



In 2001, The Governor's Center for Local Government Services . . .

Produced and distributed, in February the second Annual Report on Land Use. This report highlighted achievements from 2000 and presented the Center's Land Use Agenda for 2001.

Worked with the Land Use Interagency Team and local government associations to sponsor the Pennsylvania Growing Smarter: Land Use in PA Conference in Hershey, March 18-20. More than 1,400 state and local officials and citizens attended this first-of-its-kind event to hear presentations covering the many facets of sound land use.

Partnered with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in the spring and fall to train planners on Growing Greener: Conservation by Design concepts by noted conservation planning expert Randall Arendt and the Natural Lands Trust.

Sponsored, in cooperation with the Dickinson School of Law and Pennsylvania's local government associations, the first Pennsylvania Land Use Institute for municipal solicitors and officials. Presentations, held in June, focused on intergovernmental cooperation and recent amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code. Two regional institutes also were offered in November and December.

Conducted training in the winter and spring for staff of the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority and the Department of Environmental Protection on planning issues and the Municipalities Planning Code.

Throughout the year, traveled across the Commonwealth to provide technical assistance to more than 100 multimunicipal groups and local government units on a variety of planning topics.

Met with county planning directors in June and September to strengthen the Center's working relationship with county planning agencies.

Awarded 63 planning grants totaling \$2.6 million through the Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) from July 1, 2000, through June 30, 2001.

Chaired monthly meetings of the Interagency Land Use Team to coordinate state agency efforts to implement the directives contained in Executive Order 1999-1 and the changes in the Municipalities Planning Code.

Revised the Center's Planning Series to reflect the changes to the Municipalities Planning Code. These popular publications are a key component in the Center's outreach and education efforts to promote sound land use to local government.

Produced and distributed the 15th edition of the Municipalities Planning Code, following enactment of the amendments to the MPC in 2000.

Developed and distributed the Center's newest CD-ROM, containing the 15th edition of the Municipalities Planning Code, the newly-revised Planning Series, and the Center's report Land Use in Pennsylvania: Practices and Tools.

Began developing the Land Use Electronic Resource Library, which will ultimately function as a web-based clearinghouse for land use plans and ordinances throughout the Commonwealth.

Funded the production of a rural communities brochure that will serve as a resource for local land use planning activities.

Provided technical assistance to approximately 40 communities for floodplain management and hazard mitigation.

Received revisions and updates to state agency implementation plans, originally developed as a result of the Interagency Land Use Team Supplementary Report issued in August 2000. These plans outline state agencies' strategies to incorporate Growing Smarter into their programs.



Looking Back - 2001 Accomplishments

In 2001, the Governor's Center for Local Government Services devoted a great deal of resources, money, and energy to supporting responsible land use planning and providing communities with the tools and resources to manage growth. The Center's accomplishments can be grouped into five components: outreach, education and training, technical assistance and support, financial assistance and state agency coordination.

Outreach

Since being given the responsibility in Executive Order 1999-1 to be the lead agency to promote sound land use practices, the Governor's Center for Local Government Services has directed much of its efforts to various audiences through a variety of formats. The Center continues to reach out to local officials, state agencies, professional planners, and the general public. Building on the 1999 Sound Land Use Forums and the 2000 Growing Smarter Forums, the Center expanded its outreach in 2001 with a statewide conference and a web site devoted to sound land use.

Growing Smarter Conference

The first-ever statewide Growing Smarter Conference in March of 2001 was the Center's most significant outreach effort of the year. The conference, *Pennsylvania Growing Smarter: Land Use in PA*, was hosted by the Center and sponsored by 16 state agencies, five local government associations, the Governor's Green Government Council, the Sound Land Use Advisory Committee and other organizations. The three-day event attracted more than 1,400 attendees and featured keynote addresses by Governor Mark Schweiker, Mayor Joseph Riley of Charleston, S.C., City Councilman David W. Crockett of Chattanooga, Tenn., and Edward T. McMahon of The Conservation Fund.



Governor Mark Schweiker addressing the Growing Smarter Conference

Fifty-one workshops covered a variety of pertinent issues related to eight core themes: farmland preservation and agriculture, green communities, greenways and open space conservation, historic preservation, housing and community development, infrastructure and growth, perspectives on sound land use policies, and zoning for smart growth.

Growing Smarter Web Site

In a major initiative to reach out to a broader audience, the Center launched its new Growing Smarter web site — www.landuseinpa.com — to provide tools and information for community leaders, state officials, and others who wrestle with land use and growth issues. The site contains four key areas: general information, education and training, financial assistance and technical assistance. Visitors to the site can also click on the Land Use Law Library, which provides access to land use-related laws, proposed legislation, current statutes and court decisions.

