

North Shenango Township Comprehensive Plan Update

November 2006

North Shenango Township Planning Commission

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Letter From the Planning Commission

The Comprehensive Plan is the only public document that describes the community as a whole in terms of its complex and mutually supporting networks. The plan contains policy statements, developed by the community and adopted by its officials, which are used to support community decisions and anticipate future conditions.

The North Shenango Township Comprehensive Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Although the plan is not a legally binding document, it is the official statement for future development in the community.

The committee would like to thank the residents of North Shenango Township for their input via the survey and other sources, the North Shenango Planning Commission, the North Shenango Board of Supervisors, and the Crawford County Planning Commission for their support during this multi-year process.

John Bergan

**Coordinator of the NST
Comprehensive Plan Committee**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 History

Shenango was one of the original thirty-four Townships in Crawford County when it was formed in 1800. It occupied an area of approximately seventy-two square miles, and encompassed the entire southwest corner of Crawford County – including what is now South Shenango, West Shenango, West Fallowfield, and portions of North Shenango, Sadsbury and East Fallowfield. In 1830, the boundaries were changed and North and South Shenango were formed, the former including that are now North and South Shenango and Pine. The organization of Pine occurred in 1845 and reduced North Shenango to its present size.

During the 1800's, numerous remains of the Mound Builders were found along the lowlands of Shenango Creek. Besides a number of mounds from thirty to fifty feet in circumference, two circular forts were found – each encompassing approximately one half acre of ground. One of these forts was located on land now consumed by Pymatuning Reservoir near Tuttle Point. Each fort was surrounded by a moat, indicating the purpose of their construction as being defense.

The Erie and Pittsburgh Railroad (later the Penn Central) crossed the Township northeast and southwest. In 1885, Espyville Station had a store, hotel, blacksmith shop and approximately twelve “dwelling houses”.

Espyville, in the western part of the Township, was laid out in 1833 by John Espy. Jeremy Allen, the first merchant, Hugh Wilson, a blacksmith, and Isaac Marshall, a carpenter and teacher, were the only residents for years. By 1885, the village had not grown much and contained one store, two blacksmith's shops, one wagon shop, one paint shop, a jelly factory and cider mill, Collin's Bros. saw and planing mill, a school, church, twenty residences, and the only post office in the Township.

Prior to 1885, a post office was located at Stewartville, along with a cheese factory and several residences. Stewartville was located south of the intersection of present-day PA 285 and Hartstown Road.

There were three churches in the Township: The Methodist Episcopal at Espyville was organized in 1831 and the present frame building was erected in 1870 at a cost of \$6,000; Center Chapel, another Methodist Church, was located one half mile east of Espyville Station in a building constructed Episcopal in 1846; and North Shenango United Presbyterian Church was organized in 1849, holding services in the existing church which was built just prior to 1885 – also approximately one half mile east of Espyville Station.

Early settlers of the Township include: Anthony and Henry Bennett; William Bennett; Samuel Barrackman; Sidney Harriott; Mrs. Hannah Linn and sons John, Andrew, George, Joseph; Isaac W., Henry, Elizah, and David Collins; George Espy; John Gaugh; James Pollock; James and William Reed; William Shellito; Hugh Wilson; James Robinson; Patrick Davis; Henry Blair; John Alexander; Samuel Glenn; and Mr. Patterson.

George Espy built a saw and grist-mill about one-fourth of a mile west of Espyville, and also operated a distillery. Anthony Bennett and, a little later, many others also owned stills. Stephen Allen started a carding mill in about 1832. Joseph Wright taught the first school in 1804 in a deserted cabin which stood at Elliott's Corners in the central part of the Township (now known as Hirschman's Corners).

Shortly after the Civil War, in 1869, the General Assembly of Pennsylvania authorized a survey for the purpose of determining the feasibility of draining the Pymatuning Swamp. In subsequent Acts, from 1911 through 1925, the Assembly approved the development of Pymatuning Reservoir, including the acquisition and clearing of land and the construction of a dam north of Jamestown. While the primary purpose of this project was to regulate the flow of water in the Shenango and Beaver Rivers, it also served to create one of the most unique recreational and wildlife habitats in the State. More important in terms of this Plan, however, is the impact that Pymatuning State Park has had on the type and extent of development in North Shenango Township. While detailed analyses of impacts on the Township's land use pattern will be provided in the next section, it is important to state here, from an historical perspective, that no other single factor has had nearly the influence on the development of North Shenango as that generated by the construction of Pymatuning Reservoir.

The accompanying map (Figure 1) depicts the Township as it appeared in 1876, and shows property owners, acreages, and the location of prominent structures. This map is taken from 1876 publication, entitled Combination Atlas Map of Crawford County, Pennsylvania, by Everts, Ensign and Everts.

Note: *The historical facts in this narrative were compiled from History of Crawford County, Pennsylvania by P. C. Brown; Warner, Beers and Co., Chicago, Illinois, 1885.*

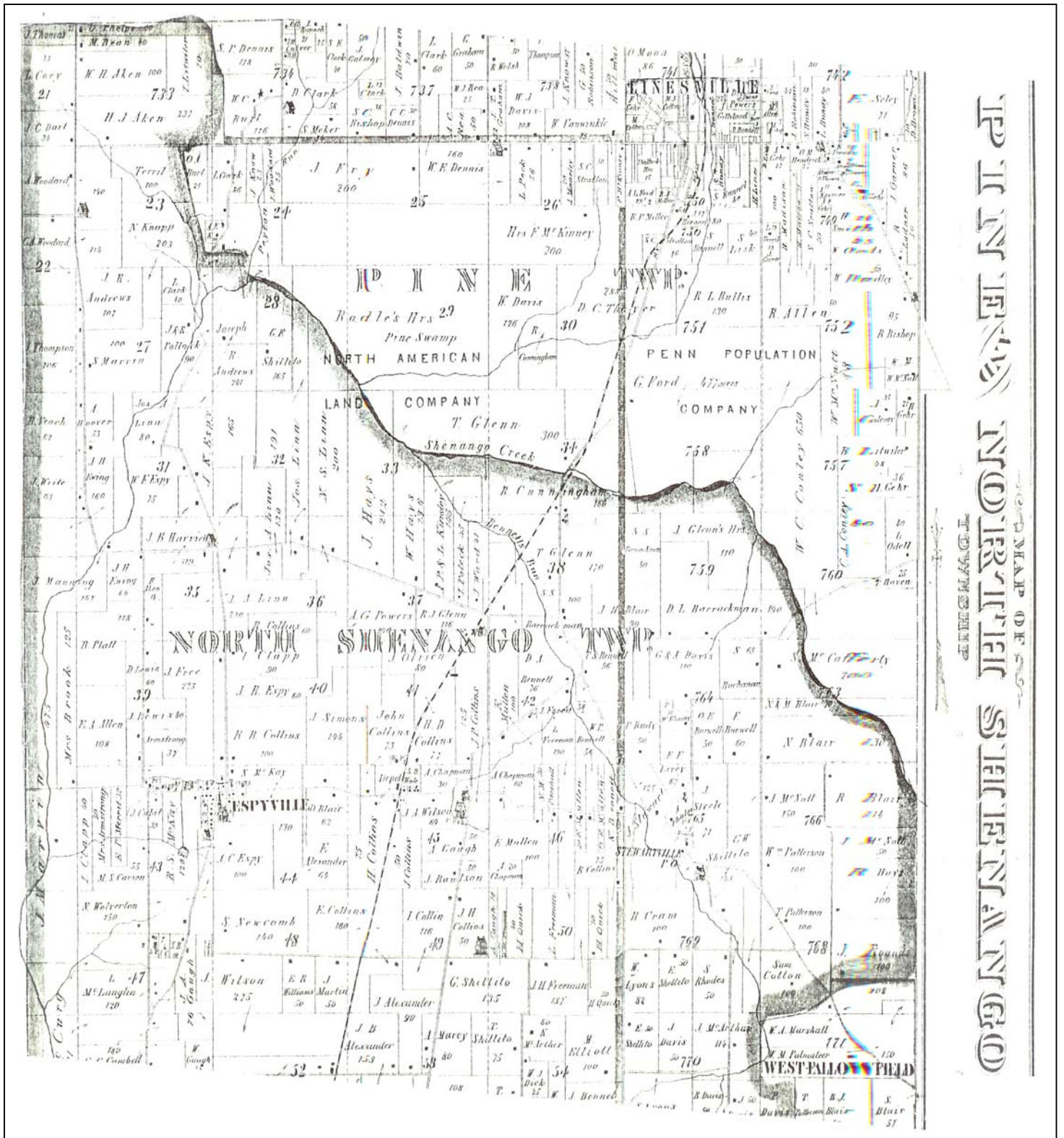


Figure 1 Map of Pine and North Shenango in 1876

1.2 North Shenango Township 1979 Plan

Spurred by U.S. Steel Corporation's proposal to build a fully integrated steel making facility at the shores of Lake Erie, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) agreed to fund planning programs for six municipalities in Western Crawford County- enabling them to prepare for growth impacts expected to be generated by the development of this industrial complex. North Shenango Township was one of the six municipalities to request this assistance and, as such, the 1979 plan represents the first formal effort to establish guidelines for the control of growth and development within the Township. Additionally, the plan sought to address some of the impacts associated with Pymatuning State Park.

1.3 Purpose of the 2006 Plan

Today, the Township is not faced with the U.S. Steel proposal, but Pymatuning State Park is still a major influence on the way development occurs throughout the Township. Because the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances the Township currently uses are as dated as the previous Comprehensive Plan, a need exists to update these documents as well. The best place to begin this process is with the Comprehensive Plan; this will help to identify the problem and special needs areas that will be addressed in those documents.

The Comprehensive Plan is increasingly becoming a valuable legal asset to municipalities when they face challenges by developers who are attempting to change existing land use controls. If a municipality can demonstrate that its zoning ordinance conforms to logical development goals and objectives that are a part of a Comprehensive Planning process, the municipality will generally prevail in developer appeals concerning challenges to zoning district designation and standards.

The Comprehensive Plan is a guiding principle guide for the logical development of the North Shenango Township. The Plan's primary task is to promote the health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of its citizens. It is intended to organize and coordinate the unified collection of people, ideas, land facilities, services, land uses, and environmental elements, which comprise the Township as a whole. Thus, the term "comprehensive" is used to express the scope of the plan content.

2.1 The Natural Environment

Introduction

Through the survey and analysis of existing land use patterns, we have studied the "man-made environment" of North Shenango, or more accurately, man's impact on the natural landscape of the Township. In developing the future land use plan; it becomes necessary to combine this analysis of the man-made environment with an understanding of the natural environment, so that future growth can be located in areas, which are capable of supporting development.

Physiography

North Shenango is located in the southwest corner of Crawford County; the Township shares its western boundary with the State of Ohio (Andover and Richmond Townships), its northern boundary with Conneaut and Pine Townships, its eastern boundary with East Fallowfield and Sadsbury Townships, and its southern boundary with South Shenango Township. The Township's geometric shape resembles a triangle, and covers an area of 17,124 acres (26.58 square Miles). See the Regional Location Map (Map 1) for a visual view.

The topography of the Township ranges from 1,010 feet above sea level along the shoreline of Pymatuning Reservoir to 1,180 feet in the south-central portion of the Township. Bennett's Run is the major stream, which drains storm water off Township land. This stream and its tributaries drain the eastern half of North Shenango into Pymatuning Reservoir. Approximately five smaller streams drain that area of the Township, which lies west of the abandoned Penn Central tracks.

Soil Conditions

The soil analysis for North Shenango looks at soils in terms of their suitability for certain types of use specifically agriculture and residential development. By analyzing the data available from the Soil Conservation Service, it is possible to identify the best agricultural areas in the Township, as well as those areas which are best suited to supporting on-lot septic systems. The soils data also delineates those areas adjacent to Township streams, which are susceptible to flooding, or stream overflow.

In general terms, the Township is primarily overlain by the Frenchtown and Venango soil associations. Both of these soils are characterized as having a high water table and slow to very slow permeability. The soils which are subject to flooding, are Holly soils; these are also characterized as having a water table at or near the surface and moderately slow permeability. The best soils in the Township are the Chenango and Haven soils; these are moderately well to well-drained soils found in materials weathered from glacial till and glacial stream deposits. Other soils found in small scattered locations in the Township are Alden, Braceville, Carlisle Muck, Halsey, Red Hook and Scio soils. The following analysis provides a description of the above soils based upon their suitability for agriculture and on-lot sewage disposal and a discussion of those areas of the Township which are susceptible to stream overflow.

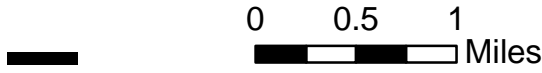
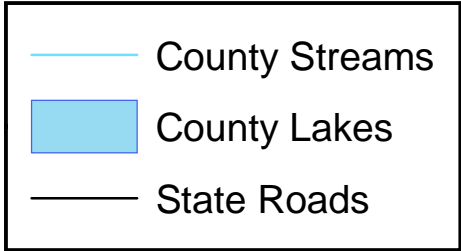
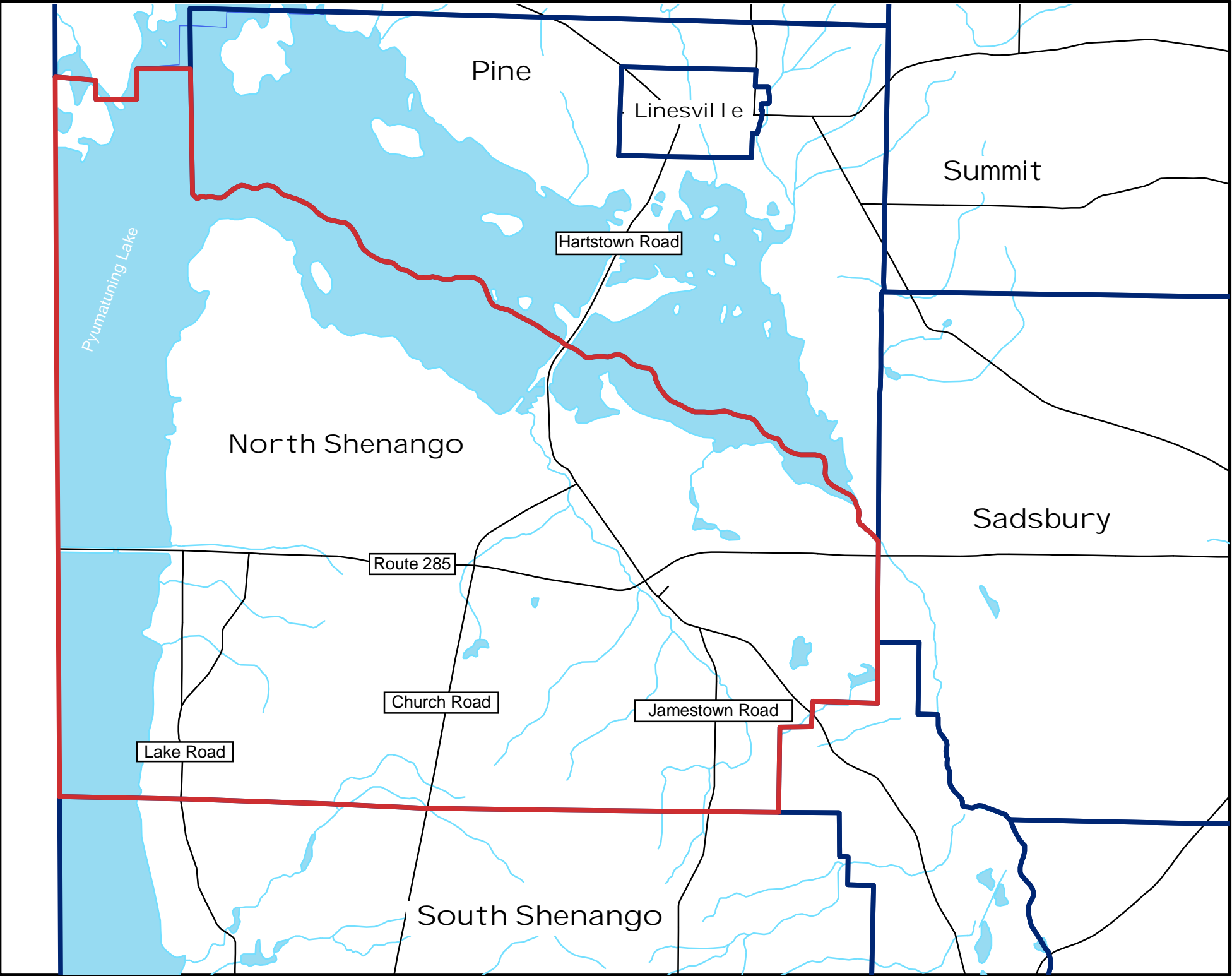
Agricultural Quality

The Soil Conservation Service has classified soils according to eight "capability classifications" for agricultural use. The limitation on the use of a soil becomes progressively greater as the classification numbers increase. The following is a listing of the eight soil classes, and an explanation of the limitations inherent in each.

