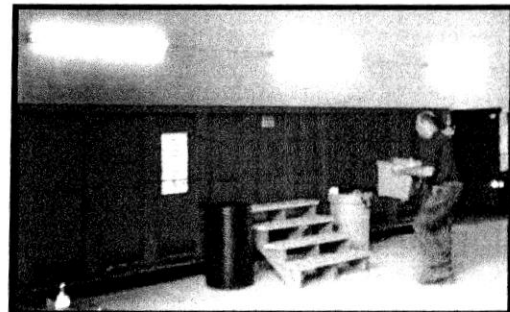
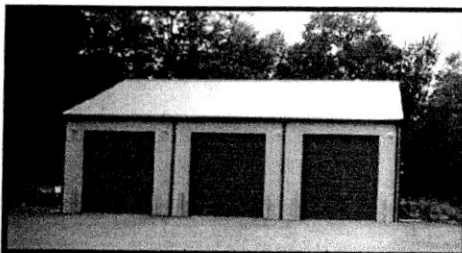
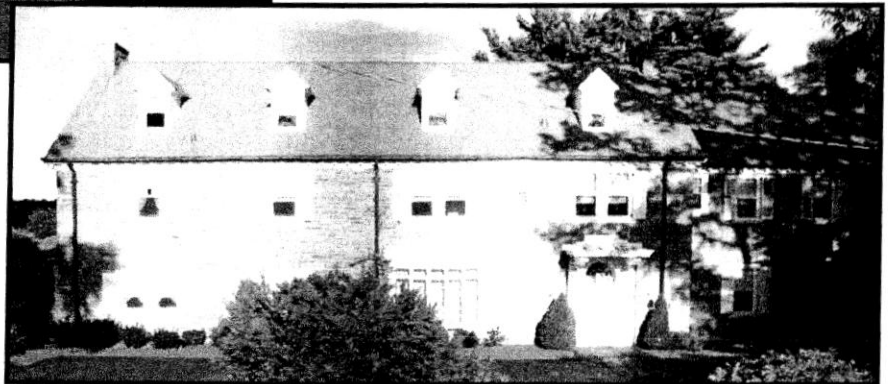
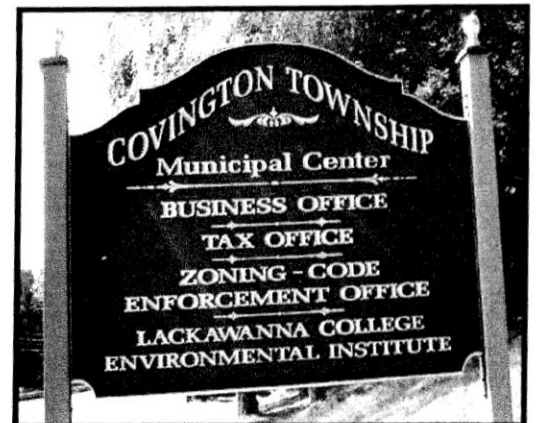
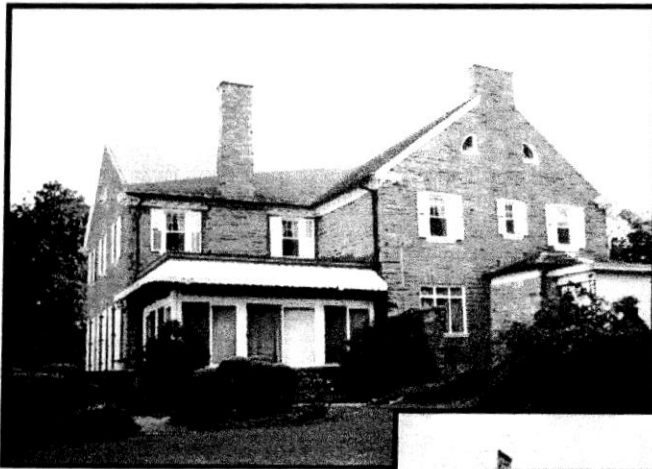


COVINGTON TOWNSHIP

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



COMMUNITY PLANNING
& MANAGEMENT, LLC

Carson Helfrich
Paupack, PA 18451

LAND USE, NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
5	<u>Conservation Easements</u> - Consider the purchase of conservation easements with local funds to preserve agricultural and other open land.	Supervisors	2 - 5 years
6	<u>Land Conservation Organizations</u> - Support the efforts of local land trusts.	Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
7	<u>Cooperation</u> - Recognizing that continued area wide strong growth and development will have significant effects on the Township, strengthen coordination and cooperation with other municipalities.	Supervisors	ongoing
Environmental Protection			
8	<u>Environmental Standards</u> - Periodically review and update local environmental standards to ensure the most effective protection. The range includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental impact analysis requirements for large scale and environmentally problematic uses. • Soil stabilization and landscaping. • Stream, lake and wetland buffers. • Stormwater best management practices including quality treatment and infiltration. • Floodplain management. • Hydrogeological studies for proposed uses with large groundwater consumption. • On-site sewage disposal system management. • Limitations and special standards for development on steep slopes. 	Zoning Officer Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
9	<u>Sewage Disposal</u> - Discourage the use of non-soil based sewage disposal methods in order to match development to the carrying capacity of the land, and carefully consider any expansion of the existing public sewer system in terms of stimulating development.	SEO Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
10	<u>Sewage Plan</u> - Review the Township Sewage Facilities Plan Update to ensure it is consistent with current Township planning and to address any identified problem areas.	SEO Planning Commission Supervisors	1 -2 years
Residential Development			
11	<u>Sewer District</u> - Evaluate setting a higher residential density in the sewer service area and setting lower density in other areas.	Planning Commission Supervisors	1 -2 years
12	<u>Conservation Design</u> - Continue to apply the conservation subdivision design standards in the zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance and update as necessary.	Zoning Officer Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing

LAND USE, NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
13	<u>Transferrable Development Rights</u> - Promote TDR as permitted by the zoning ordinance.	Zoning Officer Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
14	<u>Residential Protection</u> - Continue to provide protection for residential areas by maintaining separate residential and nonresidential zoning districts, applying environmental, development and operational performance standards to commercial and industrial uses, and establishing increased lot sizes, setbacks, and buffers where such uses adjoin residential development.	Zoning Officer Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
Nonresidential Development			
15	<u>Standards</u> - Monitor the effectiveness of zoning ordinance performance standards to ensure community and environmental protection and update to meet changing needs	Zoning Officer Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
16	<u>Commercial/Industrial Areas</u> - Provide adequate area for commercial and industrial development.	Supervisors	ongoing
17	<u>Design Guidelines</u> - Maintain up to date design guidelines for commercial, industrial, and institutional development to encourage the most efficient use of commercial land and development consistent with community character.	Planning Commission Supervisors	1 -2 years
18	<u>Conservation Design</u> - Apply the conservation design process to nonresidential development.	Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
19	<u>Economic Development</u> - Cooperate with area economic development groups to broaden the local economy to provide more local jobs, but in keeping with the rural character of the Township.	Supervisors	ongoing
20	<u>Natural Resources</u> - Provide for the economic use of available natural resources with good conservation and management practices while complying with Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code which limits local restriction of forestry, and mineral extraction.	Supervisors	ongoing

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Municipal Buildings			
1	<u>Maintenance</u> - Maintain existing facilities in current conditions.	Supervisors Staff	ongoing
2	<u>Support</u> - Continue financial support of local emergency services.	Supervisors	ongoing
3	<u>Paid Services</u> - Monitoring the need for paid emergency services.	Emgcy Serv Providers Supervisors	ongoing
4	<u>Need</u> - Monitor need and funding capability for expanded police protection services.	Supervisors	ongoing
5	<u>Regional</u> - Consider the use of regional departments if police protection is determined to be necessary	Supervisors	as needed
6	<u>Groundwater Protection Program</u> - Consider developing a groundwater protection program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve the community by organizing a committee of interested individuals from the community, and neighboring communities • Determine sources and uses of the community's water supply and define the proposed groundwater protection areas. • Identify possible contamination sources-past, present, and future-in the groundwater protection areas. • Establish goals and priorities based on an evaluation of the groundwater threats. • Implement appropriate management measures, including plans for future needs. 	Citizens Watershed Associations Planning Commission Supervisors	3 - 5 years
7	<u>Sewage Enforcement</u> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the strict enforcement of the on-lot sewage disposal program. • Evaluate the benefit of an on-lot sewage system management program. 	SEO's Supervisors	•ongoing • 1 - 3 years
8	<u>Stormwater Management</u> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require stormwater infiltration as the option of choice to maximize groundwater recharge. • Address stormwater quality (nutrient and pollutant removal) along with quantity. 	Part of SALDO Planning Commission Elected Officials Wyoming County	1 year

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Water Supply			
9	<u>Well Construction and Protection</u> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the need for a well siting and construction ordinances. As a means of building a data base, require well drillers to submit copies of the state <i>Water Well Completion Report</i> which includes details about new wells – depth, depth to water bearing zones, static level, yield, and type of aquifer. Require bacterial testing for all new wells with a report submitted to the Township. Sponsor an annual well water testing program and compile and map the results. Adopt well head protection standards that limit potential contaminating activities in zones around community wells. 	Well Drillers Planning Commission Supervisors	1 - 3 years
Sewage Disposal			
10	<u>On-Site Sewage Systems</u> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the functioning of existing on-lot sewage disposal systems and order corrections when malfunctions occur. Ensure that all new systems meet DEP regulations. Update sewage facilities plans as needed. Consider on-lot sewage systems maintenance program in areas where malfunctions are occurring or are likely (e.g., poor soils, concentrated numbers of small residential lots). 	SEO Supervisors	•ongoing •ongoing •ongoing •1 - 3 years
11	<u>Sewage Collection and Treatment</u> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the use of soil based sewage disposal methods to match development density to the land's carrying capacity. Diligently monitor the operation of all sewage collection and treatment systems to ensure compliance with DEP effluent discharge criteria. Carefully consider proposed construction or expansion of any sewage collection and treatment system for potential stimulation of development. 	SEO Planning Commission Supervisors Sewer Authority	ongoing
Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling			
12	<u>Solid Waste</u> - Continue current system of County Planning, regional landfills and private hauler collection.	Supervisors	ongoing
13	<u>Recycling</u> - Continue operation of Township Recycling Center.		

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Recreation			
14	<u>Recreation Committee</u> - Support and work with the Township Recreation Committee.	Supervisors	ongoing
15	<u>Existing Facilities</u> - Continue to pursue completion of the Moffat Estate facilities and plan for continuing improvements.	Recreation Committee Supervisors	ongoing
16	<u>Planning and Maintenance</u> - Ensure improvements at existing facilities are made in accord with an overall plan and all facilities are maintained.	Recreation Committee Supervisors	1 - 3 years
17	<u>Site Identification</u> - Identify potential sites for additional recreation facilities and amend the comprehensive plan to include these sites.		
18	<u>Funding Plan</u> - Develop a funding plan to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of fees assessed for residential development under the subdivision and land development ordinance. • solicitation of private contributions. • grants. • direct municipal contributions. • a special fund for land acquisition and capital improvements 		
19	<u>Technical Assistance</u> - Obtain technical assistance from County and State agencies.		
20	<u>Community Organizations</u> - Cooperate with area wide community recreation organizations to improve recreation facilities and programs.		
21	<u>Official Maps</u> - Show planned recreation facilities on an Official Map to ensure that the land can be acquired.		
Community Facilities for New Development			
22	<u>SALDO Enforcement</u> - Continue the enforcement and update as necessary of the current subdivision and land development ordinance.	Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
Private Residential Communities			
23	<u>Communication</u> - Recognize and communicate with private residential communities about common needs.	Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing

TRANSPORTATION			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
1	<u>Inventory</u> - Maintain an accurate inventory of all vehicles and equipment.	Road Supervisor	ongoing
2	<u>Liquidation</u> - Liquidate obsolete vehicles and equipment.	Supervisors	as needed
3	<u>Capital Improvements Plan</u> - Include planned purchases of vehicles and equipment on a capital budget to better plan for large expenditures.	Supervisors Road Supervisor	1 - 3 years
4	<u>Township Roads</u> - Focus on the maintenance and improvement of existing local municipal roads.	Road Supervisor Supervisors	ongoing
5	<u>Width and Alignment</u> - Monitor the need and ability to correct specific width and alignment problems which would require reconstruction as traffic volumes dictate and available funds allow.	Road Supervisor Supervisors	ongoing
6	<u>Road Inventory</u> - Use the <i>Road Inventory and Evaluation Form</i> and projected municipal revenues to plan for the improvement of local roads over the next five to ten years within the normal budget process.	Road Supervisor Supervisors	1 year
7	<u>Capital Improvements</u> - Include any reconstruction projects in a capital improvements program.	Road Supervisor Supervisors	1 year
8	<u>Road Task Force</u> - Work with area municipalities to form a <i>North Pocono Road Task Force</i> as a means of addressing area wide transportation issues and road improvements.	Area municipalities Supervisors	1 - 2 years
9	<u>State Roads</u> - Work with Road Task Force, PennDOT, and the Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission to identify the most critical state route improvement needs and work to have the improvements programmed by PennDOT.	Planning Commission Supervisors LCRPC	ongoing
10	<u>Ordinances</u> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an up-to-date road dedication ordinance setting standards for construction of public roads and establishing procedures for dedication to the public. • Maintain an up-to-date road occupancy ordinance setting standards for driveway access to Township roads and stormwater and utility improvements within the Township road right-of-way. • Review road construction standards to assure adequacy for public safety and eliminate excessive requirements to minimize the consumption of resources for construction and long term maintenance. 	Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing

HOUSING			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
1	<u>Housing Programs</u> - Work with the County to ensure that the housing needs of low-income and elderly households in the Township are being addressed.	Elected Officials Co. Housing Authority	ongoing
2	<u>Land Use Ordinances</u> - Review land use ordinances in terms of standards not directly linked to public health and safety which increase housing costs.	Planning Commission Elected Officials	ongoing

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
1	Prioritize local municipal community facility and service needs and adopt a capital improvements budget to financially plan for large expenditures for buildings, equipment, roads, etc., by setting aside funds in accord with the programmed budget.	Planning Commission Supervisors Staff	1 - 2 years

HISTORIC PRESERVATION			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
1	<u>Historical Society</u> - Encourage the creation of a local Historical Society to focus attention on historic preservation and work on preservation.	Planning Commission Supervisors	1 - 3 years
2	<u>Design Guidelines</u> - Prepare and adopt design guidelines for commercial and institutional development to encourage development consistent with areas of historic character.	Historical Society Planning Commission Elected Officials	1 - 2 years

OFFICIAL MAP			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
1	Consider the adoption of an official map as needed public facilities are planned to reserve the location for public acquisition – parks, road improvements, buildings, etc.	Planning Commission Elected Officials	2 - 3 years

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Any community conservation and land use control effort by its very nature, must include goals. Without goals, there would be little direction to the future of the community. In the case of planning for a rural community like Covington Township, goals establish the framework for change and growth management, and the foundation for maintaining key community characteristics. Goals pronounce the community's expectations and provide a vision of how the community is expected to evolve into the future. Objectives are specific actions which are designed to achieve goals and satisfy community needs. Effecting objectives improves the physical condition of the community and sustains and enhances the overall quality of life.

The goals of all residents of the community will not be the same. Some residents will favor increased economic development, while other residents demand environmental protection. Some residents will demand more community facilities and services, while others prefer lower taxes. Some residents will strive for land use diversity, while others would prefer to live in a bedroom community. One function of the community conservation and land use control process is to strike a balance between these varied expectations to meet the overall goals of the community.

Rural communities and residents of rural communities are characteristically unique from their more urban counterparts, and have the opportunity to directly mold their communities. *The rural community is seen as the conservator of its own resources, habitat, and culture. Local citizens are directly involved in the control of community assets as they plan for the retention, enrichment, and equitable use of those assets for present and future generations.*

Along with the community's goals, specific objectives must be identified; actions and methods

for achieving the goals. Some objectives will be the direct responsibility of local elected and appointed officials. Others will require the cooperation and participation of other levels of government and the private sector.¹

Shared Vision

Every successful business, organization, or individual has a plan for the future. Communities are no different. If nothing else, a community needs to agree on a shared vision of what it wants to become. This vision should address the full range of local concerns: schools, housing, economic development, neighborhoods, parks and open space. Creating a shared vision is important because it provides a blueprint for the future of the community. People may differ on how to achieve the community's vision, but without a blueprint nothing will happen.

Source: Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities, Howe, J., McMahon, and Propst, L., Island press, Wash., D.C., 1997, p. 48.

Another key factor in formulating a local municipality's goals and objectives is any planning conducted at the County and regional level. The Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners have developed a county-wide comprehensive plan which establishes a broad framework for the future growth and development of the County. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, at §301.4, states, *Municipal comprehensive plans which are adopted shall be generally consistent with the adopted county comprehensive plan.*

This comprehensive plan is intended to serve as a means of addressing the future growth and development of the Township by identifying key

¹ P. Lusk, J. A. Rivera, F. O. Sargent, M. Varela, (1991) *Rural Environmental Planning for Sustainable Communities*, Island press, Washington, D. C., p. 5

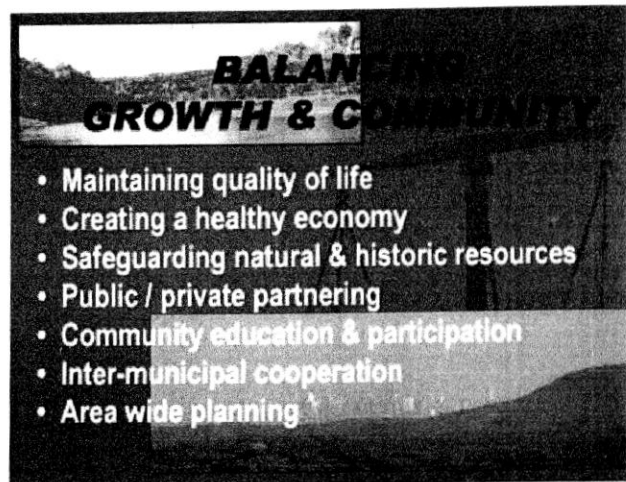
issues and establishing goals and objectives; and is further intended to be consistent with the Lackawanna County Comprehensive Plan. The community planning process also is aimed at fostering cooperation between the County and the Township as envisioned by §306 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code which states, *both the county and the municipality shall each give the plan of the other consideration in order that the objectives of each plan can be protected to the greatest extent possible.*

The following goals and objectives were developed by the Township Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors based on the planning process and resident opinions and expectations expressed at public meetings conducted as part of the process. The goals and objectives are intended to serve the Township as a guide for land use control decision making. Any significant action taken by a local municipality, be it the adoption or revision of a zoning ordinance or the improvement of a municipal building, should be evaluated in terms of the community's goals and objectives. In addition, community planning and land conservation and development control is an on-going process, and the Township must periodically evaluate its goals and objectives to assure that they adequately reflect current community conditions and the expectations of Township residents and officials.

General Community Development Objectives

This statement of the Community Development Objectives is included under the authority of Section 606 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The Community Development Objectives include, but are not limited to the following:

A. **Land Use** - To achieve the best use of the land within the Township, insuring that varying use of land and water bodies will complement one another and thus improve the economic, social, and aesthetic character of the community.



- B. **Population Density** - To establish realistic population densities in order to insure health standards, privacy and open space and in order to provide utilities, police protection, and community services and facilities in the most convenient and efficient manner.
- C. **Road System** - To maintain and improve the road system for better internal circulation and movement of through traffic, which will facilitate the efficient and safe movement of people and goods.
- D. **Facilities and Services** - To provide the necessary community facilities and services to meet the needs of the growing population.
- E. **Sewage Disposal** - To assure that adequate sewage disposal is provided to maintain the public health and protect water quality, and consider the impact of central sewage on development.
- F. **Environmental Protection** - To guide the location of future development and establish developmental standards in such a way that negative impacts on the natural environment and natural resources are minimized, and to minimize existing and future water, air, land and noise pollution.

- G. **Variety of Housing** - To provide the opportunity for a wide-range and variety of housing types at reasonable densities to meet the needs of all Township residents; newly-formed households, growing families and senior citizens.
- H. **Monitoring** - To update and revise planning goals and objectives, and the operational tools necessary for implementation, in light of new data and changing conditions.
- I. **Economic Development** - To expand local commercial enterprises and strengthen the area economy by encouraging well-planned

commercial, industrial, residential, and recreational growth which will provide for local employment, shopping facilities, and recreational opportunities which in turn will strengthen the local tax base.

- J. **Internal Coordination** - To strive for coordination between policies, plans, and programs in the community through cooperation among governing officials, community interest groups, and the general populace.

GOAL 1

Maintain the township's existing rural-residential character and quality lifestyle; and, conserve agricultural land and forest land as important elements of the local economy and character.

The Township's physical environment, regional location and past development practices have shaped and maintained its character as a rural-residential community with limited heavy commercial development. Residential dwellings and residential subdivisions are interspersed with agricultural land and forest land. Commercial uses are largely concentrated at business/activity centers at key road intersections in the Township with some minor intrusions into residential areas.

Open land was the cornerstone of the foundation of the area when its earliest settlers arrived, and has played a key role in the growth and development of the Township. Without this open land and the natural resources it offered the character of the Township would be dramatically different. Maintaining open land and the quality lifestyle associated with it is key to the future of the area.

Covington Township is perceived as an attractive community offering a high quality of life. Future development must be controlled and managed with an overriding concern to sustain the Township's community character while broadening the tax base with controlled

commercial development.

Objectives:

- A. Preserve agricultural land, forest land, open space, significant natural features, and sensitive land areas.
- B. Develop local land use controls including flexible zoning performance standards to control density and minimize conflicts between existing and future development, and update the controls periodically to address changing conditions.
- C. Use of *conservation design development* zoning to shift residential development away from important natural, scenic and cultural features, and preserve the resulting open space.
- D. Allow the use of transferrable development rights to direct development to locations with adequate infrastructure and enable conservation-minded landowners to preserve their properties.

