
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PHASE II: PLAN ELEMENTS
FOR
CRAWFORD COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

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as administered by the
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**Prepared by the:
CRAWFORD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

and

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1997-2000



August 21, 2000

Crawford County Planning Commission
Crawford County Courthouse
903 Diamond Park
Meadville, Pennsylvania 16335

Attention: Jack Lynch, Executive Director

RE: PHASE II, PLAN ELEMENTS FOR CRAWFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Attached is the "FINAL PRINT" of Volume II of the above captioned report. This report represents the cooperative efforts of the Crawford County Planning Commission and the Community Planning firm of Richard C. Sutter & Associates, Inc.

We have thoroughly enjoyed this challenging undertaking and look forward to its finalization for the new millennium.

Sincerely,

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Crawford County Board of Commissioners:

Morris Waid, Chairman
Jack Preston
Roger Williams

Crawford County Planning Commission:

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*Rob Merchant, Assistant Director
*Karen Montgomery, Land Use Planner

*Former employees vital to the success of the Plan

Public Participation:

Special thanks goes out to the hundreds of people who helped make this plan by participating in surveys and visioning processes, served on technical committees and/or donated their time and expertise in certain fields relevant to Crawford County's future.

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Planning Consultant:

Richard C. Sutter and Associates, Inc.
Comprehensive Planners/Land Planners/Historic Preservation Planners

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE BACKGROUND STUDIES

A community comprehensive plan is simply a formally documented policy guide for the physical development of a community. It is an expression of how a community sees itself in the future, and a blueprint of how the community will achieve that future. In Pennsylvania, the content of such a plan is regulated by Article Three of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code* (P.L. 805, No. 247). A plan can almost always be divided into two parts: (1) an inventory of the community's physical, social, economic, and historical environment; and (2) a strategy, based on the facts displayed in that inventory, that will help the community reach its goals. The first of these two parts is often termed "background studies". This executive summary is a brief recounting of the *1999 Crawford County Comprehensive Plan's* background studies.

The background studies of this plan are divided into eight chapters. A brief summary of the most important findings in each of these chapters is presented below, in the same order as the chapters themselves.

CHAPTER I: The History of Crawford County

The many historic resources recorded in the *Crawford County Comprehensive Historic Sites Survey* (1979) demonstrate that there are a variety of historic themes linked to the development of Crawford County. However, this County Planning Commission survey was completed for only the County's western and eastern tiers. The central or French Creek tier, which has the County's densest concentration of historic buildings and sites, was not surveyed. In the intervening two decades many historic landmarks have been lost to neglect and inappropriate development, diminishing the County's collective historic memory derived from information gathered from local interviews and field studies. Crawford County has great potential for developing a heritage tourism industry based on its many and varied historic sites.

Since the Crawford County Comprehensive Plan does not address recommendations for Historic Preservation this summary contains such recommendations. They are as follows: Crawford County should take this opportunity to complete and update the Historic Sites Survey; follow through with eligible historic district nominations; and then utilize this streamlined database on heritage resources to recognize, promote, and protect the County's many landmarks.

CHAPTER II: The Physiography and Environment of Crawford County

Crawford County has a humid, continental climate. It lies in one of the coolest, snowiest regions of the Commonwealth; however, it has warm, pleasant summers. The County's highest point has an elevation of over 1,910 feet above sea level, while its lowest point has an elevation of just 850 feet. The County's topography differs widely between its eastern and western halves. The east is formed from a deeply incised high plateau, while the west is formed from a gentle plain. The entire surface has been extensively glaciated, which has severely impacted its drainage, topography, and soils. The County contains five different soil associations. Four of these associations, which collectively cover about 78% of the County's surface, frequently exhibit restricted permeability and a high water table.

CHAPTER III: The Existing Land Use of Crawford County

Various land use surveys associated with this and several other comprehensive plans were used to estimate that Crawford County's 663,680 total acres (1,038 square miles) are generally being used as follows.

TABLE 1

EXISTING LAND USE Crawford County, 1999				
Category	Acres	Percent of County	Percent of Developed Land	Percent of Developed (less agriculture)
Urban Residential	2,176.0	0.3%	0.4%	4.1%
Rural Residential	25,221.0	3.8%	5.6%	47.6%
Multi-Family Residential	26.0	trace	trace	trace
Commercial	1,932.0	0.3%	0.4%	3.6%
Industrial	515.0	trace	0.1%	1.0%
Public/Semi-Public	23,140.0	3.5%	5.1%	43.7%
TOTAL DEVELOPED (Less Agr.)	53,010.0	8.0%	11.8%	100.0%
Agricultural	397,178.0	60.4%	88.2%	
TOTAL DEVELOPED	450,188.0	67.8%	100.0%	
Wooded/Forested	170,219.0	25.2%		
State Game Lands	24,186.0	3.6%		
Marshland	1,349.0	0.2%		
Major Bodies of Water	15,974.0	2.4%		
Vacant	1,764.0	0.3%		
TOTAL UNDEVELOPED	213,492.0	32.2%		
TOTAL COUNTY	663,680.0	100.0%		

CHAPTER IV: The People of Crawford County

In 1990, Crawford County had 86,169 residents. Although this represented a 3.04% decrease from its 1980 level, it represented a 5.93% increase from its 1970 level. In most years since 1940, the County's townships have usually gained more residents than its boroughs and cities. From 1970 to 1990, six of the County's eight planning regions gained residents: the Eastern Tier (which grew by 24.66%), the Pymatuning Region (which grew by 19.43%), the Conneaut Lake Region (which grew by 14.01%), the Geneva/Cochranon Region (which grew by 13.65%), the Cambridge/Saegertown Region (which grew by 10.57%), and the Conneautville Region (which grew by 6.15%). During this period, the Greater Meadville Area declined by 3.56% and the Oil Creek Valley Region declined by 1.27%. From 1980 to 1990, six of the County's eight planning regions lost population: the Greater Meadville Area (which declined by 7.82%), the Geneva/Cochranon Region (which declined by 4.03%), the Conneaut Lake Region (which declined by 3.16%), the Oil Creek Valley Region (which declined by 2.78%), the Conneautville Region (which declined by 1.69%) and the Cambridge/Saegertown Region (which declined by 1.10%). During the 1980s, the Eastern Tier grew by 4.51% and the Pymatuning Region grew by 4.02%. Crawford County's population has been projected to grow at a slightly slower rate than it did during the 1970s through the year 2015.

In 1990, about 30% of the citizens of Crawford County were under the age of 20. This was one of the highest proportions of young people to be found in all of western Pennsylvania, and was significantly higher than the Commonwealth's average. In 1990, people between the ages of 20 and 40 composed a significantly lower proportion of Crawford County's population than Pennsylvania's population. When considered with the County's relatively high percentage of residents under the age of 20, this suggests that many young people were leaving the County and not returning. In 1990, women in the most common child bearing years composed a significantly higher proportion of Crawford County's population than Pennsylvania's population. Consequently, the County's 1990 crude fertility rate was also significantly higher than the Commonwealth's.

CHAPTER V: Crawford County's Housing

In 1990, there were 40,462 housing units in Crawford County. This represented a gain of 23.1% over the 31,110 units reported in 1970. Of the 9,352 units added in this time period, 8,691 (93%) were located in townships and 2,896 (31%) were seasonal. The primary areas where these housing units were added were around Meadville and the resort areas of the Pymatuning region. The average age of the County's housing stock in 1990 was similar to Pennsylvania's average age; however, the significant amount of seasonal housing construction after 1970 disproportionately reduces the County's average age. Over half of the housing stock in 9 of the County's 14 boroughs was built prior to 1940. Only 25% of the housing stock in the townships was this old. A disproportionately high percentage of the County's housing stock is mobile homes as compared to like counties in western Pennsylvania and Trumbull and Ashtabula Counties in Ohio.

CHAPTER VI: The Economy of Crawford County

Crawford County's labor force is similar to that of many non-metropolitan counties in western Pennsylvania. The County has many workers in relatively low-skill manufacturing positions and in the agricultural sectors. It has relatively few workers in high-skill occupations and in high-growth sectors of the economy. The high unemployment rate suggests that the growth of good, year round jobs have not kept up with the growth of the labor force. The low percentage of people with college degrees is a concern, especially as the changing economy is reducing the demand for unskilled and semi-skilled workers in relatively high paying manufacturing industries. These characteristics combine to generate relatively low household incomes.

Some of these characteristics may be seen as opportunities. The fact that the County is a net exporter of workers to Warren and Mercer Counties in Pennsylvania, and Trumbull and Ashtabula Counties in Ohio, suggests that the potential labor force for jobs in the County is fairly high. Furthermore, prevailing wages are quite low and the County is in a good competitive position to lure industries seeking an abundant pool of inexpensive labor. Conversely, the estimates for the 1990s are very encouraging, suggesting that the County is rebounding.

According to labor market studies, Crawford County had a slight increase in employment in the first five months of 1995 when compared to the first five months of 1994. In order to maintain and increase this trend in employment, the County needs to concentrate on immediate and medium-term new business attractions.

CHAPTER VII: Crawford County's Transportation

Some needed transportation system improvements in Crawford County include enhancing access to various industrial sites, reducing congestion on Meadville's North Street, better coordinating social service transportation, upgrading roads and access areas for wide-body trucks (102 inches), and diverting through truck traffic out of Meadville. As with many areas throughout Pennsylvania and the country, improved truck routes in Crawford County are needed to attract new industry, specifically east-west corridor travel routes between Meadville and Titusville. Based on business information from the Meadville-Titusville East-West Corridor Study and the 1973 Comprehensive Plan, road improvements to State Routes 27, 77, and 408 are desirable. Additionally, improvements to State Route 198 and the roads to the industrial zones west of Meadville are needed. Beyond enhancing the County's transportation network, such road improvements would increase the number of workers within a 30-minute commute of both Meadville and Titusville. This would be a significant business attraction.

Roadway Safety

Many links in the County's key routes have accident rates significantly above the statewide average. Several clusters of "night curve" accidents were identified. This accident data suggests that the following location-specific improvements should be considered.

-
-
- # hill climbing lanes
 - # reducing curves (both horizontal and vertical)
 - # intersection improvements (signals, channelization, and turning lanes)
 - # lane realignment and relocation
 - # lane and shoulder widening
 - # elimination of off-set intersections

Roadway Deficiencies

The lanes and shoulders of the existing roadway network are largely substandard when compared to current roadway design standards.

- # Extensive stretches of travel lanes and shoulders are narrower than the current state standards.
- # The existing roads follow the rolling topography of the region resulting in many vertical grades and horizontal curves that necessitate warning signs with advisory speed reductions at a rate of approximately one per mile.
- # Mobility is restricted and travel time increased by long stretches of no-passing zones (this occurred on approximately 80% of the study routes).
- # Larger trucks are prohibited on State Route 77's State Road Hill. Since it is not feasible to improve this grade, improving the alternate routes (i.e., State Route 198, State Route 86, and U.S. 6/19 should be considered).
- # In the urban areas of Meadville and Titusville, many of the traffic signals are outdated or substandard. Updating the signal displays, interconnections, and timings would reduce congestion and accident potential.

Roadway Congestion

In and around Meadville, eight roadway links and thirteen intersections are projected to have a Level of Service "D" or worse by 2017. In and around Titusville, two highway links and four intersections are projected to have a Level of Service "D" or worse by that time.

Roadway System Linkage

Travel in the corridor between I-79, Meadville, and Titusville requires the use of at least several routes and sometimes the use of north-south routes to go east or west. This is not desirable, particularly for tourism. Many of the region's largest and most unique attractions are in the eastern Crawford County and northern Venango County areas. One route should be clearly signed to assist tourists, especially those arriving from I-79.

Trucks are using state Routes 77 and 408 slightly more often than State Route 27 between Meadville and Titusville. Additional signs should be provided to further encourage truckers to use 77 and 408.

CHAPTER VIII: The Community Facilities of Crawford County

Education

There are seven public school districts that serve a part of Crawford County, all but one of which also serves parts of other counties. These seven districts consist of a total of 12 high schools and 28 elementary, middle, and junior high schools. There is a vocational-technical school in the County. Between 20% and 25% of the high-school students in the school districts that utilize this school attend classes there. Post-secondary educational opportunities are available to County residents at the Crawford County Area Vocational Technical School, PMI, the Northwest Job Training Partnership, Allegheny College, the University of Pittsburgh at Titusville, and five additional colleges/universities located within 45 minutes of the Courthouse.

Recreation

The set of recreational facilities that are located in the County is dominated by large-scale, regionally oriented operations that are owned and/or operated by the federal or state governments. Because of this, the County's role in providing recreation has largely been one of cooperation with state and federal agencies — as opposed to one of building local parks. Colonel Crawford Park is a good example of this. Nevertheless, many impressive locally owned and operated recreational facilities exist in the County.

Public Safety

Twelve separate police forces protect the County, consisting of a total of over 120 full time enforcement officers. There are 34 separate fire fighting units that protect a portion of the County, consisting of 25 paid and nearly 1,000 volunteer firefighters. There are 17 emergency medical (ambulance) services that serve a portion of the County, consisting of 55 paid paramedics, 57 paid EMTs, and over 130 volunteer EMTs.

Water Systems, Sanitary Sewer Systems, and Solid Waste Disposal Patterns

There are 36 permitted public water systems in Crawford County. There are 57 non-municipal and 12 municipal sanitary sewer systems. Crawford County's Municipal Solid Waste Management Plan is currently being updated. The County's current regional capacity for landfilling solid waste is five to seven years. In 1997, an estimated 12% of the County's total solid waste was recycled.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO CRAWFORD COUNTY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

INTRODUCTION TO

CRAWFORD COUNTY'S 1999 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This Plan marks the completion of an intensive effort over the preceding two years, which was focused upon the preparation of the Countywide Comprehensive Plan for Crawford County. The Plan is an update to the 1973 Crawford County Comprehensive Plan. Based upon the collection and analysis of data describing development as it presently exists and forecasts of anticipated growth and development throughout the County as it is expected to exist in the future, the Plan was conceived with one major goal in mind -- **that of insuring the future orderly growth and development of Crawford County and making Crawford County a better place in which to live and work.**

The fact that the Countywide Comprehensive Plan has been completed, however, should **not** be interpreted to mean that the County's Planning Program is completed. In actuality, the completion of the Countywide Comprehensive Plan marks the beginning of the very vital phase of the Planning Program - that of Implementation. The time for implementation follows adoption of the Plan's concepts and recommendations in the summer of 2000. At that time the County Commissioners need to insure that the concepts and recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan be acted upon to help the County and its constituent municipalities, to realize their mutual goals, to capitalize upon their mutual opportunities, and to solve their common problems.

The process of countywide comprehensive planning is a systematic and continuing process intended to aid in solving current problems and in providing for future needs. The process includes the identification and continuous refinement of Goals and Objectives; formulation of development criteria; collection and analysis of pertinent data; consideration of alternative courses of action; policy decisions upon selected courses of action; coordination of "local level" plans and programs with the activities affecting the development of the County; formulation, maintenance, and updating of the Countywide Comprehensive Plan on an ongoing basis; and improvements, programming, and other measures for implementing the Plan. Comprehensive Planning most commonly focuses upon: Land Use, Housing, Community Facilities and Public Utilities, Transportation, Environment, Economy (left to the area economic development Authorities in this case), Implementation Tools, and other aspects of the physical, economic, and social development of area wide significance to a particular geographic area.

The process of Countywide Comprehensive Planning includes: (1) assessing the needs and resources of an area; (2) forming conclusions based upon the analysis of the components of the County; (3) formulating goals, objectives, policies, and standards to guide the long-range physical, economic, and human resources development; (4) preparing plans and programs which (a) identify alternate courses of action in the spatial and functional relationships between the activities to be carried out thereunder; (b) specify the appropriate ordering in time of such activities; (c) take into account other related factors affecting the achievement of the desired development of the area; and (d) provide an overall framework and guide for the preparation of functional and project development plans.¹

The Countywide Comprehensive Plan should provide the general framework into which "local level" Community Comprehensive Plans, functional plans, and project plans should fit. For an indication of the interrelationship between those various types of planning, refer to the **Figure 1** on the following page.

¹Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247, as amended by Act 170 of 1988, and other subsequent amendments.

Figure 1 - Flow Chart of Comprehensive Planning Process

The plan elements presented within this Comprehensive Plan are countywide in scope. In the case of each municipality, we recognize their considerable importance to the County as a whole and its future development. For this reason, we are particularly interested in insuring that the planning and development within each municipality is in the proper relationship with the Countywide Plan of the County. Through the proper coordination of planning and development at both the "local" and "countywide" levels, it is the intent of the Crawford County Planning Commission to eliminate any costly duplication of effort, to maximize the benefits to be gained through proper planning, and to work toward the achievement of our major goal -- that of insuring the future orderly growth and development of Crawford County making Crawford County a better place in which to live and work.

Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to provide long-range direction to the future growth and development of Crawford County by providing a general framework or blueprint to guide future development in such a manner as to achieve the Countywide Goals and Objectives. The Plan is intended not only to present solutions to existing problems, but also to identify and anticipated future problems and recommend courses of action for their solution.

Comprised of five closely integrated elements -- (1) Land Use Plan; (2) Housing; (3) Transportation Plan; (4) Infrastructure and Community Facilities; and (5) Environmental -- the County Comprehensive Plan is most necessary to establish a general framework which will guide future orderly growth and development throughout Crawford County well into the 21st century. It is the aim of this Plan that it be utilized by the elected public officials throughout the County as a guide for evaluating and making future development decisions as to their desirability and positive contribution to the overall County of the future.

