



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Dear Centre County Resident,

On behalf of the Centre County Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission, we are pleased to present the *2014 Centre County Planning Commission Annual Report*.

This past year, the Planning Office continued to provide a variety of services to our municipalities, local service agencies, and citizens. Staff assisted with numerous activities that included but was not limited to subdivision and land development, grant writing, GIS mapping and data support, development and review of municipal ordinances, public water system trouble shooting and maintenance, housing affordability, farmland preservation, source water protection, and floodplain information. The Planning Office also continued its support to local economic development groups in an effort to retain jobs, grow local businesses, and increase our visibility to businesses looking to move to Centre County.

As we move ahead in 2015, our staff looks forward to working with the local communities to ensure that all of the residents have the opportunity to live, work, and play in this great place that we call home – Centre County.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Jacobs, AICP

Planning Director

MISSION STATEMENT:

It is the mission of the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office to provide the citizens of Centre County with professional planning services by promoting a coordinated and cost effective approach to the orderly growth and development of their communities.

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SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

One of the important tasks performed by the Planning & Community Development Office is the administration of the Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). This aspect of 'county planning' is done to help ensure that benefits realized by development activity outweigh negative impacts that might result from an increase in the demand on local facilities and services as well as providing assistance concerning developer compliance with applicable local, state and federal land use controls.

To achieve this goal, the Planning & Community Development Office staff is charged with the duty of administering the County's Ordinance. The staff's main focus is within the 25 municipalities that fall under the jurisdiction of the County's SALDO, as well as to receive, review and monitor all plans originating from those municipalities that have adopted their own local subdivision and land development ordinances. The administration of the County's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance is the direct responsibility of staff members Anson Burwell and Chris Schnure.



In comparison of the subdivision and land development activity data for 2014, the total number of 'subdivision lots' created computes to 122 county-wide and represents a 16% decrease in the number of lots created from the previous year's total of 145 lots. This change seems consistent with and reflects the continued

and sustained adverse affects of the economic climate of the last several years.

Unlike the above, 'land development units' data compiled in 2014 show a much larger total of 644 units. This number represents an 8% decrease in land development activity from last year's total of 703 units. These numbers are consistent with last year's numbers and reflect activity in the Centre Region and Benner Township. Three plans make up the bulk of the development activity, namely the Fraser Center and The Metropolitan of State College (creating 314 units, being a combination of residential units, hotel rooms and commercial units) with both located in State College Borough, and the Graystone Court at Eagle Point, a senior living complex (comprising 138 age-restricted housing units) located adjacent to the Centre Region in Benner Township.



Upon comparison of the data compiled for 2014 with the previous year's numbers, it seems evident that the national, state and local economic conditions are still having negative effects on growth patterns regarding subdivisions creating new residential lots; however, the continued rise in the creation of land development units would seem to indicate that the inventories of existing stock have been depleted such that there is now a market and a growing

demand for these type of units, especially within and around the Centre Region. For example, the 2014 development activity for the creation of new residential lots is at a level similar to the county totals compiled in 2013....but is still 25% below the numbers generated in the creation of residential land development units at the high-water mark of 870 units created back in 2005 when local development was at a peak.

In regard to the various indicators that we routinely observe, the consistently low number of subdivision lots created in the past several years coupled with the significant increases in land development activity is a pattern that seems to indicate that growth stagnation may have finally been reached with a gradual resurgence in activity predicted to occur locally. If our observations are correct, we predict that the 2015 numbers will reflect a slight upward trend in overall development activity.

If you would like to review additional information regarding development activity, please reference the 2014 Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Activity Report on file at the following website:



www.centrecountypa.gov

last revised: 4/17/15

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING CONTROLS

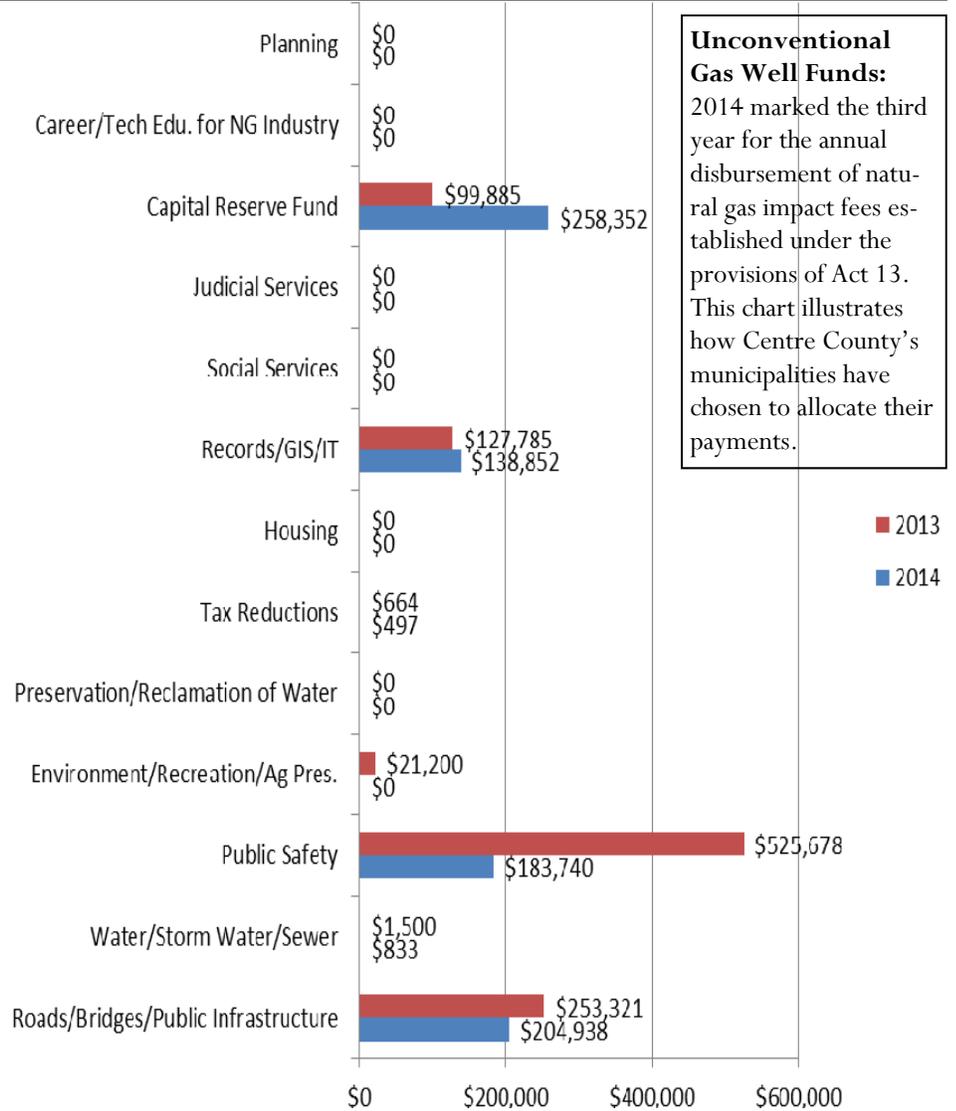
2015

	Adopted Comprehensive Plan	Planning Commission	Municipal SALDO Applies	County SALDO Ordinance Applies	Zoning Ordinance	Parkland Dedication Ordinance	Building Permit Ordinance	Federal Flood Insurance Program	Ag Security Area	Official Map	Storm-Water Ordinance
CENTRE COUNTY	X	X		X							X
CENTRE REGION											
State College Borough	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X
College Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ferguson Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Halfmoon Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Harris Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Patton Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
LOWER BALD EAGLE VALLEY REGION											
Howard Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X			
Milesburg Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X			
Boggs Township	X			X	X		X	X			X
Curtin Township				X			X	X			
Howard Township	X			X			X	X			
Liberty Township	X	X	X		X		X	X			X
NITTANY VALLEY REGION											
Bellefonte Borough	X	X	X		X		X	X			X
Benner Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X
Marion Township	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Spring Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Walker Township	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X
MOSHANNON VALLEY REGION											
Philipsburg Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X			
Rush Township	X	X	X		X		X	X			
MOUNTAINTOP REGION											
Snow Shoe Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X			
Burnside Township	X			X			X	X			
Snow Shoe Township	X			X	X		X	X			
PENNS VALLEY REGION											
Centre Hall Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X			
Millheim Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	
Gregg Township	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Haines Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		
Miles Township	X			X	X		X	X	X		
Penn. Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		
Potter Township	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
UPPER BALD EAGLE REGION											
Port Matilda Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X			
Unionville Borough				X	X		X	X			
Huston Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X
Taylor Township				X	X		X	X	X		X
Union Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		
Worth Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X

CENTRE COUNTY MARCELLUS SHALE GAS DRILLING: 2014

Unconventional natural gas well drilling in 2014 was negligent with only one new well added to the year-end total of 64 Marcellus wells countywide. Up by only one new well and with no Marcellus wells drilled in the prior year, 2013, the industry continued to experience a dramatic change from 2010 when nearly 3 Marcellus wells were drilled per month. This reduced drilling activity was attributed to the downturn in the price of natural gas and the lack of gathering pipelines to transport the natural gas to market. With more interest in pipeline development, the Centre County Natural Gas Task Force focused many of their bi-monthly meetings on pipeline development and impacts. In 2015, the county expects to see the installation of additional gathering lines in the Mountaintop Area, Snow Shoe and Burnside Townships.

