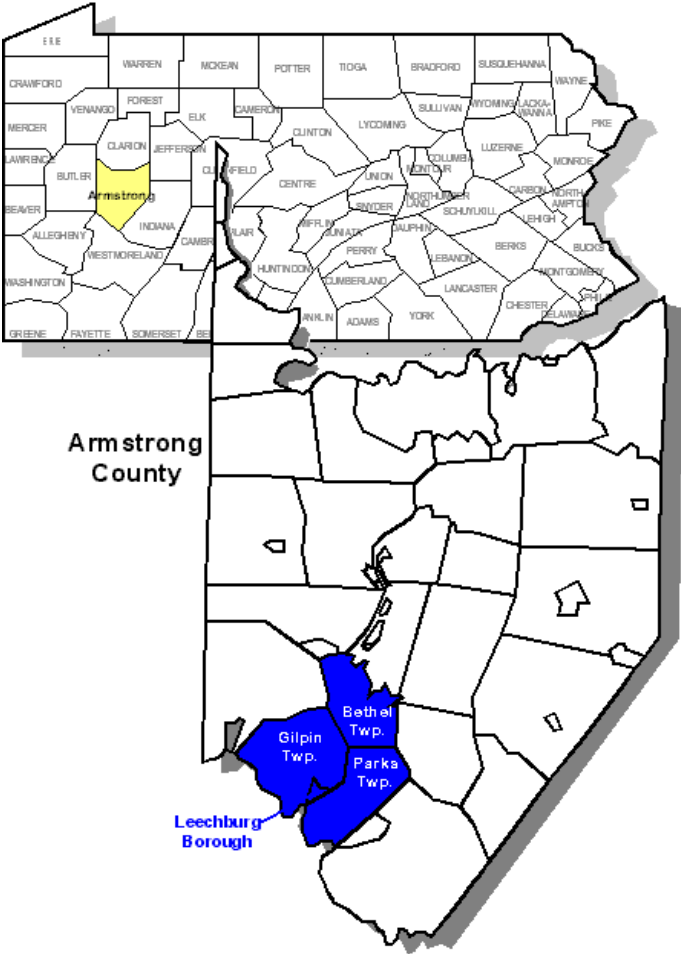


SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



PREPARED FOR:
Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough
Armstrong County, PA
PREPARED BY:
Richard C. Sutter and Associates, Inc.

**SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY
REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR
GILPIN, PARKS AND BETHEL TOWNSHIPS AND
LEECHBURG BOROUGH
ARMSTRONG COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

This project was financed through the following sources:
A State Planning Assistance Grant (SPAG), FFY 1999
(Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships),
a Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program, FFY 2001
(Leechburg Borough),
from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as administered by the
Department of Community and Economic Development, and Local Sources.

PREPARED BY:

**GILPIN, PARKS AND BETHEL TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS,
LEECHBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL, AND THE
SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RICHARD C. SUTTER & ASSOCIATES, INC.
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNERS/LAND PLANNERS/HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLANNERS
THE MANOR HOUSE – P.O. BOX 564
HOLLIDAYSBURG, PA 16648**

June 15, 2003

The Communities of South Central Armstrong County including

Gilpin Township
589 State Route 66
Leechburg, PA 15656
(724) 845-6981

Parks Township
26 Jackson Street
Vandergrift, PA 15690
(724) 567-7764

Bethel Township
218 Ridge Road
Ford City, PA 16226
(724) 763-1882

Leechburg Borough
260 Market Street
Leechburg, PA 15656
(724) 842-8511

**RE: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY
 REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Kindly find attached the Final document of the South Central Armstrong County Comprehensive Plan.

Speaking upon behalf of our firm, we have most enjoyed this challenging Multi-Municipal planning project. If you should need our assistance in the future as you proceed through the adoption process and begin to implement the recommendations and proposals contained within the Plan, kindly feel free to call upon us.

With best personal regards.

Very truly yours,

RICHARD C. SUTTER AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
Comprehensive Planners/Land Planners/Historic Preservation Planners

Richard C. Sutter, AICP
Senior Community Planner
President

Map 1 - Regional Base map 11x17

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page #

Title Page	i
Letter of Transmittal	ii
Regional Base Map	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Maps	v
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	viii
Acknowledgments	ix
Gilpin Township Base Map	x
Parks Township Base Map	xi
Bethel Township Base Map	xii
Leechburg Borough Base Map	xiii

PART I: THE BACKGROUND STUDIES

1. The History of the South Central Armstrong County Region	1
2. The Physiography and Environment of the South Central Armstrong County Region ..	16
3. The Existing Land Use of the South Central Armstrong County Region	40
4. The People of the South Central Armstrong County Region	57
5. South Central Armstrong County Region's Housing	70
6. The Economy of South Central Armstrong County Region	83
7. South Central Armstrong County Region's Transportation	100
8. The Community Facilities and Public Utilities of the South Central Armstrong County Region	112

