Woodcock Township Comprehensive Plan

2007

Crawford County Planning Commission

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Maps and documents made available to the public by the Crawford County Planning Commission are not legally recorded maps nor surveys and are not intended to be used as such. The Planning Commission has attempted to compile accurate information, but because of various sources of information that go into creating this document, errors may exist.

I. Introduction

The planning effort, which has produced this Report, should be considered in conjunction with, and an extension of, the earlier programs in the Township and County. Elements of the 1975 Woodcock Township and the 2000 Crawford County Comprehensive Plans have been incorporated into this work. Woodcock Township is located in Crawford County, Pennsylvania, north of the City of Meadville. The following map insert shows the regional location of Woodcock Township.



Community Planning

Township Planning as dealt with in this Report is simply trying to analyze this "area of land" called Woodcock Township and relates social needs and objectives to the land so as to fashion its physical development in some reasonable way. This is done with a general end in view, namely to make the Township a healthy, safe, convenient, and attractive place to live. Stated another way, our planning process and the recommendations it has produced in this report stem from a recognition of community change and an attempt to guide this inevitable change into patterns of physical development, which accomplish these general goals. It is true the goals are broadly stated in the sentence above and in their ultimate you could say would establish a "Utopia"; yet pursuing these goals through community planning can direct change, making it less haphazard and more purposeful. Change is inevitable anyway; why not make change *serve* society and not *overwhelm* it.

1.1 The Comprehensive Plan in Woodcock Township

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

In order to achieve sound and effective policy recommendations, the various social, economic, cultural, historical and physical factors that impact land use are analyzed. An examination of local and regional demographics is useful in the identification of development and social patterns, and can provide insight for future growth potential. The extensive mapping of natural and man-made landscapes provides a record of existing features and, when analyzed in conjunction with demographic data, enables an assessment of future needs in terms of housing, infrastructure, community facilities, and conservation of natural resources. A basis from which to locate areas that are suitable for development and areas that are not suitable for development, as well as areas that call for special conservation efforts are the results of the planning efforts.

This Plan is a result of the combined efforts of the Woodcock Township Planning Commission and the Crawford County Planning Commission staff. Interest in the update to the 1975 plan for the Township developed as a result of a desire to update the Woodcock Township Zoning Ordinance and Map. The Crawford County Planning Commission recommended that the correct procedure was to gain public input through updating the Woodcock Township Comprehensive Plan prior to updating the Woodcock Township Zoning Ordinance.

It is important to understand that a comprehensive plan is neither a legal document, nor a land use ordinance. However, in order for the Township to be successful in the future updates to the subdivision and zoning ordinances, that are legal documents, it must identify the land development issues within its jurisdiction and decide what, in the general interest of the public, are the best objectives and policies relative to these issues

1.2 Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code

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

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

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

The Planning Commission reviews and comments on the draft plan and holds a public hearing before forwarding the comprehensive plan to the governing body. The governing body shall hold at least one public hearing pursuant to public notice before proceeding to vote on the plan, or amendment thereto.

The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan shall be by resolution carried by the affirmative votes of not less than a majority of all members of the governing body. Counties shall consider amendments to their comprehensive plan proposed by municipalities that are considering adoption or revision of their municipal comprehensive plans so as to achieve consistency.

This plan contains two major sections. The first is composed of background information for plan making. This includes studies and analyses of housing, demographics, economic characteristics, land use, transportation, community facilities, and natural resources. The second section is the plan itself, which includes community development objectives, a future land use plan, community facilities and housing plan, and a transportation plan, and finally the strategies that will be used to implement the plan.

The planning effort, which has produced this Report, should be considered in conjunction with, and an extension of, the earlier programs in the Township and County. Elements of the 1975 Woodcock Township and the 2000 Crawford County Comprehensive Plans have been incorporated into this work.

1.3 History of Woodcock Township

The settlement of Woodcock Township dates back to the 1790's. The Holland Land Company owned most of what is known as Woodcock Township today in the earliest days of settlement. The pioneer settlers, by 1796-1797, had spread throughout the whole of the Township. Many of these pioneer settlers were veterans of the American Revolution; one such early veteran was an Issac Berlin. One of the foremost pioneers in this area was William Jones who settled in the southwest portion of the Township.

The first public school in the Woodcock Area was located at what was called "Peiffer Town", near the present Peiffer Cemetery on Park Avenue Extension; this school was in use by 1812. The Township boundaries as we know them today were established in 1829; Woodcock Township was "carved" out of Rockdale and Mead Townships. In 1850 its population was 2,288- in 1880 the population was down to 1,499.

In the early history of the Township there were a number of gristmills and some paper mills in operation. It is interesting to note that in the early part of the 19th century, Woodcock Borough was a growing settlement. Its location on what was the Meadville-Cambridge Springs-Waterford Road put it on an important highway route. Once US Route #19 was constructed north of Meadville, along French Creek, this road became the main road going north out of Meadville and of course it never passed through Woodcock Borough. This turn of events on the location of a major road was a "locational blow" from which Woodcock Borough has never recovered. The continuing growth it expected to have as a municipality never occurred, and today we know this Borough as a very sparsely settled municipality.

II. Background Information

2.1 Physical Characteristics

An important component of any Comprehensive Plan is knowledge of the natural environment of the area to be planned. The physical features of the area, including topography, soils, and flood-prone lands are important in evaluating past growth, and are particularly significant in guiding the future growth of the community. Certain aspects of the natural features of a community serve as limitations upon the type and degree of development of a given area; and as limitations, should be considered before development.

The purpose of this section will be to describe the natural features in Woodcock Township and the implications of these features on future development within the Township.

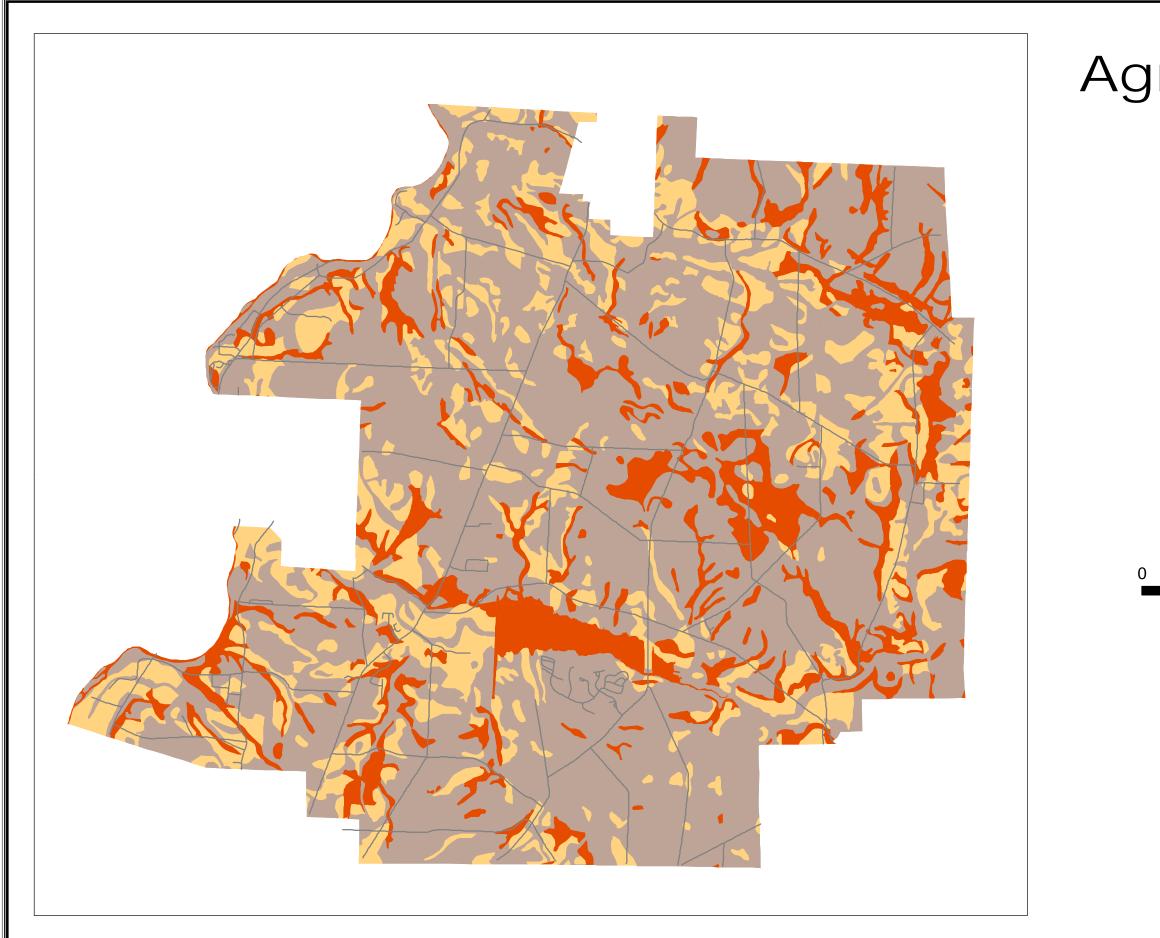
Topography

The shape of the land in terms of its slope and three-dimensional form is represented by contours. Topography can be a limiting factor on development; for example steep slopes tend to prohibit extensive development and act as natural boundaries. Woodcock Township has no major topographic limitations.

Agricultural Quality

Agricultural authorities have classified soil into eight categories relative to their capability for agricultural purposes. The limitations on the use of soil become progressively greater as its classification number increases. Following is a listing of the eight soil classes and an explanation of the limitations involved with each. This system of classification is taken from the Soil Interpretations For Crawford County, Pennsylvania, Volume I, dated 1974.

- 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.
- Class III Soils that have severe limitations which reduce the choice of plants, require special conservation practices, or both.



