

An aerial photograph of Centre County, Pennsylvania, showing a complex network of roads, land parcels, and vegetation. The map is overlaid with a grid of lines, likely representing property boundaries or planning zones. The text is superimposed on the map.

**CENTRE COUNTY**

**SUBDIVISION  
AND LAND  
DEVELOPMENT  
ORDINANCE**

**ORDINANCE NUMBER**

**13**



CENTRE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COURTHOUSE  
BELLEFONTE, PENNSYLVANIA 16823  
814 355-5521

COMMISSIONERS  
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SOLICITOR  
ROBERT K. KISTLER

July 1, 1983

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO THE CITIZENS OF CENTRE COUNTY

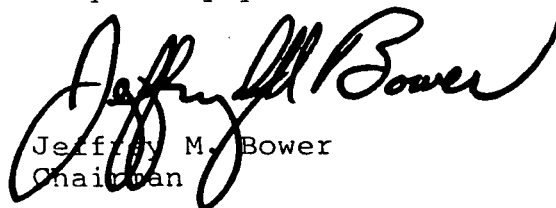
The Centre County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the County Planning Commission and the County Planning Office, is pleased to announce the approval and official adoption of the Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. It is the intent of the Board that this document, a major revision and updating of Centre County's 1966 Land Subdivision Regulations, has been prepared in the best interests of the citizens of Centre County, and further, that its adoption is in keeping with the overall goals and objectives of the Centre County planning program.

You are advised that the Centre County Board of Commissioners has delegated to the Centre County Planning Commission, acting through the Centre County Planning Office, the responsibility for administration of this Ordinance.

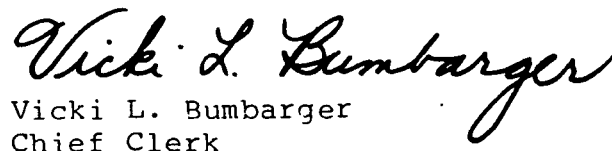
Further be advised that the provisions of this Ordinance apply within the applicable local municipalities which have not adopted their own subdivision and land development ordinances.

Through this Letter of Transmittal, the Centre County Board of Commissioners hereby certifies to all concerned that this is a true and correct copy of the Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, which was adopted by the Board on June 28, 1983, to become effective on the first day of August, 1983.

Very truly yours,

  
Jeffrey M. Bower  
Chairman

Attested To:

  
Vicki L. Bumbarger  
Chief Clerk

**CENTRE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

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John Glatz

John T. Saylor

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CENTRE COUNTY SUBDIVISION  
AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE NUMBER 3

Prepared for

THE CENTRE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By

THE CENTRE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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CENTRE COUNTY SUBDIVISION  
AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE  
ORDINANCE NUMBER 3

PREAMBLE STATEMENT

PURPOSE, OVERALL GOAL, POLICIES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND BENEFITS

WHEREAS, The Board of County Commissioners of Centre County, Pennsylvania desires to adopt rules and regulations establishing minimum standards for the subdividing and development of land in the County; and

WHEREAS, The County of Centre has, through a comprehensive planning process, including the official adoption of The Centre County Comprehensive Plan and various reports and publications or subsequent amendments thereto, recognized a certain Overall Goal and has further recognized certain land use Policies and Recommendations which are more fully described as the following:

A. The Centre County Comprehensive Plan, entitled Directions for the Future: Guidelines for Decision Making\* recognizes that the Overall Goal of the Centre County Planning Program is "TO MAINTAIN THE MUTUAL COEXISTENCE BETWEEN THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND MAN'S NEEDS."

B. The Centre County Commissioners, as part of the adopted Centre County Comprehensive Plan entitled Directions for the Future: Guidelines for Decision Making recognized certain land use policies which are as follows:

1. A Policy for Development

The majority of future residential, commercial, industrial, transportation, and public facilities development in Centre County should be encouraged to occur within our existing urban communities. These communities are the major growth areas of the future and are now providing a level of services that

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\*The Comprehensive Plan was accepted and endorsed by the Centre County Planning Commission on November 21, 1978. The Comprehensive Plan was subsequently adopted by the Centre County Board of Commissioners on February 13, 1979.

make them attractive for people and are capable, in varying degrees, of absorbing growth. Expansion of additional services can be done in an efficient and planned manner without great capital outlays and at the same time will not overburden, or put excessive pressure on, lands which should remain in a less developed state; e.g., agricultural lands. At the same time, rural communities and villages could accept a limited amount of growth compatible with their local environments.

2. A Policy for Open Space

Open Space should continue to perform its diverse functions at the County, regional and local levels. The Open Space functions at all levels include physical separation, water resource management, land resource management, natural and cultural areas, and recreational activities. Maintaining County-wide and regional Open Space and incorporating Open Space in local-level development will aid in orderly community development and the protection of areas which are environmentally sensitive or are limited for development.

C. The adopted Centre County Comprehensive Plan report entitled Directions for the Future: Guidelines for Decision Making also recognized that there are certain features of Centre County that must be considered which either pose Development Limitations or are Sensitive Areas. These Policies related to Development Limitations and the Sensitive Areas are as follows:

1. Development Limitations

a. Recommendation for Floodplains

Floodplains should be either maintained in their undeveloped state or be put to uses compatible with the floodplain environment. Such uses include agriculture, parks and other non-structural recreational uses, and wildlife areas. The development which already exists in the floodplains should be encouraged to take the necessary precautions against damage and loss through floodproofing and participation in the Federal Flood Insurance Program.

b. Recommendation for Soil Resources

The limitations of the soil are a major factor in determining the use of the land. Development should not take place in areas where the soils present severe engineering or environmental restrictions; likewise, areas that have soils suitable for non-development uses such as agricultural, forested, floodplains, should remain as non-developed areas.

c. Recommendation for Carbonate Geology Areas

Proposed development within carbonate geology areas should be accompanied by thoroughly investigated site locations to ensure that construction takes place in areas that are free from collapse and will prevent groundwater pollution.

d. Recommendation for Sloping Land

Lands with slopes of 15 percent or greater have had limited development in the past. Future uses, such as sensitively designed residential development, should maintain the sloping lands for their scenic, watershed, recreational, forested and mineral repository roles.