Education and Training

The Center has always made education and training of local officials one of its highest priorities. When Governor Tom Ridge designated the Center as the principal state agency responsible for land use assistance and monitoring in Executive Order 1999-1, the Center's training mission was expanded to include land use and planning topics. The passage of the amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code in 2000 gave additional impetus to that mission.

Training for Local Officials

When Governor Ridge signed the amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code in June 2000, the Center was quick to respond. Within weeks, the Center, in cooperation with one of its training partners, the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS), held workshops throughout the state to describe the new legislation to local officials and others.




A workshop for local officials

In April 2001, the Center unveiled its new Growing Smarter training courses in cooperation with its two training partners, the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs (PSAB) and PSATS.

With financial support from the Center, the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs developed two new courses. The first, in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, focused on promoting land use in downtown areas as an alternative to sprawl and was initially offered in the spring of 2001. Working with Preservation Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, PSAB offered the course, "Historic Preservation: Growing Smarter by Preserving Your Community's Assets," in the fall of 2001.

In the spring of 2001, PSATS offered "The ABCs of Land Use Management" to officials from communities that were just getting started in land use planning and ordinance writing. In the fall and winter of 2001-2002, PSATS unveiled a companion to its ABCs course called



“Successful Strategies for Sound Land Use Decisions.” This course focuses on advanced planning techniques and targets rapidly growing communities struggling to deal with the pace of growth.

The Center and PSATS also developed courses on the local regulation of forestry, mineral extraction and agriculture. These industries, which play an important role in the Commonwealth's economy, all have a significant impact on land use. Over the years, townships in particular have struggled to address the effects of these industries within their borders. These new courses will help local officials understand what the Municipalities Planning Code, other state statutes, and case law do and do not permit in regulating such industries.

Local governments may now host any of these Growing Smarter courses at a convenient date and time in their area as long as a minimum number of participants can be guaranteed. In addition, recipients of funds from the Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) may use up to \$1,000 of their grant money to pay for training, either by sending their officials to a scheduled program or by hosting an appropriate course.



Phil Robbins from the Center staff talks about Growing Smarter to local officials.

Training for Professional Planners

For several years, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has sponsored informational programs for local officials and others to learn more about the conservation design concepts advanced by noted planning expert Randall Arendt and the Natural Lands Trust. "Growing Greener: Conservation by Design" can help communities use the development regulation process to their advantage to protect interconnected networks of permanent open space.

As a result of these informational sessions, local officials and developers have sought professional planning services that the staff of the Natural Lands Trust could no longer meet alone. Consequently, the Center, DCNR, and the Trust have created a partnership to provide technical training for professional planners on "Growing Greener: Conservation by Design," with an emphasis on ordinance review and writing and site plan design.

These professionals, many of whom are municipal or county planners, can then provide technical assistance to communities in the form of ordinance reviews and revisions. The two-part training was offered in March and June and again in September and October of 2001. Additional training sessions will be offered in 2002.

Training for Municipal Solicitors

Local officials now have more planning tools available to them as a result of the amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code adopted in 2000. To implement these options, however, local officials need sound legal advice.

To help respond to this need for legal expertise, the Center, in conjunction with PSATS and the Dickinson School of Law of the Pennsylvania State University, offered the first Pennsylvania Land Use Institute in June 2001. The two-day institute informed municipal solicitors and local officials of the current status of planning and land use legal issues, both in Pennsylvania and in other states. Particular emphasis was placed on multimunicipal planning initiatives.



A staff person from DCNR attends a Growing Greener: Conservation by Design workshop.

As a follow-up to the institute, Dickinson conducted an update at PSATS' fall seminar for township solicitors in Hershey in November and at the Pennsylvania Land Use Institute West in Monroeville in December. Both sessions focused on recent court decisions, intergovernmental cooperation agreements, and local regulation of mining, forestry and agriculture. The second annual Pennsylvania Land Use Institute is scheduled for June 10 and 11, 2002, at the Dickinson School of Law in Carlisle.

Training for State Agency Staff

The amendments to the MPC gave state agencies new authority to consider and, in some cases, rely upon local comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances in their decision-making process.

In their implementation plans describing how they would incorporate the Commonwealth's land use objectives into their programs and policies, state agencies had to address the training of their staff.

Several state agencies took advantage of the Center's offer to help provide that training in 2001. The Center conducted a single half-day of training for regional staff from the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) in January and eight sessions for staff from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in the spring of 2001. A second part of the DEP training addressed that department's new land use permitting policies. The Department of Transportation and the Public Utility Commission provided similar training for their staffs.

The Center is currently working with the Department of General Services on training and anticipates working with other state agencies in the future. In addition, Center staff has conducted numerous shorter sessions with groups from other agencies and organizations.