Agricul tural Quality Woodcock Township Soil Capability Good Fair Poor 0.5 1 Miles Created By The 1885 8 8 8 Note) m 1000 E Co Re Martin Con

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Crawford County Planning Com Meadville, Pennsylvania

Map 1

- 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 to 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 to recreation, wildlife, water supply and aesthetic purposes.

For mapping purposes this Comprehensive Plan report groups all of the Township's soil into three categories:

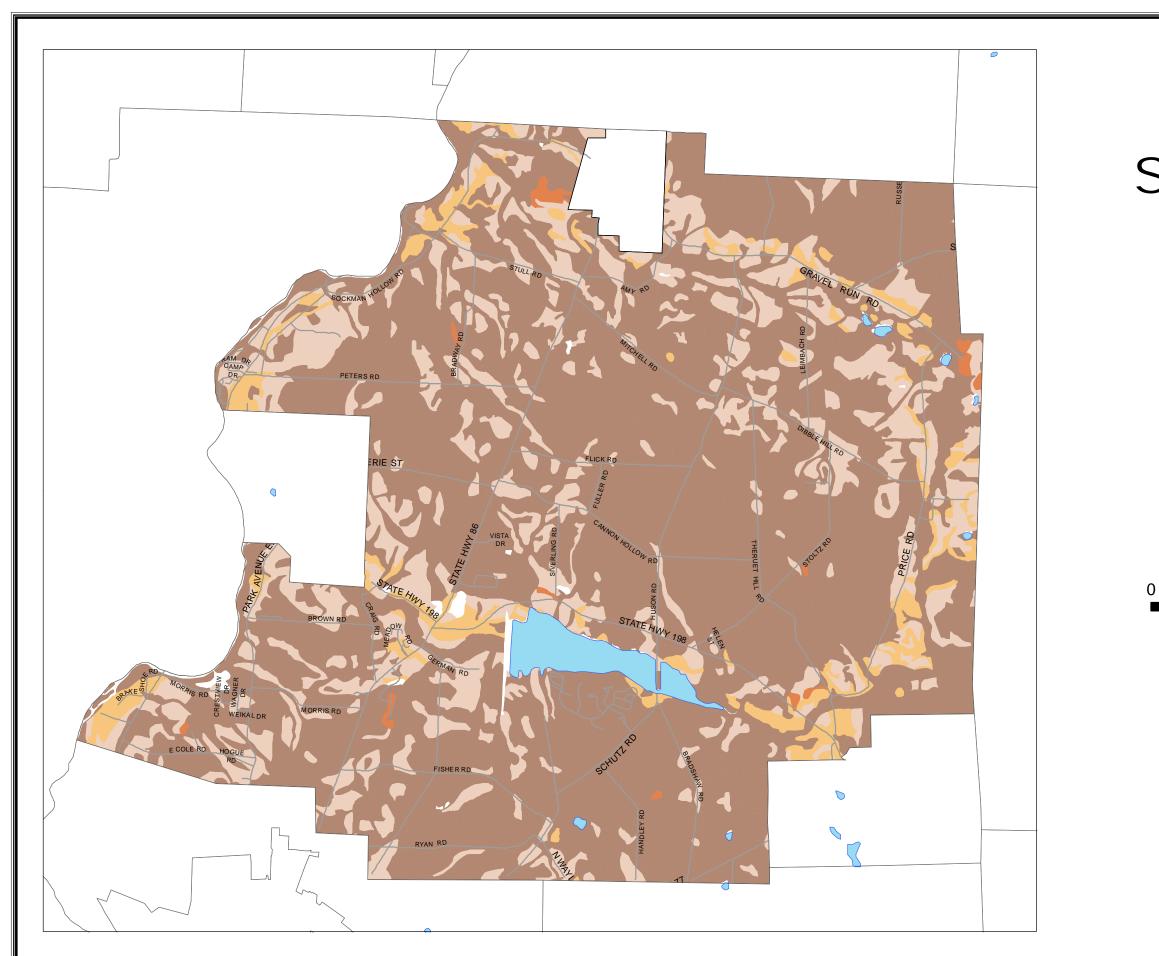
- Category 1. Good agricultural land, which can be effectively and relatively easily cropped (Classes I and II).
- Category 2. Land which is fair for cropping (Class III).
- Category 3. Marginal to poor land for cropping (Classes IV and VIII).

These categories reflect such classification criteria as soil quality and slope. For example land with a slope of 8% to 15% is automatically classified in Category 2; land with a slope greater than 15% is classified in Category 3 regardless of how good the soil quality may be. **Map 1** indicates the patterns of soil categories in Woodcock Township. Class I and II soils can be found in abundance throughout the township.

On-Lot Sewage Suitability

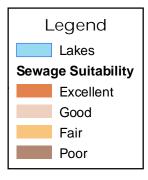
Act 537, the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act (1966) requires every municipality in the Commonwealth to adopt an "official plan" addressing its needs relative to sewage disposal. A separate Countywide Comprehensive Plan for water and sanitary sewers was developed by the Crawford County Planning Commission in 1970 with the aid of a consulting firm and subsequently adopted by all the municipalities within the County as their "official plan." This plan deals primarily with those areas of the County having existing or proposed water and sewer systems, or with those areas where population concentrations are great enough so as to make on-lot disposal systems precarious.

The capability of soil to properly filter sewage effluent is perhaps the most



On-Lot Sewage Suitabil ity

Woodcock Township







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Map 2

critical element of land development in areas where centralized sewage treatment plants 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. *Map 2*, entitled On-Lot Sewage Suitability, establishes three categories of soil indicating their relative suitability for on-lot sewage disposal systems. These categories are described 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 (PennDEP) for conventional disposal systems. A conventional system includes a septic tank in which the heavier solids settle out of the liquid effluent and the lighter particles float to the surface. In the septic tank anaerobic bacteria (needing no oxygen) digest the surface scum and most of the solids. The partially treated liquid is then discharged from the tank into a subsurface absorption area where the effluent is purified of its remaining bacteria as it percolates through the soil. Soils suitable for these systems:

- Are not susceptible to flooding
- Have minimum depth to an impervious layer of 6 feet
- Have a depth of 4 feet or more to the seasonal high water table
- Are termed well-drained by the U. S. Soil Conservation Service
- Have percolation rates of 6 to 60 minutes; this means it takes 6 to 60 minutes for water to drop 1 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)
- Have a slope no greater than 15%; and
- Are not so stony as to make system installation impossible.

Fair Suitability- Soils in this category will not normally qualify for a conventional system but may qualify for a modified or "alternate" on-lot disposal system. Such alternate systems must be carefully designed and installed. To adequately function in these soils a system would have to be more elaborate than a conventional system. Generally alternate systems are more costly to install. Soils grouped within this category:

- Are not susceptible to flooding
- Have minimum depth to an impervious layer of 1.5 feet
- Have a depth to the seasonal high water table of between 1.5 and 4 feet
- Are termed moderately well drained by the U. S. Soil Conservation Service
- Have percolation rates of 60 to 300 minutes and a permeability range of 1.0 to 0.2 inches of water movement per hour
- Have a slope no greater than 15% and are not so stony as to make 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:

- Be susceptible to flooding
- Have a depth to the impervious layer of less than 1.5 feet
- Have a depth to the seasonal high water table of less than 20 inches
- Be termed poorly or very poorly drained by the U. S. Soil Conservation Service
- Have a percolation rate of greater than 300 minutes, and permeability range of less than 0.2 inches of water movement per hour
- Contain slopes greater than 15% and
- 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 idea of the on-lot sewage suitability of the Township's land. Exceptions to the conditions portrayed on the map may be discovered when a specific parcel is examined in more detail.

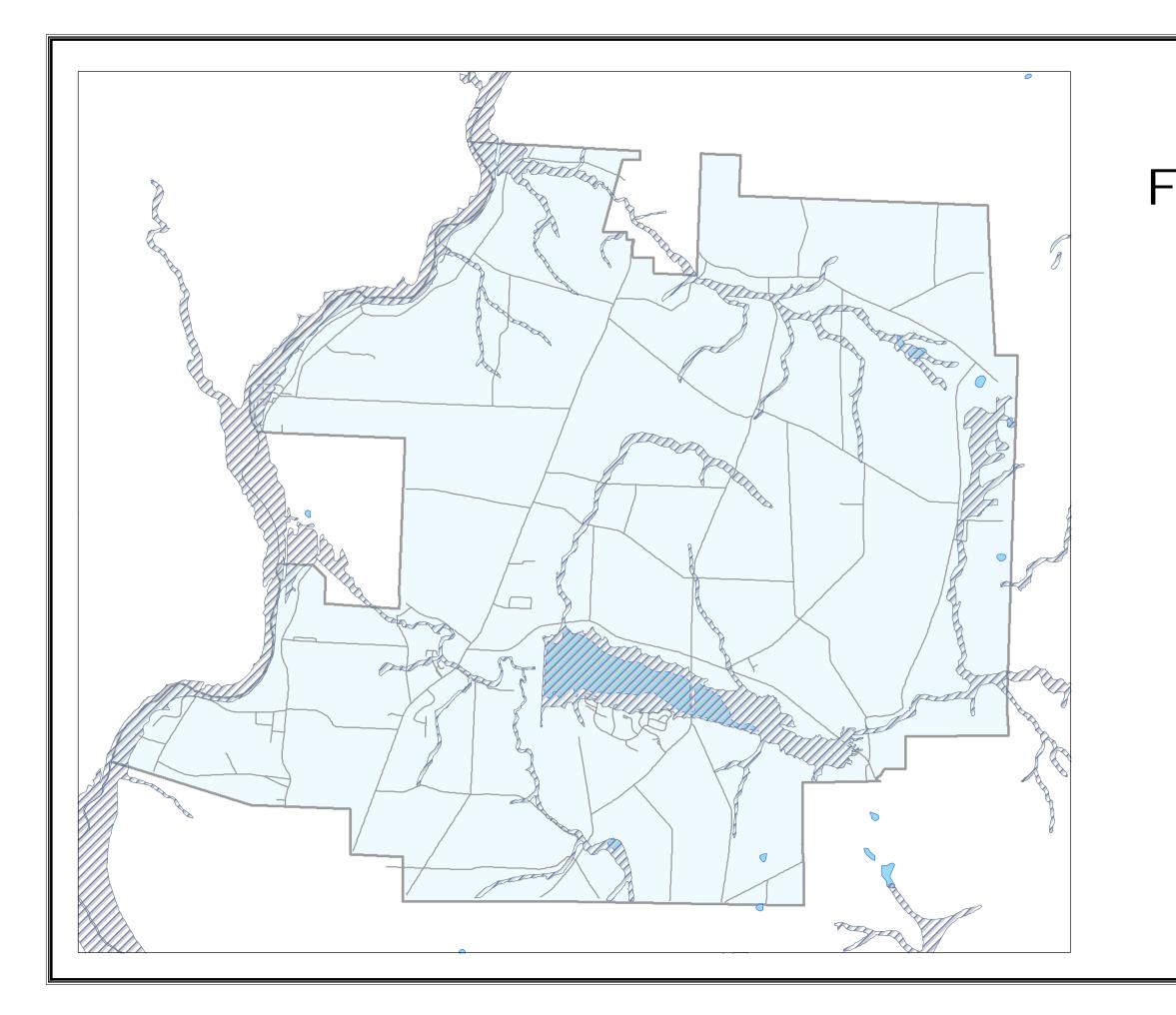
An examination of the On-Lot Sewage Suitability Map indicates that there are no large concentrations of soils having good suitability in the Township. The largest concentration of these soils is found to the west of Woodcock Borough and along the Richmond Township border at Gravel Run Road.

