

# Cussewago Township

## 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update



# **Cussewago Township Comprehensive Plan Update 2005**

## **Cussewago Township Planning Commission**

William Lasher, Chairman  
Palma Leone, Vice-Chairman  
Monika Beier, Secretary  
Ronald Alward  
Amy Schmidt

## **Board of Township Supervisors**

Donald Reibel, Chairman  
Raymond Armel  
John E. Acker

Lyle Acker, Township Secretary  
Attorney Joseph Tinko, Township Solicitor

## **Letter From Planning Commission**

We have been working with the Crawford County Planning Commission since 2001 to gather information concerning Cussewago Township in order to establish an updated comprehensive plan for our Township. This information includes the results of surveys sent to our citizens as well as studies involving traffic patterns, land use, housing, soil types, flood areas, population, occupations, local businesses and also includes various maps.

With the continued and increasing growth and changes of Cussewago Township from being agriculturally based to becoming a more residential Township this updated information will allow us to adapt accordingly, and plan in cooperation with our surrounding Townships.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Crawford County Planning Commission for their guidance and expertise in developing and assembling this plan with us. We also wish to thank the Cussewago Township Supervisors and the citizens of the Township for their support and cooperation in this endeavor.

### **Cussewago Township Planning Commission**

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# I. Introduction

## Introduction

Cussewago is a rural Township containing 43 square miles and is located on the northern boundary of Crawford County. Its mid-point is ten miles north of Meadville and 23 miles south of Erie. Its geography and topography emphasize a north-south direction and major traffic movements favor this direction.

The Township is approximately square, with boundaries running north-south and east-west. The Township is 6  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles east-west and 6  $\frac{2}{3}$  miles north-south. A rectangular block of about one half square mile is missing from the southeast corner.

## The Planning Process in Cussewago Township

This report includes the results of many months of data collection. The physical features of the Township were analyzed. Social and economic conditions in the Township were examined. Problems and opportunities were identified. All the information collected and analyzed was considered in light of the goals and objectives for Township development established by the Cussewago Township Planning Commission. Out of this work a Land Use and Facilities Plan for the Township was created. This entire process, including all the background information, statements of the Township's development objectives and plans for achieving these objectives are set forth in this report, the Cussewago Township Comprehensive Plan.

The *Comprehensive Plan* involves an inventory of conditions and characteristics, as they currently exist within the Township. Its primary purpose is to establish the policies that will guide land use decisions over the next 20 years. It is intended to promote a coordinated development pattern that will meet the Township's long-term planning goals and is compatible with regional planning efforts.

In order to achieve sound and effective policy recommendations, the various social, economic, cultural, historical and physical factors that impact land use are analyzed. An examination of local and regional demographics is useful in the identification of development and social patterns, and can provide insight for future growth potential. The extensive mapping of natural and man-made landscapes provides a record of existing features and, when analyzed in conjunction with demographic data, enables an assessment of future needs in terms of housing, infrastructure, community facilities, and conservation of natural resources. A basis from which to locate areas that are suitable for development

and areas that are not suitable for development, as well as areas that call for special conservation efforts are the results of the planning efforts.

This Plan is a result of the combined efforts of the Cussewago Township Planning Commission and the Crawford County Planning Commission staff. Interest in updating the 1970 plan for the Township developed as a result of the increased growth and development that the Township has seen in recent years.

## **Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code**

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) empowers municipalities in Pennsylvania to, individually or jointly; prepare plans for their future development and, by various legal and other measures, to implement those plans. Those municipalities choosing to plan for their future and take advantage of those benefits must meet the planning requirements of the MPC. Article III, Section 301 of the MPC requires that municipal comprehensive plans through the use of maps, charts, and text should include the following basic elements:

1. Community Development Objectives
2. A Plan for Land Use
3. A Plan for Housing
4. A Plan for Community Facilities and Utilities
5. A Plan for Transportation

Because Planning is a public process, the Township must adhere to the following series of steps before the plan can become Township policy:

1. The Planning Commission reviews and comments on the draft plan and holds a public hearing before forwarding the comprehensive plan to the governing body.
2. The governing body shall hold at least one public hearing pursuant to public notice before proceeding to vote on the plan, or amendment thereto.
3. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan shall be by resolution carried by the affirmative votes of not less than a majority of all members of the governing body.

Counties shall consider amendments to their comprehensive plan proposed by municipalities that are considering adoption or revision of their municipal comprehensive plans so as to achieve consistency.

## **Township History**

Cussewago Township was founded on July 9, 1800 by the Court of Quarter Sessions. The name "Cussewago" was derived from the Indian name "Kos-se-waus-ga," which translated literally means "big-belly." When the Indians first

came to "Cussewago Creek," they discovered a large black snake with a white ring around his neck, perched upon a limb. The snake had a large bulge near his stomach as if it had swallowed an animal as large as a rabbit. Thus the name for our Township came to be.

Cussewago Township is one of the largest Townships in Crawford County, and also dates back to one of the earliest portions of the county ever settled. Wildlife thrived due to the rolling surface of the land and the low marshy areas located near its streams and tributaries. It wasn't uncommon for the early pioneers to come across deer, bear, wolves, and even an occasional panther. Today, although deer are most prevalent, black bears have also migrated back into the area and the wolves and panthers have been replaced with an occasional coyote.

Among the earliest of settlers here in our Township are some familiar names, with some descendants of the original settlers still living within the boundaries to this day. These include: John Collum (arriving in 1792 and settling in Mosiertown), John Clawson (arriving from New Jersey in 1797 and settling near the center of the Township), and John Chamberlain (also arriving from New Jersey in 1797 and settling in Crossingville). Other settlers included the family names of: Carman, Swaney, Hites, McBride, Tinny, Donohue, Ross, Grenlee, Harned, Cole, Hurd, Anderson, and Lewis.

Cussewago Township contains the villages of Mosiertown and Crossingville. Mosiertown, located in the southern part of the Township, was home to a post office, two churches (Baptist and Lutheran), one school, two stores, one hotel, a blacksmith, shoe and carriage shop, three physicians, a tannery, a steam grist-mill built and operated by Lemuel Stebbins (later destroyed by fire and never rebuilt), twenty dwellings and in 1830 the first tavern in the township was erected by a Mr. Phelps. Crossingville, situated in the northwestern portion of the township, was formerly known as "Cussewago Crossing," derived from an Indian trail that crossed Cussewago Creek at this point. John Hagany was the first settler to Crossingville, which was also the home to two churches (Catholic and United Brethren), one school, two stores, one hotel, two blacksmith shops, a shoe shop, a cheese factory and more than a dozen dwellings.

Historically, Cussewago Township is home to the first Baptist Church erected in Crawford County, Carmel Baptist Church (located in Mosiertown) and also the first Catholic Church erected in the Diocese of Erie, St. Philip's Church (located in Crossingville). If you are old enough to remember the television show "The Lone Ranger," you may recall the Lone Ranger's Indian Guide and "Kemosabe" friend, Tonto. His real name was Jay Silverheels and he was a Cussewago Indian. He was originally from Crossingville and is buried in St. James Cemetery belonging to St. Philip's.

Owen David taught the first school in 1804. He taught fifteen pupils out of a

log cabin, owned by Michael Greenlee, located on mile southeast of Mosiertown. When the public school system was adopted in 1835, one-room schools were created throughout the Township. There were four of them on record to have been in existence. Pictures of these may be seen in our modern-day school, Cussewago Elementary, located on North Mosiertown Road.

We are fortunate to reside in a Township rich in history and diversity, as well as resources and beauty. Cussewago certainly remains "A Great Place to Grow." Cussewago Township welcomes you!

*The Township History Section was compiled by Jeannine Reibel.*

### **Cussewago Township 1970 Plan**

In 1970, Cussewago Township created their first Comprehensive Plan, to serve as an overall evaluation of the community. It was intended to serve as a guide to Township Officials as well as other government agencies and private individuals and developers seeking to develop or expand land. The plan was financed in part through an urban planning grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

To further assist in the implementation of the plan, both a Zoning and a Subdivision and Land Development ordinance were created. The Zoning Ordinance set forth districts of the Township to establish uses permissible in each district. The Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance established the standards and procedures for subdividing any parcel of land into lots.

The 1970 plan has served the Township well for the past 30 years, and much of the work done at that time will be used in the updated plan. This plan will also make a good basis of comparison too see if the projections created at this time were ever realized.

### **Purpose of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan**

There are several purposes involved with the development of our 2005 Comprehensive Plan, not the least of which is in recognizing that our existing Comprehensive Plan was done well over 30 years ago.

In developing this updated Comprehensive Plan we not only bring about an awareness of the transitions Cussewago Township has experienced in the past 30 years, but also with the information gathered, we are able to recognize patterns and trends developing as our Township grows. With the changing of the demographics, land use, housing, traffic patterns, economic and business characteristics being documented we are able to develop a viable comprehensive plan to guide our township into the future.



This updated Comprehensive Plan will enable the governing body of Cussewago Township to more effectively establish ordinances covering various areas, including zoning, subdivision development and land use.

The development and adoption of this Comprehensive Plan plays a pivotal role in our Township's ability to qualify for state and federal grants and funding. Also with a definitive comprehensive plan established, this brings us into compliance with state mandates.

William C. Lasher, Chairman  
Cussewago Township  
Planning Commission

## **II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **2.1 Natural Features**

Cussewago Township is a rural township located in northwestern Crawford County. The township encompasses approximately 43 square miles. Cussewago Township is nearly square missing only a portion of the southeastern corner. It is bordered by Venango Township to the east, Hayfield Township to the south, and Spring Township to the west. The township's northern boundary, which is approximately 6 miles in length, borders Washington and Elk Creek Townships in Erie County. Map 1 provides a general location map of Cussewago Township in relation to the rest of northwestern Pennsylvania.

The topography of the township varies from rolling hills throughout much of the township to low-lying areas surrounding the Cussewago Creek. Steep slopes, a major factor in development limitations, are not prevalent in the township. Areas in which these slopes can be found have been highlighted in map 2. The township's highest points of elevation are located at two points on either side of Gospel Hill Road in the southeast corner of the township. These two points rise to 1,551' above sea level.

Cussewago Creek, a tributary of the French Creek, is the chief body of water in the township. The creek runs in a north - south orientation through the western region of the township where it enters Hayfield Township. The point where the creek exits the township is the township's lowest point of elevation approximately 1,080' above sea level. Refer to map 3 for portions of the Edinboro South, PA and Conneautville, PA United States Geological Survey 7.5" topographic maps for additional geographic information relative to Cussewago Township.

### **Watersheds & Wetlands**

Cussewago Township is located in the French Creek watershed, specifically both the Upper and Lower French Creek watersheds. Interstate 79 offers a helpful landmark in determining major watershed drainage patterns. Nearly all of the land in the township east of the interstate drains into the Upper French Creek watershed, whereas land west of the interstate drains into the Lower French Creek watershed (see map 4).

Just as the French Creek watershed is comprised of sub watersheds, the upper and lower, these too are further broken down into nine additional watersheds. The main contributor to the Upper French Creek watershed is the French Creek itself, whereas the main contributor to the Lower French Creek

watershed is the Cussewago Creek. A detailed breakdown of all nine sub-watersheds in the township is included in map 5.

Observing the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Wetlands Inventory, of all the land situated in the Lower French Creek watershed, that which is located along the Cussewago Creek is home to a majority of the township's wetlands. These wetlands were identified based on vegetation, visible hydrology, and geography by the U.S. Department of the Interior. This inventory serves as a good point of reference for land use planning in the township. Aside from the wetland locations along Cussewago Creek, other small pockets exist scattered throughout the township. Map 6 identifies all of the wetlands found in Cussewago Township.

### **Flood Prone Areas**

The Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) that are maintained by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) highlight the fact that the Cussewago Creek area is among the wettest in the township as it also represents the main flood hazard area in the township. The maps, which were last updated September 1984, show flood zones stretching the entire length of the Cussewago Creek, the west branch of the Cussewago Creek, and Carr Run. Flooding can also be found in the State Game Lands area east of Lake Road. Map 7 highlights the flood hazard areas in the township.

### **Soils**

A major factor influencing land use patterns throughout the township is the soil. The capabilities of the various types of soil found in Cussewago Township help determine site suitability for the location of residences, industry, agriculture, and recreation. In 1978, the Soil Survey of Crawford County was published analyzing and mapping soil conditions in the County. The different types of soils were classified into an eight-class system. Classes 1 and 2 were determined to be excellent for farming. Class 3 was found to be very good for agricultural operations when good land use practices were implemented. The remaining four classes were found to be poor for farming and limited to other types of agricultural use. Besides agricultural use, the classification system also helps determine the best locations for dwellings and their accompanying septic systems based on soil properties. Map 8 identifies the classes of soil found in Cussewago Township.

## **2.2 Existing Land Use**

This section provides for an inventory and analysis of current land uses, which will serve as a foundation for analyzing future development patterns. Comparing past development patterns with current land uses helps to identify trends, which can then be used to plan for the future. The information obtained

through the analysis of the existing land use will be used to develop the future land use plan and map.

Land development is the main component of physical growth in a Township. It is the relationship of various land uses, which creates values and produces an urban or rural pattern of development. The way in which each parcel of land is developed and used is of great importance, not only to its current owner and adjacent owners, but also to Cussewago Township as a whole, since the provision of adequate public facilities and services also must be conditioned upon how land is being, or is to be used.

To determine how the land in Cussewago Township is used, a land use inventory was taken. To supplement the field data, Crawford County tax maps and tax assessment files were consulted. From the information collected a map of existing land use in the Township was prepared, along with a table showing the statistical results of the inventory, by land use category. (See Map 9 and Table 1.1)

### **Land Use Categories**

A field survey of existing land uses was conducted in the fall of 2003 to provide the basis for a land use analysis. The results of this survey, an existing land use map, graphically represents the existing patterns of development in Cambridge Township. Map 9 depicts the results of this survey. The following categories were used in the survey:

**Agricultural:** This includes land used for crop production and pasturage, and land that is cleared that, with only a modest amount of preparation, could be used for crops or pasturage.

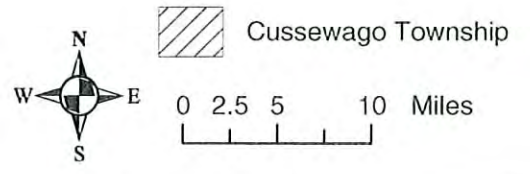
**Residential:** This includes both single-family and multi-family housing. The housing unit may be either of conventional construction, a mobile home or a modular home.


**Commercial:** This includes a wide range of wholesale, retail activities, and office activities, but excludes activities where goods are made and which are more appropriately classified as industrial. This category also includes mixed residential and commercial.