- Class I Soils that have few limitations, which restrict their use.
- Class II Soils that have some limitations, which reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices.

Regional Location

North Shenango Township



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- Class III Soils that have severe limitations, which reduce the choice of plants, require special conservation practices, or both.
- Class IV Soils that have very severe limitations, which restrict the choice of plants, require careful management, or both.
- Class V Soils that have little or no erosion hazard but have other limitations, which are impractical to remove and limit their use largely to pasture, woodland, or wildlife food and cover.
- Class VI Soils that have severe limitations, which make them generally unsuited cultivation and limit their use largely to pasture, woodland, or wildlife food and cover.
- Class VII Soils that have very severe limitations, which make them unsuited to cultivation and restrict their use largely to grazing, woodland or wildlife.
- Class VIII Soils and land forms that have limitations, which prevent their use for commercial plant production and restrict their use recreation, wildlife, water supply and aesthetic purposes.

Haven soils are the only soils in the Township, which are included in the Class I category. These soils are located only along Linn Road, south of the new municipal building, and in the State Game Lands in the southeast corner of the Township.

The Braceville, Cambridge and Scio soils are considered to be Class II; the Frenchtown, Venango and Red Hook soils are Class III; Alden and Halsey soils are Class IV; and the Holly and Carlisle soils are Class VI and VII respectively.

For the purposes of the Plan, the soil classes were grouped into three major categories; good (Classes I and II), fair (Class III), and poor (Classes IV through VIII). The vast majority of soils in the Township are categorized as being fair for agricultural production, with the major limiting factors in most soils being slow permeability and a high water table. These groupings of classifications can be seen on Map 2, Agricultural Quality.

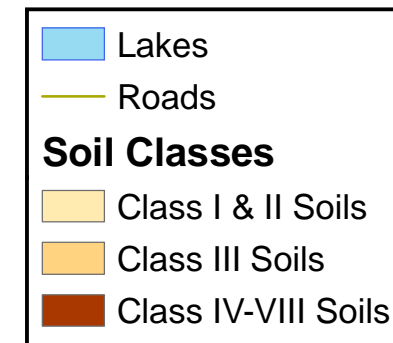
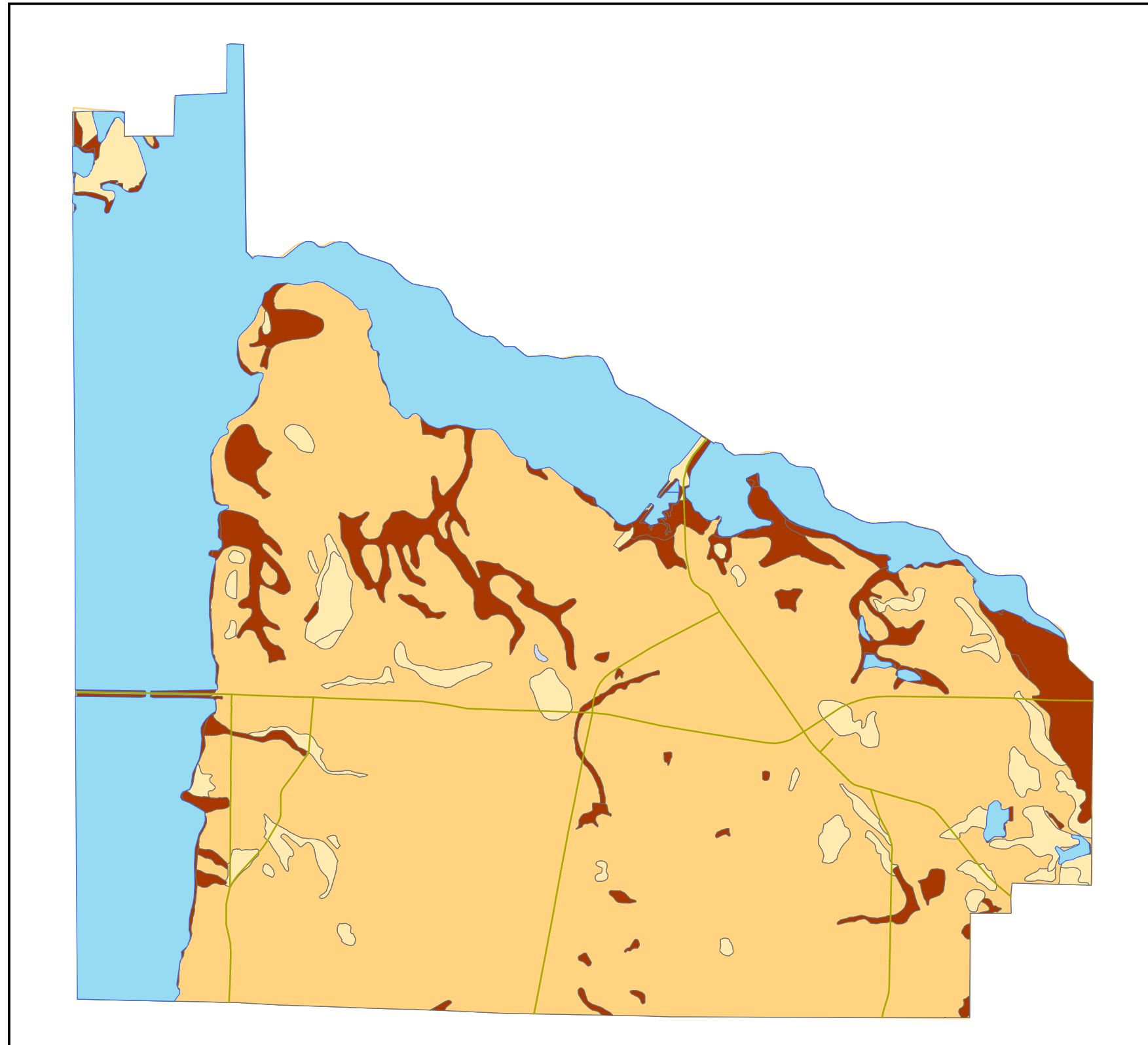
On-Lot Sewage Suitability

The capability of soil to properly filter sewage effluent is the most critical land constraint on development in areas where centralized sewage treatment systems do not exist. Filtering capability is based on: (1) Soil permeability, (2) depth of soil to bedrock or some other impervious layer, and (3) the slope of the land. Once again, the soils in the Township were categorized as good, fair or poor, depending upon their ability to support on-lot septic system. The criteria for these categories is as follows:

- Good Suitability Soils in this category will normally be approved by the Township's sewage enforcement officer and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for conventional disposal systems. Soils, which are good for on-lot septic systems:
 - (a) Are not susceptible to flooding;

Agricultural Quality

North Shenango Township



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- (b) Have minimum depth to impervious layer of six (6) feet;
 - (c) Have a depth of four (4) feet or more to the seasonal high water table;
 - (d) Are termed “well-drained” by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service;
 - (e) Have percolation rates of 6 to 60 minutes; this means it takes 6 to 60 minutes for water to drop one inch in a saturated hole; or in reference to permeability, it means the soil has a range of between 10.0 and 1.0 (inches of water movement per hour);
 - (f) Are located on slopes of 15 percent or less;
 - (g) Are not so stony as to make system installation impossible.
- **Fair Suitability** Soils in this category will not normally qualify for conventional on-lot systems, but may qualify for a modified or alternate system. To adequately function in these soils, a system would have to be more elaborate than a conventional system, generally involving higher cost. Soils grouped within this category:
- (a) Are not susceptible to flooding;
 - (b) Have a minimum depth to the impervious layer of twenty (20) inches;
 - (c) Have a depth to the seasonal high water table of between twenty (20) inches and four (4) feet;
 - (d) Are termed “moderately well-drained” by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service;
 - (e) Have percolation rates of 60 to 300 minutes and a permeability range of 1.0 to 0.2 inches per hour;
 - (f) Are located on slopes no greater than 25 percent;
 - (g) Are not so stony as to make proper system installation impossible.
- **Poor Suitability** Soils within this category will not normally qualify for a conventional sewage disposal system and may not qualify for an alternate system due to the presence of one or all of the following conditions. These soils may:
- (a) Be susceptible to flooding;
 - (b) Have a depth to the impervious layer of less than twenty (20) inches;
 - (c) Have a depth to the seasonal high water table of less than twenty (20) inches;
 - (d) Be termed poorly or very poorly drained by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service;
 - (e) Have a percolation rate of greater than 300 minutes and a permeability range of less than 0.2 inches per hour;
 - (f) Be located on slopes exceeding 25 percent;

- (g) Be so stony as to make system installation impossible.

These three categories represent generalized statements about soil suitability. The mapping of these soils provides a general ideal of the on-lot sewage suitability of the Township's land. This map, Map 3, indicates that the majority of land in North Shenango is poor for on-lot sewage systems. Those areas that are indicated as being good or fair for on-lot systems are also those areas designated as the best agricultural land. Exceptions to the conditions shown on the map may be discovered when a specific parcel is examined in detail.

Flood Prone Areas

Another limiting factor on development is the susceptibility of land to flooding, or stream overflow. The Soil Conservation Service by the extent of alluvial soils bordering the Township's streams identified lands within North Shenango that border streams and which are subject to stream overflow. (These are soils that are composed of sand, silt and clay deposited and left behind, when a stream overflows).

Those areas of the Township which are subject to flooding are, for the most part, in agricultural use or grown over by woodland and brush. In several instances, however, allotments in the west and southwest portions of the Township have been plotted along the path of streams with no design consideration for the course of the stream through the subdivision. Consequently, those lots over which the stream passes have been rendered partially or wholly undevelopable, unless the stream is culverted. This problem occurs in the Causeway Park, McClurg, Colonial Estates and Tuttle Allotments. Map 4 shows the flood plains in the township. The flood plains are low-lying areas around major streams that tend to flood, but all the flooding in the township might not be restricted to these areas. The majority of the flood plains are located along Bennett Run and along the lakeshore. This map is only an approximation and other low-lying areas are subject to flooding during heavy rains.

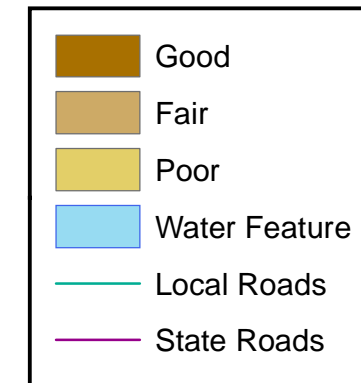
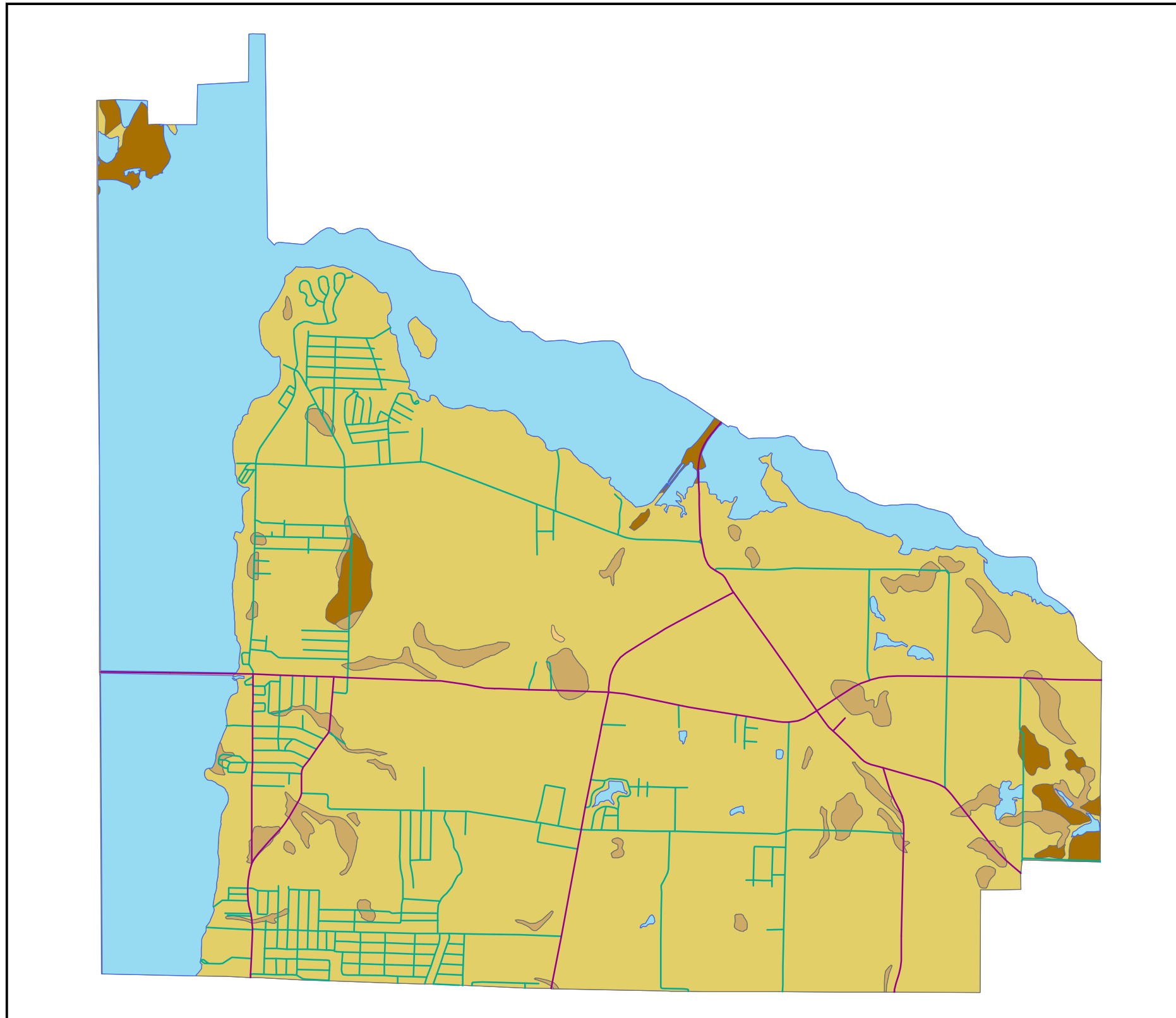
Wetlands in the Township

Wetland regulations have assumed an increasing importance in the life of communities. North Shenango Township is a place with lots of federal and state owned natural lands, and this makes wetlands very important to mention. Current regulatory practice makes it almost impossible to fill in wetland areas and incorporate the filled land into a developed site plan. This makes it wise to be aware of delineated wetlands and plan around them.

The U.S. Department of the Interior has produced a mapped National Wetlands Inventory. Although it is by no means definitive, the National Wetlands Inventory is a good resource for future planning in North Shenango Township. The Inventory is done on the U.S.G.S. 7.5 quadrangle map series at 1" = 2,000'. Observing the delineations, it can be noted that a large majority of the Township's wetlands are found along the shores of Pymatuning Lake and also along Bennett Run. Other wetlands areas are found in the center of the Township. These wetlands are indicated on Map 5.

