

For the past three years, the Governor's Center for Local Government Services has examined land use trends for Pennsylvania in an annual report on land use. With the release of U.S. Census 2000 results, the trend analysis in this fourth report focuses on population patterns: How and why is the population distributed throughout Pennsylvania in its current pattern?

Census 2000 and additional supporting data tell a significant story about Pennsylvania's population trends and their impact on the Commonwealth's landscape. The statistics reinforce what state and local officials and professional planners already know in terms of suburban sprawl. The data summarized in this chapter identify how, where, and at what pace we are growing and offer a start for identifying the consequences, both negative and positive, of growth and development.

This chapter also looks at how counties and other local governments are using state resources to leverage their funding to implement planning projects.

What Are Pennsylvania's Population Patterns?

Census 2000 and other data reveal information on how population growth in Pennsylvania is occurring and where Pennsylvanians are moving to and leaving from. Based on Census 2000 and additional supporting data, the following major trends in Pennsylvania's population patterns during the 1990s have been identified:

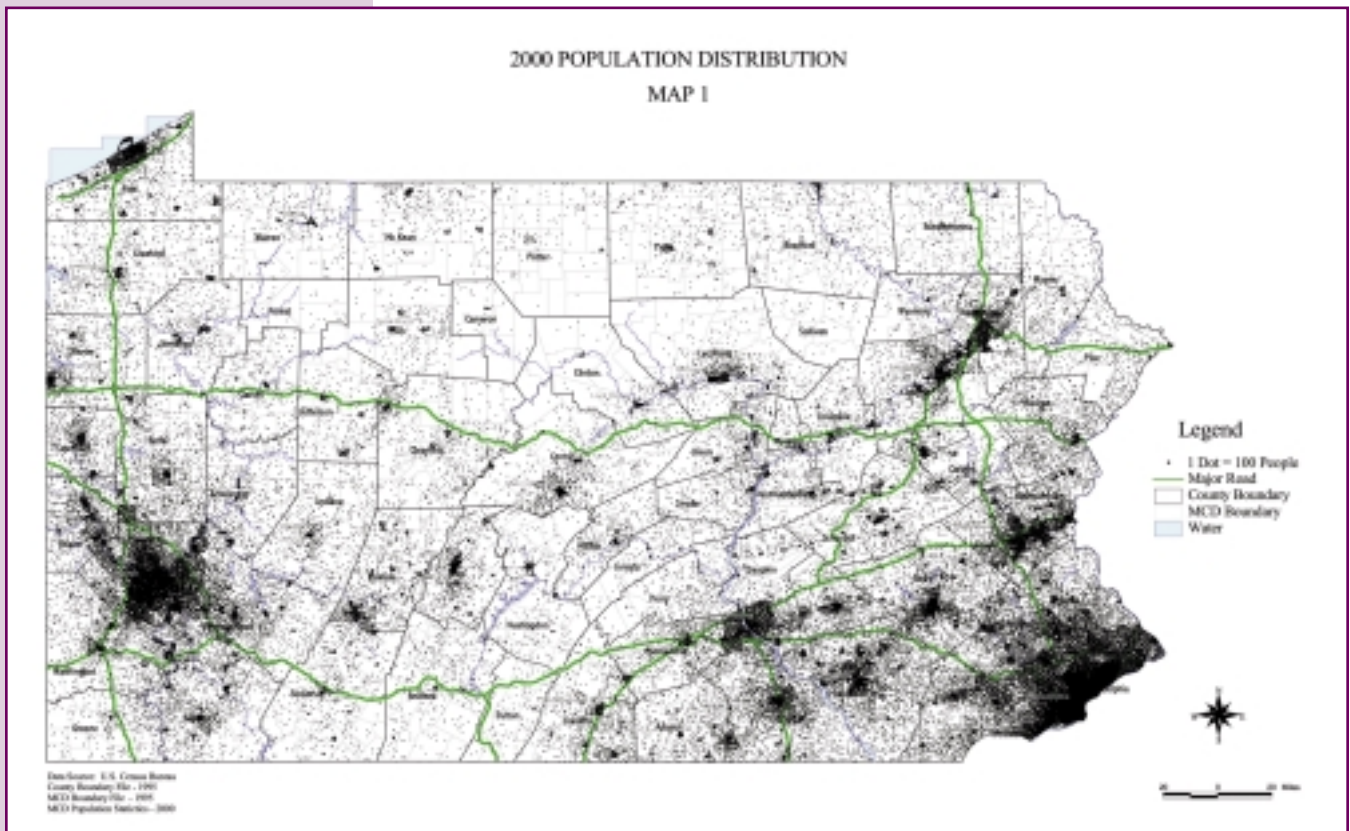
- **Trend 1:** Pennsylvania's growth is stagnant compared to that of the nation.
- **Trend 2:** Statewide, more citizens are migrating out of than into Pennsylvania.
- **Trend 3:** People are migrating to Pennsylvania's eastern and southcentral counties.
- **Trend 4:** The growth occurring in eastern and southcentral Pennsylvania is part of a regional growth corridor.
- **Trend 5:** Growth in Pennsylvania's western and northern tier counties is stagnant or declining.
- **Trend 6:** Urbanized areas continue to experience population loss, while many traditionally rural areas are growing.
- **Trend 7:** Fewer people are consuming greater amounts of land.