**Industrial:** This includes goods producing activities and mineral extraction (gravel).

**Conservation Lands:** This includes land owned by the State Game Commission and State Fish Commission.

# General Location Map



 Cussewago Township

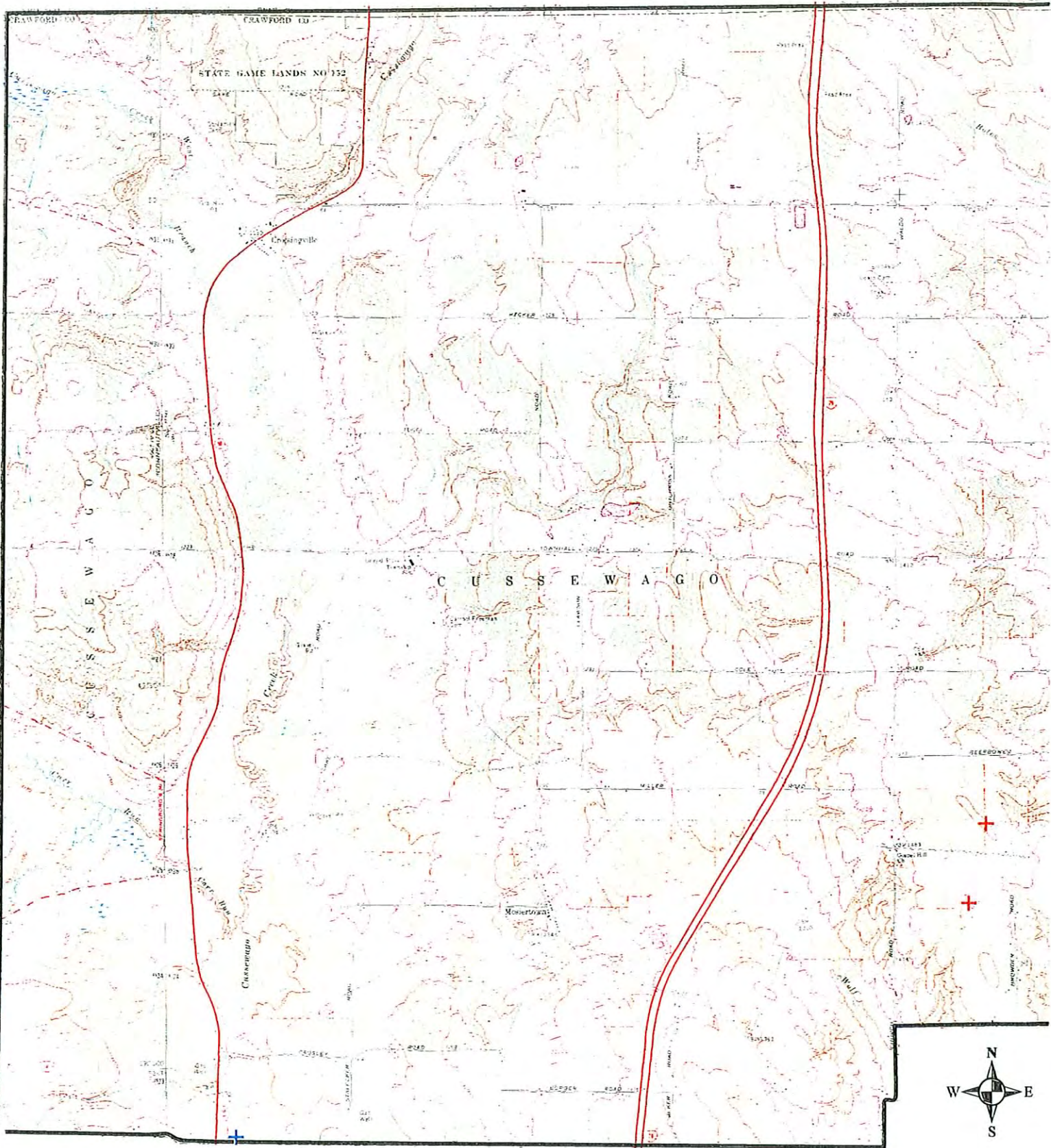






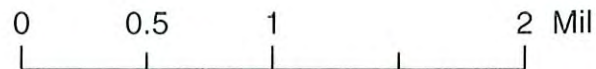


# United States Geological Survey Map

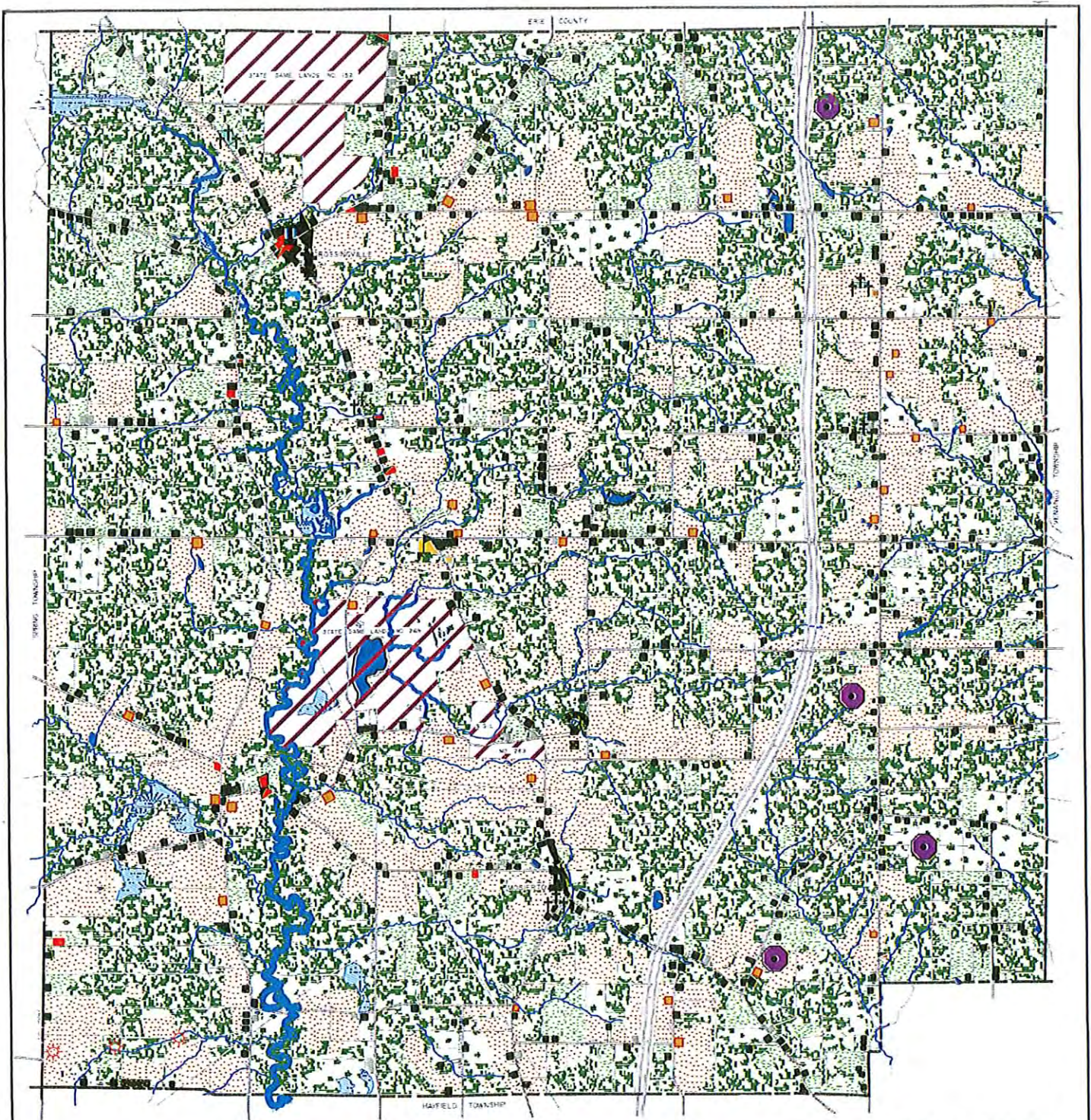


This map was created by the Crawford County Planning Commission, with data from various sources. Maps are intended for representative purposes only, and no guarantee is made on the accuracy of the data displayed here.

- + Highest Point (1,551')
- + Lowest Point (1,080')
















# EXISTING LAND USE MAP

CUSSEWAGO TOWNSHIP  
 CRAWFORD COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
 SCALE 1" = 1000'

## Legend

- |   |             |   |                       |
|---|-------------|---|-----------------------|
|  | AGRICULTURE |    | HOUSE                 |
|  | WOODS       |    | MOBILE HOME           |
|  | SCRUB       |    | AGRICULTURE BUILDINGS |
|  | FIELDS      |    | COMMERCIAL            |
|   |             |  | COMMUNICATIONS TOWER  |

CREATED BY THE  
 TOWNSHIP OF CUSSEWAGO  
 CRAWFORD COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
 DATE: 11-15-2011

N



- **Woodland and Brush:** This includes forested areas, areas with heavy growth of brush and land going to brush, which would not appear to be easily converted to farmland.

Table 1.1

**2004 CUSSEWAGO TOWNSHIP LAND USE ACCOUNTS**

Land Use	Acres	Per Cent
Residential	657.8	2.5
Mixed Residential / Commercial	7.8	0.0
Public	25.5	0.1
Semi-Public	14.9	0.1
Conservation	1,088.9	4.1
Agriculture	5,716.5	21.7
Woodlands / Brush	14,965.9	56.8
Fields	2,203.4	8.4
Scrub	719.7	2.7
Commercial	17.9	0.1
Interstate	405.4	1.5
State and Township Roads	535.4	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,359.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

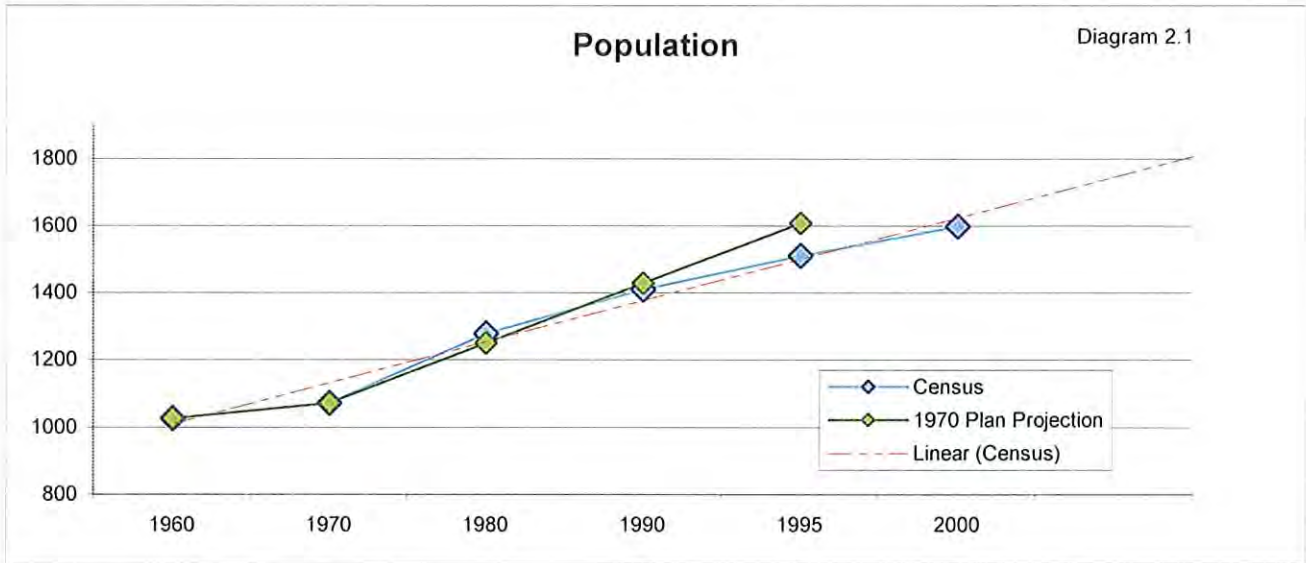
**2.3 People / Housing Characteristics**

Examining and understanding a community’s population is an essential part in developing a Comprehensive Plan. Insight into the current demographic makeup of a township and projecting future trends is vital to developing a successful Plan. Every issue that a township faces is interconnected to its citizens, therefore it is important to understand key characteristics of the population.

**Population Trends**

Cussewago Township has experienced steady population growth since the 1960’s. The growth that the township has experienced has come close to, but did not meet the projections of the 1970 Comprehensive Plan (diagram 2.1). That Plan

predicted the township's population would exceed 1,600 people by 1995. The most recent Census numbers indicate that there were 1,597 people living in the township in 2000. Although the population growth did not meet 1970 expectations, the township did experience a 49% increase in population during that thirty-year period and a 13.3% growth in the last ten years. Cussewago Township experienced the 12<sup>th</sup> largest increase in population in Crawford County from 1990 to 2000. Diagram 2.1 illustrates the population growth over the past forty years and projects future growth in the township.



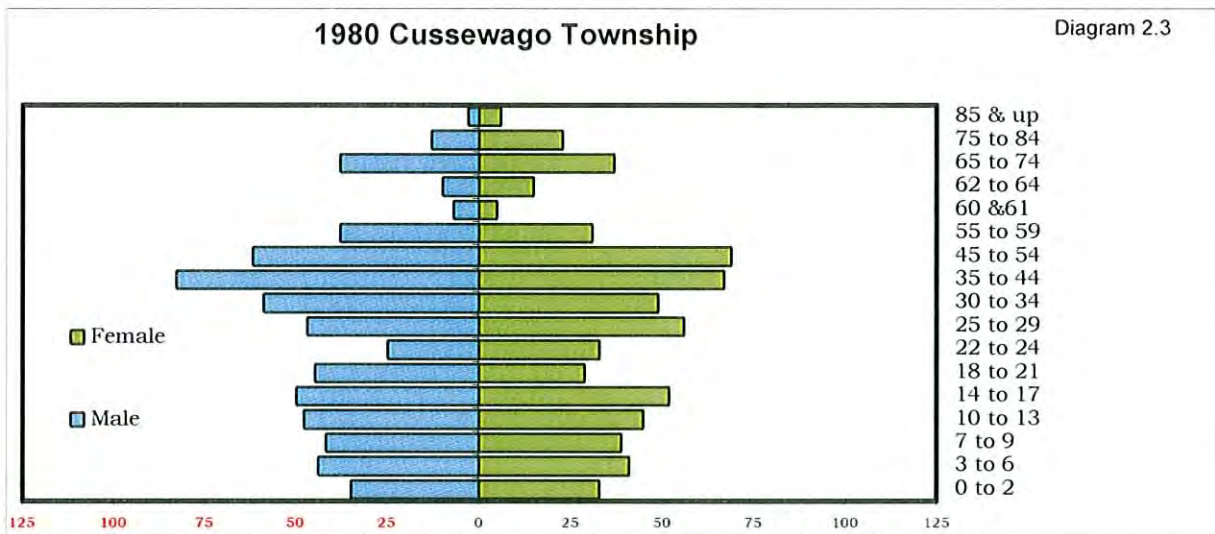
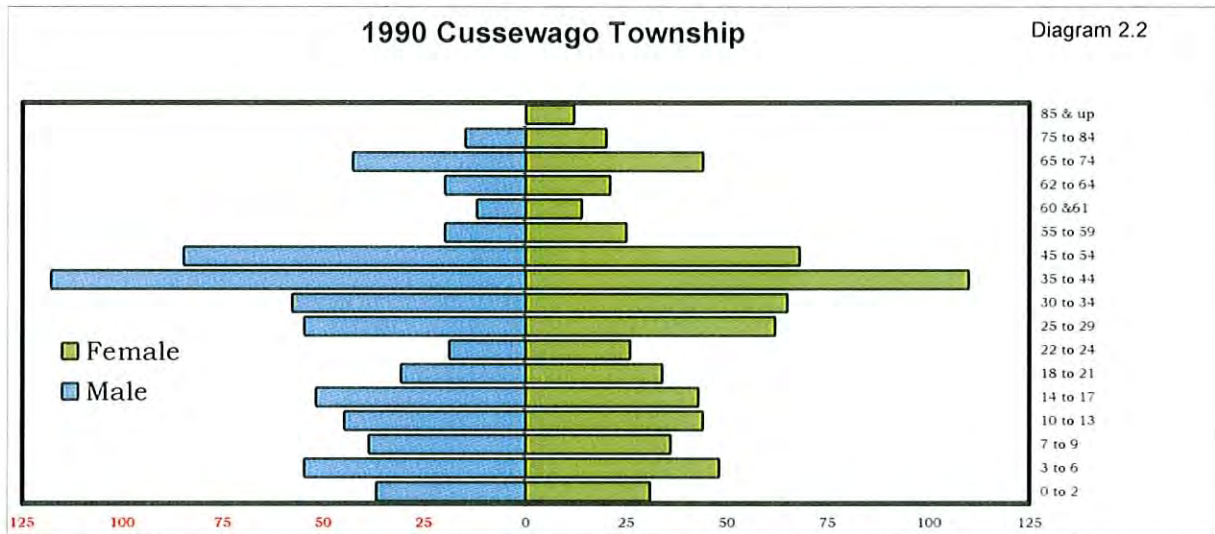
Community Survey results reveal that just over half of the population (52%), lived in the township twenty years ago. The actual number varies greatly according to the geographical area in the township. For instance, 70% of the population in the southern portion of the township has lived in Cussewago for 20 or more years whereas about 43% of the remainder of the township has lived in the township for that length of time. The northern portion of the township has experienced the largest growth of newcomers into the township with 35% of the population having lived in the township for less than ten years and 55% have lived in the township for less than 20 years according to the survey data.