PART II: THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

9. Introduction	131
10. Public Participation Process and Results	134
11. Goals and Objectives	152
12. The Future Land Use of South Central Armstrong County Region	167
13. The Future Housing of South Central Armstrong County Region	191
14. The Future Economy of South Central Armstrong County Region	204
15. The Future Transportation of South Central Armstrong County Region	208
16. The Future Community Facilities and Public Utilities of the South Central Armstrong County Region	216
17. The Plan Component Interrelationship Statement	229
18. The Contiguous Municipalities Statement	231
19. The Implementation Tools and Strategies	233

PART III: APPENDICES

Appendix A - 2000 Census Data Tables	235
Appendix B - Parks Township Business Listing	256

LIST OF MAPS

Map #	Title	Page #
PART I: THE BACKGROUND STUDIES		
Map 1	The Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Township and Leechburg Borough Region, Armstrong County, and Pennsylvania	iii
Map 2	Gilpin Township Base Map	x
Map 3	Parks Township Base Map	xi
Map 4	Bethel Township Base Map	xii
Map 5	Leechburg Borough Base Map	xiii
Map 6	Historical Armstrong County	3
Map 7	Historical South Central Armstrong County Region	14
Map 8	Regional Topography	21
Map 9	Regional Slope	22
Map 10	Regional Geology	25
Map 11	Regional Soils	32
Map 12	Regional Flood Plains and Wetlands	36
Map 13	Regional Mine Subsidence Map	37
Map 14	Gilpin Township Existing Land Use	44
Map 15	Parks Township Existing Land Use	47
Map 16	Bethel Township Existing Land Use	50
Map 17	Leechburg Borough Existing Land Use	53
Map 18	Regional Existing Land Use – Summary Map	55
Map 19	Regional Roadway Classifications	102
Map 20	Regional Traffic Volumes	104
Map 21	Regional School Districts	115
Map 22	Regional Community Facilities	123
Map 23	Regional Water Service Areas	125
Map 24	Regional Sewer Service Areas	127
PART II: THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS		
Map 25	Regional Development Opportunities and Constraints	169
Map 26	Regional Future Growth Areas	183
Map 27	Gilpin Township Future Land Use	184
Map 28	Parks Township Future Land Use	185
Map 29	Bethel Township Future Land Use	186
Map 30	Leechburg Borough Future Land Use	187
Map 31	Future Regional Water Service Areas	228
Map 32	Future Regional Sewer Service Areas	229
Map 33	Contiguous Municipalities	233

LIST OF TABLES

Table #	Title	Page#
PART I: THE BACKGROUND STUDIES		
Table 1	Gilpin Township Existing Land Use	42
Table 2	Parks Township Existing Land Use	45
Table 3	Bethel Township Existing Land Use	48
Table 4	Leechburg Borough Existing Land Use	51
Table 5	Population Change, 1970-2000	58
Table 6	Gilpin Township's Population Trends and Projections, 1930-2020	59
Table 7	Parks Township's Population Trends and Projections, 1930-2020	59
Table 8	Bethel Township's Population Trends and Projections, 1930-2020	60
Table 9	Leechburg Borough's Population Trends and Projections, 1930-2020	61
Table 10	Families as a Percent of Households, 1990-2000	62
Table 11	Educational Attainment, 1990-2000	64
Table 12	Age Distribution, 1990-2000	66
Table 13	Place of Birth, 1990-2000	67
Table 14	Dependent Populations, 1990-2000	68
Table 15	Total Housing Units, 1980-2000	71
Table 16	Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 1980-2000	73
Table 17	Renter-Occupied Housing Units, 1980-2000	75
Table 18	Vacant Housing Units, 1990-2000	76
Table 19	Housing Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 1980-2000	78
Table 20	Contract Rent, 1990-2000	79
Table 21	Labor Force Participation Rate, 1980-2000	84
Table 22	Gilpin Township's Labor Force Participation by Sex, 1980-2000	84
Table 23	Parks Township's Labor Force Participation by Sex, 1980-2000	85
Table 24	Bethel Township's Labor Force Participation by Sex, 1980-2000	85
Table 25	Leechburg Borough's Labor Force Participation by Sex, 1980-2000	86
Table 26	Labor Force and Employment Data, 1990-2000	87
Table 27	Occupation of Workers, 1990-2000	89
Table 28	Job Openings in Major Occupational Groups, 2005	90
Table 29	Occupations with Highest Growth Rates, 2005	91
Table 30	Employment by Industry, 1990-2000	92
Table 31	Place of Work, 1990-2000	94
Table 32	Households by Income Group, 1990-2000	95
Table 33	Income, 1980-2000	96
Table 34	Poverty Status, 1979-1999	97
Table 35	Average Daily Traffic of State Maintained Routes, 2002	101
Table 36	PennDOT Twelve Year Plan, 2000-2012	106
Table 37	Leechburg Area School District	112
Table 38	Kiski Area School District	113
Table 39	Armstrong School District	114

LIST OF TABLES (cont.)