Scope

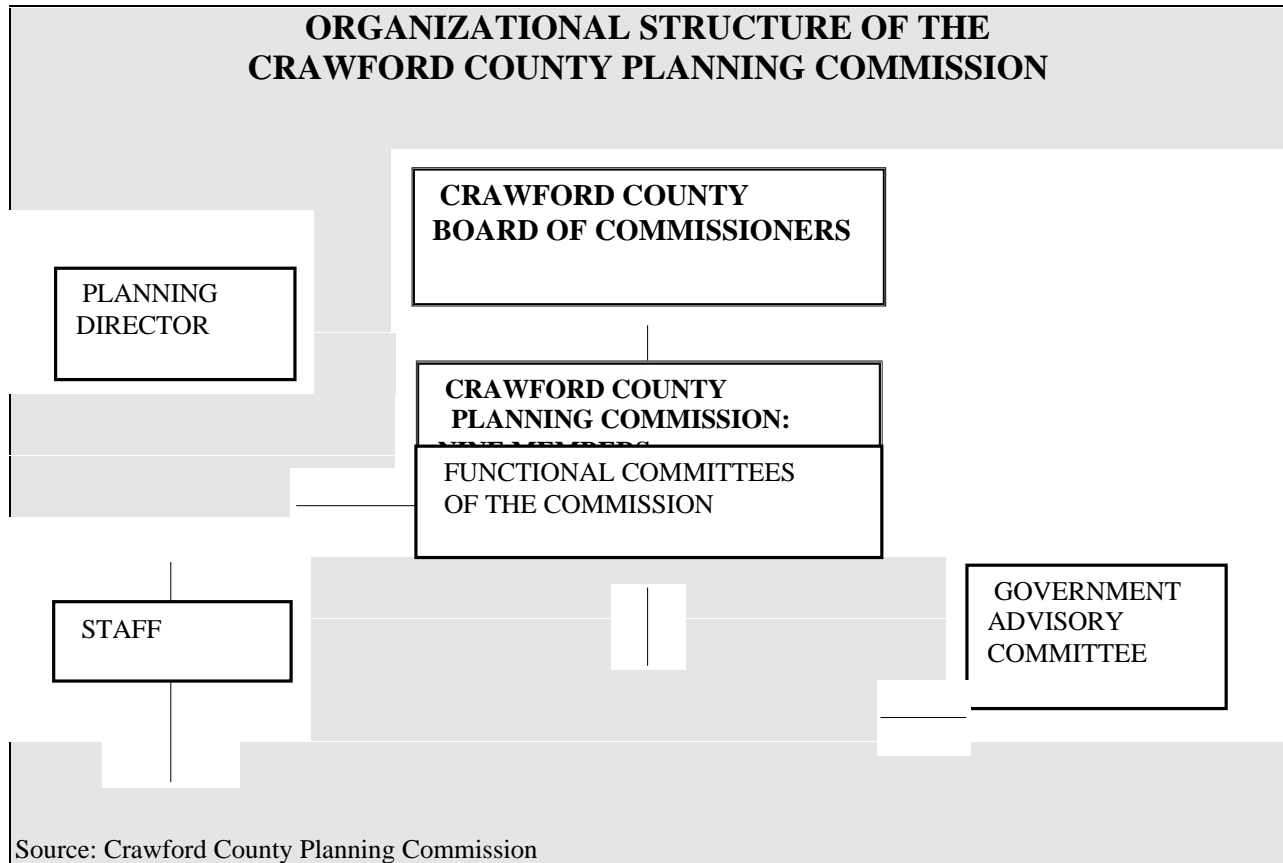
The scope of this Plan is broad in nature since it applies to Crawford County as a whole. Having been prepared at the countywide level, this Plan does not go to the level of detail usually associated with "local level" Comprehensive Planning. It encompasses, however, the broad structure and general framework of development throughout the County.

In providing a general framework to guide future growth and development throughout Crawford County, most every community component has been considered and analyzed. For the purpose of plan development, community components have been grouped into the five Basic Plan Elements including: Land Use Plan (Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional); Housing Plan (Private, Publicly Assisted); Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan (Municipal Buildings, Schools, Libraries, Parks and Recreation, Police and Fire Protection) and Public Utilities (Water, Sewer, and Solid Waste); and Environmental ("growing greener" initiatives, conservation of open space, water quality, water quantity, streams and lakes pollution, soil contamination, stormwater management).

Organization for Planning

Recognizing the considerable importance of a strong organizational structure for planning, Crawford County and its constituent municipalities have placed particular emphasis upon the establishment and maintenance of a sound organizational structure. The authorization for the original establishment of the Crawford County Planning Commission is set forth under the terms and provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247, as amended by Act 170 of 1988 and several subsequent amendments. The organizational structure of the Crawford County Planning Commission is basically similar to that of other County Planning Commissions throughout Pennsylvania as shown in the organizational chart below.

Figure 2



Study Design With the foregoing organizational structure acting as a firm base, a program was conceived for the formulation of the Countywide Planning effort. The following presents a summary of the study design being employed:

STUDY DESIGN

Phase I, Background Studies, Volume I

- # Historic Preservation
- # Physiography and Environment
- # Land Use
- # Population, Demographics, and Economic Base
- # Housing
- # Economy
- # Transportation
- # Community Facilities and Public Infrastructure
- # Municipal Finance

Phase II, Comprehensive Plan, Volume II

- # Goals and Objectives (public participation)
- # Land Use Plan Element
- # Housing Plan Element
- # Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan Element
- # Transportation Plan Element
- # Environmental Plan Element

Phase III & Subsequent Phases, Implementation and Ongoing Program

Effectuation of recommendations and proposals presented in the Comprehensive Plan. All elements included in Phases I and II - Evaluate, update, and refine on a continuing basis. Implementation Strategies including Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, and other miscellaneous implementation strategies and ordinances as found appropriate.

Planning Sub-Regions

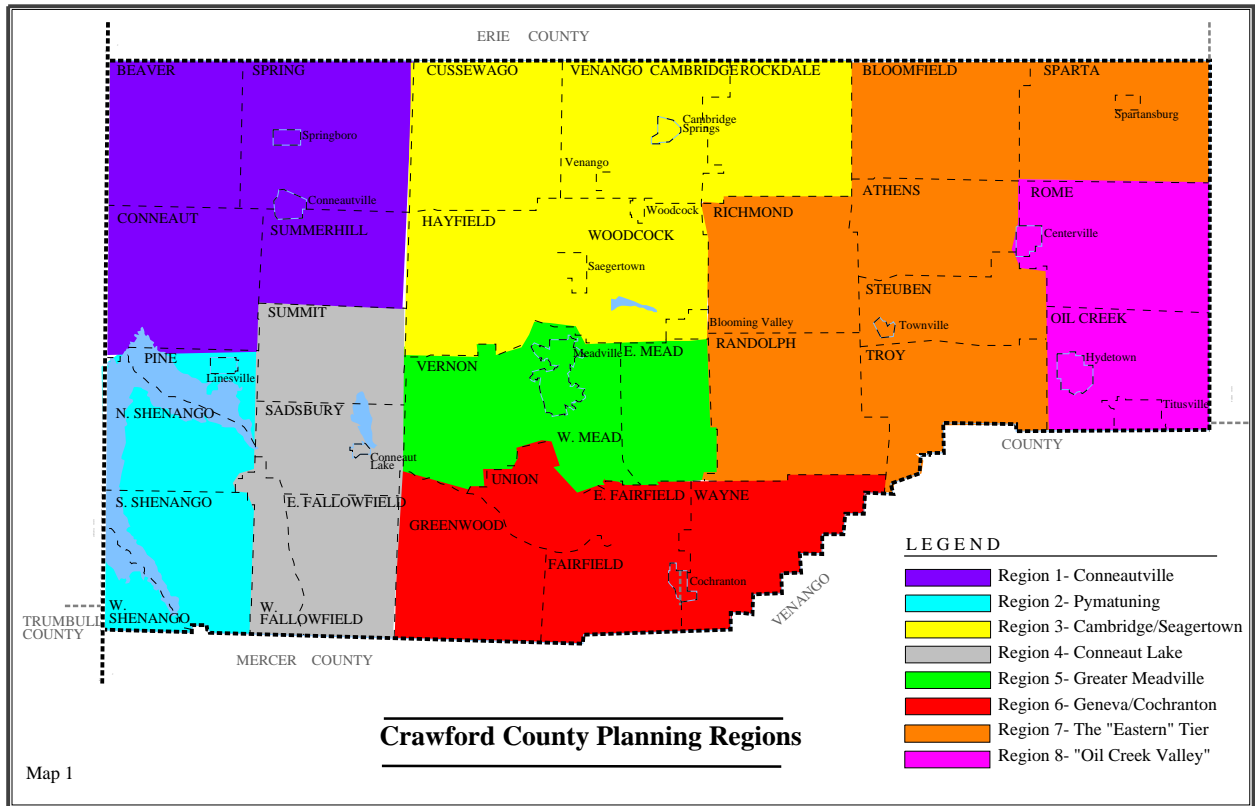
While planning on the “countywide” level is imperative in that it encompasses problems and solutions on a broad scope and defines a general framework which will guide future development of the entire county, it must necessarily be complemented by “local level” planning. The increasing pace of development now being experienced throughout parts of Crawford County and the resultant pressures and problems experienced by the units of local government make it imperative that detailed and definitive planning be undertaken through planning programs at the local level.

Paradoxically, increasing development, which necessitates detailed planning on the local level, may require that individual municipalities acting separately undertake the task. The complexity and extensive nature of the myriad problems confronting local government have no respect for traditional municipal boundaries. Conversely, the solutions to these problems cannot be accomplished within the boundaries of individual municipalities acting separately and out of phase with neighboring municipalities. It is not intended to infringe upon the autonomy of any singular unit of local government, but to fashion a combined effort to attack and solve common problems and to address common opportunities within self-contained areas constituted of municipalities exhibiting similar characteristics.

The solution then appears to rest in consolidation, not of government, but of effort and services among adjacent municipalities within delineated areas which are large enough to contain the common problem and yet not so extensive as to obscure the significance of the local point of view. Further justification of this concept is apparent in the economies of intergovernmental cooperation. The facilities and services which units of local government are called upon to provide are increasing; and correspondingly, greater demands are made upon local financial resources. Many facilities including water service, sewer service, solid waste disposal, recreation (district parks), land use controls, ordinance administration, economic development, and numerous others can be more economically provided when undertaken through intergovernmental cooperation.

Bearing in mind the advantages of the concept of intergovernmental cooperation among adjacent municipalities and the necessity for the points of view afforded by the “countywide” and “local levels” of planning, the County has been divided into eight planning Sub-Regions as graphically illustrated in MAP 1 below. It is felt that each of these Sub-

Regions, constituted of a number of adjacent municipalities, which exhibit similar physical, economic, and social characteristics, affords a firm and logical basis for delimiting units for future local level planning programs. These same Planning Sub-Regions have been utilized as the basic planning unit in the development of various elements of the Crawford County Comprehensive Plan.



Map 1

CHAPTER II

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

CRAWFORD COUNTY'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

Any Comprehensive Plan to guide the future development of a community is only useful if it reflects the goals and objectives of the residents living in the municipality. Goals and objectives are intended to respond directly to the wants, needs, and visions of the community. Ideally, the formulation of goals and corresponding objectives is a cooperative undertaking by local government officials, the general public, and technical guidance from planning professionals. Crawford County's Goals and Objectives have been formulated through a formalized process involving citizen participation, the Crawford County Planning Commission, elected officials of the municipalities and of the County and the County's planning consultant, Richard C. Sutter & Associates, Inc.

Although all groups mentioned in the goals and objectives process were important in the formulation of this policy guide for Crawford County, special efforts were made on the part of concerned citizens in the public participation process. The process, spanning from the summer of 1998 to the early fall of 1999, involved more than 350 residents and more than 40 meetings. The participation from the public was one of the most comprehensive undertaken in the Commonwealth among rural counties. The meetings began in late 1997 with a "kick-off" meeting announcing the intentions of the Crawford County Planning Commission to update the County's 1973 Comprehensive Plan. The meeting was well attended by citizens throughout the County. The meeting's intent was to explain the Comprehensive Planning process and to solicit broad participation from the public. (**Figure 3** graphically depicts the entire public participation process).

The "kick-off" meeting led to the formation of eight "Communities of Interest". The regions were formed so that citizens of communities with like interests, geographical locations, and socio-economic characteristics could discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of their region (S.W.O.T.).

Next, to insure that the participation ranged through all ages of citizens in the County, a survey was taken of senior citizens throughout the various nursing home and care centers in the County. Students also participated in a "visioning" process plus activities designed to teach them about local government. The students involvement also included receiving flyers announcing an upcoming "visioning workshop" to encourage greater public participation

A large "visioning workshop" inviting the general citizenry occurred in the early fall of 1998. The meeting was a success with over 150 attendees. The resulting information spawned the formation of "topical groups" to further examine the many key issues and concerns raised from the public feedback.

The "topical groups" focused on six major areas: agriculture and land use, environment, tourism and business, housing, transportation and intergovernmental cooperation. The groups each met a minimum of three times averaging 15 to 25 members. The intent of the formation of the groups was to become technical advisory committees to the Planning Commission. Nevertheless, the groups were not made solely of stakeholders, elected officials and professionals, rather a unique mix of experts and the general citizens. The topical groups, later known as Technical Committees, met in a workshop in April of 1999 to summarize the results of their meetings into issues and policies and to receive feedback about how the information would be presented in the Comprehensive Plan.

The final public feedback was from a survey of the local municipalities concerning recent planning activities. This information was combined with the large amount of feedback from regional meetings, seniors, students, visioning and the Technical Committees to form the Goals and Objectives of Crawford County listed in this chapter.

The Crawford County Commissioners and the Crawford County Planning Commission would like to thank all of the citizens who helped to make the 1998-1999 Crawford County Comprehensive Plan truly a "grassroots" plan for the future of Crawford County.

CRAWFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FLOW CHART

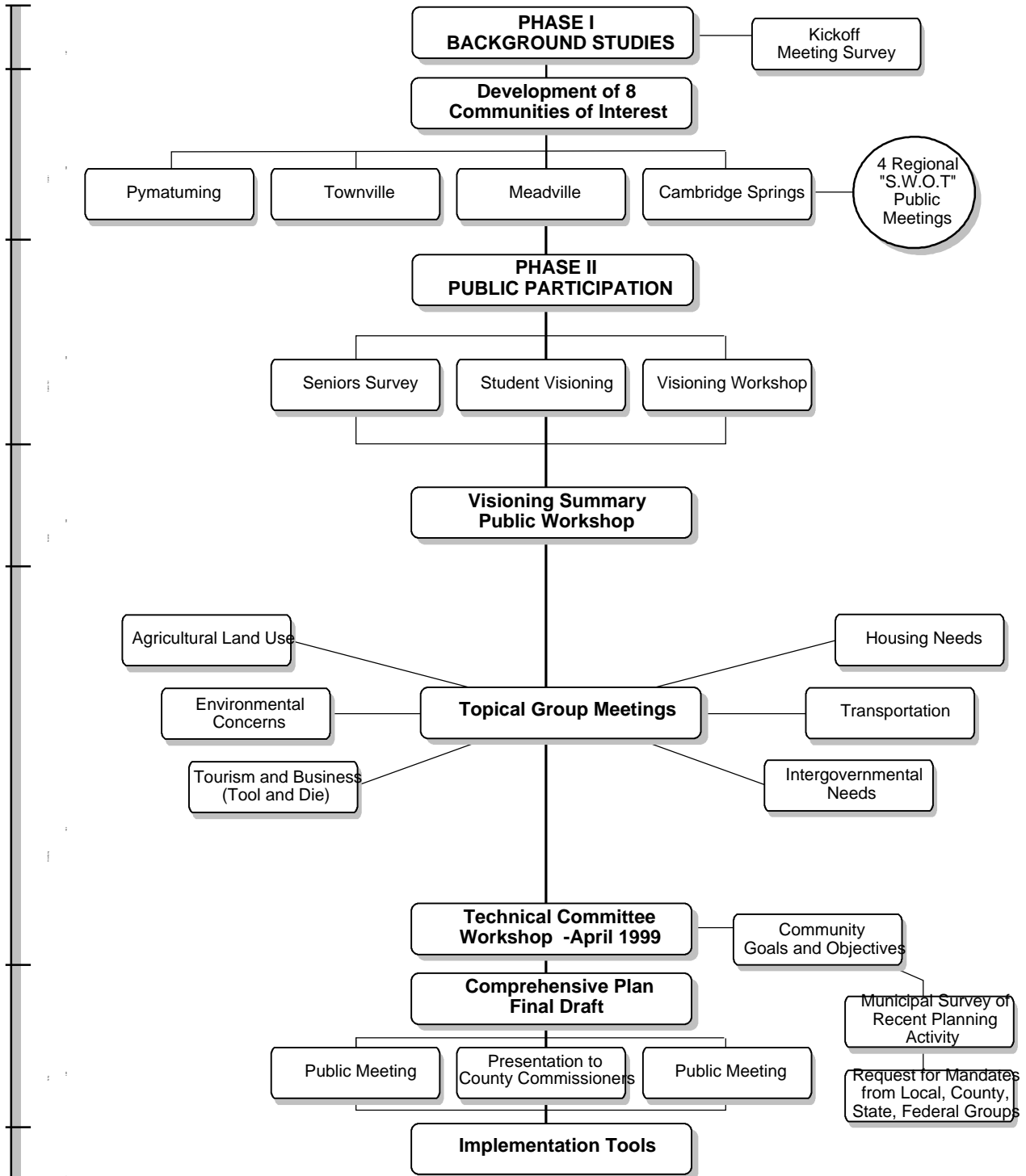


Figure 3

Definitions

As a prerequisite to the work performed upon the Goals and Objectives formulation process, a set of definitions has been utilized throughout the process of Goals and Objectives Statement preparation. These definitions follow:

GOALS: “Goals are defined as a general value statement of long-range direction or ideal, unconstrained by time, which identify desired states of affairs toward which activities and resources can be directed. Goals reflect the community’s needs and values and give meaning, purpose, and direction to the day-to-day planning and development decision being made by the municipalities of the study area and other local decision-makers.” Progress toward the achievement of Goals can be accomplished through the application of policies and the attainment of short-range objectives and the accomplishment of corresponding projects and programs.