COVINGTON TOWNSHIP

LACKAWANNA COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

TOWNSHIP REVIEW DRAFT
DECEMBER 2006

Prepared By

COVINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
COVINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Planning Assistance By

Community Planning and Management, LLC
Carson Helfrich
HCR 1 Box 59
Paupack, PA 18451

- E. Encourage the use of *Act 319 Clean and Green* and other tax incentive programs as a means of forestalling development.
- F. Do not overly restrict forestry with unnecessary zoning regulations.
- G. Evaluate, in cooperation with the Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission, more progressive means of open land preservation including open land zoning, purchase of easements, and transfer of development rights, especially in cooperation with conservancy and land trust organizations.
- H. Assure that adequate community facilities including sewage disposal and water supply are provided for new development.
- I. Encourage the use of soil based methods for sewage disposal; that is, on-site subsurface disposal and land application, instead of collection and treatment facilities with a surface water discharge.
- J. Work with the Township Sewer Authority to carefully consider the development of community facilities such as central water supplies and central sewage collection and treatment facilities in terms of stimulating unwanted development in areas with important natural, scenic and cultural features, and agricultural areas.
- K. Direct higher density development to areas already served by the central sewage collection and treatment system.
- L. Carefully control the location and scale of commercial establishments while recognizing the importance of such development to the convenience of local residents and the tax base.
- M. Limit heavy commercial uses and industrial uses by establishing performance standards to control noise; outdoor manufacturing, processing and storage; lighting; and other potential effects.
- N. Control common law nuisances and threats to public health and safety due to, among others, noise, lack of property maintenance, poor building practices, junk accumulation, odors and uncontrolled burning.
- O. Cooperate with local business development organizations to promote commercial and industrial development which will not compromise the qualities of the Township which make it so attractive.
- P. Support the efforts of local land trusts to work with willing landowners to place conservation easements on open land.

GOAL 2

Conserve natural resources and open space in Covington Township and use the resources in a way to sustain the area's economy.

Exploitation of the natural resources and sensitive environmental areas in the Township can lead to the decline of the attractive rural character of the area and the quality lifestyle it affords, with eventual direct threats to the environment and public health and safety. Of special concern are soil and surface and ground water resources.

Objectives:

- A. Identify sensitive natural areas such as wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, steep slopes, poor soils and flood plains, and adopt regulations to protect such areas.

- B. Evaluate and develop Township land use controls in terms of effects on open space with the goal of maintaining open space to the greatest extent possible.
- C. Maintain up-to-date standards in Township ordinances for storm water control, soil erosion and sedimentation control, sewage disposal, solid waste disposal and other environmental concerns.
- D. Consider the use of land use control incentives, such as a density bonus, for the preservation of large sensitive natural areas.
- E. Use of *conservation design development* zoning to shift residential development away from important natural, scenic and cultural features, and preserve the resulting open space.
- F. Allow the use of transferrable development rights to direct development to locations with adequate infrastructure and enable conservation-minded landowners to preserve their properties.
- G. Encourage home occupations and small businesses as a means of allowing the owners of large parcels to realize economic gain thereby forestalling the development of open land.
- H. Use land use controls to direct new residential and commercial development away from floodplain to areas where land is adequate to provide facilities necessary to support development and flood damage is minimized.
- I. Require as part of the land use control process the assessment of impacts of residential and nonresidential development on water quality.
- J. Maintain up-to-date standards in Township ordinances for storm water control, soil erosion and sedimentation control, sewage disposal, solid waste disposal and other environmental concerns.
- K. Support the efforts of local land trusts to work with willing landowners to place conservation easements on open land.

GOAL 3

Encourage commercial and industrial development located and designed to be compatible with existing land use and community character.

A healthy economy fosters a healthy community by providing business development and employment opportunities. Given the historical development pattern of the Township with limited commercial development, residents historically relied on the greater Scranton/Lackawanna County area for employment, shopping and personal services. More recent commercial development, primarily in the retail and service sector, has somewhat reduced the economic importance of the larger region.

Local government may choose to not take a direct role in economic development, but can institute land use control and development policies that have a positive effect on the local economy and tax base, while addressing community

conservation concerns. Recreation and tourism and forestry enterprises continue to be important to the Township economy and steps should be taken to sustain these activities.

Objectives:

- A. Direct new commercial development to areas of existing commercial development and where community facilities are adequate.
- B. Welcome new commercial and industrial development to areas of existing similar development and where community facilities are adequate so that the development is compatible with existing land use and community character.

- C. Support the continued development of the industrial park and other businesses providing local employment and contributing to the tax base.
- D. Promote local economic viability by allowing home occupations and home businesses consistent with residential districts and small businesses consistent with recreation and tourism and the overall community character.
- E. Develop guidelines for commercial building design, landscaping and parking that will ensure high aesthetic quality and while meeting basic needs.
- F. Adopt, monitor and update commercial and industrial development standards to protect the public health, welfare and safety, to preserve community character, and to minimize conflicts with the tourism-recreation trade by controlling such activities as noise; outdoor manufacturing, processing and storage; lighting; and other potential effects.
- G. Recognize the importance of the regional economy and monitor and participate in county and regional business development activities.
- H. Encourage compact commercial development based on conservation design to avoid commercial strip development.

GOAL 4

Provide for a variety of housing types and densities.

Families and individuals of all income levels reside in the Township and need continued access to decent and affordable housing with proper community facilities. The special needs of young families looking for their first home and senior citizens on fixed incomes must be addressed.

Objectives:

- A. Allow residential development of various types (single-family, two-family, multi-family, mobile home parks) in certain areas at a density sufficiently high to moderate the increasing cost of housing, yet assuring adequate water supply and sewage disposal.
- B. Direct higher density residential development to areas served by the existing central sewage collection and treatment system.
- C. Encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing older homes which typically are larger and more difficult to maintain, especially for individuals on fixed incomes.
- D. Investigate and encourage participation in all county, state and federal housing rehabilitation and assistance programs to assure Township residents have the opportunity to receive full benefit from such programs.
- E. Require all residential development to meet adequate design standards and provide proper community facilities via the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.
- F. Require in the Subdivision Ordinance the continued ownership and maintenance of all improvements and facilities associated with residential development.
- G. Foster a housing market affordable to younger and fixed-income residents by carefully evaluating the affect of land use controls on the cost of housing.
- H. Consider the adoption of an ordinance to regulate nuisances and safety hazards associated with dilapidated and dangerous structures.

GOAL 5

Ensure that community facilities and services will be adequate to meet expected needs.

Township residents rely on community and public facilities and services to meet their transportation, educational, water supply, sewage disposal, police protection, emergency response, recreation and other daily living needs. The Township does not, and cannot, provide all the facilities and services demanded by its residents, many such services being provided by other levels of government or volunteer organizations. Nevertheless, without diligent and ongoing attention to the operation and maintenance of existing facilities and services, and planning for new facilities and services, a municipality can fall short in adequately serving its residents. In addition, the Eagle Lake Recreation Community is an important part of the Township and Township Officials must recognize that the needs of that community may be somewhat different than the needs of permanent residents.

Objectives:

- A. Systematically identify local municipal community facilities and services needs, including useful life replacement of existing facilities, and develop a capital budget to meet the needs.
- B. Provide necessary maintenance of existing Township community facilities to extend the useful life and forestall unnecessary capital expenditures.
- C. Encourage and continue to support volunteer fire, ambulance and other public service organizations.
- D. Assure that an adequate and safe water supply system, sewage collection and conveyance system, well designed and constructed roads and other facilities are provided by developers as part of any residential development.
- E. Manage all Township facilities and services efficiently and effectively.
- F. Participate in any area intergovernmental cooperation efforts for community facilities planning and economies of scale for joint purchasing, recreation and other facilities and services.
- G. Work with the Eagle Lake Association to identify specific needs for that community.
- H. Maintain up-to-date standards in Township ordinances for storm water control, soil erosion and sedimentation control, sewage disposal, solid waste disposal and other environmental concerns.

GOAL 6

Establish and maintain a road system adequate to safely and efficiently move goods and people through the Township

Safe and well maintained roads are vital to all communities, serving not only as the means of travel within the community, but as the direct link to the region and beyond. Interstate Route 380 runs north and south through the western third of the Township and one interchange at Route 307 is situated in the Township. I-380 provides connection to I-84 and I-81 to the north and I-80

to the south. Arterial routes in the Township include State Routes 307 and 435 which run north to Scranton and south toward Stroudsburg, and Route 502 which runs west to Moosic. In short, the interstate and state routes serving the Township provide easy access to and from the Township, and hold great potential for fostering development, both residential for citizens who

commute to work and for commercial development as the greater Scranton area demands. The Township has direct jurisdiction over 23.13 miles of the roads in the community, being responsible for improvements and maintenance, with the more heavily traveled routes owned and maintained by the State totaling 25.23 miles and I-380 adding about six additional miles of roadway. Land use controls must take into consideration the capacity of roads, directing commercial and higher density development to areas served by roads capable of carrying increased traffic and the trucks necessary to serve commercial establishments.

Objectives:

- A. Inventory and classify according to function all public roads in the Township and assess maintenance and improvements needed.
- B. Identify key intersections and other problem areas, and plan for improvements.
- C. Maintain the adequacy of roads by requiring adequate off-street parking and loading, limited curb cuts, well defined access points, and standards for dedication of roads to the Township.
- D. Limit higher density and higher traffic impact development to areas with adequate highway capacity to accommodate such development.
- E. Develop a road and intersection maintenance and capital improvements program.
- F. Maintain an up-to-date Township road ordinance setting standards for construction of public roads and establishing procedures for dedication to the Township.
- G. Actively participate in all County and PennDOT highway planning programs.
- H. Encourage intermunicipal cooperation as a means of addressing regional highway needs.
- I. Require as part of zoning approval for new or expanded uses, the issuance of a highway occupancy permit by the Township or PennDOT, as appropriate.
- J. Maintain an up-to-date Township road occupancy ordinance setting standards for driveway access to Township roads and storm water and utility improvements within the Township road right-of-way.

GOAL 7

Protect historic resources as an important part of the character of Covington Township.

Many historic structures are found in Covington Township, ranging from farm residences and outbuildings, to the older homes in villages, to old schools and churches. These buildings were merely erected as part of a growing community, and although many of the early structures are now gone, the many which remain add tremendously to the character of the area. In addition to buildings, stone walls and fences are significant historic features throughout the Township. Originally an integral part of early agricultural practices, stone walls and fences are now being incorporated into home design and as the prime feature in landscaping. The preservation of historic buildings and other features, and

encouraging new development to be consistent with the existing historic character are critical to the future of the community.

Objectives:

- A. Develop an inventory of historic resources in the Township.
- B. Based on the historic resources inventory, create a local historic register and consider nomination of qualifying structures and places to the National Register of Historic Places.
- C. Include in development design standards the

consideration of historic features. For example, use conservation residential subdivision design to preserve farm residences and stone walls.

- D. Develop guidelines for residential and commercial development to encourage historically sensitive design. These guidelines would be recommended to developers in areas not included in a formal historic district where specific architectural design standards can be applied by ordinance.
- E. Allow the *adaptive use* of large older homes to enable owners to adequately maintain the structures. For example, allowing the inclusion of an apartment unit would or a bed and breakfast business would generate income for overall building maintenance.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Regional Location

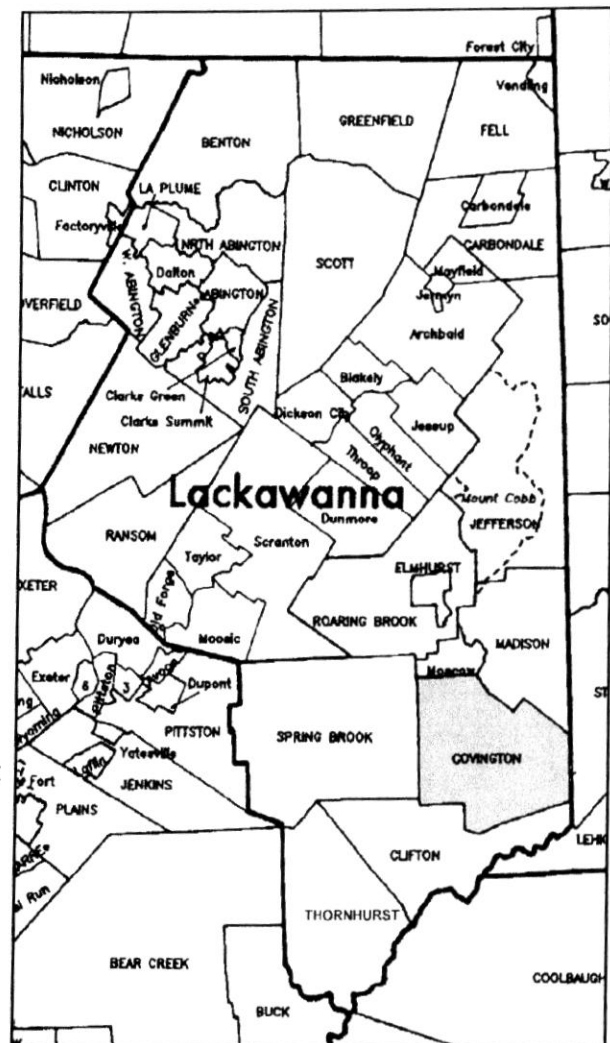
Covington Township lies in southeast section of Lackawanna County, bordered on the north by Moscow Borough and Madison Township, on the west by Springbrook Township, on the south by Clifton Township, and by Sterling Township, Wayne County on the east. With good access to the interstate highway system, Covington Township is situated in the heart of an attractive rural area lying between the Scranton metropolitan area and the northern reach of the Pocono Mountains, and within a reasonable travel time to the Lehigh Valley and Philadelphia areas of Pennsylvania, and metropolitan areas of New Jersey and New York. (See Figure I-1, Regional Location Map.)

The Township is bisected north-and-south by Interstate Route 380 which connects to Interstate Route 84 and Interstate Route 81 a short distance to the north and Interstate Route 80 about twenty-five to the south. These routes, along with Route 307, Route 435 and Route 502, the other major state routes in the Township, serve to provide the easy access to the Township. See Section VII for a detailed discussion of highways and transportation.

General Characteristics

A community's character evolves from, and is defined by, a variety of interrelated factors. Covington Township's regional location, physical characteristics (geology, topography, soils), early settlement patterns, the area transportation network and the regional economy have been synthesized into the existing community character of the Township and its context in Lackawanna County and the larger region.

Covington Township can best be characterized as a suburbanizing rural community comprised of a mix of residential and retail/service development interspersed with large tracts of forest and other open land. A more recent development is the industrial park off Route 435 in the eastern end of



Regional Location

the Township which has added considerably to the tax base and provides employment for area residents.

Little agricultural land remains, much having been converted to residential and commercial use while much previously farmed land lies idle, in the process of reverting to brush and forest land. While there is no state forest or state game land in the Township, hundreds of acres of forest land are owned by the Theta Land Corporation. Historically part of watershed lands associated with drinking water supplies developed by the

Pennsylvania Gas and Water Company, this land has long remained open land and has added to the rural character of the Township. A recent change in company structure and policy has changed the status of this land which may now become available for development.

The Township is relatively sparsely populated for lying so close to the Scranton metropolitan area. The 2000 Census reported 1,994 permanent residents in the Township, or eighty-five persons per square mile, compared to the county-wide population density of 470 persons per square mile. Given the attractive rural character of the Township and its proximity to the City of Scranton, the recent completion of the sewer system serving part of the Township, and the development of the industrial park, increased population growth is expected.

Development History

Covington Township was formed in 1818 from Wilkes-Barre Township and included all the land obtained by Henry Drinker in the southern part of the original Luzerne County. The Drinkers were an old and prominent Philadelphia family, descended from one John Drinker who emigrated from Exeter, England, and settled on the banks of the Delaware River at Philadelphia in 1679 before the arrival of William Penn. Colonel Henry W. Drinker was the man who opened for settlement and development the whole eastern part of Lackawanna County. The land holdings of Colonel Drinker were once known as *Drinker's Beech*, so called for the predominant beech timber on the tract. It was named Covington at the suggestion of Henry Drinker's son, in honor of Brigadier General Covington, who died in the War of 1812. Covington Township originally covered the whole eastern half of Lackawanna County, but now is divided into nine municipalities.

Securing a charter from the Pennsylvania legislature in 1819, Drinker began the construction of the *Philadelphia and Great Bend Turnpike* in 1821. Serving as the first major highway through the region and later known as

the *Drinker Turnpike*, owing to the Colonel's contribution of personal funds and energy, the toll road ran from Mount Pocono, through Tobyhanna, Daleville, Moscow, Dunmore, Providence, Chinchilla, Clarks Green, Waverly, Fleetville, Glenwood, Lenox Corners, Harford, and New Milford, terminating at Great Bend. In 1926, Drinker obtained a charter for the *Delaware and Susquehanna Canal and Railroad Company*, envisioning a connection between the two rivers to carry coal and iron ore to eastern markets. It wasn't until the involvement of the Scranton Brothers with their iron industry that the railroad became viable, with the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad being formed in 1853 from two smaller railroad companies, the Leggitts Gap Railroad and the Delaware and Cobbs Gap Railroad.¹

Daleville, the principal village in the Township, was first settled in September 1819 by Edward Wardell, a native of Yorkshire England who purchased 250 acres of land from Colonel Drinker at \$5 per acre. David Dale was the next settler, arriving a week later, with Matthew Hodson, Robert Roseman, John Fish and Frederick Raish arriving soon thereafter. The first frame house was constructed in 1826, the first hotel and first tavern in 1827, and the first store in 1831. By 1880, Daleville was comprised of two churches, a steam sawmill, a school, a hotel, a blacksmith shop, a wagon shop, a store, and some 150 residents.²

Timbering and agriculture served as the base for the initial settlement and early economic development of the Township and Lackawanna County, with coal becoming important in later years. However, over the years these basic activities have lost significance to the local economy. Many acres in the region which once were forested or in agriculture are now subdivided into residential lots. Improvements in

¹William P. Lewis, Executive Director, Lackawanna County Historical Society, April 1980.

²History of Lackawanna County, Munsell, 1880.

transportation, initiated by railroad access and culminating in modern road improvements and the completion of the interstate highway system, transformed Lackawanna County into the community of today. More recently, changes in the quality of life and cost of living in urban areas are reflected in the changing character of the more rural areas of the County to a bedroom communities where residents commute to work outside of their home municipality. Given the large private land holdings, the Township holds great potential for development should the demand for housing be stimulated by a revitalized home market or by an increased pace of the relocation of nearby urbanites to full-time residency in the Township. The direction plotted by this *Comprehensive Plan* and the land use control and growth management actions taken by the municipal officials of Covington Township, along with the private development decisions made in response to demands for housing and commercial development, will shape the community's character over the next ten to twenty years.

PLANS

The individual plan elements included in this *Comprehensive Plan* are intended to reflect established goals and objectives, to consider the findings of the background studies, and to set the overall growth and development direction for Covington Township. Having stated this, it is important to note that municipal planning must be

considered an on-going process, and a community's goals and objectives will change with changing conditions in the community. Therefore, the basic planning tenet of this *Comprehensive Plan* is the continual review of the Township's goals and objectives with adjustments made to the associated plans and policies.

LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PLAN

Existing Land Use Controls and Environmental Regulations

Based on earlier plans and policies, the Township adopted a number of land use control ordinances including a subdivision and land development ordinance and a zoning ordinance. These two types of ordinances are the principal land use control ordinances available to local municipalities in Pennsylvania.

SALDO

The subdivision and land development ordinance, first adopted in 1982 and comprehensively updated in 1992, provides standards for the development of residential and non-residential projects assuring the provision of adequate community facilities such as roads, water supply and sewage disposal, utilities, proper highway access, and storm water control. The 1992 update was amended in 1994 to include provisions for storm water management in the Lackawanna River Watershed and in 1998 to revise plan filing and review requirements. In 2006, provisions for conservation subdivision design were included. In order to make the subdivision ordinance more *user friendly* the Township periodically publishes ordinance compilations which incorporate all amendments into the body of the original ordinance.

Zoning Ordinance

Initially adopted in early 1972, the zoning ordinance was completely revised in 1989, with a number of subsequent amendments to address

specific types of land uses such as drive-through restaurants, adult businesses, commercial communications towers, wind farms and treatment centers/clinics. Conservation subdivision design and transfer of development rights were added in 2006 to encourage the preservation of open space while allowing landowners to capture the full density of development parcels.

All of the amendments were consolidated and reenacted into a complete zoning ordinance in early 2007. Now, in addition to the typical regulations governing lot size, setbacks and building height, the zoning ordinance includes specific standards for a broad range of land uses including for example: parking, signs, junkyards, solid waste facilities, mobile home parks, recreational vehicle parks and multi-family dwellings, and other general community development and environmental performance standards.

Other Ordinances

In addition to these two principal land use and environmental control ordinance the Township has adopted a number of other ordinances addressing such concerns as floodplain management, outdoor burning, sewage disposal, building construction and fire prevention, and junked vehicles.

Future Land Use

Covington Township's proximate location to

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	Introduction-1
OVERVIEW	Overview-1
GOALS AND ACTIONS SUMMARY	Goals and Actions Summary -1
COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	Goals and Objectives-1
COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DEVELOPMENT HISTORY	
Regional Location	1
General Characteristics	1
Development History	2
PLANS	Plans-
Land Use and Environmental Protection Plan	1
Existing Land Use Controls and Environmental Regulations	1
SALDO	1
Zoning Ordinance	1
Other Ordinances	1
Future Land Use	1
Land Use Planning Approach	2
Current Zoning Districts Affirmed	2
Sewer Service Area Overlay District	2
Rural Character and Open Land Preservation	3
Conservation Subdivision Design	3
Conservation Design in Covington Township	8
Transferrable Development Rights (TDR)	8
TDR in Covington Township	10
Conservation Easements	10
Environmental Protection	11
Residential Neighborhoods	11
Specific Actions for Nonresidential Development	12
Forestry	12
Mineral Extraction	12
Other Specific Land Use Control and Environmental Protection Actions	13
Community Facilities and Services Plan	14
Municipal Buildings	14
Emergency Services	14
Police Protection	14
Utilities	
Water Supply	15
Water Quality Protection; Quality	15
Wellhead Protection	15

metropolitan areas, coupled with the area's attractive rural/residential character, is expected to continue to stimulate residential development, with continued progression to a *bedroom community* character involving permanent residents who commute outside the Township to work. This trend will be tempered somewhat by the strong retail service development in Daleville and increased occupancy in the industrial park

An additional factor which is expected to stimulate residential development is the central sewage disposal system serving the core area of the township. The effect of this key community facility must be considered in terms of residential density and the Township zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance must be evaluated to adjust minimum lot sizes within the sewer district and coordinate connections to the system in accord with the requirements of the Covington Township Sewer Authority.