Flooding

Another limiting factor on development is the susceptibility of land to flooding. A Food Insurance Study that investigated the existence and severity of flood hazards in the Township of Woodcock began in the mid 1980s and the resulting maps were published in 1990. The source of authority for this Flood Insurance Study is the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973.

The Flood Insurance Study covers the Township of Woodcock, Boroughs of Woodcock, Saegertown, and Blooming Valley. The following streams were covered in detail: French Creek and Woodcock Creek; while the balance of waterways in Woodcock Township was studied by approximate methods. The study found that major floods could occur along French Creek and Woodcock Creek throughout the year, Woodcock Creek Dam controls flooding on Woodcock Creek downstream of Woodcock Creek Lake. The maximum flood of record along French Creek and Woodcock Creek occurred in January 1959.

To provide a national standard without regional discrimination, the 1% annual chance (100 year) flood has been adopted by FEMA as the base flood for floodplain management purposes. For French Creek, the 100-year floodplain boundaries have been delineated using the flood elevations determined at each



100 Year Floodplains

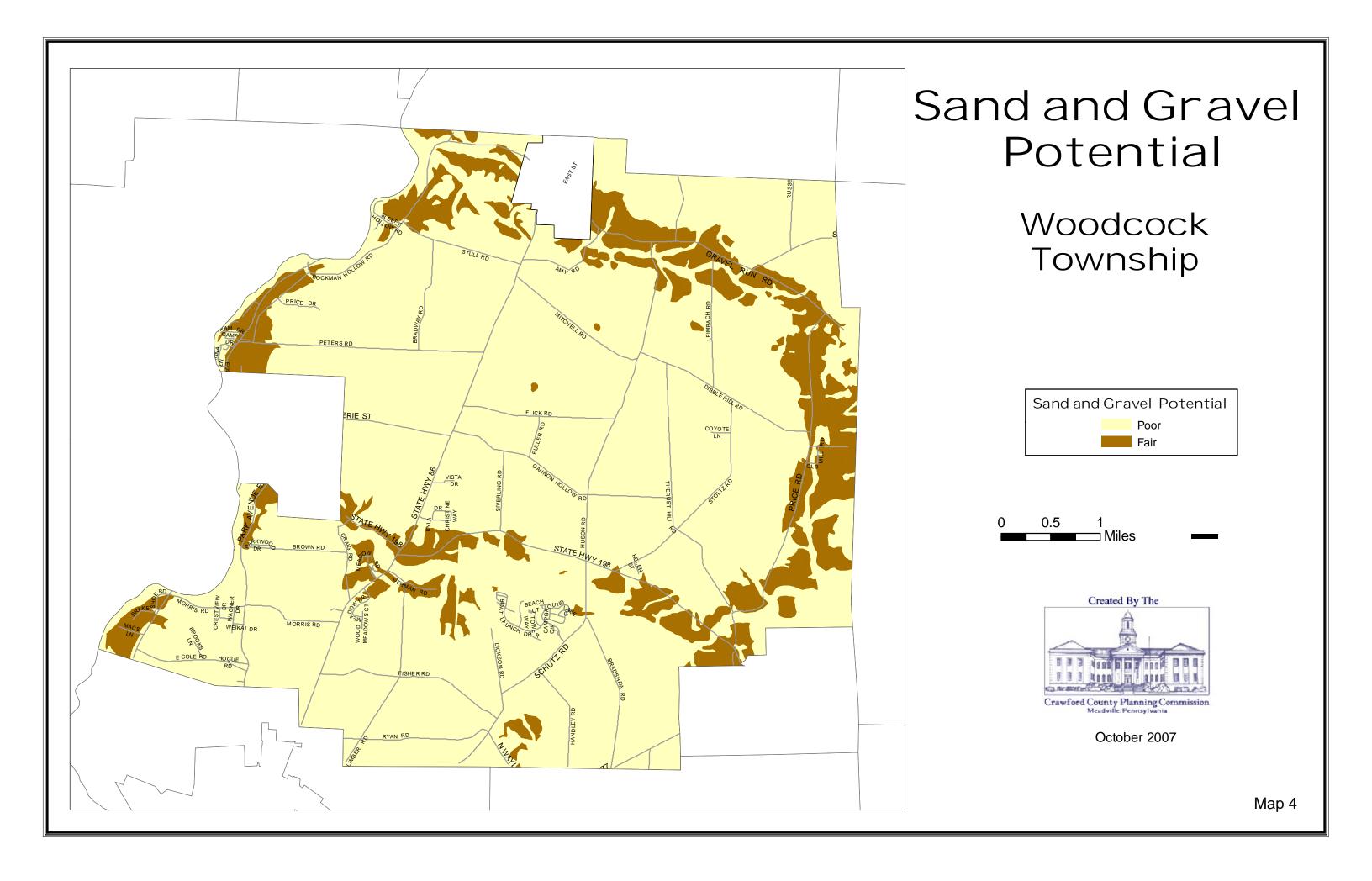
Woodcock Township





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Map 3



cross section, while Woodcock Creek boundaries were delineated using topographic maps. The 100-year floodplain boundaries are shown on **Map 3**. The majority of the 100-year floodplains are present along French Creek, surrounding the lake, and along tributaries of both.

Because encroachment on floodplains, such as structures and fill, reduces flood carrying capacity, increases flood heights and velocities, and increases flood hazards in areas beyond the encroachment itself, the National Flood Insurance Program developed a zone-designated rating system. These zones are depicted on the Flood Insurance Rate Map, and are an often used tool in planning, especially upon consideration of new housing developments.

Sand and Gravel Potential

Sand and gravel are important resources to any relatively rural Township. Knowledge of good deposits of these materials can prove beneficial to the municipality. *Map 4*, entitled *Sand and Gravel*, designates areas considered by the US Soil Conservation Service (DCNR) to have good sand and gravel potential. Based on the soil survey, the following soils are considered good sources of gravel:

- Chenango gravelly sandy loam
- Chenango fine sandy loam
- Howard gravelly silt loam

The largest concentrations of sand and gravel in the Township occur along French Creek and in the Northeast section of the Township along Gravel Run Road and Price Road. While the suitability of the identified soils may vary widely, this map helps to pinpoint where future surface mining operations may occur.

2.2 Socio-Economic Analysis

This section examines and updates the population characteristics that represented Woodcock Township over the last 40 or so years. Population projections are provided to give Township officials an insight into the future and how this may have an impact on infrastructure, community facilities, and services.

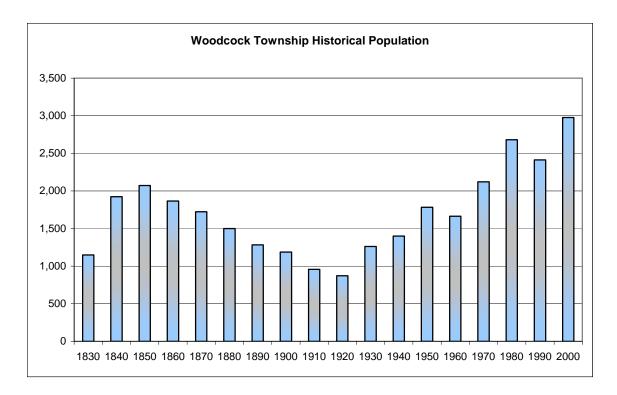
Examining and understanding a community's population is an indispensable part in developing a Comprehensive Plan. Insight into the current demographic makeup of a township and projecting future trends is crucial to developing a successful Plan. Every issue that a Township faces is interconnected to its citizens; therefore, it is important to understand key characteristics of the population. This section provides a description of historical trends in population within Woodcock, along with a comparison of future population estimates.

Population Trends

Woodcock Township has experienced steady population growth since the 1970's (with the exception of a slight drop in 1990), shown in Figure 2. Before

this time population peaked around the mid 1800's and again in 1950. These could be attributed to the growth of Meadville as a county seat and commercial center and then the heavy industrial era of Meadville in the middle of the 1900's. The circumstances of Woodcock Township's geographical locale are interesting due to the fact that it is located near to Meadville but "in the country" enough to encourage a rural lifestyle. Most likely, the Township was affected by both events.