**Age / Sex Characteristics**

The structure of the township's population, in terms of age distribution, appears to be healthy for a growing community (diagram 2.2,2.3). Over the last few decades increases in specific age groups suggest that new families are moving into the area and are major contributors to the population growth. Between 1980 and 1990 the population of residents between the ages of 3 and 9, 25 and 29, and 35 to 44 years of age experienced an increase with the 35-44 year old cohort experiencing the largest increase in the township. This group witnessed a 66%

increase between 1980 and 1990. On the other hand, the group to see the largest decline was the 18 to 24 year old cohort.

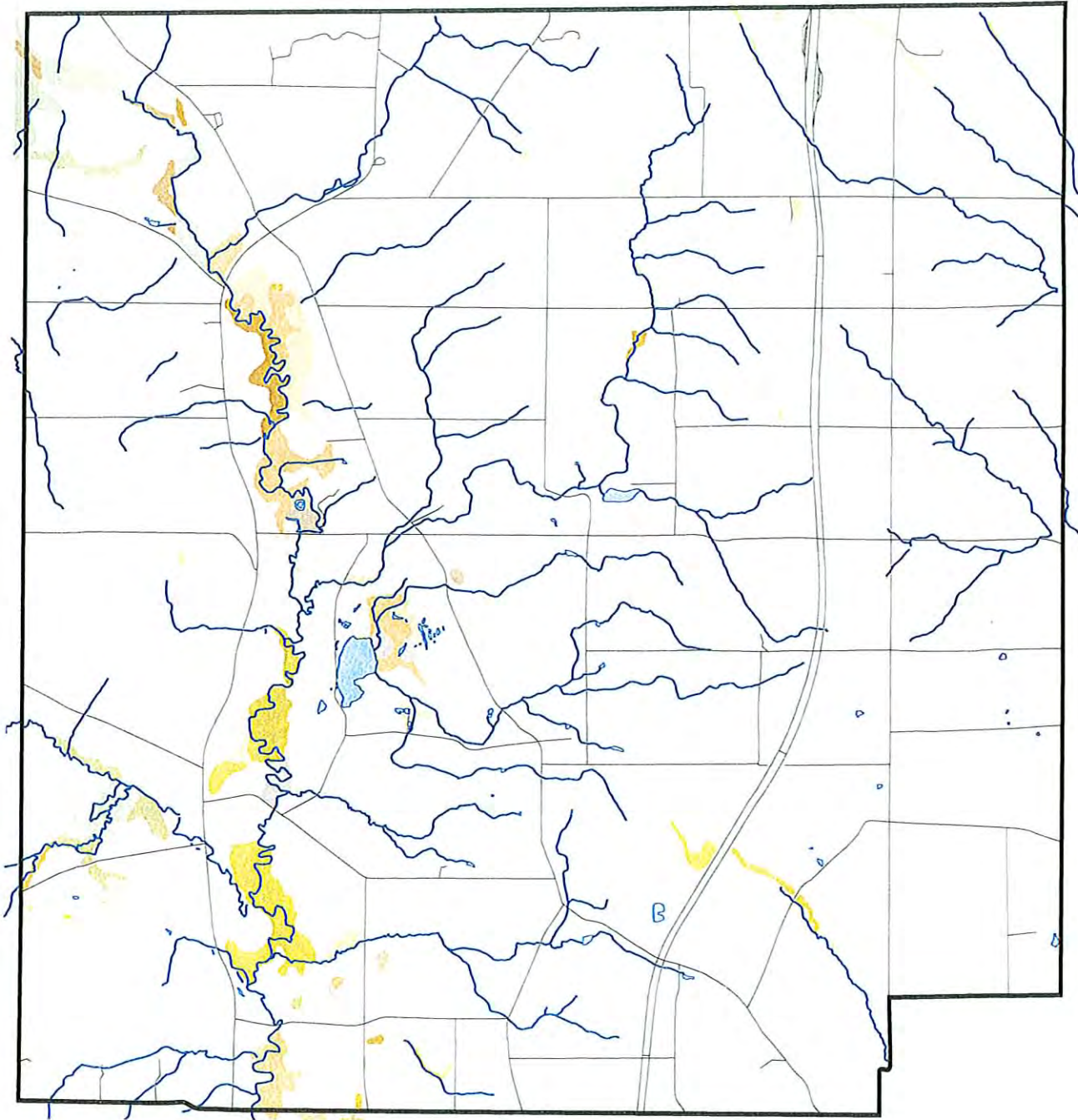
In terms of survey response, the 35 to 44 year olds represented those most likely to respond to the survey accounting for 28% of all responses. Whereas the 18 to 24 year old group represented less than 1% of all survey respondents.





# Wetlands

Map 1.10



\*For information regarding each individual wetland, refer to the U.S. Department of the Interior National Wetlands Inventory

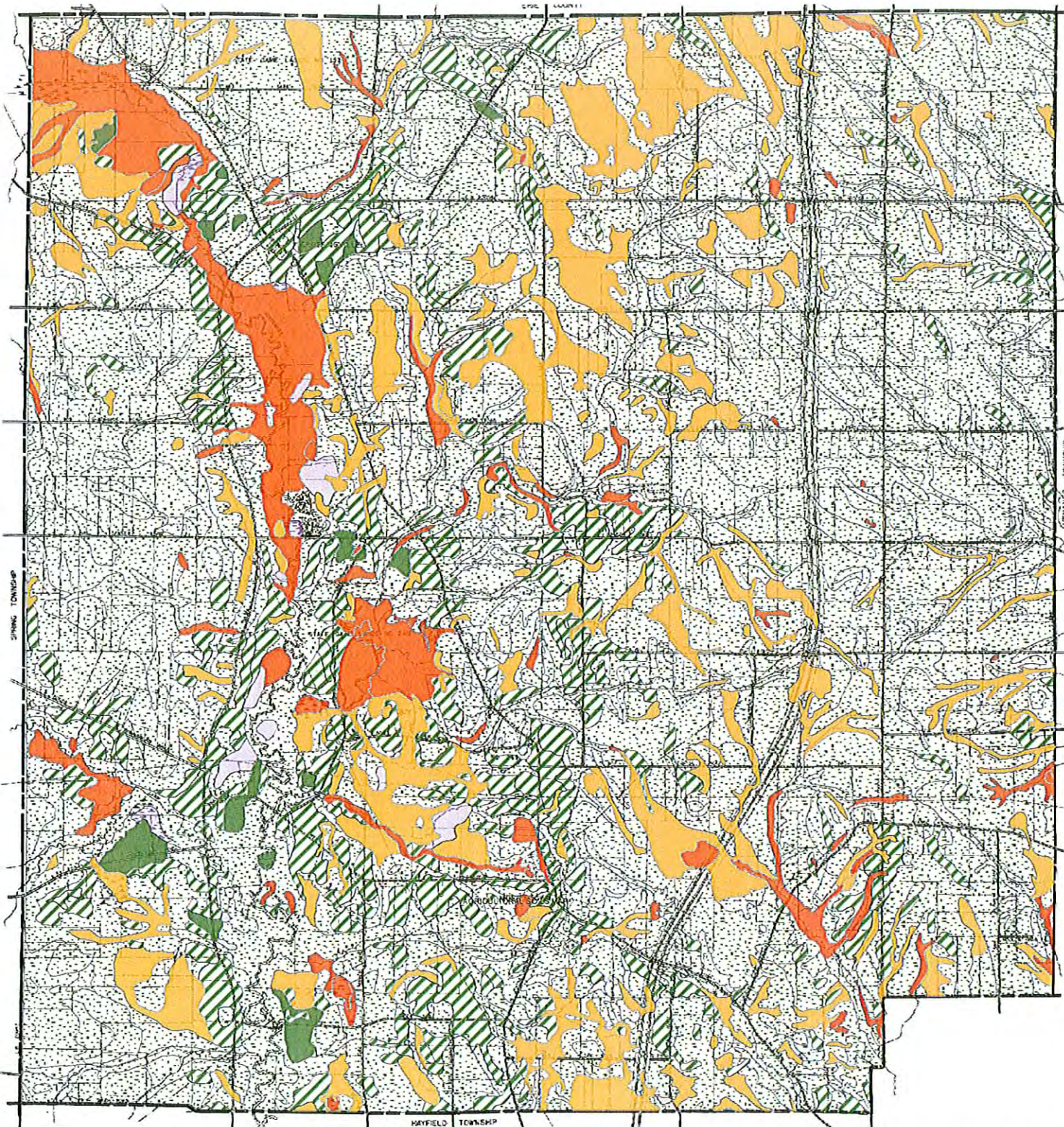


This map was created by the Crawford County Planning Commission, with data from various sources. Maps are intended for representative purposes only, and no guarantee is made on the accuracy of the data displayed here.







0 0.5 1 2 Miles







**SOIL CLASSIFICATIONS**

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1 |  | 4 |
|  | 2 |  | 6 |
|  | 3 |  | 7 |

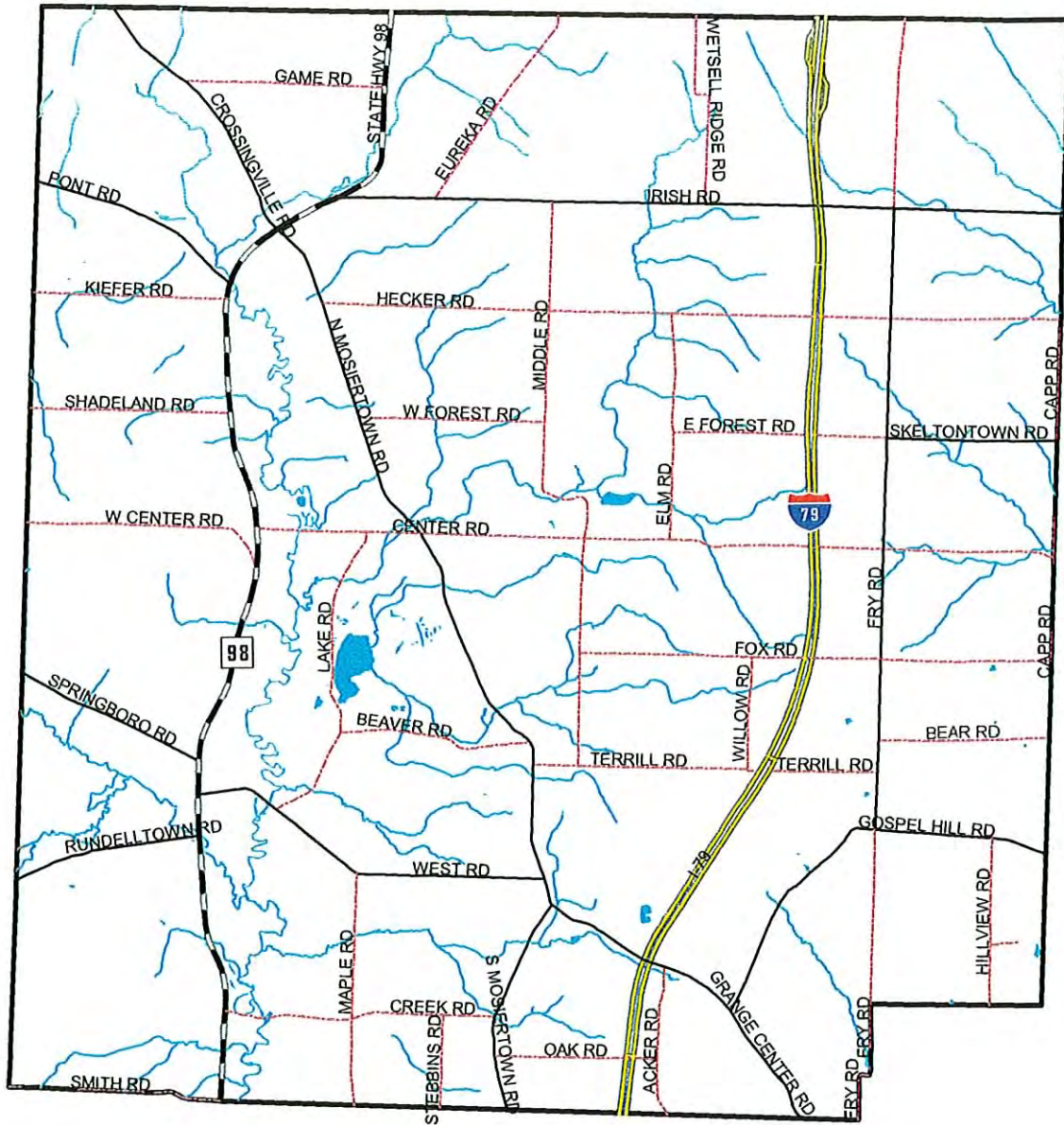
# SOIL CLASSIFICATION MAP

**CUSSEWAGO TOWNSHIP**  
 CRAWFORD COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
 SCALE 1" = 1000'

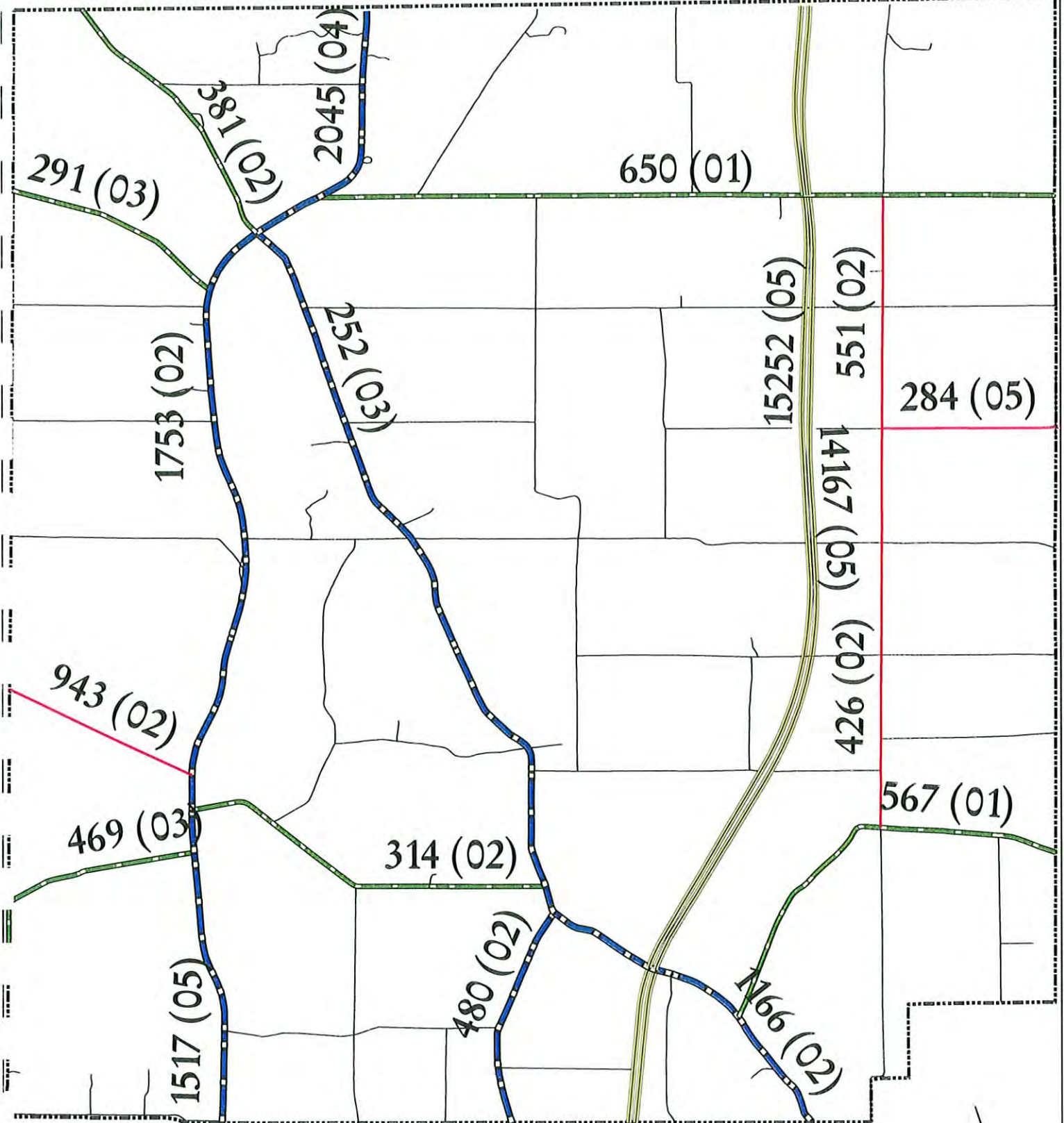
PREPARED BY THE  
 CRAWFORD COUNTY  
 PLANNING COMMISSION  
 REVISIONS MADE FEBRUARY 1992