The trends in Pennsylvania's population patterns are summarized below, but more detailed background documentation to support these trends can be found in the *Appendix*.

TREND 1: Pennsylvania's growth is stagnant compared to that of the nation.

While Pennsylvania has maintained a positive population growth statewide over the last several decades, its growth fell short compared to the states surrounding Pennsylvania and the nation overall. Between 1990 and 2000, the total population in the United States increased by 13.2 percent; however, Pennsylvania's growth rate for this same period was only 3.4 percent. Among the 50 states, Pennsylvania ranked 48th in terms of a percentage increase in population during the 1990s.

It is interesting to note that across its 44,820 square miles of land, Pennsylvania does not have an even geographic dispersion of its population. Map 1 illustrates how Pennsylvania's population was distributed across the state in the year 2000. The majority of Pennsylvanians live in and around the state's larger urban centers of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, the Lehigh Valley, Harrisburg, and Scranton–Wilkes-Barre.




TREND 2: Statewide, more citizens are migrating out of than into Pennsylvania.

In the last decade of the 20th century, more citizens moved out of than into Pennsylvania.¹ Between 1990 and 2000, about 1.73 million citizens moved into the Commonwealth, and an estimated 1.89 million residents moved out, accounting for a net out-migration of 159,521 residents.

TREND 3: People are migrating to Pennsylvania's eastern and southcentral counties.

Pennsylvania is attracting new residents along the borders in its eastern and southcentral counties. Eastern Pennsylvania counties, such as Pike and Monroe, have developed into bedroom communities for the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area. An increasing number of southcentral Pennsylvania residents travel to work in the Baltimore/Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.



TREND 4: The growth occurring in eastern and southcentral Pennsylvania is part of a regional growth corridor.

The majority of Pennsylvania's population growth between 1980 and 2000 occurred in its eastern and southcentral counties. Of the seven Pennsylvania counties that exceeded the national growth rate of 13.2 percent during the 1990s, all but two are located in the eastern or southcentral part of the state.

Population growth in counties close to New York, New Jersey, and Washington, D.C., is part of a regional band of population growth in the areas that surround the Washington, Philadelphia, New Jersey, and New York metropolitan areas. The percentage change of population by county in Pennsylvania and its surrounding states reveals this corridor of population increase in these major metropolitan areas. Not surprisingly, Pennsylvania's eastern and southcentral counties are located within this metropolitan growth corridor.

TREND 5: Growth in Pennsylvania's western and northern tier counties is stagnant or declining.

The majority of Pennsylvania's western and northern tier counties have experienced either stagnant or declining population levels in the 1990s. Of the 19 counties that saw a population loss between 1990 and 2000, 13 are located in either western or northern Pennsylvania.