Since 1960, Woodcock Township has concurrently increased in population along with all other Crawford County Townships, while the populations in all of Crawford County's boroughs and cities have decreased. According to the 2000 Census, the population of Woodcock Township is 2,976.

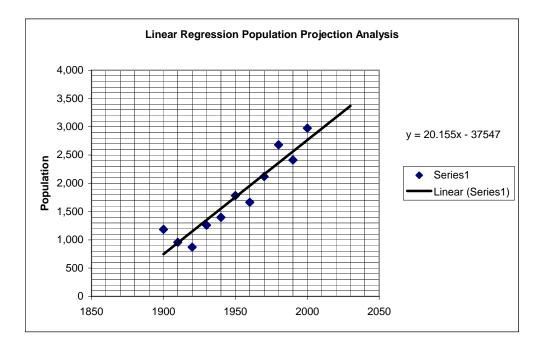


Population Projections

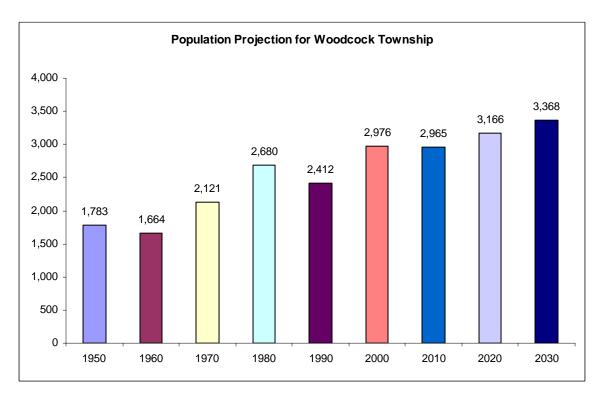
Forecasting future populations is always challenging. However, since community planning is concerned with future growth and development, it is important to estimate the current population as accurately as possible. The estimates used here are based on knowledge of past trends and understanding of future constraints. As such, forecasts discussed here are intended to reflect alternative sets of assumptions regarding the future of Woodcock and should not be interpreted as something more exact.

The population projection technique used is a linear regression curve. The populations since 1900 were plotted and a best-fit regression line was used to extrapolate the information for 2010, 2020 and 2030. The population for the past 50 years has fluctuated, but the population projection shows steady growth. It is quite possible that the projection will not be correct from year to year, but over time, as long as most things stay

constant, the projection should be on target. The first graph shows the linear regression line and the equation.



This following graph shows the projected population up until 2030.



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These projections should be taken lightly. There are many factors that can affect population change and they are not all addressed in the preceding estimates. While looking at past trends and applying them to the future is an effective technique, it does not take into the consideration the import of export of jobs into Woodcock Township. Events such as these can greatly affect the future population of the Township, as did the settlement activity and the industrial boom in the earlier life of Crawford County.

Employment Characteristics

According to the 2000 Census, 2976 people lived in Woodcock Township, of which 2246 are included in the workforce. The number of people employed in the workforce is 61% or 1360 individuals. This leaves an unemployment rate of 3.7%; somewhat under the 2006 estimated state average of 6.2%.

The following table highlights what industries the workforce is employed in. Results were taken from the Community Survey completed in 2004 as well as from the US Census. A total of 1185 surveys were mailed out and 411 were returned. This survey will be discussed in a further section.

The 411 households that returned surveys made up a total of 956 individuals between the surveys. The following table shows the industries that the 461 employed individuals in the township are employed in:

Table 2	Townsł	nip Survey	Cei	Census	
Industry	Survey Responses	Percentage of Survey Responses	Woodcock Township	Crawford County	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	12	2.6%	2.4%	3.5%	
Construction	11	2.4%	5.5%	6.0%	
Manufacturing	45	9.8%	30.7%	26.3%	
Wholesale Trade	5	1.1%	3.1%	2.2%	
Retail Trade	13	2.8%	6.2%	11.1%	
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	13	2.8%	6.0%	4.3%	
Information	2	0.4%	1.5%	1.5%	
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental	17	3.7%	3.2%	2.9%	
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management	138	29.9%	7.7%	4.5%	
Educational, health and social services	67	14.5%	20.4%	21.1%	
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	6	1.3%	4.7%	7.2%	
Other services (except public admin.)	125	27.1%	2.5%	5.4%	
Public administration	7	1.5%	6.2%	4.0%	

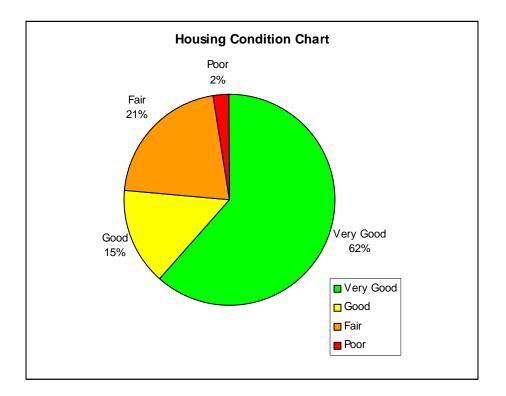
These results show that the Township is close to the State-wide averages in terms of employment. Retail trade is lower in the Township than in the rest of the state, but this is most likely due to the rural nature of the Township, and the lack of a large number of retail facilities. Professional and management are the biggest industries according to the survey, but this does not match up with the Census data of only 4%.

2.3 Housing Characteristics

Housing is a significant issue to local governments. Not only does a sound housing stock make the community more attractive for various job-creating developments, it is fundamental to the health, safety, and welfare of the Township's residents. Housing conditions also affect the Township's tax base. According to the 2000 Census, Woodcock Township contained 1,028 total housing units. This number represents an increase from the 1990 Census when 895 units were reported in the Township.

Housing Condition

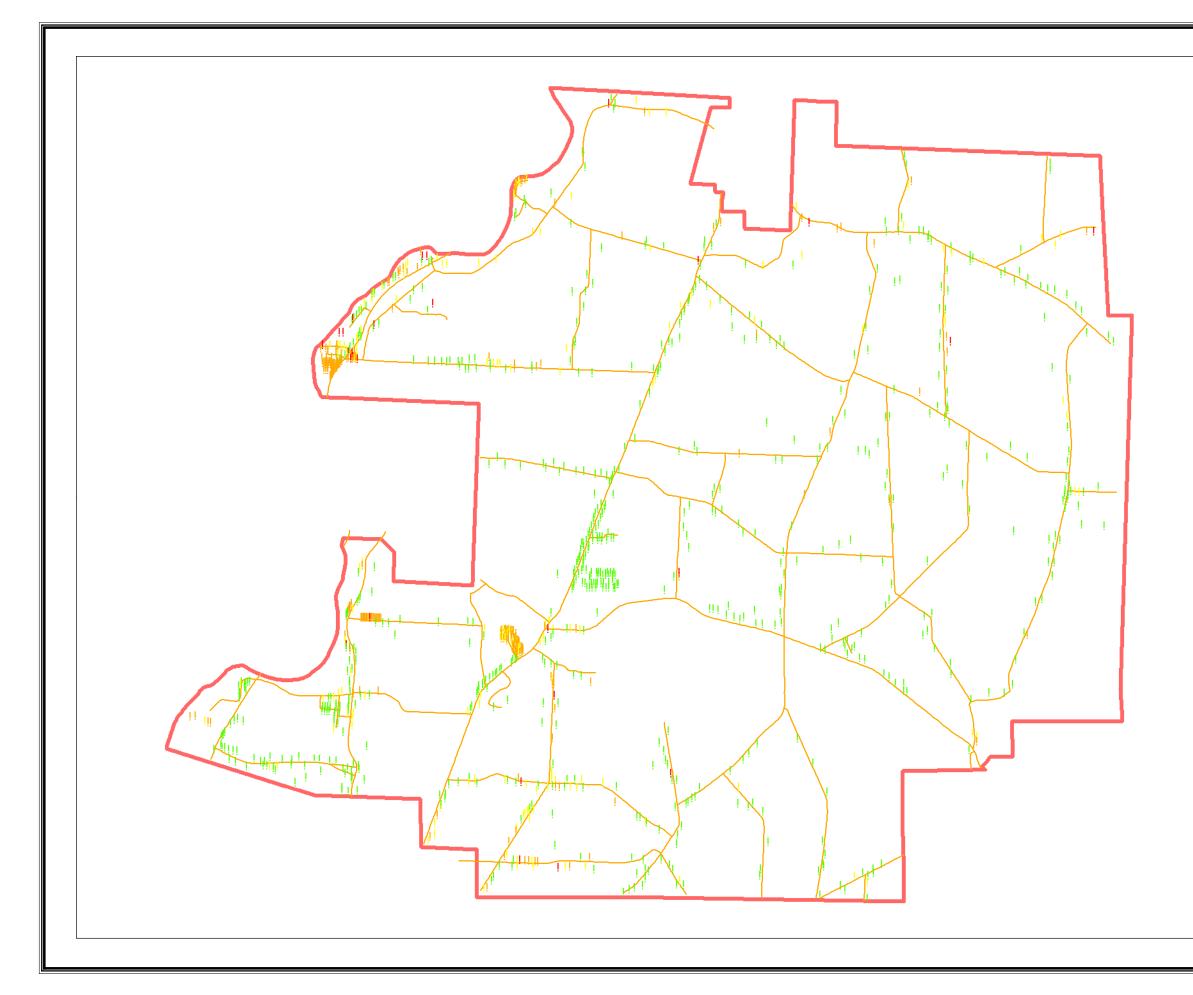
The staff of the Crawford County Planning Commission (CCPC) conducted a windshield survey of housing conditions in the Township in late 2005 and early 2006. The survey area consisted of the entire Township. **Map 5** shows the results of the housing survey. The following rating system was applied to the houses of Woodcock Township and the percentage of each found in the Township can be seen in the following figure:

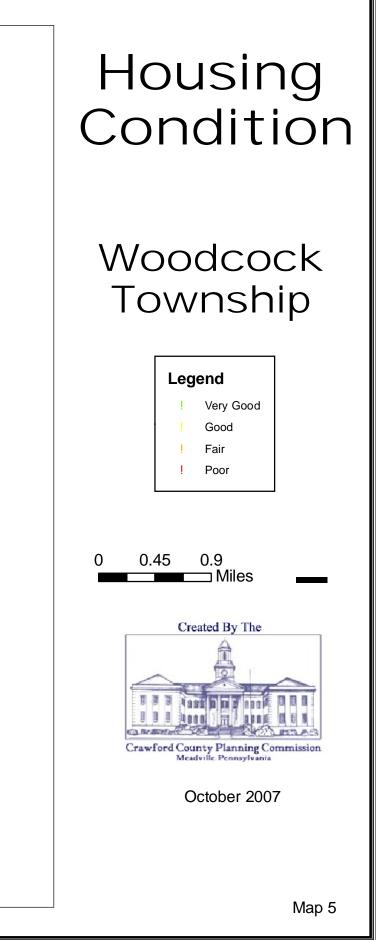


2.4 Existing Land Use

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, that can then be used to plan for the future.

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 Woodcock 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 Woodcock Township is used, a land cover survey was consulted. Land cover is directly related to land use and describes what is on the ground, as opposed to what it is used for. This survey was completed by The Pennsylvania State University through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The dataset was completed in 2007, and for Crawford County 2005 data was consulted. From the information collected a map of existing land cover in the Township was prepared (**Map 6**).

The land cover categories used are as follows:

Agriculture, Forest, Residential, Institutional/Industrial/Commercial, Water, Wetlands, and Roads.

2.5 Township Survey Results

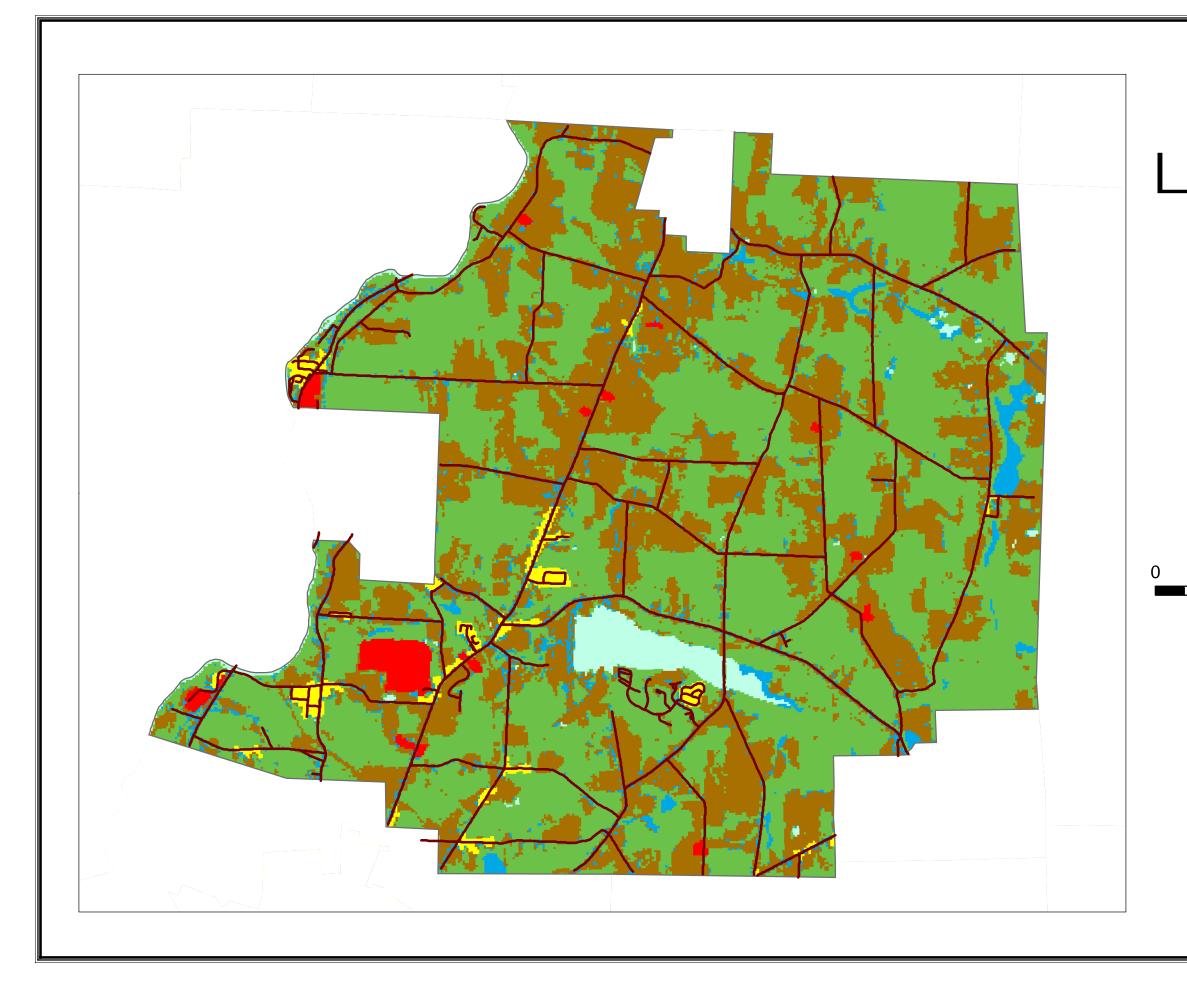
Public Input

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. Woodcock 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 was formulated.

Results of the Survey

The response to this survey was considered to be very good, especially when compared to other similar endeavors in other County Townships. The surveys were collected throughout June and July of 2004 and, altogether, some



Existing Land Cover



Legend

Roads

Crops and Pasture

Forest

Water

Wetlands

Residential

Institutional/Industrial/Commercial





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Map 6

262 or 37% of the surveys were returned with information. A total of 718 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 Woodcock Township Community Survey is 45 years.
- Over 90% of respondents consider their household in the Township to be permanent.
- The majority of Township residents commute between 2-10 miles to work.

Community Facilities

Levels of satisfaction ranked very high for ice and snow removal and average for condition of Township roads.

Housing

- 99% of Township residents own their own home.
- The mean housing cost for Woodcock Township residents is \$300.00 per month.
- 71% of Township residents feel the overall appearance of housing is average.
- 61% of Township residents responded that affordable housing is the most needed type of housing.

Economics

- 81.2% of respondents would like to see Woodcock Township preserve land for agricultural purposes.
- 66% of Township residents responded that tourism should be promoted.
- Meadville and Saegertown are used by a majority of respondents for groceries, banking and postal needs. Meadville and Erie are used by a majority of residents for clothing needs and entertainment.
- 35% of respondents would like additional areas serviced by sewage and of that 35%, 57% would be willing to incur additional costs.
- 91% of respondents believe home-based businesses should be permitted in the township.
- 51% of respondents believe that industrial growth and development should occur along Rt. 19 and toward Saegertown.

2.6 Transportation Characteristics

The road network makes up the development for any municipality; in short, road locations have shaped the Township. One combination federal/state highway (Rt. 6 and 19) and three major state highways (PA Rt. 86, PA Rt. 77, and PA Rt. 198) serve the Township. Several minor state roads plus township and private roads cover the remainder of the township.

There are 76.17 miles of roads in Woodcock Township. The breakdown of ownership of these roads is as follows:

State owned and maintained (PennDOT)	28.49 miles
Township owned and maintained	47.68 miles

Classification of Roads

Key to understanding the planning for roads is the acknowledgement that they form a network. The relationship of the roads in the network is important because all roads should not serve the same function. The network concept is based on a hierarchy of roads that takes into account the transportation needs that individual roads serve. Some roads serve interstate and inter-county needs. Others serve inter-borough travel requirements, while still others function only to provide access to abutting properties. In reality, however, often the same road serves too many functions in which case problems can arise.

The Federal Functional Classification System defines a "hierarchy" for roads. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) accepts the federal system as the classification system to use in describing and categorizing roads. This plan, as a result, follows the nomenclature in the Federal Functional System. The road classification in this system is as follows:

<u>Interstate:</u> A road designated as a route of the Interstate System. I-79 is the only Interstate System road in Crawford County.

<u>Minor Arterial:</u> A road that serves interstate and inter-county travel, and where trips are normally of long duration. In Woodcock Township, Routes 6 and 19 and PA Route 77 are in this category. <u>Major Collector:</u> A road serving inter-county travel that connects development centers within a county. PA Route 86 and PA Route 198 are in this category.