Interest in natural gas vehicles, new CNG fueling facilities, and the extension of distribution lines to underserved segments of the county's population became the stronger focus of planning activities. By year end, 21 new CNG fueled vehicles were placed into service through grant funded opportunities administered by the planning office.



Unconventional Gas Well Funds:
 2014 marked the third year for the annual disbursement of natural gas impact fees established under the provisions of Act 13. This chart illustrates how Centre County's municipalities have chosen to allocate their payments.

RURAL GASIFICATION

The Centre County Board of Commissioners approved a one-year extension for the Rural Gas Utilization Initiative (RGUI) feasibility study through March 31, 2016. The RGUI feasibility study is being funded in part by an Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to identify potential natural gas infrastructure expansion projects in the counties of Centre, Clinton and Mifflin. The feasibility study has two primary objectives. First, identify targeted investment areas (TIAs) in each of the three counties in which at least one

potential expansion project will be further pursued. Second, identify a legal and/or administrative framework to operate and/or maintain the natural gas infrastructure by way of a cooperative, authority, or board-type model. As of Spring 2015, each of the three counties has narrowed the number of TIA selections. The TIAs were first ranked using geographic information systems (GIS) software. Later, county staff used Decision Lens software which weighted project factors such as economic viability, environmental conditions, and community support,

against each other. The process of using Decision Lens further defined the priority level of each project. The legal recommendations were completed in September of 2014 by a utility law professional. The legal recommendations are under review as potential capital funding sources are researched. The lead agency for the study is the Susquehanna Economic Development Association-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG); the project manager is Don Kiel.

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PLANNING

“*Safe Drinking Water Starts at the Source*” and in the last two years Centre County’s Community Water Systems (CWSs) have made great strides to protect their drinking water sources. Of the 43 CWSs in the county, five systems completed their Source Water Protection Plans in 2014, bringing the total of approved plans to 14 – just under one-third of all CWSs operating in the county. The good news, 5 additional CWSs initiated the planning process in 2014, and by year’s end, a total of 16 CWSs were participating in the planning process. The total population served by the 43 Centre County CWSs is 149,123, 97% of the county’s 2010 population (153,990). The remaining 3% would be served by privately owned water sources such as wells or springs. Refer to the following chart for details listed by CWS.

The Department of Environmental Protection Safe Drinking Water, Source Water Protection Technical Assistance Program (SWPTAP) Status		
Centre County Community Water Systems (CWS)	Status	Date Plan Approved
Bellefonte Borough Water Authority	Approved	March 7, 2014
Boggs Township Water System-PA American	Approved	October 6, 2014
College Township Water Authority	Approved	June 1, 2011
Howard Borough Water Department	Approved	June 2, 2009
Milesburg Borough Water Authority	Approved	March 7, 2014
Miles Township Water Authority East	Approved	June 10, 2013
Mountain-Top Regional Water Authority	Approved	June 28, 2013
Oak Ridge Water Authority	Approved	March 27, 2014
Pennsylvania State University	Approved	June 25, 2007
Philipsburg-PAWC	Approved	July 3, 2013
Pine Glenn Water Association	Approved	June 28, 2013
Ridgmont Municipal Authority (<i>Inactive</i>)	Approved	2/12/2007 (Consecutive w/SCBWA)
State College Borough Water Authority (SCBWA)	Approved	February 12, 2007
Unionville Municipal Water Works	Approved	September 10, 2014

Centre County Community Water Systems (CWS)	Status	Enrolled into SWPTAP
<i>Half Moon Water Association</i>	<i>In review by CWS</i>	<i>February 6, 2012</i>
<i>Black Hawk Mobile Home Park</i>	<i>Combined in Potter Township SWP Plan</i>	<i>May 2, 2013</i>
<i>Centre Hall Borough Water Department</i>		
<i>Country Club Estates</i>		
<i>Empire Mobile Home Park</i>		
<i>Gregg Twp. Water Auth.(Spring Mills Water Assoc.)</i>	<i>In review by CWS</i>	<i>September 20, 2013</i>
<i>Millheim Municipal Authority</i>	<i>In review by CWS</i>	<i>August 30, 2012</i>
<i>Grove Park-Benner Twp. Water Authority</i>	<i>In development</i>	<i>May 29, 2014</i>
<i>Haines-Aaronsburg Municipal Authority</i>	<i>In development</i>	<i>November 20, 2013</i>
<i>Hampton Hills-Benner Twp. Water Authority</i>	<i>In development</i>	<i>May 29, 2014</i>
<i>Madisonburg Water Works</i>	<i>In development</i>	<i>October 9, 2013</i>
<i>Port Matilda Waterworks</i>	<i>In development</i>	<i>May 29, 2014</i>
<i>Upper Halfmoon Water</i>	<i>In development</i>	<i>August 5, 2014</i>
<i>Nittany Water Company-PAWC</i>	<i>In development</i>	
<i>Ridge Crest Mobile Home Park</i>	<i>In development</i>	<i>June 17, 2014</i>
<i>Spring Township Water Authority</i>	<i>In development</i>	<i>December 4, 2012</i>