Concurrently, increased demand for retail and service establishments will be generated by the residential development, and suitable areas for commercial areas must be identified. The need to provide improved employment opportunities in the community is also recognized, as is the importance of maintaining existing businesses. In short, it is the intent of Township officials to conserve the community's rural character, while concurrently encouraging economic development and job opportunities consistent with the rural character. Higher density residential development and commercial development should be directed to the core area of the Township where the central sewer and better highway access is available.

Land Use Planning Approach

The basic land use planning approach of this *Plan* is outlined as follows:

- providing incentives for good design and open space preservation as property is developed
- protecting residential neighborhoods and subdivisions from incompatible development

- providing well-situated and appropriate development areas to accommodate projected growth
- relying on the larger region to supplement local business in meeting retail and service needs and providing employment
- carefully controlling the expansion of public water and sewer service areas

Current Zoning Districts Affirmed

Based on this philosophy and on this *Comprehensive Plan*, and the Township Supervisors and Planning Commissioners recognize that the continued enforcement of the zoning ordinance and the subdivision and land development ordinance, continued planning by consulting, reviewing and updating this *Comprehensive Plan*, and periodically updating the ordinance to address changing conditions are the most critical actions required to manage the growth and development which is inevitable for the Township.

The existing zoning districts in the Township as delineated by the current zoning map are affirmed as the future land use plan for the Township. The zoning districts are listed below.

RR Rural Residential District
 R-1 Low Density Residential District
 R-2 High Density Residential District
 C-1 General Commercial District
 C-2 Highway Commercial District
 M-1 Manufacturing District
 SC Special Conservation District
 MP-RV Mobile Home Park - Recreational
 Vehicle Park District

Sewer Service Area Overlay District

The current service area of the Covington Township Sewer Authority includes several different zoning districts which permit a variety of residential and commercial uses. Single-family and two-family dwellings are permitted at a density of one unit per acre whenever off-site sewage is provided, and townhouses and garden

apartment density is set at two units per acre, and apartment buildings at three units per acre.

By allowing higher densities within the sewer service area, and setting a single-family, two-acre minimum in the balance of the Township regardless of the type of sewage disposal and coupled with mandated land conservation development, several important goals may be realized. First, the Township will meet its *fair share* of higher density (and more affordable) housing. Second, more intense development will be centered in the core area of the Township where facilities and services are adequate. And finally, much of the critical open space in the Township will be preserved.

One option to provide for higher residential densities is to create a *sewer service area overlay district* which would coincide with the boundary of the service area and would permit higher density development. The underlying zoning districts, the range of allowed uses, and other performance standards would otherwise remain intact. This option also enables the overlay zone to extend along with any expansion of the sewer service area. The details of density and mechanism for implementation should be determined based on the normal zoning ordinance amendment and public participation process.

Rural Character and Open Land Preservation

Open land is a key ingredient of the Township's attractive rural character, and Township officials should encourage the conservation of open land. The Township is fortunate to include thousands of acres of privately owned open. However, many of the area's unique land features have already been platted into traditional single-family residential subdivisions. Continued unabated, all areas of undeveloped land in Covington Township which are not wetlands or are not extremely steep could be developed, using central sewage disposal if necessary. Taken to the extreme, the entire area of the Township which is suitable for development would be platted into lots meeting the minimum one or two acre lot size. This scenario does little to preserve the character of

Covington Township which is so dependent on open land.

Conservation Subdivision Design

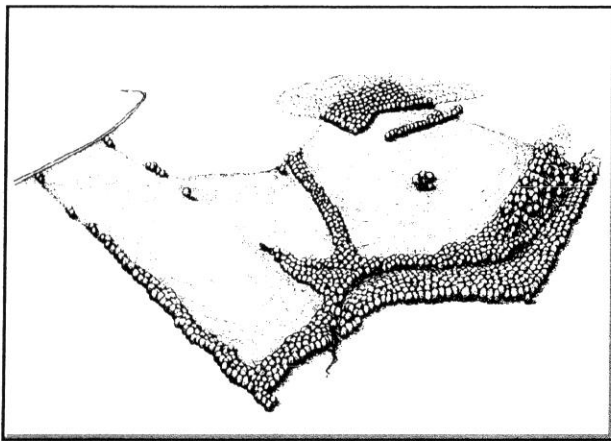
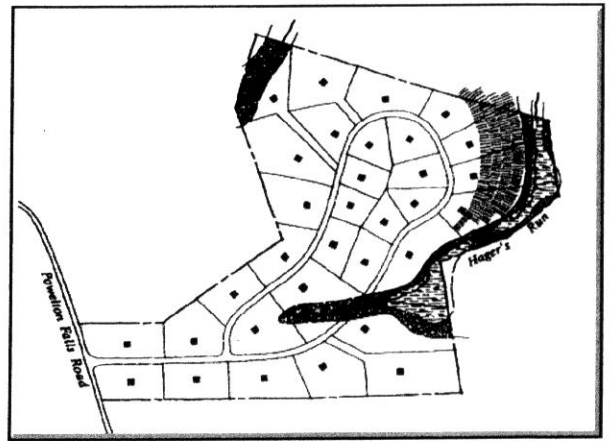
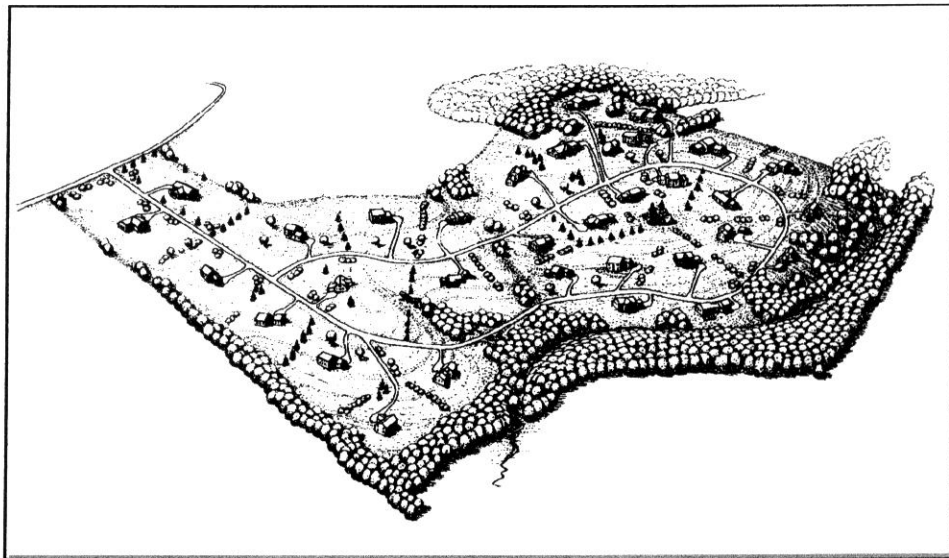
Conservation subdivision design allows the same number of units on a parcel as a typical subdivision but with a reduction in minimum lot size, provided the remainder of land needed to maintain the density established by the ordinance is set aside as permanent open space. In addition to maintaining open land, conservation design reduces development costs (and commitment of resources) given shortened road and water and sewer line length, minimizes long term maintenance costs of such improvements, and limits environmental affects such as soil disturbance and storm water.

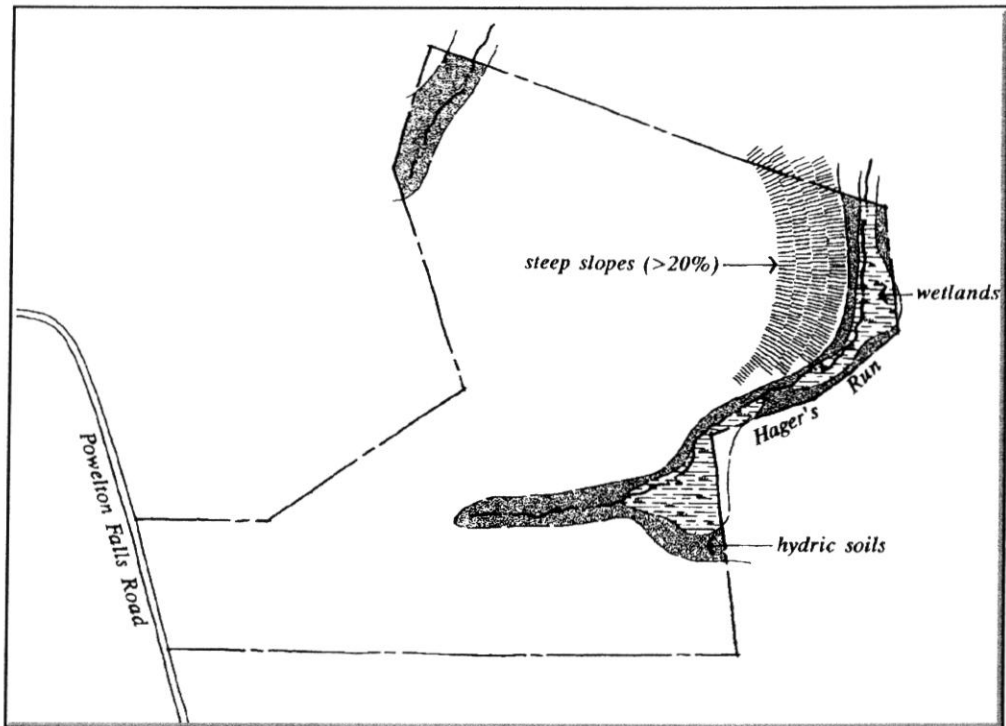
The Natural Lands Trust, Inc., a nationally known land conservation organization suggests that the land conservation concept be taken to a higher level by providing incentives (or disincentives) to encourage the conservation of open land and establishing specific techniques for the design of open space subdivisions.

The process is presented in detail in the handbook, *Designing Open Space Subdivisions, A Practical Step-by-Step Approach*, published by the Natural Lands Trust. Incentives could include allowing higher density for open space design; a disincentive would be the reduction in density if a traditional lot layout is used in place of the open space design. In fact, some communities have mandated the use of open space design for all development. The conservation design process involves the following steps: (See the following illustrations from *Designing Open Space Subdivisions, A Practical Step-by-Step Approach*)

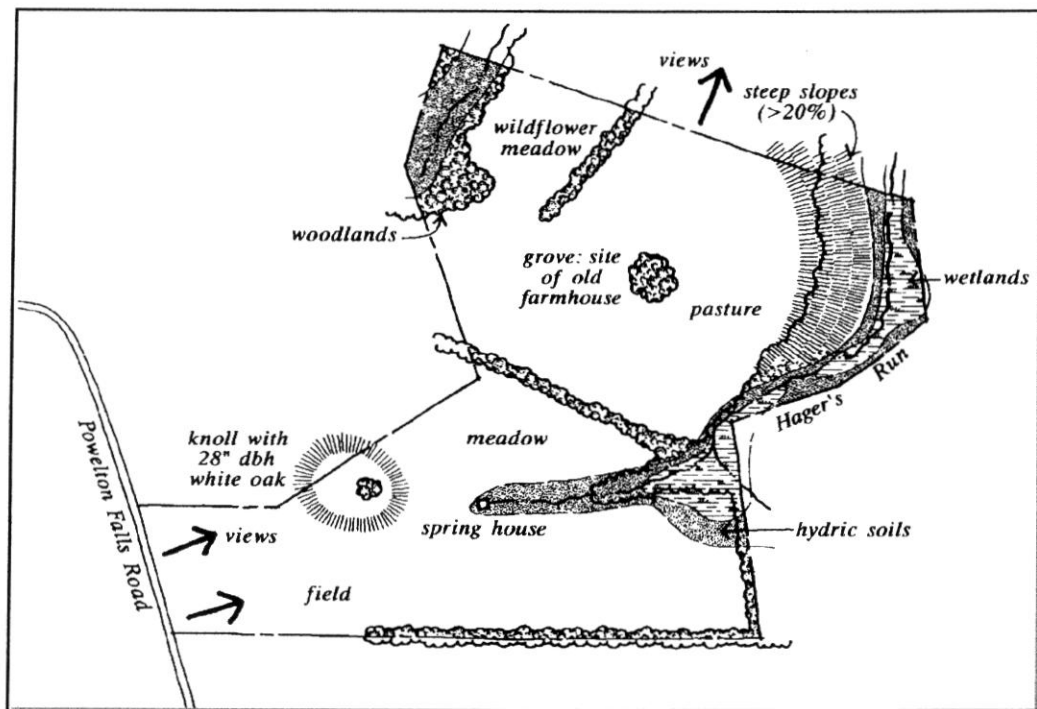
1. Yield Plan - the number of units which could be developed on the site using the traditional subdivision approach.
2. Identification of all potential open space areas including primary conservation areas such as
 - Soils suitable for on site sewage systems
 - Water bodies

- Floodplain
 - Wetlands
 - Steep slopes
- and secondary conservation areas such as . . .
- Mature woodlands
 - Prime farmland
 - Significant wildlife habitats
 - Historic, archeological, and cultural feature
 - Views into and out from the site
 - Aquifers and recharge areas
3. Identification of potential development areas -- Where should the houses be logically located on the site?
 4. Location of potential house sites -- Where should individual units be located within the development area?
 5. Design of infrastructure -- How is access, water supply, sewage disposal, and stormwater management best provided with the least impact on conservation areas?
 6. Drawing in the lot lines at the reduced lot size results in the conservation of the designated open land.

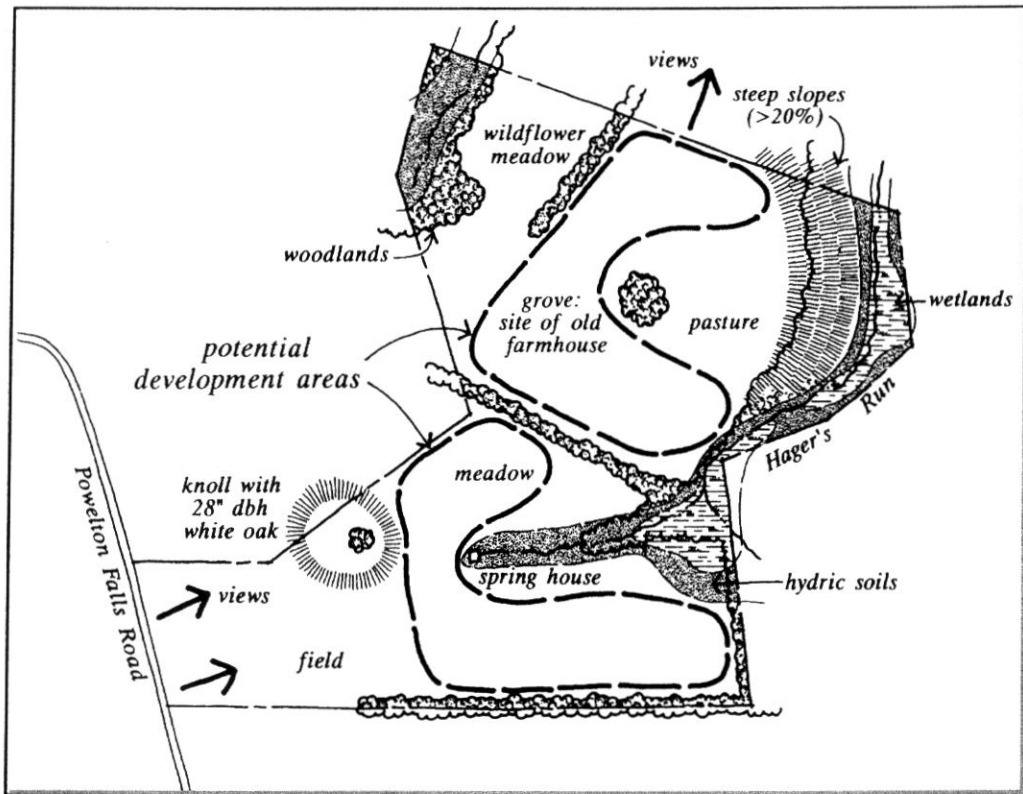
*Before Development**Yield Plan**With Conventional Development*



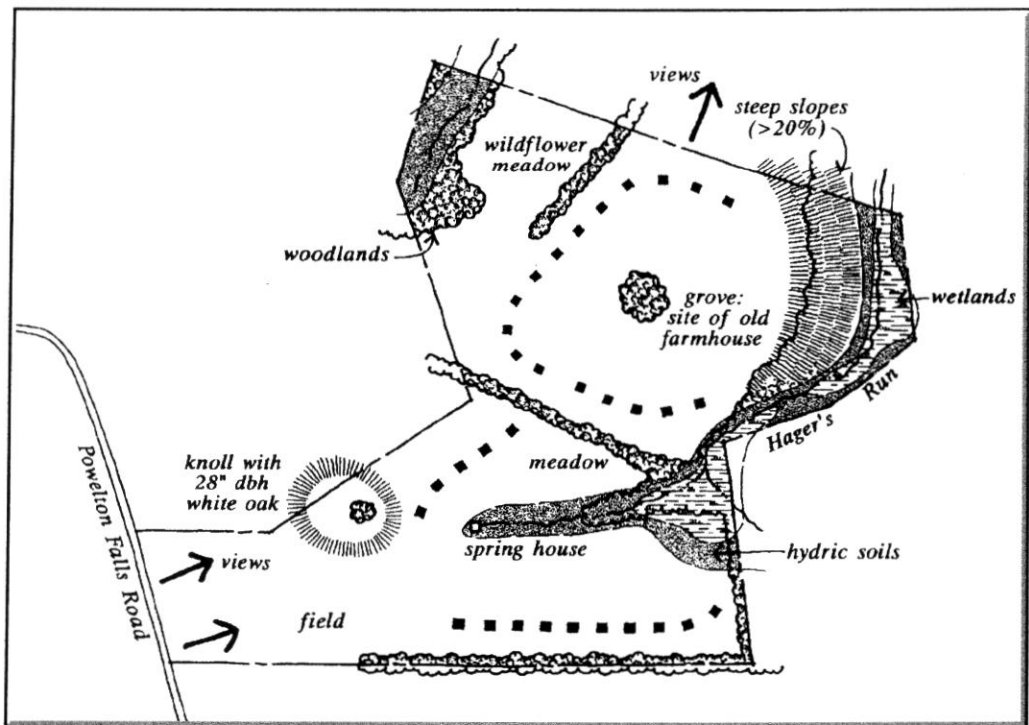
Identifying Primary Conservation Areas



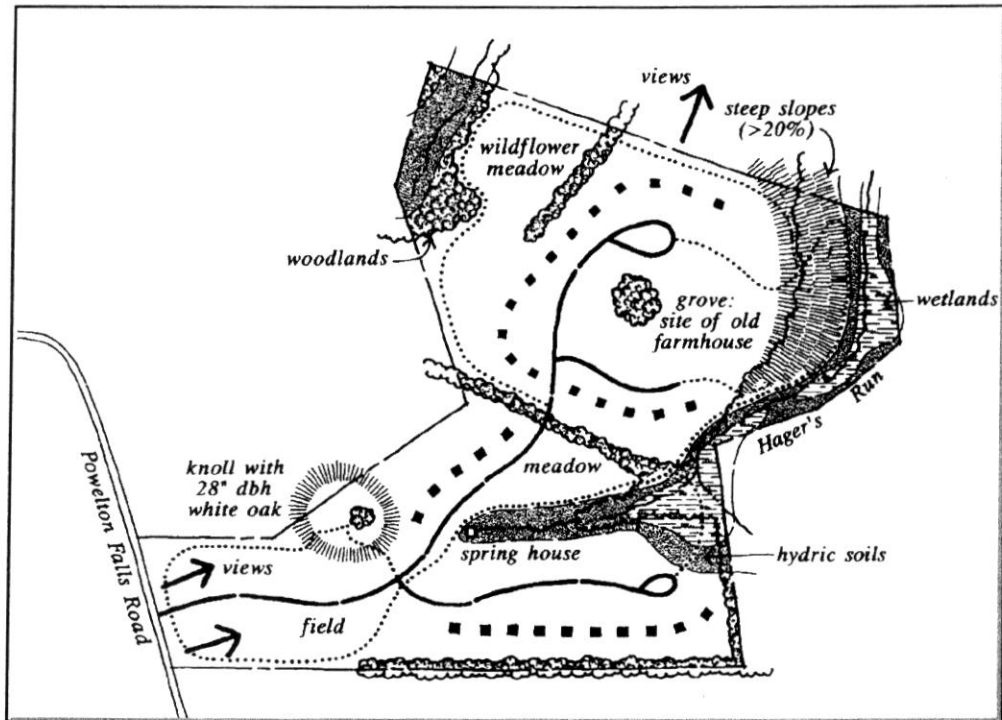
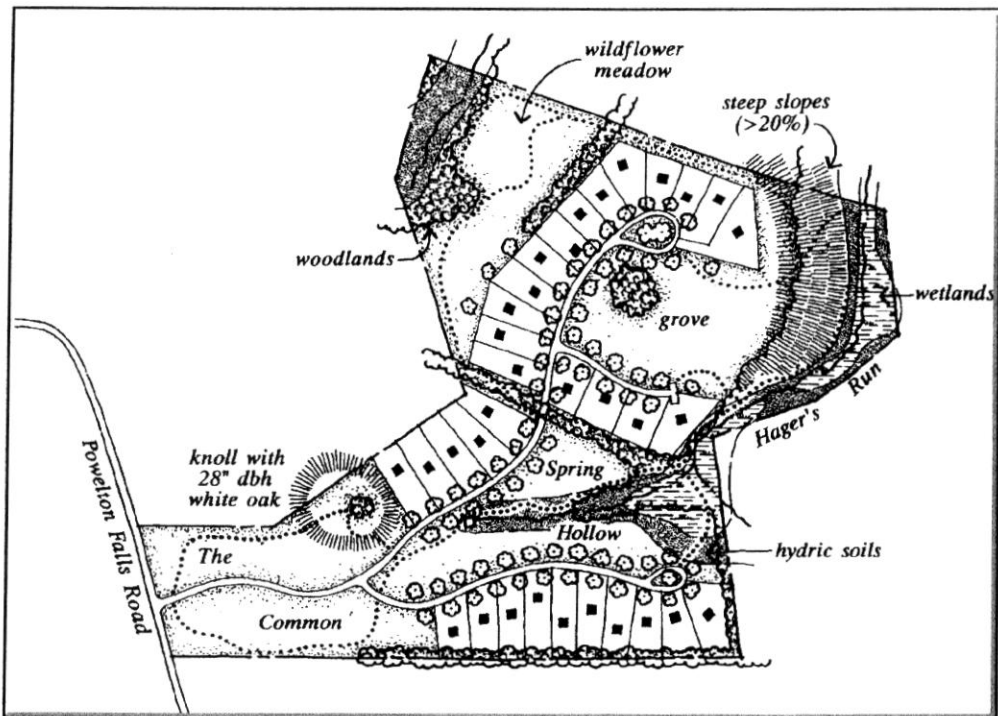
Identifying Secondary Conservation Areas