Other Training

In June 2001, the Center participated in three Growing Smarter seminars offered by the Professional Engineers in Private Practice Association. The program provided an overview of the changes to the Municipalities Planning Code, the Center's Growing Smarter initiatives, and the Commonwealth's new land use policy.

Held in Valley Forge, Harrisburg, and Monroeville, the seminars targeted engineers, architects, landscape architects, surveyors, contractors, and planners.

Technical Assistance and Support

The Center has expanded its responsibility and ability to provide technical assistance as a result of changes to the Municipalities Planning Code and new funding for land use planning assistance.

In recognition of the Center's added land use responsibility, the governor and the General Assembly appropriated \$1 million to the Center for technical assistance and education in 1999-2000 and increased that amount to \$2 million in 2000-2001. The additional funding enabled the Center to add more planners to its staff to provide technical assistance to local officials and communities.

Technical assistance can take many forms, from answering a simple procedural question to providing on-site consultations or presentations. In addition to countless telephone and e-mail inquiries, Center staff made more than 100 on-site visits in 2001 to help municipalities and multimunicipal groups.

Peer-to-Peer Assistance

The Center also offers technical assistance through a peer-to-peer program, which matches experienced professionals with communities in need of special planning assistance and expertise. Whenever a community requires planning assistance that can be best met with the help of a peer consultant, the Center will dispatch an individual from that region with expertise on that specific issue.

The peers work with the local officials, offering guidance to communities that want to develop a comprehensive plan or land use ordinance for the first time, revise an existing document, or develop a public participation strategy. With the peer-to-peer program still in its infancy, the Center anticipates a growing demand for peer consultants as more communities seek assistance with land use planning.



Downtown Ridgeway in Elk County



County Planning Assistance

The final component of the Center's strategy for technical assistance is to strengthen its partnership with county planning agencies. Whenever appropriate, the Center encourages local officials seeking assistance with land use and planning to ask their county planning staff for help. County planning agencies are familiar with local and regional issues and can provide invaluable assistance to local officials.



Chambersburg in Franklin County

By encouraging these cooperative efforts between county planners and municipal officials, the Center helps ensure that MPC requirements for intergovernmental cooperation and general consistency are better met.

While the majority of county planning agencies have the resources to provide technical assistance to their municipalities, some do not. With a goal of better coordinating state and county efforts and enhancing the ability of counties to provide technical assistance to municipalities, the Center initiated biannual meetings with county planners from across the Commonwealth in the fall of 2000.

(For a more detailed discussion of these efforts, turn to page 37 of the Agenda 2002 section of this report.)

Land Use Electronic Resource Library

Changes to the Municipalities Planning Code added a step to agency review procedures for funding and permitting applications. Commonwealth agencies now have new authority to consider and, in some cases, may rely upon county, municipal, and multimunicipal comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances when reviewing applications to fund or permit infrastructure or facilities. To provide state agencies with access to these documents, the Center, in cooperation with the Land Use Interagency Team, has begun work on the development of a Land Use Electronic Resource Library (e-library).

The e-library, which will provide access to county, municipal, and multimunicipal comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, and official maps, will ultimately function as an electronic clearinghouse for many municipal and county land use documents. The e-library will be accessible through the Center's land use web site.

Given the large number of land use documents produced by Pennsylvania's 2,567 municipalities and 67 counties, providing electronic access to these documents will be a multiyear, multi-tiered effort. As part of the first tier, the Center will collect municipal and county comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and official maps. During the second tier of this effort, the Center will gather additional

land use documents, such as subdivision and land development ordinances, Act 537 plans, Act 167 plans, floodplain ordinances and open space plans.

Counties, municipalities, professional planners, economic development specialists, and residents of Pennsylvania will all benefit from the e-library and its promotion of sound land use practices. With immediate electronic access to some of the most important land use documents in the Commonwealth, all of these groups will be able to use these documents to make decisions.

Municipalities and counties will be able to use the e-library to promote their municipal land use documents to the general public and help coordinate planning between neighboring municipalities and counties. Local officials will be able to review plans and ordinances from neighboring municipalities, thus helping promote more consistency among plans.

Access to planning documents from around the Commonwealth may also help officials who are looking for ideas about how to better manage growth. Property owners will benefit by gaining access to ordinances that regulate their property, as well as their neighbors' properties.

The e-library also will become a valuable tool in promoting community and economic development in the state. Businesses that are seeking to locate new facilities anywhere in the Commonwealth will have ready access from a single source for local plans and ordinances.

(For the number of comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances in Pennsylvania, see the Land Use Trends section on page 13 of this report.)

Financial Assistance

Over the past two years, state funding to help communities with land use planning has grown more than threefold, reinforcing the importance the Commonwealth has placed on sound land use.

In its first Annual Report on Land Use, the Center recommended an increase in state funding for communities to develop new land use plans and ordinances. Governor Ridge made that recommendation one of his Growing Smarter priorities for the 2000-2001 budget.