On-Lot Sewage Suitability

North Shenango Township



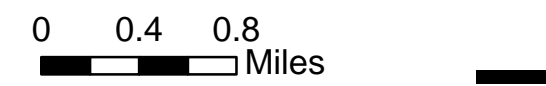
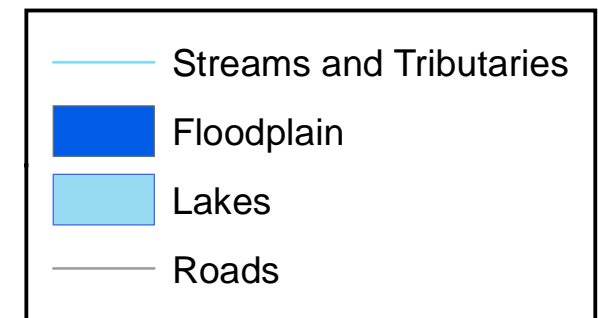
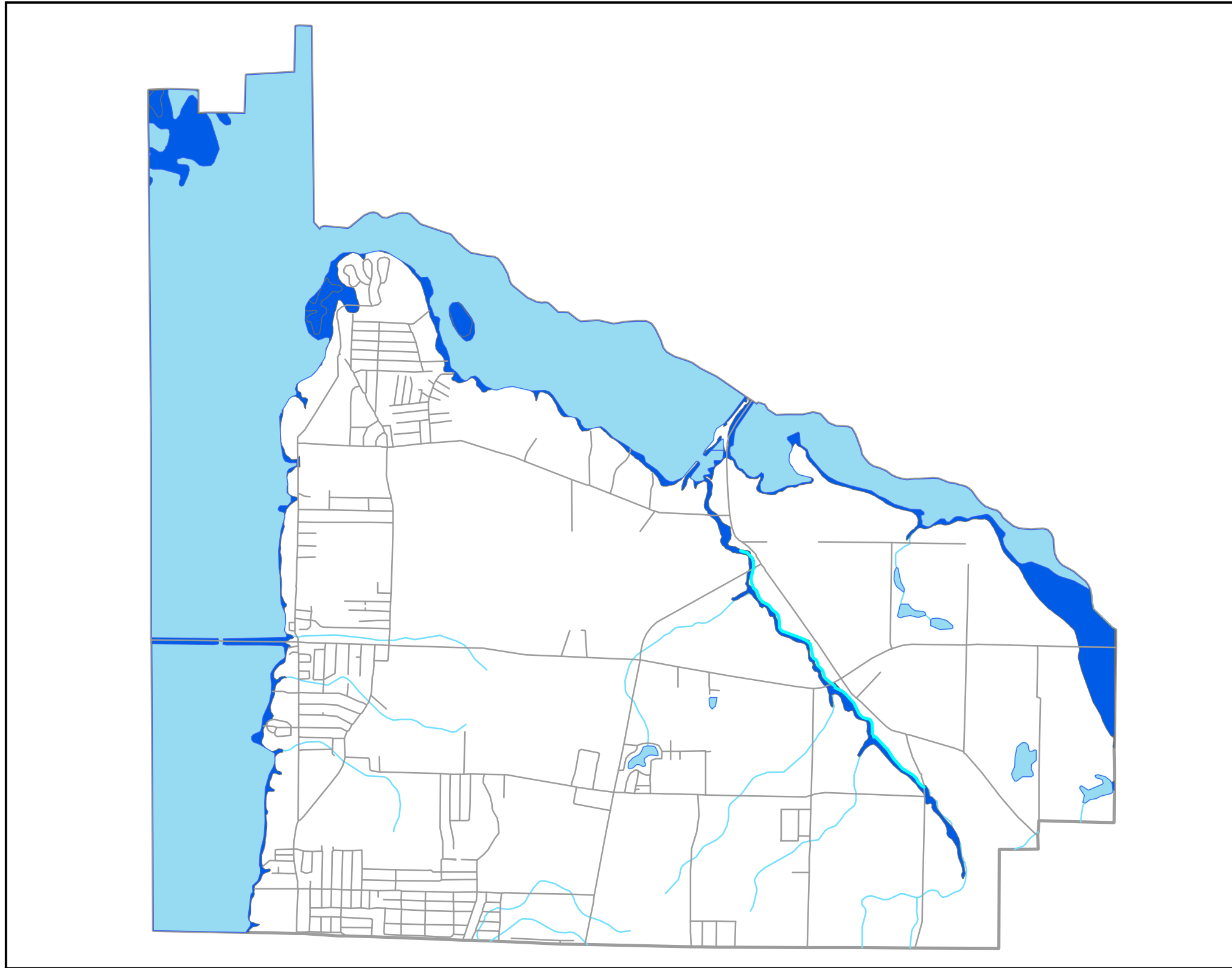
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* Only a representation. Individual parcel investigations may show different results

Floodplains North Shenango Township



*An estimation only. Other areas may be subject to flooding as well.

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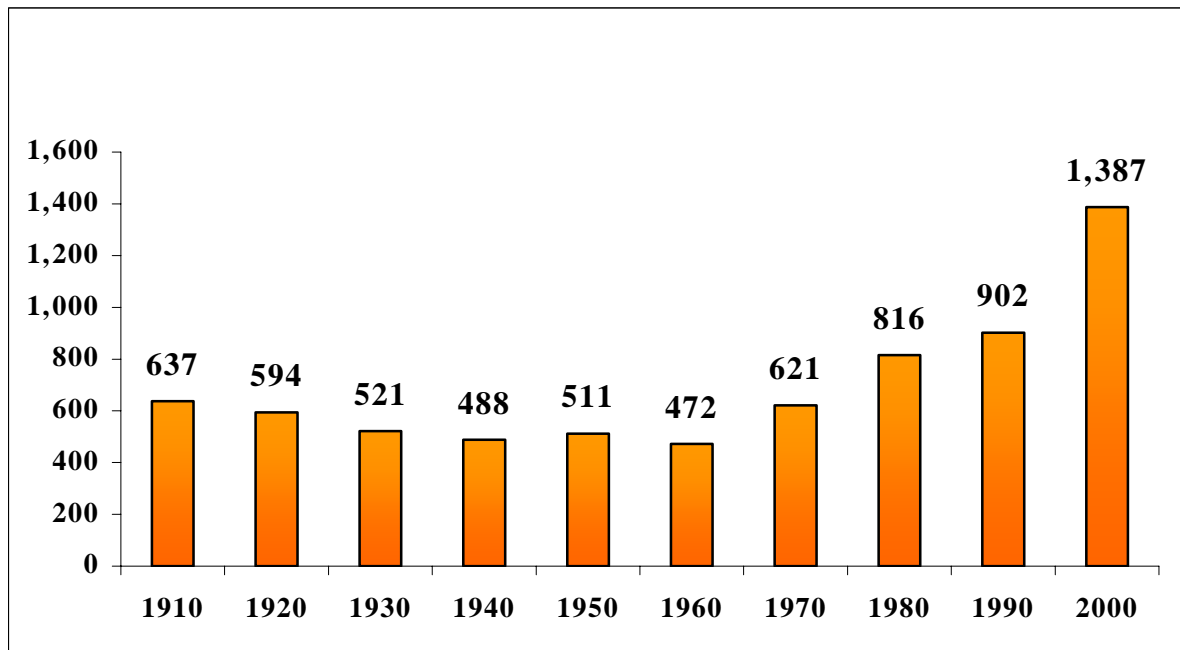
2.2 The People

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. This section provides a description of historic trends in population within North Shenango, along with a comparison of future population estimates.

Population Trends

North Shenango Township has experienced steady population growth since the 1960's, shown in Figure 2. Since 1960, North Shenango has departed from the countywide trend of population decline, and has increased steadily to the present, with a Year 2000 population of 1,387 people.

Figure 2 North Shenango Population, 1910-2000

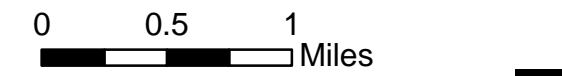
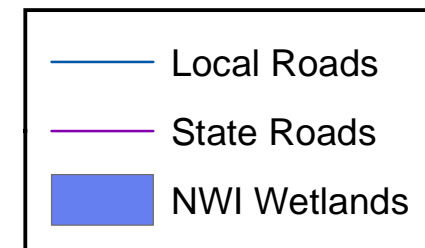
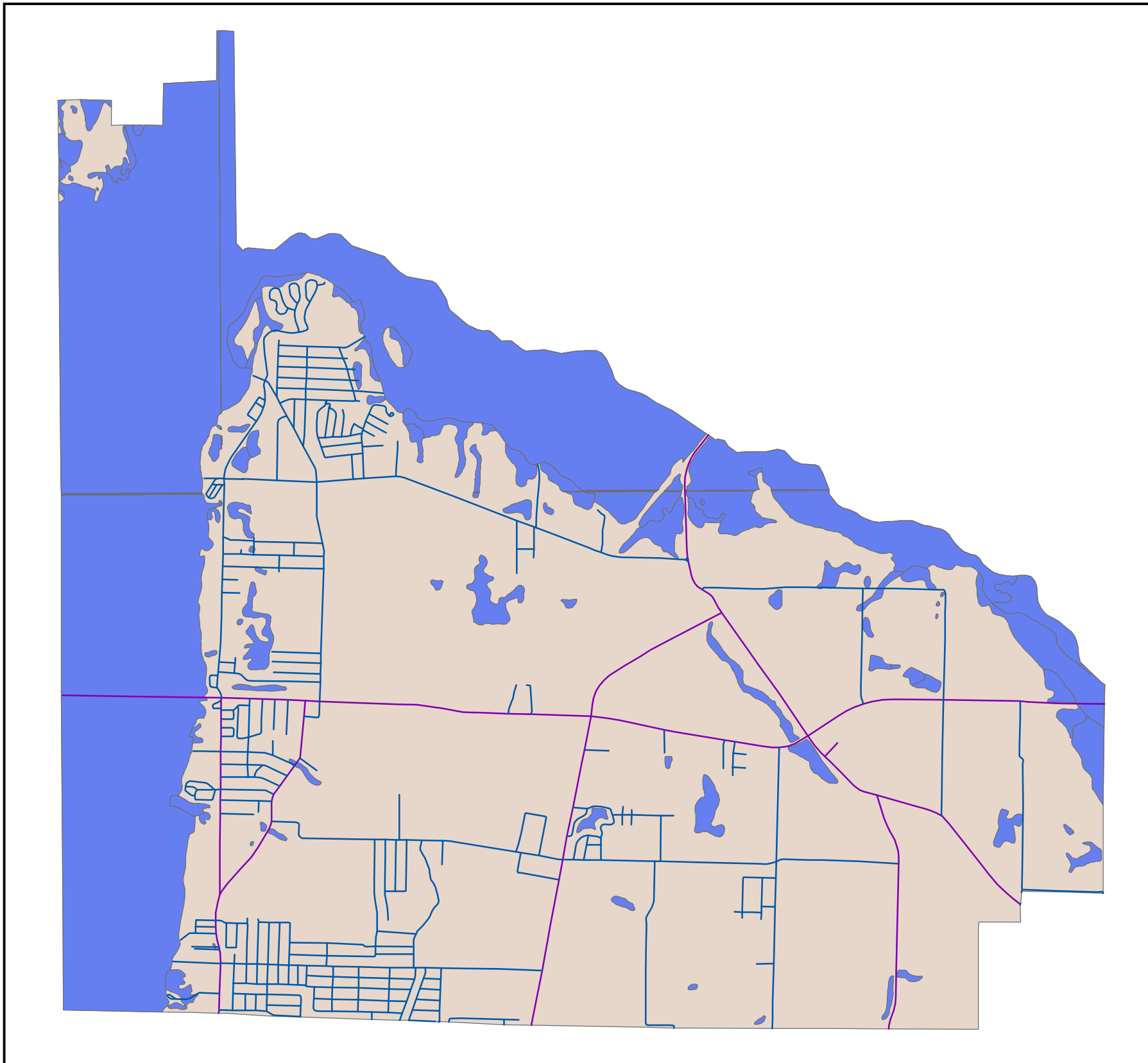


The growth that the township has experienced did not quite exceed the 1979 Comprehensive Plan estimates. That Plan forecasted the township's population would exceed 1,300 people by 1990, and 1,900 people by the year 2000. Figure 3 shows this trend and forecasted trend.

Wetlands

North Shenango Township

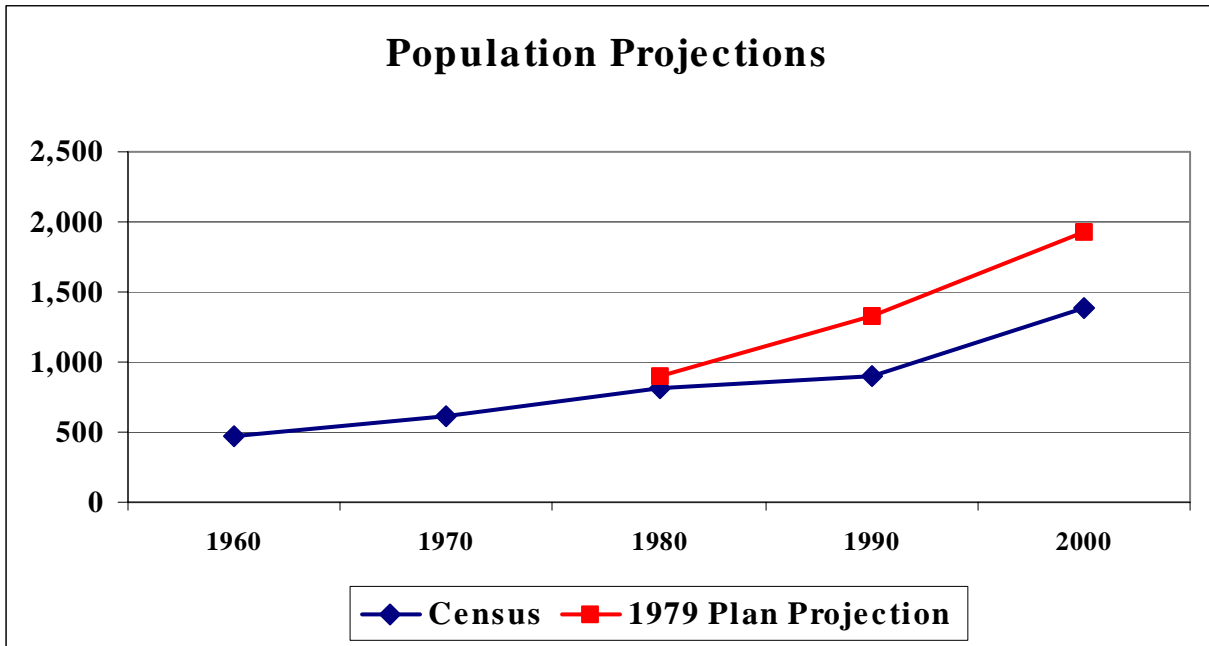
As Determined By The
National Wetlands Inventory



Note: Not all wetlands may be described here and also the ones described might not be present

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Figure 3 Population Projections from 1976 Plan



Age / Sex Characteristics

The structure of the township's population, in terms of age distribution, appears to be healthy for a growing community. Over the last few decades, increases in specific age groups suggest that overall, the population is aging, and people near or at retirement age are moving into the area. The 45-84 year old age cohort has nearly doubled in size during the 20-year period 1980-2000. See Figures 4-6.

In terms of survey response, those aged 56 and over represented those most likely to respond to the survey accounting for 54% of all responses. Whereas the 18 to 24 year old group represented less than 1% of all survey respondents.