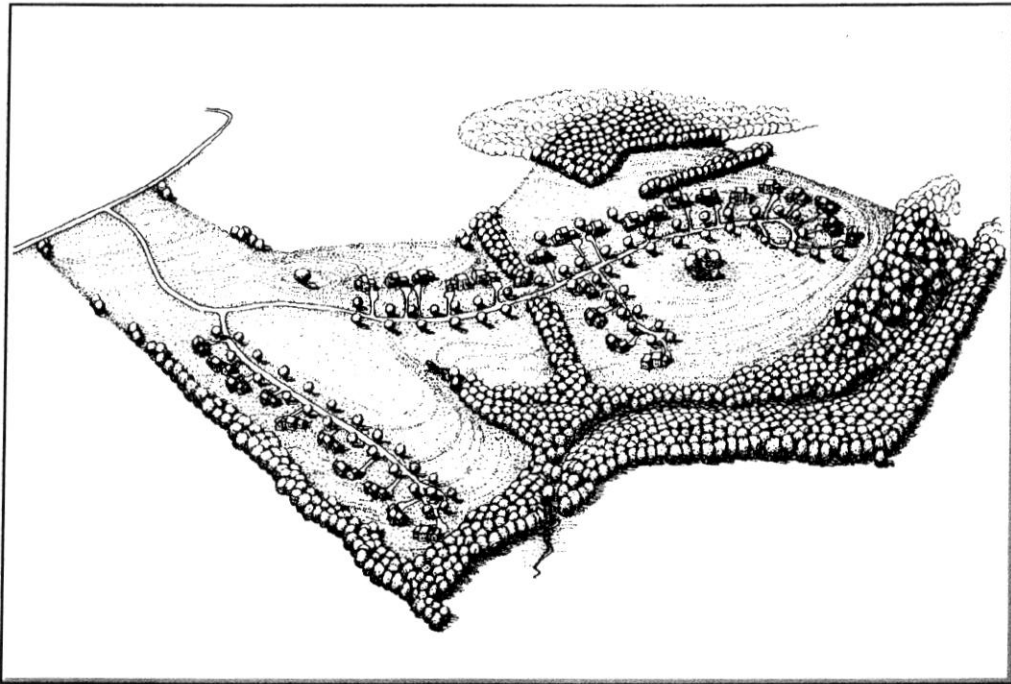


Identifying Potential Development Areas



Locating Potential House Sites

*Designing Infrastructure and Trail Links**Drawing in the Lot Lines*



With Open Space Design

The *Conservation Opportunities Map* included with this *Plan* provides an overview of the primary conservation areas addressed in the conservation design process. These areas form the base of the long term open space preservation envisioned by this *Plan*, with the details of specific conservation areas provided project-by-project as development plans are submitted in accord with the design standards contained in Township ordinances. (See also the Goals for Conservation Subdivision Design on the following page.)

Conservation Design in Covington Township

The Township recently revised its SALDO and zoning ordinance to incorporate conservation subdivision design. The SALDO now includes the four-step design process along with the requirement at the preliminary stage for plans that give the Township the information required for ensuring quality residential subdivision design.

The zoning ordinance mandates conservation design in the Special Conservation District, and allows it as an option in all other zoning districts where residential development is permitted. Two

open space options are available, one at fifty percent and the second at seventy percent. In the Special Conservation District, a third option is a conventional subdivision with a ten-acre minimum lot size with no common open space.

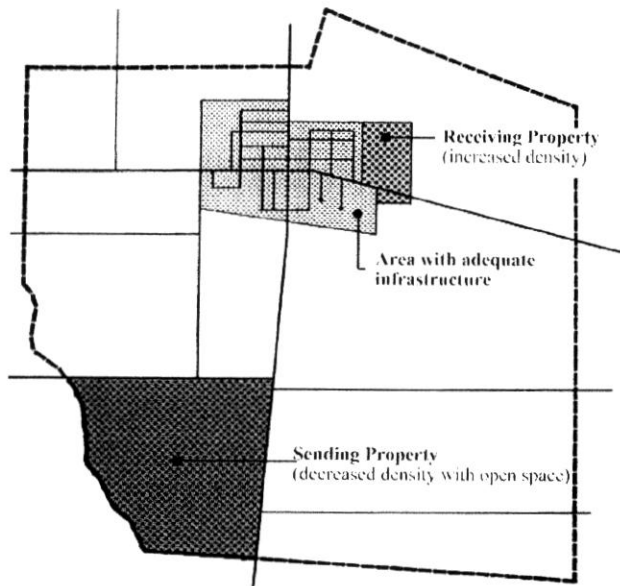
Transferable Development Rights (TDR)

TDR is a free market tool authorized via zoning for preserving forest land, open space, and natural resources. The traditional approach to preservation has been twofold: 1) public purchase of threatened property, either in fee or by purchase of conservation easements, and 2) placing zoning restrictions on development.

TDR programs allow the owner of open land to sell the development rights to another property owner through the private real estate market. TDR is not the same thing as conservation design development. Both TDR and conservation design involve the shifting of density, but conservation design involves the reorganization of development density on the same property, whereas TDR involves the transfer of development rights from one property to another.

Goals for Conservation Design Development

- To conserve open land, including those areas containing unique and sensitive natural features such as woodlands, steep slopes, streams, flood plains and wetlands, by setting them aside from development.
- To focus on the preservation of prime and other active agricultural land as a means of preserving agriculture.
- To provide greater design flexibility and efficiency in the siting of services and infrastructure, including the opportunity to reduce length of roads, utility runs, and the amount of paving required for residential development.
- To reduce erosion and sedimentation by the retention of existing vegetation, and the minimization of development on steep slopes.
- To provide for a diversity of lot sizes, building densities, and housing choices to accommodate a variety of age and income groups, and residential preferences, so that the community's population diversity may be maintained.
- To implement adopted municipal policies to conserve a variety of irreplaceable and environmentally sensitive resource lands, including provisions for reasonable incentives to create a greenway and trail system for the benefit of present and future residents.
- To implement adopted land use, transportation, and community policies, as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.
- To protect areas of the Township with productive agricultural soils for continued or future agricultural use, by conserving blocks of land large enough to allow for efficient farm operations.
- To create neighborhoods with direct visual access to open land, with amenities in the form of neighborhood open space, and with a strong neighborhood identity.
- To provide for the conservation and maintenance of open land within the Township to achieve the above-mentioned goals and for active or passive recreational use by residents.
- To provide multiple options for landowners in order to minimize impacts on environmental resources (sensitive lands such as wetlands, flood plain, and steep slopes) and disturbance of natural or cultural features (such as mature woodlands, hedgerows and tree lines, critical wildlife habitats, historic buildings, and fieldstone walls).
- To provide standards reflecting the varying circumstances and interests of individual landowners, and the individual characteristics of their properties.
- To conserve scenic views and elements of the rural working landscape, and to minimize perceived density, by minimizing views of new development from existing roads.



TDR - Sending Property and Receiving Property

Under TDR, the development rights are severed from a sending property and are sold on the open market to a developer who uses the rights to increase density on a receiving property. The zoning ordinance establishes the parameters for the TDR program. A density bonus can be provided as an incentive and the number of development rights is determined after deducting the area of constrained land akin to the conservation design process. Once the development rights are severed, the sending property is protected from development by a conservation easement. A receiving property must be located in an area with adequate sewage disposal, water supply and other infrastructure required to handle the increased density.

TDR in Covington Township

The Township recently included TDR in the zoning ordinance as an option for conserving open space. Development rights may be sent from parcels of ten acres or more in Rural Residential and Special Conservation Districts to parcels in Rural Residential, Low density Residential, High Density Residential, and Mobile Home Park-Recreational Vehicle park Districts where central water supply and central sewage disposal are provided. The sending property is protected from further development by a conservation easement.

TDR offers potential benefits of compelling importance:

- TDR redirects development from areas where development is not appropriate to areas where development makes the most sense.
- TDR preserves open space at little or no public expense.
- TDR ensures that landowners suffer no serious property value reductions that accompany other zoning approaches (such as downzoning used to protect open space).
- TDR allows large groups of parcels (e.g., entire agricultural areas, sensitive watersheds, scenic vistas, historic districts) to be conserved in contrast to parcel-by-parcel clustering techniques.

Source: Transfer of Development Rights, Brandywine Conservancy, 2003, p. 5

The optional transfer of development rights, combined with the conservation design approach, gives the Township a very progressive tool to conserve large areas of open land while providing development options for landowners. In fact, an entire sending property could be preserved with the density transferred to the receiving property where individual lot sizes could be reduced and important conservation areas would also be conserved.

Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are an important tool for preserving open land, but have found little use by municipalities in Northeastern Pennsylvania. A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency. The easement may be sold or donated by the property owner and places permanent restrictions on the use or development of land in order to protect its conservation values.

Although local governments are just beginning to see the utility of conservation easements, community based nonprofit organizations have long used conservation easements to preserve land

Advantages Offered by Conservation Easements

Less Costly: Purchasing an easement is less costly than an in-fee purchase and can afford as much protection.

Private Ownership: The property remains in private ownership and continues to contribute to the local tax base. The landowner may choose to live on the land, sell it, or pass it on to heirs.

Owners Satisfaction: Gives the landowner the satisfaction that the land will remain unchanged.

Flexibility: Easements are flexible and can be written to meet a particular landowner's needs while protecting the property's resources.

Permanency: Most easements are permanent, remaining in force when the land changes hands. The easement holder ensures that the restrictions are maintained.

Tax Reduction: There are significant tax advantages if easements are donated rather than sold.

Charitable Taxes: The donation of a conservation easement to a land trust is treated as a charitable gift of the development rights. The donation creates a charitable tax deduction, equal to the value of the conservation easement, on the landowner's Federal and State income tax returns.

Estate Taxes: Estate taxes are significantly lower, sometimes making the difference between heirs holding onto the family land or selling it to pay inheritance taxes.

Property Taxes: Conservation easements will sometimes lower property taxes, a result of reduced valuation on property subject to the conservation easement.

Minimizes Effect of Development: Minimizes other impacts of residential development such as increased population, traffic, and demand for community facilities and services.

and rural character by accepting donation or acquiring the easements. Such organizations range in size from the Nature Conservancy, a nationwide organization, to small organizations with board members from the local community. Funding for the acquisition of easements is available from a number of sources, including donation or bargain sale by the owner for tax benefits, and state and federal grant programs.

Environmental Protection

The Township zoning ordinance include a broad range of environmental standards. The intent is to ensure *environmentally friendly* or *green* development within the context of the existing zoning districts. The zoning ordinance includes in §512 specific commercial and industrial performance standards and SALDO §601.1 requires the consideration of natural and manmade features as part of subdivision and commercial land development planning. The Township will periodically review and update local environmental standards to ensure the most effective protection. The range includes:

- Environmental impact analysis requirements for large scale and environmentally problematic uses.

- Soil stabilization and landscaping.
- Stream, lake and wetland buffers.
- Stormwater best management practices including quality treatment and infiltration.
- Floodplain management.
- Hydrogeological studies for proposed uses with large groundwater consumption.
- On-site sewage disposal system management.
- Limitations and special standards for development on steep slopes.

Residential Neighborhoods

In addition to the villages in the Township, residences are found in a number of planned or historically evolved developments and on individual lots. Local officials recognize that the future land use plan must allow for all types of commercial and manufacturing uses. However, this *Plan* must also afford to existing residences and new residential development protection from incompatible uses and the *externalities*, that is, negative effects, of unrestrained commercial and

Sewage Disposal	15
Solid Waste Disposal	16
Recreation/Community Activities	16
Emergency Management	17
Facilities and Services Future Financing - O&M	17
Community Facilities for New Development	17
Private Residential Communities	17
Transportation Plan	19
Road Improvements	19
Administrative Road and Intersection Improvement Actions	19
Township Roads	19
State Roads	20
Bridges	20
Subdivision Roads	20
Specific Actions for New Subdivision Roads	20
Airports, Railroads and Public Transportation	20
Housing Plan	21
Municipalities Planning Code Requirements	21
Housing Affordability Considerations	21
Age of Housing	22
Home Ownership and Housing Value	22
Housing Affordability in the Township	23
Township Regulations	24
Regional Housing Efforts	24
Affordability in a Growing Community	24
Specific Housing Actions	25
Capital Improvements Program	26
CIP - A Planning Tool	26
CIP Benefits	26
Prioritization of Municipal Needs	26
Planned Expenditures	27
Historic Preservation Plan	28
Historic Resources	28
Official Map	29
Regional Planning and Intermunicipal Cooperation	29
Interrelationship of Plan Elements and Implementation Strategies	29

BACKGROUND FINDINGS

Findings-

Growth and Development, and Existing Land Use	1
Natural Features, Land Suitability for Development and Development Concerns	2
Demographics and Economic Base	4
Financial Analysis	5
Planning and Development in Contiguous Municipalities, the County, and Region	6

APPENDIX

Road Inventory and Evaluation Form

industrial development. This is best accomplished by continuing to maintain separate residential areas, applying environmental, development and operational performance standards to commercial and industrial uses, and establishing increased lot sizes, setbacks, and buffers where such uses adjoin residential development. This should, however, not preclude the use of mixed use development techniques which allow a mix of dwelling types and retail and service establishments internal to the development as a means of providing needed commercial uses close to residences and reducing traffic on public roads. The Township will continue to provide protection for residential areas by maintaining separate residential and nonresidential zoning districts, applying environmental, development and operational performance standards to commercial and industrial uses, and establishing increased lot sizes, setbacks, and buffers where such uses adjoin residential development.

Specific Actions for

Nonresidential Development

The Township zoning ordinance includes a broad range of commercial performance standards which must be continually reviewed and updated to address changing development patterns.

- Monitor the effectiveness of zoning ordinance performance standards to ensure community and environmental protection and update to meet changing needs
- Provide adequate area for commercial and industrial development.
- Maintain up to date design guidelines for commercial, industrial, and institutional development to encourage the most efficient use of commercial land and development consistent with community character.
- Apply the conservation design process to nonresidential development.

Forestry

This *Comprehensive Plan* encourages forestry activities throughout the Planning Area provided such operations are conducted in accord with sound forest management practices and environmental regulations. The Township zoning ordinance is consistent with the MPC by classifying forestry as a principal permitted use in all zoning districts. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), at §603(c)(7), states that *zoning ordinances may not unreasonably restrict forestry activities* and goes on to require that in the Commonwealth, *forestry activities . . . shall be a permitted use by right in all zoning districts in every municipality*. The Code defines *forestry as the management of forests and timberlands when practiced in accord with accepted silvicultural principles, through developing, cultivating, harvesting, transporting and selling trees for commercial purposes, which does not involve any land development* (buildings such as sawmills and wood products manufacturing are treated as separate uses).

Mineral Extraction

The primary minerals of importance extant in the Planning Area are sand and gravel, and quarry stone. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code clearly recognizes mineral extraction as a lawful use. Along with other community effects, such uses can have impacts on water supply sources and are governed by state statutes that specify replacement and restoration of affected water supplies. In addition, the Planning Code now severely limits the range of development and operational standards which can be applied to mineral extraction by local municipalities, with location standards the primary tool available to the Township. Planning Code §603(I) states that *zoning ordinances shall provide for the reasonable development of minerals in each municipality*. The Code definition of minerals is: *Any aggregate or mass of mineral matter, whether or not coherent. The term includes, but is not limited to, limestone and dolomite, sand and gravel, rock and stone, earth, fill, slag, iron ore, zinc ore, vermiculite and clay, anthracite and bituminous coal, coal refuse, peat and crude oil*

and natural gas. The Code, at §603(b) allows zoning ordinances to regulate mineral extraction, but only to the extent that such uses are not regulated by the state Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation Act, the Noncoal Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation Act, and the Oil and Gas Act. These Acts regulate such things as setbacks, dust, noise, blasting, water supply effects, and reclamation.

This *Comprehensive Plan* recognizes the need to provide for the reasonable development of minerals and encourages such operations in appropriate locations. Concurrently, local officials must confirm that mineral extraction operations comply with state regulations and are located in suitable areas where impacts will be minimized. The Township zoning ordinance includes standards for mineral extraction and the standards should be reviewed and updated to ensure that mineral extraction is controlled to the greatest extent possible within the limitations of the MPC.

Other Specific Land Use Control and Environmental Protection Actions

The future land use plan will be implemented via the continued enforcement of the subdivision and land development ordinance, zoning ordinance and zoning map, and other special purpose ordinances. In addition to the specific actions noted previously the Township will . . .

- Use the *Conservation Options Map* in this *Plan* as the base for the long term preservation of open land in the Township.
- Periodically review and update the zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance to reflect the findings and goals and objectives of this *Comprehensive Plan*.
- Consider the use of local municipal funds for the purchase of conservation easements to preserve open land of special value.
- Provide for the economic use of available

natural resources with good conservation and management practices while complying with Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code which limits local restriction of forestry, and mineral extraction.

- Recognizing that continued area wide strong growth and development will have significant effects on the Township, strengthen coordination and cooperation with other municipalities.
- Continue to allow residential development in all areas of the Township based on adequate on-site sewage disposal.
- Discourage the use of non-soil based sewage disposal methods in order to match development to the carrying capacity of the land, and carefully consider any expansion of the existing public sewer system in terms of stimulating development.
- Review the Township Sewage Facilities Plan Update to ensure it is consistent with current Township planning and to address any identified problem areas.
- Cooperate with area economic development groups to broaden the local economy to provide more local jobs, but in keeping with the rural character of the Township.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

Community facilities and services are provided in Covington Township, either directly or by means of funding other agencies, by all levels of government, and in certain cases by non-profit organizations. This element of the *Comprehensive Plan* focuses on those facilities and services which are under the direct jurisdiction of the Township. This is not to imply that Township officials should ignore the quality and adequacy of the community facilities and services provided by other entities. Instead, local officials should monitor these facilities and services to assure that the needs of Township residents are being addressed, and the Supervisors should, via the appropriate administrative and political process, take any action necessary to effect such adequacy.

Municipal Buildings

The recent gift to the Township meeting of the forty-acre Moffat Estate and the improvement of the old municipal building have corrected a longstanding deficiency in office space. The Township Secretary, the Zoning Officer/Grants Coordinator, and other administrative staff are now located in the Moffat building and space is expected to be adequate for the very long term. The meeting room is also adequate for normal Township Supervisor and agency meetings. Meetings which generate broader public participation can be conducted in the nearby fir hall.

The Township Police Department and the local Head Start program are housed in the former municipal building and space is more than adequate. Road maintenance facilities have been improved with the construction of a maintenance and equipment building which will also be adequate for the long term. With the recent acquisition of the Moffat Estate and fourteen acres adjacent to the Township property in Daleville, along with additional recreation property acquisitions, the Township will have adequate property for municipal purposes for

quite some time.

Emergency Services

Fire protection, emergency response and ambulance service in Covington Township are provided entirely by volunteer organizations located outside the Township. The Covington Township Fire Company provides fire protection and ambulance service throughout the Township. The Moscow and Gouldsboro Fire Companies currently provide ambulance service to Covington residents. Emergency services appear to be adequate for current needs, covering all areas of the Township, and direct municipal provision of such services is not planned. The volunteer organizations provide an invaluable service to the Township in these times when many communities are unable to muster an adequate number of volunteers. As new development occurs, the Township must address emergency services as part of the development regulation process and monitor the overall effectiveness of the area service. The Township will continue its financial support to the volunteer organizations serving Township residents.

Police Protection

The Township Board of Supervisors has determined that the current level of police protection is the most reasonable which can be maintained by the Township in terms of the financial resources available versus the hours of coverage provided. No major changes to the current organization are planned. The Township must continue to monitor population growth and the incidence of crime, along with the Township's annual financial conditions, in order to plan for any changes in the system. The Township will also explore the merits of cooperating with other area municipalities on the regionalization and consolidation of police forces as a means of achieving economies of scale to reduce the costs of police protection without compromising its effectiveness. Several municipalities in the Mount Pocono area have found a regional police

force to be effective in terms of both protection and cost efficiency. This approach could possibly be initiated via the North Pocono Council of Governments. Funding for assessing the feasibility of such a police force and technical assistance may be available from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Utilities

Utilities in Covington Township will continue to be provided by private, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission regulated, utility companies. The Township plans no direct involvement, there being no such need identified, in providing electric, telephone, or other utilities. The Township subdivision and land development ordinance requires adequate community facilities, including utilities, for all new development, and will be enforced accordingly.