# Cussewago Twp



# Township Road Classifications Including A.D.T. Data



## Legend

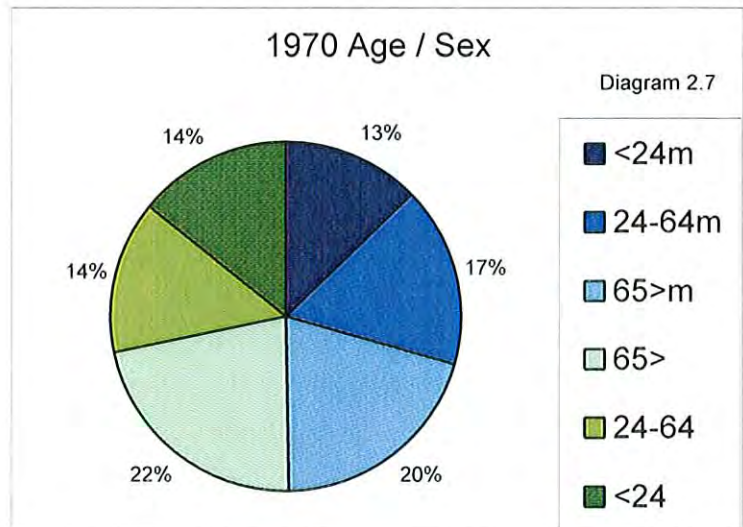
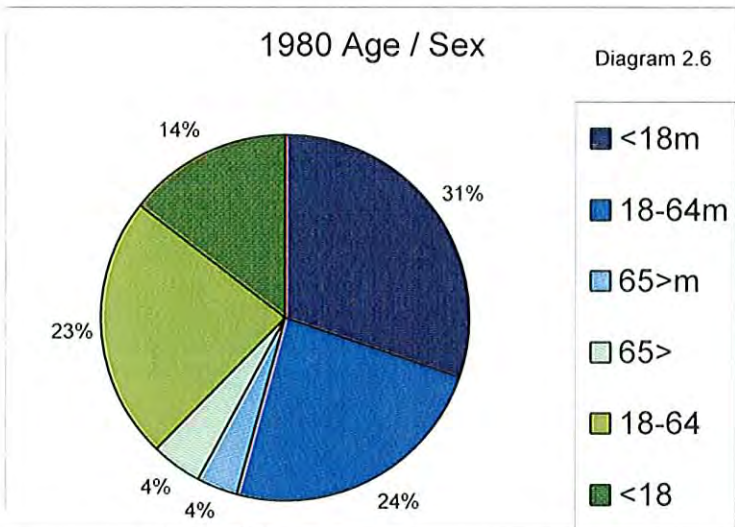
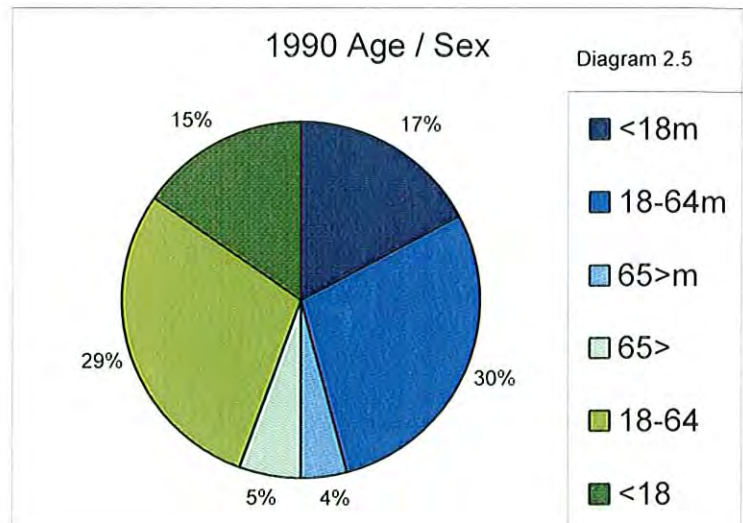
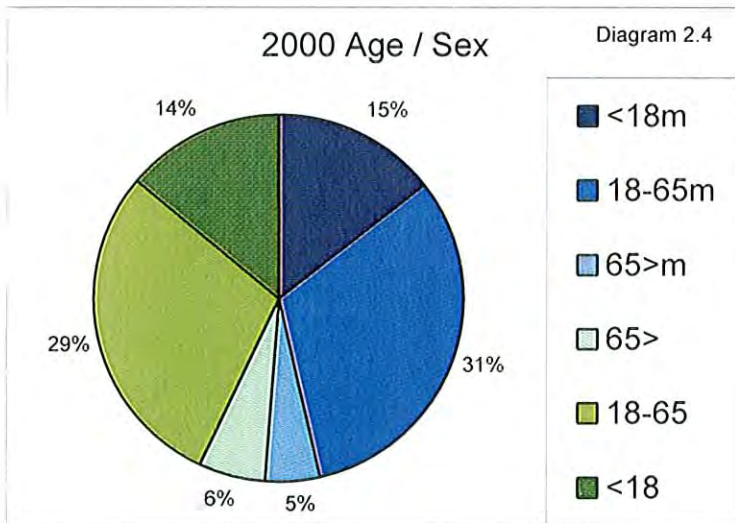
**Functional Class** — Minor Collector — Township Road Network

— Interstate — Local Collector (05) Year ADT Count Taken

— Major Collector 930- Average Daily Traffic Count Number







In 2000, just as in 1970, the township's male to female ratio was fairly equal with 51% male residents (816) and 49% female residents (781). Diagrams 2.4-2.7 chart the slight changes in age and sex distribution in the township since the last plan.

## **Race Trends**

Cussewago Township has witnessed very little racial diversification in the township population since the 1970's. In 1970 Cussewago Township was 100% white. According to the 2000 Census, slightly less than 98% of the township's population was white.



## **Household Data**

While the number of households in the township continues to grow, the average size of each household shrinks from decade to decade. According to Census data, family households made up nearly three quarters of the 591 households in the township in 2000. About 440 families resided in the township in 2000 with an average family size of 3.14 persons. This number represents an increase from the 250 families living in the township in 1970 and a decrease in family size from 3.68 persons.

2001 survey results showed the average family size in the township to be 2.66.

In 2000, about 40% of the households in the township had individuals 18 years of age and younger present. This number represents a decrease from the 1980 figure of 47%. On the other hand, in 2000 about 20% of the households in the township had individuals 65 and over present whereas in 1980 this number was at 28%.

## **Educational & Income Characteristics**

Educational attainment in Cussewago Township has steadily improved over the last thirty years. In 1980, 17% of the township's population 25 years old and over sought higher education after high school. Ten years later that number increased to 28% and according to the 2000 census, 32% of the population 25 years and over furthered their education past high school.

According to the community survey results, 55% of the township residents pursued education past high school.

An increase in income often accompanies an increase in the level of education achieved. In 1980, the median family income was \$16,875. In 1990 this number nearly doubled to \$31,058 and in 2000 the median family income grew to \$47,273.

According to the community survey, 51% of the families in the township now report a gross annual income above \$30,000 with 29% reporting \$50,000 or more. Community survey results also show that 68% of the families in the central portion of the township report earning more than \$30,000. This number is well above the average for the township.

## The Working Community

The citizens of Cussewago Township are employed in a broad array of fields ranging from agriculture to medicine. According to 1990 Census data, the most prevalent occupation in the township was precision production. The 1980 Census data revealed this title formerly belonged to machine operators. The 2000 Census categorized occupational information in a different way than the previous two censuses, which made it difficult to truly compare changes in certain categories, such as citizen occupations. This Census revealed the most prevalent occupations in the township were in the production, transportation, and material moving occupations, which includes precision production and machine operators.

Despite the decrease in machine operators between 1980 and 1990, the dominance of these two occupations remained above average when compared to Crawford County. In fact, besides precision production and machine operators, the only other industry more prevalent in the township than in the County during that time frame was farming, fishing, and forestry. See diagrams 2.8 and 2.9 for a complete breakdown of township occupation and industry Census data.

Community Survey results listed the manufacturing and medical fields as the two largest occupations in the township. A complete breakdown of these responses can be found in diagram 2.10.

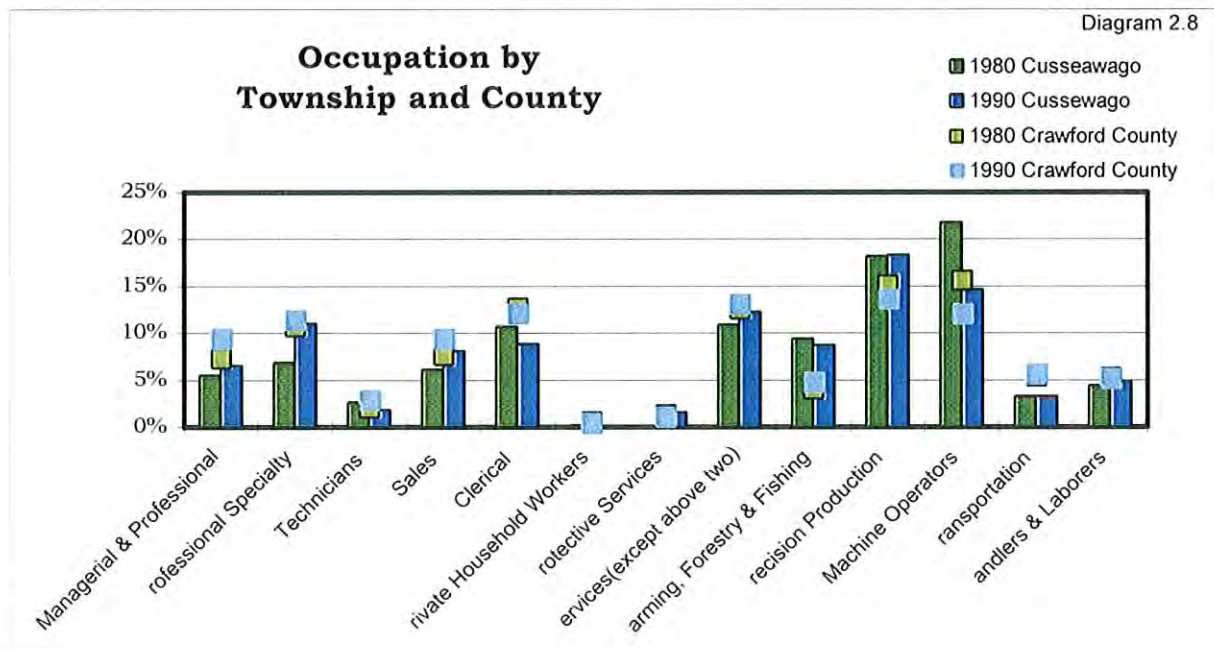
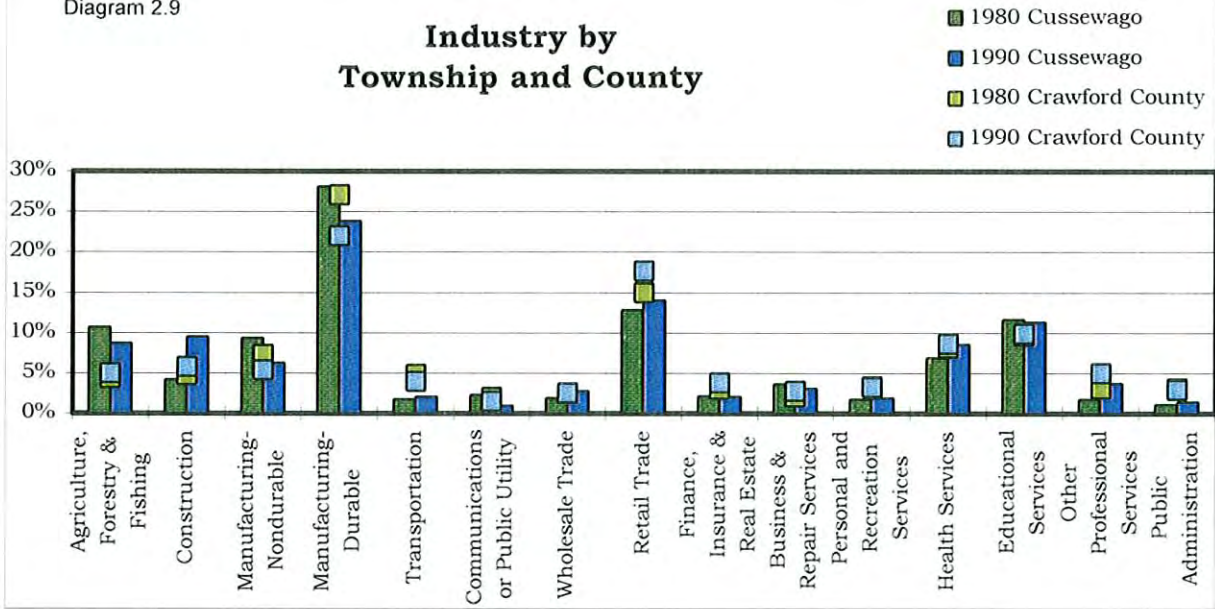


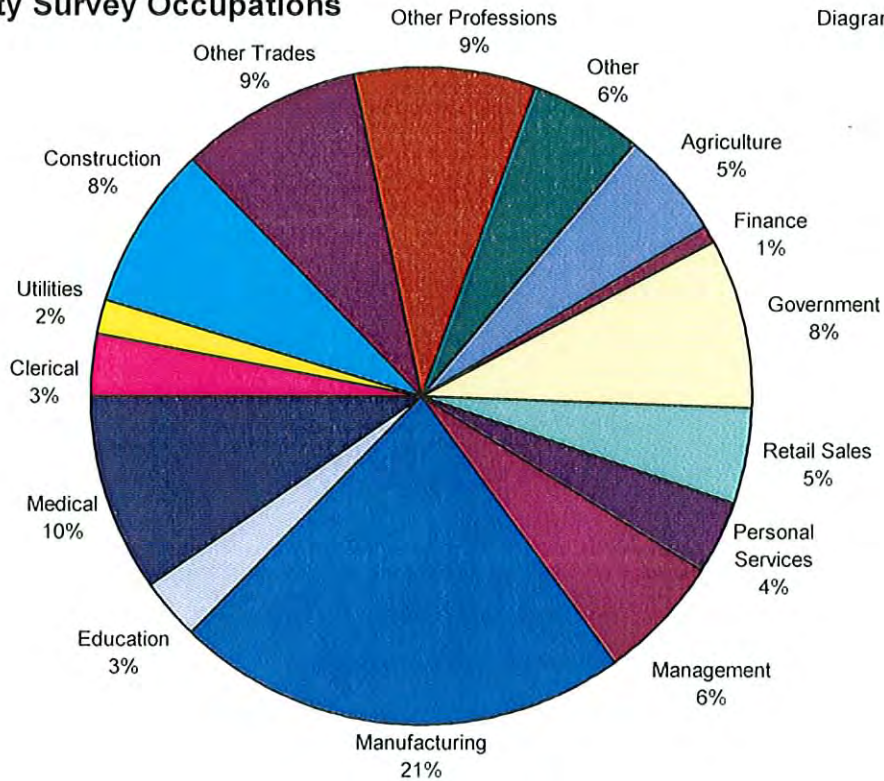
Diagram 2.9

### Industry by Township and County



### Community Survey Occupations

Diagram 2.10



## **Housing**

According to the 2000 Census, Cussewago Township contained 644 total housing units. This number represents an increase from the 1990 Census when 555 units were reported in the township and the 1980 Census count where there were 495 reported housing units. Census figures also reveal 91.8% of the housing units in 2000 were occupied and just over 87% of those were owner occupied. This is an increase from 1980 statistics in which 90.5% were occupied, 86.2% of which were owner occupied.

The community survey revealed 97% own their housing unit, 2% did not respond to this particular question, and only 1 respondent rents their unit.

The median year of housing stock in the township as of the 1990 Census was 1964. This represents a newer stock than the County's (1956) and the State's (1954).

The background studies section of the 1970 comprehensive plan incorporated a location map illustrating the site and condition of houses throughout the township. In that housing survey, 33% were found to have been in sound condition, 46% were said to be in deteriorating condition and 21% were in a dilapidated state.