OBJECTIVES: “Objectives are defined as measurable or quantifiable statements. They are specific in nature and are intended to serve the related goals.” The attainment of groupings of objectives will ultimately result in positive progress toward the achievement of a given goal.

Purpose

The principal purpose of a statement of Goals and Objectives is to provide a means of direction and guidance to the planning and development activities throughout Crawford County.

Process

The process of formulating “Goals and Objectives” involves: the inventory and analysis of needs, issues, resources, problems, and opportunities of the study area and its member municipalities; the formulation of long-range goals based upon this inventory and analysis; the formulation of short-range objectives usually one year and three years; and the identification of projects needed to attain these stated objectives. Additionally through the planning process, a prioritizing of projects is performed. As time passes, a periodic (usually annual) Measure of Attainment is performed. The Measure of Attainment provides an indication of the manner in which the study area and its constituent municipalities are moving toward the achievement of their stated Goals and toward the attainment of their objectives and projects. The statement of goals and objectives and the measure of attainment are community executive management tools to improve the allocation of resources (natural, financial, manpower, and time) toward meeting the most critical needs of the County and its constituent municipalities as determined from the evolving recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan components being advanced by the Commissioners and the Planning Commission.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Included in the Goals and Objectives listed below are the Plan Elements of Land Use, Traffic Circulation, Community Facilities, Housing and Neighborhoods, and Environment. Additionally, several visioning results and Technical Committees expanded beyond the scope of coverage for the development of objectives and policies for this Plan. The additional areas of concentration include Intergovernmental Cooperation, Tourism, and Economic Development. The latter areas do not have chapters dedicated to them. However, goals, objectives and policies for Intergovernmental Cooperation and Tourism were derived from the extensive public participation process, have been written within this chapter, and will be important to the elected officials in future policy decisions. Economic development issues are not largely affected by County policy and were deemed to be left to the major economic development agencies that operate within the County.

Therefore, it is the pleasure of the Crawford County Commissioners and the Crawford County Planning Commission to present the “Goals and Objectives” for Crawford County’s social, physical, and economic development for the new millennium and through the next 15 years.

Mission Statement: To provide a high quality of life through promoting a healthy economic climate by fostering the entrepreneurial spirit and value-added resource development, providing decent, affordable housing, preserving urban cores while maintaining rural character, preserving bio-diversity, clean water and air, improve the coordination of agency activities and municipal functions, and support the improvements along with the new developments towards an efficient, safe, diverse, economical and environmentally sensitive transportation system.

Chapter

III. LAND USE

Goal: To achieve orderly, efficiently, and economically, socially and physically balanced transformation of open lands and acreages into residential, commercial, industrial, and other private and public development as needed to accommodate the increasing population growth of the County.

General

Objective: To have local land use decisions consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan.

Objective: To recognize, preserve, and protect specific historic and cultural resources as a means for enhancing the visual character of the local municipalities and for improving the overall quality of life of County residents.

Objective: To preserve the existing rural character of the County and to preserve land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Objective: To provide commercial sites which are safe, serve neighborhood populations, minimize traffic, encourage pedestrian traffic, reuse existing infrastructure and are attractive.

Agricultural Land Use

Objective: To use existing agricultural land more effectively.

Objective: To preserve and protect economically active farmland with “good” soil.

IV. TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

Goal: To create an efficient, safe, environmentally sensitive, and economical transportation system for all residents of the County.

General

Objective: To provide an efficient, safe and economical transportation system to move people and goods, which will promote better communications, make better use of neighboring resources, and create a greater choice of living-working relationships for the citizenry.

Objective: To minimize the environmental impacts of transportation improvements.

Objective: To assure every elderly resident of Crawford County has adequate and affordable transportation in order to access community services and facilities.

Roads and Highways

Objective: To maintain the highway system and make improvements to meet the needs of the current and increasing vehicular population.

Rail

Objective: To preserve and improve rail freight service.

Air

Objective: To preserve and improve air services of the Meadville and Titusville airports.

V. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal: To increase the standard of living, attractiveness, and desirability of the County through the adequate provision of a wide range of community facilities, that are easily accessible to all.

Objective: To increase the livability and attractiveness of the County through the adequate provision of a wide range of community facilities which are easily accessible to all the citizenry.

Objective: To insure adequate water supply, sewage collection and treatment systems, and storm drainage facilities are available to all concentrations of development.

Objective: To promote program and facility development to provide and maintain quality basic education in Crawford County.

VI. HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Goal: To insure that every resident has clean, safe and affordable residence.

General

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Urban Housing

Objective: To minimize housing unit losses in Meadville, Titusville, and larger boroughs due to neglect, expansion of institutions, and conversion to commercial uses.

Objective: To minimize Meadville and Titusville's population declines as families buy housing on the outskirts of those cities and into the hinterlands.

Objective: To improve rental housing conditions in Meadville and Titusville, which are especially vulnerable to neglect and deterioration.

Rural Housing

Objective: To preserve and extend existing housing thru BOCA standards and implementation.

Objective: To assist the many rural residents who are able to live on very little means, but find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Market Rate Housing

Objective: To minimize the dispersed manner in which much of the county's new housing is developing in the Townships surrounding Meadville and Titusville.

Objective: To manage rural residential land use as utility service extensions and technologies solve rural development factors currently inhibiting growth.

Subsidized and Special Needs Housing

Objective: To assist the many families in Crawford County that are not eligible for public housing or other forms of public housing because of poor tenant records, credit history, or other life skills problems.

Objective: To better utilize the public agency's housing resources surplus of two and three bedroom public housing units and support the development of one bedroom subsidized apartment units for single persons in Meadville and Titusville.

Objective: To mitigate the problems associated with the many public housing units in Meadville and Titusville that are poorly situated for their residents to access public services and retail establishments.

Objective: To investigate the perception that there is some duplication of services available to tenants facing eviction or homelessness.

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Objective: To insure adequate rental units are available for low-income persons, families, elderly, and those having other special needs.

VII. ENVIRONMENT

Goal: To improve citizen awareness of environmental issues through educational initiatives, provide sufficient quantity and quality of water for consumption, recreation and wildlife, manage forests levels, and insure safe solid waste disposal practices.

Objective: To preserve and protect the ecological and environmental quality using both proactive and regulatory means.

Objective: To encourage high quality development and redevelopment that minimize negative environmental and visual impacts and creates developments that are fiscally sound.

Objective: To mitigate transportation related pollution to air, water, and soil.

Educational Initiatives

Objective: To provide the most useful and effective opportunities to increase land and environmental awareness within the County.

Water Quantity and Quality

Objective: To minimize the ill effects of unmitigated stormwater run-off including point and non-point solutions.

Objective: To provide the citizens of the County with clean water.

Objective: To re-establish stream buffers or riparian zones along water systems.

Lake/Stream Management

Objective: To promote and encourage the cooperation of local municipalities in the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program introduced by the County Soil and Water Conservation District, who's aim is to improve water quality for cold water streams by reducing the run-off from gravel roads.

Forestry Management

Objective: To preserve and protect our existing forests while allowing for ecologically balanced amount of forestry.

Solid Waste Management

Objective: To provide the information and services which results in the most environmentally sensitive collection, treatment, and disposal of solid wastes.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Goal: To improve the coordination and cooperation of local government initiatives within Crawford County.

Objective: To encourage the utilization of the Comprehensive Plan to guide decision making by the Supervisors, Councils, Planning Commissions, and other local Boards and Authorities to assure that the objectives of this document are accomplished.

Objective: To establish a system promoting the regional cooperation of local governments.

Objective: To make available the County Comprehensive Plan to the largest amount of citizens in a cost-effective manner.

TOURISM

Goal: To increase tourism within the County.

Objective: To promote Crawford County commerce, tourism and local events.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To foster a strong economic environment within the County to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.

Objective: To create an economic climate conducive to development of career-oriented, rewarding jobs.

Objective: To advertise countywide economic opportunities and business assistance programs.

Objective: To promote development of commercial, office, and manufacturing activities, which will provide for growth of the economy.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through awareness and development of additional diversified local employment opportunities.

Objective: To minimize the loss of many raw materials and resources such as lumber, natural gas, farm products, and other agricultural products which are leaving the county and being processed or manufactured elsewhere to improve and diversify the local economy.

Objective: To promote funding for the Crawford County Redevelopment Authority to develop a staff agency to promote non-industrial forms of economic development outside of the Cities of Meadville and Titusville.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure to remove impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

Objective: To retain and enhance the downtown areas of the cities of Meadville and Titusville.

SUMMARY

The results of the goals and objectives are further discussed in the ensuing chapters in this report. In order for goals to be obtainable objectives must be implemented by elected officials of the governing body through the formulation of policy (political courses of action), which support and forward the objectives of the County. The definition of policies is as follows:

POLICIES: “Policies are defined as definite courses or methods of action uniquely tailored to aid in the formulation and guiding of the community planning and development decision-making process.” For the effective advancement toward the attainment of goals and objectives and their corresponding projects and programs, specifically designed policies must be formulated. To be most effective, policies must be formulated in light of existing and anticipated conditions and must be applied uniformly and consistently over time. It is through the implementation of policies (the means) that it is intended to achieve the goals and objectives (the ends).

As discussed in the introduction, several of the goals and objectives sections authored in this chapter were not included as individual chapters in the Comprehensive Plan, thus limiting the discussion of policies to achieve the objectives for Intergovernmental Cooperation, Tourism, and Economic Development. It is the desire of those involved in the planning process that many of the policies developed be published as supplemental sections to this chapter, which has been completed below for Intergovernmental Cooperation and Tourism. However, the policies for Economic Development will not be discussed due to the limited desire of the County to greatly affect current policy.

Supplemental Section A: Intergovernmental Cooperation

The goal of the intergovernmental cooperation section is “*...to improve the coordination and cooperation of local government initiatives within Crawford County.*” The objectives designed to fulfill this goal are listed below augmented with the supporting policies.

Objective: To encourage the utilization of the Comprehensive Plan to guide decision making by the Supervisors, Councils, Planning Commissions, and other local Boards and Authorities to assure that the objectives of this document are accomplished.

Policies:

- # Heavily promote the finished document through publication, distribution, advertisement, press releases, and public meetings.
- # Update the plan every 5 years and redistribute the updates.
- # Update the plan in 2002 when the new census data is available.
- # Publish annual updates on progress of the goals and objectives.
- # Establish as the Planning Commission’s the task, annual review of the Comprehensive Plan so that the policies developed in 2000 are still relevant and applicable in 2, 5, and 10 years.
- # Attempt to make the Plan user-friendly through educational programs, realistic funding opportunities, and better dialogue among agencies.

Objective: To establish a system promoting the regional cooperation of local governments.

Policies:

- # Form ongoing technical groups as citizen advisory boards via committees of the Crawford County Planning Commission and staff.
- # Organize a semi-annual meeting of elected local officials discussing the progress on the Goals and Objectives of the County Comprehensive Plan.

Objective: To make available the County Comprehensive Plan to the largest amount of citizens in a cost-effective manner.

Policies:

- # Make the Comprehensive Plan and final summary available on-line with links to other County agencies websites.
- # Devise a synopsis of the key points or highlights of the Plan Background and Policy Portion that would be forwarded to municipalities and to the Chambers of Commerce for inclusion with the County Welcome Packets.

Objective: To increase ordinance consistency throughout the County’s municipalities implementing new “growing greener” techniques.

Policy:

- # County Commissioners, via the Planning Commission, should strongly encourage municipalities to update the local subdivision and land development ordinances to include basic requirements to identify wetlands, scenic corridors and endangered biological species, in addition to the inclusion of “growing greener” subdivision techniques.

Supplemental Section B: Tourism Policies

The goal of the County for tourism is “...to increase tourist traffic within the County.” The straightforward goal is supported by some very interesting policies.

Objective: To promote Crawford County economy, tourism, and local events.

Policies:

- # Develop a community website.
- # Construct kiosks for tourism and local events information in central place in each of the cities, all boroughs, and major townships.
- # Develop a single publication in the form of a map or booklet that quantifies all of Crawford County’s assets.
- # The agency designated to promote tourism in Crawford County needs to establish education and training for persons serving in “front-line” tourism service businesses. Formulate a Countywide tourism plan that specifically outlines future goals, projects, and staffing needs. The plan should also be very specific on the amount of money needed. This plan should be the instrument to present to the county, the state, and private enterprises when the tourism promotion agency is seeking funding.
- # Explore other funding sources for tourism promotion such as a countywide bed tax.
- # Support efforts that are consistent with the Route 6 Initiative. One way is to support transportation projects that enhance the Route 6 experience such as shoulder widening for bicycle traffic and streetscape improvements.
- # Promote roadside gardens in key locations, such as entryways into Meadville, Titusville, Cambridge Springs, Conneaut Lake, etc.
- # Reassess land use regulations in these communities to provide for more landscaping requirements, greater setbacks, and appropriate land uses in key locations.
- # Develop a Scenic Value Inventory, which identifies areas of special scenic value that are vulnerable to development pressures prior to modification or elimination.

FUTURE LAND USE

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Introduction

For Crawford County to realize its optimum growth potential; derive the maximum benefit from its resources, capabilities, and opportunities; experience economic growth and development; and meet the many needs of its present and future residents, it is necessary that land throughout the County be designated for its most suitable and appropriate public and private uses. This allocation of land can be best accomplished through the land use planning process within the overall context of Crawford County's Future Land Use Plan.

Land use planning is comprised of the identification of the location, amount, character, intensity, and timing of the various uses of the land. It proposes a pattern of development which will: insure the harmonious interaction of the various land uses; maintain a balance among the various land uses; minimize the mixing of incompatible uses; and achieve a harmony between development and the natural environment. The impact of the Land Use Plan is readily visible and apparent and is a prime determinant of the nature and character of the future community. Additional importance is attached to the Land Use Plan by the fact that it will bind together the Traffic Circulation, Community Facilities and Services, and the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan elements presented in successive chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

Being countywide in scope, the Land Use Plan contained in this element of the Comprehensive Plan proposes a general framework to guide future development as growth and expansion proceed in the future. It is so designed to readily accommodate the more specific and definitive elements of "local level" planning programs which have been undertaken or which will be initiated in the future. Embodied in this plan element are proposals and concepts which will lead to the attainment of the previously presented Countywide Land Use Goals: (1) to ensure the optimal use of the County's land resources; and (2) to promote harmony among existing development, future development, and the natural environment.

Although comprehensive community planning focuses upon the future, it must be grounded by the conditions of the past and the present. Existing development has been fashioned by the interplay of political, economic, social, and physical forces, some of which if left unchanged will propel development in directions that are not in the best interest of the County and its constituent local municipalities. Earlier generations laid the foundation for existing development. Similarly, this generation is making decisions that will determine the future character of Crawford County for the generations to come.

As the population has increased, residential development has spread out from the boroughs along existing roadways; primarily in the form of low-density, scattered single-family housing. Large development has occurred in the forms of intense commercial development along major transportation corridors, highway related commercial development, and tourist related commercial and seasonal housing. The redistribution of population over recent years indicates an increasing preference for a suburban or rural location as compared with housing within the boroughs. For financial reasons; - lower taxes and cheaper land - as well as some social reasons, families tend to move outward to newer areas, which are perceived by many to be more desirable. A large portion of the County's land remains vacant or wooded; however, much of this land in the southern portion of the County is too steep for economical construction or any high-intensity use. At the present and for the next several decades, most of this wooded land is best reserved for watersheds and conservation purposes or for passive recreation areas. There remains potentially developable land immediately surrounding the already developed areas of the boroughs; however, the ever-increasing needs and demands upon the land, which will only be compounded in the future, make it imperative that growth throughout the County be properly guided.

Development Opportunities and Constraints

Many factors contributed to the existing land use pattern throughout the County; among the most significant are: topography, slope (in particular), natural cover, suitability of soil for agricultural or building purposes, the course of rivers and waterways, flood plains, former trails and existing roadways, and early settlement patterns. All of the above factors are also important to future land development. Those factors, which should be considered to a greater degree in future development, include:

- # land use interrelationships
- # existing development
- # infrastructure such as sewer and water
- # underlying geologic structure
- # depth to Bedrock
- # soil characteristics -- suitability for development
- # slope
- # seasonal depth of water table
- # subsurface drainage
- # flood plain areas
- # wetlands and marshlands
- # large water bodies
- # environmental factors; e.g., smoke, odors, objectionable noise, fire hazards, heavily traveled thoroughfares, surface water pollution, etc.
- # the availability and proximity of employment, basic community facilities, shopping areas, basic public utilities, mass transportation, and major highways
- # natural amenities

In developing the Development Opportunities and Constraints Map many of the above factors were mapped to create a graphic depiction of the places where future development should or will take place. The results are then used to create a future growth areas map. Refer to the following page for a visual representation of the overlay technique utilized in determining Development Opportunities and Constraints in the preparation of the Land Use Plan Element. Refer to **Map 2** for a graphic indication of the development constraints throughout Crawford County.

figure 4 - Comprehensive Community Planning Land Use Plan Element Overlay Technique

Map 2 - Development Opportunities and Constraints

LAND USE OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The overall Land Use Planning Goal for Crawford County is *“to achieve orderly, efficiently and economically, socially and physically balanced transformation of open lands and acreages into residential, commercial, industrial, and other private and public development as needed to accommodate the increasing population growth of the County”*. More important than maintaining the status quo, the County must look ahead and anticipate future land use needs. In view of the large amount of undeveloped land throughout the County, the County is now in an excellent position to lay the groundwork for guiding the development of the County’s land resources within the framework of Countywide Comprehensive Planning and within the context of the Countywide Goals and Objectives Statement now prepared for the County and its constituent municipalities. The Land Use Goals and Objectives of Crawford County are based upon the following premises:

- # Development, while basically desirable and often inevitable, must be guided so as to attain the Land Use Goals and Objectives of the County, and the more specific goals and objectives of the constituent municipalities.
- # Through a continuing program of comprehensive land use planning, the adoption of adequate development controls and ordinances, and based upon the Countywide Comprehensive Plan; conflicts between the various land uses can be minimized.
- # The attainment of the future orderly growth and development of the County is possible, but only through a united effort of both public and private interests. Private development through cooperation with the units of local government should be shaped by cooperative development decisions.
- # Through a planned approach to community development, the County is capable of accommodating anticipated development without destroying its outstanding natural and visual resources and characteristics.

