances to better preserve the scale of historic districts
 - Ensure mixed use zoning in the downtowns
 - Adopt, maintain, and enforce property maintenance ordinances

Note: Muncy Borough redevelopment is also addressed in Priority Issue 2 under the Greater Muncy Resiliency Plan. Brownfield redevelopment is included as an element of that plan.

HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE

This project would help revitalize and maximize economic potential of these downtown districts by connecting Muncy Creek Planning Area residents and others to the downtowns and promoting the boroughs as destinations for increasing numbers of visitors to downtown centers, thus rendering them more economically viable.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Lead Agency – Each of the three main elements of this project will be led by a project team best suited for that particular component:

- Promote East Lycoming Communities: Muncy or Hughesville Business Association – lead
- Downtowns Improvements: PCD – lead
- Land Use Policies: Elected municipal officials – lead

Other Partners – Hughesville Borough, Picture Rocks Borough, Hughesville Business Association, PA DCED, SEDA-COG, Muncy Creek Planning Area Township officials

STEPS FOR SUCCESS

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	Select PDT for each project component: A) Promotion of East Lycoming communities B) Downtown improvements C) Land use policies	2019	A) Business Associations –lead B) PCD – Lead C) Elected municipal officials – lead and PCD staff
2	For each project component: Conduct community visioning process for the downtowns, including downtown assessments to inventory existing conditions Output: A vision statement describing the future of these downtowns	2019	A) Business associations –lead B) PCD – lead C) Elected municipal officials – lead and PCD staff
3	For each project component: Convene meetings to discuss and develop solutions for identified issues Output: List of solutions for each issue identified	2020	A) Business Associations –lead B) PCD – lead C) Elected municipal officials – lead and PCD staff
4	Implement solutions	2020-	A) Business associations –lead

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
		ongoing	B) PCD – lead C) Elected municipal officials – lead and PCD staff

FUNDING RESOURCES

Possible funding sources for this project include:

- PA DCED
- SEDA-COG
- EPA
- Private foundations and businesses

Priority Issue #6



Current land use regulations and enforcement do not consistently and adequately meet community visions and respond to changing conditions.

Back Story The Muncy Creek Planning Area is a gateway to the eastern end of Lycoming County. Interstate 180 and State Routes 118 and 220 are the main entry points, and along with State Route 405, are the main transportation routes within this Planning Area. Development in the Muncy Creek Planning Area has been historically concentrated in the Boroughs of Hughesville, Muncy, and Picture Rocks, and along the main transportation corridors.

Over the past 10 years, the Muncy Creek Planning Area has undergone modest residential growth and development, especially in Wolf and



Rt. 405 intersection at the 'Y' in Muncy Creek Township

Muncy Creek Townships.

This growth pattern is anticipated to continue. This Planning Area has also undergone commercial growth along the State Route 405 corridor, especially near the I-180/State Route 405 interchange.

While change is inevitable and growth is generally desirable, the communities in the Muncy Creek Planning Area are concerned with potential for a change in character of the Planning Area. Municipal leaders strive to strike a balance among four factors:

- Agricultural roots and rural nature
- Historical background
- Desirable commercial growth
- Quality residential growth

Development Highlights near the I-180 & SR 405 Interchange

- *Muncy Valley Hospital Expansion*
- *Weis Grocery Store Expansion*
- *CVS Pharmacy*
- *Citizens & Northern Bank*
- *Murray Motors Expansion*
- *Fairfield Chrysler Jeep*
- *Sheetz Convenience Store*
- *Wendy's*

Priority Issue Overview

South of this Planning Area, in neighboring Northumberland, Snyder, and Union Counties, will be the forthcoming Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation Project (CSVTV). Upon completion of multi-year development of the CSVTV, volume of traffic along I-180 could increase rapidly. This, in turn, could

exert additional development pressure in this corridor and, in a larger sense, throughout the Muncy Creek Planning Area.

In short, the CSVT project will create a bypass for U.S. Route 15 near Shamokin Dam and divert traffic across a new bridge over the West Branch Susquehanna River on to State Route 147, which becomes I-180 north of I-80. Because U.S. Route 15 is a major north-south route through central PA and central New York, the CSVT project may shift traffic patterns and create both development opportunities and pressure within this Planning Area, specifically near the I-180/ State Route 405 interchange and along State Route 405 and U.S. 220 corridors.