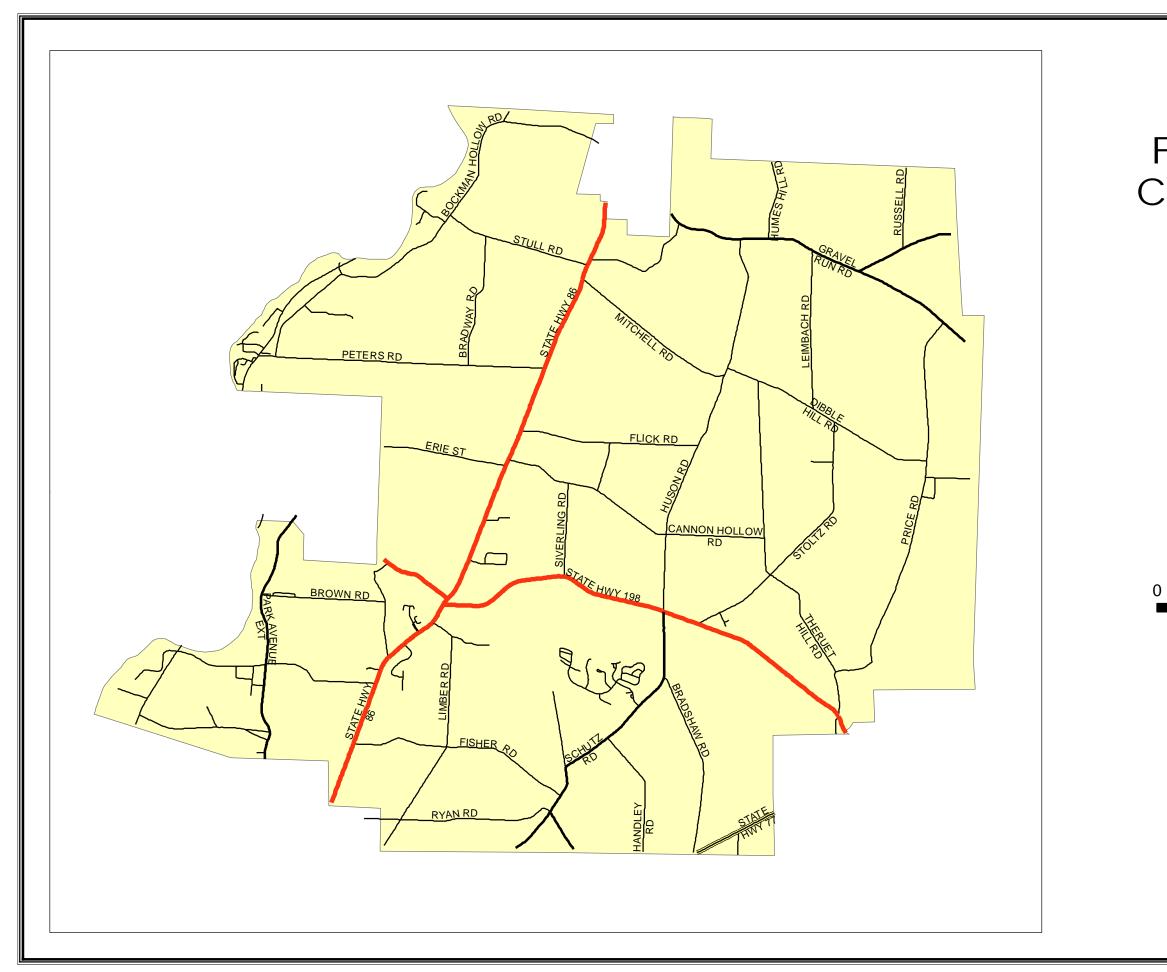
<u>Minor Collector:</u> A road that collects traffic from the local road system and funnels it to the major collector and minor arterial systems. State Route 1001, State Route 1002, State Route 1003, State Route 1012 and State Route 2009 are in this category.

The four categories described above include roads that have reasonable continuity. All other roads are Township Routes. The information can be seen graphically in **Map 7.**

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

The classification system previously described, although developed by the federal government mainly to provide an ordering for state maintained roads, has been articulated and organized in this report to include Township maintained roads. It can be said that the Township has three types of roads based on ownership: state roads, township maintained roads and private roads. All state and Township roads have number designations. There are three digits in the Township numbers, and four digits in the state numbers. Where a state road has a route designation, this designation is reflected in the four-digit number, for example 0198 is the number for U.S. Route 198. All Township roads have names that are reflected in the accompanying maps.

Private roads are a different matter. These roads do not have numbers; most of them have names. In many instances the families on private roads desire a private road. Where the Board of Township Supervisors has not taken official action to accept a road into its network, such a road is a private road and must be maintained by abutting property owners.



Federal Road Classifications

Woodcock Township

- Minor Collector
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Township and Private Roads





August 2007

Map 7

Average Daily Traffic Counts (ADT)

Average daily traffic (ADT) is a term used to express the number of vehicles that use roads. As the term implies it measures the number of vehicles that use a particular portion of road in a 24-hour period averaged over the time span of one year. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation conducts counts at selected points on certain roads. **Map 8** indicates the ADT counts available for Woodcock Township. The counts are based on data from PennDOT's Internet Traffic Monitoring System (July 2, 2004) and include data collected from 2000 through 2003. In examining the traffic counts one should keep in mind that a two lane highway in a rural area has a carrying capacity of approximately 7,500 average daily trips; this refers to reasonably well maintained road with a minimum travel way of 20 or 21 feet.

Problem Intersections (See Map 8)

1. PA Route 86 and PA Route 198: This is an offset intersection. The offsets are approximately 300 feet apart.

2. PA Route 86 and Flick Road: This intersection is blind at the northeast corner.

3. PA Route 86 and Craig Road: This intersection is angular and has poor visibility.

4. Park Avenue Extension and East Cole Road/Hogue Road: East Cole Road and Hogue Road are closely aligned and both intersect with Park Avenue Extension. Hogue is a one way street.

5. Huson Road and Mitchell Road: This is an offset intersection.

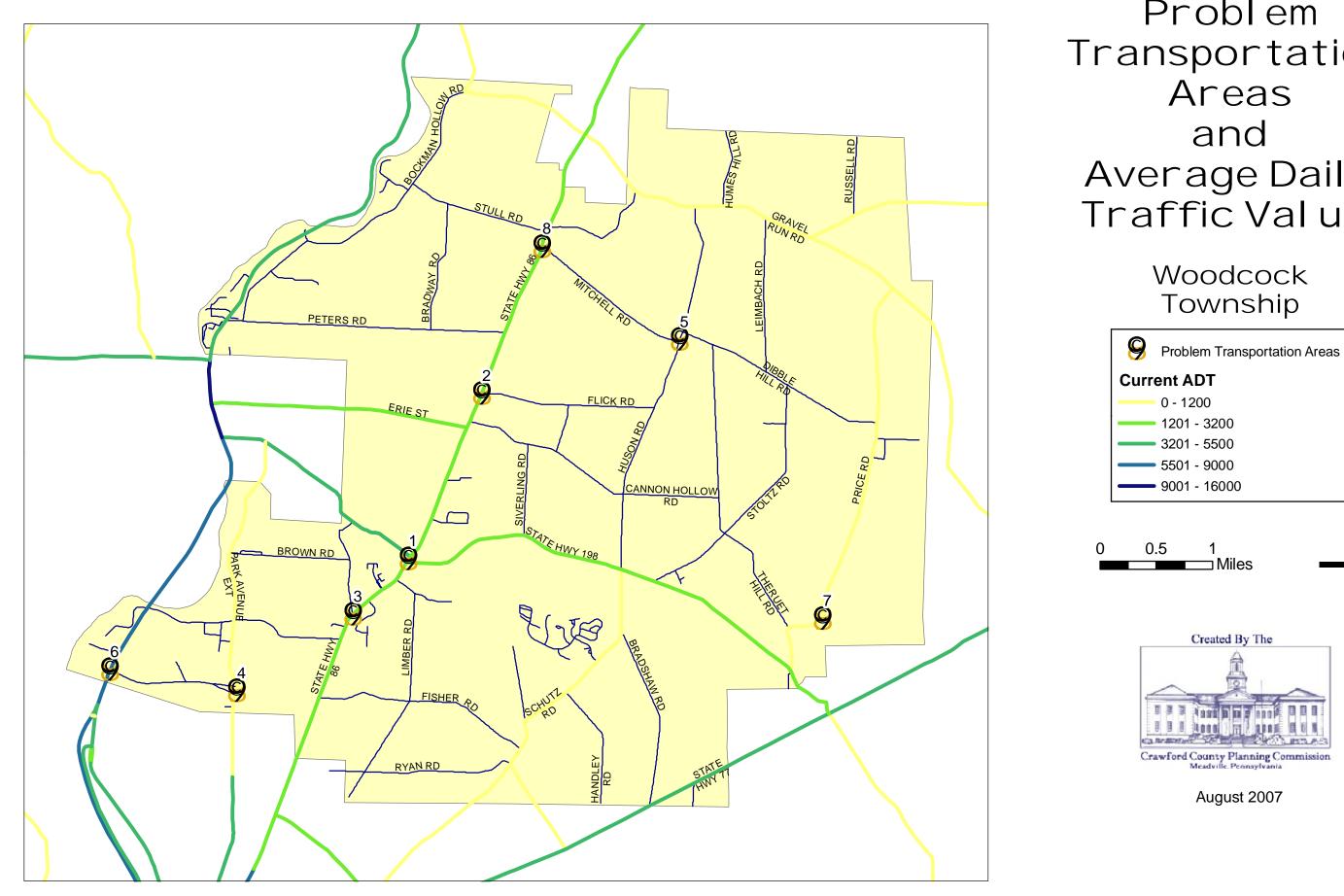
6. U.S. Highway 6 & 19 and East Cole Road: This intersection has poor visibility.

7. Price Road approximately one third of a mile east of the intersection with Theuret Hill Road: This section of road contains a very sharp bend.

8. PA Route 86 and Mitchell Road: This is an angular intersection.

2.7 Community Facilities

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.



Problem
ansportation
Areas
and
verage Dail y
raffic Values

Map 8

Schools

Woodcock Township is covered by the PENNCREST school district whose headquarters are in Saegertown Borough. French Creek Valley Christian School is located in the township.

Emergency Services

Woodcock Township is served by the Saegertown, Blooming Valley, West Mead No. 2, Venango and Cambridge Volunteer Fire Departments. Ambulance service is provided by Meadville, Cambridge and West Mead fire departments.

Police Protection

At the present time, protection is provided by the Meadville barracks of the Pennsylvania State Police.