General

Objective: To have local land use decisions consistent with County Comprehensive Plan.

Policies:

- # Assist and encourage municipal land use regulation.
 - *Create a model-zoning ordinance for local municipalities.
 - *Commit County staff time to systematic updates of zoning ordinances in “growth” municipalities.
 - *Encourage “unzoned” townships to adopt basic land control ordinances.
 - *Discourage “strip” or “ribbon” commercial and residential development.
- # Recognize and reserve suitable sites for future industrial development and expansion.
- # Strongly encourage municipalities to update the local subdivision and land development ordinances to include basic requirements to identify wetlands, scenic corridors and endangered biological species, in addition to the inclusion of “growing greener” subdivision techniques.
- # Explore the creation of a Countywide subdivision and land development ordinance.
- # Hire staff qualified to assist municipalities in regular (i.e. every 3-5 years) updates of zoning ordinances (using the model ZO) in the growth municipalities identified at the end of this chapter.
- # Attempt to incorporate into staff time at the Planning Commission the organization of a continuous planning effort by regional, county, and local agencies to insure on-going evaluations, revisions, and amendments of land use plans based on changing social, economical, and physical needs of the citizens of the area.

**Note: Phase III - Comprehensive Plan Implementation: Phase III should concentrate on the writing of a model zoning ordinance, creating a draft version of a countywide subdivision and land development ordinance and write an implementation strategies summary report for Countywide distribution to stakeholders, groups and organizations*

Objective: To recognize, preserve, and protect specific historic and cultural resources as a means for enhancing the visual character of the local municipalities and for improving the overall quality of life of County residents.

Policies:

- # Complete the Crawford County Comprehensive Historic Sites Survey.
- # Update the Crawford County Register of Historic Sites.
- # Complete nominations of eligible historic properties to the National Register.
- # Plan a Heritage Tourism Visitor Network - see Tourism page 16.
- # Promote the history of the County in school curriculums.
- # Planning Commission staff write grant applications securing funding for the above activities.

Objective: To preserve the existing rural character of the County and to preserve land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Policies:

- # Insure development in flood plains and flood hazard areas to be consistent with the guidelines contained in the Flood Plain Management Act of 1978, as amended. The Planning Commission should send out informational packets on the Act to municipalities with growth controls.
- # Prevent growth and development on soils or slopes having severe limitations for specific types of development.
- # Preserve active agricultural land by expanding Agricultural Security Areas (ASA).
- # Create an Agricultural Land Preservation Program, in which conservation easements can be purchased, thereby ensuring preservation of open space.
- # Improve communications with local municipalities about ASA farmlands.

Objective: To provide commercial sites, which are safe, serve neighborhood populations, minimize traffic, encourage pedestrian traffic, reuse existing infrastructure, and are attractive.

Policies:

- # Assist local governments to regulate commercial development through the creation or updating of local zoning ordinances.
- # Discourage commercial development that is one lot deep along major corridors, which isolate land behind the development, create potential traffic problems, and encourage sprawl.
- # Encourage development that reuses vacant properties located between current developments.
- # Insure commercial developments have available an adequate water supply, sanitary sewer system, storm water drainage facilities, energy supply and modern telecommunications.
- # Insure adequate parking in commercial developments.
- # Provide well-located points of ingress and egress in commercial developments, which are controlled to prevent traffic congestion on adjacent arterial streets or road.
- # Promote the incorporation of marginal access roads and service roads in future subdivisions and land developments.
- # Provide adequate natural screening to serve as a buffer between commercial uses and adjacent noncommercial uses.

The policies listed above require actions to be taken through coordination with local municipalities concerning their zoning and subdivision ordinances. The coordination should be encouraged through the Planning Commission staff providing model ordinances for zoning and subdivision updates.

Agricultural Land Use

Objective: To use existing agricultural land more effectively.

Policies:

- # Encourage the formulation and use of conservation plans and soil surveys as a basis for determining the best use and management of agricultural lands.
- # Encourage the use of the Clean and Green Program.
- # Educational activities, such as quarterly forums sponsored by the Planning Commission, highlighting the Clean and Green program, Agricultural Security Areas program, and the programs' benefits to land owners and the County as a whole.

Objective: To preserve and protect active farmland with "productive" soil.

Policies:

- # Identify and inventory all Class I through IV lands that have been improved (i.e. drained or tilled) for agricultural use.
- # Encourage cluster developments that require less acreage than traditional subdivisions. Through clustering development it allows large blocks/tracts (200 to 500 acres) of agricultural land to remain active and it reduces the number of parcels being carved out of the farmland for other land uses.
- # Limit sprawling developments through the encouragement of mixed-use development such as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).
- # Again, through a County subdivision ordinance, create density bonuses and development requirements allowing for and encouraging cluster development and mixed uses such as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).

THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

In preparing the Proposed Land Use Plan for the County, three alternate concepts of land use arrangement were considered and analyzed. These included the following:

1. Trend Concept (Corridor) or Status Quo
2. Dispersion Concept
3. Centers Concept (Multi-nuclei) or Village Concept

Each of the concepts was analyzed as to its feasibility and desirability in light of the existing land use development pattern. The findings and conclusions reflected in the Background Studies previously prepared in PHASE I of the County's Comprehensive Planning Program, and its consistency with the Countywide Goals and Policies developed. These alternates are described individually as follows:

Land Use Plan Concept #1 Trend (Corridor): The Status Quo

The most obvious concept of land development and the most easily attained is that characterized by the continuation of present trends and existing policies. Essentially, this concept is highly oriented toward highways and roads with very little development in depth, usually limiting development to areas along a narrow corridor immediately adjacent to highway right-of-ways. Low-density, suburban type scattered residential development would occur along some of the same corridors.

The Trend Concept of development, with increased mobility supplied by the automobile and the highway system constructed to accommodate it, encourages low-density residential construction in suburban areas usually along highways and roads extending outward from existing development. This growth pattern limits the variety of housing available, while increasing the amount of land necessary for residential use. This tendency toward single-family homes on large lots, combined with local building and housing traditions, limits new housing to a specific price range and tends to segregate the various types of housing and income groups. As the older centers of the boroughs have deteriorated, those families who can afford to do so will tend to move to the suburban fringe. Furthermore, there is little incentive or the financial capability to rehabilitate the deteriorating homes of the existing housing inventory, which the low-income and elderly sectors of the population will be compelled to occupy.

As residential development becomes more extended geographically, some small commercial establishments can be expected to follow. Instead of complementing and strengthening the commercial activity in the Central Business Districts (CBD) of the existing boroughs, the process further drains away the economic vitality of the older established development concentrations. With the absence of land use controls inherent in this pattern of development, industrial development also tends to spread away from the more densely settled areas where land is more expensive and tax rates are higher compared to the outlying rural areas.

With new development confined to narrow strips along highways and roads, there is much pressure on and competition for land within the narrow corridors, with a decrease of pressure on the less accessible areas, away from the main highways. Therefore, the reservation of open spaces for agricultural uses, recreation areas, and large parks becomes more practicable. However, the disadvantages of the land use pattern generated by the trend concept far outweigh the advantages.

As this narrow corridor of development increases in length, the cost of providing infrastructure including water and sewer facilities will become more prohibitive. In fact, it would become economically impossible to provide municipal services or facilities to all the development that can be expected to result from this pattern of development.

Paradoxically, the transportation network that encouraged this pattern of development will eventually reach overcapacity and become increasingly inefficient. Travel times between the various activity areas (residence, employment, shopping, recreation, etc.) will increase correspondingly. Traffic will become more congested, eventually resulting in the need for the construction of expanded and wider roads and highways. These improvements in turn would accelerate development to reach even further out from the existing development concentrations, thereby perpetuating the inherent inefficiencies of the existing trend in land use development. This concept is characterized by little land use control and encourages low-density large lot housing development. This decentralization process requires an excessive amount of land, increases the cost of providing utilities, prevents the economical provision of municipal services and facilities, and weakens the tax base of the existing development concentrations of the boroughs. This land use concept embodies the uneconomical and inefficient use of land resources, and it substantially limits the County's long-range growth potential.

Land Use Plan Concept #2: Dispersion

This concept is characterized by low-density development throughout the flatter areas of the County. The Dispersion Concept incorporates the first elements of conscious land use planning.

This concept will distribute future development rather evenly throughout the flatter areas of the County. New residential development would consist primarily of low-density (one to two units per acre) single-family homes with few multi-family units of medium density (five to eight units per acre). The same building practices and elements of choice would function under this concept as under the foregoing Trend Concept thereby limiting the choices of available housing types.

Commercial and industrial establishments would locate throughout the area, probably along major transportation arteries or at major intersections where they would be readily accessible by automobile. Because of the low-density, dispersed development, the private automobile would be the necessary means of transportation. Trip lengths between activity centers would be long, though perhaps shorter than necessitated by the corridor pattern; and an extensive supporting primary and secondary highway and road network would be necessary.

The demand for flat building land would make the provision of parks and open spaces more difficult. The high quality, flat lands, which are now being used for agriculture, will be in demand for development as the population expands. With few, if any, land use controls to guide development, much prime agricultural land would be lost, and farming would be compelled to occupy more marginal lands on which it is more difficult and less economical to grow crops. Eventually, income from farming could be lost to those engaged in agriculture and to the County as a whole.

Such a scattered pattern makes the provision of municipal water and sewer facilities economically unfeasible. However, as the population increases and densities increase accordingly, these utilities could become more feasible in the future. The same difficulty is true for the provision of community facilities such as schools, churches, police and fire protection.

The pattern of development as generated by the Dispersion Concept comes closer, in some respects, to fulfilling the Countywide Land Use Goals and Objectives. Zoning ordinances and the building of public utilities and municipal streets or roads could encourage residential building in those flat areas which lie outside the narrow corridor along the highways.

Some controls could be applied to reserve agricultural land and open space and to regulate commercial strip development, but development density would remain low. This alternative comes one step closer to achieving the County's Land Use Goals and Objectives; but the Dispersion Concept, in reality, is inefficient and consumes an excessive amount of land, consequently severely limiting the County's growth potential and quality of development.

Land Use Plan Concept #3 Centers (Multi-nuclei): Village Concept

The application of the Centers or Village Concept of land use development is dependent upon a high level of land use control. Marked by the concentration of development in the most suitable and strategic locations throughout the County, this concept allows for the most efficient and effective use of the County's land resources. For the most part, these development concentrations would take place within the boroughs and in the townships, immediately surrounding the boroughs and villages throughout the County. Others could be encouraged at equally strategic locations by the provision of an improved transportation network and adequate public utilities and community facilities. Coupled with this development pattern would be the encouragement of in-fill development within the boroughs and villages.

A variety of low, medium, and high density residential development would be provided in each of these development concentrations. Smaller commercial establishments would be located within neighborhoods throughout these centers with the central business districts being strengthened and revitalized to provide an all-inclusive range of products and services. Industrial/Business parks as well would be encouraged to locate in close proximity to these development concentrations with their supporting infrastructure and services.

With the concentration of the various use areas, trip lengths would be minimized. Travel times between the various development concentrations, either by private automobile or public transportation, would also be minimized. The efficiency of the transportation network is preserved by this pattern of development, which provides for extensive open space and undeveloped areas between the various concentrations of development thereby discouraging the classic "strip" development along highway and road corridors.

Land best reserved for agricultural use, open space and view sheds would be protected because of the reduction of

land pressure in suburban and rural areas. Water and sewer facilities and the wide range of municipally provided services could be economically provided throughout each of the development concentrations. The living environment of each family would be substantially improved.

Recommended Plan Concept: Plan Rationale

Based upon the Centers (Multi-Nuclei) or Village Concept of land use development a number of multi-purpose development areas are proposed throughout Crawford County. Refer to **Map 3 - Future Growth and Development Areas** on the next page.

For the most part, the development areas are proposed around existing development concentrations; however, a number of new development concentrations at strategic locations are also proposed. These new development areas can be encouraged to occur through local level zoning, improvements to the transportation network, and the provision of adequate public infrastructure, particularly water and sewer. These areas are located near major transportation corridors and in growth townships throughout the County. Each is designed to contain a wide range of land use activities, with the exception of heavy industry, which will be situated on the periphery along major transportation corridors. Over the next ten to twenty years, intensive varied development would be encouraged within these development areas.

A variety of housing types will be encouraged in each of the development areas including low-density (one to three per net residential acre), and medium-density (five to ten per net residential acre). A variety of housing is conducive to growth in the County by attracting residents with diverse backgrounds, preferences, and abilities who seek diversity in their choices of housing.

There exists a significant relationship between residential density and open space in the Centers Concept of land use. As the population continues to increase, there is a greater pressure to develop remaining vacant land to the extent that residential growth is dispersed. The amenities and efficiency of the total concept is decreased. By limiting spatial spread of residential development, the Centers Concept encourages the construction of some multi-family dwellings and the restoration and continued maintenance of the existing housing inventory. The “cluster” technique in the development of new housing areas should be strongly encouraged throughout Crawford County.

As residential growth is encouraged within the various development areas, commercial and industrial growth should be encouraged to locate in close proximity. In addition, the concentration of population in a relatively small area tends to encourage a wider range of cultural and social activities. Another advantage of concentrating residential, commercial, and industrial development is that locally provided utilities, such as water, sewer and solid waste disposal, can be more economically provided and efficiently operated within the growth area.

Map 3 - Future Development Areas 11x17

Procedures

As a result of these concepts the Growth Areas Map has been calculated through the following procedures. The 1990 population of Crawford County was 86,169. The most ambitious population projection uses the natural increase projection and shows that the County needs to accommodate residential living units for a maximum of 4,180 people by 2010, or a total population of 90,349. In 1990 the persons per household of residential living was 2.6. Using this figure and assuming that the majority of persons will live in a single-family residence as primary living units, the projected number of housing units necessary will be approximately 1,600. The large majority of new housing units in the County have taken place in the rural townships. This trend will continue, therefore we will use a rather modest estimate of two dwelling units per net acre - a modest rural lot. In addition to the lots we must accommodate 20% more land for infrastructure such as streets and utilities. The total residential land needed will be 800 acres plus 160 for streets and utilities for a total of 960 acres of residential land. The total residential land will increase from 27,423 to 28,383, or 3.5%.

Commercial and industrial development should increase much faster than residential as trends suggest. Currently, there are 2,447 acres of these lands in the County. In 2010 the commercial and industrial lands should increase by 500 net acres, or 20.4%. Including streets and infrastructure the total will be 600 acres of additional commercial and industrial lands.

The public and semi-public land additions will be rather low unless unforeseen, large-scale developments take place. Estimates for increases in this type of land use will remain well below the population projection at 4.9%. Currently there are 23,140 acres of public/semi-public lands including State Parks and Game lands. Additional land would be minimal at 100 acres.

Agricultural lands will continue to decrease in the County with much of the new land needed for growth coming from the current total.

In summary, additional commercial, residential, industrial, and public/semi-public land additions needed to accommodate future residents will be estimated at 1,660. For a visual representation of the future land distribution throughout Crawford County of the various land use categories, refer to **Map 4 - Future Land Use**, on the following page.

Future Land Use Category Definitions

Village: Village is defined broadly as all identified low-density residential housing. This covers all surveyed land that is occupied by a residential housing unit including large portions of all the boroughs in the County, except Cambridge Springs, and areas surrounding the major urban areas near Meadville and Titusville cities.

Urban Fringe: Urban fringe may contain a moderate dense mix of residential, industrial, and commercial lands including public and semi-public infrastructure. The urban fringe generally surrounds the areas on the outskirts of downtown Meadville and Titusville, dense development near Conneaut and Pymatuning Lake and strip development along Routes 19 and 6/322 in Vernon Township.

Urban: The definition of 'urban' according to the Census Bureau states, "places of 2,500 or more persons incorporated as cities or boroughs, excluding the portions of extended cities". For this study we extended the definition to include Meadville, Titusville, and Cambridge Springs (the largest borough). Additionally, the newly designated Keystone Opportunity Zone land in Greenwood Township was designated as urban. The primary reason is that the land will be developed almost entirely industrial. Industrial lands do not fit into any of the other categories at the proposed density of the KOZ land.

Agricultural/Rural: The category includes all land in the County that is not included in any of the aforementioned categories or is used for farming except for water, marshland, wetlands, and State or Federal conservation areas.

Conservation/Recreation/Recreation Trail Corridors: This category includes all state Gamelands and forests, all Federal conservation areas, parks, trail corridors and any other land conserved for nature preserves, wildlife sanctuary, current or future recreation.

Water/Marshland: All wetlands or marshlands as identified by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (DCNR) National Wetlands Inventory.

Water Areas: All areas covered by water over 1 acre including major lakes and reservoirs, excluding streams.

Map 4 - Future Land Use 11x17

Summary

To encourage the pattern of land use proposed in this concept requires an innovative application of land use controls and ordinances. The most familiar procedures of controlling land use development include the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

A Zoning Ordinance, based upon the County's Land Use Plan, could specifically designate the land use of all the parcels throughout a municipality. Only through cooperation between local government and private citizens can such an ordinance hope to be successfully enforced over time.

The Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance operates on a somewhat smaller scale than Zoning Ordinances, but can be effective in achieving well planned new residential and commercial developments so as to insure the provision of adequate community facilities, public utilities, and streets plus an acceptable level of subdivision layout and design.

Crawford County does not have land management ordinances in place. In order for the County Land Use Plan to be effective in managing future growth, the County Planning staff, Planning Commission and elected officials must implement incentives to encourage boroughs and townships developing a new zoning or subdivision ordinance or updating existing ordinances, to cooperate and adhere to the Crawford County Land Use Plan. **Table 2** identifies municipalities that do not have zoning ordinances in place.