A windshield survey of housing conditions in the township was not conducted for this plan update. Instead, community survey results were used to analyze housing in the township. These survey results show that 88% of the respondents found the overall appearance of housing in the township to be average or very good and only 7% found the housing conditions poor. One common public comment added to the survey responses were in regards to the location of junk on property.

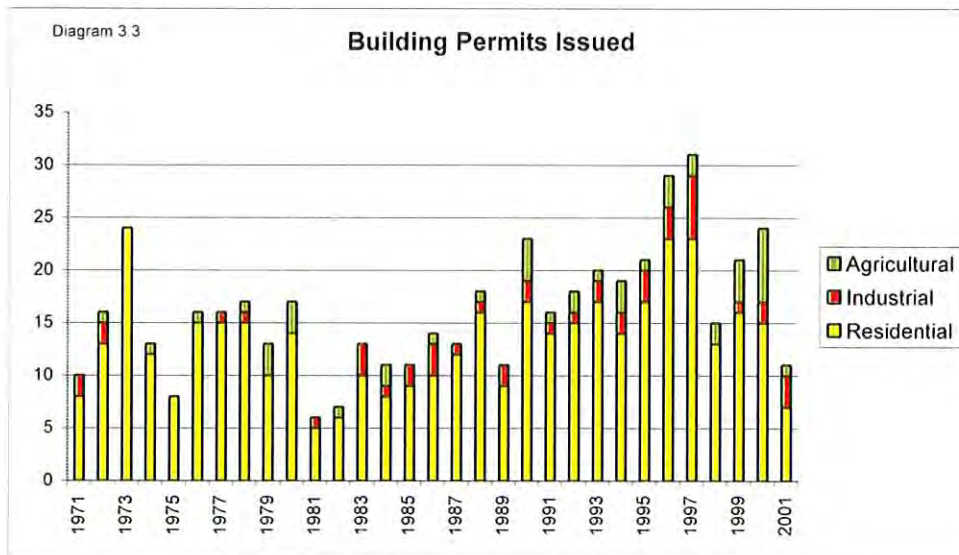
When asked what type of housing is most needed in the township, 54% said affordable housing. However when asked about the purchase price of a house in the township 63% feel it is about average, 14% feel it is very reasonable, and only 6% feel it is too expensive.

Census figures disclose the median value of a unit in 1980 at \$31,500, in 1990 at \$42,300, and in 2000 at \$82,900. The same holds true for rental statistics where the median rent in 1980 was \$158, in 1990 the median rent was \$225 per month, and in 2000 this figure grew to \$439 per month. Diagram 3.2 compares these statistics against county data where in 2000 the median value of a house was \$72,000.

The township experienced significant increases in new residential builds during the previous decade. During the 1990's, there was only one year (1998)



where fewer than 14 new residential building permits were issued. The average value of a new residential building during this time was \$60,000. In comparison, in the 1980's, there were only two years (1980 & 1988) where the number of new residential permits issued reached 14. Diagram 3.3 illustrates building permits issued during the last thirty-year period from 1971-2001.



According to the 1990 Census, 96% of the households in Cussewago Township used an on-lot septic tank or cesspool, 1% of the households in the township were on some type of public sewer system or served by a private company and 3% of the households disposed of their sewage by other means. Compared to 1980 statistics where 93% of the units were served by an on-lot system, a public sewer or private company served 2%, and 5 % were disposed of their sewerage by some other means.

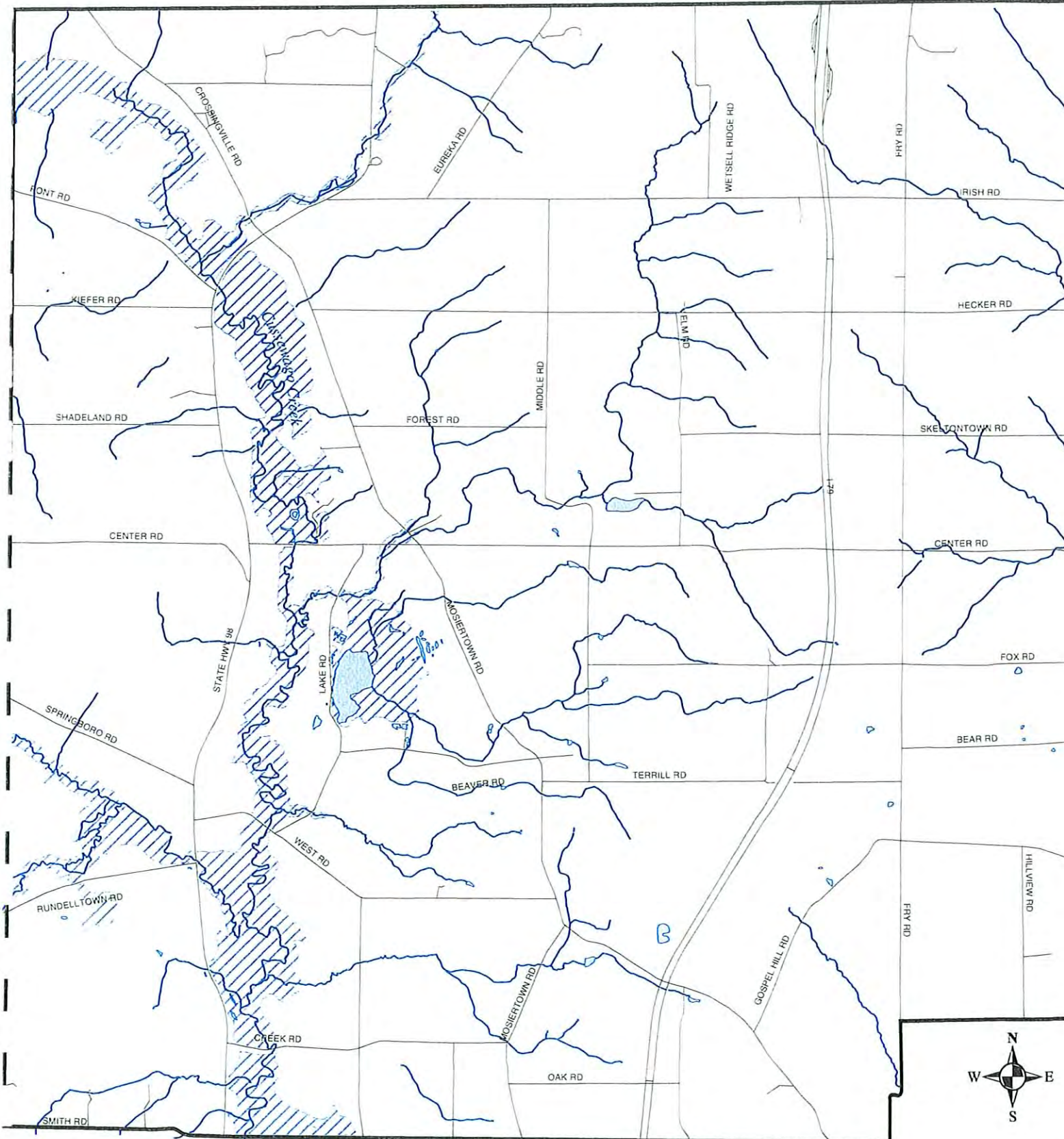
Community survey results show that of those responding, 29% are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their septic quality and 32% are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their water quality. The responses were not unique to one particular section of the township.


## 2.4 Transportation

The development of an area is reliant upon the township's ability to move people and goods from one point to another via its road network. An important component in understanding the location of existing development as well as potential areas for future development is through understanding transportation patterns. The road network makes up the development framework for any municipality. Road locations have strongly influenced the Township's residential



# Flood Prone Areas



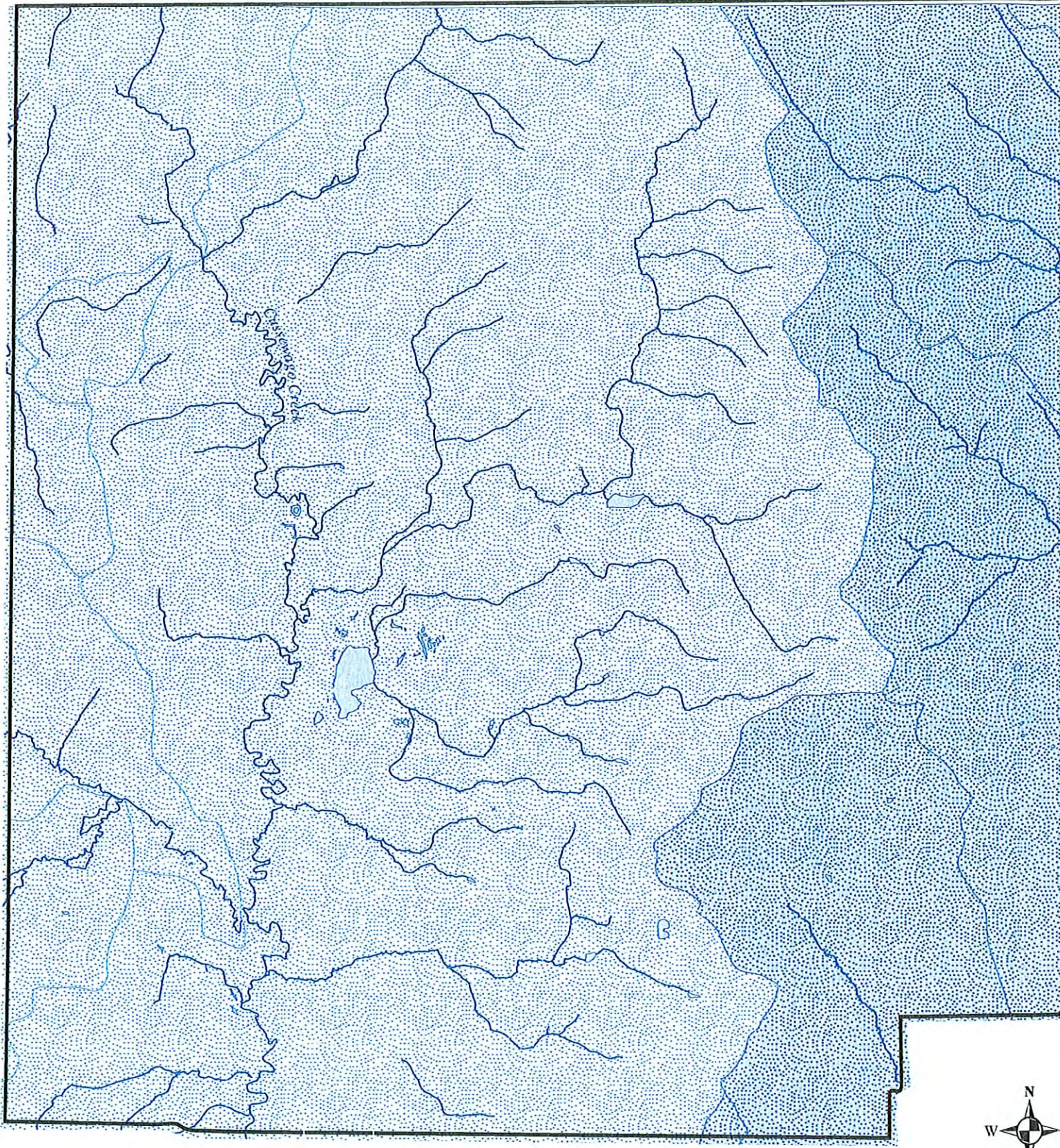
 Approximate Floodplain Location



This map was created by the Crawford County Planning Commission, with data from various sources. Maps are intended for representative purposes only, and no guarantee is made on the accuracy of the data displayed here.



# Major Watersheds



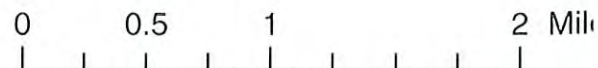
This map was created by the Crawford County Planning Commission, with data from various sources. Maps are intended for representative purposes only, and no guarantee is made on the accuracy of the data displayed here.