Cambria County experienced the most significant percentage in population loss — 6.4 percent — of all Pennsylvania's counties. Butler County, which grew by 14.5 percent, was the only county in western and northern Pennsylvania that exceeded the national rate of growth during this time frame.

TREND 6: Urbanized areas continue to experience population loss, while many traditionally rural areas are growing.

Although Pennsylvania's population is concentrated in the state's larger metropolitan areas, population in these urban centers is declining. Throughout the 1990s, population declined in urban and older suburban areas, while it grew in suburban and traditionally rural areas of the state.

On average, Pennsylvania's townships — the traditionally more suburban and rural areas of the state — grew by 10 percent during the 1990s. Meanwhile, cities lost 4 percent of their population during the 1990s, and boroughs lost 2 percent.²

In 1980, cities and boroughs contained 52 percent of the state's population. Two decades later, this percentage had decreased to 26. Such data support a trend of Pennsylvanians leaving the state's more urban and developed areas for areas that have traditionally been less developed.

TREND 7: Fewer people are consuming greater amounts of land.

The continuing shift of population from Pennsylvania's urban areas and older suburbs to more rural areas consumes large amounts of land. Pennsylvania ranks fifth in the nation for change in the amount of land developed. Only Texas, Georgia, Florida, and California rank higher.³

Between 1982 and 1997, Pennsylvania consumed land at the fourth fastest rate among 13 competitor states even though it had the slowest population growth,⁴ according to the Pennsylvania Economy League. Pennsylvania's slow growth rate and its greater-than-average rate in land development suggests that a greater amount of land is being consumed for a fewer number of people. In other words, although relatively few people are moving into the state, Pennsylvania's citizens are consuming greater amounts of land.

Inventory of County and Local Planning Tools

In September 2002, the Governor's Center for Local Government Services launched its new Web-based Electronic Resources Library, or *e-library*. With the help of county planning directors, the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Center has begun collecting and scanning county and municipal comprehensive plans, zoning and floodplain ordinances, and other land use documents to make them available through its Growing Smarter Web site, www.landuseinpa.com. Although municipal documents will be collected and posted in the e-library over time, the Center has completed the collection and posting of each county's comprehensive planning documents. Having these plans enables the Center to report on the status of comprehensive planning at the county level.

The Center has also collected information from county planning directors on multimunicipal planning efforts throughout the Commonwealth. Two important planning tools in Pennsylvania — the status of county-level planning in the Commonwealth and the increase in multimunicipal planning efforts across the state — are examined next.