Definitions

In review - The project is being reviewed by the CWS personnel.

In development - The project is in various stages of development with the Department’s SWPTAP contractor Spotts, Stevens and McCoy.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

CCPCDO staff continues to take a proactive approach to the coordination of land use and transportation infrastructure development. In conjunction with the Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA), the CCPCDO provides staff support to the federally governed Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO).

The CCMPO is the lead entity responsible for developing the county's transportation plans and allocating federal, state and some local transportation funds toward priority projects.

Planning Process Review

In response to provisions in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) federal transportation legislation, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and PennDOT will now conduct transportation "planning process reviews" every four years for all medium/small-sized MPOs.

The reviews are intended to help MPOs comply with all federal and state transportation planning requirements. The planning process review is

similar to the formal certification review process conducted for large MPOs (over 200,000 in population). The CCMPO was selected for the first planning process review in Pennsylvania in order to pilot the procedures to be used in future reviews.

In spring 2014, FHWA and the PennDOT Central Office completed a desk review of documents and processes. In July, an on-site field review meeting was held with FHWA, PennDOT Central and District 2-0 Offices, and CCMPO and CATA staff.

As indicated in the final report, FHWA and PennDOT found that the CCMPO's planning process fully complies with the spirit and intent of metropolitan transportation planning laws and regulations, and is in compliance with Title 23, United States Code (USC), Section 134.

As with any organization, there are opportunities to improve approaches and processes. As a result of the review, the CCMPO took steps to adopt both a Title VI

and Limited English Proficiency Plan. Staff is also proactively working to address a number of recommendations addressed in the final report.

Long Range Transportation Plan 2044

One of the key efforts throughout 2014 was the ongoing development of the new Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

During 2014, a significant amount of work was done to solicit, review and prioritize candidate projects across all modes of transportation.

Projects were screened through the following 9 criteria, which coincide with the LRTP's adopted Goals and Objectives:

1. Safety and Security
2. Preservation of the Existing Transportation System
3. Efficient System Management and Operation
4. Integration and Connectivity of the Transportation System
5. Accessibility and Mobility Options for People and

Freight

6. Consistency with Planned Growth and Development Areas
7. Environment and Air Quality Conformity
8. Economic Vitality
9. Local Priority

These prioritized candidate lists were then compared to financial resources projected to be available throughout the life of the new LRTP to determine which projects are likely to be funded over the next 30 years.

Its important to note that the LRTP is very much a "living document" that will be updated every 5 years and will establish performance measures and implementation strategies that help us ensure that goals are being met.

The new LRTP is slated for a September 2015 adoption.

To Learn More

To learn more about the Planning Process Review, the new LRTP and all the other initiatives being undertaken by the CCMPO, please visit www.ccmpto.net.

PENNS VALLEY RAIL TRAIL

Throughout 2014, CCPCDO staff helped to manage the ongoing development of the Penns Valley Rail Trail Feasibility Study.

This study, which was sponsored by Gregg Township and partially funded by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural

Resources, evaluated the viability of a rail trail on 27 miles of the former Lewisburg to Tyrone rail line.

Our 40+ member steering committee and consultants Albertin Vernon Architecture and Brian Auman, Landscape Architect, utilized a very hands-on process to engage the

property owners and adjoining communities in open and frank discussion over the pros and cons of this possible trail development.

As a result of these discussions, it was determined that while a 27 mile destination-type trail was not viable, smaller community based

trails in Linden Hall to Centre Hall and Spring Mills areas did appear to have interest and potential feasibility.

The final study report is slated for delivery in Spring 2015. More information on this effort can be found on our website under the Recreation Resources tab.