Chart 5
Funding for Land Use
Planning Assistance
(in Millions)

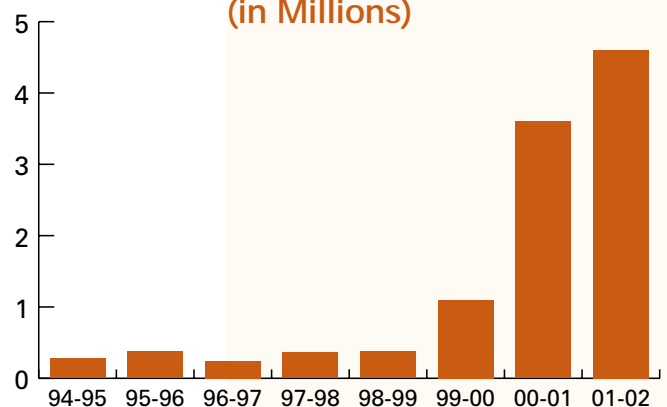
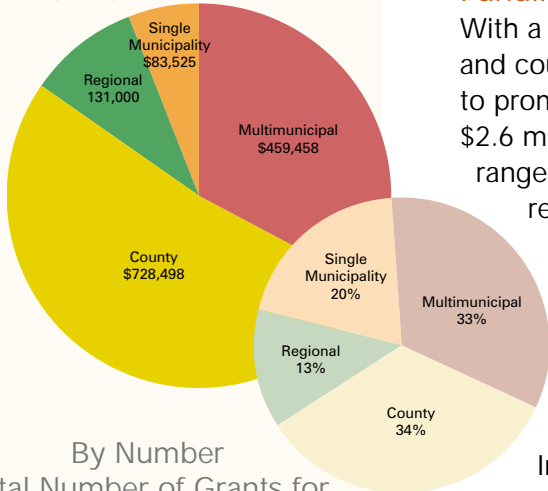
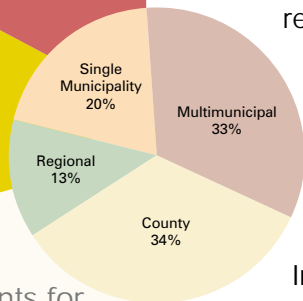


Chart 6 Breakdown of LUPTAP Grants Awarded for Comprehensive Plans, FY 2000

By Dollars Awarded
Total: \$1,402,481



By Number
Total Number of Grants for
Comprehensive Plans = 30



Funding for Land Use Planning Assistance, one of the three components of the governor's Growing Smarter Initiative, more than tripled in 2000-2001, going from \$1.1 million to \$3.6 million. The appropriation included \$1 million for technical assistance and \$2.6 million for the new Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP). Funding in FY 2001-2002 increased again to \$4.6 million, with \$2 million for technical assistance and \$2.6 million for LUPTAP grants.

Funding Highlights from 2000-2001

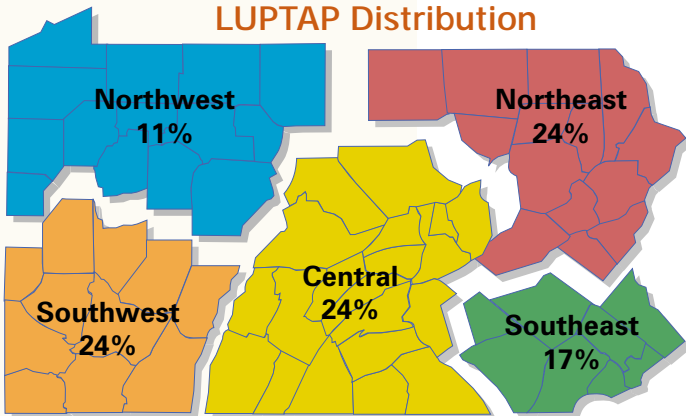
With a full year of LUPTAP funding now complete, local governments and counties have overwhelmingly responded to the Center's efforts to promote Growing Smarter. The Center was able to disburse the full \$2.6 million appropriation to municipalities and counties for a wide range of planning efforts under the new program guidelines. Funding requests exceeded this amount by an additional \$500,000.

Now midway through the second year of LUPTAP funding, the number and dollar level of requests will most likely surpass the first year's totals and are expected to exceed the available dollars before the end of the fiscal year.

In 2000-2001, the Center selected 63 applicants to receive LUPTAP grant funds. Since comprehensive plans are the genesis of smart growth, about half of the total appropriation (30 grants) was distributed to the preparation of these plans.


With Acts 67 and 68 of 2000 and the LUPTAP guidelines encouraging intergovernmental cooperation, almost half of the funding for total comprehensive planning efforts went to multimunicipal or regional entities with a formally established regional planning organization. Single municipal efforts received just 20 percent of the total appropriation for comprehensive planning.