Figure 4 1980 Census Population, By Age Group

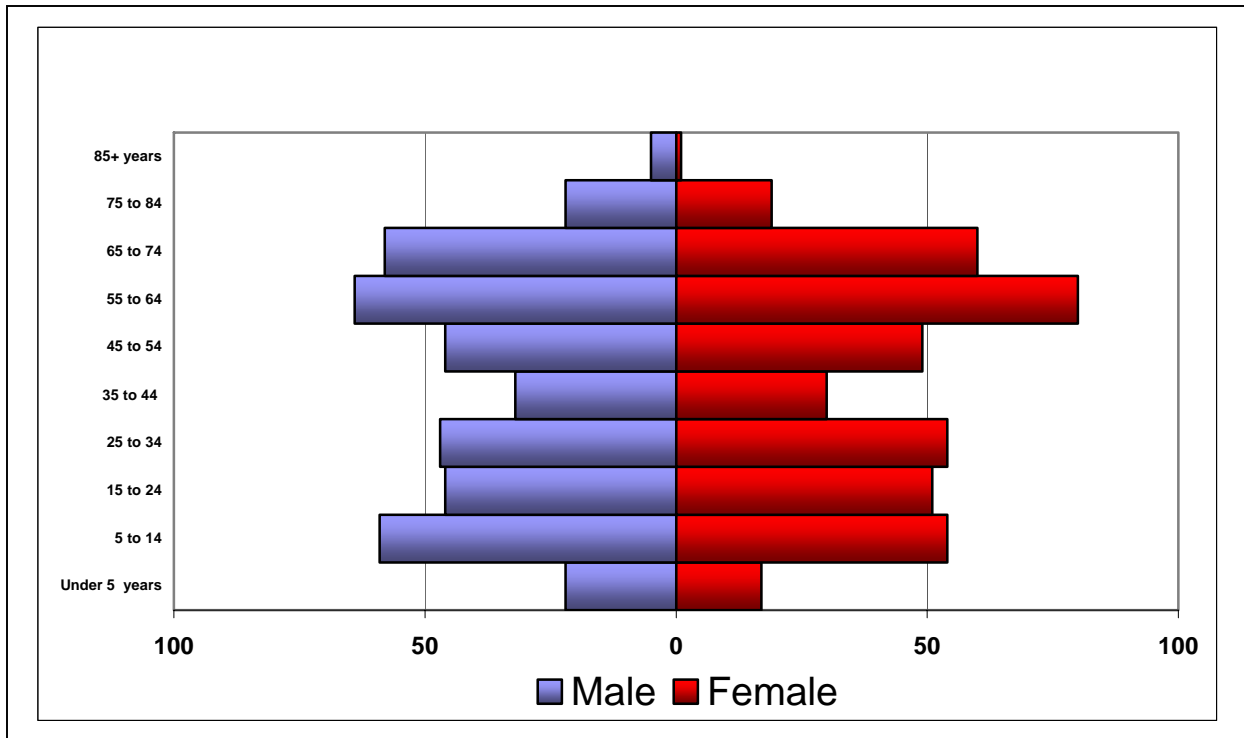


Figure 5 1990 Census Population, By Age Group

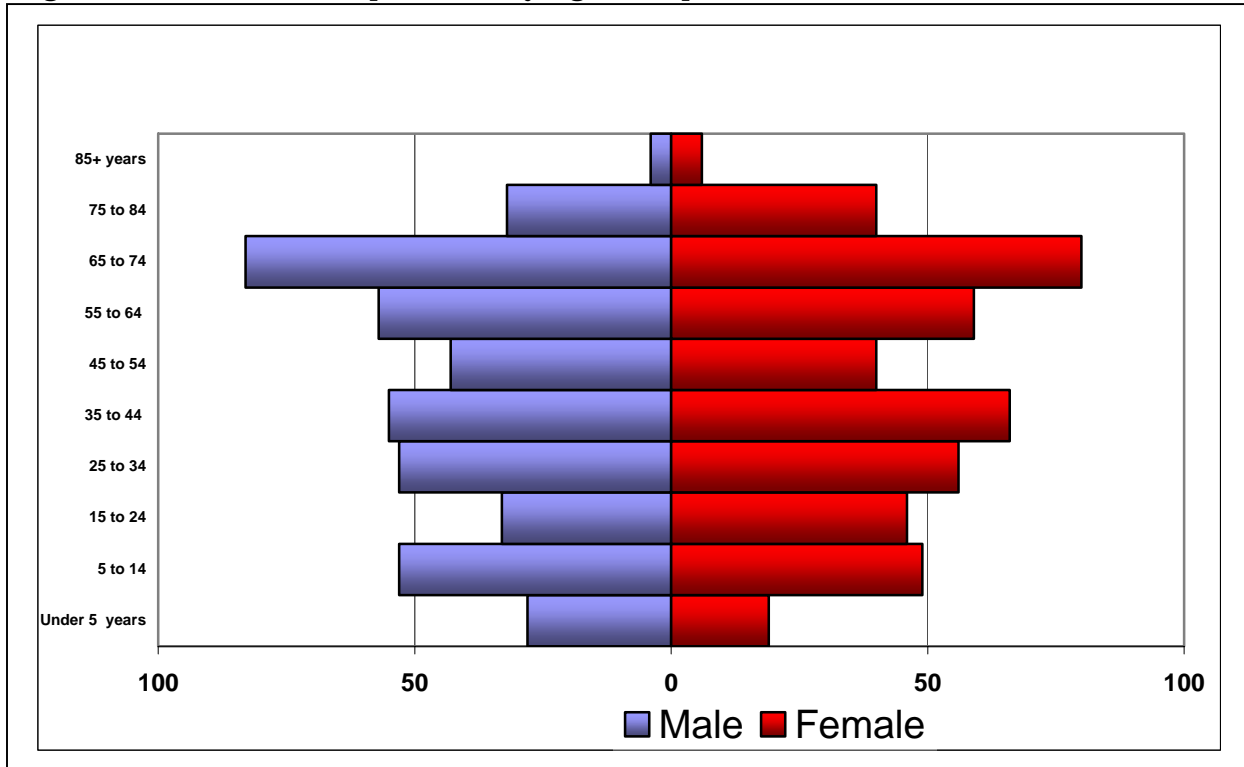
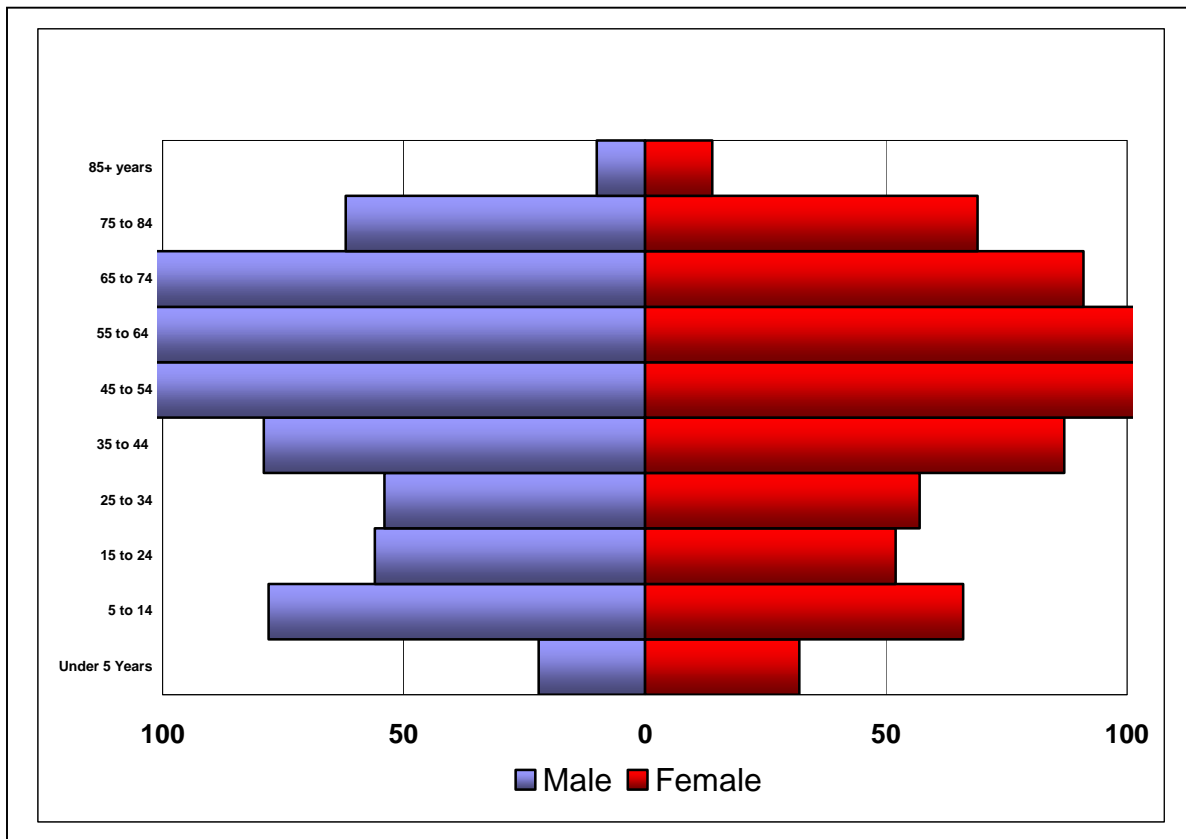


Figure 6 2000 Census Population, By Age Group

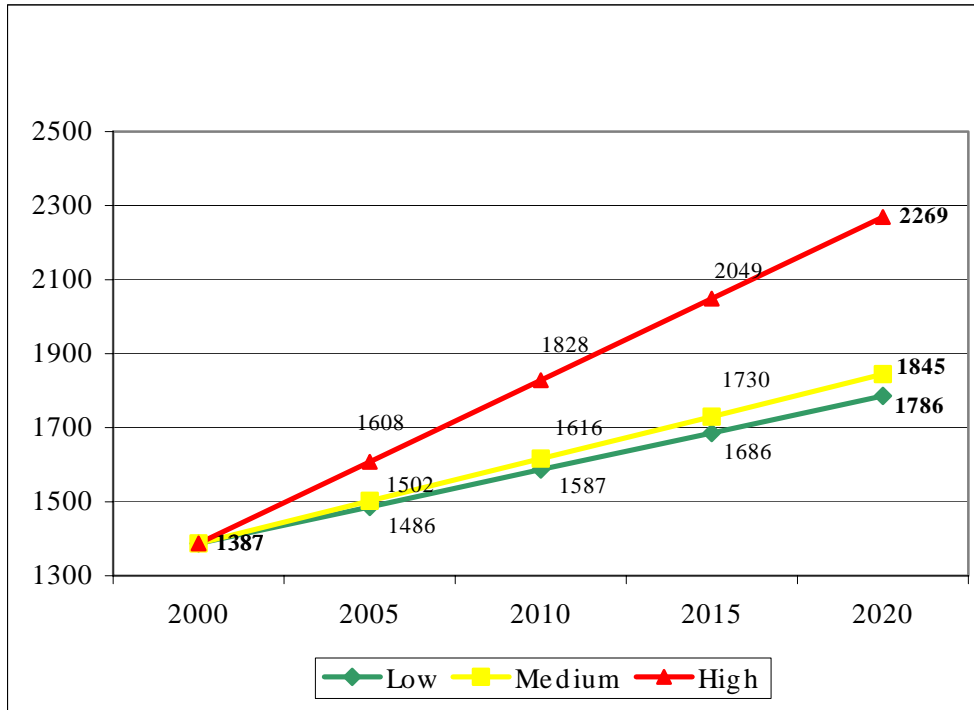


Population Projections

It is always difficult to forecast future population. However, since community planning is concerned with future growth and development it is important to estimate it as accurately as possible. Population projections are difficult because of the many variables and unforeseen factors involved. The estimates used here are based on our knowledge of past trends and our understanding of future constraints. As such, forecasts discussed here are intended to reflect alternative sets of assumptions regarding the future of North Shenango, and should not be interpreted as something more exact.

Three forecasting techniques have been used which provide a range of population projections. Future population size is expected to fall within this range. In all cases, the 2000 U.S. Census count is used as the base year population size for the Township. The Population Projections in Figure 7 summarize the results of these projections. These projections consider trends over the past 20-30 years to establish patterns and take into consideration cycles in the building industry through the use of new housing permits.

Figure 7 Population Projections by Three Methods



Low Range Projection considers the number of new housing units built between 1992 and 2003 (90). An approximate family size of 2.66 is obtained from the 2000 Census and applied to the average rate of building permits issued from 1992-2003 (7.5). An increase of **399** persons over the next 20 years is projected using this method. This technique provides for the lowest rate of growth.

Medium Range Projection establishes constant numerical change within the population and projects the change into the future. It is based on an average gain of 230 persons each decade, as experienced between 1960 and 2000. An increase of **458** persons over the next 20 years is projected. This technique results in a moderate projection.

High Range Projection determines a rate of change figure, which occurs each decade. The rate of change between 1960 and 2000 was selected as the most realistic representation of population change within the Township. The average rate of increase per decade was calculated at 31.8 percent. An increase of **882** persons over the next 20 years is projected using this method. This technique provides the highest projection.

In evaluating the various population projections discussed in this section, one must also consider the factors, which will have an influence on population within North Shenango. For example, while we know the extension of the sewerage system will attract more residential development, we cannot gauge population increase by the number of new housing starts alone mainly because of the mix of year-round *and* seasonal uses in the

Township. Additionally, persons who have retired have converted many previously seasonal homes to year-round use; thus population has increased while the existing housing stock can absorb this increase. We must also consider what will happen when these “converted” homes are sold; will they revert to seasonal use, or continue to be occupied year-round? If they revert to seasonal use, the Township would stand to lose population. Thus the seasonal residence in North Shenango Township is a factor, which can have a substantial influence upon population growth or decline serving as a further illustration of the complexity involved in accurately predicting future population levels.

2.3 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 North Shenango 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 North Shenango Township is used, a land use inventory was taken in the fall of 2003. To supplement the field data, Crawford County tax maps, tax assessment files and aerial photography 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 6 and Table 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 produced an existing land use map, which graphically represents the existing patterns of development in the Township. Map 6 shows 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.
- **State and Federal Lands:** This includes land owned by the State Game Commission and State Fish Commission.

Existing Land Use

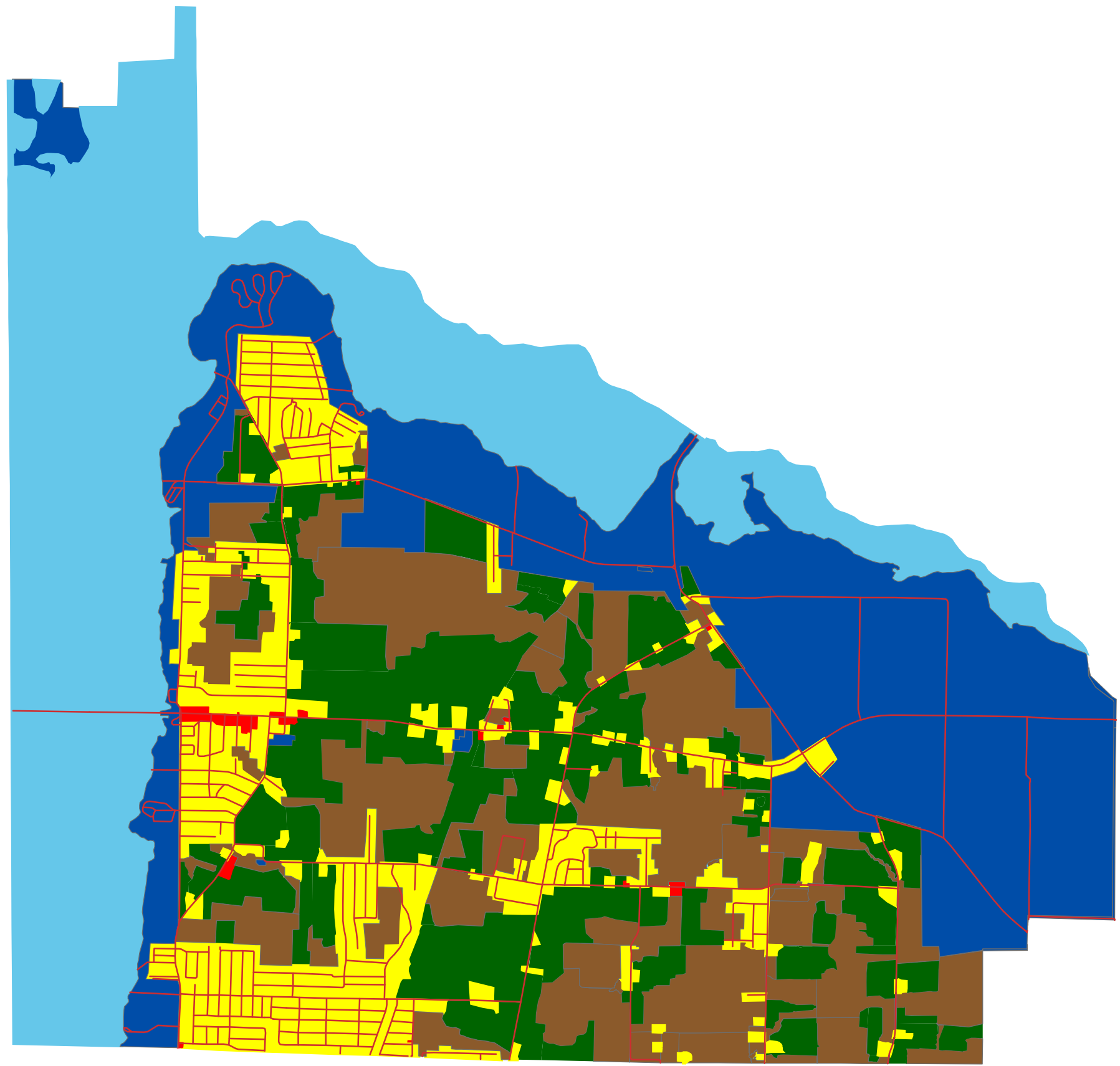
North Shenango Township

-  Agriculture
-  Commercial
-  Public
-  Residential
-  Water
-  State Park and Gamelands
-  Woodlands and Pastures

0 0.35 0.7 Miles



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- **Woodland and Pastures:** 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.
- **Public:** Lands, which are used for government or public functions, are included in this classification.
- **Water:** Larger bodies of water, such as Pymatuning Lake.

Land Use Accounts

Table 1, entitled *Existing Land Use Accounts*, details the total acreage in North Shenango devoted to each of the land use categories described above. As the table indicates, the largest single land use category, after water, in the Township is State Parks and Gamelands that accounts for 24.5% of the total area of North Shenango. Pymatuning Lake causes the water to be a larger contributor to land use than normal. The next largest use of land is Woodlands and Pastures, which encompasses approximately 18.3% of Township land; followed by Agriculture.