Water Supply

Drinking water in Covington Township is taken primarily from individual private wells, and this means is proposed as the principal method for the future. In cases where new, higher density subdivisions are proposed, privately owned community water supply meeting Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission requirements can be provided in accord with Township subdivision and land development ordinance requirements. Extension of public water lines from outside the area is not an option due to unavailability and the creation of any local municipal water company is not anticipated.

Water Quality Protection; Quantity

Zoning Ordinance §512.10 requires proposed commercial and industrial uses to address any potential groundwater contamination issues. The section requires the applicant to provide details of any materials or process which have the potential for contamination, along with the steps taken to minimize the threat and actions to be taken if a problem occurs. The Township may require a plan and security for insuring contamination response. The section should be updated to give

the Township the authority to require surface water and groundwater monitoring.

A section should be added to the zoning ordinance to require a hydrogeologic study in cases where large water withdrawals may affect adjoining wells. While state law prohibits local municipalities from denying a development application based on groundwater withdrawal, the section would include requirements for the developer to address the mitigation of any potential significant impact on existing water users revealed by the study.

Wellhead Protection

Wellhead protection standards may be included in a zoning ordinance to establish potential contaminant source isolation distances for water wells serving as the source for public and community water systems. The wellhead protection zones should be based on a study of the aquifer and are often applied as an overlay district, and typically establish zones where the types of uses prohibited are based on the potential for contamination. For example, only open space uses would be permitted in the immediate area of the well and perhaps low density residential in nearby recharge areas, with industrial uses restricted to areas more distant from the well and recharge areas.

Sewage Disposal

Sewage disposal is a key issue facing the development of Covington Township. Without adequate sewage disposal facilities, continued development will be severely restricted and water quality can be degraded. The Township will encourage the use of soil based sewage disposal methods in order to match development to the carrying capacity of the land and avoid degradation of high quality streams. Sewage treatment systems using stream discharge will be considered as an option of last resort for new development and to correct existing sewage disposal problems where no other solution is possible. Higher density development will be directed to the existing service area of the Covington Township Sewer Authority.

Extensions of the public sewer will be considered carefully for the effect of stimulating residential and commercial development and should be directed primarily by the need to correct existing sewage disposal problems.

Solid Waste Disposal

Planning for solid waste disposal is a county responsibility as mandated by state statute and local municipalities are authorized to regulate solid waste disposal by ordinance. Collection and disposal of solid waste by private haulers in Covington Township is adequate to meet current needs. The Township will monitor the adequacy of the private hauler solid waste collection and disposal system, and should any deficiencies be identified, take corrective measures via municipal ordinance. The Township obtained a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection for the construction of a recycling center adjacent to the Township building in Daleville, and should work with the County Recycling Center to minimize the operation and maintenance costs of the recycling program to the Township. The Township will also monitor any solid waste disposal site proposals in the region area to assure the Township's best interests are served.

Recreation/Community Activities

Covington Township maintains recreation facilities on the fourteen acres in Daleville and at the Moffat Estate. The fourteen-acre Daleville property, in addition to the other Township facilities, includes the Township Senior Center and a Township park with basketball courts, a playground and walking trails. The Township has prepared a recreation site plan and feasibility study for the Moffat Estate land and plans include a pavilion, walking trails, fishing at the pond, and an amphitheater. In addition, the 140-acre wooded parcel owned by the Township near Eagle Lake is available for future recreation needs.

While existing facilities meet much of the current recreation and community activity demand, future needs must also be considered. This section of

Recreation and the Planning Code

Under the authority granted by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Section 503(1.1), local municipalities can require the dedication of land for public use, and upon agreement of the developer, the construction of recreation facilities or the payment of fees in lieu thereof by developers for the construction and maintenance of recreation facilities accessible to the residents of the proposed residential development. Inclusion of this requirement in the subdivision and land development ordinance should be considered by each municipality. Fees can be assessed on a per lot basis for subdivisions, on a per unit basis for any mobile home park or multi-family dwelling, and for commercial land developments.

- Consistent with the municipal comprehensive plan.
- Suitable for active and passive recreational activities.
- Reasonably accessible to all residents of the municipality with consideration given to all age groups.
- Provided with adequate vehicular access and parking and other necessary infrastructure and facilities.
- Developed in accord with an overall site plan intended to preserve to the greatest extent practical, natural vegetation and groves, lakes, ponds and waterways, scenic points, historic sites and structures, community landmarks, and other community assets.

Township Recreation/Community Activity Plan

This *Comprehensive Plan* constitutes the Township plan for recreation. The Township should amend the SALDO to include provisions for land dedication and recreation fees and any fees collected by the Township will be used to improve the existing Township park and recreation facilities with the long term consideration of improvement of the 140-acre tract.

the *Community Facilities Plan* outlines a specific strategy for the development of these facilities and monitoring of the need for additional recreation facilities in Covington Township, and actions to address any identified needs.

The Board of Supervisors has appointed a Township Recreation Committee comprised of interested citizens and individuals involved in community recreation organizations. The Recreation Committee serves as the administrative arm of the Township Board of Supervisors to monitor and refine this *Recreation and Community Activity Plan* to address:

- The details of the development of recreation facilities and activities at the park in Daleville and at the Moffat Estate.
- Operation and maintenance programs for all park, recreation, and community activity facilities.
- Participation of community recreation organizations to improve recreation facilities and programs..
- Future park, recreation, and community activity facility needs.
- Identification of potential sites for Township recreation facilities.
- *Community activity* uses not being addressed in Covington Township including such things as a youth center, meeting facilities, and day care center, with such uses possibly incorporated into the senior center or former municipal building.
- Facility and program funding to include . . .
 - Use of fees assessed for residential development under the subdivision ordinance (see the discussion which follows.)
 - Solicitation of private contributions
 - Grants
 - Direct municipal contributions
 - A special fund for land acquisition and capital improvements
- Technical assistance from the County and State agencies.

Emergency Management

Emergency management planning at the local level is coordinated by the Lackawanna County Emergency Management Agency (EMA). County emergency management agencies throughout the Commonwealth receive direction from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The Township Board of Supervisors works with the County EMA, and has appointed an Emergency Management Coordinator. The Township emergency management plan is incorporated into this *Comprehensive Plan* by reference.

Facilities and Services

Future Financing - O&M

A key aspect of the development of any new community facility or program is providing for continued operation and maintenance. The cost of operation and maintenance must be considered in terms of future costs to taxpayers compared to the benefits of the particular facility or program. In some cases grants can assist a municipality with initial facility construction or program development, but in the long term, the operation and maintenance responsibility will fall on the municipality.

Community Facilities for New Development

A number of problems with community facilities in Covington Township stem from the time when a subdivision and land development ordinance had not yet been adopted. Inadequate roads and lots with no soil suitable for sewage disposal are the primary example. The subdivision and land development ordinance enables the Township to require adequate community facilities and to assure the long term maintenance of facilities by requiring the formation of a community association comprised of lot owners. It is vital that the Township officials diligently enforce these provisions of the subdivision ordinance. The Township also has adopted regulations which govern dedication of roads, whereby roads are constructed to specified standards and then are accepted by the Township for public use.

Private Residential Communities

Some private communities are located in the Township where roads and other facilities are limited to use only by members of the community. In many cases individuals purchase real estate in such a development primarily because public access is limited. Township funds can be used only for public purposes, therefore tax dollars cannot be devoted to any community facility improvements within a private community. Nevertheless, Township officials should communicate with residents of these private communities about their needs and provide assistance where possible.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Road Improvements

Given the limited availability of state and federal funds for the construction and reconstruction of state roads, this *Comprehensive Plan* takes a more practical position with regard to major road improvements. The construction of new state roads and major realignment or reconstruction of state roads is not likely in Covington Township in the near term. Although Township officials have no direct control over the improvement of state roads, local officials can participate in the planning process involved with state road and bridge improvements. Township officials should focus attention on the state road and intersection improvement needs identified by this *Plan* and work with the Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to include these projects on any available state or federal programs to effect their construction. The primary concern is the continued maintenance of the state roads in the Township.

Administrative Road and Intersection Improvement Actions:

- Work with area municipalities to form a *North Pocono Road Task Force* as a means of addressing area wide transportation issues and road improvements. The Task Force would meet regularly with PennDOT and County officials.
- Work with local legislators, the County, the Task Force and PennDOT to schedule studies to identify improvements to correct identified traffic problems.
- Promote regional intermunicipal cooperation as a means of assessing the traffic impacts of all development occurring in Covington Township.

- Review and update zoning ordinance standards for off-street parking and loading areas to reduce congestion and improve safety.
- Require as part of zoning approval for new or expanded uses, the issuance of a highway occupancy permit by the Township or PennDOT, as appropriate.
- Inventory Township roads and develop a capital improvement program integrating all means of financing including the Township general funds, State Liquid Fuels Funds, and Dirt and gravel Roads Program Funds..

Township Roads

With the exception of new roads constructed by developers as part of residential subdivisions, no new local road construction in the Township is anticipated in the near future. Township Supervisors will focus on the maintenance and improvement of existing Township roads in Covington Township, and monitor the need and ability to correct specific width and alignment problems which would require reconstruction as traffic volumes dictate and available funds allow. The major maintenance concern is providing good drainage for all Township roads. Based on this policy, the Township Supervisors will use the inventory and analysis format included in the Appendix along with projected Township revenues, to assess the needs for the improvement of Township roads over the next five to ten years and include the projects on a capital improvements program. In the case of the gravel roads, the intent is to re-grade and improve the drainage and then maintain the upgraded roads. Over the long term, the traffic volume of dirt and gravel roads will be monitored and when dictated, a road can be upgraded and paved.

State Roads

The following deficiencies in state roads and intersections have been identified or are anticipated:

- Route 435 and Route 307 intersection - Signalization scheduled for 2007.
- Route 435 and Industrial Park Road intersection - Signalization scheduled for 2007.
- Route 502 - Width, surface condition and drainage.

Bridges

All public bridges in the Township are owned by Lackawanna County. Township officials will monitor County efforts to maintain and replace bridges.

Subdivision Roads

New road construction in the Township is associated with residential development. The subdivision and land development ordinance sets standards for road layout, design, and construction. Roads may be owned and maintained by private communities, or if a road is constructed to the higher standards of the road dedication ordinance standards it may be accepted by the Township for general public use. Dedicated roads are then added to Pennsylvania Liquid Fuels Program reimbursement list and are owned and maintained by the Township.

Specific Actions for New Subdivision Roads:

- Maintain an up-to-date road dedication ordinance setting standards for construction of public roads and establishing procedures for dedication to the public.
- Maintain an up-to-date road occupancy ordinance setting standards for driveway access to Township roads and stormwater and utility improvements within the Township road right-of-way.
- Review road construction standards to assure adequacy for public safety and eliminate excessive requirements to minimize the consumption of resources for construction and long term maintenance.

Airports, Railroads, and Public Transportation

Given the regional nature of airport and railroad development and support, this *Comprehensive Plan* calls for no specific action to be taken by the Township with regard to air and rail service. However, the Township must monitor the status of the proposed passenger rail service between Scranton and New York City, and consider the possibility of a railroad siding or spur to stimulate economic development in the Township. Direct Township provision of public transportation is not feasible and no action is planned.

HOUSING PLAN

Municipalities Planning Code Requirements

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) addresses housing from the perspective of ensuring affordable housing for families of all income levels. In terms of planning, MPC §301 requires comprehensive plans to include an element *to meet the housing needs of present residents and of those individuals and families anticipated to reside in the municipality, which may include conservation of presently sound housing, rehabilitation of housing in declining neighborhoods and the accommodation of expected new housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels.*

In terms of land use management as effected by zoning, MPC §604 requires zoning ordinances to *provide for the use of land within the municipality for residential housing of various dwelling types encompassing all basic forms of housing, including single-family and two-family dwellings, and a reasonable range of multifamily dwellings in various arrangements, mobile homes and mobile home parks, provided, however, that no zoning ordinance shall be deemed invalid for the failure to provide for any other specific dwelling type.*

Court decisions have upheld this zoning provision of the MPC establishing a *fair share* rule which considers the percentages of land available for a given type of housing, current population growth and pressures within the municipality and surrounding region, and the amount of undeveloped land in a community. The Pennsylvania Department of Economic Development publication titled, *Reducing land Use Barriers to Affordable Housing, Fourth Edition, August 2001*, lists a number of barriers to affordable housing associated with land use regulations, including among others:

- insufficient amount of land zoned for medium

and high density residential development

- excessive lot frontage and setback requirements which dictate greater lot sizes
- excessive street widths and construction standards unrelated to expected traffic volumes
- lack of provisions for cluster design and planned residential development
- limitations on the use of mobile homes and manufactured homes
- plan review and administrative delays

Housing Affordability Considerations

Municipalities throughout the Country have been addressing housing issues for many years, and the Summer 2000 *Affordable Housing Study* for Jacksonville Florida provides a good description of how affordable housing is assessed. *The American Dream* has long been associated with the possibility of owning one's home. National housing-market surveys report that the home ownership rate reached a peak in the late 1990s—almost sixty-seven percent in 1999—due mainly to a robust economy with record levels of low unemployment and low interest rates. However, while this unprecedented economic expansion enabled many Americans to purchase their own homes, it has pushed housing prices and rental rates higher, preventing many other households, with insufficient incomes, from either becoming homeowners or finding affordable, safe, and decent rental housing. Housing affordability is a relative concept—both rich and poor can experience difficulty in affording housing, depending on how much they spend toward housing costs. Housing in one community with a relatively high median income can be quite expensive but affordable compared to housing in another community with a relatively low median income.

INTRODUCTION

This *Covington Township Comprehensive Plan* was undertaken by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in recognition of three principal critical community needs:

1. The need to identify and inventory the key components of the Township's natural resources and community assets;
2. The need to establish a framework for the conservation of the Township's character and environment while concurrently providing for sustainable growth and development; and,
3. The need to organize for the most efficient administration of Township government and the delivery of community facilities and services.

The *Plan* was adopted as required by Section 302 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. A copy of the *Plan* was provided to each contiguous municipality, the Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission and the North Pocono School District for a forty-five-day review

period. Following the review period, a public meeting was conducted by the Township Planning Commission, and a public hearing was conducted by the Board of Supervisors prior to the adoption of the *Plan*.

It is important to emphasize that a comprehensive plan should not simply be considered a *document on a shelf*, but, instead, one element of a community management process dependent upon the attitude and on-going foresight of the public officials charged with the responsibility of guiding the growth and development of the community. A comprehensive plan is a starting point - a blueprint to guide the future development of the Township and ought to be revised and updated periodically to reflect changing conditions, attitudes, situations, and goals of the community. The success of the planning program will be measured only in the form of accomplishment. The effectuation of the plan will be the responsibility of the Township's residents. It will require public support and positive action by the Township Board of Supervisors.

Federal governmental guidelines, primarily those established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), define affordable housing as costing no more than thirty percent of a household's gross monthly income—referred to here as the 30 percent rule. The income counted is derived from all wages earned by people fifteen and older in the household. For homeowners, affordability is generally defined as owning a house with a value equal to slightly more than twice the household's annual income. The homeowner costs counted typically include a mortgage payment (principal, interest, taxes, and insurance) and utilities. For renters, the costs usually include contract rent and utilities. The 30 percent rule leaves seventy percent for food, clothing, health care, child care, transportation to work, and other basic expenses. Because of increasing housing costs, many lower income Americans are forced to make tradeoffs and go without necessities. Tenants experiencing unexpected emergencies typically fall behind in their rent and face eviction. If not assisted, they may become homeless.

Similarly, *Pennsylvania Housing*, a 1988 study conducted by the Pennsylvania Housing Financing Agency, defined affordable as requiring less than thirty percent of gross monthly income for rent or less than twenty-eight percent for a mortgage and other related housing costs. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), guidelines continue to define affordable housing as costing no more than thirty percent of a household's gross monthly income.

Age of Housing

The data presented in the *Age of Housing Units Table* provides a good measure of the relative age of housing. County-wide, almost sixty percent of the existing housing units in 2000 were constructed prior to 1940. The development of the Township having started somewhat later than the boroughs in the County, the number of pre-1940 homes is about forty percent. Although many homes are more than fifty years old, most are in good condition.

AGE OF HOUSING UNITS U.S. CENSUS				
	Covington		Lackawanna Co	
# Units 2000	838		95,362	
# Units 1990	814		91,707	
# Units 1980	675		87,790	
UNITS BUILT BETWEEN YEARS:				
	#	%	#	%
1999-3/2000	16	1.9%	3,655	3.8%
1990-1998	54	6.4%	8,345	8.8%
1980-1989	147	17.5%	13,022	13.7%
1970-1979	185	22.1%	9,354	9.8%
1960-1969	111	13.2%	6,603	6.9%
1940-1959	144	17.2%	6,511	6.8%
1939 or earlier	181	21.6%	47,963	50.3%

Home Ownership and Housing Value

As shown on the *Home Ownership Table*, the 2000 Census home ownership rates reported for Covington Township were substantially higher than for the County and State. With many urban inhabitants, the statewide and countywide data reflects the higher proportion of rented multi-family dwellings. There was an insignificant change in home ownership in the Township between 1990 and 2000. The *Housing Affordability Data Table* shows that most dwellings in the Township are single-family dwellings, again substantially higher than the County and State, and a reflection of the higher home ownership pattern.

The *Housing Values Table* compares the median value of owner-occupied housing units in 1990 and 2000 as reported by the Census. Housing values in the Township are significantly higher than in the County and Commonwealth, reflecting the strength of the market. While high values are positive in terms of housing condition and real estate tax revenue, it may indicate the need to evaluate the affordability of housing for younger

HOME OWNERSHIP – 2000 U.S. CENSUS	PA	Lacka County	Coving	Scranton
Home Ownership Rate (Owner-Occupied), 1990	70.6%	66.9%	83.4%	53.7%
Home Ownership Rate (Owner-Occupied), 2000	71.3%	67.6%	82.5%	54.5%
Renters (Rented-Occupied Units), 1990	29.4%	33.0%	16.6%	46.3%
Renters (Rented-Occupied Units), 2000	28.7%	32.4%	17.5%	45.5%

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY DATA – 2000 CENSUS									
	% Single- family	% Duplex	% Mobile Homes RV's	% Multi- family	Median Housing Value	Median Gross Rent	Median Household Income	% Owner Hshlds home exp >30% of Income	% Hshlds with rent >30% of Income
Covington Twp	81.5%	6.4%	8.8%	3.3%	\$122,200	\$538	\$41,875	33.5%	33.3%
Scranton	44.2%	6.2%	0.1%	49.4%	\$78,200	\$425	\$28,805	23.9%	34.7%
Lackawanna Co	60.1%	4.1%	2.9%	32.9%	\$93,400	\$440	\$34,438	22.0%	32.9%
PA	55.9%	17.9%	5.0%	21.1%	\$97,000	\$531	\$40,106	22.8%	35.5%

HOUSING VALUES – 2000 U.S. CENSUS	PA	Lacka County	Coving	Scranton
Median Value Owner-Occupied, 2000	\$97,000	\$93,400	\$122,200	\$78,200
Median Value Owner-Occupied, 1990	\$69,700	\$68,900	\$91,500	\$57,100
Median Value Owner-Occupied, 1990, inflation adjusted to 2000	\$96,186	\$95,082	\$126,270	\$78,798
% Change 1990 - 2000 inflation adjusted	0.8%	-1.8%	-3.2%	-0.8%

couples and older residents. Equally important is the change in median value between 1990 and 2000 which provides a measure of demand for housing compared to the regional market.

After adjustment for inflation, which between 1990 and 2000 is a factor of 1.318, median housing value in the Township actually decreased in the ten years between the Censuses. This suggests that the housing values in the Township are not keeping pace with the cost of living, or that more recent housing construction has been of more modest values. The data is perplexing when considered in terms of the value of real estate in the Township.

Housing Affordability in the Township

From the above discussion, it is obvious that housing affordability is a complex issue related to the mix of housing types, housing values, and household incomes in the community. In the planning area, the proportion of multi-family dwelling units and mobile homes, housing which is generally more affordable, is very low as shown on the *Housing Affordability Data Table*. The *Table* also includes additional information to provide an indication of the affordability of housing. While median housing values are higher in the Township than in the County and State as a whole, so are median household incomes, thus potentially offsetting any housing affordability issues.

INCOME DATA – 2000 CENSUS						
	% of households with income					
	<\$15,000	\$15,000 to \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$34,999	\$35,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 & greater
Covington	7.3%	12.5%	13.5%	19.9%	23.1%	23.7%
Lackawanna Co	21.0%	15.8%	13.9%	17.0%	17.4%	14.9%
PA	16.7%	13.8%	13.3%	16.9%	19.5%	19.8%

However, a significant proportion of home owning households and renting households in the Township, about one-third, have housing costs which exceed the *thirty percent rule* for household income and housing expense. In the case of homeowners, the proportion is some eleven points higher than the County and State, while the renter proportion is on par.

Township Regulations

Covington Township does provide for two-family dwellings and multi-family dwellings in the Township zoning ordinance. Two-family dwellings are permitted in R-1, and R-2 zoning districts, and multi-family dwellings are permitted in R-2, C-1 and C-2 districts. Each type is permitted in conservation design subdivisions. Mobile homes are permitted as single-family dwellings under the same conditions as single-family dwellings, and mobile home parks are permitted in the MP-RV zoning district. As previously noted, the proportion of mobile homes in the Township is relatively high when compared to the County and State. The issue of housing affordability in the Township is one more of density than the extent of the areas available for the development of more affordable housing. Single-family dwelling density is set at one dwelling unit per two acres with on-site sewage disposal and one dwelling unit per one acre with off-site sewage disposal. Two-family dwellings must maintain the same density as single-family dwellings. In the case of multi-family dwellings, the zoning ordinance establishes a minimum parcel size and dwelling unit density as listed in Table Plans-3, Multi-Family Standards,

Covington Township. The central sewage disposal system now serving the core area of the Township provides an opportunity for the development of more affordable housing, while maintaining lower density development in the balance of the Township which continues to rely on on-site sewage disposal.