Municipal Building

The municipal building is located on the east side of PA Route 86 south of German Road. This structure houses the secretary's office and is also the meeting place for the Supervisors and the Planning Commission. The township equipment is housed in an adjoining building. The equipment consists of: three tandem dump trucks with plows, road grader, hilift, backhoe, 550 pickup truck with plow, boom mower, tiger mower, and a brine tank.

Utilities

A number of different companies serve Woodcock Township's needs for utilities. Northwest REC and Penelec provide electricity to the Township. Local phone service is provided by Windstream. Armstrong provides cable service to the Township.

III. Woodcock Township Plan

3.1 Community Development Objectives

- 1. To protect and promote the public health, safety, morals and the general welfare of the residents of the Township.
- 2. To provide for future development, both private and public, including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational and institutional so that the uses of land, including the location and bulk of buildings, are arranged orderly, conveniently, aesthetically, economically, in harmony with natural and man-made surroundings, and reasonably free from evoking or causing nuisances to surrounding uses.
- 3. To guide development into a pattern where areas of employment including industrial, commercial and public uses are located and arranged convenient to living areas and are readily accessible to transportation facilities.
- 4. To preserve to the fullest extent possible the natural amenities of Woodcock Township and to promote carefully planned and designed new development which shall be located so as to enhance each particular site and eliminate or minimize pollution or any other damage to land, water, and air in the Township.
- 5. To promote additional housing units for all income levels in a variety of housing types.
- 6. To eliminate, or rehabilitate where possible, dilapidated housing in the township; however, where structures of historic or cultural importance are identified to work for their conservation so that the Township's heritage is preserved.
- 7. To encourage and direct the major portion of future residential development (differing from farm related residences) so that it occurs in clusters and there is a depth to development rather than the indiscriminate "strip" building along existing public roads we experience currently. Residential development when it is concentrated or clustered can be served far more efficiently by public sewer and water, should they become available in the future, and community identity can be fostered. To the extent it is possible, to guide future higher density residential development into locations that can be provided central sewer and water facilities.
- 8. Where soils are only marginally adequate for the installation of on-lot sewage systems, large lot development should be required for residential construction. In areas where sanitary sewers may be available, if at all, in 20 to 30 years the development of large lots should be planned so that "in-fill" higher density development is possible in the future.

- 9. To preserve good (Class I and II) agricultural land for farming use and discourage non-agricultural development from occurring on such lands.
- 10. To insure that aquifer recharge areas, marsh and wetland areas are left in their natural state and that development does not encroach on them. To identify areas subject to periodic flooding and to protect such areas from future permanent building development.
- 11. To promote a logical road pattern for safe and efficient vehicular transportation throughout the Township and to insure that all future development provides adequate off-street parking and loading facilities. To protect the existing main transportation systems of the Township including "through" Township and State roads so that they can continue to move traffic safely and efficiently; it is recognized that indiscriminate and frequent lotting and development along these roads without provisions for considerable road improvement impairs the transportation function.
- 12. To provide adequate space for public facilities in advance of population growth.
- 13. To promote the construction of sanitary sewers in conjunction with major developments for housing, commercial, and industrial uses, preferably locating such developments in areas where a central water system is available. Extensive developments of any type should utilize a central sewer system.
- 14. To provide, in areas where industrial and commercial uses are adjacent to residential districts, suitable site development standards, such as setback, screening and landscaping measures, in order to insure that locational convenience does not compromise development quality.
- 15. To allow all citizens maximum opportunities to develop their land consistent with the other objectives of this Plan, with the abilities of the public to provide necessary facilities and services, and consistent with the prevention and elimination of nuisance uses.
- 16. To preserve, in the surrounding area, the natural amenities characteristic of the Woodcock Creek Lake Project including that part of this development administered by Crawford County, insuring that new development occurring in the vicinity of this facility is compatible and free of environmental pollution.
- 17. To relate and coordinate the development of the Township with surrounding municipalities.
- 18. To promote the community identity of Woodcock Township as a place to live, work, shop and recreate by shaping future growth in patterns that focus on a Woodcock identity.
- **19.** To protect water wellheads from encroaching development.

3.2 Future Land Use Plan

The purpose of the land use plan is to identify the goals of the Township regarding the future growth and development of the land inside the boundaries of Woodcock Township. These goals are based on the need to preserve the primary function of the land as it is currently being used, while recognizing the possibility of future expansion in the areas of residential, agricultural, and commercial use. The main focus shall be on the preservation of the values, which are embraced by the rural community.

In order to ensure the understanding of all parties who are and will be affected by this land use plan, a list of goals and corresponding objectives have been designed. This plan is created in order to offer guidance for all development taking place in Woodcock Township in the near and distant future.

Goal 1 – The encouragement of agricultural activities, which are a main focus of the rural lifestyle, shall be emphasized wherever possible. Residential activities shall be considered as compatible with this goal.

<u>Objective</u>: While considering the environment presented in an agricultural area, utmost attention will be paid to the development of land for the purpose of crop, livestock and produce farming. This focus is deemed necessary to preserve the rural community at large. Along with this focus, all consideration will be given to propositions presented, which promote activities, which correspond to such an environment. Participation in local and statewide programs for such promotion will be encouraged.

Goal 2 - While commercial use of the land is to be encouraged as well, it shall be of a nature which is in harmony with the value system found in a rural community and will be compatible with the agricultural industry.

Examples: Pallet shops, sawmills or other forestry-related businesses, retail businesses which are open to consumers of all ages, restaurants, tools and die manufacturing, farmer's markets, in-home manufacturing, etc.

<u>Objective</u>: A careful study of these goals shall be undertaken when commercial development is considered in order to follow the guidelines, which have been established. Due to the vast expanse of possibilities regarding commercial business, all proposed plans shall be evaluated with consideration to the social, economic and physical impact on the township. Location of proposed or use of present buildings will be evaluated based on proximity to the residential and agricultural areas which are not and which will be in use at such time.

Goal 3 - Residential owners will be aware of the farm-related activities, which take place in a rural community and shall be tolerant of resulting inconveniences.

Examples: Slow moving farm equipment on public roadways; the presence of mud and manure on aforementioned roads, etc.

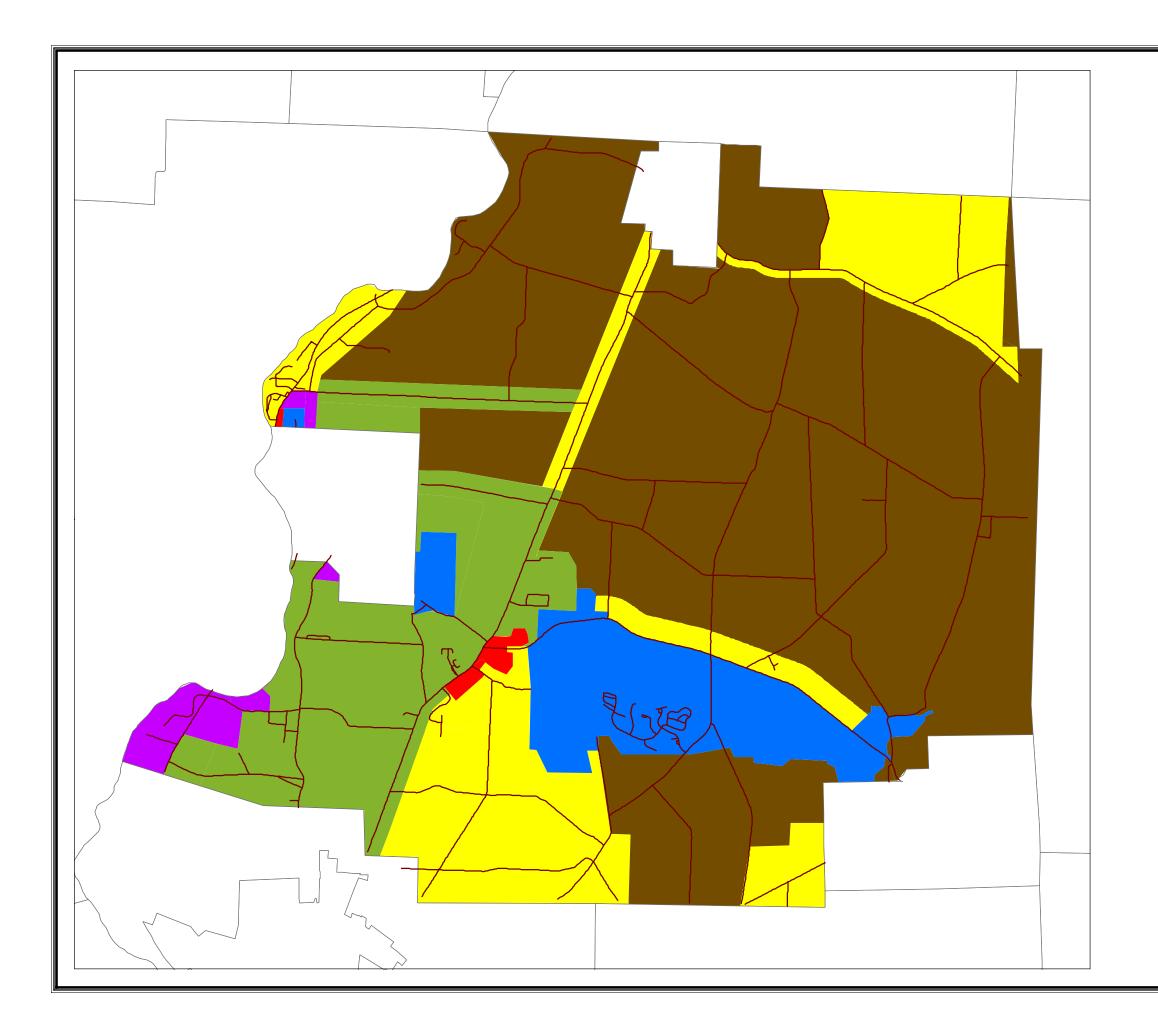
<u>Objectives</u>: While considering future residential development, all effort will be made to respect the ongoing practice of farm-related activity. Incoming residents will be aware of the benefits associated with a rural lifestyle. While being faces with some of the differences from an urban lifestyle, consideration will be given to the farmer whose employment is drawn from the land. Woodcock Township is not designed to support an urban area, and this is understood by those who choose to dwell here. The township will make every effort to abide by the laws and ordinances, which dictate the construction and usage of all buildings within its boundaries.