Concerns about land use and potential future developments within this Planning Area are not new. The 2004 Muncy Creek Multi-Municipal Plan documented the following issues:

- Commercial development along U.S. 220. Note: Most of the corridor was undeveloped at the time.
- Increased traffic was anticipated in the Planning Area from I-180 West toward Williamsport due to the planned I- 99 project. Note: The I-99 project did not come to fruition and I-180 did not undergo increased traffic volumes. Development along the Route 220 corridor did not occur to the extent anticipated.
- Changes in land use and the need for local land use regulations, as noted in the following:
 - **Chapter 2, Community and Economic Development Plan: Strategy #1** – Review all applicable ordinances to make sure they are conducive to meeting the specific goals and objectives identified in the comp plan
 - **Chapter 3, Land Use and Resource Plan: Strategy #1** – Review and revise ordinances to ensure that they are consistent with the goals and objectives of the comp plan

The action steps outlined in the 2004 Muncy Creek Multi-Municipal Plan represent a starting point for addressing development pressure and changing land uses this Planning Area faces in 2017. Some action steps proposed in that 2004 Plan have been advanced:

- The majority of municipalities in the Planning Area updated their zoning ordinances in 2007
- Wolf Township last undertook a comprehensive update of its zoning ordinances in 2004, and has enacted subsequent revisions
- Muncy Borough is proceeding with a complete update of its zoning ordinances with staff support from Lycoming County
- Muncy Creek Township is updating its zoning ordinance
- Lycoming County completed the Muncy Area Corridor Access Management Plan in 2015 to address traffic improvements and concerns at key intersections in the Planning Area

The 2016 Muncy Creek PAT identified the following ways to address this issue:

- Consider a joint municipal zoning ordinance for Muncy Borough, Muncy Creek Township to regulate future growth in a cooperative manner
- Study the impacts of CSV
- Review and update local land use regulations
- Add the area south of Muncy Borough and east of Muncy Creek Township to the designated future growth area (neighborhood) at the request of local municipal officials

Key Implications While increased development pressure is expected to occur within this Planning Area, the extent and nature of future development is difficult to estimate accurately. To better prepare for this anticipated development pressure, it will be increasingly important to evaluate land use regulations in order to ensure that development practices:

- Are carried out in a coordinated, sustainable manner
- Protect local assets
- Align with community values

Failure to update, implement, and enforce land use regulations may result in:

- Disconnect between actual land use practices and the community vision in the Comprehensive Plan
- Uncoordinated development and land use conflicts
- Increased costs to provide and maintain infrastructure for new developments such as roadways and utilities
- Increased cost to provide public services including police and fire protection
- Loss of control to guide the community's destiny and maintain its desired character

Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue**REVIEW AND UPDATE LAND USE REGULATIONS**

To effectively manage future growth and development, municipalities within the Muncy Creek Planning Area should review their current land use and zoning ordinances and determine if changes are needed.

HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE

Land use regulations are important tools that communities can use to achieve and maintain their visions. To ensure effective land use regulations, local governments must review their ordinances regularly so that these align with local values, resources, and attributes important to the community. These ordinances should be regularly reviewed to ensure consistency with the comprehensive plan, address new land use practices, and make adjustments when issues arise within the ordinances.

Better preparation of municipalities in the Muncy Creek Planning Area to handle future growth and development requires establishment of local development priorities, understanding of effects of future development on our communities, and regular updates to local land use regulations and zoning ordinances.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Lead Agency – Local municipalities and their elected officials, planning commission members, and local zoning officers will review their local land use requirements to determine if amendments and changes are needed.

Other Partners – PCD will assist the municipalities in convening meetings with municipal officials to discuss current land use requirements and potential changes. PCD staff can review and comment on proposed ordinance amendments.

STEPS FOR SUCCESS

STEP No.	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	Identify a PDT for each municipality	2018	Elected municipal officials – lead PCD staff Municipal zoning officers, planning commissions, and zoning hearing board members

STEP NO.	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
2	Conduct study to determine potential local traffic impacts of CSVT and infrastructure needs, including along the key transportation corridors of SR 405 and I-80	2018	PCD staff – lead Elected municipal officials PennDOT Consultant
3	Identify municipal training opportunities for planning, zoning, land use, and development	ongoing	Elected municipal officials PCD staff
4	Community visioning process to determine how the community wants development to occur Output: A vision statement describing future development	2019	Elected municipal officials – lead PCD staff Municipal zoning officers, planning commissions, and zoning hearing board members
5	Review current land use requirements for areas to be impacted by CSVT and other future growth to determine consistency with community development goals and if changes to land use requirements are needed. Output: List of areas with potential conflicts between existing land use requirements and potential future development	2019	Elected municipal officials – lead PCD staff Municipal zoning officers, planning commissions, and zoning hearing board members
6	Convene meetings to discuss identified land use concerns and possible solutions to those issues. Output: List of solutions for each area identified	2019	Elected municipal officials – lead PCD staff Municipal zoning officers, planning commissions, and zoning hearing board members
7	Prepare draft regulations (districts, overlays, and other amendments) to satisfy concerns	2020	PCD - lead