COVINGTON MULTI-FAMILY STANDARDS		
DWELLING TYPE	MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE	DWELLING DENSITY
Townhouses	10 acres	2 units per acre
Garden apartments	10 acres	2 units per acre
Apartment buildings	5 acres	3 units per acre

Regional Housing Efforts

Local municipalities must also recognize that housing needs cannot be addressed entirely at the local level. The Township must look to the Lackawanna County and county agency contacts with private affordable housing organizations for assistance and to assure residents' access to federally funded housing development, rent assistance and housing rehabilitation programs.

Affordability in a Growing Community

Real estate values in the Township and North pocono area have been increasing given the appeal of the quality lifestyle so close to the Scranton metropolitan area, and the demand for and cost of real estate is expected to continue to increase. Balancing this demand driven housing cost increase with the need for affordable housing is difficult, particularly when coupled with the problem of providing adequate sewage disposal

for higher density housing. In any case, when compared to the other rural municipalities in the County, Covington Township, with its provision for multi-family housing, mobile homes, smaller lots in conservation design, transferrable development rights, and central sewage, clearly provides ample opportunity for the development of affordable housing.

Specific Housing Actions

Local municipalities must recognize that housing needs cannot be addressed entirely at the local level. In fact, with the exception of ensuring that land use and building regulations are reasonable in terms of affecting costs, small municipalities can do little to manage housing affordability which is so dependent on regional economic factors. The Township must look to the Lackawanna County Housing Authority and their contacts with private affordable housing organizations, for assistance and to ensure residents' access to publically funded housing development, rent assistance and housing rehabilitation programs.

Specific actions related to affordable housing include:

- Work with the County on subsidized housing programs for low and moderate income families and assure area residents receive fair consideration for available programs.
- Work with the County to provide housing rehabilitation for eligible residents.
- Work with the County to address the needs of low-income and elderly households in the Township by investigating the development of such countywide subsidized housing projects.
- Review Township land use controls in terms of standards not directly linked to public health and safety which increase housing costs.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

CIP - A Planning Tool

Along with land use control ordinances, a formal capital improvements program (CIP) is a primary tool for the implementation of a comprehensive plan. Although not legally binding, the capital improvements program includes and establishes a time frame for the long-term capital expenditures planned by a municipality. A capital expenditure may be defined as an outlay of municipal funds to purchase, improve or construct a piece of equipment or a facility that is expected to provide service over a long period of time. Typically, a capital expenditure is relatively large when compared to normal operating expenditures included in the budget. Examples include, the construction of or major improvements to buildings, land acquisition, recreation facilities, road construction or reconstruction, water and sewage treatment plants and lines, and vehicle purchases.

CIP Benefits

In short, a capital budget allows a community to balance its capital needs with available funding. A CIP allows the municipality to identify its capital needs, prioritize and schedule their development or acquisition, and determine the best method of financing. *The Practice of Local Government Planning*, published by the International City Management Association, identifies the following benefits of an effective CIP:

- Ensures that plans for community facilities are accomplished.
- Allows improvement proposals to be evaluated against established policies.
- Enables the scheduling of improvements requiring more than one year to construct.
- Provides the opportunity for the purchase of needed land before costs increase.

- Encourages long range financial planning and management.
- Provides for the sensible scheduling of improvements.
- Offers the opportunity for public participation in decision making.
- Leads to improved overall management of the municipality.

Prioritization of Municipal Needs

For illustration purposes the *Sample Fund Projection and Capital Budget Table*, provides an example of a simple CIP. In developing a CIP the Township must prioritize its capital needs based on the planning process findings, and the CIP establishes commitment for public investment in accord with the specific goals and objectives included in the comprehensive plan. *The Practice of Local Government Planning* reports one method is for a community to divide its needs into four categories: essential, desirable, acceptable, and deferrable. In prioritizing needs, the Township must also consider the revenue side of the equation. Needed capital expenditure can only be made by identifying anticipated revenues in terms of other operating expenditures. The costs of scheduled capital expenditures are evaluated in terms of acquiring the necessary revenue to fund the improvements. In any case, the CIP is by necessity an on-going process which must be monitored continuously in terms of project status and need for additional projects, with a planning period of five years being typical. A variety of CIP techniques are available and the Township should develop one at the level of detail which best suits its needs. The process typically includes a financial analysis, a listing of needed public improvements, project prioritization, development of a financially feasible program, public participation, and adoption by the governing body.

<u>SAMPLE</u> FUND PROJECTION AND CAPITAL BUDGET						
GENERAL FUND PROJECTION	YEAR					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012

<u>SAMPLE</u> FUND PROJECTION AND CAPITAL BUDGET						
GENERAL FUND PROJECTION	YEAR					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Projected general fund revenue	\$200,000	\$210,000	\$225,000	\$250,000	\$260,000	\$275,000
Projected general fund expenditures	\$160,000	\$168,000	\$175,000	\$205,000	\$215,000	\$250,000
Projected Net Funds Available	\$40,000	\$42,000	\$50,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$25,000
CAPITAL BUDGET						
Township Park - land acquisition, engineering, construction, and debt service. \$300,000 over 20 years beginning in 2006	\$0	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Road Improvement - right-of-way acquisition, engineering, construction, and debt service. \$200,000 over 10 years beginning in 2008.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Total New Capital Expenditures	\$0	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
Net New Financing Required* <u>Equals</u> Total New Capital Expenditures <u>Minus</u> Projected Net Funds Available	(\$40,000)	(\$27,000)	(\$35,000)	(\$10,000)	(\$10,000)	\$10,000
* Parentheses indicate available funds exceed new capital expenditures.						

Planned Expenditures

The principal anticipated direct capital expenditures identified by this *Plan* are outlined below and the Township should use the information in this *Plan* as the base to develop a CIP.

Essential**Desirable****Acceptable**

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

Historic Resources

According to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) no properties in Covington Township are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. However, the Moffat Estate is classified as eligible for listing. (See *National Register of Historic Places Sidebar*.) The lack of designated and limited number of eligible properties does not mean that the planning area does not have a rich history. Many of the older homes and buildings in the Township, along with the landscape itself, add to the historic fabric of the community. The following actions can be taken to preserve the history and historic structures in the community:

- Encourage the creation of a local Historical Society to focus attention on historic preservation and work on preservation. The Society would . . .
- Complete an historical and architectural history of the Township.
- Work toward the inclusion of qualifying structures on the National Register.
- Conduct an inventory of historic resources in the to include Indian sites, buildings, roads, railroads, stone walls, etc.
- Consider the development of a local historic register program.
- Incorporate the preservation of historic resources in conservation design for residential development as part of any zoning ordinance.
- Prepare and adopt design guidelines for commercial and institutional development to encourage development consistent with the community's character.
- Allow home occupations and bed and breakfasts in all zoning districts as a means of

encouraging productive use of historic structures which tend to be larger and more difficult to maintain.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission manages the National Register of Historic Places for Pennsylvania. National Register properties are distinguished by having been documented and evaluated according to uniform standards. These criteria recognize the accomplishments of all peoples who have contributed to the history and heritage of the United States and are designed to help state and local governments, federal agencies, and others identify significant historic and archeological properties worthy of preservation and of consideration in planning and development decisions.

Listing in the National Register, however, does not interfere with a private property owner's right to alter, manage or dispose of property. It often changes the way communities perceive their historic resources and gives credibility to efforts to preserve these resources as irreplaceable parts of our communities.

Listing in the National Register contributes to preserving historic properties in a number of ways:

- Recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, the state, or the community.
- Consideration in the planning for federal or federally assisted projects.
- Eligibility for federal tax benefits.
- Qualification for federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available.

THE OFFICIAL MAP

Article IV of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code grants the authority to municipalities to adopt an official map. The official map shows the location of areas which the municipality has identified as necessary for future public streets, recreation areas, municipal buildings, open space and other public grounds. By showing the area on the official map, the municipality puts the property owner on notice that the property has been reserved for future taking for a public purpose.

The municipality may refuse to issue a permit for any building or development on the designated parcel; however, the municipality has one year to purchase the property upon notice by the owner of intended development. This little used land use control tool can be invaluable for minimizing the cost of public improvements, and the Township should carefully consider its use as public improvement projects are identified.

REGIONAL PLANNING AND INTERMUNICIPAL COOPERATION

A recurring point in this *Comprehensive Plan* is the need for regional planning and intermunicipal cooperation. Given the population and housing growth and associated commercial development anticipated in Covington Township and the potential negative effects on the area's rural character, the necessity of intermunicipal cooperation for regional planning is clear because each municipality alone cannot address the multitude of issues facing the area. Highway network planning, water supply, sewage disposal, police protection, emergency services, housing, recreation and most other community issues transcend municipal boundaries and can best be addressed from a regional perspective.

This *Comprehensive Plan* is a good first step in fostering intermunicipal cooperation. In order to improve and expand cooperation, it is vital that the Township participate in any county or regional planning effort to focus attention on the issues facing the Township and begin to develop the framework to address the issues. The Township should continue to participate in the North Pocono Council of Governments, which in addition to facilitating area-wide planning, can serve to improve the fiscal condition of participating municipalities via joint purchasing programs.

INTERRELATIONSHIP AMONG PLAN ELEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

This *Comprehensive Plan* provides a framework for the future growth and development of Covington Township. Although the *Plan* is comprised of these a number of elements, each element, and, in fact, each planning and development action taken by a public body or private individual, is inextricably interrelated with other plan elements and planning and development actions. For example, the

development of housing implementation strategies cannot be accomplished without taking into account land use controls and economic development trends. Economic development strategies cannot be formulated without considering land-use controls and transportation needs. Community facilities and services planning requires an assessment of future development, transportation needs, and housing

affordability. In most cases, these types of interrelationships and implementation strategies are discussed in the various comprehensive plan elements.

A theme consistent throughout all elements of this *Comprehensive Plan* is the concept of *process*. The published comprehensive plan document represents only the first step of what should evolve into an on-going planning process. If this *process* frame of mind is not firmly established, local officials, businessmen, land developers, and citizens, all players in the community growth and development arena, will have little chance of achieving the sustainable growth vital to Covington Township's environmental and economic future. This process will also allow the recognition of the shifting interrelationships of community growth and development decisions vital to the success of long-term planning efforts.

Another key theme of this *Plan* is the conservation of Covington Township's open land and rural-recreational character. Any actions taken by the Township should be initially assessed in terms of its effect on the area's character. For example, the success in providing additional central sewage disposal capacity will in all probability result in the development of more land at higher population densities. Increases in population will trigger the need for improved or new community facilities and services such as schools and police protection. Without careful analysis, one implementation action taken by a Township can have unexpected and often undesirable effects.

To achieve Covington Township's growth and development goals and to establish the community's planning process for the future, this *Comprehensive Plan* includes the following overall recommendations:

- Identify areas for growth within and adjacent to existing developed areas and the area served by the Covington Township Sewer Authority.
- Direct development away from

environmentally sensitive areas and conserve large blocks of open land.

- Propose the implementation of mechanisms to better relate the timing of growth to the capabilities of the area's community facilities.
- Emphasize the importance of growth management - an effort to manage the location, type, and timing of future growth.
- Encourage increased local, inter-municipal, and regional cooperation for comprehensive planning and land use control implementation; and overall local municipal administration and management.
- Encourage a mix of business and commercial development in appropriate locations in Covington Township.
- Encourage a variety of housing types.

The *Comprehensive Plan* outlines a vision for Covington Township's future and recommends a course of action to achieve growth and development goals. However, the effective implementation of the *Plan* is necessary to make the planning program a success. Many of the resources, programs and techniques available for implementing the comprehensive plan are not within the direct control of local government. For example, although zoning and subdivision ordinances, the chief tools for land use control and land use plan implementation, are the purview of local governments, the funding, construction and maintenance of major roads and improvements have historically been the responsibility of the state and federal governments. Demand for housing in Covington Township is generated in large part by external market forces, that is, residents of the larger region who choose to relocate to the Township. The implementation of the *Plan* and the creation of an on-going planning process, must be a community-wide effort fostered by Township officials.

It is obvious that the implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan* will require broad-based community involvement and coordination and cooperation among various federal, state, and local agencies. Plan implementation will require both a commitment of financial resources and human resources. The human resources can include both volunteer and paid staff and professional assistance. Many of the recommendations identified in the Plan Elements could require increased staff support and demand for volunteer services.

A variety of implementation strategies have been recommended in this *Plan* and are oriented to developing long-term policies for growth management, strengthening the Township's land use control programs, anticipating capital improvement needs and facilitating inter-governmental cooperation to accomplish local and regional goals. The key implementation strategies proposed in this *Comprehensive Plan* include:

- Development of a capital improvements program to logically plan for future needs and allocate funds; with annual progress evaluations and adjustments in capital project timing and capital equipment purchases.
- Continuing education for local officials via seminars and workshops.
- Enforcement of existing land use control ordinances, and on-going updating of the ordinances, to effect the land use plan, provide environmental protection, maintain rural character, and achieve community facilities and services and housing objectives.
- Carefully evaluate any proposed private sewage treatment plans and any expansion of the existing public sewer system in terms of stimulating development
- Focusing limited Township resources on those community facilities and services which are most critical to meet resident needs.
- Monitor community facilities and services provided by the county, state, and federal government to assure such services are adequate and Covington Township is obtaining its *fair share*.
- Participate in all county, state and federal entitlement and grant funding programs, not solely for the sake of participation, but only if such programs can be sensibly used to achieve valid community development objectives.

By focusing the available resources on implementation of the this *Comprehensive Plan*, and the continuance of the "planning process" with an eye to preserving rural character, Covington Township can achieve sustainable growth and development into the future and maintain its quality of life.

OVERVIEW

Covington Township is unique among Lackawanna County municipalities in terms of community character and development concerns. Geographically, Covington Township lies between the City of Scranton and the northern Pocono Mountains, a major tourist mecca within an hour's drive of much of the eastern megalopolis. A key route, Interstate Route 380, running north and south through the Township, connects with Interstate Routes 84 and 81 to the north and Interstate Route 80 to the south, providing easy access to the Township.

The early development in the Township occurred in association with the opening of the County for agricultural settlement, timber harvesting, and in later years, coal mining. These activities now hold little significance to the Township, which has evolved into a bedroom community with residential development scattered throughout the Township and commercial development concentrated in the Daleville area. Although the Township has been as accessible to thousands of urbanites as the other communities in Lackawanna County, surprisingly much of Covington Township remains undeveloped.

Given the number of unimproved lots and undeveloped land in Covington Township, the Township's ease of access and close proximity to the Scranton metropolitan area, and the recent construction of a central sewage disposal system, strong growth in population and housing units is

expected. Clearly, Covington Township is poised to become one of the most changing areas of Lackawanna County. This continued growth presents to the Township the challenge of providing public services and facilities to meet the needs of the increasing population. At the same time, the Township is responsible to assure that the growth and development occurs in accord with sound planning principles with the goal of preserving the environment and community character. In short, the citizens and public officials of Covington Township must resolve the land use conflicts which result from the necessary balance between increased development and need for facilities and services, and environmental protection and community and open land conservation. Sewage disposal will be a key issue affecting the long term growth and development of the Township and demands careful planning and land use control to protect water quality and overall environmental integrity.

This combination of growth and development issues clearly demonstrates the critical need for this *Comprehensive Plan Update* and reevaluation of land use controls in the Township. The Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and the Zoning Ordinance will continue to play a vital role in the growth and development planning program by directing residential and commercial development to the areas best suited for such development and requiring adequate community facilities and infrastructure.

BACKGROUND FINDINGS

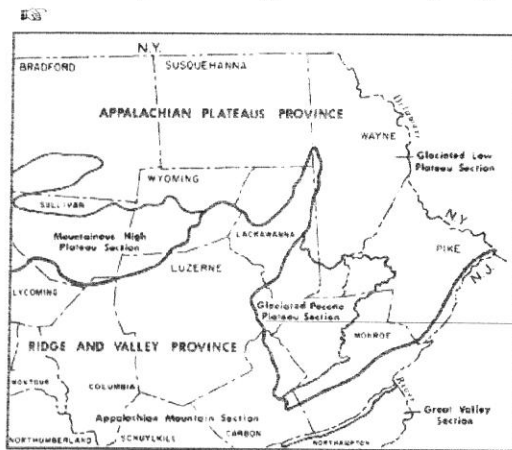
Growth and Development, and Existing Land Use

- ☞ The Planning Area's economy and land use pattern is inextricably linked to nearby Scranton and Wilkes-Barre metropolitan areas, and as these areas expand there will be more pressure for development in the Township.
- ☞ The challenge is to strike a balance for sustainable development. That is, to provide for the essential economic growth and development of the area, while conserving its scenic and natural environment, particularly open land and natural resources, and its small town character, the very elements which have largely been the impetus for the area's past development.
- ☞ The recent commercial development in Daleville and the success of the industrial park are providing more job opportunities within the Township.
- ☞ The Township's future land use, environmental quality and community character will evolve in response to the actions of community leaders and active citizens combined with the forces of the local and regional economy, and the demand for land and community facilities and services.
- ☞ Forest and open land remain the primary land use types in the Township.
- ☞ Agriculture has declined to be only an insignificant part of the local economy, but the remaining agricultural land is an important aspect of the Township's landscape.
- ☞ Residential development is most concentrated in the northwestern half of the Township with a number of individual residential lots scattered throughout the Township. In more recent years, residential development has been concentrated in planned subdivisions such as the Foleywood, Skyline, Glen Meadows, Covington Lake Estates, and Independence Ridge developments.
- ☞ The primary type of dwelling in the Township is single-family residential, 81.5 percent, with 8.8 percent mobile homes according to the 2000 Census.
- ☞ Eagle Lake, a recreational vehicle community, encompasses some 250 acres and 3,000 lots, with about 2,500 recreational vehicles.
- ☞ Commercial development is most concentrated in the Daleville area with a mix of retail and service establishments.
- ☞ The Covington Industrial Park, which encompasses some 700 acres, has three large distribution center tenants, with three more tenants pending.
- ☞ A number of home occupations operate in the Township, but given the nature of many such business which rely on electronic communications and personal computers, the number of such enterprises cannot be accurately determined.

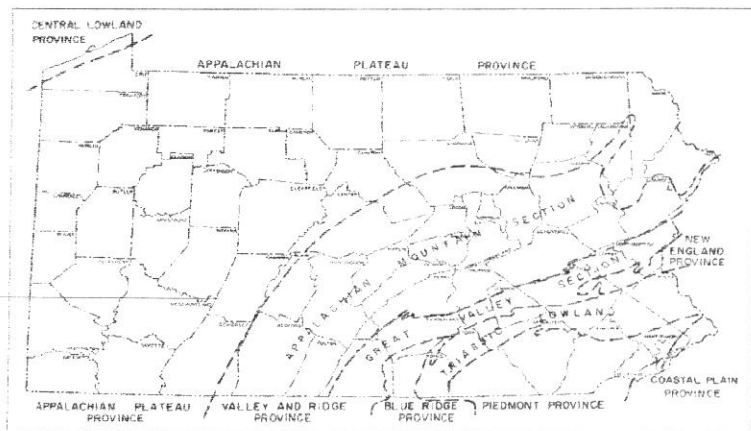
- ☞ Publically owned land includes:
 - ☞ the Township's fourteen acres in Daleville.
 - ☞ the forty-acre Moffat Estate.
 - ☞ a small parcel owned by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.
 - ☞ the PennDOT maintenance facility at the I-380/Route 307 intersection.
 - ☞ 470 acres owned by Lackawanna County which the Township is attempting to acquire for recreational use.
- ☞ Semi-public land includes several churches, cemeteries, the Moscow Water Company, and the Fire Company.

Natural Features, Land Suitability for Development and Development Concerns

- ☞ The Township lies in the Glaciated Pocono Plateau Section of the Appalachian Plateaus Province, one of the major physiographic divisions of the Commonwealth. (See *Physiographic Divisions of Pennsylvania Figure¹* and *Physiographic Provinces of Eastern Pennsylvania Figure²*.)



Physiographic Provinces of Eastern PA



Physiographic Divisions of PA

Covington Township and Lackawanna County are underlain by rocks of the Devonian Age which are some 350 to 400 million years old. The Catskill formation is exposed over most of Lackawanna County, including Covington Township, where the Delaware River Member consists of red, gray and brown siltstone and sandstone.

- ☞ The land's suitability for development largely determines the character of a community's land use, and the most basic component of the land is its soil.
- ☞ Lackawanna County was covered by at least two great continental ice sheets. The most recent one, called the Wisconsin glacier, retreated about 12,000 to 14,000 years ago after having formed some 70,000 years ago and this significantly affected the area's topography and soils. (See *Glacial Deposits*

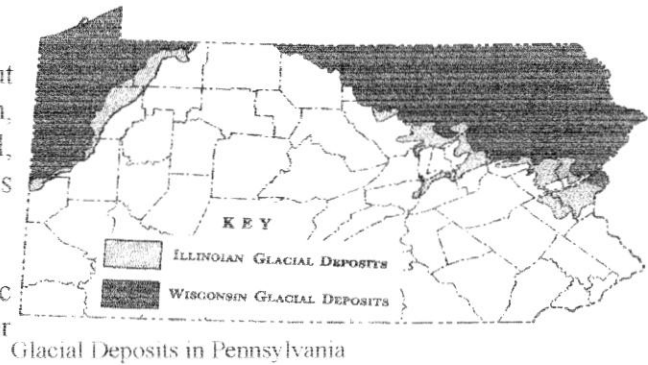
¹*Pennsylvania Geology Summarized*, Pennsylvania Topographic and Geologic Survey, B. Willard, 1968.

²*Report 65, Groundwater Resources of Pike County, Pennsylvania*, Pennsylvania Topographic and Geologic Survey, D. K. Davis, 1989.

in Pennsylvania Figure.)

☞ The glacier deepened stream valleys, carved out depressions, scraped away soils and vegetation, leaving deposits of assorted rocks and gravel, especially in the valleys, and forming wetlands and lakes.

☞ Soils are a mixture of mineral and organic materials, and living organisms, and form over thousands of years.



☞ Soil type depends on microclimate, the underlying bedrock, biological activity, slope, time, and human activity.

☞ Soils influence agricultural productivity, the type of natural vegetation and wildlife, and the ability to support roads, buildings, septic systems and landfills.