TABLE 2

CRAWFORD COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES WITHOUT ZONING ORDINANCES Crawford County, 1998							
Municipality	Zoning	Sub division	Comp. Plan	Municipality	Zoning	Sub division	Comp. Plan
Athens Twp.				S. Shenango Twp.		X	1979
Centerville Bor.			1998	Spatansburg Bor.			
Cochranon Bor.			1990	Sparta Twp.			1997
Conneaut Twp.			1981	Spring Twp.			1979
East Fallowfield Twp.				Stueben Twp.			
E. Mead Twp.		X	1983	Townville Bor.			
Fairfield Twp.				Troy Twp.			
Greenwood Twp.		X	1985	Union Twp.		X	
Hayfield Twp.		X	1970	Venango Twp.			
Hydetown Bor.			1998	Wayne Twp.			1972
Rockdale Twp.				W. Fallowfield Twp.		X	
Rome Twp.				W. Shenango Twp.		X	1979
Richmond Twp.			1976	Woodcock Bor.			

Source: Crawford County Planning Commission

In addition to these planning opportunities some major growth townships should consider ordinance updates. The townships considered in **Table 3** are experiencing rapid growth and significant land development pressures. Their existing ordinances should be updated in accordance to the County Land Use Plan and the areas repeated from **Table 2** should be a priority. The municipalities' population changes since 1980 and the status of their Comprehensive Plans and ordinances are identified on the next page.

TABLE 3

CRAWFORD COUNTY'S PLANNING REGIONS - "GROWTH" MUNICIPALITIES' STATUS OF LAND USE CONTROLS								
Name	Zoning	Subdiv	Comp. Plan	1970 Population	1980 Population	1990 Population	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1970-1990
Crawford County				81,342	88,869	86,169	-3.04%	5.93%
Region 1 - Conneautville								
Spring Township			1979	1,287	1,500	1,561	4.07%	21.29%
Summerhill Township	X		1980	963	1,196	1,246	4.18%	29.39%
Region 2 - Pymatuning								
Pine Township	X	X	1994	392	435	455	4.60%	16.07%
North Shenango Township	X	X	1979	621	816	902	10.54%	45.25%
South Shenango Township		X	1979	1,132	1,479	1,560	5.48%	37.81%
West Shenango Township		X	1979	424	474	496	4.64%	16.98%
Region 3 - Cambridge/Saegertown								
Blooming Valley Borough	X		1970	358	374	391	4.55%	9.22%
Woodcock Borough				108	126	148	17.46%	37.04%
Saegertown Borough	X	X	1970	1,348	942	1,066	13.16%	-20.92%
Cussewago Township	X	X	1970	1,072	1,279	1,409	10.16%	31.44%
Cambridge Township	X	X	1999	1,654	1,389	1,496	7.70%	-9.55%
Rockdale Township		draft		820	1,060	1,045	-1.44%	27.44%
Venango Township		blg.		528	693	729	5.19%	38.07%
Region 4 - Conneaut Lake								
Summit Township	X	X	1970	1,517	1,992	1,890	-5.12%	24.59%
East Fallowfield				1,130	1,259	1,280	1.64%	13.27%
West Fallowfield Township		X		647	650	693	6.62%	7.11%
Region 5 - Greater Meadville								
West Mead Township	X	X	1993	4,652	5,590	5,401	-3.38%	16.10%
Region 6 - Geneva/Cochranon								
Union Township		X		690	884	895	1.23%	29.71%
Region 7 - Eastern Tier								
Richmond Township			1976	1,023	1,228	1,370	10.37%	33.92%
Bloomfield Township	X	draft	1978	1,378	1,714	1,839	6.80%	33.45%
Randolph Township				1,437	1,589	1,661	4.33%	15.59%
Wayne Township			1972	985	1,335	1,401	4.71%	42.23%
Sparta Township			1997	988	1,405	1,554	9.59%	57.29%
Region 8 - Oil Creek Valley								
Rome Township				1,020	1,304	1,491	12.54%	46.18%
Oil Creek Township	X	X	1993	1,743	2,035	2,069	1.64%	18.70%

Source: US Census of Population and Housing, 1970-1990

In addition to the townships listed in the table as growth communities with little or no land use controls, the City of Meadville, the City of Titusville, and Vernon Township are important municipalities for the County to encourage land use controls, which adhere to the Comprehensive Plan of the County.

Chapter IV

FUTURE

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION PLAN

Introduction

“Good transportation” infers more than merely having nice roads and new bridges since the term covers a range (or modes) of transit from air travel, to roads and rail travel, and including water/sea transportation. Moreover, and as was pointed out, the citizens and businesses of Crawford County have a greater reliance on rail and air transit than a typical citizen of the County would first assume. The Technical Committee, Planning Commission, Planning Commission staff, and public input, defined the overall goal of Crawford County’s transportation network. The goal is *“...to create an efficient, safe, environmentally sensitive, and economical transportation system for all residents of the County.”*

However, and given the constituent make-up of members of the Transportation Technical Committee, the skills of the County Planning Commission staff and those of the planning consultant, the lions’ share of discussion and, thus, the plan elements, centered around roadway transportation issues, with an emphasis on roadway projects.

Nonetheless, legitimate issues raised include public transportation, the state of the County’s two airports, and the plight of rail service as throughout the County as well as the nation. As can be expected, many of the issues overlapped with respect to land use issues (i.e. continued sprawl), the dependence on the automobile, costs associated with capital improvements and the importance of good transportation “networks” for industry in Crawford County.

Finally, there is a growing recognition that Crawford County is indeed a part of an increasingly global economy that depends on a reliable transportation network to bring products and services in and out of the County in efficient fashion in order to compete. The County also recognizes through this process that while we cannot hope to control the “macro” elements that make up the fabric of national (or even international) transportation, we have a shared recognition that there is a responsibility that good transportation policy begins at home and provides that backbone and is the springboard for successful business, industry as well as intergovernmental relationships within Crawford County.

The balance of the Transportation Plan Element will be broken down by transportation mode. The sections offer goals, objectives, and actions to be taken to improve the transportation network of Crawford County.

TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

General

Objective: To provide an efficient, safe, and economical transportation system to move people and goods, which will promote better communications, make better use of neighboring resources, and create a greater choice of living-working relationships for the citizenry.

Policies:

- # Locate new highway facilities in a manner, which will encourage growth in accord with the County’s land use plan.
- # Preserve the efficiency of arterials and collectors through proper control of roadside development.
- # Reduce to a minimum the conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- # Improve mass transportation facilities to aid in meeting the increasing transportation requirements of the County.
- # Integrate the various modes of transportation to improve overall efficiency and reduce travel times.
- # Encourage local governments to require the installation of sidewalks in new subdivisions.
- # The County Planning Commission should lead a Transportation Committee made up of elected officials from each municipality whose responsibility it is to compile and submit a prioritized list of transportation projects for inclusion in the Penn DOT 12-year plan. The list would then be coordinated tightly with the overall goals and objectives of the County Comprehensive Plan.

Objective: To minimize the environmental impacts of transportation improvements.

Policies:

- # Encourage the use of public transportation to reduce the number and size of new roads.
- # Encourage the development of bicycle paths and trails throughout the County.
- # Plan new roadways with the State's "Growing Greener" sound land use practices in mind.

Objective: To assure every elderly resident of Crawford County has adequate and affordable transportation in order to access community services and facilities.

Policies:

- # To assure that transportation planning and development includes the needs of handicapped elderly, i.e., those who would have difficulty riding in standard vehicles.
- # Assist CATA and other transportation service providers in coordinating duplicitous routes.
- # The list of transportation projects for inclusion in the Penn DOT 12-year plan should be coordinated tightly with the overall goals and objectives of the County Comprehensive Plan. Include in the committee representatives from CATA and the Area Agency on Aging.

Roads and Highways

Roadway and transportation planning is the preeminent concern of the County in terms of improvements, sustainability and maintenance. Also recognized is the societal issues (i.e. continued dispersion of population, the nature of commerce, two-income families, etc.) increasingly tax the transportation network, and over time, the monies needed to sustain this network may not keep pace with the increasing demand on the network.

Objective: To maintain the highway system and make improvements to meet the needs of the current and increasing vehicular population.

Policies:

- # Encourage the use of public transportation and rail freight.
- # Encourage the streamlining and integration of County human service transportation.
- # Work with municipalities to develop truck routes and alternative routes that preserve local road networks and keep heavy truck traffic on designated right-of-ways.
- # Improve access roads to areas with high tourist, commercial, or industrial development potential.
- # Develop an improved east/west corridor across the County.
- # Develop a north/south Meadville by-pass connecting to Route 77.
- # Work with the local school districts to mitigate route problems.
- # Continue to educate the local municipalities about submitting roadway concerns for inclusion in the 12-year plan.

Rail

Even though they are under private ownership (in most cases - Authorities being the notable exception) railroads are in effect “roadways” of commerce that are part of the local, regional, national, and international transportation network. Generally speaking, reliance on railroads has ebbed in the past quarter century as trucking and over-the-road freight haulers have become a more affordable alternative with greater flexibility for modern industrial concerns. In spite of all of this, rail service provides an invaluable resource for bulk hauling; hauling large quantities over great distances. In addition, once a rail right-of-way is lost, it is dubious whether or not it is economically feasible to replace line. In addition, loss of rail translates into a handicap for regions in terms of their ability or desirability for siting large-scale industrial concerns. This has become abundantly clear in conversations with local and regional industrial development organizations.

Objective: To preserve and improve rail freight service.

Policies:	
#	Increase public awareness of rail service and explore strategies to strengthen this valuable resource.
#	Form a public awareness campaign for the rail industry.
#	Areas abutting existing rail lines in Crawford County should be highlighted for industrial development siting or reuse. Coordinate these efforts through the Planning Commission and move for adaptations of existing zoning ordinances, which encouraged this type of development.
#	Rail freight assistance grants and related sources of revenue from the State should be tied into the adaptive reuse of industrial land. In other words, linking rail service to proposed land use (zoning) should be coupled with financial incentives for preserving rails lines and service.

Air

Crawford County presently has two airports - Port Meadville Airport and the Titusville Airport. Both airports are under the ownership of their respective cities. Generally, and for a variety of reasons, it is felt that both airports are underutilized and under-financed in terms of State and Federal monies that are available for their continued development. Port Meadville Airport has several aircraft that are owned and operated by local industries, but poor management coupled with a desire by the City to divest itself of this infrastructure has plagued the airport itself. Airports are ill understood by most citizens in terms of their basic utility to the community and their importance to the local economy. In addition, it is felt that better management coupled with a more aggressive strategy (at both airports) for basic capital improvements would improve the services and viability of both airports that serve the citizens and industry within the County.

Objective: To preserve and improve air services of the Meadville and Titusville airports.

Policies:	
#	Work with Vernon Township to encourage industries, which require overnight shipments to develop near the airport.
#	Encourage the economic development agencies to promote the ongoing development and greater use of both airports.
#	Airports must be supported to thrive. While they are “customer dependent” for their use, their loss would limit the communities’ ability to capture high-end business and industry.
#	Land around airports should be evaluated for its appropriateness for business and industry that is air dependent. Strategies should be linked to airport development that provide value-added incentives for industry to site at locations around the existing airports.

Future Transportation Improvements

Many of the goals and objectives previously referred to are served by the current and future (second, third and fourth quarters of the twelve year plan) and are shown in the following table and corresponds to **Map 5 - Future Transportation Improvements**, Crawford County. *Note: The “na” items were not mapped. The information for those items was received after the mapping had been completed. The final copy of this document will contain changes.*

TABLE 4

PENN DOT TWELVE-YEAR PLAN, 1999 Crawford County Projects					
#	State Route/ location	Map Key	Project Name	Improvement	Program Period (1 st four years, 2 nd , etc.)
0006	na		Meadville East-West Bypass	2 lane relocation	first
0006	na		Meadville East-West Bypass	2 lane relocation	third
0006	H1		CBD Meadville	signal improvement	first
0006	B1		Shermanville Bridge	bridge replacement	first
0006	na		Vernon Twp. Line to Twp. Road #486	restoration	first
0006	na		Shermansville Railroad Bridge	bridge replacement	first
0006	na		US #6 Bridge Paint	bridge painting	first
0008	na		T.R. #8 and 408 turn lane	add lane	first
0018	H2		Curve in vicinity of T-889	safety improvement	first
0019	B2		19/Conneaut Swamp Bridge	rehabilitation	first
0027	H3		Frenchtown curves	safety improvements	first
0027	H4		T.R. #27 @ Hunter's Inn	safety improvements	first
0077	na		Leslie Road to Woodcock Road	restoration	first
0077	na		T.R. #77 @ 408 Intersection	add lane	first
0079	H5		Rest Area #19 sewage	rest area sewage treatment update	first
0079	na		I79 Reconstruction, MP 141-147	restoration	first
0079	na		I79, Mercer County - MP 141	resurface	first
0089	B3		PA 89 Oil Creek Bridge	bridge replacement	first
0089	B4		PA 89 Oil Creek Bridge #2	bridge replacement	first
0089	na		Church Run Road	bridge replacement	first
0102	na		Kennedy Hill - S.R. #98	restoration	first
0198	B5		Mulberry St. Bridge	replacement	first
0198	B6		PA 198 Cussewago Creek Bridge	replacement	first
0285	H6		Espyville Causeway	resurface	second
0285	H7		Espyville Causeway	resurface	third
1002	B7		Venango/French Creek	bridge replacement	first
1002	B8		Venango/French Creek	bridge replacement	second
1016	B9		Miller Station/French Creek	bridge replacement	third
1017	B10		Jerico Road	bridge replacement	first
1017	B11		Jerico Road	bridge replacement	second
1025	B12		Grant Street	bridge rehabilitation	first
1025	B12		Grant Street	bridge rehabilitation	second
1043	B13		Price Road Bridge	bridge replacement	third
2003	B14		Mercer Pike Bridge	bridge replacement	third
2020	B15		Holiday Bridge	bridge replacement	first
2022	na		Franklin Street	bridge rehabilitation	first
2027	na		Newton Road	bridge replacement	first
3013	na		Atlantic/Kinard Road	bridge replacement	first
4010	na		West Road	bridge painting	first
4012	na		Shadeland Road	bridge replacement	first
4012	na		Shadeland Road	bridge replacement	second

PENN DOT TWELVE-YEAR PLAN, 1999
Crawford County Projects (Continued)

#	State Route/ location	Map Key	Project Name	Improvement	Program Period (1st four years, 2 nd , etc.)
	9900	na	Mead Avenue	bridge replacement	first
	9900	na	Mead Avenue	bridge replacement	second
	9900	na	Duncan Avenue	bridge replacement	first
	9900	na	Peters Road T-703	bridge replacement	first
	9900	na	Peters Road T-703	bridge replacement	second
	9900	na	Plank Road T-517	bridge replacement	first
	9900	na	Plank Road T-517	bridge replacement	second
	9900	B16	Fish Road (T-693)	bridge replacement	first
	9900	B16	Fish Road (T-693)	bridge replacement	second
	9900	B17	Amy Road T-757	brodge replacement	first
	9900	B18	Center Street Bridge/Conneautville	bridge replacement	first
	9900	B18	Center Street Bridge/Conneautville	bridge replacement	second
	9900	B19	Jefferson Street	bridge replacement	first
	9900	B20	Lester Road T-721	bridge replacement	first
	9900	B21	Creek Road T-751	bridge replacement	first
	9900	B22	Creek Road T-751	bridge replacement	second
	9900	B23	Dotyville Road T-926	bridge replacement	second
	9900	B24	Blakeslee Road	bridge replacement	first
	9900	B24	Blakeslee Road	bridge replacement	second
	9900	na	Watson Road	bridge replacement	first
	9900	na	Watson Road	bridge replacement	second
	9900	na	King Road T-749	bridge replacement	first
	9900	na	Krietz Road T-899	bridge replacement	first
	9900	na	Krietz Road T-899	bridge replacement	second
	9900	na	Morris Road T-653	bridge replacement	first
	9900	na	Morris Road T-653	bridge replacement	second
	9900	na	Middle Road T-487	bridge replacement	first
	9900	na	Middle Road T-487	bridge replacement	second
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	overlay runway	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	land acquisition (phase I)	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	construction access road; clearing; relocate fence	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	engineering study runway 7/25 ext.	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	complete apron exp. (phase I)	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	land acquisition (phase II)	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	extend runway	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	eng. study -widen runway, install ILS	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	install PAPI runway 25	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	apron exp. (Phase II)	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	rehabilitate apron area	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	install ILS	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	widen runway	first
	NA		Port Meadville Airport	land acquisition (phase III)	first
	NA	A1	Port Meadville Airport	expand terminal building and parking	first

Source: 1999 Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Twelve Year Plan, 1999- 2011, District 1

Map 5 - Future Transportation Improvements 11x17

Transportation Problems of Key Routes

The items listed below are specific roadway improvements beyond the goals and objectives actions. These items should be highest priority to be included in the Penn DOT twelve-year plan for state route items and/or local activities, which would benefit not only the direct area but also the overall transportation network of the County.