STEP NO.	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	regarding land use changes and development Output: Draft codes and ordinances that address conditions and needs for each Identified area		Elected municipal officials Municipal zoning officers, planning commissions, and zoning hearing board members Consultant
8	Review recommended land use regulations for modification and adoption by municipalities. Output: Adoption of land development, sub-division, and/or zoning ordinances	Early 2021	Elected municipal officials – lead PCD staff Municipal zoning officers, planning commissions, and zoning hearing board members

FUNDING RESOURCES

Potential funding sources for this project include:

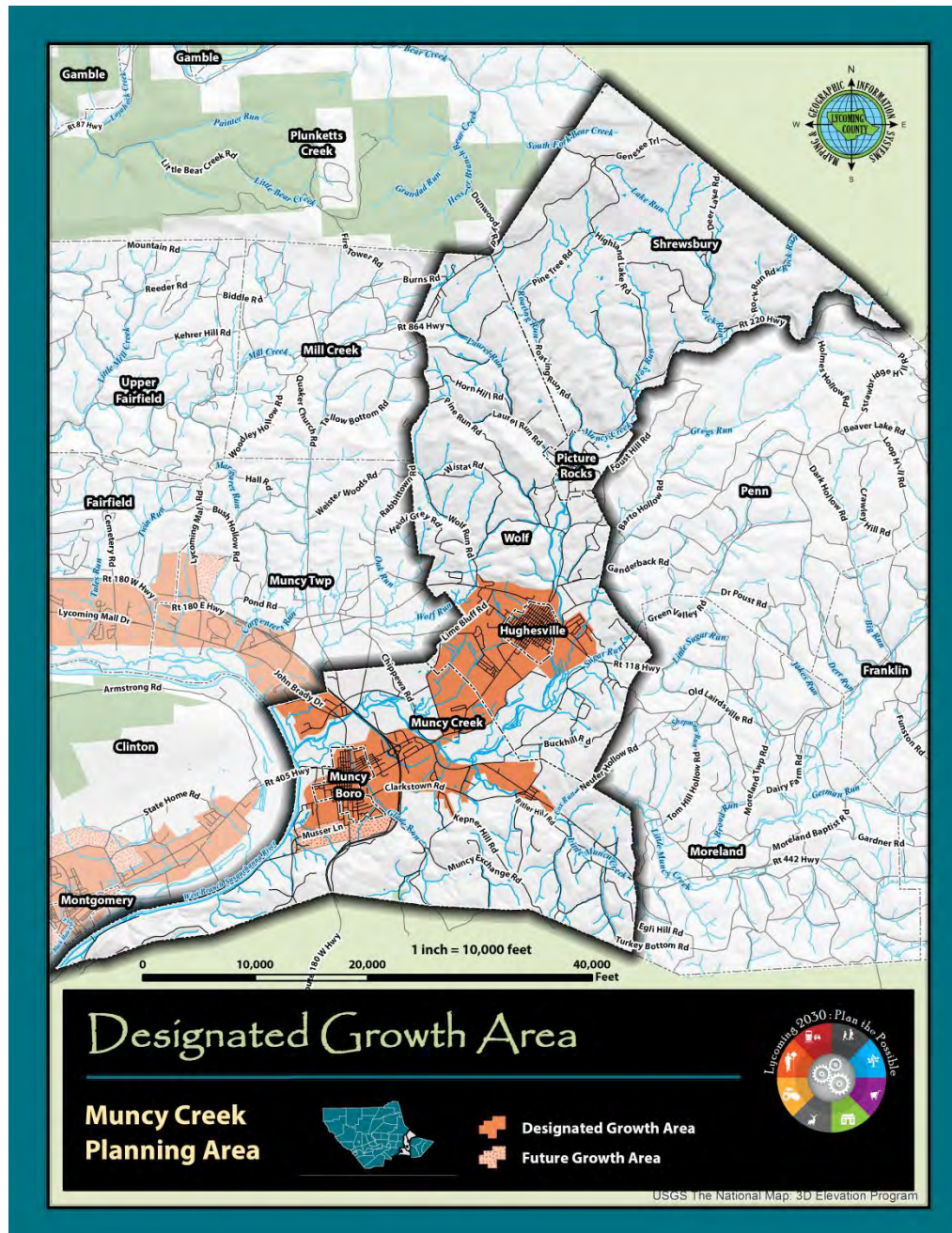
- PA DCED
- PennDOT

Additional Projects, Programs and Initiatives for this Issue**EXPLORE JOINT MUNICIPAL ZONING BETWEEN MUNCY BOROUGH AND MUNCY CREEK TOWNSHIP**