Lower French Creek

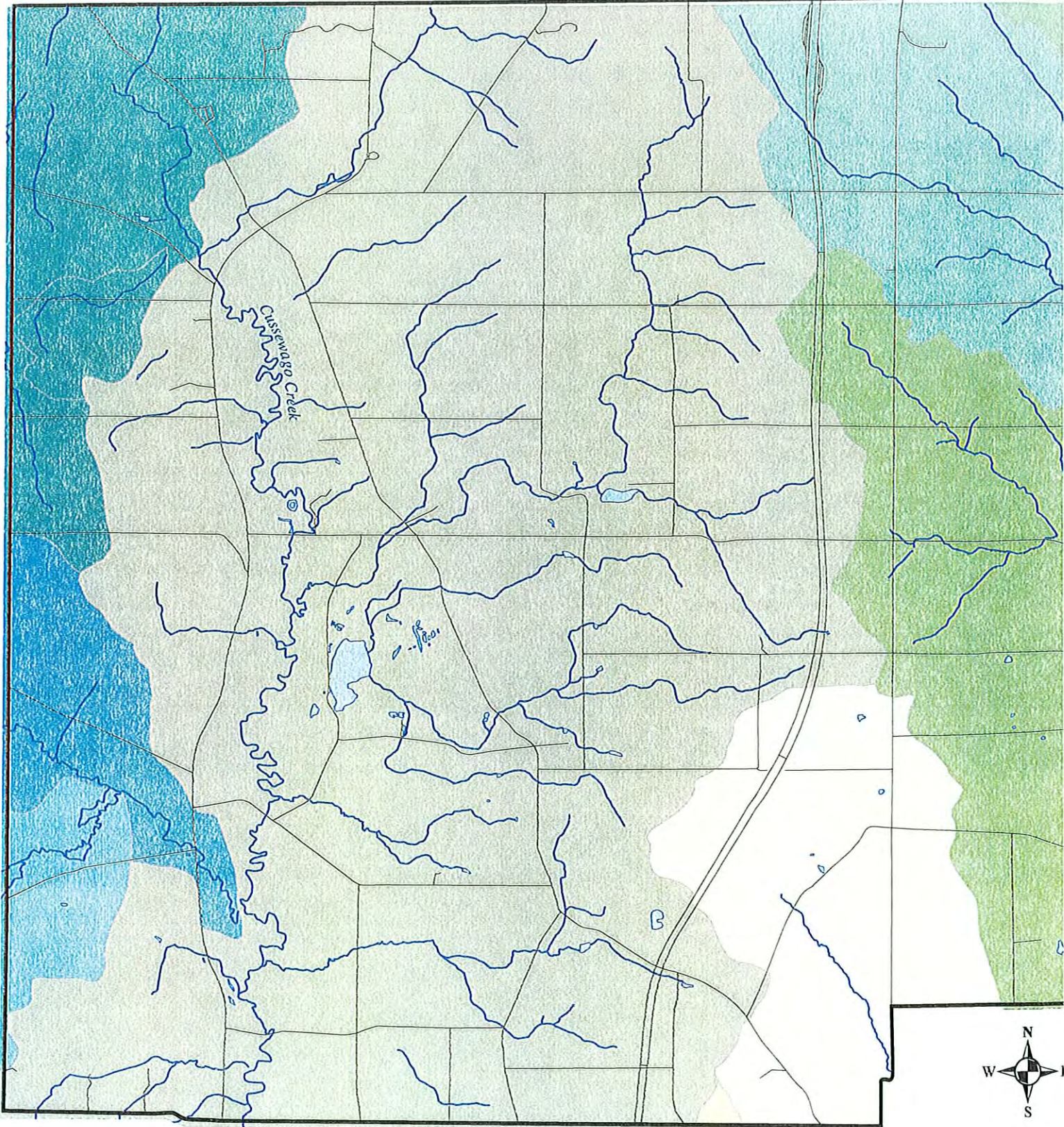


Upper French Creek

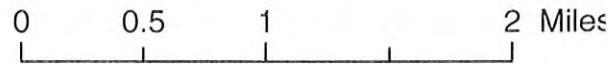





# Minor Watersheds



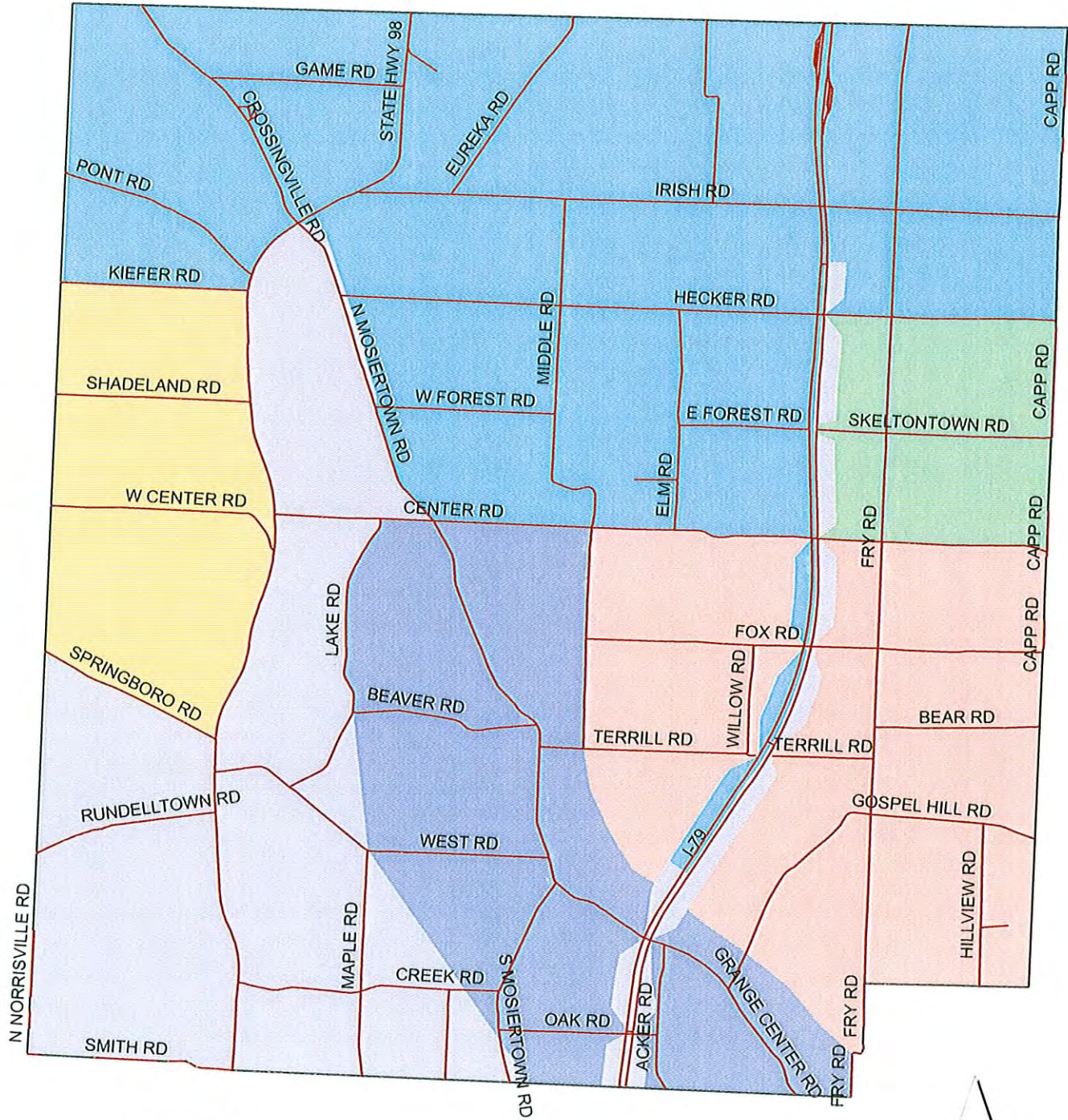
- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  Boles Run         |  Cussewago Creek |  Rundelltown Creek         |
|  Brookhouser Creek |  French Creek    |  W. Branch Cussewago Creek |
|  Carr Run          |  Torry Run       |  Wolf Run                  |



 This map was created by the Crawford County Planning Commission, with data from various sources. Maps are intended for representational purposes only, and no guarantee is made regarding the accuracy of the data displayed here.



# Fire Department Response Areas



## Legend

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Cambridge     |  Saegertown |
|  Conneautville |  Springboro |
|  Edinboro      |  Venango    |
|  Hayfield      |  |



development patterns. There are 109.04 miles of roads in Cussewago Township. The breakdown of ownership of these roads is as follows:

State owned and maintained (Penn DOT)	59.58 miles
Township owned and maintained	45.67 miles
Private Roads	3.79 miles

Approximately less than 4% of all Township roads are now paved, and all Penn DOT maintained roads are paved with the Township.

### **Road Classification**

With the exception of Interstate 79, the layout of Cussewago Township's road network has not changed over the last 50 years. A current township road map can be found in Map 10. Map 11 delineates the township's road hierarchy, which consists of an interstate, major collectors, minor collectors and local roads. Ideally, the road hierarchy distributes traffic to the appropriate level to provide for an efficient transportation network. The system of classification is as follows:

**Interstate:** A road designated as a route of the Interstate System. Interstate 79 is the only Interstate System road in Crawford County and although it does run through Cussewago Township there is no point of access to it within the township.

**Minor Arterial:** A road that serves interstate and inter-county travel, and where trips are normally of long duration. There are no minor arterials in Cussewago Township.

**Major Collector:** A road serving inter-county travel that connects development centers within a county. State Route 98 and Springboro Road (State Route 4010) are in this category.

**Minor Collector:** A road that collects traffic from the local road system and funnels it to the major collector and minor arterial systems. West Road and Irish Road are in this category.

The four categories described above include roads that have reasonable continuity. The following two categories demonstrate a difference in the continuity characteristics, especially the local access road.

**Local Collector:** This category of road is named local in the Federal System and it includes all Township maintained streets as well as State owned local roads.

**Local Access:** This is the true local street that would never, even with full development surrounding it, carry appreciable through traffic. It primarily serves as access for abutting property owners.



The classification system previously described, although developed by the federal government mainly to provide an ordering for state maintained roads, has been organized in this report to include Township maintained roads. It can be said that the Township has three types of roads based on ownership: State roads, Township maintained roads and private roads. All State and Township roads have number designations. There are three digits in the Township numbers, and four digits in the state numbers. Where a state road has a route designation, this designation is reflected in the four-digit number, for example 0098 is the number for State Route 98. All Township roads have names, which are reflected in the accompanying maps.

Besides providing a convenient way to organize one's thinking about the Cussewago Township street network, the Federal Functional System has other important characteristics. It denotes the amount of financial aid the federal government will supply to a particular road category. It also is a key to relative road importance and major improvement priorities. Minor Arterial and Major Collector roads qualify for substantial federal aid. Minor Collector and Local (Collector) roads do not participate in the conventional federal aid programs.

Private roads are not considered an ideal situation, but there are scattered amounts that exist throughout the Township. Where the Board of Township Supervisors has not taken official action to accept a road into its network, such a road is a private road and must be maintained by abutting property owners. Normally the Township won't accept a road into its system unless the right-of-way is a minimum established in the subdivision ordinance and the construction of the road meets Township standards.

While the road layout has not changed over the last fifty years, the amount of traffic carried by the roads has changed. Average Annual Daily Traffic counts, along with Township Road Classifications are shown on Map 11.

### **Road Right-Of-Way**

The term road right-of-way refers to the entire dedicated area of land within which the travelway or cartway and any other associated roadway improvements are located. It is important that right-of-way widths should be designated and related to relative road importance i.e. the relative position of the road in the classified hierarchy.

In Cussewago Township the designated widths of the road rights-of-way differ slightly from road to road throughout the township with some of the roads having rights-of-way that are variable. In all too many instances there are no designated right-of-way widths in the Crawford County court records. Right-of-way widths as established over the years through Crawford County court proceedings

are indicated in Table 1.2. given below. This table should be used in conjunction with Map 1.11. But it must be acknowledged that, at best, records of road rights-of-way are poor, except perhaps for recently built state roads where construction drawings have been made. Since land subdivision ordinances had never existed either in Cussewago Township or at the level of county government, accurate records on location and right-of-way often have not been filed. For example a description of the location of a township road established in the 19th century can have the following description:

*“... a road beginning at a post at the roots of a red oak stump at the corner of Newholds and Peterson's land to a beech on or near a road running north and south past John Williams' land.”*

Table 1.2

**Right-Of-Way Widths, Cussewago Township's Road System**

Township Road Number	Township Road Name	Crawford County Court Records In Feet
492	Maple	40
494	Stebbins	50
496	Lake	50
500	Eureka	50
520	Acker	50
524	Middle	50
526	Elm	50
540	Fry	50
542	Willow	50
544	Wetzell	40
566	Hillview	50
568	Capp	40
570	Fry	50
749	Smith	50
751	Creek	50
753	Oak	50
757	Hollow	40
805	Beaver	50
807	Terrill	40
809	Bear	50
811	Fox	50
839	Shadeland	50
841	Center	50
841	West Center	50
843	West Forest	50
845	East Forest	40
869	Kiefer	50
871	Hecker	50
871	Holowach	50
893	Game	50

The following standards are given for road right-of-way widths:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Right-Of-Way Width</u>
Local Access & Collector	50 - 60 feet
Minor Collector, Major Collector & Minor Arterial	60 - 80 feet

One can note that these standards are given in the way of ranges. Specific right-of-way standards are designated in Article III. §303.11 of the Cussewago Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

## **Summary**

With the increased reliance on the automobile as the primary mode of travel, any patterns of traffic or development are likely to change in the upcoming decade. Patterns of traffic movement can both influence and be influenced by the locations of various uses of land. As traffic routes with large volumes can attract commercial uses, negative effects on residential land use can cause conflicts. Additionally, ever increasing traffic volumes can congest intersections and lead to the potential for greater traffic hazards. As Cussewago Township grows and changes, the functioning of its roadway network will be a vital factor, demonstrating that transportation analysis and planning should not be neglected.

## **2.5 Community Facilities and Services**

Cussewago Township residents depend on various facilities and services to sustain a safe and livable community. The following sections will breakdown these elements of the township.

### **Government**

Cussewago Township is a township of the second class under Pennsylvania law. A locally elected board of supervisors currently made up of 3 residents governs the township. The township employs 5 individuals in the following positions: 1 part-time secretary that also serves as the treasurer, 1 part-time zoning officer, 1 road master and 2 full-time road workers. In addition to the previously mentioned positions, the following persons also play an important part in the township with their services being used on an 'as needed' basis: tax collector, solicitor, engineer, and sewage enforcement officer.

Also assisting the township supervisors in the operation of Cussewago Township is a 5 member planning commission and a 3 member zoning hearing board. These

bodies are composed of appointed township residents serving terms of varying lengths.

The township building serves as a meeting place for the supervisors, planning commission, all other boards, and with permission, township residents and organizations. Contact information for township officials and emergency services can be found posted at the building. Other events held at this location include elections and clean up days. The building was constructed in 1968 and is situated on 2 acres of land at 23748 Mosiertown Road. The township stores its vehicles, equipment and supplies in the 4 bay garage next to the building. Equipment stored at the building and garage include 5 dump trucks purchased between 1984 and 1998, a 1973 hi-lift and backhoe, a loader, two tractors and mowers, a road rake, 3 spreader boxes, a road roller, a number of snow plows, and a grader. Other equipment and supplies include a salt storage bin, 4 brine storage tanks, and a 1000-gallon diesel fuel tank and electric pump.

To gain a better understanding of where the township has devoted its resources over the years please refer to diagram 3.1 that highlights the 1974, 1987, 1995 and 2001 budgets.

## **Recreational Facilities**

The residents of Cussewago Township have three public areas in the township in which they can enjoy the outdoors, including two State Game Lands and a community park.

A community park located at Cussewago Elementary School, which is owned and operated by the Penncrest School District, offers picnic areas, a walking trail, a basketball court and ball fields.

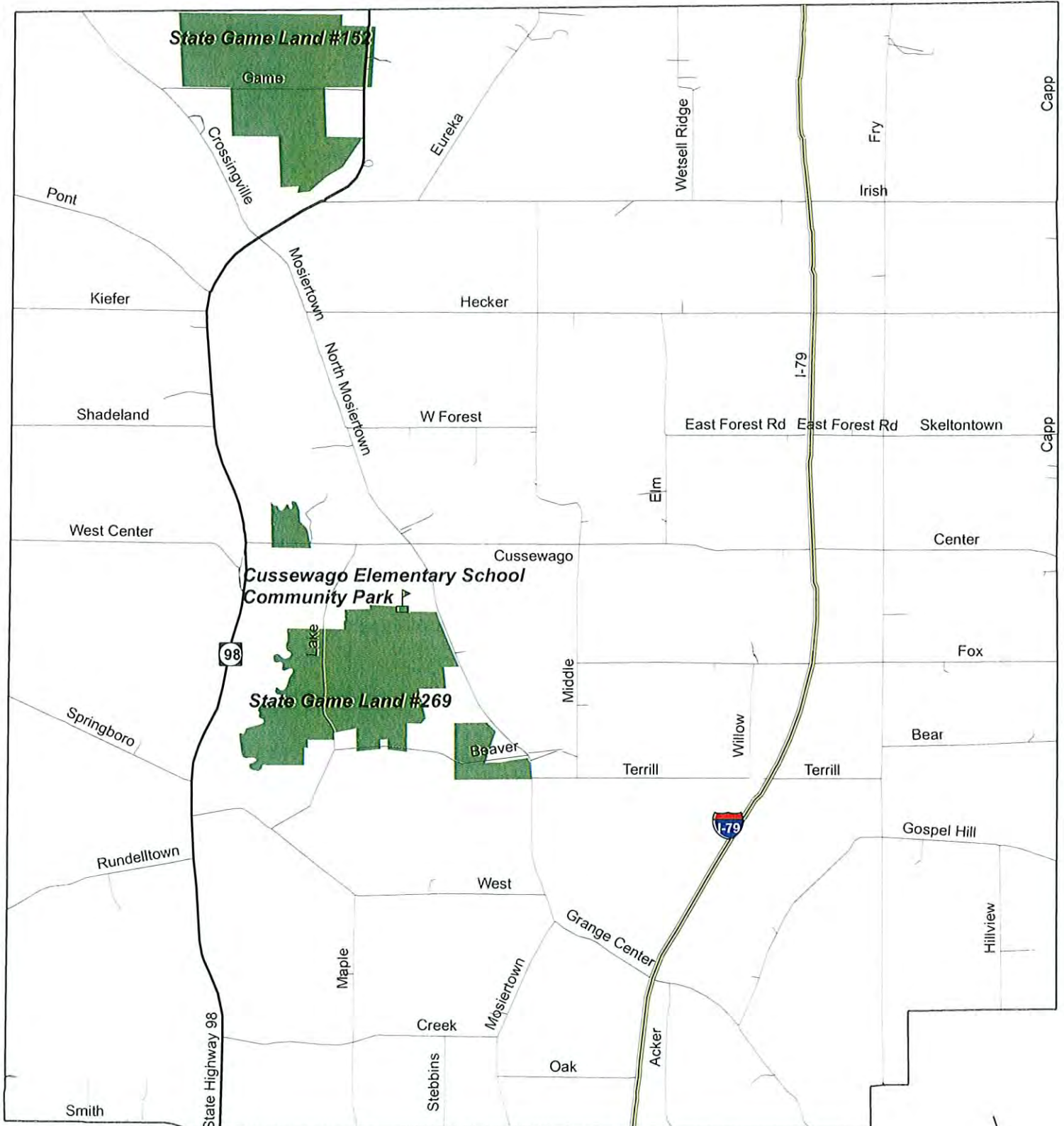
State Game Land No. 152 encompasses 499 acres in the northern portion of the township. This area is accessible from Game Road off of either Route 98 or Grange Road. This area was established in 1938.

State Game Land No. 269 encompasses 589.5 noncontiguous acres in the central portion of the township. This area offers a variety of options for the public to enjoy from streams and ponds for fishing to woods and open land for hiking or hunting. This area was established in 1969.

Map 12 illustrates the recreation areas in the township.

Community survey questions pertaining to parks and recreation provided insufficient feedback. Many of the comments included with the responses revealed the public was unaware that the above-mentioned places existed in the township. In fact, when asked what services the township should provide, two of

# CUSSEWAGO TOWNSHIP RECREATION AREAS



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles



the top three responses were 'parks and recreation' and 'a trail system'. It is also interesting to note that although none of the activities listed under the question dealing with support of an increased mil levy were in a majority, the activity that received the best response was for 'parks and recreation' which achieved 31% of the respondents supporting an increase mil levy for parks and recreation.