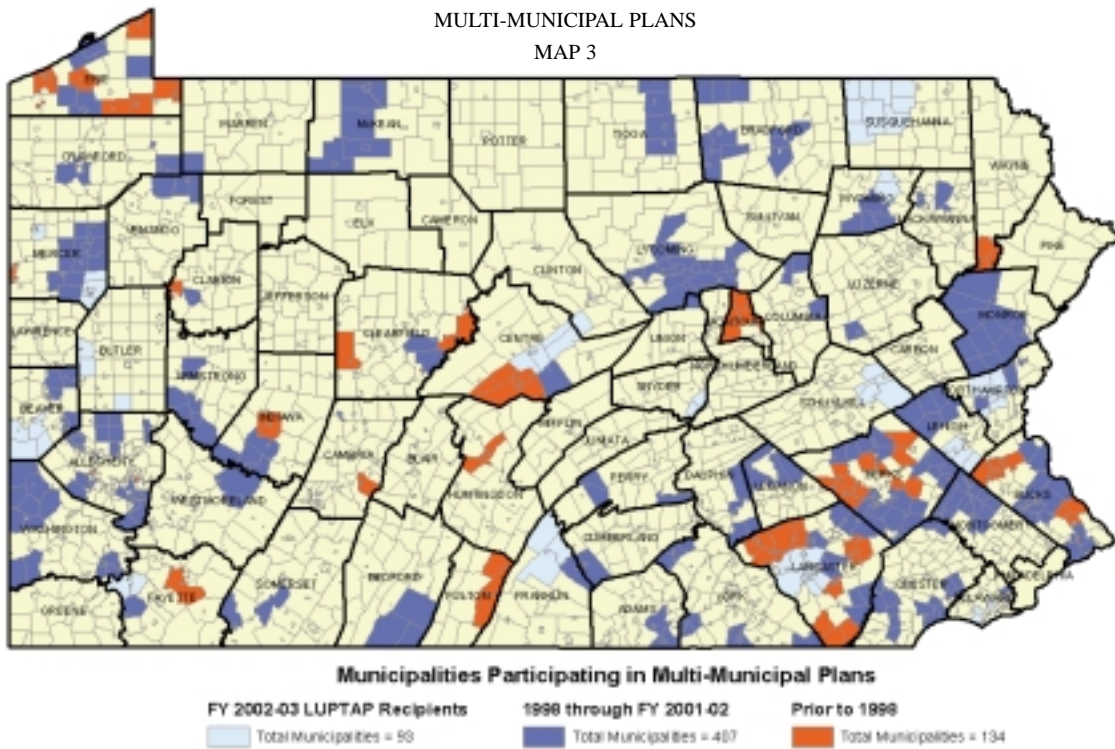
TOOL #1: The Status of County Planning in the Commonwealth

Under the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), all counties in the Commonwealth (*except for Philadelphia, where the MPC does not apply*) have had to develop and adopt a comprehensive plan since 1988. As a result of amendments to the MPC in 2000, counties are now required to update their plans every 10 years.

Although most counties have adopted a comprehensive plan, some of these plans have not been updated in more than 10



MULTI-MUNICIPAL PLANS
MAP 3



Governor's Center for Local Government Services has been able to strongly encourage these new multimunicipal planning efforts.

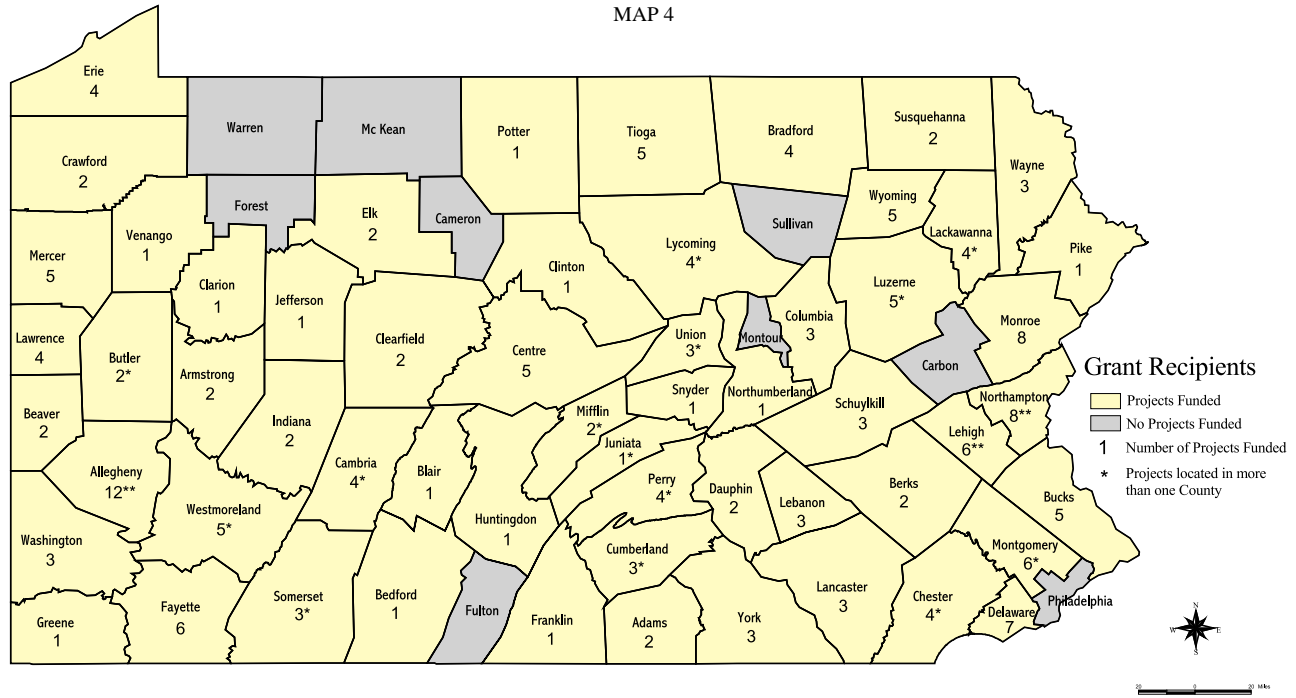
Map 3 shows multimunicipal planning efforts completed or under way in the Commonwealth. Because the development of a comprehensive plan is typically a lengthy process, all of the multimunicipal planning groups identified on Map 3 have not adopted new comprehensive plans but are expected to do so in the future.