Table 1 Existing Land Use Accounts

Land Use	Acreage	% of Land Use
Agricultural	2781	16.6
Commercial	44	0.3
Public	16	0.1
Residential	1960	11.7
Water	4798	28.6
State and Gamelands	4108	24.5
Woodlands and Pastures	3079	18.3

Summary

Existing land use in North Shenango Township is characterized by wooded and agricultural areas in the majority of the Township, with a large concentration of housing on the western portion of the Township, due to the proximity of the Pymatuning Reservoir. There is no large industry in the Township, and commercial uses are

primarily located on Route 285, or of the home occupation type. For the most part, basic service businesses such as banking, grocers, gasoline, and pharmacies do not exist. A large recreation area is available due to the state lands, and Pymatuning Reservoir.

Potential Conflicts

Most of the current land uses in the Township integrate well. The agricultural, wooded, gamelands all compliment one another and contribute to the rural character of the community. In the majority of the Township, residential uses are not highly concentrated, with the exception of the allotment areas along the western edge of the Township.

While it is important for the Township to recognize the right of a property owner to use his land, it is also important to recognize the right of others whose “peace and tranquility” may be diminished by the inappropriate use of land, not to mention their health, safety or general welfare.

One potential conflict exists between the highly developed areas known as the “allotments” and their future development. The key to development of these higher density areas is the availability of sewer and water. The potential for substandard housing exists if building codes or not strictly adhered to.

A secondary potential conflict exists in the type of commercial activity now taking place in the Township. Home occupation businesses are convenient, low overhead activities that can provide a needed second income for many families. They can also provide needed services for rural communities such as North Shenango, whose population cannot always support independent full-time businesses. However, the Township must be alert that these enterprises do not disrupt residential neighborhoods. The supervisors may want to consider regulatory controls on the type, size and number of employees for such businesses through the Zoning Ordinance. It is a delicate balance between encouraging such business activity, while allowing for some type of control by stipulating that certain regulations must be followed.

2.4 Housing Analysis

According to the 2000 Census, North Shenango Township contained 1728 total housing units. This number represents a very small increase from the 1990 Census when 1722 units were reported in the township and the 1980 Census count where there were 1558 reported housing units. Census figures also reveal that only 35.8% of the housing units in 2000 were occupied and just over 90% of those were owner occupied. This is an increase from 1990 statistics in which 22.1% were occupied, 88% of which were owner occupied.

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

The median year of housing stock in the township as of the 2000 Census was 1972. This represents a newer stock than the County’s (1959) and the State’s (1957).

The background studies section of the 1979 comprehensive plan discussed the high number of seasonal residences in the Township, and the potential for more development with the completion of the new sewage system. A housing survey was not conducted for

that plan, but it was stated that many of the cottages/trailers had an uncared-for appearance, and the number of abandoned / vandalized homes were quite high, posing a safety hazard.

Housing Condition

A windshield survey of housing conditions in the township was conducted for this plan update in the fall of 2003. The survey area consisted of the entire township. The following rating system was applied to the houses of North Shenango Township:

1=Excellent; 2=Good; 3=Fair; 4=Poor

In the entire Township, it was determined that 91% of the houses were classified as either excellent or good. Because of the scattered nature of housing in the Township, the dynamics of substandard housing in rural areas are generally different than in urban areas. It is more difficult to determine concentrations of housing condition problems. The results of this survey are shown on Map 7.

When asked what type of housing is most needed in the township, 34% said elderly housing. However when asked about the appearance of housing in the township 69% feel it is about average, and 16% feel it is poor, when compared to only 1% ranking poor on the housing survey. Often, appearance can be influenced by the presence of “junk” or other items one might find unsightly. These results are displayed in the following graphs, Figures 8 and 9:

Figure 8 Needed Types of Housing

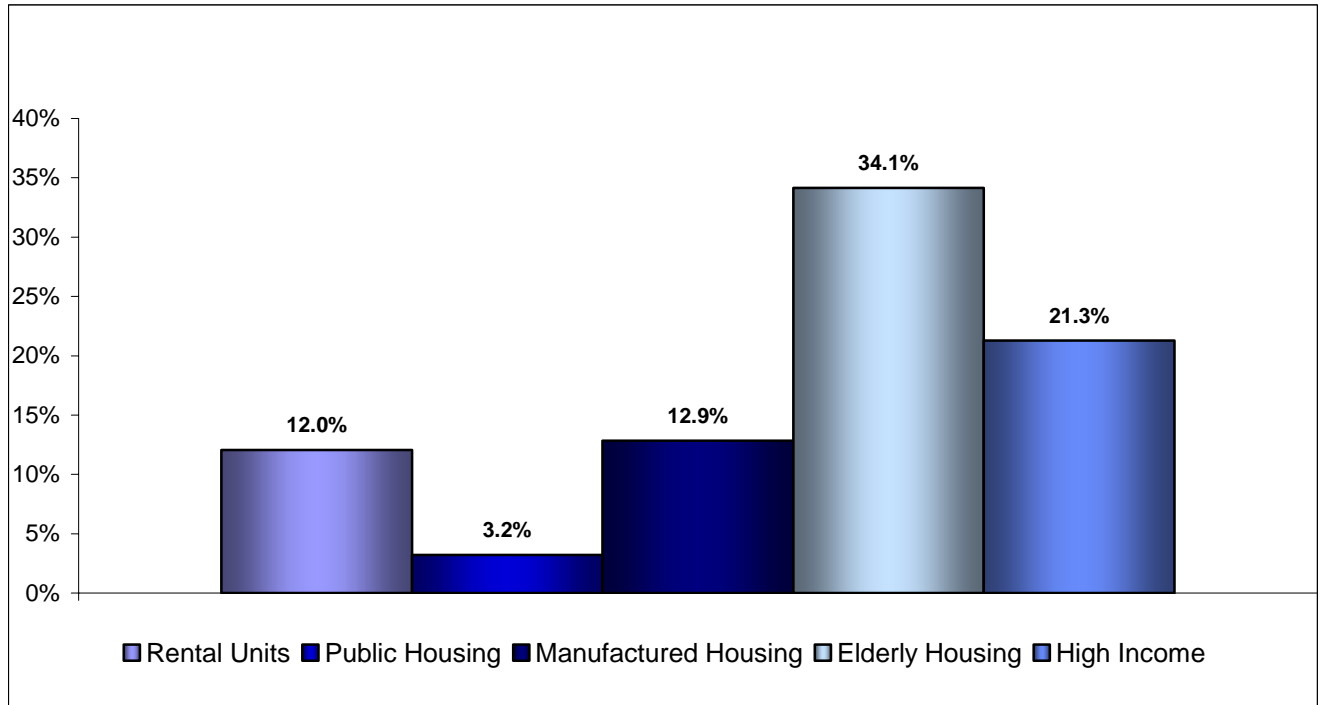
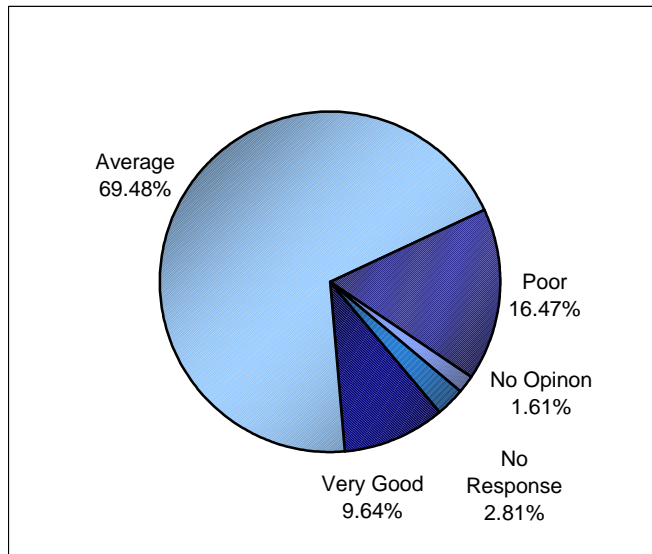


Figure 9 Overall Appearance of Housing from Windshield Survey

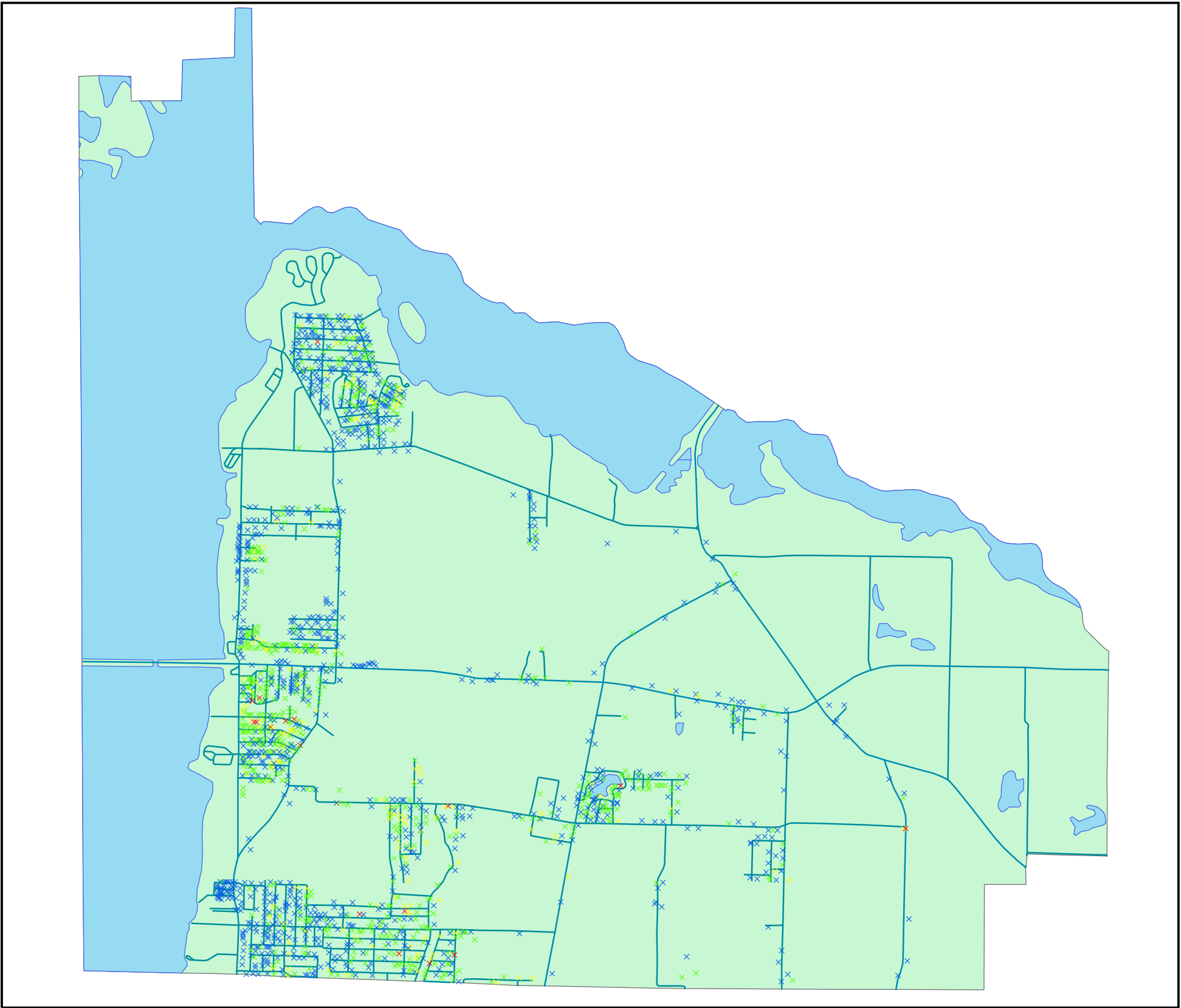


Other Housing Characteristics

The following information in Tables 2 and 3 was compiled from the 2000 U.S. Census. In each of the following tables, North Shenango Township information is compared with countywide census information. Some interesting differences between the Township’s and the County’s housing stocks emerge from these comparisons. Approximately 91% of

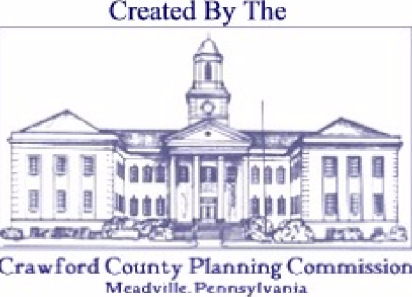
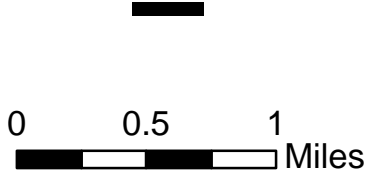
Housing Condition

North Shenango Township



Housing Condition

- × Excellent
- × Good
- × Fair
- × Poor



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the occupied housing units in North Shenango Township are owner occupied compared with 76% countywide. Additionally, North Shenango Township's housing stock is generally younger than the whole of Crawford County. Only 25.8% of the housing units were constructed prior to 1960 compared with 51.3% countywide.

**Table 2
HOUSING UNITS BY OCCUPANCY**

Occupancy	# in Township	% in Township	% Countywide
Owner Occupied	561	90.6	75.5
Renter Occupied	58	9.4	24.5
Total Occupied Units	619	100.0	100.0

**Table 3
HOUSING UNITS BY AGE**

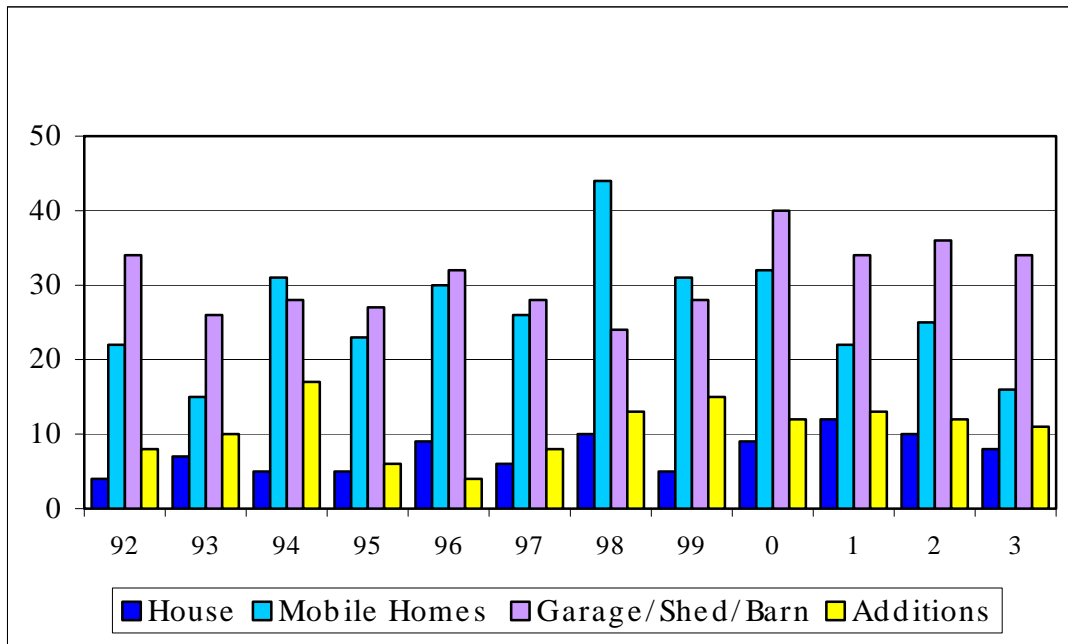
Year Structure Built	# in Township	% in Township	% Countywide
1999-March 2000	52	3.0	1.4
1995-1998	159	9.3	4.9
1990 – 1994	81	4.7	4.7
1980 – 1989	184	10.7	9.2
1970 – 1979	471	27.4	18.0
1960 – 1969	326	19.0	10.6
1940 – 1959	330	19.2	19.5
Before 1939	114	6.6	31.8

According to the 1990 Census, 33% of the households in North Shenango Township used an on-lot septic tank or cesspool, 67% of the households in the township were on some type of public sewer system or served by a private company and 1% of the households disposed of their sewage by other means. Compared to 1980 statistics where 61% of the units were served by an on-lot system, a public sewer or private company served 34%, and 5 % were disposed of their sewerage by some other means.