FEMA'S COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM

FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary program under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in which communities can participate in order to reduce flood insurance premiums for homes and businesses. CRS-participating communities must complete flood management activities that are above minimum requirements that satisfy NFIP compliance. In fact, if a municipality is not NFIP-compliant it would not qualify for CRS. Communities are rated or ranked on a scale of 1 to 9 (1 being the highest, 9 being the lowest) based on the activities or program elements that are fulfilled; communities that satisfy more CRS activities are rated higher which decreases flood insurance premiums for all flood insurance policyholders within the participating jurisdiction. Flood insurance premium reductions can range between 5% and 45%, a substantial savings for homeowners and businesses. Most communities enter at a 9 rating and work towards achieving a higher ranking.

The primary goals of CRS are:

- Reduce and/or avoid flood damage to insurable properties
- Strengthen and support the NFIP
- Foster comprehensive floodplain management

Communities that are interested in joining CRS can schedule a visit with a FEMA representative. However, before a community visit or formally submitting a CRS application, communities should be "CRS ready". The CRS Ready Quick Check guide and sample Letter of Interest to Join is available online at http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1908-25045-6843/crs_quick_check_ff_086_0_35_omb_1660_0022_edition_2013.pdf.

Centre County Planning and Community Development staff have taken CRS web courses and spoken with FEMA representatives to better understand the program. Staff collected and are in the process of analyzing flood insurance policy data to determine which community(ies) are most at risk for flood damage and inadequately covered for structural flood losses.

CENTRE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

The mission of the Agricultural Land Preservation Board is to preserve the County's prime agricultural land. The nine member board was established in 1989 and has purchased Agricultural Conservation Easements on 44 farms in seven townships totaling 6,750 acres. Funding for easement purchases comes from the Bureau of Farmland Preservation,

Centre County Government, and the federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program.

In 2014, the Agricultural Land Preservation Board completed preservation on three farms. The PACE ranking criteria also underwent major revisions in 2014, which will be utilized

along with an updated LESA system in 2015 to score and rank applicants to the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Program.

The Municipal Partnership Program (MPP) was also introduced in 2014 to help leverage municipal funds in order to increase the allocated State match dollars.

CENTRE COUNTY FARMLAND TRUST



The Centre County Farmland Trust is a publicly supported, tax exempt, nonprofit organization [501(c)(3)]. The trust is authorized by the Internal Revenue Service and the Pennsylvania Department of State to accept, hold and administer conservation easements. Governed by a 15 member Board of Trustees established in 1996, the Trust has preserved 11 farms totaling over 1,000 acres. Two farms were preserved in 2012, one with exceptional historic value in Penns Valley

Land owners wishing to donate a conservation easement as a charitable gift must meet the minimum criteria established by

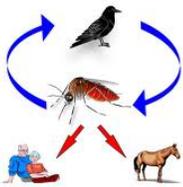
the Internal Revenue Service and the Trust. Land owners must have a current survey and legal description of the property along with an appraisal by a Certified General Appraiser who determines the easement value. Once approved by the trustees, an easement deed is prepared along with extensive documentation that establishes the condition of the land at the time the easement deed is recorded. Land owners who qualify may be able to claim their donation as a charitable gift and take advantage of federal tax reductions. Eased properties are inspected annually by the Board to ensure that the

easement deed is being observed. Conservation easements are permanent and become part of the deed when land is sold or transferred. The land owner still owns the land but has donated the right of present and future land owners to develop the property.

Funding comes from annual memberships of individuals, families and corporate sponsors. Grants to support specific projects have come from the Hamer Foundation, Centre County Community Foundation, The Bureau of Farmland Preservation, Wal-Mart and Sam's Club.

CENTRE COUNTY 2014 WEST NILE VIRUS SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL PROGRAM

West Nile virus Transmission Cycle



West Nile Virus is a disease that resides in bird populations and can be transmitted to humans through

the bite of a mosquito that has previously bitten an infected bird. While most cases of West Nile Virus in humans are mild or even undetected, in some instances the virus can result in inflammation of the brain or spinal cord, and can result in death.

Since mid year 2000, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) has made funds available in the form of annual grants to Pennsylvania Counties for the purpose of monitoring the local mosquito population for the presence of West Nile Virus, for the purchase of equipment and pesticide products for controlling mosquito numbers, and for public outreach to teach citizens how to protect themselves from becoming infected by West Nile Virus.

In Centre County the West Nile Virus (WNV) Program is administered by the CCPCDO. In 2014 the staffing consisted of a County Coordinator and one field assistant, both of whom are part time County employees.

Funding

The Centre County West Nile Virus (WNV) Program expended \$40,026 in grant funding in 2014. Centre County's PADEP funding for the 2015 WNV Program will be \$68,640.