As of July 2002, the Center had been able to identify 172 multimunicipal and joint planning efforts that encompass 541 municipalities in 32 counties throughout the state. An additional 15 new projects covering 93 municipalities received LUPTAP funding approval between July and October 2002. These new projects bring the number of municipalities involved in multimunicipal planning efforts to 634, about 24 percent of the Commonwealth's 2,566 municipalities.

County and multimunicipal planning efforts can be found throughout the state. Map 4 shows the distribution of LUPTAP funds in 47 of the Commonwealth's 67 counties. Given the number of multimunicipal planning efforts funded through LUPTAP, the distribution of grants approximates the distribution of multimunicipal planning in Pennsylvania.



LAND USE PLANNING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
 AWARDS BY COUNTY (July 2000 - October 2002)
 MAP 4



Summary

The growth or decline of a community cannot be attributed to any single factor. While the availability and capacity of public infrastructure influence the timing of development, human choice often dictates the ultimate pattern of development. Whether driven by lower taxes, more affordable housing stock, or a desire to improve their quality of life, many people in Pennsylvania are choosing to live on the urban fringe.

Throughout the Commonwealth, bedroom communities are receiving new development at a rate that, in some cases, outpaces population growth in the state. This pattern of decentralized development induces roadway congestion and urban disinvestments and places an increased strain on municipalities to implement expensive capital improvements.

The most significant trend identified in this report does not come as any surprise to government officials, planning professionals, or citizens, all of whom have witnessed this trend for years: As Pennsylvania's population growth remains relatively small, a fewer number of people are consuming greater amounts of land.

Across Pennsylvania, municipalities are learning that the most proactive stance they can take in guiding future growth is to ensure that comprehensive plans and land use regulations are well-considered and up-to-date. Besides making the most of limited municipal



resources, multimunicipal planning efforts help municipalities to look outside their borders and address issues of common concern to the larger region.

The impact of Acts 67 and 68 of 2000 is beginning to be felt across the Commonwealth. Thanks to more municipalities and counties taking advantage of the smart land use tools now available to them, an increasing number of counties and multimunicipal groups are engaging in new comprehensive planning efforts that should, over time, begin to reverse some of the land use trends captured in this report.

¹ Internal Revenue Service, Statistics of Income Division, *State-to-State Migration Data for the State of Pennsylvania, 1990-1991 through 2000-2001*.

² Metropolitan Philadelphia Policy Center, *Greater Philadelphia Regional Review (Spring 2002)*, "A Good Economy Starts with Great Communities," 8.

³ 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, "January 31, 2001, News Update," citing U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Resources Inventory, "State Rankings by Acreage and Rate of Non-Federal Land Developed," December 2000.

⁴ Metropolitan Philadelphia Policy Center, *Greater Philadelphia Regional Review (Spring 2002)*, 9. Twelve competitor states are California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia.