Permit Activity

The township experienced significant increases in new residential builds, mobile homes, additions and garages during the previous decade. During the 1990's, there were only two years (1993,2003) where fewer than 20 new permits were issued for mobile homes. Figure 10 illustrates building permits issued during the last eleven-year period from 1992-2003.

Figure 10 Building Permit Activity, 1992-2003



2.5 Transportation Analysis

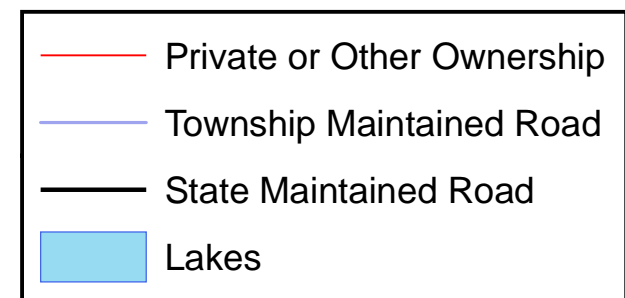
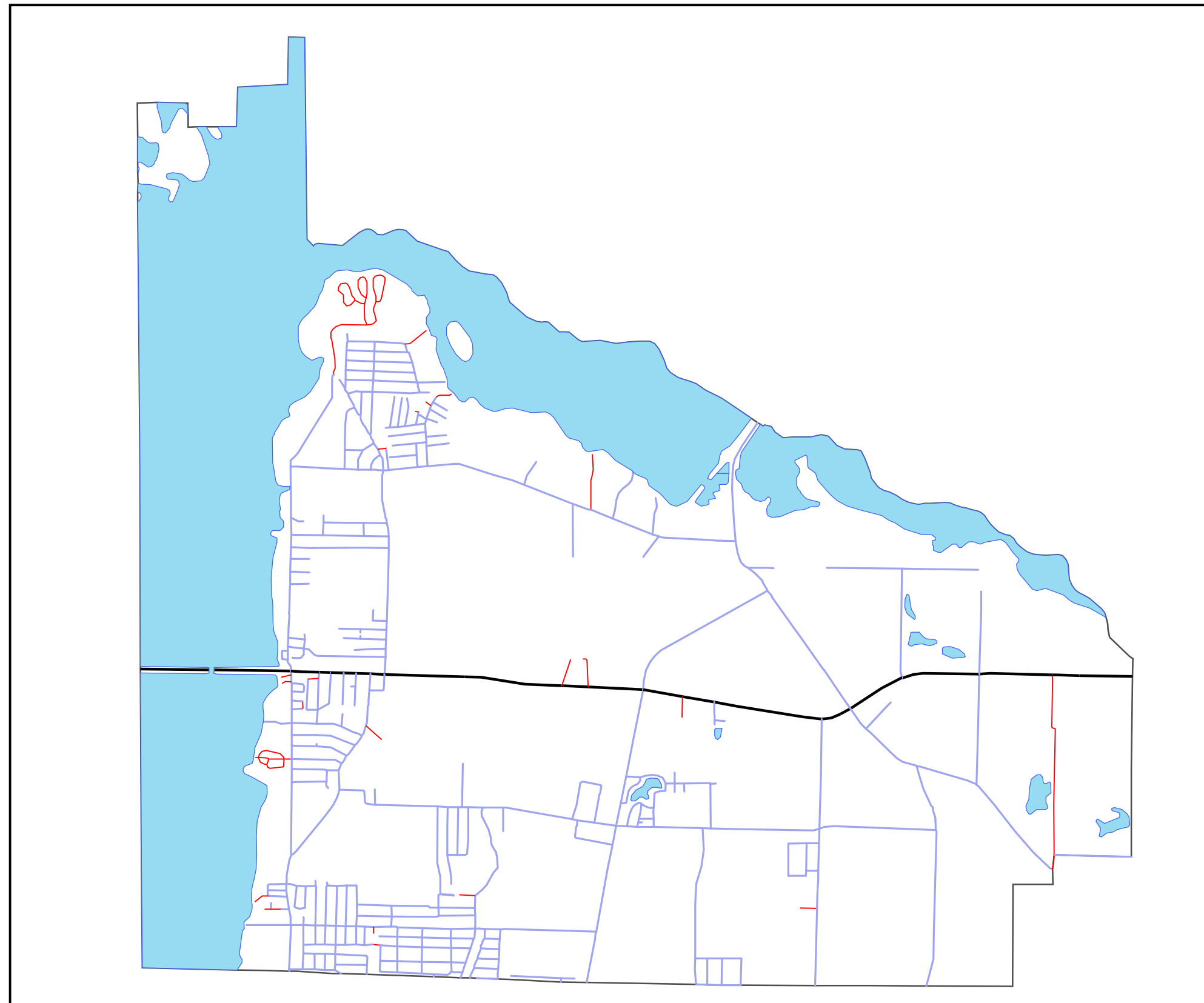
Aside from the occasional Township bridge structure, the most significant element influencing local transportation patterns under the direct influence of Township Government is the local road system. Given this fact, local road maintenance is one of the major and most important functions of Township government- particularly in NW Pennsylvania where this network is prone to extreme swings in temperature and prone to localized flooding occurrences. It should be noted however that through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's (PADOT's) Twelve Year Program (TYP) Township Government can also facilitate state road improvements through working with and through PADOT on State highway segments that traverse the Township.

The road network makes up the development framework for any municipality. Road locations have strongly influenced the Township's commercial and residential development patterns. There are 67 miles of public roads in North Shenango Township. The breakdown of ownership of these roads is as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. State owned and maintained (PADOT) | 18.81 miles |
| 2. Township owned & maintained | 48.19 miles |
| a. Gravel | 15.46 miles |
| b. Tarred and Chipped | 21.54 miles |
| c. Paved | 11.39 miles |

In North Shenango Township approximately 40% of all Township roads are now paved, and all PennDOT maintained roads are paved with the Township.

Road Network North Shenango Township



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Road Classification

The key to understanding the role of planning for local roads is the recognition that they weave the local network. The relationship of all roads in the network is important because all roads do not and *should not* serve the same function. The network concept is based on a hierarchy of roads, which takes into account the transportation needs that individual roads serve. A portion of the network serves interstate and inter-county travel. Others serve inter-township travel requirements, while still others function only to provide access to abutting properties. In reality, however, often the same road serves many functions in which case problems can arise. Map 8 depicts State, Township, and Private roads in North Shenango.

The Federal Functional Classification System defines the aforementioned “hierarchy” of the roadway network. The PADOT accepts the federal system as the classification system it uses in describing and categorizing roads. This Comprehensive plan follows the categorization in the Federal Functional System. The road classification in this system is as follows:

- **Interstate:** A road designated as a route of the Interstate System. I-79 is the only Interstate System road in Crawford County.
- **Minor Arterial:** A road that serves interstate and inter-county travel, and where trips are normally of long duration. In the North Shenango Area, only PA Route 285 is in this category. It serves to connect North Shenango Township with the cities of Meadville and points west in Ohio.
- **Major Collector:** This road system generally serves traffic of an intracounty, rather than intercounty or statewide importance. The system often provides service to a county seat or larger settlement area, as well as areas of traffic generation not directly served by the higher system.
- **Minor Collector:** A road, which collects traffic from the local road system and funnels it to the major collector and minor arterial systems. These roads may penetrate neighborhoods, distributing trips from the higher systems to their ultimate destinations.

The four categories described above include roads, which 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.
- **Local Access:** This is the true local street, which would never, even with full development surrounding it, carry appreciable through traffic. It primarily serves as access for abutting property owners.

Table 4 provides a listing of roads in North Shenango by functional classification.

Table 4 Road Classifications for North Shenango Township

CLASSIFICATION	ROAD
Major Arterial	None
Minor Arterial	PA 285
Major Collector	SR 3011 SR 3005
Minor Collector	SR 3007 SR 3009
Local	All remaining State & Township roads.

Source: PADOT

Average Daily Traffic

Data indicating the Annual Average Daily Traffic flow (AADT) has been compiled for the State Roads in North Shenango. These counts are taken by PADOT for all roads in its system, and represent the average number of vehicles utilizing a particular road on any given day. These counts are updated periodically to take account of changing conditions in traffic volume and/or circulation. Map 9 summarizes the 2003 traffic volumes for State roads in North Shenango Township.

Road Improvements

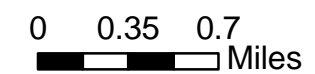
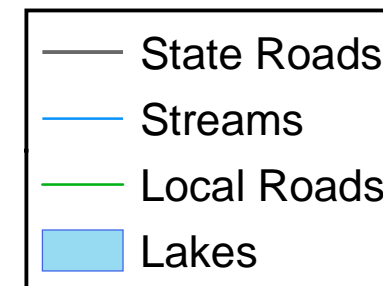
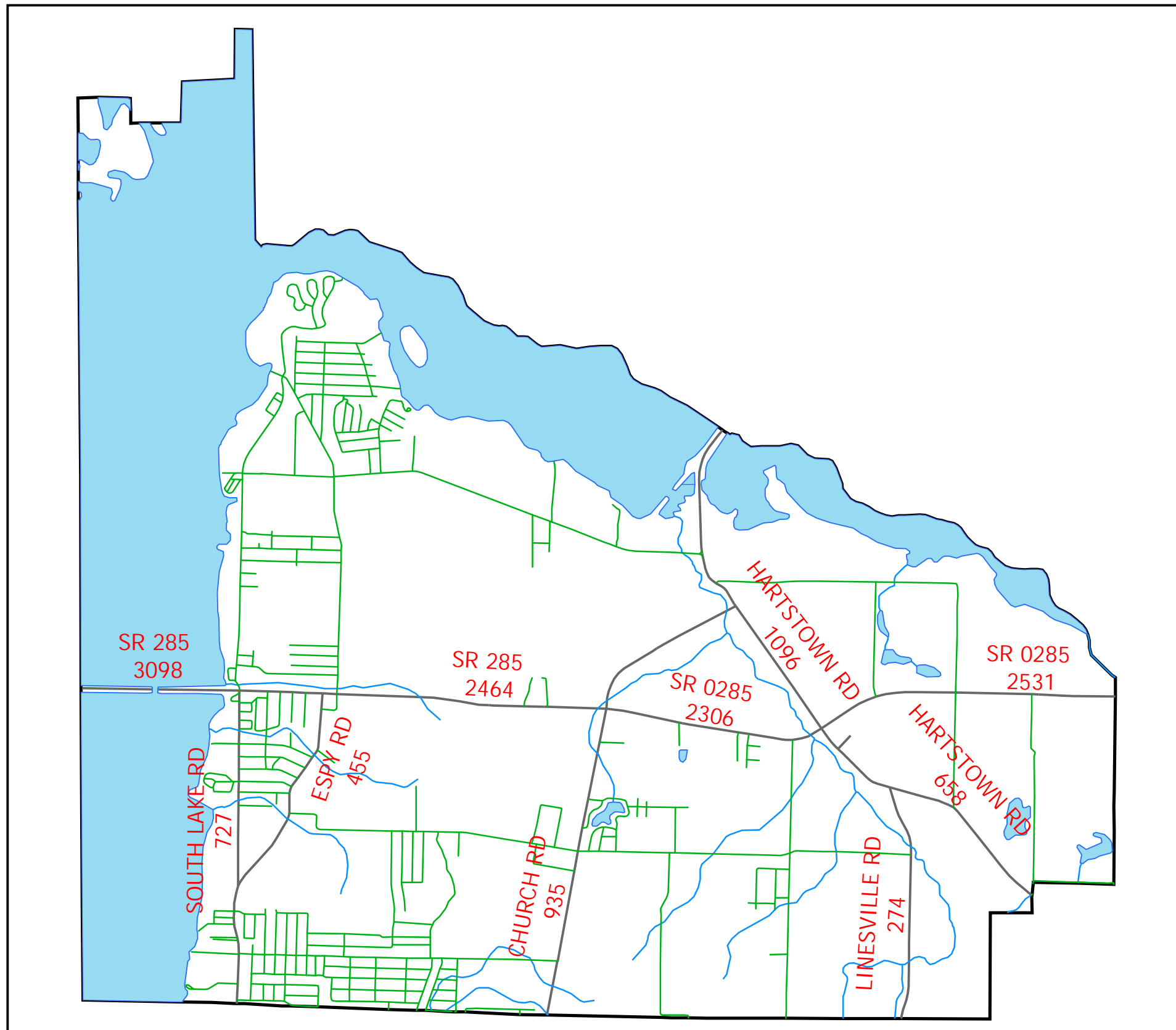
The 1979 Comprehensive Plan called out for several deficiencies in the Township road network. These included the following trouble spots:

- Intersection of East Lake Road & SR 285 at the Causeway
- Intersection of Linn Road & SR 285
- Intersection of Church Road & SR 285 (Hirschman’s Corners)
- Intersection of Hartstown Road & SR 285
- Fries Road and Hartstown Road

Since the development of the 1979 Plan, many of these problem spots have been addressed, and stop signs or blinker lights have been installed. Additionally, the road name duplications have been addressed and corrected. The introduction of the 911 system in Crawford County in the early 1990s helped to organize the road naming/numbering system to ease the burden of emergency services people.

Given that the Township possesses 37.0 miles of local roadway that is categorized as either “gravel” or “tarred and chipped”, the local expenditure to keep these roads

Average Daily Traffic North Shenango Township



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serviceable accounts for a reasonably large portion of the budget. For this reason, and coupled with the fact that the Township maintains 11.39 miles of paved roads, a Capital Expense Plan (matrix) should be developed by the Township ‘benchmarking’ current expenses for existing trouble spots while setting up an account for future capital expenses with cost estimates taking into account inflation and the price of materials. This is particularly essential in an era of rising costs for materials ranging from asphalt (an oil based product) to gravel since these materials have escalated 10% to 15% nationally after the Hurricane Season of 2005.

Bridge Improvements

North Shenango Township owns a single bridge structure, which is Fries Road (T-479) Bridge over Bennet Run. Currently this structure is classified as ‘posted,’ which infers that the bridge structure’s structural integrity coupled with its serviceability has resulted in a reduced load carrying ability – or capacity. This bridge structure, while in the Twelve Year Program (TYP) for replacement, will need to advance to the Transportation Improvement Program (the TIP) which is the First Four Years of the overall TYP and is where all bridge structures are earmarked for funding.

Township officials should note that there are federal and state match monies available for bridge replacement projects on either one of the following schedules (assume a \$100,000 bridge replacement for purposes of illustration). Specifically:

\$100,000 Bridge Replacement

80% Federal	=	\$80,000
<u>20% Local</u>	=	\$20,000
<i>- or -</i>		
80% Federal	=	\$80,000
15% State	=	\$15,000
<u>5% Local</u>	=	\$ 5,000

The latter of the above examples infers that the Township would need to budget at least \$5,000 for its local share in the funding Program, which if targeted for funding in the next TYP update, would infer that this money would be deployed in 2009 or 2010. The next round of requests for funding in the TYP will occur during the Fall of 2007 for funding in the 2008 to 2011 TIP

2.6 Community Facilities and Services

This section of the plan provides the Township an overview to collect and summarize information on the facilities and service systems fulfilling “community” needs in the residents’ lives. The following paragraphs provide this information. Map 10 shows the existing community facilities.