Items Not Included in the Current Twelve-Year Plan

Meadville Area

1. US 322/19/6 - I-79 to Park Avenue
 - # Inadequate off-ramps eastbound from I-79 northbound
 - # Projected LOS F in the year 2017
2. SR 1001 (Park Avenue) - US 322 to North Street
 - # Projected LOS D, E in year 2017
 - # Outdated traffic signals
3. North Street - Water Street to State Street
 - # Projected LOS F in year 2017
 - # Outdated traffic signals
4. PA 27 - North Street to PA 77
 - # Projected LOS F in year 2017
 - # Outdated traffic signals
5. Park Avenue - North Street to City Line
 - # Outdated traffic signals

Titusville Area

1. PA 27 and PA 8 (Spring Street) in Titusville
 - # Projected LOS D in year 2017
2. PA 27 and PA 8 (Central Avenue) in Titusville
 - # Projected LOS F in year 2017

Route 27

1. PA 27 - Meadville to PA 8 in Titusville
 - # steep grade entering Meadville
 - # narrow shoulders
 - # substandard lane widths
 - # steep grades
 - # tight curves
 - # passing restrictions

Route 408

1. PA 408 - PA 8 at Hydetown to PA 77
 - # reduced speed and sharp turns in Hydetown
 - # narrow shoulders
 - # substandard lane widths
 - # steep grades
 - # tight curves
 - # passing restrictions
 - # difficult intersection at Lyona Road

Route 77

1. PA 77 - PA 408 to PA 27 in Meadville
 - # narrow shoulders
 - # substandard lane widths
 - # steep grades
 - # tight curves
 - # passing restrictions
 - # steep grade on State Road Hill entering Meadville
 - # diversion of truck traffic from State Road Hill to PA 168

Route 168

1. PA 168 - PA 77 to I-79
 - # difficult intersection in Saegertown
 - # narrow shoulders
 - # substandard lane widths
 - # LOS C, E and F in Saegertown in year 2017
 - # tight curves
 - # passing restrictions
 - # Offset intersections at PA 86
 - # Offset intersections in Saegertown

Route 86

1. PA 86 - PA 168 to North Street
 - # steep grade
 - # residential, educational, commercial uses
 - # 35 MPH speed and truck traffic on hill in built-up urban areas

CHAPTER V

FUTURE
COMMUNITY
FACILITIES AND
SERVICES PLAN

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES PLAN

Introduction

The primary goal for Community Facilities Development throughout Crawford County is *“to increase the livability, attractiveness and desirability of the County through the adequate provision of a wide range of community facilities which are easily accessible to all of the citizenry of the County”*. The purpose of this Community Facilities Plan is to present recommendations to alleviate those deficiencies which now exist plus to adequately provide for the future community facility needs resulting from the anticipated increase in and redistribution of the County’s population and development concentrations. An analysis of both existing and anticipated deficiencies upon which the recommendations are based was presented in VOLUME I of Crawford County’s Comprehensive Planning Program. This Plan Element seeks to create an awareness of future needs, to correlate these needs with the Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Public Utilities, and Economic Development Plans. Additionally, the Community Facilities Plan Element is to provide a flexible plan whereby existing facilities combined with proposed facilities can adequately meet future needs of the residents of the County.

Community Facilities are those basic services provided for the most part, by local government to insure the health, safety, and general welfare and to fulfill cultural desires of the residents of the community. Such facilities include: municipal buildings, schools, libraries, museums and historic sites, park and recreation areas, police and fire protection, hospitals, homes for the elderly, social and welfare services, and correctional facilities. Many of these facilities are not under the ownership or direct control of Crawford County, but rather of local municipalities, boards, or commissioners.

The number, type, and adequacy of these facilities determine to a large measure the quality and general livability of the environment and the growth potential of the County. These facilities increase the ability of the County to attract new residents, reduce out-migration, and induce new business and industries to locate within the County. As a result, the community’s tax base is strengthened and it can realize the maximum return on dollars invested in improved community facilities. Too often, though, community facility needs are not recognized and the necessary programming is not developed on the Countywide level. Instead, each municipality handles individual cases with crisis decisions being the rule rather than the exception. In addition to inadequately providing for the needs of the citizenry, this uncoordinated and piecemeal approach results in the inefficient use of the limited financial resources of the community through duplication of effort.

Inasmuch as the Community Facilities Plan is addressed to the County as a whole, it is necessarily broad in nature. Consequently, the Countywide concept will be employed in the solution of community facility problems. The desirability of recommended facilities were evaluated upon the basis of their providing service to broad areas of the County rather than to specific individual municipalities, although regionalization may be justified due to geography or areas of commerce.

The areas of the County recommended for future water service are presented on **Map 6** later in this chapter. **Map 7** indicates those areas recommended to receive sewer service within a ten-year time frame and those areas proposed to receive sewer service within a ten to twenty year time frame.

The location, character, and timing of future development as indicated on **Map 3 - Future Development Areas and Map 4 - Future Land Use**, has to be utilized as the basis of both the extent and timing of the future water service and the future sewer service plans. The location of both existing and new sewage treatment plants is also indicated.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Public Water Systems

Objective: To insure adequate water supply is available to all concentrations of development in the County.

Like sanitary sewer systems, public water systems generally expand the amount of development that a given area can support. Although Crawford County's future development isn't nearly as dependent on public water service as it is on sanitary sewer service, large scale residential, commercial, or industrial developments may still require water service. Thus, public water systems — like sanitary sewer systems — may be coordinated to provide a de facto growth management system for the County. Any such coordination should observe the same growth management concerns given on the previous page.

As was noted in Chapter VIII, KLH Engineers, Inc. completed a "Water Supply Plan" for Crawford County in October of 1997. The improvements recommended by KLH Engineers should be encouraged and supported by the County, and the 1997 Water Supply Plan is included in this plan by reference.

Of course, the County's public water systems are controlled by the municipalities, municipal authorities, mutual associations, private companies, or private citizens that own them. Like the County's municipal sanitary sewer systems, the County itself does not control its water systems. So how can the County "encourage and support" proper water system planning, construction, and maintenance?

Policy:

The County can open on these subjects where such communication does not already exist. However, the County may wish to go beyond this and create a countywide water authority. Such an authority could act as a conduit for funding and technical assistance to its member water systems. It could also help to coordinate these systems into an effective growth management tool. Centre County, Pennsylvania has recently created such an authority. Crawford County may also wish to actively offer some funding assistance of its own to certain water projects — as is discussed under sanitary sewers below.

Sanitary Sewer Systems

Objective: To insure adequate water supply, sewage collection and treatment systems, and storm drainage facilities are available to all concentrations of development.

The greatest restrictions to the future economic growth of Crawford County may well be the limitations placed on on-lot septic systems by the County's soil, 78% of which has a "restricted" permeability rate and a high water table. Although development can and does occur in the County using on-lot septic systems, this development can only happen at very low densities. The best solution to this problem is sanitary sewer service. Sanitary sewer systems can safely dispose of sewage from several sources, and thus, greatly increase the density of development that a given area can support. Furthermore, because mid-to-high density residential, commercial, and industrial development can barely survive in the County without their services, sanitary sewer systems can be coordinated to provide a de facto growth management system. Mid-to-high density development can be prevented in conservation areas by not extending sewer service to these areas.

With this in mind, any expansions to the County's existing sanitary sewer systems should be weighed against the development patterns that they may ignite. For instance, expanding sewer service along rural commercial corridors may accelerate the decline of downtown retail. On the other hand, limiting such expansions will likely force some new commercial activity back into downtown Meadville, Titusville, and other communities with sanitary sewer systems.

As was noted in Chapter VIII (in the Background Studies Report), several boroughs and villages in the County are without any municipal sanitary sewer service whatsoever — chief among these being Cochranon, Townville, Blooming Valley, Centerville, Guys Mills, Geneva, Spartansburg, Hartstown, and Adamsville. The lack of sanitary sewers in these communities severely limits their growth potential, and may actually pose public health hazards. Admittedly, several have already begun the process of acquiring sewers. The County should fully encourage and support such endeavors, building on the successes of the Bloomfield Township Sewer Authority, the Conneaut Lake Joint Municipal Authority, the North and South Shenango Joint Municipal Authority, the Northwest Crawford County Sewer Authority, the Saegertown Area Sewer Authority, and the other systems that have been largely built since the County's 1973 Comprehensive Plan.

As was further noted in Chapter VIII, several of the County's existing sewer systems are badly in need of repairs, upgrades, and/or maintenance in general. The County should fully encourage and support such maintenance activities where they are warranted.

Of course, the County's sanitary sewer systems are controlled by the municipalities or municipal authorities that built them and not the County itself. So how can the County "encourage and support" proper sewage system planning, construction, and maintenance?

Policy:

The County can -- once again -- open dialogues between itself and its municipalities on these subjects where such communication does not already exist. However, the County may wish to go beyond this and actively offer some funding assistance to certain sewer projects. To an extent, the County has already done this -- using a portion of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation to fund sewage planning in Pine Township. However, the County should consider expanding such funding activities -- perhaps using other funding sources besides CDBG allocations.

Vocational-Technical Schools

As was noted in Chapter VIII of the Background Studies, most local economies in the United States depend on their vocational-technical schools to supply trained labor to technical industries. However, the Meadville and Titusville area's economy is especially dependent on the Crawford County Area Vocational Technical School (CCA-VTS) and the Titusville Vocational Technical School (TVTS)— which are the chief sources of labor for the region's tool and die industry, among others. Because of this, the County should go out of its way to support and promote this institution. The adult educational programs offered by CCA-VTS should be of particular interest to the County, as they are key to retraining displaced workers from other fields for the area's growing technical industries.

To be fair to citizens who live in the Corry Area School District, the Jamestown Area School District, the Titusville Area School District, and the Union City Area School District, the County should also support and promote the Corry Area Vocational-Technical School, the Mercer County Vocational-Technical School, and the Venango County Vocational-Technical School. These schools are also vital sources of trained labor for northwestern Pennsylvania's economy.

Recreational Facilities

Compared to most Pennsylvanian counties of its size, Crawford County has generous amount of recreational facilities. As was noted in Chapter VIII, Pymatuning State Park is the largest state park in the Commonwealth and the second most frequently visited. Beyond this, the County can boast of approximately 40 square miles of State Game Lands, a 13,000 acre National Wildlife Refuge, a 1,700 acre U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control/recreation project, and one of the state's largest agricultural fairs. Within western Pennsylvania, the Meadville Area Recreation Complex is one of the finest publicly-owned facilities of its kind. The various publicly and privately owned facilities at Conneaut and Canadohta Lakes have made them resort destinations for well over a century. This overabundance of recreational facilities is one of the County's greatest strengths -- it will likely insure that the County has both a high quality of life and a profitable tourism industry for years to come.

As was noted in Chapter VIII, many of the County's largest recreational facilities are owned and operated by the federal and state governments — including Pymatuning State Park, the Woodcock Creek Lake Project, and the Erie National Wildlife Refuge. Within the County, the Pennsylvania Game Commission owns 13 different State Game Lands as well as a popular waterfowl museum. Meanwhile, the Pennsylvania Fish Commission owns eight different access areas and the largest inland fish hatchery in the nation. After noting the County's good fortune in having easy access to these facilities, all of which are intended to serve a region much larger than the County itself, the *1973 Crawford County Comprehensive Plan* recommended that County officials continue to cooperate with the appropriate state and federal agencies in the construction and maintenance of these facilities. This recommendation is as valid today as it was in 1973.

The County's leasing Colonel Crawford Park from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Woodcock Creek Lake Project is a shining example of this cooperation. Within the limits of its lease and fiscal realities, the County should continue to seek ways to improve and strengthen this popular facility. The newly proposed bike/pedestrian trails through

Colonel Crawford Park and the rest of the Woodcock Creek Project suggest that the County is already well ahead of this recommendation.

Over the past century, the County Fair Board, the County's agricultural community, and its citizens in general have built the Crawford County Fair into one of the region's most memorable institutions. The achievements begun at Vallonia continue today in West Mead Township, with the completion of the new state-of-the-art grandstand. The County and the County Fair Board should work towards preserving this unique institution by continuing to seek means of improving the County Fairgrounds and promoting the Fair in general.

The County should continue to maintain its forest in Steuben, Oil Creek, and Troy Townships. Considering that most of the County's largest recreational facilities are concentrated in its western half, the County Forest should be preserved as a potential recreational area for the upper Oil Creek Valley.

In a County with so many large-scale, regional recreational resources, it is often easy to overlook the importance of smaller, community-centered recreational organizations and facilities. Although the County has no direct role in the Meadville Area Recreation and Parks Board, the Titusville Recreation Commission, and other municipally-based organizations, it should encourage, coordinate, and support these groups when this would be helpful.

While it is clear that all of the aforementioned recreational resources should be retained and maintained, it may be less obvious that some of these facilities may have to be upgraded in the future. If the population growth that Crawford County has exhibited in the 1990s continues into the 21st Century, the County's overabundance of recreational opportunities may turn into an outright shortage.

Emergency Management

Crawford County should continue to support its 12 police forces, 34 fire-fighting units, and 17 emergency medical service organizations. The County's 911 Emergency Response System should be supported and promoted as a vehicle for emergency management planning. All such planning should keep in mind that the County's population has grown in the 1990s, and may continue to grow well into the 21st Century.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

Regarding solid waste disposal and recycling, the County should continue to support the activities of the Crawford County Solid Waste Authority and the County's Department of Solid Waste and Recycling. The efforts of these organizations to update the County's 1990 Act 101 solid waste management plan should especially be supported, and the directives of this update (as well as the directives of the 1990 original, where they are still relevant) should be followed. The County's 1990 plan is hereby included in this plan by reference, and all future updates are also included as they are completed.

Map 6 - Water Service Areas 11x17

Map 7 - Sewer Service Areas 11x17

CHAPTER VI

FUTURE HOUSING
AND NEIGHBORHOODS
PLAN

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN

Introduction

As part of the Comprehensive Plan for Crawford County, a Housing Plan Element has been formulated. Information concerning the housing stock in the County has been obtained from U.S. Census data and an on ground and windshield survey conducted by personnel from Richard C. Sutter and Associates, Inc. This Plan Element provides a framework for conservation and rehabilitation of the housing in Crawford County and provides County officials with the necessary information to implement a housing rehabilitation program. Through the undertaking of a concerted rehabilitation effort, the County will be able to achieve an upgraded housing stock, higher property values, an improved tax base, and elimination of situations, which are having a negative impact on the housing market throughout the County.

The following section, Housing and Neighborhoods Objectives and Policies, is the cumulative result of the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission staff, Technical Committees, and over one year of public participation. The overall goal of housing in Crawford County has been defined through these sources as “...*To insure that every resident has clean, safe and affordable residence*”. Indeed, the goal is broad and is further defined by the specific objectives and policies authored in this section. The result of this section is to guide the elected officials in making political decisions concerning housing policy in Crawford County over the next 10 to 15 years.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

General

The general goals, objectives, and actions serve the general good of housing residents in Crawford County. They could not be categorized into the other categories included in this section, which are urban housing, rural housing, market rate housing, and subsidized and special needs housing.

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Policies:

- | | |
|---|---|
| # | Encourage participation in county, state, and federal programs that assist first time homebuyers, low-income families, and handicapped persons. |
| # | Encourage additional economic opportunity through low down payment, low interest, long-term mortgages for new homes and home repairs. |
| # | Promote the Crawford County Housing Authorities as repositories of information on housing programs, which could serve the residents with the vital information about loan, and lending programs through the State and Federal government. |

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Policies:

- | | |
|---|---|
| # | Encourage use of federal, state, or local assisted housing rehabilitation programs. |
| # | Encourage additional economic opportunity through low interest loans for new or rehabilitated housing. |
| # | Encourage uses of a building permit system and BOCA compliance in each municipality. |
| # | Promote the Redevelopment Authorities as repositories of information on housing programs, which could serve the residents with the vital information about loan, and lending programs through the State and Federal government. |

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Policies:

- # Provide technical assistance to those governmental entities that want to pursue housing development.
- # Promote the provision of affordable housing for all residents and add a wider choice of low-moderate income housing.
- # Through ordinances, have developer bonuses and requirements for percentage of development towards moderate income housing in planned subdivisions.

Urban Housing

The Housing Needs Technical Group recognized that urban housing and rural housing present a different set of planning issues and concerns. For the purposes of this plan, urban housing is defined as the existing housing stock situated within the municipal boundaries of Crawford County's two cities and its larger boroughs (Cambridge Springs, Linesville, Cochranton, Saegertown, etc.). In these communities, issues generally center around an aging housing stock, a larger percentage of rental housing than the countywide average, and a net loss of housing units due to population loss, deterioration, and the expansion of businesses and institutions. As a result, the policy objectives and implementation strategies put forth in this plan center around attracting home builders and home buyers into urban areas, targeting blighted neighborhoods with carefully planned in-fill* development and housing rehabilitation, and encouraging renters to buy their own homes.

Objective: To minimize housing unit losses in Meadville, Titusville, and larger boroughs due to neglect, expansion of institutions and conversion to commercial uses.

Policies:

- # Encourage the development of market rate and subsidized in-fill* housing in underutilized lands in the greater Meadville and Titusville areas and in larger boroughs.
- # The cities Meadville and Titusville, via their Redevelopment Authorities or Planning Departments, should delineate vacant, deteriorated, or underused residential building lots for the purpose of targeting housing rehabilitation efforts, market and subsidized in-fill development, and housing development incentives. Areas identified containing a significant percentage of deteriorated structures should be considered for land banking to attract new housing development.
- # The cities of Titusville and Meadville should work closely with Habitat For Humanity and other organizations involved with home building for income eligible residents to insure that new houses are constructed in prime in-fill development sites within the cities. In this light, the cities of Meadville and Titusville could provide a tax disincentive to owners of vacant lots, or surface parking lots. This can be done by reassessing the level that both land and buildings are valued and taxed within the cities.
- # Develop a strategy of financial incentives and transfer the ownership of the properties to municipalities, redevelopment authorities, or other groups positioned to rehabilitate the properties and return them to the tax roles.

*In-fill development is defined as the reuse of vacant lots scattered throughout developed areas, as opposed to the constructing of multiple housing unit subdivisions or commercial strip sites on the outskirts of developed areas.

Objective: To minimize Meadville and Titusville’s population declines as families buy housing on the outskirts of those cities and into the hinterlands.

Policies:

- # Increase and expand incentives for persons to buy housing in Meadville and Titusville.
- # Apply the LERTA ordinances (tax abatement) in both Meadville and Titusville to residential development carefully targeting the use of LERTA toward identified distressed neighborhoods.
- # Continue to subsidize closing costs and down payments for low/moderate income persons through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME programs.
- # Make all tax incentives, grants, and targeted housing improvement areas known to area realtors and lending institutions.
- # Develop a brochure outlining the programs and showing the locations of delineated housing improved areas.

Objective: To improve rental housing conditions in Meadville and Titusville, which are especially vulnerable to neglect and deterioration.