Surveillance and Control

During the surveillance season from early April until the end of September, larval and adult mosquitoes from 250 test sites

throughout the County are captured and sent to PADEP in Harrisburg for identification. The adult mosquitoes are further tested for West Nile Virus if they are found to be a species that can infect humans with the virus. In 2014 there were 590 sampling events in Centre County that resulted in 22,982 mosquitoes being shipped for identification and possible testing. There were 324 West Nile Virus tests performed on adult Centre County mosquitoes, with 13 positive results. The County's WNV program is also responsible for collecting and shipping dead birds for virus testing. Twenty one birds from Centre County were tested in 2014, with two testing positive for West Nile Virus.

Unlike 2012, when a human case of WNV was confirmed in Centre County, there were none in the County in 2014. Nor were there any cases of animals reported by veterinarians as being infected with the virus in 2014.



The presence of a positive mosquito or the presence of large numbers of a mosquito species that can transmit the virus to humans can result in the application of pesticides to reduce the population of these "disease vectors". In 2014, Centre County West Nile Virus staff conducted 166 pesticide applications to control mosquito numbers.

Additionally, County WNV staff responded to 31 citizen requests for information, dead bird collection, or mosquito surveillance and control.

Public Education

Public education is also a component of the West Nile Virus program. In 2014, the County West Nile Virus program gave

WNV presentations to two County Senior Centers, and also maintained an educational booth at the Grange Fair in Centre Hall.

Protect Yourself

Following several years of declining positive mosquito results, in 2010 West Nile Virus began a significant return to Pennsylvania. By 2012 there were 3,410 positive mosquito results statewide, along with 135 birds and 51 veterinary (horse) cases. Sixty human cases of WNV were confirmed in 2012, with 4 deaths. In 2014 there were thirteen

human cases with one death. Residents should take reasonable precautions to avoid mosquito bites, such as wearing long sleeves and pants where mosquitoes are active, and using insect repellants containing DEET or Picaradin. Elimination of standing water around the home is the single most important thing residents can do to reduce breeding populations. Rain gutters, swimming pool covers, bird baths, ornamental ponds, and especially tires are all capable of breeding large amounts of mosquitoes.



HOUSING



Centre County offers a First Time Home Buyer Program providing down payment and closing costs assistance in the amount of \$10,000 or 10% of the purchase price, whichever is less. The assistance is in the form of a zero percent deferred loan that is made payable when the house is sold, when the mortgage is paid off, when the house is no longer used as a principal residence, or is refinanced for more than 100% of the purchase price. Priority is given to residents and persons who work in Centre County.

In 2014, the County, through its participating lenders, assisted five home buyers. Since the inception of the program, 310 home buyers have taken advantage of the program totaling over \$2.5 million in loans. For more information visit <http://www.centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=218> or call the Centre County Planning and Community Development

Office at 355-6791.

In November 2014, the Centre County Board of Commissioners signed an agreement with the Centre County Housing and Land Trust to provide 5 hours per week of the Housing Coordinator's staff time to administrative services to the organization.

Administration of the Centre County Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program continues in the Penns Valley Region. The program is designed to bring the eligible home owner's dwelling into compliance with the rehab standards in order to reduce ongoing and future maintenance costs, promote energy efficiency, and to preserve decent affordable owner-occupied housing. Twelve homeowners are expected to be assisted through this program.

Staff is involved with the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition in an effort

to increase awareness of affordable housing issues in our communities.

In 2012, Centre County was awarded \$150,000 of PHARE (Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement) Funds under Act 13, Natural Gas Impact Fee. The funds are being used for rental assistance, helping individuals and families with rent and security deposits and preventing homelessness.

Another PHARE Fund Grant was awarded in 2014 in the amount of \$33,250. The funds will be used to provide heating assistance and support to households in the Marcellus Shale region and contiguous municipalities.

The Centre County Board of Commissioners approved a \$50,000 match for each of the PHARE grants using the monies from the Centre County Housing Trust Fund.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The Planning Office has a great working relationship with the County's municipalities. The support we provide helps municipalities reduce their overall costs with the development and administration of their ordinances. In 2014, the Planning Office provided support to the following municipalities: Benner Township, Burnside Township, Gregg Township, Haines Township, Huston Township, Milesburg Borough, Miles Township, Millheim