Joint municipal zoning offers the opportunity for neighboring municipalities to regulate future growth in a coordinated cooperative manner. Joint municipal zoning is allowable under Article VIII-A of the PA Municipal Planning Code, and meets the requirement to provide all land uses between the municipalities. This type of zoning offers the opportunity to create a joint planning commission and/or zoning hearing board.

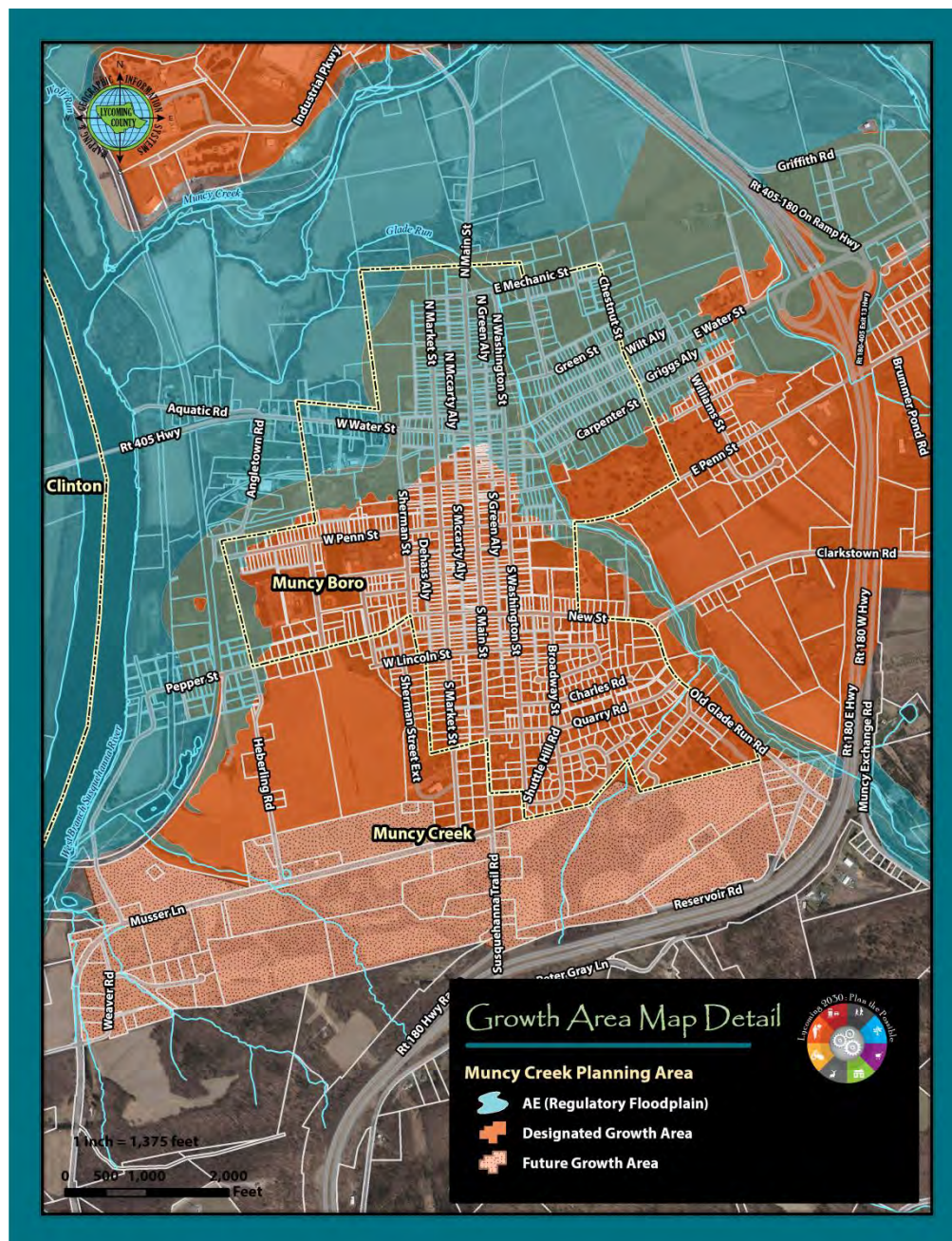
Chapter 3: Growth Area and Future Land Use Maps