Policies:

- # Increase the quality of the County’s rental housing, especially in the cities and boroughs through a combination of increased code enforcement and low cost rehabilitation programs.
- # Step up code enforcement of rental properties by providing periodic inspection of such properties. Require certification of rental properties based on meeting local building codes. Increased enforcement can be funded through the CDBG program in Meadville and Titusville.
- # Increase funding available for the rehabilitation of rental units. Link the rental certification program with the rental rehabilitation program to provide an option for financially vulnerable landlords facing the cost of bringing their properties up to code. Titusville and Meadville can increase the amount of CDBG funds available for rental housing rehabilitation by tapping into other funding sources to finance owner occupied housing rehabilitation (i.e. Home Investment Partnership Program) which is currently funded via the CDBG program in both cities.

Rural Housing

For the purposes of this plan, rural housing is defined as housing located in the townships and smaller boroughs of Crawford County beyond the feasible range of existing community sewer and water systems. Crawford County’s rural housing stock is marked by great contrasts. There are many older farmhouses and rural residences in desperate need of rehabilitation. There are an ever-increasing number of manufactured homes both on individual lots and in commonly owned manufactured home parks. Finally, Crawford County’s state and township roads are becoming increasingly attractive locations to middle class and wealthy city and suburban residents wanting a place in the country. Whether a rural resident lives in a 30 year old, poorly insulated mobile home, or a \$250,000 dream house, it is generally recognized that people live in the country by choice. It is also recognized that with lower land values and the lack of municipal services, it is possible to live in rural areas of the county on very little means. Therefore, the policy objectives and implementation strategies offered in this section focus on helping low and moderate rural residents to stay in their homes by assisting in needed housing repairs. Another focus of this section is to encourage the adoption of PA BOCA in the rural areas of the county. New programs that encourage first time homebuyers should primarily be targeted to urban areas of the county.

Objective: To preserve and extend existing housing thru BOCA standards and implementation.

Policies:

- # Explore the possibility of establishing a “circuit rider” code enforcer who works with a number of rural municipalities. CDBG funding can be used to establish this program.
- # Work with rural municipalities through the comprehensive planning process to encourage the development of building and property maintenance codes.

Objective: To assist the many rural residents who are able to live on very little means, but find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Policies:

- # Continue to support, expand, and streamline the countywide housing rehabilitation program through a combination of grant funding and low interest loans.
- # Enumerate all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in Crawford County. Devise a comprehensive strategy to increase communication between lending institutions, government agencies, and non-profits in order to combine and target the various programs in order to maximize the number of households being served. For example, low interest loan programs may be targeted to households having moderate incomes (50% to 80% HUD defined median income) while grant programs may be targeted to households having low incomes (below 50% HUD defined median income).

Market Rate Housing

Market rate housing is defined in this plan as private sector housing located on the fringes of Crawford County’s established communities. Areas covered in this section are either served by public sewer or water or are within feasible distance for the extension of these utilities. This plan primarily focuses on identifying areas that are well situated to accommodate future housing growth and overcoming hurdles to development in these areas. This plan also advocates the development of a mix of housing types in order to better respond to changing demographics and socioeconomic characteristics in the county.

Objective: To minimize the dispersed manner in which much of the county’s new housing is developing in the townships surrounding Meadville and Titusville.

Policies:

- # Through the Comprehensive Planning process, identify and target areas in the County that are poised for future residential growth that have existing utilities or are in feasible range for the extension of utilities. These areas should be situated to complement developed areas and reduce sprawl.
- # Use the Comprehensive Plan to direct the extension of sewer lines, exercising the County Planning Commission’s role in commenting on municipal Act 537 Plans, zoning amendments, subdivisions, local land use ordinances, etc.
- # The Crawford County Planning Staff should identify obstacles, if any, to residential development in targeted growth areas (i.e. zoning restrictions) and assist municipalities in amending their ordinances, if necessary.

Objective: To manage rural residential land use as utility service extensions and technologies solve rural development factors currently inhibiting growth.

Policies:

- # Work with municipalities to better prepare them for this impact through improved or new zoning and other land use ordinances.
- # Encourage the principles of “greener growth” and the clustering of subdivisions as advocated by the Pennsylvania Growing Greener legislation.
- # The Crawford County Planning Office should proactively work to prepare amendments to local zoning and subdivision ordinances that overcome the obstacles and better encourage the development of clustered subdivisions.

Subsidized and Special Needs Housing

Subsidized and special needs housing is generally identified as housing developed specifically for the purpose of serving income eligible tenants, the elderly, or persons with disabilities.

Objective: To assist the many families in Crawford County that are not eligible for public housing because of poor tenant records, credit history, or other life skills problems.

Policies:

- # Support the development of transitional housing and an increase in the number of housing counselors and caseworkers to prepare more families for public housing.
- # The County should support efforts to develop transitional housing by the Crawford County Coalition on Housing.

Objective: To better utilize the public agency’s housing resources surplus of two and three bedroom public housing units, and support the development of one bedroom subsidized apartment units for single persons.

Policies:

- # Explore the option of transforming public housing units to private owner occupied units, special needs housing, or one-bedroom units.
- # The various County Housing Authorities should work closely with other housing related agencies and social services organizations to develop strategies and feasibility studies on the best use of the Housing Authority’s units that are experiencing persisting vacancies
- # Support the creation of additional subsidized housing units for single and special needs persons.
- # The various County’s Housing Authorities should consider the feasibility of converting some of their two and three bedroom housing units into single bedroom units to address this need.

Objective: To mitigate the problems associated with the County’s many public housing units that are poorly situated for their residents to access public services and retail establishments.

Policies:

- # Improve the pedestrian and transportation linkages between public housing sites and retail and social services.
- # The Crawford Area Transportation Authority should carefully explore the feasibility of establishing a fixed-route service within the Titusville area that accesses not only the City’s public and subsidized housing sites, but serves a large cross-section of the residential, commercial, and industrial areas as well.

Objective: To investigate the perception that there is some duplication of services available to tenants facing eviction or homelessness.

Policies:

- # Improve tracking of clients using such housing programs as the emergency shelter program or rental assistance program. Increase communication among the various providers.
- # Center For Family Services, Inc., a non-profit organization that serves families and persons facing eviction, homelessness, and other financial or housing problems, is in the process of developing a system to track clients. As this system is developed, it should be expanded to include all organizations in Crawford County that serve the homeless or near homeless. Information gathered from this program should be used to streamline existing programs, eliminate duplicated programs, and develop new programs that address identified gaps in service.

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Policies:

- # Promote “aging in place” initiatives to assist the growing numbers of elderly to be able to remain in their own homes with any available means of assistance.
- # Support federal, state, and local efforts to reduce the property tax burden on older persons dependent on low incomes.
- # Support housing improvement/renovation subsidies for older persons desiring to remain in their own homes. Enumerate all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in Crawford County.
- # Devise a comprehensive strategy to increase communication between lending institutions, government agencies, and non-profits in order to combine and target the various programs in order to maximize the number of households being served. For example, low interest loan programs may be targeted to households having moderate incomes (50% to 80% HUD defined median income) while grant programs may be targeted to households having low incomes (below 50% HUD defined median income).

Objective: To insure adequate rental units are available for low-income persons, families and elderly and those having other special needs.

Policies:

- # Publicize funds, which are available for rental rehabilitation like rental rehabilitation programs.
- # Consider additional housing development for income eligible seniors.
- # Enumerate all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in Crawford County.

FUNDING AND HOUSING PROGRAMS INFORMATION

Housing Programs

The PA CDBG program provides funds to address community needs such as street improvements, water and sewer improvements, housing rehabilitation, as well as many other community related activities. The PA H&CD program targets its money to Housing Assistance, Community Development, Downtown Pennsylvania, and Economic Development. There are three (3) ways to obtain funding.

1. Because Crawford County is a PA CDBG entitlement community, i.e. the County does receive an annual allocation of its own PA Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, the local officials may submit a proposal to Crawford County requesting use of part of the County's entitlement funds.
2. The County may also apply directly to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for "competitive" CDBG funds. These funds are set aside for communities which are both "entitlement" and "non-entitlement communities". Crawford is an entitlement community. There is a high degree of competition for these funds and the amount of money is limited to approximately \$5 million statewide.
3. The Pennsylvania Housing and Community Development Grant (H&CD) Program is a competitive program which provides funds to communities for four (4) general purposes one (1) of which is housing assistance. A housing rehabilitation program would fall under the category of housing assistance. The County can apply for up to \$350,000 for any given year. Application must be made to the Department of and Economic Development. It is recommended that the County apply for both PA CDBG and PA H&CD funds to initiate the housing rehabilitation program. This program has been recently refined into the Communities of Opportunities Program.

Program Guidelines

To be eligible for the funding, the Crawford County Housing Rehabilitation Program must be concentrated upon low/moderate-income families according to State and Federal guidelines. Grants should be made available to low/moderate-income households to rehabilitate their housing units. It is recommended that the County make the housing rehabilitation program Countywide and that it be limited to owner-occupied housing.

Conditions for participation in the program should include:

- # Homeowners must have resided in their homes for at least one year prior to making application for rehabilitation assistance.
- # The owner must continue to live in the property and maintain it in accordance with Section 8 Housing Quality Standards of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for five years to receive the full benefit of the forgiveness loan from the County.

If the owner of a dwelling is eligible for a forgiveness loan, he must "borrow" the full amount of the loan from the County. As long as the owner remains in and maintains the property as determined by an annual inspection by the Housing Rehabilitation administrating agency, one-fifth of the amount of the loan will be forgiven annually for five years.

If the owner sells or transfers his property in less than five years, the outstanding amount of the loan will be paid from the proceeds of the sale. The funds that are recovered are then available to fund additional rehabilitation activities throughout the County. Loans should only be given to rectify deficiencies and to weatherize the property. Critical deficiencies must be addressed first.

Loans are to be made up to \$9,000. If a balance of the \$9,000 maximum remains after eligible repairs are made, then those funds can be spent for other code deficiencies and weatherization improvements. It is important to note that when a unit is eligible for rehabilitation assistance, the unit must be brought up to the HUD Section 8 Quality Standards. If the maximum amount of the loan is not sufficient to cover these expenses, the owner of the home must come up with the additional amount needed to bring the unit into compliance.

Implementation

The first step in implementing any housing rehabilitation program is to secure the needed funds. The applications, PA CDBG and PA COP, which must be prepared are rather lengthy and involved. It is recommended that someone who is experienced with the application preparation procedure be retained to prepare the applications. Because of the County's limited staff, it may be advantageous to request assistance from the Meadville and Titusville Housing Authorities to actually implement a housing rehabilitation program.

A Housing Committee will need to take the initiative to provide the public with information they need to participate in the program. Then the Committee and staff will be responsible for reviewing the qualifications of applicants for the program, reviewing work write-ups, securing bids from contractors, and then monitoring and inspecting the housing units when the work is completed. The committee may receive more applications than there are funds for and applications will have to be made in subsequent years for additional funds. Following this plan will improve the quality of life in Crawford County.

Affordable Housing

There is a belief at every level of government that every family should have a choice of affordable housing available to them. The County's housing goal outlined in the Goals and Objectives section reflects this belief as well.

Affordable housing law

Several laws at all levels of government were created to deal with the provision of affordable housing. The Federal Fair Housing Act was enacted to ensure that persons would have available to them a decent home in a suitable environment. New Jersey has been the home to several important cases involving affordable housing at the federal level. The rulings on these cases, Mount Laurel I and II, basically state that communities must provide their share of a region's affordable housing stock and that regulations do not relieve the municipality of this obligation.

Affordable housing programs

Several strategies are available to promote affordable housing. As previously outlined in this section of the plan, rehabilitation of existing homes can be used to provide sound affordable housing.

Weatherization is a form of housing rehabilitation that involves reducing the energy costs of a low-income household. Both owner-occupied and rental dwellings are eligible for weatherization service. The Weatherization program is funded through the federal Department of Energy and has received a portion of Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds provided by the Department of Health and Human Services. The Bureau of Human Resources should be contacted for more information.

New Housing

The Centers or Village Concept of Land Use Development as presented in the Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan should be closely followed in all new housing developments.

If priced within an appropriate range, such a development can serve as affordable housing for senior citizens. With expected growth and redistribution for Crawford County in population, existing housing and rehabilitation measures will not be enough to meet future demand. New housing should be built within or adjacent to existing development concentrations where water and sewer and other infrastructure are already in place and where accessibility for emergency vehicles (ambulances, fire trucks) is not a problem.

Other Housing Legislation

Affordable Housing and the Law

The Federal Fair Housing Act (as amended 1990) was created to ensure that every family would have a decent home in a suitable environment available to them. There is a growing body of both statutory and case law that pertains to affordable housing:

Federal Case Law

As mentioned earlier, Mount Laurel I and II: New Jersey has become home to landmark cases involving affordable housing. In the Mount Laurel I Decision, the Supreme Court ruled that communities in growth areas must take their fair share of the region's affordable housing stock.

In Mount Laurel II, the New Jersey and United States Supreme Courts ruled regulations do not relieve a municipality of their obligation to account for their fair share of affordable housing in a region. In addition, affirmative measures such as builders' remedies, mandatory set asides, subsidies and mobile home zoning may be used to ensure that the fair share goal is achieved.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Laws Regarding Affordable Housing

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code Section 301(2.1) states that each municipal zoning ordinance is designed to provide for the use of land within the municipality for residential housing of various dwelling types encompassing all basic forms of housing. These forms include single family and two family dwellings, a reasonable range of multi family dwelling units in various arrangement, mobile homes, and mobile home parks. However, no zoning ordinance will be deemed invalid for the failure to provide for any specific dwelling type. Basically, this provision discourages exclusionary zoning and promotes affordable housing.

Surric V. Zoning Hearing Board of Upper Providence County: This was the 1977 test case that the Pennsylvania Supreme Court established provisions for affordable housing. In particular, it like the Mount Laurel case, requires communities in growth regions to provide their share of affordable housing.

Funding Sources for Affordable Housing (as of 1998)

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD is the base funding source of many Housing Programs. Their funds are used for developing affordable housing and purchasing mortgages (Fannie MAE, Freddie MAC and Ginny MAE) and for rehabilitation and weatherization. The primary source of direct funding for housing is the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development offers several programs that utilize CDBG monies as a funding source. They are: Entitlement CDBG funds, Competitive CDBG, and Housing and Community Development Funds, now the Communities Program, and the HOME Program.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

The largest funding source for housing is the CDBG program. Both entitlement and competitive funds are eligible for this activity. The CDBG Competitive grants are usually due in Harrisburg in late March. The current maximum grant amount for housing rehabilitation is \$250,000. Applications for funding should be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. It is quite possible to reapply for additional funding to continue the housing program after the first grant funds are expended.

Other State and Federal Affordable Housing Programs

Most federal and state programs for housing are targeted to low and moderate-income families or individuals. To address the needs of affordable housing, rehabilitation of existing housing and future housing needs, it is recommended that the following programs be examined and possibly implemented.

Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly (HUD)

The large number of senior citizens in Crawford County creates substantial demand for elderly housing. This program provides capital advance grants for construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of housing for very low-income elderly. Funding is available to CBO's and other developers. Contact HUD Regional Office.

Section 811 Supportive Housing for the Disabled (HUD)

This program, like, Section 202, provides capital advance grants for construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of supportive housing. Contact HUD Regional Office.

HOME - Home Investment partnership program (HUD, DCED)

This program offers funding and general guidelines to municipal governments; while allowing the local government the freedom to tailor implementation strategies for providing affordable housing to their own communities. This program contains the following Goals:

- # Provide affordable housing to low to very low income Pennsylvanians (80 percent of median income)
- # Assist local governments in achieving adequate supplies of affordable housing
- # To foster and strengthen partnerships between the public and private sectors which will increase the production and management of affordable housing.

Low Income Rental Housing Tax Credits (Federal)

The tax credit program is intended to assist in the creation and preservation of affordable multi-family housing for families with low incomes, senior citizens, handicapped individuals, and homeless persons. The program makes available a dollar-for-dollar federal income tax credit up to 70 percent of the project's cost. Contact Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA).

Home ownership Program (PHFA)

Provides for low interest loans made through local banks to purchasers who have not owned a home in the last three years. Requires a low down payment and subsidizes interest rate. This is available for individuals and families only, but a useful way for banks to meet their CRA commitment.

PennHOMES (PHFA, DCED)

A combined resource program to create multi-family rental housing by reducing financing costs. Both for profits and non-profits are eligible. Contact local bank or DCED.

Housing and Community Development Grants (DCED)

This is the Commonwealth's largest pool of state monies for housing and community revitalization. It is a competitive program with the following eligible housing activities: owner occupied rehabilitation, rehabilitation of investor owned properties up to four units, new construction, and site improvements. Contact DCED for further details. This program is now known as the Communities Opportunities Program.

Act 137 Housing Fund

County Commissioners have increased fees for deeds and mortgages to provide a match for other affordable housing programs.

Fannie Mae, Ginny Mae and Freddie MAC (HUD)

In these three programs Federal Funds are used to help low to moderate income and first time homebuyers. When implemented, these programs help keep younger families in the local area, aid in slowing down housing turn over and the housing cycle and stimulate a sense of community. Local Real Estate Brokers, Financial Institutions should be contacted for more information and the Regional HUD Office.

Community Service Block Grant Program and Employment and Community Conservation Program

These programs are administered through the Department of Community and Economic Development, Bureau of Human Resources. These programs are targeted toward wider scale (community and neighborhood) type activities. In addition this Bureau funds the Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP), which has the following components:

- # Housing Initiative,
- # Weatherization,
- # Local Initiative,
- # Progressive Readiness Employment Program (PREP), and
- # Enterprise Zone Extension Credit Program

The status of these programs, including their funding and timing, is unclear at the present time due to changes in the organization of the Department of Community and Economic Development.

Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (IRS)

Tax credits may be taken on improvements made to income producing properties in the Historic District if work meets certain standards set by the Secretary of the Interior.