Borough, Potter Township, Philipsburg Borough, Port Matilda Borough, Rush Township, Snow Shoe Borough, Snow Shoe Township, Taylor Township, Union Township, and Unionville Borough. The Planning Office also assisted Potter Townships with the development of their Official Map Ordinance which will help them plan for future roads, parks, trails, and special protection areas. The Planning Office continues to provide staff support

to the following regional municipal planning groups: Nittany Valley Joint Planning Commission, Penns Valley Region Planning Commission, and the Upper Bald Eagle/ Halfmoon COG. These planning groups meet on a regular basis to collaborate on important issues, share ideas, address public safety concerns, and provide cost effective services across municipal boundaries. We applaud their cooperative efforts.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) AND MAPPING



The internal and external GIS websites were upgraded in 2012 to provide the public and County employees with more tools, data layers and layer control options. The [public GIS website](http://centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=505) (<http://centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=505>) is a free service offered by Centre County for anyone with an internet connection. The [internal website](http://centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=205) (<http://centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=205>) is available through a WebIA subscription and provides users with more detailed information not provided on the public GIS site.

Centre County Government provides mapping services to municipalities, conservation groups, authorities, school districts, landowners, businesses, and the general public. Tax parcel boundaries, streets, buildings, floodplains, land use, and zoning are basic features on most maps; other datasets may be available upon request.

The departments of Tax Assessment, GIS, and Planning provide hard-copy maps at minimal fees.

GRANT ASSISTANCE / ADMINISTRATION

Grant writing and grant administration continue to be a major work task for planning staff; with the grants serving a variety of purposes including community and economic development, housing, recreation and transportation.

Redevelopment Assistance Capital Projects (RACP):

These projects are significant by scale and/or dollar value. In 2014, one RACP project was completed and a second was started. The Central PA Institute of Science and Technology (CPI) located in Pleasant Gap completed a \$10Million construction project for the

Transportation Training Center; and Fraser Partners, LLC began the construction of the **Fraser Centre** in downtown State College.

PA Community Forest

Grant: Philipsburg Borough continued to participate in the PA Community Forest Grant Program. Having successfully planted 10 trees on North Centre Street (SR 53), their focus was directed toward a Borough-wide street tree inventory.

US Environmental Protection

Administration : STAG
Staff is providing assistance for a \$250,000 grant awarded to Millheim Borough and the Haines-Aaronsburg Municipal Authority (HAMA). These funds will be used to complete

a water line inter-connect between the respective water systems.

US Economic Development

Administration: Staff was instrumental in developing the project scope and continues to provide administrative services for a three-county effort to identify potential natural gas infrastructure expansion projects to serve unserved and underserved property owners.

Centre County's ACT 13

PHARE Grant Program: The Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Program provides funding to address housing needs in counties impacted by the natural gas industry. Staff assists with the development of grant applications for this program and provides grant oversight for a \$200,000 program to provide county-wide rental assistance and a \$83,250 program offering home heating assistance and support. Allocations from the Centre County's Housing Trust Fund (ACT 137) support both of these projects.

Centre County Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program (CCOOR):

The CCOOR program is designed to bring eligible home owner's dwelling units into compliance in order to reduce maintenance costs, promote energy efficiency, and preserve affordable owner-occupied housing in the Penns

Valley Region. Grant funding in the amount of \$500,000 with a \$25,000 match from the Centre County Housing Trust Fund was awarded by the PA DCED under the HOME Investment Partnerships Program.

DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2):

This is a popular grant program for community-based recreation and staff assisted with five C2P2 grant efforts in 2014.

In Penns Valley,

~ Administrative assistance for the Penns Valley Rails-to-Trails Feasibility Study – a \$64,000 project to determine trail feasibility along a 27-mile historic rail corridor.

~ Consultation and review for the Gregg Twp. Old Gregg School Playground Grant resulting in a \$40,000 award. In 2015, staff will be aiding in project survey, design, and administration.

~ Consultation and review for the Potter Twp. Potter Run Playground to include a parking area, pedestrian walkway, ADA access and landscaping. The project was awarded \$40,000.

~ Grant writing assistance to Gregg Township for two companion grants, one to the C2P2 program for design and the second to PennDOT for construction of the Spring Mills Trail segment portion of the Penns Valley Rail-to-Trail.

Unfortunately, this project was not funded, at this time.

In **Philipsburg Borough**, through the combined efforts of Philipsburg Borough, the Cold Stream Recreation Foundation, and NRG Energy Company, staff facilitated the submittal of a grant request for a successful award of \$40,000 to refurbish a Borough playground with new equipment and a walking path.

DCED Community

Financing Authority: Grant writing and consultation were provided for the "Save Colyer Lake" project in an effort to receive approximately \$210,000 on behalf of Potter Township toward dam reconstruction and the refurbishment of recreation amenities. This project was unfunded by the Community Financing Authority but is moving forward through other sources.