Map 4 LUPTAP Distribution



The Center also focused financial support toward strengthening and building the capacity of counties. Seven counties – Armstrong, Cambria, Centre, Montgomery, Somerset, Susquehanna and Venango – received grants for new or updated comprehensive plans. Two other counties — Berks and Monroe — received funding to support multimunicipal planning efforts.

After awarding grants for comprehensive planning, the Center used the remaining LUPTAP money to fund a variety of planning activities, including transportation corridor studies, downtown revitalization and other plans related to economic development, water resource and community



facility plans and other special studies. Funding also went to the preparation of local land use implementation tools such as zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.

The statewide distribution map on page 24 shows that the LUPTAP funds were evenly distributed across the Commonwealth.

Multimunicipal Planning Efforts

Municipalities that approach planning on a regional or multi-municipal level typically have the most comprehensive, affordable, and appealing land use practices, something the Center and others have long recognized and advocated. Executive Order 1999-1 identified intergovernmental cooperation for land use planning as one of the Commonwealth's objectives. Acts 67 and 68 of 2000 amended the MPC to specifically encourage multimunicipal planning, and as a result, LUPTAP guidelines emphasize multimunicipal planning efforts.

Multimunicipal planning grants captured 33 percent of the monies earmarked for comprehensive planning. Another 13 percent of those funds went to regional planning proposals. Examples of this type of planning activity include:

- The Twin Rivers Council of Governments, representing 14 municipalities in eastern Allegheny County, is using its LUPTAP grant to develop a multimunicipal comprehensive plan. This state funding is providing \$45,000 of the \$75,000 total cost of the project. The COG includes the City of McKeesport, the townships of Elizabeth, Forward and South Versailles, and the boroughs of Elizabeth, Glassport, Liberty, Lincoln, Madison, Port Vue, Versailles, West Mifflin, West Newton and White Oak.
- In western Lebanon County, the borough of Jonestown, the townships of Bethel, Cold Spring, East Hanover, Swatara and Union, and the Northern Lebanon School District are undertaking a land use and environmental planning project that will examine the impact of

LUPTAP Funds Downtown Revitalization

Downtown revitalization is another integral element of the Commonwealth's Growing Smarter Initiative. A number of projects funded by LUPTAP during this fiscal year demonstrate the wide range of efforts to promote and revitalize urban and built-up areas:

- The City of Bethlehem in Northampton County is receiving assistance for the city's Southside downtown revitalization plan. Southside is an interesting mix of uses, including the former Bethlehem Steel Works, a commercial area and Lehigh University. The \$155,000 project is funded in part with a \$75,000 LUPTAP grant.
- Northern Cambria Borough in Cambria County is creating a comprehensive plan for the newly-formed borough that resulted from the consolidation of Barnesboro and Spangler boroughs. LUPTAP funded the entire \$42,000 cost of the project.
- New Castle City in Lawrence County conducted a land re-use feasibility study for the benefit of the city and the New Castle Area School District. LUPTAP funded \$23,820 of the \$25,000 total project cost.
- Nazareth and Roseto boroughs in Northampton County are working together to develop a joint Main Street Revitalization Plan. LUPTAP funded \$7,450 of the \$30,000 total project cost.



growth on the school district and the municipalities within its borders. As part of this project, students from a number of classes in the Northern Lebanon School District will be involved in a community visioning effort. LUPTAP funds are providing \$15,000 of the total project costs of \$36,800.

- East Deer, Frazer, and Springdale townships in Allegheny County are using \$11,658 in LUPTAP funds to develop the second phase of their comprehensive plan. These townships are located in a rapid-growth area near the Route 28 corridor in the northeastern part of the county.
- In Montgomery County, two multimunicipal comprehensive planning efforts are under way through the Indian Valley Regional Planning Commission, representing the boroughs of Souderton and Telford and the townships of Franconia, Lower Salford, Salford and Upper Salford, and the Upper Perkiomen Valley Regional Planning Commission, representing the boroughs of East Greenville, Green Lane, Pennsburg and Red Hill and the townships of Marlborough and Upper Hanover. LUPTAP grant money is providing \$32,600 and \$26,100, respectively, for these two projects.

County Planning Benefits from LUPTAP Money

Counties throughout the Commonwealth have been active in addressing local planning needs. The efforts highlighted below demonstrate the importance of county-level planning and counties' ability to work closely with municipalities in their planning efforts.

With funding from LUPTAP, counties have engaged in a variety of significant planning efforts:

- Armstrong County is developing a new comprehensive plan for the county and a regional plan for a number of municipalities in the southwestern part of the county.
- The Lehigh Valley Joint Planning Commission is working on a new two-county regional comprehensive plan for the Lehigh Valley.
- Monroe County is promoting and implementing its comprehensive plan and geographic information system (GIS) and also providing technical assistance to municipalities in the county.

