

## *Land Use and Growth Management Profile*

**F**ulton County is located in south central Pennsylvania and is bordered by Bedford, Franklin, and Huntingdon Counties in Pennsylvania, and Washington and Allegany Counties in Maryland. Predominantly rural in character, Fulton County is composed of ridge and valley terrain covering 439.8 square miles. The County is divided into 13 municipalities that include 11 townships and two boroughs. McConnellsburg Borough is the county seat and serves as its employment and population center.

According to the 2000 Census, Fulton County ranks 64<sup>th</sup> in population with 14,261 persons and has a population density of 32.9 persons per square mile. From 1990 to 2000, the County's population grew at a nominal rate of only 1.5 percent, or by 207 persons.

### **Existing Land Use Conditions**

Fulton County's existing land use patterns are greatly influenced and shaped by surrounding natural features such as mountain ranges, valleys and waterways, as well as its transportation features. These features have largely determined the location of transportation corridors and development activities, as well as agricultural practices.

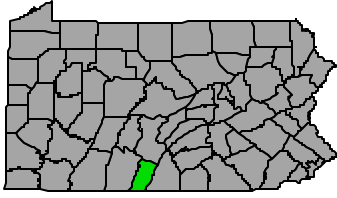
A network of high-capacity transportation systems traverses Fulton County. These systems include the Pennsylvania Turnpike, Interstate 70, U.S. Route 30, and U.S. Route 522. In addition, Fulton County is in close proximity to the juncture of I-70 and I-68 in

Maryland. These transportation systems have greatly contributed to Fulton County's accessibility and land development patterns.

Of the County's total land area, only four percent is considered developed, while the bulk of the undeveloped resides in forested and agricultural uses.

### **Key Land Use Issues**

- ☑ **McConnellsburg Borough has remained the population center and the industrial and commercial nucleus of Fulton County.** Consequently, a natural pattern of development has occurred as a concentric ring of growth has expanded outward from the Borough into the neighboring rural townships.
- ☑ **Fulton County's commercial and industrial land development patterns are largely influenced by the transportation network and availability of public sewer services.** As a result, future growth in the County is expected to occur in five distinct geographic areas: (1) McConnellsburg; (2) Warfordsburg; (3) Hustontown; (4) Ft. Littleton; and (5) Crystal Spring.
- ☑ **Fulton County's future population growth and land use development patterns will be largely influenced by in-migration patterns of people from the east and south.** Data gathered from the Internal Revenue Service reveals that Fulton County's greatest population in-flows originated in



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Franklin County, PA, and Washington County, MD.

- ☑ **Fulton County's rural character is being jeopardized** as its agricultural lands are slowly being converted to low-density, scattered residential development. From 1990 to 2000, U.S. Census enumerations show that the increase in housing units (9.8 percent) outpaced the County's population growth (4.6 percent).
- ☑ **Land use regulations are not prevalent in Fulton County.** For example, Fulton County does not have a county zoning ordinance nor a subdivision and land development ordinance. In addition, of the 13 municipalities, only McConnellsburg Borough has adopted a zoning ordinance. Moreover, municipal subdivision and land development ordinances lack the regulations necessary to support the preservation of the County's existing rural character.
- ☑ **Agricultural use of land is in long-term decline.** According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 18 farms and 5,635 farmland acres were lost between 1987 and 1997.
- ☑ **Less than one-tenth of one percent (95 acres) of the County's total farmland is enrolled in its agricultural easement program.** The primary reason here is that very little to no money exists to support this program and the additional purchase of agricultural easements it entails.

- ☑ **Access management is an increasing concern** as residential land development patterns continue to develop in a linear fashion along local roadways (e.g., U.S. 522) and each property obtains an individual highway occupancy permit from PennDOT.

### **Land Use Planning Activities**

- ☑ **The Fulton County Commissioners adopted a brand new comprehensive plan in May 2000**, which was funded in part through the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).
- ☑ **The County's first multi-municipal comprehensive plan was adopted in 1994** for the greater McConnellsburg region, which includes McConnellsburg Borough, Ayr Township, Todd Township, and Dublin Township. Funding assistance for this project was made available through the DCED.
- ☑ **The County is spearheading a multi-municipal comprehensive planning effort that includes 12 of the County's 13 municipalities.** This new multi-municipal plan includes McConnellsburg Borough and Ayr, Todd, and Dublin Townships and it will replace their 1994 multi-municipal plan.