☞ The 1987 Township *Wastewater Facilities Plan* reported:

☞ (A) *fragipan* or "hard pan" is common at varying depths in the Township's two major soil associations ... and tends to produce a seasonal high water table, generally precluding the use of conventional on-lot system.

☞ Approximately 60% of Covington Township's soils are suitable for at least an alternative type of on-lot disposal system.

☞ Soils with slopes of greater than 25% comprise less than 1% of Covington Township's area with soils of 15% to 25% slopes accounting for approximately 20% of the Township. Slope limitation in Covington Township is significantly less than most other Lackawanna County municipalities.

☞ The relatively few alluvial soils in Covington Township, largely occurring on State Forest Land and large land holdings are not a significant limitation to development in Covington Township.

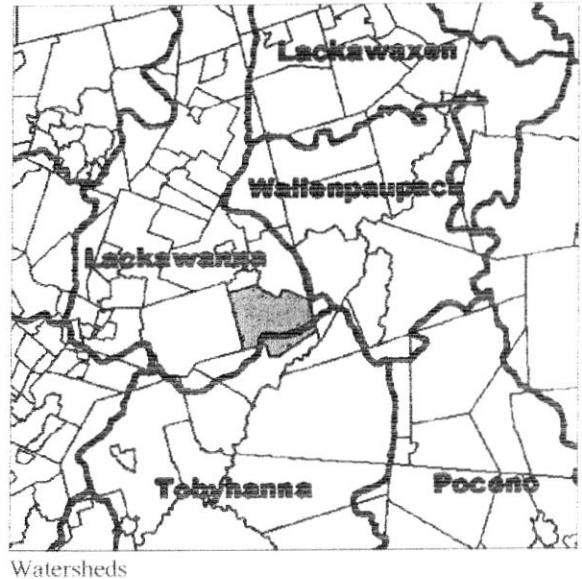
☞ The major limitations in Covington Township are soils with a seasonal high water table. These soils are scattered throughout the Township.

☞ The fractured bedrock serves as the groundwater aquifer for residents' water supply. Residents rely entirely on groundwater for domestic supply, and well water quality and quantity are important issues to Township residents.

☞ Groundwater supply is adequate and quality is generally good, but on-lot sewage systems, stormwater runoff, and agricultural fertilization can cause bacterial and nitrate contamination, and highlight the need for water quality protection.

☞ Covington Township contains extensive wetlands, which is not surprising given the Township's geology and effect of glaciation.

- ☞ The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Maps, published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are the best tools for the preliminary identification of wetlands, but the maps are not accurate for detailed site planning and site specific investigations are necessary for a final wetlands determination.
- ☞ Covington Township lies almost entirely in the Lackawanna River Watershed, a sub-watershed of the Susquehanna River watershed. A very small southern portion of the Township is contained within the Tobyhanna Creek Watershed, which ultimately drains to the Lehigh River and then the Delaware River. (See *Watersheds Figure*).
- ☞ Two of the major lakes in the Township are the Hollister Reservoir with a surface area of 175 acres and Lake Henry (Eagle Lake) at sixty-nine surface acres.
- ☞ Surface water quality in the Township is generally good with all streams classified by PA DEP as cold water fisheries with the exception of Roaring Brook which is classified as *high quality*.
- ☞ Covington Township has, when compared with other municipalities, relatively few areas where flooding is a significant threat to large numbers of improved properties. (As compared to, for example, urban communities along the Susquehanna River in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties.)
- ☞ The Township has adopted flood plain management regulations which comply with state and federal requirements.
- ☞ Covington Township has adopted a Stormwater Management Ordinance in accord with the County-adopted Stormwater Management Plan for the Lackawanna River Watershed.
- ☞ The 1996 *lackawanna County Natural Areas Inventory* listed a number of locations of importance in the Township:
 - ☞ English Swamp - a Broadleaf Conifer Swamp which is a relatively undisturbed peatland with a diversity of rare and threatened plants, privately owned and subject to degradation.
 - ☞ Eagle Lake - a glacial lake with a good population of a state-threatened aquatic plant.
 - ☞ Johnson Pond - Westend Complex and Freytown Marsh.



Population

- ☞ Detailed Census information for 1990 and 2000 is provided in the Profiles at the end of this section.
- ☞ Covington Township's population has changed little in the past fifteen years, increasing from 2,055 in 1990 to an estimate of 2,098 in 2005.

HISTORICAL POPULATION AND GROWTH RATES U.S. CENSUS										
MUNICIPALITY	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	80-90	2000	90-00	2005*	00-05
Covington Twp	925	1,107	1,460	1,858	2,055	10.6%	1,994	-3.0%	2,098	5.2%
Clifton Twp	226	349	526	855	1,041	21.8%	1,139	9.4%	1,180	3.6%
Elmhurst Twp	676	788	799	953	834	-12.5%	838	0.5%	853	1.8%
Madison Twp	780	788	993	1,659	2,207	33.0%	2,542	15.2%	2,652	4.3%
Moscow Boro	1,050	1,212	1,430	1,536	1,527	-0.6%	1,883	23.3%	1,916	1.8%
Roaring Brook Twp	335	576	1,385	1,895	1,966	3.7%	1,637	-16.7%	1,689	3.2%
Spring Brook Twp	761	1,064	1,577	2,144	2,097	-2.2%	2,367	12.9%	2,424	2.4%
Scranton (1,000's)	126	111	104	88	81	-8.0%	76	-6.2%	73	-3.9%
Lacka Co (1,000's)	251	229	234	228	219	-3.9%	208	-5.0%	210	1.0%

* U.S. Census estimate

- ☞ With its many acres of open land, the Township holds great potential for population growth.
- ☞ Based on a ten-year, ten percent growth rate, the Township population would reach almost 2,200 by 2010 and over 2,300 by 2020.
- ☞ Clearly, the Township would continue to be rural by Census definition, although many new lots and housing units will be required to meet the demands of the population.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS COVINGTON TOWNSHIP			
2000 Census Population			1,994
10-Year Projected Growth Rate	Projected Population		
	Year 2005	Year 2010	Year 2020
5%	2,044	2,095	2,146
10%	2,094	2,198	2,303
20%	2,193	2,413	2,632

Financial Analysis

- ☞ The current Township real estate tax rate is 10.25 mills and the assessed valuation as of March 2006 is \$38,247,992.
- ☞ One mill of real estate tax generates about \$38,250 of revenue in Covington Township.

- ☞ State law allows a maximum of fourteen mills for general purpose spending in Townships of the second Class, giving Covington some additional revenue generating capacity.
- ☞ In terms of revenue available for meeting general operating expenses, Township taxes generate the most revenue, with amounts in the following declining order: real estate tax, earned income tax, and realty transfer tax.
- ☞ A strong real estate market, increasing real estate values, new home and business construction, and higher and increased numbers of local incomes will result in increased tax revenue generation.
- ☞ The realty transfer tax varies from year to year depending on the level of real estate sales, but accounts for significant revenue in the Township.
- ☞ The Township has been successful in obtaining grants to defray the costs of capital improvements.
- ☞ Road maintenance accounts for the highest proportion of spending in the Township, followed by general administration, police protection, and fire protection.
- ☞ The Township has no long term debt. The only debt is associated with short term loans for vehicle purchases.
- ☞ It appears the Township will be able to meet its revenue needs withing its current tax structure for many years.

Planning and Development in Contiguous Municipalities, Lackawanna County and the Region

- ☞ The five local municipalities which adjoin Covington Township, Shohola Township and Westfall Township, have each adopted a comprehensive plan and subdivision and land development ordinances. All but Madison Township have adopted zoning.

	Comp Plan	SALDO	Zoning
Clifton	1982	1982	1989
Madison	N. Poco. Region 1973 new multi-plan pending	1996	process initiated
Moscow	N. Poco. Region 1973	1981	1999
Spring Brook	N. Poco. Region 1973	1995	1997
Sterling	1996	1989	1991

- ☞ Although the adjoining comprehensive plans vary in date, status of formal adoption, and content, all of the plans concentrate on land use issues and no significant inconsistencies are anticipated between those plans and this *Plan*.
- ☞ Lackawanna County currently has no comprehensive plan, however Lackawanna County and Luzerne County are in the process of developing a joint comprehensive plan.

- ☞ The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code calls for consistency between local and county plans, and this must be addressed as part of the bi-county plan.
- ☞ The Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance, located in Pittston, Luzerne County, serves as a community and economic planning and development information source and funnel for grants and special projects for Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill and Lackawanna Counties, but has no municipally authorized regional planning power.

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic area: Covington township, Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population	1,994	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population	1,994	100.0
Male.....	963	48.3	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	23	1.2
Female.....	1,031	51.7	Mexican.....	3	0.2
Under 5 years.....	96	4.8	Puerto Rican.....	9	0.5
5 to 9 years.....	153	7.7	Cuban.....	2	0.1
10 to 14 years.....	145	7.3	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	9	0.5
15 to 19 years.....	159	8.0	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	1,971	98.8
20 to 24 years.....	108	5.4	White alone.....	1,941	97.3
25 to 34 years.....	220	11.0	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	318	15.9	Total population	1,994	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	344	17.3	In households.....	1,994	100.0
55 to 59 years.....	111	5.6	Householder.....	738	37.0
60 to 64 years.....	68	3.4	Spouse.....	456	22.9
65 to 74 years.....	142	7.1	Child.....	645	32.3
75 to 84 years.....	95	4.8	Own child under 18 years.....	458	23.0
85 years and over.....	35	1.8	Other relatives.....	92	4.6
Median age (years).....	39.2	(X)	Under 18 years.....	32	1.6
18 years and over.....	1,493	74.9	Nonrelatives.....	63	3.2
Male.....	715	35.9	Unmarried partner.....	21	1.1
Female.....	778	39.0	In group quarters.....	-	-
21 years and over.....	1,422	71.3	Institutionalized population.....	-	-
62 years and over.....	301	15.1	Noninstitutionalized population.....	-	-
65 years and over.....	272	13.6	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	118	5.9	Total households	738	100.0
Female.....	154	7.7	Family households (families).....	561	76.0
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	247	33.5
One race.....	1,983	99.4	Married-couple family.....	456	61.8
White.....	1,960	98.3	With own children under 18 years.....	187	25.3
Black or African American.....	13	0.7	Female householder, no husband present.....	82	11.1
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	1	0.1	With own children under 18 years.....	44	6.0
Asian.....	5	0.3	Nonfamily households.....	177	24.0
Asian Indian.....	-	-	Householder living alone.....	151	20.5
Chinese.....	1	0.1	Householder 65 years and over.....	68	9.2
Filipino.....	2	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	269	36.4
Japanese.....	-	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	195	26.4
Korean.....	2	0.1	Average household size.....	2.70	(X)
Vietnamese.....	-	-	Average family size.....	3.13	(X)
Other Asian ¹	-	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units	838	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	738	88.1
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	100	11.9
Samoan.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	56	6.7
Some other race.....	4	0.2	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	1.5	(X)
Two or more races.....	11	0.6	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	5.8	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units	738	100.0
White.....	1,971	98.8	Owner-occupied housing units.....	609	82.5
Black or African American.....	14	0.7	Renter-occupied housing units.....	129	17.5
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	8	0.4	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.76	(X)
Asian.....	7	0.4	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.43	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	1	0.1			
Some other race.....	4	0.2			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

Table DP-2. Profile of Selected Social Characteristics: 2000

Geographic area: Covington township, Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania

[Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT			NATIVITY AND PLACE OF BIRTH		
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school.....	530	100.0	Total population.....	1,994	100.0
Nursery school, preschool.....	43	8.1	Native.....	1,961	98.3
Kindergarten.....	29	5.5	Born in United States.....	1,948	97.7
Elementary school (grades 1-8).....	242	45.7	State of residence.....	1,674	84.0
High school (grades 9-12).....	154	29.1	Different state.....	274	13.7
College or graduate school.....	62	11.7	Born outside United States.....	13	0.7
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			Foreign born.....	33	1.7
Population 25 years and over.....	1,321	100.0	Entered 1990 to March 2000.....	13	0.7
Less than 9th grade.....	57	4.3	Naturalized citizen.....	28	1.4
9th to 12th grade, no diploma.....	140	10.6	Not a citizen.....	5	0.3
High school graduate (includes equivalency).....	560	42.4	REGION OF BIRTH OF FOREIGN BORN		
Some college, no degree.....	256	19.4	Total (excluding born at sea).....	33	100.0
Associate degree.....	85	6.4	Europe.....	21	63.6
Bachelor's degree.....	127	9.6	Asia.....	5	15.2
Graduate or professional degree.....	96	7.3	Africa.....	-	-
Percent high school graduate or higher.....	85.1	(X)	Oceania.....	-	-
Percent bachelor's degree or higher.....	16.9	(X)	Latin America.....	7	21.2
MARITAL STATUS			Northern America.....	-	-
Population 15 years and over.....	1,597	100.0	LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME		
Never married.....	391	24.5	Population 5 years and over.....	1,887	100.0
Now married, except separated.....	920	57.6	English only.....	1,829	96.9
Separated.....	27	1.7	Language other than English.....	58	3.1
Widowed.....	144	9.0	Speak English less than "very well".....	14	0.7
Female.....	114	7.1	Spanish.....	22	1.2
Divorced.....	115	7.2	Speak English less than "very well".....	5	0.3
Female.....	67	4.2	Other Indo-European languages.....	34	1.8
GRANDPARENTS AS CAREGIVERS			Speak English less than "very well".....	7	0.4
Grandparent living in household with one or more own grandchildren under 18 years.....	27	100.0	Asian and Pacific Island languages.....	2	0.1
Grandparent responsible for grandchildren.....	2	7.4	Speak English less than "very well".....	2	0.1
VETERAN STATUS			ANCESTRY (single or multiple)		
Civilian population 18 years and over ..	1,480	100.0	Total population.....	1,994	100.0
Civilian veterans.....	250	16.9	Total ancestries reported.....	2,549	127.8
DISABILITY STATUS OF THE CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION			Arab.....	-	-
Population 5 to 20 years.....	458	100.0	Czech ¹	16	0.8
With a disability.....	31	6.8	Danish.....	2	0.1
Population 21 to 64 years.....	1,152	100.0	Dutch.....	81	4.1
With a disability.....	216	18.8	English.....	240	12.0
Percent employed.....	62.0	(X)	French (except Basque) ¹	14	0.7
No disability.....	936	81.3	French Canadian ¹	10	0.5
Percent employed.....	80.8	(X)	German.....	474	23.8
Population 65 years and over.....	274	100.0	Greek.....	3	0.2
With a disability.....	109	39.8	Hungarian.....	22	1.1
RESIDENCE IN 1995			Irish ¹	381	19.1
Population 5 years and over.....	1,887	100.0	Italian.....	361	18.1
Same house in 1995.....	1,380	73.1	Lithuanian.....	58	2.9
Different house in the U.S. in 1995.....	492	26.1	Norwegian.....	13	0.7
Same county.....	320	17.0	Polish.....	329	16.5
Different county.....	172	9.1	Portuguese.....	-	-
Same state.....	104	5.5	Russian.....	83	4.2
Different state.....	68	3.6	Scotch-Irish.....	25	1.3
Elsewhere in 1995.....	15	0.8	Scottish.....	25	1.3
			Slovak.....	36	1.8
			Subsaharan African.....	-	-
			Swedish.....	4	0.2
			Swiss.....	6	0.3
			Ukrainian.....	38	1.9
			United States or American.....	86	4.3
			Welsh.....	154	7.7
			West Indian (excluding Hispanic groups).....	-	-
			Other ancestries.....	88	4.4

-Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹The data represent a combination of two ancestries shown separately in Summary File 3. Czech includes Czechoslovakian. French includes Alsatian. French Canadian includes Acadian/Cajun. Irish includes Celtic.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

Table DP-3. Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic area: Covington township, Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania

[Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
EMPLOYMENT STATUS			INCOME IN 1999		
Population 16 years and over	1,566	100.0	Households	740	100.0
In labor force	1,052	67.2	Less than \$10,000	59	8.0
Civilian labor force	1,049	67.0	\$10,000 to \$14,999	32	4.3
Employed	988	63.1	\$15,000 to \$24,999	115	15.5
Unemployed	61	3.9	\$25,000 to \$34,999	97	13.1
Percent of civilian labor force	5.8	(X)	\$35,000 to \$49,999	142	19.2
Armed Forces	3	0.2	\$50,000 to \$74,999	152	20.5
Not in labor force	514	32.8	\$75,000 to \$99,999	94	12.7
Females 16 years and over	807	100.0	\$100,000 to \$149,999	30	4.1
In labor force	494	61.2	\$150,000 to \$199,999	9	1.2
Civilian labor force	494	61.2	\$200,000 or more	10	1.4
Employed	472	58.5	Median household income (dollars)	41,875	(X)
Own children under 6 years	143	100.0	With earnings	581	78.5
All parents in family in labor force	85	59.4	Mean earnings (dollars) ¹	50,047	(X)
COMMUTING TO WORK			With Social Security income	223	30.1
Workers 16 years and over	966	100.0	Mean Social Security income (dollars) ¹	11,628	(X)
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	797	82.5	With Supplemental Security Income	21	2.8
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	109	11.3	Mean Supplemental Security Income		
Public transportation (including taxicab)	6	0.6	(dollars) ¹	5,414	(X)
Walked	25	2.6	With public assistance income	11	1.5
Other means	2	0.2	Mean public assistance income (dollars) ¹	2,709	(X)
Worked at home	27	2.8	With retirement income	132	17.8
Mean travel time to work (minutes) ¹	23.0	(X)	Mean retirement income (dollars) ¹	30,100	(X)
Employed civilian population			Families	562	100.0
16 years and over	988	100.0	Less than \$10,000	23	4.1
OCCUPATION			\$10,000 to \$14,999	18	3.2
Management, professional, and related			\$15,000 to \$24,999	70	12.5
occupations	292	29.6	\$25,000 to \$34,999	76	13.5
Service occupations	121	12.2	\$35,000 to \$49,999	112	19.9
Sales and office occupations	259	26.2	\$50,000 to \$74,999	130	23.1
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	1	0.1	\$75,000 to \$99,999	88	15.7
Construction, extraction, and maintenance			\$100,000 to \$149,999	26	4.6
occupations	125	12.7	\$150,000 to \$199,999	9	1.6
Production, transportation, and material moving			\$200,000 or more	10	1.8
occupations	190	19.2	Median family income (dollars)	47,857	(X)
INDUSTRY			Per capita income (dollars) ¹	19,132	(X)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting,			Median earnings (dollars):		
and mining	10	1.0	Male full-time, year-round workers	36,208	(X)
Construction	72	7.3	Female full-time, year-round workers	21,906	(X)
Manufacturing	157	15.9			
Wholesale trade	19	1.9			
Retail trade	143	14.5			
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities					
Information	14	1.4			
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and					
leasing	48	4.9			
Professional, scientific, management, adminis-					
trative, and waste management services	67	6.8			
Educational, health and social services	202	20.4			
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation					
and food services	54	5.5			
Other services (except public administration)	89	9.0			
Public administration	42	4.3			
CLASS OF WORKER					
Private wage and salary workers	781	79.0			
Government workers	117	11.8			
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated					
business	88	8.9			
Unpaid family workers	2	0.2			

-Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹If the denominator of a mean value or per capita value is less than 30, then that value is calculated using a rounded aggregate in the numerator. See text.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

GOALS AND ACTIONS SUMMARY

This *Covington Township Comprehensive Plan* establishes a broad range of community conservation goals and objectives and identifies many specific actions to carry the *Plan* forward. This section provides a summary of those goals and actions.

GENERAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES	
A	Land Use - To achieve the best use of the land within the Township, insuring that varying use of land and water bodies will complement one another and thus improve the economic, social, and aesthetic character of the community.
B	Population Density - To establish realistic population densities in order to insure health standards, privacy and open space and in order to provide utilities, police protection, and community services and facilities in the most convenient and efficient manner.
C	Road System - To maintain and improve the road system for better internal circulation and movement of through traffic, which will facilitate the efficient and safe movement of people and goods.
D	Facilities and Services - To provide the necessary community facilities and services to meet the needs of the growing population.
E	Sewage Disposal - To assure that adequate sewage disposal is provided to maintain the public health and protect water quality, and consider the impact of central sewage on development.
F	Environmental Protection - To guide the location of future development and establish developmental standards in such a way that negative impacts on the natural environment and natural resources are minimized, and to minimize existing and future water, air, land and noise pollution.
G	Variety of Housing - To provide the opportunity for a wide-range and variety of housing types at reasonable densities to meet the needs of all Township residents; newly-formed households, growing families and senior citizens.
H	Monitoring - To update and revise planning goals and objectives, and the operational tools necessary for implementation, in light of new data and changing conditions.
I	Economic Development - To expand local commercial enterprises and strengthen the area economy by encouraging well-planned
J	Internal Coordination - To strive for coordination between policies, plans, and programs in the community through cooperation among governing officials, community interest groups, and the general populace.