Multimunicipal Efforts Tackle Water Resources, Transportation Planning

Multimunicipal planning can target water resources and transportation, as the following recipients of LUPTAP grants illustrate:

- The Pennridge Area Coordinating Council in Bucks County is conducting a water resources and land use impact planning project to better guide development in the region. Partners in this cooperative planning project include Dublin, Perkasio, Sellersville and Silverdale boroughs and Bedminster, East Rockhill, Hilltown and West Rockhill townships. Other participants are the Bucks County Planning Commission, the Pennridge School District and the Pennridge Chamber of Commerce. LUPTAP is providing \$23,000 of the total project costs of \$95,000.
- The Cumberland/Perry County Task Force on Transportation and Planning received \$20,000 in LUPTAP funds to help conduct a transportation study that encompasses 17 municipalities within Cumberland and Perry counties. LUPTAP funds were used to leverage an additional \$179,640 in federal and state transportation



grant money for the study. The purpose of the study is to ensure that the existing highway network can adequately handle the traffic volume caused by a growing population.

- An I-95/PA Turnpike Interchange Neighborhood Impact Study will identify all infrastructure within Bensalem, Bristol and Middletown townships, Bucks County, that will be directly or indirectly affected by the construction of the I-95/ PA Turnpike interchange. This proactive study will assess existing conditions and develop a strategy to resolve problems and issues created by the construction. By combining \$40,000 in LUPTAP funds with \$30,000 committed by the three townships and Bucks County, the project was able to access an additional \$35,000 in federal transportation funds.
- East Marlborough, Kennett, New Garden, Pennsbury and Pocopson townships in Chester County received funding for a U.S. Route 1 Corridor Study to develop a land use and transportation coordination plan for the corridor. This \$125,000 project is funded by a variety of public and private sources, including \$25,000 from LUPTAP.

State Agency Coordination

The Growing Smarter initiatives undertaken in the past few years have emphasized the forging of new partnerships. No collaborative effort is more important than that performed by the state agency members of the Land Use Interagency Team.

The Governor’s Center for Local Government Services continues to chair monthly meetings of this team, promoting communication and coordination of state land use policies among the member state agencies. With the addition of the Department of Health in 2001, the Interagency Land Use Team now consists of 15 state agencies and seven state offices. A complete list of the interagency team members can be found in Appendix I.

Multimunicipal Planning in Lycoming County

Lycoming County and its 52 municipalities are embarking on a unique approach to comprehensive planning. During the next two years, the county will update its comprehensive plan to address all components of the Municipalities Planning Code. In addition, six new multimunicipal plans covering 26 boroughs and townships will be developed. Those municipalities, primarily in the southern and central part of the county, are home to 83 percent of the county’s population. By including Gregg Township in Union County in one of the multimunicipal plans, the Route 15 South corridor will be the focus of one of the multimunicipal plans. The remaining 26 municipalities will be included in the county’s plan, resulting in the entire county covered by new or undated comprehensive plans. Lycoming County represents the first integrated planning effort under the 2000 revisions to the Municipalities Planning Code.



Lisa Atkinson Brown, Deputy Secretary for Community Affairs and Development, and James Lombardo, Executive Director of the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services, present a check to Jerry Walls, Planning Director, and Roger Jarrett, Chairman of the Lycoming County Planning Commission.

Funding for this project is being provided in part with \$200,000 in LUPTAP funds and additional support from the Departments of Conservation and Natural Resources, Environmental Protection and Transportation.

The Commonwealth's approach to land use decisions has changed significantly since 1999, and more change is expected as state agencies refine their policies affecting land use. Consistent with the 1999 Executive Order, the 2000 amendments to the MPC, and their own missions, state agencies must now consider local planning and zoning when making permitting and funding decisions about infrastructure and facilities. Regulatory agencies now have statutory authority to deny permits, under certain conditions, if projects are not consistent with local planning and zoning.

As the following synopsis of their activity in 2001 shows, state agencies are committed to meeting their new responsibilities under the sound land use initiatives and the agencies' implementation plans

Department of Agriculture

Pennsylvania's Farmland Preservation Program reached several milestones in 2001. In February, the American Farmland Trust recognized Pennsylvania for leading the nation in the number of acres of farmland preserved. As of July, Pennsylvania had preserved a total of 200,000 acres of farmland.



The Randy Andrews farm in West Lampeter Township, Lancaster County, was preserved in July 2001, adding another 74 acres of farmland to Pennsylvania's nation-leading total.

In the first eight years of the state preservation program, 100,000 acres were preserved. In the next four years, the Commonwealth doubled this rate, preserving another 100,000 acres. By September, 219 more farms and 24,070 additional acres were preserved.