Changing conditions undoubtedly will cause this plan to change from time to time. At the present time, however, the Commission thinks this plan represents the best arrangement of land uses it can assemble. This Land Use Plan should serve as a guide for public and private actions as these interests contemplate building, developing, or using land in the Township.

Following is a brief explanation of the land use categories shown on **Map**

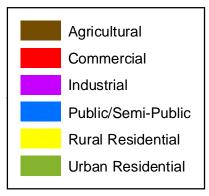
- Agricultural These areas include agricultural uses such as fields and forested lands. Large lot and smaller lot agricultural uses are present in these areas. Most of these areas should be using on-site sewage systems and wells.
- Commercial This includes a wide range of wholesale, retail and office activities, but excludes activities where goods are made and which are more appropriately classified as industrial. This category also includes mixed residential and commercial uses.
- Industrial This area includes activities where goods are made and refined. It specifically includes tool and die shops.
- Public/Semi-Public These areas include Colonel Crawford Park, Woodcock Lake, the Crawford County Farm and the French Creek Valley Christian School.

9



Future Land Use

Woodcock Township



0 0.25 0.5



July 2006



- Rural Residential Residential areas that are more concentrated than housing in agricultural areas. Community forming including public and semipublic uses should also be encouraged to locate in these areas.
- Urban Residential Residential areas that contain higher density lotting patterns than rural residential areas.

3.3 Transportation Plan

Woodcock Township is served by three major state highways: PA Rt. 77, PA Route 198 and PA Route 86. The Township is served by one U.S. Highway—U.S. 6 & 19. These four routes have the highest Average Daily Traffic totals in the township. The balance of the Township is quite rural in character and gravel roads are part of that character. For this reason, this plan avoids a paving schedule in favor of maintaining the Township's existing gravel roads to the Township's best ability given budget realities.

Objective 1: To accept the Federal Functional Classification System as a proper way to classify highways with respect to their roles in the overall highway network for the Township.

Most people recognize that the local highway system is part of a larger overall network which ties into the national network of highways and byways. Moreover, most people intuitively understand that individual roads in this network serve different purposes. The network concept is predicated upon the principle that, given the different purposes roads serve, there appears over time a "hierarchy" of needs across this network. In Pennsylvania, PennDOT accepts the federal highway system for describing and categorizing its roads. It would serve Woodcock Township well to adopt this classification systems since, by definition, the Township contains Minor Arterials, Major and Minor Collectors, Collectors and Local Access Roads.

Objective 2: To maintain all Township roads in gravel surfacing unless, finances permitting, the density of development exceeds an average of one use for each 400 feet of road frontage. From a standpoint of adopting a strategy revolving around budgetary issues, the Township should consider adopting a formal schedule for grading road profiles and ditches predicated upon their ADT's and incidence of heavy truck traffic.

Objective 3: To effectuate safety improvement and needed major repair or replacement (realignment) projects in the road network with a

priority given to those intersections identified in the Transportation Analysis portion of this Comprehensive Plan as "Problem Intersections." This section coincides with previously mentioned **Map 8**. The following is a list of transportation project priorities:

- **Project 1:** PA Route 198 and PA Route 86: This intersection is on the 1st Four Years of PennDOT's Twelve Year Program. It is scheduled for construction in 2008—the two offset intersections will be realigned.
- **Project 2:** PA Route 86 and Flick Road: The geometry of this intersection should be altered. This project should be placed on PennDOT's Twelve Year Program.
- **Project 3:** PA Route 86 and Craig Road: The geometry of this intersection should be altered. This project should be placed on PennDOT's Twelve Year Program.
- **Project 4:** Park Avenue Extension and East Cole Road/Hogue Road: "Loud Signage" is needed to alert motorists that Hogue Road is a one way street.
- **Project 5:** Huson Road and Mitchell Road: This offset intersection should either be realigned or, as an intermediate step, have "loud" signage installed at the approaches.
- **Project 6:** U.S. Highway 6 & 19 and East Cole Road: The bank at the southeast corner of this intersection should be cut back or regraded to improve visibility.
- **Project 7:** Price Road approximately one third of a mile east of the intersection with Theuret Hill Road: This section of road should be realigned to eliminate the sharpness of the bend in the road.
- **Project 8:** PA Route 86 and Mitchell Road: The geometry of this intersection should be altered. This project should be placed on PennDOT's Twelve Year Program.

Objective 4: Restrict the future proliferation of private roads through the enforcement of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. This practice is not in the best interests of the Township or its citizens to have an inordinate amount of private roads as part of its road network. For obvious reasons, private roads present difficulties to the Township and, since they lack the profiles and Right of Way of Township roads, represent something of a safety hazard in terms of turning movements on and off private roads.

The Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance provides a built-in mechanism that restricts the utility of private roads. Moreover, the Ordinance standardizes the profile and cross section of any road that is to be dedicated to the Township for public use.

3.4 Housing Plan / Community Facilities

Objective: To attract residential development (method: Sewage solutions and information).

Woodcock Township is a rural township; it has never been customary for many public services to be provided to its citizenry. The responsibilities of the Township Supervisors in rural townships have been chiefly in the area of road maintenance.

One major issue that affects the Township's involvement is perking and approving on lot in ground sewage systems. The approval and perking of in ground septic systems is problematic in Woodcock Township due to the soil make up throughout the Township. Alternatives include sand mounds and on lot sewage treatment plants.

Portions of the Route 86/198 corridors of the Township are served by public sewer. Funding sources for public sewer improvements include PennVEST and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

Woodcock Township has traditionally not enacted building codes; however, in 2004 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania adopted the BOCA codes and the Woodcock Township Supervisors followed suit by adopting the BOCA codes. Any new construction in the Township is to fall under the BOCA codes and be enforced by a code enforcement officer. The Woodcock Township secretary can be contacted to find out who is the current code enforcement officer.

To help Woodcock Township inform its current and future residents, the local business community should develop a pamphlet on Building, Housing and Sewage Codes information. This pamphlet would contain general information on BOCA code, Sewage Regulations, who to contact for inspections and who to contact for more information on these and related codes. This information hopefully would help stimulate growth in the Township. One way to help defray the cost of publishing this information would be to ask local businesses to advertise on the pamphlet. Grant money could also be sought.

Woodcock Township should promote the maintenance of its housing stock by regularly pursuing funding through the HOME Program to target housing rehabilitation for Low and Moderate Income persons in the Township. The Woodcock Township Planning Commission and the Township Supervisors should jointly develop and send a letter to the Crawford County Planning Office expressing interest in the HOME Program. Maximum grant amounts have traditionally been set at \$250,000. This could fund 20 to 25 individual houses. Given the Township need for housing rehabilitation, the Supervisors should prioritize very low-income persons to take part in this program.

3.5 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 Woodcock 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 Woodcock 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, Woodcock is designated as "Agricultural/Rural" in a large amount of the Township. A sizable portion of the western part of the Township-mainly south and east of Saegertown-is designated "Village". There is a section of "Urban Fringe" along Rt. 86 in the southern part of the Township and the remainder of the Township is designated as "Conservation/Recreation". The Future Land Use Map for Woodcock Township (**Map 9**) also designates a large amount of Township land as "Agricultural".

Woodcock Township Comprehensive Plan

The Woodcock Township Board of Supervisors should formally adopt the 2007 Woodcock 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. (Hayfield Township, Cambridge Township, Richmond Township, East Mead Township, West Mead Township, Saegertown Borough, Woodcock Borough, Blooming Valley Borough, Crawford County, and PENNCREST School District).

Zoning Ordinance

No single document is more important than a municipal zoning ordinance to assist in implementing many of the recommendations delineated in this Comprehensive Plan. Woodcock Township has a zoning ordinance; it was adopted by the Woodcock Township Supervisors in 1976. The Woodcock Township Planning Commission should begin the work of updating the zoning ordinance to present to the Woodcock Township Board of Supervisors. The Crawford County Planning Commission staff is available to assist in the updating of this document. Upon finalization of the draft ordinance, the Woodcock Township Board of Supervisors must formally adopt their 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 has a Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which was enacted in 1976. This Ordinance can 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.

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

Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan

This plan helps 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,
- * Who to contact: Crawford County Planning Commission (814) 333-7341,

or Economic Progress Alliance (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 or your local State Representative or State Senator.

Woodcock Township Crawford County Pennsylvania

Resolution No. 2008–2

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Be it Resolved and it is hereby Resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Woodcock Township as follows:

- 1. The Woodcock Township Comprehensive Plan dated February 2008 is hereby adopted in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code as and for the Comprehensive Plan for Woodcock Township.
- 2. The 2008 Woodcock Township Comprehensive Plan hereby adopted supercedes and replaces the Woodcock Township Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1975.
- 3. The 2008 Woodcock Township Comprehensive Plan hereby adopted shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until amended or repealed by further Resolution of the Township Supervisors in accordance with applicable law.

Resolved this March 11, 2008 by the Board of Supervisors of Woodcock Township.

Woodcock Township Board of Supervisors

illiam R Winters, Chairman

Vice Chairman Robert F. Shelby.

Michael A. Mitchell

ATTEST:

Renee D. Hayes, Secreta