Locally Based Programs

The County could take several steps related in preserving and promoting its housing stock. These projects could be administered by the County in conjunction with the Meadville and Titusville Redevelopment Authorities, civic groups, local financial institutions, and the Crawford County Planning Commission Office. The following are suggested projects that the County could undertake:

Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) With Local Banks

Under the guidelines of the Community Reinvestment Act, a Federal Law, local financial institutions must provide funds for community, economic and affordable housing development in the municipalities in which they conduct business.

This vehicle could be used for mortgage programs under the PHFA Home ownership Program to stimulate home ownership in areas where it is now low, providing low interest loans for housing rehabilitation projects, and developing Senior Housing Units.

Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

Preparation of a revised Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance should promote affordable housing, encourage new housing structures, preservation of existing sound housing and the demolition of blighted structures. The ordinance writing process would take several years to complete and require substantial public input.

CHAPTER VII

ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN

ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN

Introduction

In order to provide the County with a good overview of environmental issues, each item of concern was organized under the four main overriding issues that relate to air, water, land, and educational initiatives. Each major issue includes a detailed subset of related issues and opportunities and potential goals. The following ideas, suggestions, and future action plans were prepared by the members of the Environmental Concerns Committee in conjunction with representatives from the Agricultural community. Additionally, the County Planning Commission, Planning Commission staff, and over one year of public participation helped define this plan section. Also, these groups defined the overall environmental goal of the County which is *“...to improve citizen awareness of environmental issues through educational initiatives, provide sufficient quantity and quality of water for consumption, recreation and wildlife, manage forests levels, and insure safe solid waste disposal practices.”* As with the other plan sections, the result of this section is to guide the elected officials in making political decisions concerning environmental policy in Crawford County over the next 10 to 15 years.

ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

General

Objective: To preserve and protect the ecological and environmental quality using both proactive and regulatory means.

Policies:

- # Assist municipalities with the updating or adopting of local land control ordinances. (See land use)
- # Explore the possibility of a tax incentive for landowners that choose to have their land included in land trusts.
- # Develop standards for the preservation of wetlands and marshes.
- # Expand the current mapping of wetlands the Planning Commission staff maintains and develop a Countywide Wetlands Inventory and Classification of dividing them into artificial and natural wetlands.
- # Form a Crawford County demonstration and seminar day at the County Farm to show how to use alternative and/or integrated pesticide management techniques for County residents, industry and business owners.
- # Central county or common agency (County Emergency Management Office) that would retain a Hazardous Materials Inventory and the corresponding “Emergency Action” Plans for all commercial and industrial (heavy and light manufacturing) businesses within Crawford County in the event of a spill or chemical accident, etc.

Objective: To encourage high quality development and redevelopment that minimize negative environmental and visual impacts and creates developments that are fiscally sound.

Policies:

- # Preserve desirable existing open space by concentrating development and promoting greenways, common green space and viewsheds.
- # The County Planning Commission should explore the adoption of a conservation of open spaces land use and development stance through assisting municipalities with information concerning cluster developments, areas for greenways conservation and important viewsheds.

Objective: To mitigate transportation related pollution to air, water, and soil.

Policies:

- # County Commissioners via the County Township Association and the County Soil & Conservation District could host an annual workshop for local municipalities to discuss alternatives, feasibility and environmental impacts of winter road maintenance.
- # Encourage CATA to look at greater flexibility in its destinations and where the bus pickups are located so service can be extended to greater benefit all segments of the population.
- # Explore a standard yet “flexible” formula for off-street parking space/lot requirements based on the number of spaces and percent of surface coverage when revising any municipal zoning, stormwater and subdivision ordinances within the County.
- # Host an annual workshop for local municipalities to discuss alternatives, feasibility, and environmental impacts of winter road maintenance.

Educational Initiatives

Objective: To provide the most useful and effective opportunities to increase land and environmental awareness within the County.

Policies:

- # Develop a basic Geographic Information System (GIS) so data is available on-line with the County’s website with links to other existing databases, such as DEP, Allegheny College, Soil and Conservation District, etc.
- # Devise an inventory of all environmentally related plans, studies, and agencies/ organizations. This inventory should be developed and updated by one central agency, perhaps the County Planning Commission, so that residents, newly elected officials, newcomers, and environmental agencies are aware of the research and studies already established in order to avoid duplication of effort.
- # Develop a Countywide Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) with representation from each of the 8 communities of interest (regions). The EAC may be based on the current example of the Greater Meadville EAC, a cooperative effort between West Mead and Vernon Townships and the City of Meadville.
- # Include within the County Comprehensive Plan update a resource/reference listing for all items of concern in order that people have a “one-stop-shop” to find resources within the County.
- # Develop detailed mapping for all publicly owned lands i.e. Federal, State, and County. This may involve having accurate maps, which outline where and how many acres are owned by the Federal government, the State (Fish & Game lands, State Park lands, DEP lands, etc.) and then all lands owned by the County government. This series of 3 maps would provide additional information for County residents and let people know the acreage owned by the three tiers of government within Crawford. Establish utility right-of-way maps, which also include the location of all municipal sewage and water lines.
- # Develop a Geographical Information System that may be used to consolidate existing maps (paper and digital) but to also maintain a level of compatibility with other GIS systems being used (ARC Info/ESRI) by government and public agencies.
- # The County Commissioners should support a Phase III of the Comprehensive Plan 2000 update to encourage the development of an Implementation brochure. The brochure should be written as a marketing document advertising the implementation of the County’s Goals, Objectives, and Policies.

Water Quantity and Quality

Objective: To minimize the ill effects of unmitigated stormwater run-off including point and non-point solutions.

Policies:

- # Per Pennsylvania mandate develop a Countywide Stormwater Management Plan to include all 11 watersheds. *PA has 104 watersheds and 350 stormwater systems. Crawford County has 11 watersheds that cover portions of the County. Of those 11 watersheds, currently one stormwater system has been studied, the Conneaut Outlet. The issue of stormwater is not just a county concern, but is also a statewide concern because the majority of stormwater systems have not yet been studied.*
- # Apply for funds and get plans in order for submission to state agencies in order to obtain funding to conduct stormwater management plans.
- # Look at the potential and feasibility of requiring developers to install alternative low-water landscaping or landscaping plans that demonstrate wise vegetative planting plans (i.e. high water foliage are grouped together and occur during the same growing season, etc).
- # Apply for submission to state agencies in order to obtain funding to conduct stormwater management plans. State provides up to 75% of planning and implementation costs through reimbursement to the municipality (local and/or County).
- # Encourage more flexibility within the zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances and stormwater management plans when they are revised, created, or rewritten in order to address parking location and materials in order to avoid massive paved parking lots. Encourage a combination of both permeable and impermeable parking surfaces.
- # Develop a goal of preparing stormwater management plans for Crawford County over a 10 year targeted time frame:
 - a) within 5 years study one third of the stormwater sheds within the County
 - b) within 7 years have completed study of two thirds of the systems
 - c) within the 10-year period study the remaining one third of the systems.Look at existing watershed partnerships for examples of joint involvement and water management i.e. Shenango Watershed and the partnership between Ohio and PA.

Lake/Stream Management

Objective: To promote and encourage the cooperation of local municipalities in the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program introduced by the County Soil and Water Conservation District, whose aim is to improve water quality for cold water streams by reducing the run-off from gravel roads.

Policies:

- # Inform the townships within Crawford County that they should be ready to apply for these (see explanation) competitive funds during the next 5 to 7 years [*dirt and gravel roads program introduced by the County Soil and Water Conservation District - Aim to improve water quality these cold water streams by reducing the run-off from gravel roads. Program initially (first 3 to 4 years) will only target Counties and municipalities that were considered target sites by Trout Unlimited*].
- # Promote dust suppression for rural dirt and gravel roads with environmentally friendly products.
- # The County should explore the possible prioritization of the 35 townships for future participation in the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program based on the number of these roads in the municipality, proximity to watercourses and based on the State's Water course classification system, and encourage them to apply for funds, i.e. 5yr, 10yr, 15yr submissions. However, in the short term (3-4 years), the County Soil and Conservation District could work with the townships not eligible in the initial round of funding or in areas not likely to receive competitive funding, assisting them in applying the new ideas and technology, while working in concert with the County Association of Townships to help disseminate the technology-educational initiatives at the township level.
- # Encourage local townships to lobby their PA Representatives and Senators and let them know the program is a success and should include more municipalities than just the startup regions. There is significant interest in Crawford County for participating in the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program, the County Association of Townships could get involved to lobby at the State level that the program should be strengthened.
- # The County could provide a "toolbox" of information to local municipalities to give them the background knowledge necessary to obtain funding through the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program (Planning and Soil and Conservation District).

Water Quality

Objective: To provide the citizens with clean water.

Policies:

- # Identify and map wellhead protection areas, recharge areas and water supply systems (public and private).
- # Through State agencies, encourage the establishment of a permitting system for all wells (public and private) drilled within the State. Currently, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) only has access to public wells.
- # Implement the County Wellhead Protection and Water Supply Plan and assist municipalities through the PA Rural Water Association to promote water quality awareness. Currently, the County Extension Office and local Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) office host annual wellhead protection zone demonstrations for industries, developers, and municipalities.
- # Identify and map areas where there have been an incidence of dry wells or a low drinking water supply (work in concert with the DEP and water well drillers to identify these areas of low drinking water supply).
- # Encourage DEP to establish construction standards for domestic wells. There is a statewide licensing program for drillers.

Objective: The re-establishment of stream buffers or riparian zones along water systems.

Policies:

- # Re-establishment of stream buffers or riparian zones along water systems.
- # Address the existing percentage of riparian zones and set a goal for systematically increasing the buffer areas on a 5, 10, 15 and 20-year time frame.
- # Establish priorities for sensitive areas along various tributaries and/or watersheds.
- # Devise incentives for including or designating land into a land trust, trails, etc.
- # Potentially have a 50ft to 100ft buffer zone along major tributaries to help reduce both point and non-point source pollution/run-off.
- # Establish priorities for sensitive areas along various tributaries and/or watersheds.
- # Implementation of a tax incentive for landowners who choose to have their land included in land trusts or adopt conservation practices.

Forestry Management

Objective: To preserve and protect our existing forests while allowing for ecologically balanced amount of forestry.

Policies:

- # Educate small lumber firms so they are more environmentally friendly in their harvesting practices through the Northwest PA Regional Forestry Association.
- # Encourage landowners to participate in the PA Forest Stewardship Program, which makes PA Association of Conservation Districts administered matching funds available for the preparation of forest inventories and management plans, and additional monies via the PA Bureau of Forestry and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) for forest improvement practices.
- # The County Commissioners should actively encourage efforts by existing forestry/timber management organizations and their educational programs. This may be carried out through an annual workshop held in conjunction with the forestry agencies (i.e. Northwest PA Regional Forestry Assoc.) and the County Soil & Conservation District.

Solid Waste Management

Objective: To provide the information and services which results in the most environmentally sensitive collection, treatment, and disposal of solid wastes.

Policies:

- # The County may wish to explore the development of a test-site or demonstration site at the County Farm for In-vessel organic waste and composting machine.
- # Work with the County Solid Waste Authority to create a “Waste Reduction” Plan or a “Waste Minimization” Plan.
- # Establish a multi-municipal agency to address rural on-lot sewage systems within the County.
- # Construct additional Permanent Recycling depots throughout the County.
- # Encourage and promote the development of a “Waste Exchange” program on a local or regional level for businesses, industries, local municipalities, and citizens so fewer materials are shipped directly to landfill sites.

CHAPTER VIII

PLAN COMPONENT INTERRELATIONSHIP STATEMENT

PLAN COMPONENT INTERRELATIONSHIP STATEMENT

The synthesis of interrelated activities to resolve issues and problems is always the thrust of community planning. In this regard, there are linkages among the elements of the goals and objectives and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. All are related and should further the overall goal, which is *to provide a high quality of life through promoting a healthy economic climate by fostering the entrepreneurial spirit and value-added resource development, providing decent, affordable housing, preserving urban cores while maintain rural character, preserving bio-diversity, clean water and air, improve the coordination of agency activities and municipal functions, and support the improvements along with the new developments towards an efficient, safe, diverse, economical and environmentally sensitive transportation system.*

The land use and subdivision recommendations are the means to implement these principles in a regulatory framework. As an example, housing recommendations not only come to terms with demographic trends, rehabilitation needs, and existing conditions, but also further the goals of eliminating blighted structures and complement residential development. All factors aim to increase the quality of life for Crawford County residents. Transportation recommendations may address safety issues and strengthen the transportation system, and also seek to enhance the system and future linkages with arterial roadways and regional transportation networks.

Recommendations for community facilities and services reflect the urban environment of Crawford County and the need for certain services. Sanitary sewer and potable water recommendations reflect the need for maintaining and improving the existing systems.

Transportation has an effect on land use; land use has an effect on housing; housing has an effect on community facilities and services and public utilities; public utilities affect the boroughs' physiology. There are other numerous interrelationship factors between the various components of the comprehensive plan; however, the ones mentioned above are the most noteworthy.

Plan implementation and coordination coupled with Crawford County involvement with the review of subdivision and land development suggest the active role the Crawford County Planning Commission should have regarding the redevelopment of the community.

Again, each element of the Comprehensive Plan has a bearing on another. In addition, plan recommendations regarding the various components of the Comprehensive Plan have an effect on neighboring communities. These effects are explained further in the Contiguous Municipalities Statement of this document.

CHAPTER IX

CONTIGUOUS
MUNICIPALITIES
RELATIONSHIP
STATEMENT

CONTIGUOUS MUNICIPALITY STATEMENT

Regional planning provides the means of facilitating the coordination of land use, housing, economic development, transportation, community facilities, public utilities, and other planning elements throughout Crawford County. It is believed that the goals, objectives, and recommendations of this plan are consistent with those of the neighboring municipalities located in this section of Northwestern Pennsylvania. The contiguous municipalities to Crawford County include the following in the list below and depicted **Map 8**:

Pennsylvania

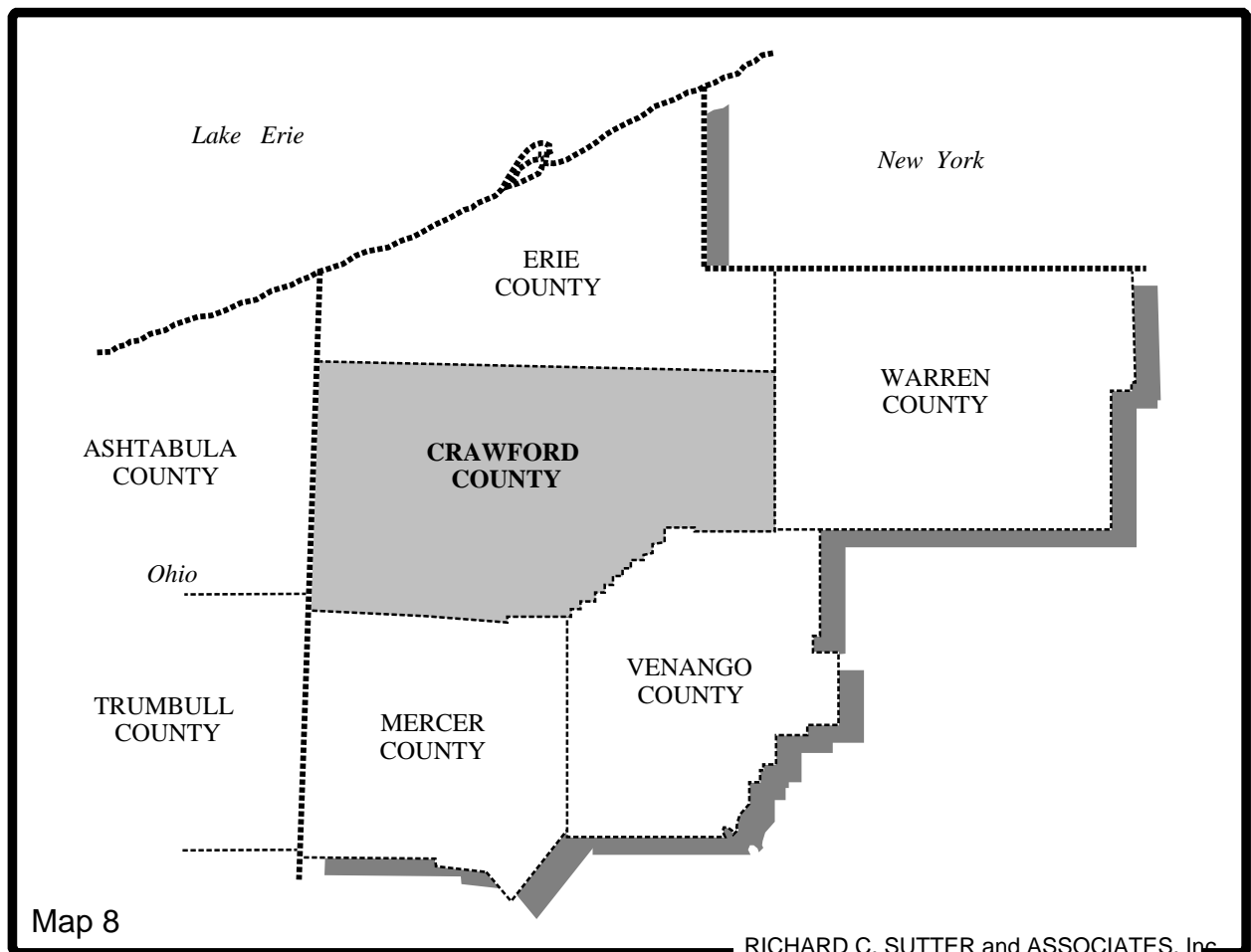
Erie County
Warren County
Venango County
Mercer County

Ohio

Ashtabula County
Trumbull County

A summary of the goals, objectives, and recommendations will be sent to each of the adjacent municipalities for their review and comments. No major conflicts are presented by incompatible land uses being proposed where these municipalities abut Crawford County. The map below illustrates the geographic relationships of the municipalities and Crawford County.

Of special interest, the land use recommendations in this Comprehensive Plan are based on the centers (or village) concept of land use.



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