## **Emergency Services**

Cussewago Township does not provide its own independent emergency services for its citizens. Rather, agreements have been made with various neighboring communities for their assistance in handling these matters.

The Pennsylvania State Police provide police protection throughout the township both during their regular patrols and when responding to 911 calls from the citizens. The State Police barracks is located in Vernon Township approximately 13 miles from the Cussewago Township Building. One officer is assigned to Cussewago Township and the other four municipalities in its patrol zone including Cambridge Township, Hayfield Township, Venango Township, and Venango Borough.

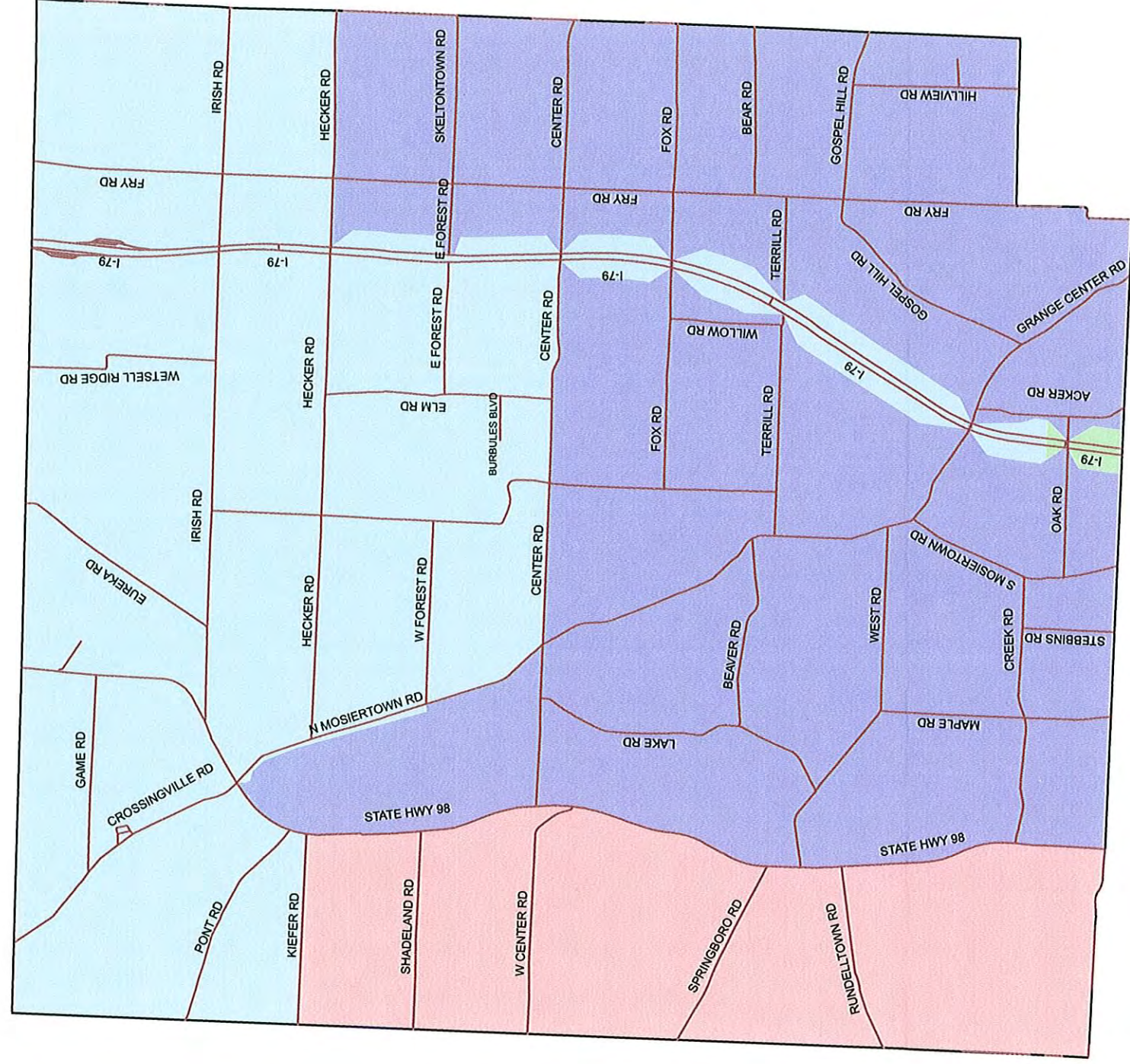
Fire protection services are supplied by a number of neighboring fire companies. Depending on where in the township the call comes from, any one of six companies may respond. These companies include Cambridge Springs VFD, Edinboro VFD, Hayfield Central VFD, Saegertown VFD, Springboro VFD, and Venango VFD. Map 13 illustrates the various fire company coverage areas for the township.

Emergency medical services, both basic and advanced, are supplied by neighboring organizations. Depending on where in the township the emergency exists, any one of three agencies may respond for basic life support services or advanced life support services. The providers of basic life support services in the area include Cambridge Area Volunteer Ambulance Service BLS, Conneautville BLS, and Edinboro Volunteer BLS. The providers of advanced life support services in the area include Meadville Area Ambulance Service (MAAS), Meadville EMS (MEMS), and Central Erie Paramedic Association (Medic 2). Basic Life Support and Advanced Life Support service areas are included in map 14.

Community Survey results show that of those responding to the survey 72% are satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided by area ambulance companies; 77% are satisfied or very satisfied with fire protection services and 83% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the police protection in the township.



# Ambulance Response Areas



## Legend

- CAVAS
- Edinboro
- Conneautville
- Meadville



## **Refuse Collection / Recycling**

Refuse collection is offered throughout the township by Waste Management of Northwest Pennsylvania. Residential rates at the time of this writing were \$18.50 per month. This price includes weekly pick up of an unlimited amount of refuse to be hauled an Erie County landfill.

Recyclables can be brought to the township building.

Every spring, Cussewago Township holds an annual clean-up day. This once a year event offers its residents an opportunity to dispose of items the waste hauler will not pick up and cannot be recycled.

## **Public Transportation**

The Crawford Area Transportation Association (CATA) offers public transportation in the form of bus service to Cussewago Township residents. The shared ride program offered by CATA offers door-to-door service to the public with an advanced reservation. Other benefits offered by CATA include driver's assistance for the elderly or disabled riders and the use of a personal care attendant and/ or guide dog on the bus at no charge. CATA also offers a reduced fare shared ride service to all eligible senior citizens wishing to obtain a Senior Citizen I.D. card. CATA does not operate on Sundays and any weather cancellations correspond with area school districts.

## **Historic Sites**

Cussewago Township does not have a site or structure on either the County or National Register of Historic Places.

## **III. REVISED TOWNSHIP PLAN**

### **3.1 Community Development Objectives**

Conflicting non-farm land uses shall be discouraged in areas where productive agriculture exists by discouraging paved roads and public utilities in agricultural areas.

Lands which have no concentration of active farm operations, and which are located outside the area feasible to be served by public sewerage, shall be encouraged to develop for low-density uses in keeping with constraints on development implicit in the land itself.

Future retail development proposed for Cussewago Township shall be controlled and guided to minimize adverse influences on adjacent roads and land values.

To encourage existing agricultural activities to remain functioning and to promote their expansion where possible, but not to consider residential activities incompatible with agricultural activity.

To encourage concentrated medium density residential development in portions of the Township that is accessible to public utilities and has no physical land restraints.

To devise a priority system for the maintenance and possible paving of Township roads based on such factors as the number of residences served by a particular road, whether the road borders the Borough, and whether the road provides a connection between two paved roads.

To hold development densities low in areas of the Township that are accessed by gravel roads on steep gradients.

To regulate the creation of new roads through the use of a Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to insure that new roads could be later be taken over by the Township, provided the roads meet Township criteria.

Building lot sizes should be regulated so that they are adequate enough to handle on-lot sewage systems but small enough so that a later conversion to public sanitary sewer and water service systems can occur without economic hardship to the property owners.

The Township shall encourage the dedication of open space park land in all new major subdivisions.

Subdivision activity within Cussewago Township shall be regulated to ensure that acceptable standards are adhered to in all new residential development and to protect the natural quality of the area from unwise exploitation.

### **3.2 Land Use Plan**

Of all the elements that comprise a comprehensive plan, no other is more important than the land use plan. The goal of this land use plan is to provide a framework for orderly growth by crafting an optimum balance between economic development and neighborhood and agricultural preservation. Cussewago Township is positioned to receive some of the residential growth and out-migration from Erie and Edinboro. One of the goals of this plan is to funnel much of this growth pressure into lands that are best positioned to meet it with public sewer, water, and a good road system. Another goal of this plan is to increase the economic viability of the region without compromising the rural quality of life in Cussewago Township.

The land use plan and accompanying map is the result of a Township-wide inventory of existing land uses provided in the background portion of this comprehensive plan. In addition, the other analyses such as the studies of population, transportation, physical features, economics, etc. were used to make future land use determinations. The general land use categories in this section are mapped out on the accompanying Land Use Map. It is important to note that this plan and accompanying maps are recommendations and do not constitute a zoning ordinance.

#### **General Objectives**

Objective 1: To encourage medium density residential development in portions of the Township best positioned to develop municipal sewer and water; and having no land restraints. Compared to the entirety of Cussewago Township, only a small amount of land is available that is accessible to public utilities and has no major physical barriers (floodplains, wetlands, and slope) to development. In addition, the Township should evaluate future subdivisions in these areas in their ability to make the best use of the limited lands and public utilities that are available.

Objective 2: To guide and control future commercial development as to minimize adverse impacts to adjacent roads and land values.

**Policy:** The Township should revise the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. This would give the Township the ability



to review and evaluate site plans for non-residential development. Such issues as internal and external traffic patterns, buffering, and landscaping, parking, etc. should be carefully evaluated against standards and requirements set forth in such an ordinance.

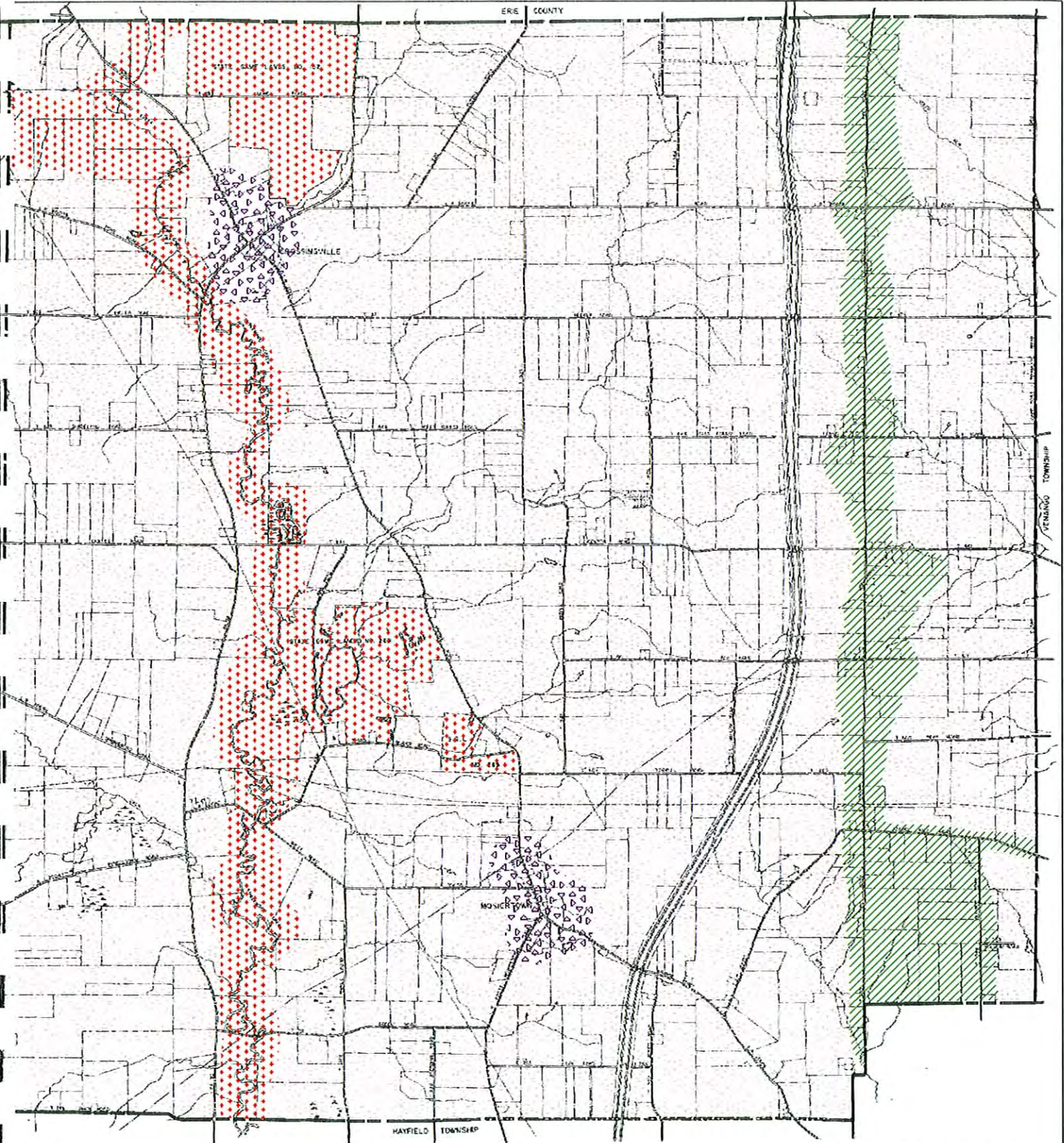
## **Land Use Classifications**

**General Agriculture:** General Agricultural areas are designated for lands in the Township where “for-profit” agricultural activities do not predominate and where there is no expectation for the provision of public sewer and water. “Hobby farms”, rural residential living along with active agricultural activities would characterize the uses appropriate for these areas. The Agricultural Preservation District includes areas where active agricultural activities exist or where cleared fields exist that could with relative ease, be put into productive use. The purpose of this district is to promote the expansion of agriculture where possible and to discourage the location of uses that would be harmful to its continuation. Public facilities such as sewer and water systems should not be extended into this area. Public roads should be maintained in a rural character; bituminous pavement is not necessary here. New public roads serving residential developments should not be built here. Non-agricultural uses locating in this area should be prepared to accept the primacy of agricultural activity.

**Rural Development:** Rural Development areas are designated for land in the Township along major State Highways where full time agricultural activities do not predominate and where there is little likelihood of the provision of public sewerage or water services. The rural development areas are characterized as lands situated along State highways where no major physical or environmental factors restrict development. Neighborhood stores, limited highway commercial activity, home occupations, small light industrial establishments, and agricultural related businesses should be sited to coexist with the predominately residential nature of these areas. Rural Residential areas are designated for lands in the Township outside of the service area for sewer and water where moderate residential densities exist. The lot sizes in these areas should be regulated to be adequate enough to handle on-lot sewage, but small enough so that a later conversion to public sanitary sewer and water services can occur without economic hardship to the property owners.

**Village:** Village areas are designated for the two existing concentrations of development at Mosiertown and Crossingville. Neighborhood stores, limited highway commercial activity, home occupations, small light industrial establishments, and agricultural related businesses should be sited to coexist with the predominately residential nature of these areas.





Legend

- General Agriculture
- Open Space
- Rural Development
- Villages

# FUTURE LAND USE

**CUSSEWAGO TOWNSHIP**  
 CRAWFORD COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
 SCALE 1" = 1000'

PREPARED BY THE  
 CRAWFORD COUNTY  
 PLANNING COMMISSION

CRAWFORD COUNTY

HAYFIELD TOWNSHIP

N



**Open Space:** Open Space areas include those set aside for passive or active recreation purposes or those with no development potential, inclusive of Game Lands and Conservation lands.

### **3.3 Housing Needs Plan**

As part of the housing needs plan for Cussewago Township, many important factors have shaped the direction of this plan. Population projections, housing unit projections, current condition of housing stock, new building code regulations, and current zoning standards were influential elements of this section.