Since the start of the program, Pennsylvania has preserved 1,730 farms and 208,704 acres in 51 counties, the most of any state in the nation.

Department of Community and Economic Development

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has many programs dedicated to strengthening and revitalizing existing communities. In 2001, two of these programs were expanded.

The Communities of Opportunity Program (*Housing and Redevelopment*) provides grants to communities, redevelopment authorities, and nonprofit organizations to improve blighted neighborhoods through redevelopment and to rehabilitate low- to moderate-income housing. Funding for this program was increased this year, and \$5 million was set aside to encourage housing in previously developed areas.

Another important DCED program targets community and economic development while furthering the objectives of Growing Smarter. Since its inception in 1999, the Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) Program

has helped to create more than 10,000 new jobs and retain more than 4,500 jobs in areas designated for growth by regions, counties and municipalities.

Because of the tremendous success of the KOZ initiative, Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zones were added in 2001. By eliminating most state and local taxes within targeted underdeveloped and underused areas, communities within Pennsylvania are experiencing economic growth and investment. Because the zones are chosen by region and must be approved by the municipality, school district and county, the KOZ initiative also is a model of intergovernmental cooperation in Pennsylvania.

Recognizing the importance of coordinating land use with local planning, DCED now asks all applicants seeking help with infrastructure to answer questions about how the project relates to local comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) played a major role in developing Pennsylvania Greenways: An Action Plan for Creating Connections, the statewide greenways plan released in 2001. Prepared by the State Greenways Commission, the plan envisions a system of greenways and linear corridors of open space throughout Pennsylvania and provides a "greenprint" for communities, state government, the private sector and individual citizens to work as partners in developing a statewide network of greenways.

Greenways provide a strategic approach for municipalities and regions to plan for smarter growth, enhance community character, provide for alternative transportation, and encourage educational opportunities in conservation, ecology and history.

For the past several years, DCNR has also supported and promoted Growing Greener: Conservation by Design, a set of zoning and land development design techniques developed by noted planner Randall Arendt and the Natural Lands Trust. Because this approach has been shown to conserve open space without affecting landowner equity and without spending public tax dollars, more and more local officials have expressed interest in incorporating these design concepts into their regulations. In response, DCNR and the Center, working with the Natural Lands Trust and others, train professional planners to help more communities incorporate these concepts into their regulations.



Before, the abandoned building was located in a distressed area of Philadelphia.



After, the newly renovated and updated building houses Custom Co-Pak, a tea-packaging company located in the heart of Philadelphia's Keystone Opportunity Zone. At this site, Governor Schweiker announced that more than 10,000 new jobs have been created in KOZ's statewide, where local governments, school districts and the state eliminate taxes to stimulate job creation and renewal in some of the Commonwealth's most challenged communities.

In its Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2), DCNR gives extra weight to projects that are generally consistent with local planning and zoning and to projects located in municipalities where a county comprehensive plan, municipal comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance exist. DCNR has coordinated its C2P2 grants with brownfield and redevelopment projects across the Commonwealth. In addition, DCNR invests a portion of its resources in rebuilding core communities to help conserve farmland, open space, greenways, natural areas and resources and historic areas.

Department of Environmental Protection

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) continues to aggressively support and implement the governor's Growing Smarter Initiative. In the coming year, DEP will institute a new legislative initiative dealing with comprehensive water resources management. It also will begin new and continue ongoing activities in a variety of other agency programs, including the Land Recycling and Growing Greener programs.

In concert with its sister agencies, DEP sponsored 15 Water Resource Forums in the spring of 2001. More than 1,700 Pennsylvanians attended these forums and provided feedback on the important connection between land use and the quality

and quantity of water resources. A summary of the public comments from the water forums is available on DEP's web site at www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/watermgt/wc/subjects/waterresources.htm.

In response to the water forums, DEP is developing a comprehensive water resources legislative proposal. The legislative proposal includes provisions to:

- Update the State Water Plan in three years and every five years after that.
- Create a water resources information system.
- Identify water-short or potentially water-short areas in every watershed.
- Authorize certain entities in water-short areas to develop detailed, integrated water resources plans and an action plan for dealing with the problems identified.
- Establish a technical assistance center to promote water conservation in homes, businesses, and industries.



Volunteers from the Kettle Creek Watershed Association learn how to restore Kettle Creek using natural stream design methods. They are planting willow bundles that will help stabilize the stream bank when they sprout. Volunteers included Secretary of Environmental Protection David Hess, Kettle Creek Watershed Director Amy Gottesfeld, representatives from the offices of U.S. Rep. John Peterson and state Sen. Jake Corman, the Fish and Boat Commission, the Clinton and Potter County Conservation Districts, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Dominion Transmission.