2017 Designated Growth Area Map

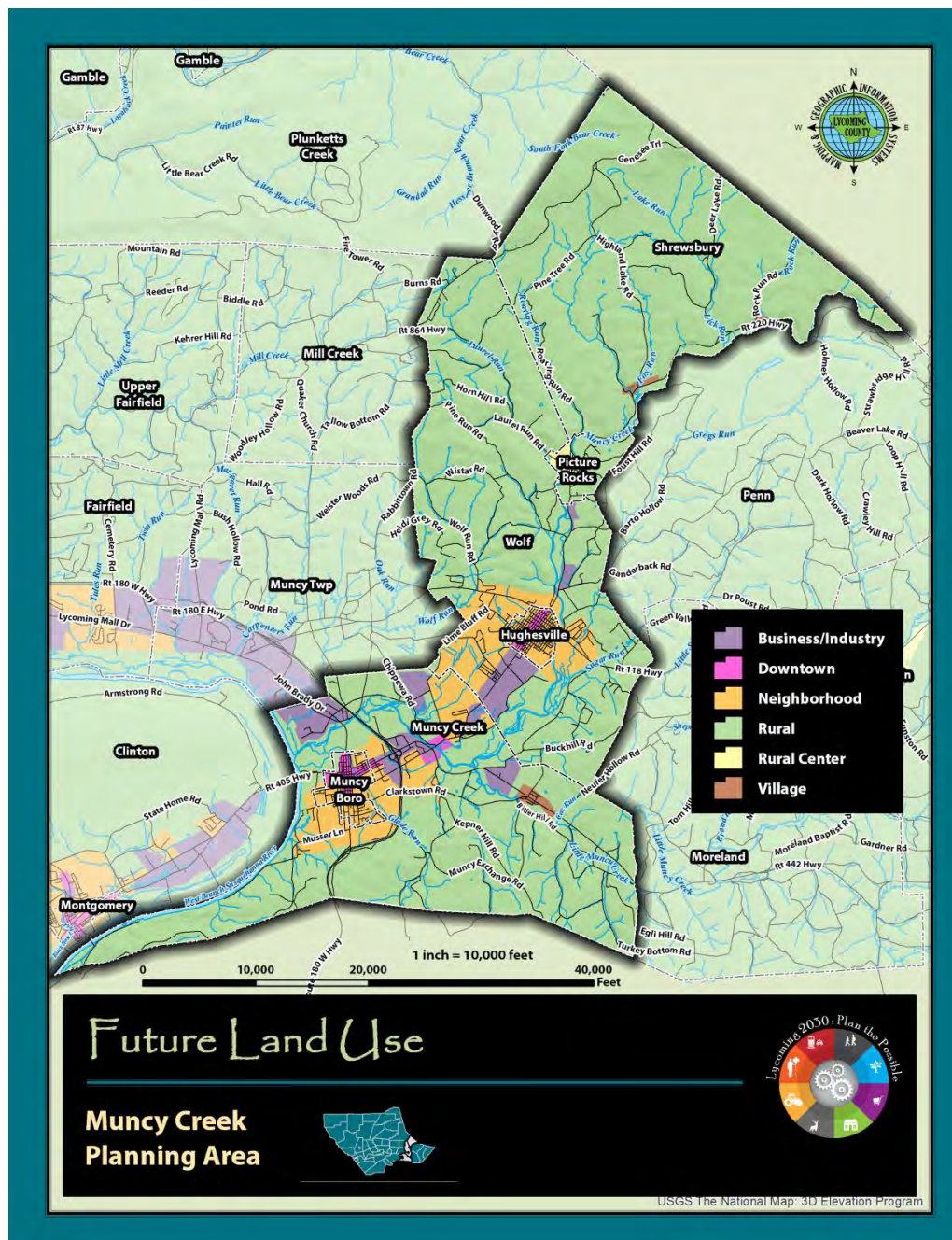


Notable Change: The future growth area south of Muncy Borough east of I-180 and west of Musser Lane in Muncy Creek Township was added to the designated future growth area because it is located outside of the floodplain and is largely served by existing water and sewer infrastructure.

2017 Designated Growth Area Map Detail



2017 Future Land Use Map



Notable Change: Land use for the area south of Muncy Borough and east of Muncy Creek Township designated as the future growth area was changed from rural to neighborhood designation.