Centre County Natural Gas Vehicle Program:

In 2014, staff administered three PA DEP Natural Gas Vehicle Grants, providing \$376,377 toward the upfit or conversion of 31 vehicles to operate on compressed natural gas. Participants included: Centre County Office of Transportation, Centre Area Transportation Authority, Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority, Ferguson and Patton Townships, State College Borough and Penn State University.

CENTRE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES

Implementable Comprehensive Plan Approach: In 2013, the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office began to transition their approach to updating the county’s comprehensive plan from a format that was heavily dependent upon the compilation of background data to an approach now favored by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development known as an

“implementable comprehensive plan”. The “implementable” approach is based on the assessment of community issues (problems to be solved, needs to be addressed, and opportunities to be pursued) AND recommendations to resolve the issues.

Using this approach, staff has reframed previously drafted chapters and is moving forward with the format in developing the remaining chapters by topic, as required

by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). These draft chapters will be internally reviewed, provided to the county’s planning commission for comment, published on the county’s website for public review, and adopted for implementation.

To date, the following chapters have been revised and will be reviewed: economic development, forest resources, energy conservation, land use, and recreation.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM

The Centre County CDBG program is a comprehensive source of federal funding that helps the rural municipalities in Centre County meet their community development needs in Low to Moderate Income communities. Over \$9.2 million of Federal CDBG Funds have gone into improvements to critical public facilities or the provision of needed services in Centre County since the programs inception in 1984.

Infrastructure projects, such as public water, sewer, storm-water and streets are considered highest priority by state and federal grant administrators and by Centre County Planners. This priority can be seen in the 2014 CDBG funding awards indicated in the table and is expected to continue into the foreseeable

future. Continuing changes in water and sewer regulations, along with aging infrastructure, places an unduly heavy financial burden on rural, low income residents when their community needs to expend funds for necessary system improvements. In the past 19 years, CDBG funds have helped over half the municipal water suppliers in Centre County come into or stay in compliance with basic requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act. Insuring residents access to a safe and dependable supply of drinking water.

Federal program rules require that the expenditure of County Entitlement CDBG funds must meet one of three primary National Objectives. These are: *Benefit to Low and Moderate*

Income (LMI) Families; Elimination of Slum & Blight; and Urgent Threats to Public Safety. A minimum of 70% of a County’s CDBG expenditure must be to the LMI objective. LMI is determined by the US Census or by conducting an income survey in the proposed community. Centre County’s program has historically allocated much more than 70% of its funds to projects that benefit LMI families.

The CCPCDO maintains a close working relationship with all the municipalities and municipal Water and Sewer Boards in Centre County. The input of these local officials is what determines how the County allocates its annual allocation of CDBG Funds. Overwhelmingly, local elected officials support continued

infrastructure funding in the low income sections of the County. Often, the County’s CDBG funds are used to assist the local communities to leverage other funding sources to help address the large financial demands for infrastructure upgrades.

The funding philosophy of the Centre County Commissioners has been that water and sewer infrastructure improvements contributes both to the immediate health of a community and also provides a solid base for long term economic development. Centre County communities are encouraged to discuss their infrastructure needs with Planning Office staff to determine CDBG eligibility.

Project	Municipality	Community	2014 CDBG Funding
Water Main Replacement	Miles Twp.	Rebersburg	\$115,600
Waste Water Treatment Plant Tank Rehab	Huston Twp.	Julian	\$129,000

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2014 PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

The Centre County Planning Commission is comprised of elected officials and interested citizens to represent the regions of the County. The Commission meets on the third Tuesday of each month in the Willowbank Office Building. The Commission provides valuable input on the activities of the CCPCDO.

<i>Freddie Persic, Chairman</i>	<i>Centre Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/16</i>
<i>Robert P. Dannaker, Vice-Chairman</i>	<i>Nittany Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/15</i>
<i>Angelica "Mimi" Wutz, Secretary</i>	<i>Upper Bald Eagle Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/18</i>
<i>Michele L. Barbin</i>	<i>Mountaintop Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/15</i>
<i>D. Richard Francke</i>	<i>Centre Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/16</i>
<i>Dennis Hameister</i>	<i>Centre Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/15</i>
<i>Christopher Kunes</i>	<i>Penns Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/18</i>
<i>Jack Shannon</i>	<i>Moshannon Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/18</i>
<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Lower Bald Eagle Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/16</i>

2014 CENTRE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Stephen G. Dershem, Chairman

C. Chris Exarchos

Michael Pipe

Timothy T. Boyde, County Administrator

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[WWW.CENTRECOUNTYPA.GOV/
PLANNING](http://WWW.CENTRECOUNTYPA.GOV/PLANNING)

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