- Direct the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority to give a higher priority to projects that reduce unaccounted for water losses in water systems.
- Set standards for water well construction.
- Provide funding to accomplish all of the above goals.

Growing Greener Provides Money for Protecting Pennsylvania's Natural Resources

When the Growing Greener legislation was signed in December 1999, a significant step was taken toward implementing sound land use practices at the state level. This legislation provided \$645 million over five years to the newly created Environmental Stewardship Fund to dramatically restructure environmental funding practices. As a result, money is redirected to a variety of programs, including those that protect watersheds, preserve farmland and open space, invest in parks and environmental recreation, emphasize clean-water initiatives, reclaim abandoned mines and wells and promote sound land use planning.

Growing Greener, which provides funds to the departments of Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, and Environmental Protection and the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority, has proven to be one of the most important conservation and preservation actions undertaken in the Commonwealth.

Based on comments received at the Water Resources Forums and the need to implement additional stormwater controls under the federal Clean Water Act, DEP also will propose a new comprehensive stormwater management policy. This policy will address the new federal requirements by building on the existing Act 167 stormwater planning program and placing increased emphasis on the management of post-construction stormwater through infiltration best management practices.

Also consistent with Growing Smarter, DEP will implement the state's Growing Greener Program and the federal Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. These programs help to reduce nonpoint source water pollution caused by urban and agricultural run-off. Through these programs, more than 800 farms have used conservation measures on 19,000 acres of farmland.



New Castle, Lawrence County



DEP finalized its land use policies for reviewing permits in 2001. Of the 26,901 permit applications the agency received since that time, 5,269 were subject to the department’s land use policy. Just 104, or two percent, were judged to require further review, and of those, 79 were found to have no zoning conflict, no comment from the municipality or no authority for DEP to act. Of the remaining 25 permits, nine were withdrawn or put on hold at the request of the applicant, 14 are under active review, and two were issued with conditions. DEP proposed some changes to the current land use policy that took effect in December 2001.

Department of General Services

The Department of General Services continues to consider local planning and zoning, open space preservation, greenways, natural areas and resources and historic areas as part of its normal process for acquiring or selling real estate. The agency also follows Act 32 of 2000, the Downtown Location Law.



Pennsylvania’s only town, Bloomsburg, Columbia County

Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST)

PENNVEST, which provides loans and grants for water and sewer systems, requires a planning consultation with every potential applicant. County and local planning agencies and county agricultural preservation boards and/or conservation districts are invited to participate in these meetings.

As a condition of approval, the applicant also is required to provide a letter of concurrence from the county and local planning agencies and the county agricultural preservation board and/or conservation district indicating general consistency between the project and local land use policy.

Public Utility Commission

In January 2001, the Public Utility Commission adopted a policy to consider the impact of its decisions upon local comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances. This policy requires a



Approaching downtown Wellsboro

review of applications for certificates of public convenience and the siting of electric transmission lines or a public utility building, as well as other commission decisions. The policy statement also encourages all public utilities in the Commonwealth to consider how their decisions may affect comprehensive land use plans.



Department of Transportation

The Department of Transportation (PENNDOT) has initiated a number of measures and procedures in support of Growing Smarter in the past year. They include the following:

- The Department created a new full-time position in PENNDOT's Center for Program Development and Management to coordinate and implement initiatives within the department related to land use.
- The Department has changed its highway occupancy permit, transportation enhancement, and rail freight assistance application review procedures to require that local planning and zoning be considered.
- PENNDOT has funded several multimunicipal initiatives integrating land use and transportation planning and will provide almost \$2 million over the next three years to conduct broad-based land use planning in conjunction with major transportation projects.
- PENNDOT has incorporated context-sensitive design principles into many of its existing processes to integrate community values with transportation solutions.
- The Department developed a Traffic Calming Handbook for municipalities to promote livable communities.
- Thirty-six Congestion Management Corridors have been nominated for the Congested Corridor Improvement Program, and as of September 2001, the department had identified four early-action corridors to be studied.
- Each of the Department's 11 districts was surveyed to establish a database of potential projects and issues that may have significant impacts on land use.



The City of Erie



A long-term objective of the Center and the departments of Conservation and Natural Resources, Environmental Protection and Transportation is to develop a process to coordinate and communicate on significant planning assistance projects. This coordination would help reduce duplication, encourage comprehensive and multimunicipal planning, and find the most appropriate funding sources for each project.

Under a related goal, the Comprehensive Land Use Planning Assistance Pilot Program will coordinate interagency funding for comprehensive planning that incorporates the old and new requirements of the MPC and addresses greenways, water and sewer infrastructure, stormwater, hazard mitigation and floodplain management needs. (See page 37 of the Agenda 2002 section of this report for more information on this initiative.)