Table DP-4. Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics: 2000

Geographic area: Covington township, Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania

[Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total housing units	838	100.0	OCCUPANTS PER ROOM		
UNITS IN STRUCTURE			Occupied housing units	738	100.0
1-unit, detached	683	81.5	1.00 or less	726	98.4
1-unit, attached	19	2.3	1.01 to 1.50	10	1.4
2 units	34	4.1	1.51 or more	2	0.3
3 or 4 units	28	3.3			
5 to 9 units	-	-	Specified owner-occupied units	458	100.0
10 to 19 units	-	-	VALUE		
20 or more units	-	-	Less than \$50,000	8	1.7
Mobile home	74	8.8	\$50,000 to \$99,999	125	27.3
Boat, RV, van, etc	-	-	\$100,000 to \$149,999	202	44.1
			\$150,000 to \$199,999	71	15.5
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT			\$200,000 to \$299,999	46	10.0
1999 to March 2000	16	1.9	\$300,000 to \$499,999	6	1.3
1995 to 1998	33	3.9	\$500,000 to \$999,999	-	-
1990 to 1994	21	2.5	\$1,000,000 or more	-	-
1980 to 1989	147	17.5	Median (dollars)	122,200	(X)
1970 to 1979	185	22.1			
1960 to 1969	111	13.2	MORTGAGE STATUS AND SELECTED		
1940 to 1959	144	17.2	MONTHLY OWNER COSTS		
1939 or earlier	181	21.6	With a mortgage	295	64.4
			Less than \$300	-	-
ROOMS			\$300 to \$499	11	2.4
1 room	5	0.6	\$500 to \$699	32	7.0
2 rooms	3	0.4	\$700 to \$999	105	22.9
3 rooms	24	2.9	\$1,000 to \$1,499	92	20.1
4 rooms	90	10.7	\$1,500 to \$1,999	43	9.4
5 rooms	170	20.3	\$2,000 or more	12	2.6
6 rooms	206	24.6	Median (dollars)	998	(X)
7 rooms	151	18.0	Not mortgaged	163	35.6
8 rooms	102	12.2	Median (dollars)	343	(X)
9 or more rooms	87	10.4			
Median (rooms)	6.1	(X)	SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS		
Occupied housing units	738	100.0	AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD		
YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED INTO UNIT			INCOME IN 1999		
1999 to March 2000	58	7.9	Less than 15.0 percent	163	35.6
1995 to 1998	156	21.1	15.0 to 19.9 percent	84	18.3
1990 to 1994	79	10.7	20.0 to 24.9 percent	51	11.1
1980 to 1989	206	27.9	25.0 to 29.9 percent	46	10.0
1970 to 1979	105	14.2	30.0 to 34.9 percent	29	6.3
1969 or earlier	134	18.2	35.0 percent or more	79	17.2
			Not computed	6	1.3
VEHICLES AVAILABLE			Specified renter-occupied units	120	100.0
None	17	2.3	GROSS RENT		
1	217	29.4	Less than \$200	-	-
2	284	38.5	\$200 to \$299	3	2.5
3 or more	220	29.8	\$300 to \$499	41	34.2
			\$500 to \$749	54	45.0
HOUSE HEATING FUEL			\$750 to \$999	2	1.7
Utility gas	10	1.4	\$1,000 to \$1,499	3	2.5
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	58	7.9	\$1,500 or more	-	-
Electricity	144	19.5	No cash rent	17	14.2
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc	467	63.3	Median (dollars)	538	(X)
Coal or coke	35	4.7			
Wood	24	3.3	GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF		
Solar energy	-	-	HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1999		
Other fuel	-	-	Less than 15.0 percent	15	12.5
No fuel used	-	-	15.0 to 19.9 percent	9	7.5
			20.0 to 24.9 percent	20	16.7
SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS			25.0 to 29.9 percent	16	13.3
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	-	-	30.0 to 34.9 percent	12	10.0
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	9	1.2	35.0 percent or more	28	23.3
No telephone service	6	0.8	Not computed	20	16.7

-Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

1990

COUNTY: 069 MCD: 050 FIPSMCD: 16664 PLACE: PLACE FIPS: TRACT/BNA: BLOCKGRP:

HOUSEHOLD TYPE AND RELATIONSHIP - Universe: Persons					
Total Persons	2055	Total 65 & Over	255	Total Under 18	585
In Households		In Households		In Households	
In Family Hholds		In Family Hholds		Householder	
Householder	571	Householder	113	or Spouse	0
Spouse	490	Spouse	59	Own Child	
Child		Other Relative	20	In Married	
Natural	721	Nonrelative	4	Family	478
(Born/Adopt)		In Nonfamily Hhold		In Other	
Step	30	Male Hholder		Family	
Grandchild	26	Living Alone	16	Male Hholder	12
Other Relative	39	Not Alone	3	(No wife pres)	
Nonrelatives	27	Female Hholder		Female Hholder	59
In Nonfamily Hhold		Living Alone	39	(No husb pres)	
Hholder living alone	118	Not Alone	0	Other Relatives	27
Hholder not alone	14	Nonrelatives	1	Nonrelatives	9
Nonrelatives	19				

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF1
BonData - Hummelstown PA (717)566-5550

GENERAL HOUSING SUMMARY

1990

Covington township, Lackawanna County PA

COUNTY: 069	MCD: 050	FIPSMCD: 16664	PLACE:	PLACE FIPS:	TRACT\BNA:	BLOCKGRP:
Total Housing Units:	814					
		OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS		PERSONS IN HOUSING UNITS		
VALUE - Universe:		Total:	703	Total:	2055	
Owner Occ. Housing Units		Owner:	586 83.36%	Owner:	1756	
Less than \$15,000	5	Renter:	117 16.64%	Renter:	299	
\$15,000 to \$19,999	6	1.01 or More Persons Per Room:	13			
\$20,000 to \$24,999	1	Persons Per Occupied Unit:	2.92			
\$25,000 to \$29,999	3	UNITS BY UNITS IN STRUCTURE				
\$30,000 to \$34,999	11			Total	Total Vacant	
\$35,000 to \$39,999	2			Housing Units	Housing Units	
\$40,000 to \$44,999	14	Single Family				
\$45,000 to \$49,999	10	1, Detached	642		94	
\$50,000 to \$59,999	27	1, Attached	6		1	
\$60,000 to \$74,999	61	Multi-Family				
\$75,000 to \$99,999	93	2	45		6	
\$100,000 to \$124,999	71	3 or more	19		5	
\$125,000 to \$149,000	52	Mobile Home/Trailer	92		4	
\$150,000 to \$174,999	23	Other	10		1	
\$175,000 to \$199,999	11	TENURE BY AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER				
\$200,000 to \$249,999	8	Universe: Occupied Housing Units				
\$250,000 to \$299,999	4			Total	Owner	Renter
\$300,000 to \$399,999	0	15-24 yrs	19		3	16
\$400,000 to \$499,999	0	25-34 yrs	116		77	39
\$500,000 or more	1	35-44 yrs	175		150	25
Median Value	\$91500	45-54 yrs	123		113	10
Aggregate Housing	\$39.76	55-64 yrs	99		92	7
Value (in Millions \$)		65-74 yrs	110		102	8
CONTRACT RENT - Universe:		75 & over	61		49	12
Renter Occupied Housing Units		VACANT HOUSING UNITS				
With Cash Rent		Total:	111	Boarded Up	1	
Less than \$100	4	For Rent	4	For Seasonal, Rec		13
\$100 to \$149	7	For Sale	6	or Occasional Use		
\$150 to \$199	12	Rented or Sold	1	For Migrant Workers		0
\$200 to \$249	15	(not occ.)		Other Vacant		87
\$250 to \$299	12	TENURE BY PERSONS IN UNIT - Universe: Occupied Housing Units				
\$300 to \$349	8			Total	Owner	Renter
\$350 to \$399	7	1 Person	118 16.79%	83 14.16%	35 29.91%	
\$400 to \$449	7	2 Persons	216 30.73%	189 32.25%	27 23.08%	
\$450 to \$499	3	3 Persons	123 17.50%	99 16.89%	24 20.51%	
\$500 to \$549	2	4 Persons	146 20.77%	124 21.16%	22 18.80%	
\$550 to \$599	1	5 Persons	66 9.39%	60 10.24%	6 5.13%	
\$600 to \$649	0	6 Persons	21 2.99%	19 3.24%	2 1.71%	
\$650 to \$699	0	7+ Persons	13 1.85%	12 2.05%	1 0.85%	
\$700 to \$749	0					
\$750 to \$999	0					
\$1,000 or more	0					
Median Rent	\$254					
No Cash Rent	28					

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF1

BonData - Hummelstown PA

INCOME AND POVERTY PROFILE

1990

Covington township in Covington township, Lackawanna County PA

STATE:42 MSA:7560 COUNTY:069 MCD:050 FIPS MCD:16664 PLACE: FIPS PLACE: TRACT/BNA: BG:

INCOME IN 1989				POVERTY STATUS BY SEX BY AGE			RATIO OF INCOME TO POVERTY	
	Household	Family	NonFamily	Universe: Persons for whom poverty status is determined			Universe: Persons for whom poverty status is determined	
Less than \$5,000	36	24	15					
\$5,000 to \$9,999	55	22	35					
\$10,000 to \$12,499	46	18	28					
\$12,500 to \$14,999	25	20	2		Female	Male	Under .50	89
\$15,000 to \$17,499	23	18	5	0-4	8	3	.50 to .74	21
\$17,500 to \$19,999	20	12	8	5	4	2	.75 to .99	37
\$20,000 to \$22,499	23	15	8	6-11	4	9	1.00 to 1.24	51
\$22,500 to \$24,999	34	31	3	12-17	4	4	1.25 to 1.49	78
\$25,000 to \$27,499	46	46	0	18-64	51	27	1.50 to 1.74	110
\$27,500 to \$29,999	27	21	6	65-74	8	4	1.75 to 1.84	36
\$30,000 to \$32,499	35	23	10	75+	14	5	1.85 to 1.99	43
\$32,500 to \$34,999	27	27	0				2.00 and over	1576
\$35,000 to \$37,499	38	36	2					
\$37,500 to \$39,999	31	31	0					
\$40,000 to \$42,499	55	57	0	FEMALE HOUSEHOLDER, NO HUSBAND PRESENT			PERSONS BELOW POVERTY	
\$42,500 to \$44,999	9	7	2	WITH INCOME BELOW POVERTY LEVEL			BY TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD	
\$45,000 to \$47,499	15	13	2	Universe: Families			Universe: Persons below poverty	
\$47,500 to \$49,999	11	14	0	With no related children:			0	
\$50,000 to \$54,999	32	32	0				Families:	102
\$55,000 to \$59,999	28	24	2	With related children			Unrelated	
\$60,000 to \$74,999	46	44	2	Under 5:			0	
\$75,000 to \$99,999	34	31	0	5 to 17:			6	Individuals: 45
\$100,000 to \$124,999	2	2	0	Under 5 & 5-17:			10	
\$125,000 to \$149,999	4	4	0					
\$150,000 or more	0	0	0					
Median	\$31143	\$35625	\$11339	1989 INCOME CHARACTERISTICS				
				Universe: Households				
				Income by Type			With	Without
				Earnings:			545	157
				Wage/Salary:			517	185
				Nonfarm Self-Employed:			93	609
				Farm Self-Employed:			11	691
				Interest, Dividend,				
				or Net Rental:			310	392
				Social Security:			225	477
				Public Assistance:			53	649
				Retirement:			141	561
PER CAPITA INCOME IN 1989								
Universe: Persons								
All Persons:	\$11731	In Households:	\$11731					
In Group Quarters								
Institutionalized Persons:		\$0						
Other Person in Group Quarters:		\$0						

AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989

Universe: Households

	Total	Under 25	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75+
Less than \$5,000	36	2	8	6	10	4	6	0
\$5,000 to \$9,999	55	0	2	2	6	5	20	20
\$10,000 to \$14,999	71	7	11	7	4	4	18	20
\$15,000 to \$24,999	100	4	26	16	6	5	27	16
\$25,000 to \$34,999	135	2	38	27	22	23	20	3
\$35,000 to \$49,999	159	2	24	60	41	18	12	2
\$50,000 to \$74,999	106	0	5	42	22	26	8	3
\$75,000 to \$99,999	34	0	3	11	12	6	2	0
\$100,000 or more	6	0	0	2	0	4	0	0

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing - STF3

BonData - Hummelstown PA - (717)566-5550

EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSPORTATION PROFILE

1990

Covington township, Lackawanna County PA

STATE:42 MSA:7560 COUNTY:069 MCD:050 FIPS MCD:16664 PLACE:		FIPS PLACE:	TRACT/BNA:	BG:
INDUSTRY				
Universe: Employed persons 16+		PLACE OF WORK	TRAVEL TIME TO WORK	
		Universe: Workers 16+	Univ: Workers 16+ not working @ home	
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries	18			
Mining	0	Worked in State of Residence:	Less than 5 minutes	34
Construction	91	Worked in County of Res.	644	5-9 minutes 137
Manufacturing, nondurable	94	Worked outside Cou of Res.	262	10-14 minutes 85
Manufacturing, durable	61	Worked outside State of Res.	25	15-19 minutes 120
Transportation	72	Worked in Place of Res.	0	20-24 minutes 205
Communications & oth pub utilities	22	Worked in MSA/PMSA of Res.		25-29 minutes 91
Wholesale trade	22	Central City	186	30-34 minutes 102
Retail trade	185	Remainder of MSA/PMSA	645	35-39 minutes 22
Finance, insurance & real estate	27	Worked in MCD of Res.	133	40-44 minutes 22
Business & repair services	35			45-59 minutes 39
Personnal services	40	MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK		60-89 minutes 35
Entertainment & recreation services	19	Universe: Workers 16+		90 or more minutes 7
Professional & related services				Total aggregate minutes 19356
Health services	60	Car, truck or van		
Educational services	68	Drove alone	721	
Other prof & rel services	24	Carpooled	148	TIME LEAVING HOMVE TO GO TO WORK
Public administration	99	2-Person carpool	113	Univ: Workers 16+ not working @ home
		3-Person carpool	29	
		4-Person carpool	2	12:00 - 4:59am 11
Universe: Employed persons 16+		5+Person carpool	4	5:00 - 5:29am 25
		Public Transportation		5:30 - 5:59am 24
Managerial & professional specialty:		Bus or trolley	6	6:00 - 6:29am 88
Executive, admin. & managerial	59	Streetcar/trolley car	0	6:30 - 6:59am 112
Professional specialty	94	Subway or elevated	0	7:00 - 7:29am 154
Technical, sales & admin support:		Railroad	0	7:30 - 7:59am 136
Technicians & related support	30	Ferryboat	0	8:00 - 8:29am 115
Sales	77	Taxicab	0	8:30 - 8:59am 37
Admin support, incl clerical	134	Motorcycle	0	9:00 - 9:59am 39
Service		Bicycle	0	10:00 - 10:59am 34
Private household	7	Walked	24	11:00 - 11:59am 10
Protective service	21	Other means	0	12:00 - 3:59pm 68
Serv. except private & protect	112	Worked at home	32	4:00 - 11:59pm 46
Farming, forestry, fishing	20			
Precision productn, craft & repair	173			
Operators, fabricators & laborers		SEX BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND RACE/HISPANIC ORIGIN		
Mach oper, assemblers & inspectors		Universe: Persons 16+		
Transportation & material moving				
Handlrs, equip clnrs, hlpers, labor				
		American		
		Indian Asian/		
		Eskimo Pacific		
		Aleut Islander Other Hispanic		
CLASS OF WORKER		Male:	Total	White
Universe: Employed persons 16+		In Labor Force:		Black
		In Armed Forces	4	0
		Civilian		Aleut
Wage & salary workers		Employed	516	Indian
Private for profit 625		Unemployed	35	Asian/
Private for non-profit 50		Not in Labor Force:	196	Eskimo
Government workers		Female:		Pacific
Local 46		In Labor Force:		Islander
State 22		In Armed Forces	0	Other
Federal 91		Civilian		Hispanic
Self-employed workers 92		Employed	421	
Unpaid family workers 11		Unemployed	24	
		Not in Labor Force:	335	

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing - STF3

BonData - Hummelstown PA - (717)566-5550

APPENDIX

TOWNSHIP ROAD INVENTORY and EVALUATION

TR # _____ Road name: _____

Date of inspection: _____

SEGMENT Length: _____

Beginning: _____ End: _____

WIDTH

Travelway: _____ feet Notes: _____

Shoulders: _____ feet Material: _____ Notes: _____

SURFACE TREATMENT ☐ gravel ☐ paved

---Gravel Road Problem Severity:

- ☐ **Low** - Good crown, little water ponding or evidence of the same; corrugations less than 1 inch deep; pot holes less than 2 inches deep and 1 foot in diameter; ruts less than 1 inch deep.
- ☐ **Medium** - Little crown or a bowl shaped surface, moderate water ponding or evidence of the same; corrugations 1-3 inches deep; pot holes 2-4 inches deep and 2+ feet in diameter; ruts 1-3 inches deep.
- ☐ **High** - Severe depressions in surface, large amounts of water ponding or evidence of the same; corrugations 3+ inches deep; pot holes 4+ inches deep and 2+ feet in diameter; ruts 3+ inches deep

---Major Problems : _____

---Paved Road Problem Severity:

- ☐ **Low** - Good crown, little water ponding or evidence of the same; few if any pot holes; little or no alligator, block or transverse cracking; little or no noticeable tire wear rutting; little or no asphalt bleeding; few patches.
- ☐ **Medium** - Little crown or a bowl shaped surface, moderate water ponding or evidence of the same; pot holes less than 2 inches deep and 1 foot in diameter; some alligator, block or random cracking which can be corrected with normal crack sealing; deteriorated crack sealing; some tire wear rutting; minor asphalt bleeding; some, but not extensive patching.
- ☐ **High** - Large amounts of water ponding or evidence of the same; pot holes more than 2 inches deep and 1 foot in diameter; alligator, block or random cracking which cannot be corrected with normal crack sealing; severely deteriorated crack sealing; significant tire wear rutting; large areas of asphalt bleeding; extensive patching.

---Major Problems : _____

PARALLEL DRAINAGE

Problem Severity

- ☐ **Low** - Small amount of ponding water or evidence of the same; little or no vegetation or debris.
- ☐ **Medium** - Moderate amount of ponding water or evidence of the same; some vegetation or debris; erosion of ditches into shoulders or roadway
- ☐ **High** - Large amounts of ponding water or evidences of the same; water running across or down road; a large amount of vegetation or debris; significant erosion of ditches into shoulder or roadway.
- ☐ **Severe** - No parallel ditches along road; erosion has created ditches

CULVERTS, DRAINAGE STRUCTURES and TAIL DITCHES

Note location, size and condition of problem culverts, drainage structures and/or tail ditches.

OVERALL CONDITION RATING

- ☐ **5/excellent** - A newly constructed road. Excellent crown, drainage and surface.
- ☐ **4/good** - Recently regraded or paved with good crown and drainage and adequate surface layer.
- ☐ **3/fair** - Needs routine regrading, patching or crack sealing; or minor ditch maintenance.
- ☐ **2/poor** - Needs additional aggregate, chipping or pave; or major drainage maintenance.
- ☐ **1/failed** - Complete rebuilding required.

ALIGNMENT - HORIZONTAL and VERTICAL

Problem Severity

- ☐ **Low** - Few if any sharp curves; no grades in excess of 5 percent.
- ☐ **Medium** - Some sharp curves; some grades in excess of 5 percent, but no severe grades in excess of 10 percent..
- ☐ **High** - A combination of sharp curves and grades over 10 percent.

TRAFFIC VOLUME

- ☐ **Low** - Serves less than ten dwellings with little through truck traffic.
- ☐ **Medium** - Serves between ten and fifty dwellings with little through truck traffic.
- ☐ **High** - Serves more than fifty dwellings, or carries more through truck traffic .

SPECIAL FEATURES

Notes on any special features such as guiderails, signs, utility poles, etc.

OTHER COMMENTS

GOALS (Plan Section - Goals and Objectives)	
1	Maintain the township's existing rural-residential character and quality lifestyle; and, conserve agricultural land and forest land as important elements of the local economy and character.
2	Conserve natural resources and open space in Covington Township and use the resources in a way to sustain the area's economy.
3	Encourage commercial and industrial development located and designed to be compatible with existing land use and community character.
4	Provide for a variety of housing types and densities.
5	Ensure that community facilities and services will be adequate to meet expected needs.
6	Establish and maintain a road system adequate to safely and efficiently move goods and people through the Township
7	Protect historic resources as an important part of the character of Covington Township.

OVERALL ACTIONS	
1	Identify areas for growth within and adjacent to existing developed areas and the area served by the Covington Township Sewer Authority.
2	Direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas and conserve large blocks of open land.
3	Propose the implementation of mechanisms to better relate the timing of growth to the capabilities of the area's community facilities.
4	Emphasize the importance of growth management - an effort to manage the location, type, and timing of future growth.
5	Encourage increased local, inter-municipal, and regional cooperation for comprehensive planning and land use control implementation; and overall local municipal administration and management.
6	Encourage a mix of business and commercial development in appropriate locations in NEWC.
7	Encourage a variety of housing types.

KEY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	
1	Annual review of this <i>Plan</i> to evaluate new development and regional issues which warrant plan changes.
2	Development of short-term and long-term capital improvements program to prioritize needed improvements and allocate funds to those improvements; with annual progress evaluations and adjustments in capital project timing and capital equipment purchases.
3	Continuing education about land use management for local officials and the public via seminars and workshops.

KEY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	
4	Enforcement of existing land use control ordinances, and on-going updating of the ordinances, to effect the land use plan, provide environmental protection, maintain rural character, and achieve community facilities and services and housing objectives.
5	Carefully evaluate any proposed private sewage treatment plans and any expansion of the existing public sewer system in terms of stimulating development
6	Focusing limited Township resources on those community facilities and services which are most critical to meet resident needs.
7	Monitor community facilities and services provided by the county, state, and federal government to assure such services are adequate and Covington Township is obtaining its <i>fair share</i> .
8	Participate in all county, state and federal entitlement and grant funding programs, not solely for the sake of participation, but only if such programs can be sensibly used to achieve valid community development objectives.

LAND USE, NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION			
#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Land Use Planning			
1	<u>Land Use Planning Approach</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing incentives for good design and open space preservation as property is developed • protecting residential neighborhoods and subdivisions from incompatible development • providing well-situated and appropriate development areas to accommodate projected growth • relying on the larger region to supplement local business in meeting retail and service needs and providing employment • carefully controlling the expansion of public water and sewer service areas 	Supervisors	ongoing
2	<u>Current Zoning</u> - The current zoning districts are affirmed and the ordinance will be updated as necessary to address changing conditions.	Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
3	<u>Ordinance Review</u> - Periodically review and update the zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance to reflect the findings and goals and objectives of this <i>Comprehensive Plan</i> .	Zoning Officer Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing
4	<u>Conservation Options Map</u> - Use the <i>Conservation Options Map</i> in this <i>Plan</i> as the base for the long term preservation of open land in the Township.	Zoning Officer Planning Commission Supervisors	ongoing