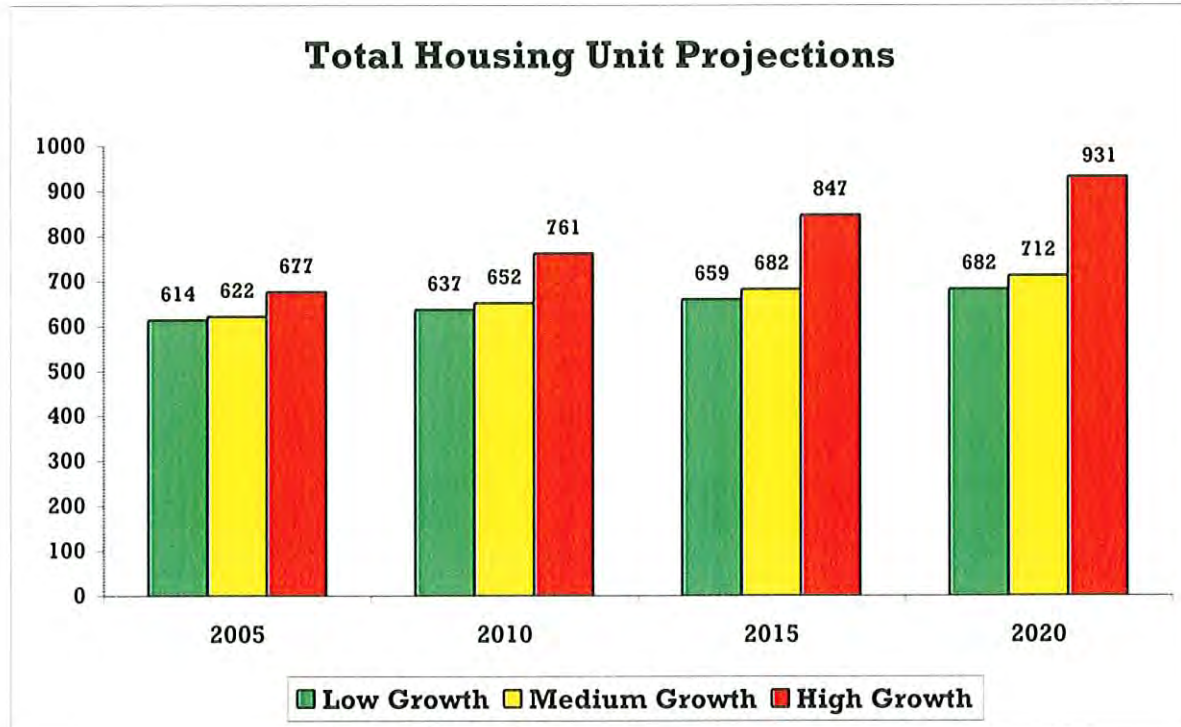
In conjunction with the County Comprehensive Plan, this plan also seeks to *“insure that every resident has a safe and affordable residence.”* To accomplish this goal, we will need to examine a variety of data sources, and let our decisions be guided by the resulting information.

#### **Housing Unit Projections**

Housing unit projections are an important element to understand potential land demands. This information, combined with the land-use map and current subdivision regulations can help to further guide the future of housing in the Township.

The projections in Table 3.1 are based on the number of year-round housing units, both vacant and occupied, according to the 2000 Census for Cussewago Township.

Table 3.1



This chart shows three different scenarios of growth, broken down into five-year periods.

- *Low Growth*- This scenario looks at the low-growth population projections for the Township, and multiplies it by a factor of 2.7 (the average household size of the Township). By these estimates, in the year 2020 the Township would contain 682 housing units, an increase of 91 from the base year 2000.
- *Medium Growth*- This is based on the medium-growth population estimates. This method takes rate-of-change from each 10-year census, dating back to 1960. Under this scenario, the Township would contain 712 housing units by the year 2020.
- *High Growth*- This method is based on the high-growth population estimates. A differentiating factor that influences these results is the fact that permit data from 1990-2000 are used. These numbers reflect not only census data, but also the actual building activity that has occurred in the Township during a ten-year period. This method resulted in the highest gain, a net increase of 340 houses, bringing the total housing units to 931 by the year 2020.

With this information at hand, the Township can presume that at least 100, and potentially 300 new housing units will be added over the next 20 years. With this comes increased traffic, the need for more services, and all of the other requirements that accompany increased population.

Currently, the housing stock in the township overall, is in very good condition. The results of the housing condition survey, conducted in the fall of 2003, ranked 91% of the housing in the Township as excellent, or good. Compared to the 1970 Comprehensive Plan, this shows a dramatic improvement.

The Township can now move forward with its goals for the next 20 years.

### **Goals/Objectives**

- With the realization of increased/continuing housing development, it should be recognized that amenities typical in cities/suburbs/boroughs might not be feasible in Cussewago Township. Future development patterns, however, could dictate change.
- At this time, Cussewago Township will support the mandated uniform building codes set forth by the state in order to maintain the quality of housing stock in the Township.

### **3.4 Transportation Plan**

One of the key goals of any planning agenda is to guide future growth and development for a given area. Planning for development *and* transportation needs are directly related because development generates traffic, and transportation routes serve and encourage economic development. The location and quality of transportation routes can help determine the general direction of growth within a community and are often deciding factors in the location of residential, commercial, and community facilities.

The roadway network in Cussewago Township was generally designed to handle rural traffic. However, due to the increased amount of development to the north, certain roadways are forced to handle a flow of traffic that is usually found in suburban areas. The result of this poses an increased safety risk for those traveling and residing along these roadways. The purpose of the Transportation Plan is to recommend a basic outline for potential road improvements that will accommodate future demands and needs.

Based on 2004 data from Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (Penn DOT), Cussewago Township has 109 miles of roads. The Township road system consists of 45.7 miles and the State road system consists of 55.6 miles. Therefore, approximately 49% of the roads within the planning area are Township and private roads and the remaining 51% are State roads. Based on Previous trends, the

percentage of Township roads will continue to increase, and shall be considered as part of this plan.

### **Safety Problem Areas**

This plan seeks to identify safety problem areas or road deficiencies within Cussewago Township. The road deficiencies are identified below, and this plan seeks to find a solution to these problem areas.

Fry Road- this road has witnessed an increased volume of traffic with the opening of the Wal\*Mart Plaza in Washington Township, to the north of Cussewago. Not only has the traffic volume increased, but the speed at which people travel down this road has also increased.

It would greatly benefit the Commission to contact the Washington Township Planning Commission to find out how they are addressing the increased traffic problem on Fry Road and work out a joint solution, since this problem does not stop at the border.

### **Transportation Planning Programs**

In order to implement improvements throughout the Township, the feasibility of the following programs should be examined:

#### **PA Dot 12 Year program**

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Twelve year Program is a prioritized list of improvements projected to receive state funding assistance within the next twelve-year period. This program is updated every two years and categorized into thirds through priority ratings. Presently, Cussewago Township does not have any projects scheduled. The Township should contact PA DOT or Crawford County Planning Commission for additional information regarding possible project improvements and funding opportunities.

#### **PA Bridge Bill**

In 1982 the State created an Act (P.L.848, No.235), entitled "*An act providing for the adoption of capital projects related to the repair, rehabilitation or replacement of highway bridges to be financed from current revenue or by the incurring of debt and capital projects related to highway and safety improvement projects to be financed from current revenue of the Motor License Fund,*" itemizing additional local and State bridge projects. This Act is well utilized across Crawford County and Cussewago Township currently has 5 bridges on the bill.

- T-496 Lake Road over Cussewago Creek
- T-751 Creek Road over Cussewago Creek



- T-540 Fry Road over Wolf Run
- T-841 Center Road Over Cussewago Creek (Multiple Locations)

## **Planning and Design Principles**

The Transportation system within Cussewago Township forms the basic framework for land development. The location and character of this system determines the general direction of growth. To accommodate future growth and development in the Township, it is important to establish design standards and specifications for the existing and future road system. The Cussewago Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance provide these design standards and specifications. The Cussewago Township Supervisors, Planning Commission and Engineer should periodically review these design standards and specifications to determine if they are adequate for the future needs of the Township. The board hopes that the Township will continue to improve the roads whenever feasible and affordable.

### **3.5 Community Facilities/Recreation/Services Plan**

The residents of a Township depend on their local government to provide services and public facilities, as well as to maintain and insure public health, safety, and the general welfare of its citizens. The governmental services (mentioned earlier in this plan) and the semi-public services that are utilized by the community (recycling, educational, emergency, etc.) can all be classified as “community facilities”. The quality of these facilities is an indication of the general character of the Township as a place to live, work, and play.

In order to adequately provide for the growth and development of the Township, future plans for community facilities, recreation, and services for both existing and future residents should be considered. This section of the comprehensive plan will attempt to identify future community facility and service projects that will benefit both current and future residents of Cussewago Township.

#### **Township Facilities**

The Cussewago Township Municipal Building is located at 23748 Mosiertown Road, approximately 2 miles south of Crossingville. This site is adequate to meet the needs of the Township in the future, and should continue as the center for municipal government. The Cussewago Township Municipal Building Garages are also located at this site. These buildings provide storage for the previously mentioned equipment. Currently, the Township Building and garages occupy approximately 3 acres of ground, however, if Cussewago continues to experience moderate growth, the facility could be expanded to accommodate future needs.

## **Recreational Facilities**

Cussewago Township has a fair amount of land area devoted for the purpose of passive recreational use. Some of the more prominent recreational areas include the State Game Lands and a community park. The community survey, conducted earlier in the planning process, revealed that the public was generally not aware of the recreational places available in the Township.

- Goal: *“ To promote and make more visible the recreational opportunities offered in Cussewago Township ”*
- Goal: *“To develop a trail system that would take advantage of the beautiful outdoor scenery the Township has to offer”*
- Goal: *“To establish a relationship between the State Game Commission and the Township, the Cussewago Township Planning Commission should invite a representative to attend at least one Planning Commission meeting per year to discuss problems and opportunities relative to the Game Lands situated in the Township.”*

## **Emergency Services**

Cussewago Township does not currently have its own emergency service providers for its citizens. The current levels of density within the Township do not make it feasible to maintain these services on a full-time basis. As mentioned in other sections of this plan, should the population continue to increase, and portions of the Township become more densely populated, these type of services may have to be provided; even if only on a part time or shared basis.

Because community survey results showed that citizens are overall satisfied with emergencies provided to the area, this area will not need to change, but continue to provide the fine service that it has been up to this point. The Planning Commission recognizes the importance of having the support of the local volunteer fire departments that protect us, and realize that the support and maintenance of these departments is costly.

- Goal: *“In conjunction with the County Emergency Services Office, the Township shall review, and have available the **Crawford County Hazard Mitigation Plan**. This will help both residents and officials to be prepared for potential emergencies, and what to do in such an event.”*

## **Utilities**

Due to its rural character and location away from major regional utilities, Cussewago Township relies primarily on on-lot sewer and water systems, which support lower intensity development. Because the Township does not have public

water or sewer facilities, we will primarily be concerned with surface and groundwater management activity, which are guided by DEP, and State standards. Public awareness of the issues surrounding water resources is another important component to water protection.

- Goal: *“To develop a public outreach program to educate residents about ways in which they can conserve water, and prevent water pollution. This should include environmentally sound agricultural practices.”*
- Goal: *“To limit high-density development on land adjacent to streams, wetlands, and other water resources.”* This will become more critical as the number of on-lot systems increases over time.

### **3.6 Implementation Strategies**

The Cussewago Township Comprehensive plan is a study, which designates a recommended course for future development for this municipality. It should be viewed primarily as a framework for action, a flexible guide rather than a rigid document. It consists of a series of general concepts and specific recommendations in the fields of land use, housing, transportation, and community facilities. This guide for action section of the Plan will take those concepts and recommendations and establish short and long-range implementation strategies.

In the first section of this document, a variety of background studies described the natural, and man-made resources of the Township. Many of these resources are locally unique and irreplaceable, and each resource requires appropriate management based on sound land use planning. The task of the comprehensive plan is to integrate the individual resource planning needs into larger plans, which address land use, housing, transportation and community facilities in the township. These major plans must be practical, feasible, economical, and legally sound and must translate into specific actions and regulations to guide and manage growth and development activities in the Township.

### **Crawford County Comprehensive Plan**

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires local comprehensive plans to be “generally consistent” with the County Comprehensive Plan, although not in strict adherence. The 2000 Crawford County Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Map shows recommended uses for Cussewago as well as other municipalities (Note that the County Plan is only a guide, not a legal document).

According to the County Future Land Use Map, Cussewago is designated primarily as “agriculture/rural” in the bulk of the Township. The areas of



Mosiertown and Crossingville are designated as “village” and a few remaining areas are designated as “conservation/recreation”

## **Cussewago Township Comprehensive Plan**

The Cussewago Township Board of Supervisors should formally adopt the 2005 Cussewago Township Comprehensive Plan. The adoption process must follow the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247 of 1968 as amended). The adoption process includes proper advertisement, public hearings by the Township Planning Commission and Supervisors, and the submittal for review and comment by surrounding governments (Spring Township, Summerhill Township, Hayfield Township, Venango Township, Elk Creek Township, Washington Township, Crawford County, and Penncrest School District).

## **Zoning Ordinance**

No single document is more important than a municipal zoning ordinance to assist in implementing many of the recommendations delineated in this Comprehensive Plan. During the adoption of this plan, the Cussewago Township Planning Commission should begin the work of creating a draft-zoning ordinance to replace their existing ordinance that was adopted in 1970. Upon finalization of the draft ordinance, the Cussewago Township Board of Supervisors must formally adopt their revised Zoning Ordinance. The adoption process must be in compliance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act #247) and follow the same procedures as the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance**

The Township adopted a Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance in 1971. This Ordinance should be used to forward the objectives of the land use plan and the transportation plan by insuring more orderly residential development, better planned commercial establishments and new roads that are designed adequately. During the adoption of this plan, the Cussewago Township Planning Commission should begin the work of creating an update to their subdivision and land development ordinance to replace their existing ordinance. Upon finalization of the draft ordinance, the Cussewago Township Board of Supervisors must formally adopt their revised Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. The adoption process must be in compliance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act #247) and follow the same procedures as the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

An updated Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance will work in conjunction with the new Zoning Ordinance, to ensure that land development is accomplished in the most environmentally appropriate way.

## **Funding Strategies**

Most of the recommendations outlined within this Comprehensive Plan cost money. The following list provides potential funding sources that may be applicable to various plan components.

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):** Crawford County receives an entitlement of CDBG funds each year. This translates to roughly \$350,000 to be spent countywide on various projects. This program also has a competitive component. This competitive program can be used for a housing rehab strategy or for larger projects that serve an urgent or compelling need.

**What Qualifies:** To qualify for this program, a potential project must meet one of three National Objectives – 51% of those served by the project must be of Low or Moderate Income, the project must relieve slum and blight, or the project must serve an urgent need.

**Potential Projects:** Water and Sewer Systems, roadway repair and expansion.

**Who to Contact:** Crawford County Planning Commission (814) 333-7341,  
or Crawford County Development Corporation (814)  
337-8200

- **Community Revitalization Assistance Program:** This program provides Grant funds to support local initiatives designed to promote the stability of communities and to assist communities in achieving and maintaining social and economic diversity, ensuring a productive tax base and good quality of life. This program has very broad guidelines and is best suited for large-scale projects that are not fundable through the other programs mentioned above. This program could also be used as a local match for programs that require such.

**Who to Contact:** PA Department of Community and Economic  
Development (717) 787-7120

## **IV. LIST OF MAPS**

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<b>MAP 7</b>	<b>FLOOD HAZARD AREAS</b>
<b>MAP 8</b>	<b>SOILS</b>
<b>MAP 9</b>	<b>EXISTING LAND USE</b>
<b>MAP 10</b>	<b>TOWNSHIP ROADS</b>
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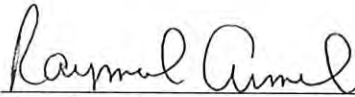
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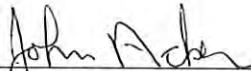
Board of Supervisors  
Cussewago Township,  
Crawford County, Pennsylvania



\_\_\_\_\_  
Donald Reibel, Chairman



\_\_\_\_\_  
Ray Armel



\_\_\_\_\_  
John Acker

Attest

I, Lyle Acker, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of an ordinance adopted by the Board of Supervisors, Cussewago Township, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, on March 7, 2006



\_\_\_\_\_  
Lyle Acker, Township Secretary

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