Community Facilities

North Shenango Township

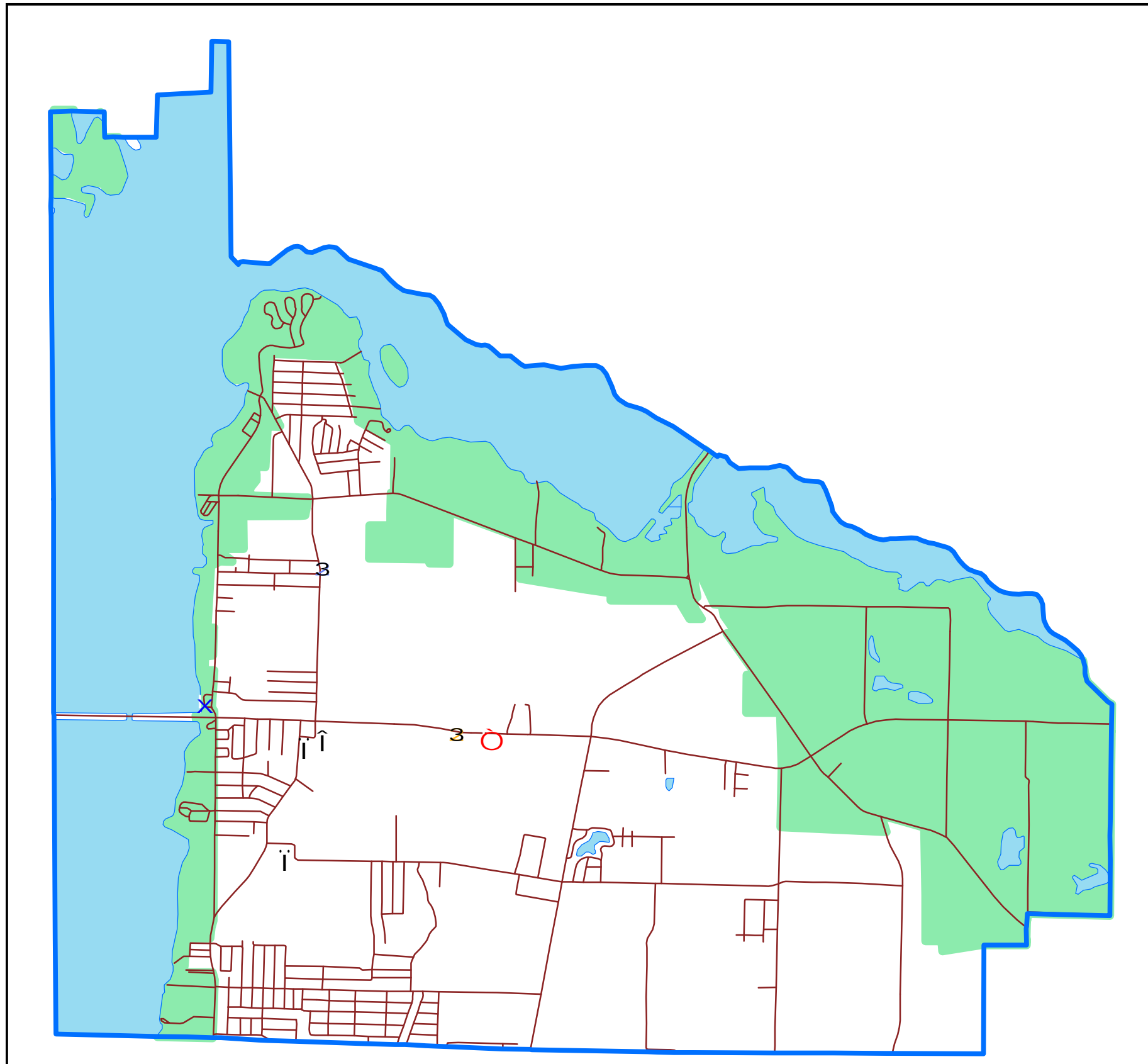
Community Facilities

- ✕ Marina
- ⋮ Cemetary
- ⤴ Church
- ⌘ Community Center and Fire Department
- Fire Department
- ⌘ Township Building
- State Park and Gamelands
- Lakes

0 0.375 0.75
 Miles



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Schools

North Shenango is included in the Conneaut School District. This District covers all of Western Crawford County, except for South and West Shenango Townships. Elementary aged children attend the Alice Shaeffer Elementary School in Linesville. Junior and senior high school students attend the Linesville High School. These facilities provide basic education as well as programs for Special Education, Learning Disabilities, Reading Services and Vo-Tech opportunities. All students, are bussed on School District busses.

Recreation

The residents of North Shenango are very fortunate to live in a community where such a wide variety of high quality recreation facilities exist. Few people, outside those residing in the Township and other surrounding municipalities, have the ease of access to environments as unique as those created by Pymatuning State Park and the State Game Land's Waterfowl Management Area. This section of the background information seeks to provide a greater familiarity with these two State facilities so that future development can be more suitably designed and located to protect their natural amenity.

Pymatuning State Park

With the dedication of Pymatuning Dam on August 17, 1934, the largest man-made lake in the State of Pennsylvania was created. As stated earlier, the "Pymatuning dream" began over a century ago, when the Pennsylvania General Assembly provided for a survey and an estimate of the cost to reclaim the Pymatuning swamplands. Through subsequent legislation and study, it was originally determined that 22,000 acres would be required for the development of a reservoir affecting 313 properties (260 in Pennsylvania and 53 in Ohio). Not until 1921, however, did land actually begin to be acquired, at which time approximately 1/3 of the required acreage was purchased; 72 dwellings and 88 barns were ultimately affected in the development of the reservoir. Land acquisitions were completed and ground was broken for construction of the dam in late 1931. The completed lake has a 70-mile shoreline and covers an area of approximately 17,000 acres. The park facilities in Pennsylvania and Ohio contain an additional 8,000 acres of land, providing a total park area of 25,000 acres.

Attendance figures for the Pennsylvania portion of the Park have been in the 3.1 – 3.5 million range annually over the past five years. In 1995 a new boat marina was constructed north of the causeway. Other ongoing improvements include: boat launches, restrooms, etc.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Outdoor Recreation began work on an update to the 1963 Master Plan some time ago. Higher priority of other planning projects, however, has forced the delay of its completion. It is expected that the land acquisition thrust of the 1963 plan will be reduced considerably, with an emphasis placed instead upon the rehabilitation or replacement of existing facilities and more optimum use of currently owned park land. Projects which are currently included in the Department's five-year capital budget request include: Park facilities which are located in North Shenango include the Orchard, Espyville, and improved Manning Boat Launches; Tuttle Beach with a very nice campground; Espyville Picnic Area; and the newly located Espyville Boat Livery.

Another facility related to Pymatuning State Park is the Pymatuning Laboratory of Ecology (PLE). This facility is managed by the University of Pittsburgh and was established in 1926. Currently it operates as a field research station for professors, undergrads, and graduate students of the University of Pittsburgh and also other researchers. Students and researchers on the site have access to over 30,000 acres of land encompassing many different habitats. In addition to the land the facility has many laboratories, offices, a library, apartments, dormitories, and a dining hall. The PLE Housing Site, which holds the apartments and dormitories, can accommodate up to 130 people, making it the largest year-round biological field station in the northeastern United States. The facility was erected in 1949 after moving from its Presque Isle location that was established in 1926.

Waterfowl Management Area

State Game Lands #214 was established in 1935 as a wildlife refuge-the primary purpose of which is to furnish migratory waterfowl a protected location in which to feed, rest and nest in their flights north and south along what is termed the "Atlantic Flyway".

Until recently, this was the only waterfowl management area of its kind in the State of Pennsylvania. However, there is now another protected area located in Lancaster and Burkes Counties, which is modeled after the facility here in Crawford County. The total acreage of the game facility is approximately 10,000 acres, and includes portions of North Shenango, Pine, Sadsbury, and East and West Fallowfield Townships. Of the above acreage, 5,393.5 acres is owned by the State Game Commission, and the remaining 4,640 acres is leased from the Department of Environmental Protection (D.E.P.). The land leased from D.E.P. includes that part of Pymatuning State Park, which is east of the spillway between North Shenango and Linesville. Thus, the Game Commission leases a significant portion of Pymatuning Reservoir, including Ford's Island and numerous smaller islands which provide excellent nesting sites for waterfowl. Ford's Island is approximately 103 acres in size and is the location of the Game Protector's residence and the Waterfowl Museum, which displays mounted specimens of the wild waterfowl, marsh and shore birds which visit the Pymatuning region.

The 10,000 acres maintained by the Game Commission is extensively managed so as to provide protected natural areas for waterfowl and wildlife, and also areas for such activities as hunting, fishing, hiking and snowmobiling. Approximately one-third of the game area is protected refuge, in which no hunting or access is permitted (other than game personnel and special educational tours). The majority of this area is covered by water (approximately 2500 acres) and provides a protected habitat for the American Bald Eagles' nests. Another one-fourth of the game lands is designated for controlled shooting at blinds provided for duck and geese hunting. The remainder of land is for open hunting and fishing, and includes seven mile hiking and snowmobile trail along the old Linesville to Hartstown rail right-of-way.

Approximately, 2,200 acres of the game lands are farmed annually to provide feed for the waterfowl. While the State itself cultivates some of the land, much of it is contracted to outside farmers for share-cropping, whereby the farmer harvests four-fifths of his crops yield for sale and leaves one-fifth standing to provide feed for wildlife. The State has invested extensively in improving the productivity of the land by installing drainage

tile and using fertilizers; thus, farmers who use the land are subject to certain standards, which are designed to maintain productivity.

The land owned by the Game Commission in North Shenango was added in 1959 and 1960, and included 25 properties totaling 1,839.1 acres. Little of this land was in cultivation because of the extensive improvements needed to make the land productive. In fact, many owners of the land acquired lived outside the Township and, thus, were not displaced by the purchases.

The value of this waterfowl management and game area, in terms of aesthetics, conservation and recreation could not possibly be gauged by monetary standards. The environmental asset to the community, region and the State is virtually unmatched. Thus, it is the responsibility of this Plan to ensure the protection of these lands by designating areas for development, which will not threaten or detract from the vast public investment made to preserve this unique area.

Library

Library facilities are available to North Shenango residents through the Conneaut School District and at Andover, Greenville, Linesville and Meadville.

Fire Protection

North Shenango maintains its own Volunteer Fire Department with 20 volunteers. Equipment is housed at the new building complex on State Route. The fire department has the following equipment: one Ford Excursion used for QRS and Rescue calls, one Grass Mini Pumper, one tanker, one engine, and a 21 foot Boston Whaler used for water emergencies.

Police Protection

At the present time, protection is provided by the Meadville Barracks of the Pennsylvania State Police. Additionally, the Township has the largest crime watch in the County, which was established in the mid-1990s.

Municipal Building

The North Shenango municipal building and garage was completed in the mid 1970's and is located on Linn Road. Both buildings are situated on a site of approximately 3.9 acres, which was donated to the Township by Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Barabas.

The municipal building contains offices for the Township Supervisors, Township Secretary, Building Inspector, Tax Collector and Wage Tax Receiver. In addition, there is a large meeting room for public assembly, storage rooms for supplies and public records, and restrooms. The municipal garage is divided in half, and houses the bingo hall, the Township garage, and the emergency management administrator.

Utilities

- North Shenango residents receive electric power from Penn Power and Pennelec.
- Telephone service is provided by the Alltel Phone Company.
- A public sewerage system is continuously expanding to serve the developed areas of the Township, generally west of the abandoned Penn Central Railroad tracks. This

system also serves major developed areas in western South Shenango, and is operated by the North Shenango-South Shenango Joint Municipal Authority.

- Total cost for the system was over \$13 million, financed by the Farmer's Home Administration. The system is designed to serve 12,000 people, based on a 20-year growth factor, and extends from Tuttle Point in North Shenango South to the sewage treatment plant located just north of Jamestown. The system is now valued at over \$20 million.

2.7 Township Survey Results

Public Input

One of the most important considerations when formulating a comprehensive plan is public input. In the process of studying community development issues, one of the most effective tools in getting to the root of resident concerns is to obtain their opinions through a survey. Due to the fact that surveys are received through the mail, filled out in the privacy of a home, and then returned anonymously to the Crawford County Planning Commission, we can be reasonably sure of the integrity of the replies to the Crawford County Planning Commission.

The State of Pennsylvania requires that a "statement of community development objectives" be included in any comprehensive plan. In devising this statement we shall consider the location, character and timing of future development. It is also intended that such a statement lay out any goals concerning subdivision / zoning ordinances, setting forth desired land use, population density, housing, business, industry, streets, community facilities, agricultural land and natural resources. North Shenango Township decided that the residents are the best source for opinions on these subjects, and they should be consulted before any official statement of goals and objectives were formulated.

Community Survey

The North Shenango Township Community Survey was mailed and administered by the Planning Commission during 2002. The questions contained in the survey were designed to help the Planning Commission gather information about public sentiment on a variety of issues affecting the future of North Shenango Township. The questions asked for basic demographic, community facility, housing, and economic information as well as any additional comments about any issues residents would like to express their concern over.

The Community Survey was mailed to all per capita and property taxed owners in the Township. The recipients were asked to complete the attached survey and return it in the postage paid envelope within 2 weeks and were assured that all survey responses were confidential and would be used for no other purpose. All surveys were sent directly for tabulation to the Crawford County Planning Commission, and the complete results are available either at the Township Municipal Building, or in the Crawford County Planning Commission Office.

Results of the Survey

The response to this survey was well above average when compared to similar endeavors in other County Townships. The surveys were collected throughout November 2002 and, altogether, some 249 or 41% of the surveys were returned with information. A total of 611 surveys were mailed to the official addresses based on the County Assessment Office records.

As previously mentioned, the complete results and comments are available at the Township and County offices. A brief summary of the results follows:

Demographics

- The average age as indicated by those responding to the North Shenango Township Community Survey is 53 ³/₄ years.
- Roughly 33% of respondents have owned property in the Township over 25 years, with the average length of residency being 14 years.
- Approximately 26% of Township residents commute more than 25 miles to work, and more than 54% of respondents commute more than 10 miles.
- The Average household income reported is \$33,949. Approximately 33% of respondents did not answer this question.

Community Facilities

- Levels of satisfaction ranked very high for fire department and emergency medical service and Pymatuning recreational program quality, while road and ditch conditions along with police protection ranked low.

Housing

- 97% of survey respondents own their home.
- 58% of residents live in a single-family, frame built house, while 37% live in some type of manufactured housing.
- The majority of Township residents feel the appearance (70%) and price (51%) of housing is *average*.
- About 34% of residents felt that senior housing is needed in the Township, while 21% stated that they desire high-income housing.

Economics

- The majority of Township residents go to Meadville, Jamestown, and Andover for their services (groceries, banking, medical, entertainment, etc.)
- 76% of respondents would like to see more business and job opportunities within the Township, with *grocery store* being the most desired type of business.
- *Post Office, Economic Development, and Cable Television* are the top 3 services that residents feel need improvement.
- Of those that had an opinion, 47% felt that the Township should provide additional resources (time, effort, money) to attract more businesses and job opportunities.

- When examining future population, roughly 52% felt that the Township population should increase somewhat, while 27% felt it should remain the same, and only 6% stated that the Township population should become smaller over the next 25 years.
- Approximately 70% of respondents felt that retail growth and development should occur along Route 285 areas of the Township. With 24% wanting development along Linesville/Hartstown Road. The remainder named areas scattered throughout the Township.
- 43% of respondents would not like to see additional areas serviced by the sewage authority, while 34% would like to see more areas serviced and the remainder had no opinion.

3.1 Community Development Objectives

Introduction

The goal of the North Shenango Comprehensive Plan is to chart the course for sound development in the Township. The delineation of the Comprehensive Plan has taken into consideration all of the information received, surveyed, and analyzed in the preceding *Background Information* sections of this report. Together with this data and the following community development objectives, this plan was prepared to best serve the Township now and in the future. The Comprehensive Plan is the blueprint for reasonable and controlled development. The Plan must rely on the public officials to give it life and meaning, although it should not be viewed as purely a public document.

General Goals

- To encourage the resort-recreational aspects of Pymatuning State Park and State Game Lands No. 214.
- The township's expanding public sewerage system provides increased potential for growth in the area generally between the State Park and the abandoned Penn Central rail right-of-way.
- To keep North Shenango a rural community with a pristine and attractive landscape.
- To encourage the continued maintenance and occupancy of the seasonal housing to promote the overall housing value within the township.

- To continue the promotion and encouragement of the upgrading and installation of older manufactured housing and camps, that in the past has detracted from the natural beauty of the township.
- To continue to maintain the subdivision process within the township in order to preserve a spacious and rural atmosphere.
- To continue the community spirit that has enabled the township to be self-sufficient in crime protection/prevention and awareness.
- Development within the township shall occur primarily in the area's served by the public sewer, as a result, the spacious environment within the township will continue. Extension of sewer lines within the currently served areas will be important to keep development within these areas.

3.2 Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan prepared for North Shenango has been created to reflect the long-range development policies of the Township. These policies provide the basis for the implementation of the Plan by identifying basic principles related to the planned and coordinated growth of the Township; the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas; and the establishment of controls to protect and enhance the unique and desirable character of the community for future residents. Thus, the Land Use Plan for North Shenango represents a series of goals, which encourage the optimum use of buildable land, as well as the protection of those lands within the Township which are either subject to building hazard or which possess unique, aesthetic or agricultural value.

The major purpose of this Land Use Plan is that it serve as an effective guide to the Township Supervisors and Planning Commission, not only in attempting to influence the location of new development, but also in holding down the costs of providing municipal services through land use regulation. In addition, the Plan has sought a close relationship between the use of land within the Township and the land use policy of surrounding communities working to achieve an efficient and mutually acceptable pattern of land use throughout the region.