3. Recommendation for Mine Subsidence Areas

Due to the potential severity of mine subsidence, development should not be encouraged in those areas where known abandoned deep mines exist. However, as an alternative to prohibiting all development in areas of underground mines or requiring extensive engineering tests, another approach to this problem is the recognition of this Development Limitation by local government agencies, landowners, developers, and prospective lot purchasers.

2. Sensitive Areas

a. Recommendation for Agricultural Land

The best protection for keeping agricultural land is to preserve and enhance the agricultural economy. Development to accommodate

population, commercial and industrial growth should take place on non-agricultural lands (not on prime agricultural Class I & II soils) whenever and wherever possible. Alternate uses of agricultural land could be recreational, forested or vacant; other uses could destroy this irreplaceable resource.

b. Recommendation for Mineral Resources

Lands containing mineral reserves should be protected and preserved so accessibility is maintained; also, the quality of the environment must be protected during mining operations and the mined out lands must be reclaimed when operations are completed.

c. Recommendation for Forested Lands

The primary use of forests should be: oxygen production; control of erosion, sedimentation and flooding; watershed protection and regeneration; wildlife habitat provision; aesthetic values; wood production and re-forestation; and woodland areas which provide buffers between different type of land uses and help to modify the effect of noise, air and water pollution. When existing forested and woodland areas are considered for competing uses, the expected impacts of the proposed uses should be studied for determining environmental costs and benefits.

d. Recommendation for Water Resources

Future growth patterns should be directed to ensure the protection of municipal and private water supplies. Surface and groundwater quality, flow and recharge must be maintained at levels which are environmentally acceptable.

e. Recommendation for Climate and Air Resources

Land use planning can affect long-term air quality, thus future growth and development should be planned to protect clean air resources.

f. Recommendation for Unique Cultural and Natural Areas

Unique cultural and natural areas should be preserved and maintained, where applicable, for present and future generations.



WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Centre County Commissioners that in addition to the above, it is further the Purpose of the Ordinance that the adoption of these rules and regulations which establish minimum standards for subdividing and development of land within the County will be of benefit to the lessee or purchaser of land, to the subdivider or developer, and to the municipality in which the development is located. These Benefits include the following:

A. Benefits to the Lessee or Purchaser

1. Accurate descriptions of the land to be leased or sold;
2. Assurances that soils are satisfactory for homesites and sewage disposal, and that adequate steps will be taken to prevent soil erosion and sedimentation;
3. Assurances that lots will either abut a public road or have access via a right-of-way agreement which also sets forth responsibility for maintenance;
4. Assurances that the sources of public water are identified and that suitable easements are provided to reach the land;
5. Assurances that roads will be adequate to provide fire and ambulance protection, and that fire hydrants will be provided in large developments;
6. A minimum of hidden expenses by placing the burden of providing necessary facilities on the developer, or by clearly stating on the plan who is responsible for such facilities; and

B. Benefits to the Subdivider or Developer

1. Accurate description of the soils and the limitations of the soil on the land to be subdivided;
2. Assistance in the design of the development in the form of recommendations by experienced staff;
3. For the transfer of all costs of the development to the purchaser through the purchase price;

4. For the establishment of clear responsibility for right-of-way maintenance, easements and ease of permit issuance, thereby reducing the potential for expensive and lengthy litigation when such issues are not considered;
5. For reduction of disputes over land ownership by requiring accurate survey;
6. For compliance by all landowners to protect the value of property; and

C. Benefits to the Municipality

1. Informing the municipality of the needs of proposed future developments;
2. Assuring that the road construction criteria are clearly established and obtaining the acknowledgment of the developer of his responsibility;
3. Assuring adequate rights-of-way and setbacks;
4. Preventing the imposition of major development costs upon the municipality;
5. Assuring that emergency equipment can reach all lots;
6. Reducing or eliminating the possibility of floods, mine subsidence, erosion, pollution, lack of adequate water and water pressure;
7. Protecting remaining resources from destruction;
8. Planning developments in a coordinated manner to avoid the creation of future problems.

WHEREAS, the Board of Centre County Commissioners concurs with and supports the official position of the Centre County Comprehensive Plan as set forth herein as the Overall Goal; Policies; Recommendations; and further concur with the Benefits to the Lessee or Purchaser, the Benefits to the Subdivider or Developer and the Benefits to the Municipality; and

WHEREAS, the Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance is intended to cause subdivisions and land developments to conform with or to provide

for such Goals, Policies, Recommendations and Benefits\*;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED, by the Board of County Commissioners of Centre County, Pennsylvania, and it is enacted and ordained as follows:

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\*The above referenced Goals, Policies, Recommendations and Benefits, as well as the various standards and requirements found elsewhere in this Ordinance, are not intended to be interpreted as a development or consumer guarantee. However, they are intended to serve as guidelines and minimum requirements for use by the Commission, local government agencies and other interested groups and individuals.