The following discussions present the growth and development policies established by North Shenango to govern land development and conservation. These policies are born out of lengthy discussions as to how the Township should manage its land to achieve its objectives for controlling growth; the primary objective being to preserve the rural/agricultural character of the Township, while encouraging new growth to locate in areas which are best suited for concentrated residential and commercial development. In some instances, programs and/or projects have been identified which prescribe specific means for extending policy into action. Where appropriate, these programs/projects are described in conjunction with the policies they seek to achieve. A

summary is provided at the end of the discussion of policies that details the specific recommendations of the Plan, as illustrated on the “Land Use Plan” map.

- *Future development shall be encouraged to locate in the appropriate use areas as delineated by the North Shenango Land Use Plan. This plan designates areas for agriculture, rural and concentrated residential development, commercial development, and conservation, lands.*
- *Non-farmland uses shall be discouraged in areas where productive agriculture exists.*
- *Future large-scale subdivision of land for Residential purposes shall be encouraged to locate in areas designated for concentrated residential development.*
- *Lands which have no concentration of active farm operations, and where the potential for concentrated development does not exist, shall be encouraged to develop for low density uses in keeping with constraints on development implicit in the land itself.*

Future Land Use Classifications (Map 11)

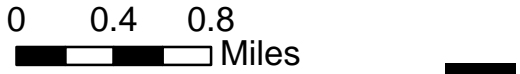
- **Agricultural:** The Agricultural District includes areas where active agricultural activities exist or where cleared fields exist that could with relative ease, be put into productive use. These areas are designated for lands in the Township where “for-profit” agricultural activities are still predominate but there also tends to be a mix of “hobby” farms, rural residential lots and some small scale agriculturally related commercial activities. This District will still maintain a strong rural character and have the primary focus of the historic agricultural activities along with a variety of other rural land uses deemed appropriate for the area. An additional use permitted in this area would be any type of industrial activity. Although the Township does not currently have a great deal of industrial activity, it would be in this district in which it would be allowed on a conditional basis.
- **Commercial/Retail:** 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.
- **Concentrated Residential:** Major residential concentrations occur in the thirty-one recorded allotments (subdivisions), which are located generally in the western area of the Township, along the edge of Pymatuning State Park. The majority of the homes in allotments are seasonal residences, which have constituted the predominant form of development in North Shenango over the past fifty years. These allotments were created to take advantage of the demand for seasonal home generated by Pymatuning State Park. Today, however, there is a mixture of seasonal and year-round residences located in the allotments due primarily to the fact that many previously seasonal residents have retired and settled permanently in the area.

FUTURE LAND USE

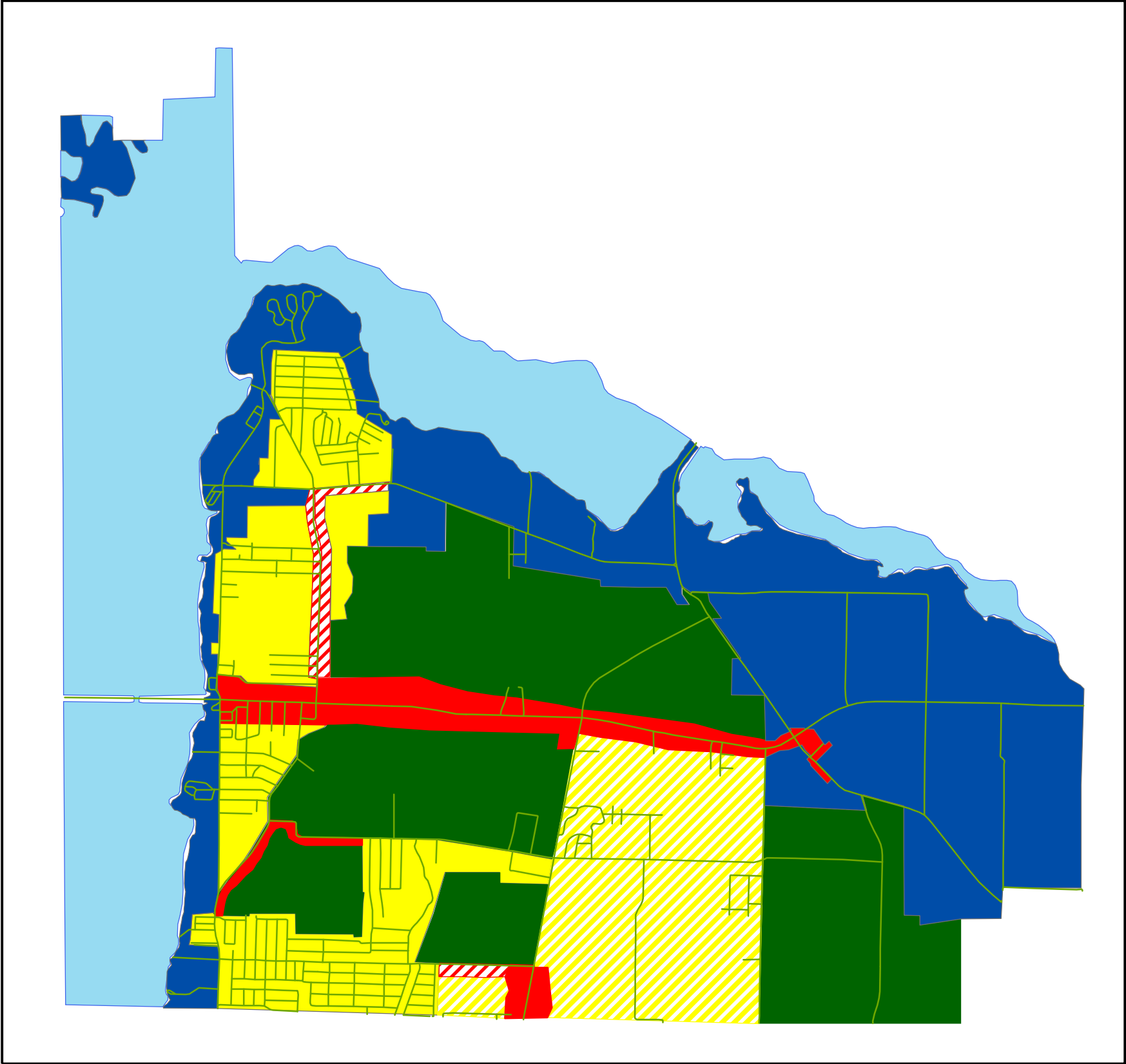
North Shenango Township

Legend

- Conservation Lands
- Agriculture
- Light Commercial
- Commercial Retail
- Concentrated Residential
- Rural Residential
- Roads
- Lakes



July 2006



The land that falls into this category would also be suitable for apartments, retirement and condominium style housing.

- **Rural Residential:** Rural residential 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 residential areas are characterized as lands situated along State highways where no major physical or environmental factors restrict development. Neighborhood stores, home occupations, small light industrial establishments, and agricultural related businesses should be sited to coexist with the predominately residential nature of these areas.
- **Open Space / Game Lands:** Open Space areas include those set aside for passive or active recreation purposes or those with no development potential. These include State Game lands, and the land adjacent to Pymatuning Reservoir.

3.3 Housing Needs Plan

The Housing Needs Plan of the North Shenango Comprehensive Plan identifies and establishes the Township's policy relative to the maintenance and development of housing to meet the needs of existing and future residents. It establishes policies that will guide Township decision-making, and sets forth an action program to implement housing goals for the next twenty years. This plan seeks to identify some of the methods available to North Shenango to deal responsibly with the housing problems, which exist in the Township. Realistically, however, this is an area, which must be more thoroughly addressed in future planning cycles in order to present meaningful alternatives for action. With this in mind, the following policies represent the position of North Shenango relative to its most immediate needs in resolving housing problems.

The Housing Needs Plan has been designed to address key housing issues in the Township. These issues include the provision of a mix and balance of housing types and costs to meet the needs of all segments of the community, provision of affordable housing for special needs groups in the community, and the maintenance of the existing affordable housing stock found predominantly in the North Shenango-Allotment areas. The Housing Element has been designed to meet the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

- *To provide adequate housing sites suitable for residential development for all types of housing units that are properly located taking into consideration environmental constraints, community facilities, and public services.*
 - *To encourage residential developments to occur through the subdivision process rather than as isolated elements of the lot split process.*
- *North Shenango Township shall continue to enforce its building and development codes so as to maintain and improve existing residential neighborhoods, to insure sound new residential construction, and to protect the housing consumer.*

- *Encourage development of Senior Citizen Housing.*
 - *Examine the number (percentage) of senior housing units compared to the total housing stock.*
 - *Promote the location of senior housing proximate to commercial areas to facilitate easy access and access without automobiles.*
 - *Promote the location of senior housing adjacent to transit corridors and appropriate public facilities.*
- *The Township is open to various plans that provide affordable housing; whether it is condominiums, manufactured housing, apartments, or senior living communities. Such plans are encouraged to be well thought out, before development can occur*

3.4 Transportation Plan

The Transportation Plan for North Shenango Township has been developed as an extension of the Land Use Plan, in that it identifies additional and in some instances, more 'tangible' methods for achieving land use policy. The policies and programs which are presented in this discussion focus specifically on what public officials in North Shenango can do, in terms of public investment, to influence the location of new development in the Township. A major emphasis in the Transportation Plan is placed upon road management; i.e., maintaining the Township road system so as to promote or discourage growth in specific areas of the Township. It must be mentioned, however, that all of the policies and programs discussed in both the Land Use and Transportation Plans are interrelated working collectively to achieve the Township's objectives for controlling growth.

Road Management

The objective of road management in North Shenango is to maintain a safe, efficient and attractive road system that is functionally consistent with the recommendations of the Land Use Plan. The following policies establish a basis for accomplishing this objective.

- The Federal Functional Classification System shall be accepted as the appropriate system for the classification of roads in the Township

The Federal Functional Classification System, as discussed in the background information on roads, establishes a hierarchy for classifying roads throughout the nation according to their function. The Crawford County Planning Commission has further refined the Federal' local' classification to differentiate between roads designated as local by the Federal System, which provide continuity and actually serve a collector function, and those roads, which serve no other function than to provide access to abutting properties. This refinement is necessary because the majority of road mileage in Crawford County falls within the Local classification and, as such, is undifferentiated on the basis of more specific functional criteria. As such, North Shenango endorses the use of the Federal system, as refined by the County Planning Commission; for the purpose of classifying roads in the Township.

3.5 Community Facilities/Recreation/Utilities Plan

Just as road management is a key mechanism available to the Township in attempting to influence the location of development, so too is the management of other community facilities and services. All public investments must be managed to try to concentrate development so as to increase service efficiency, maintain the rural-agricultural character of the Township and provide increased safety and amenity to all Township residents. It is necessary to mention, however, that North Shenango, like most other rural townships in Crawford County, does not presently provide a wide range of facilities and services for its residents particularly in comparison to what more urbanized municipalities offer. With this in mind, the question becomes, what is the threshold at which the Township should consider getting involved in such additional programs? Certainly, this can be determined, to a large extent, by monitoring the facility and service needs of Township residents – particularly as the population of the Township increases. However, even as needed facilities and services are identified, North Shenango’s limited financial resources will restrict the extent to which the Township can become involved.

The following policies establish the position of North Shenango relative to providing community facilities and services adequate to meet resident’s needs, and to expand such services where feasible.

- ***North Shenango Township shall continue to provide assistance to its volunteer fire department.***

The Township shall continue to provide assistance to the North Shenango Volunteer Fire Department in helping it to maintain adequate equipment necessary to meets its needs.

- ***The future extension of the sewerage system shall be based upon population density or upon intensity of land use as justification and evidence of need.***

The Township Planning Commission and Supervisors shall work closely with the North Shenango–South Shenango Joint Municipal Authority to assure that any future expansion of the sewerage system is consistent with the land use plan.

The present service area of the system provides an immense potential for growth on land that is already subdivided. An analysis of allotments in the Township indicates that only approximately one-fifth of the available lots have been developed – while four-fifths have been purchased. Thus, if only half of the remaining vacant lots were developed, there would be almost three times as many homes within the allotments than presently exist.

As stated in the land use policies, future large scale subdivision of land should be encouraged to locate in areas which are adjacent to the sewerage system’s present service area, so that development is concentrated and sewer lines aren’t encouraged to extend all over the Township. In addition, the Township should prohibit any further expansion of the system east beyond Espyville Station and the Pymatuning Village allotment. The primary purpose for providing service to this area was to eliminate

pollution, not to create a stimulus for growth in the central and eastern areas of the Township.

The Township Planning Commission and Supervisors encourage the continued maintenance and use of the Community Center in the Township.

- ***The Township supports the development of recreation programs and facilities, which will provide structured leisure time activities for Township residents.***

The Planning Commission should look into unmet recreation needs in the Township and make recommendations relative to the Township's role in providing support and/or guidance for recreation programming. There are numerous facilities already available in the Township and surrounding area that could be utilized for programmed activities.

The Township also strongly supports the reclamation of the abandoned Penn Central right-of-way for use as a bike, hike and snowmobile trail. This right-of-way extends from Jamestown in Mercer County, north to Linesville and beyond. The re-use of the right-of-way between Jamestown and Linesville for recreational purposes would be an invaluable asset to the Township, Pymatuning State Park, and all other communities in the immediate region. The possibility of putting a trail around the lake, on the State property should be further examined.

- ***North Shenango Township should explore the benefits of joining with the communities of Jamestown, South and West Shenango, and any other interested municipalities in forming a council of governments (COG) to represent the Pymatuning area and its interests; to facilitate the combined enforcement of development regulations; and to explore projects and programs which will have a greater benefit if approached regionally rather than locally.***

In the background section of this report, several references are made to the adverse impacts of Pymatuning State Park, most notably in terms of roads and housing. Also, North Shenango's limited revenues are discussed specifically related to the Township's inability to take on major new programs. While these problems are, in some instances, more pronounced in North Shenango, they are none-the-less very real problems in Townships such as South and West Shenango as well. Consequently, the benefits to be realized by 'pooling resources' are certainly worth evaluating.

The formation of a council of governments would serve to greatly expand the opportunities for intermunicipal cooperation beyond the provision of such basic services as fire protection and recreation programs. For example, the communities involved could benefit by the joint purchase of supplies and equipment to maintain roads as well as the coordination of road maintenance across municipal boundaries. In addition, a council of governments would have the power to apply for grant funds and contract for services, two areas where member municipalities could benefit greatly by a combined effort. (State and federal agencies often favor grant applications for projects that are of regional, vs. local, benefit – as more people are benefited by the dollars spent). Another benefit of forming a COG is that it could hire a full-time administrator who could, as a

major part of his responsibility, provide technical assistance in enforcing the various development codes of member communities, a task which is badly needed.

Other benefits include the possibility of joint police protection, and the creation of a “bigger voice” to represent the interests and concerns of the Pymatuning area to County and State agencies. Certainly, other programs and activities, too numerous to begin discussing here, could be investigated and undertaken by such a council of governments. As such, it is strongly recommended that the formation of a COG be given very serious consideration.

- ***North Shenango Township shall explore the possibility of a “Gateway” feature as you enter the Township from the direction of Ohio.***

The concept of a gateway would help to provide a sense of transition, as one enters North Shenango Township and Pennsylvania, from points to the west. Gateways can also provide adjacent properties and buildings with an opportunity to emphasize the local character of an area, be it through architecture, natural beauty, or other such elements such as an arch, sculpture, fountains, or flower plantings. Such a gateway project could lead to other signature projects in the Espyville area, such as new lighting, sidewalks or street tree plantings.

3.6 Implementation Strategies

It is hoped that the information organized and printed in this plan will be useful to many persons and organizations. More importantly, it is hoped that the courses of action set forth will guide both private and public sector actions in the years ahead. The North Shenango 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 implementation strategy section of the Plan will take those concepts and recommendations and establish short and long-range implementation goals.

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 North Shenango 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, North Shenango is designated as “agriculture/rural” in a large amount of the Township. The areas along the water are designated as “village” and “urban fringe” and the remaining areas of State Lands are designated as “conservation/recreation”

North Shenango Township Comprehensive Plan

The North Shenango Township Board of Supervisors should formally adopt the 2006 North Shenango 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 (Conneaut Township, Pine Township, Sadsbury Township, West Fallowfield Township, South Shenango Township, Crawford County, and Conneaut 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 North Shenango Township Planning Commission should begin the work of creating a draft-zoning ordinance to replace their existing ordinance that was adopted in 1982. Upon finalization of the draft ordinance, the North Shenango 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 1974. 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 North Shenango 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 North Shenango 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.

Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan

This action will help to accomplish the fulfillment of the State mandate.

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 is generally used for bridge and road projects or for larger projects that serve an urgent or compelling need, such as water line replacement or extensions.

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/bridge 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