Table #	Title	Page#
PART II: THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS		
<i>Nominal Group Process Results:</i>		
Table 40	Gilpin Township Strengths	135
Table 41	Gilpin Township Strength Actions	135
Table 42	Gilpin Township Weaknesses	136
Table 43	Gilpin Township Weakness Actions	136
Table 44	Gilpin Township Opportunities	136
Table 45	Gilpin Township Opportunity Actions	137
Table 46	Gilpin Township Threats	137
Table 47	Gilpin Township Threat Actions	137
Table 48	Parks Township Strengths	138
Table 49	Parks Township Strength Actions	138
Table 50	Parks Township Weaknesses	139
Table 51	Parks Township Weakness Actions	139
Table 52	Parks Township Opportunities	140
Table 53	Parks Township Opportunity Actions	140
Table 54	Parks Township Threats	141
Table 55	Parks Township Threat Actions	141
Table 56	Bethel Township Strengths	141
Table 57	Bethel Township Strength Actions	142
Table 58	Bethel Township Weaknesses	142
Table 59	Bethel Township Weakness Actions	142
Table 60	Bethel Township Opportunities	143
Table 61	Bethel Township Opportunity Actions	143
Table 62	Bethel Township Threats	143
Table 63	Bethel Township Threat Actions	144
Table 64	Leechburg Borough Strengths	144
Table 65	Leechburg Borough Strength Actions	145
Table 66	Leechburg Borough Weaknesses	145
Table 67	Leechburg Borough Weakness Actions	146
Table 68	Leechburg Borough Opportunities	146
Table 69	Leechburg Borough Opportunity Actions	147
Table 70	Leechburg Borough Threats	147
Table 71	Leechburg Borough Threat Actions	147
Table 72	Regional Strengths	148
Table 73	Regional Strength Actions	148
Table 74	Regional Weaknesses	148
Table 75	Regional Weakness Actions	149
Table 76	Regional Opportunities	149
Table 77	Regional Opportunity Actions	149
Table 78	Regional Threats	150
Table 79	Regional Threat Actions	150
Table 80	Commonly Provided Recreational Facilities	218

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure#	Title	Page#
PART I: THE BACKGROUND STUDIES		
Figure 1	Location of the Regions' Municipalities	16
Figure 2	Years of Housing Unit Construction - 1990	80
Figure 3	Years of Housing Unit Construction - 2000	80
Figure 4	Map of the Armstrong Trail	118

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of a project as complex as this Comprehensive Plan involves both a great deal of effort and a variety of disciplines. A number of people have contributed to this volume. We would like to extend our acknowledgment and thanks to the following:

GILPIN TOWNSHIP

Dennis L. Wolfe
William Salem
Scott Christie

PARKS TOWNSHIP

Mary Ralston
Regina Heilman
David Frickanisce
Ray Rimel
Doug Baughman
Lisa Baughman
F. L. "Bud" Shannon
John Shannon
Jane Stearman
Jeff Anthony

BETHEL TOWNSHIP

Jennifer Emmonds
Charlie Boarts
Jim Riederer

LEECHBURG BOROUGH

Mary Beth Girardi
Dolores Lucjak
Anthony Roppolo
Dr. Frank Ceraso
Max Isreal
Donna Rupert

GENERAL GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, INDIVIDUALS AND COMPANIES

Parks Township Supervisors
Parks Township Planning Commission
Gilpin Township Supervisors
Bethel Township Supervisors
Leechburg Borough Council
Armstrong County Planning and Development
The Pennsylvania Department of Community and
Economic Development (DCED)
The citizens of the region and other groups who
volunteered their time and efforts

GILPIN TOWNSHIP GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Ladies Auxiliary, Firemen, Scouts, and Church
Organizations

PARKS TOWNSHIP GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Park Township Volunteer Fire Department, Parks
Township Police Department, Pleasant View Brethren
Church, Reformation Lutheran Church, St. Paul's
Highfield Lutheran Church, First Baptist Church of
North Vandergrift, Morningstar Baptist Church, Kings
Deliverance Holiness Pentecostal Church, Parks
Township Sportsman Club, Ft. Hand Rifle Club, Circle
D Saddle Club, Laurel Point Grange, Kepple Hill
Women's Club, Slovak Club, Laurel Point Elementary
School, Laurel Point PTA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts

BETHEL TOWNSHIP GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Allegheny Land and Trust, Bethel Township Volunteer
Fire Department, Bethel Lutheran Church, Bethel
Township Senior Citizens, Boy Scouts, Crooked Creek
Presbyterian Church, Homewood Baptist Church

LEECHBURG BOROUGH GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Leechburg Rotary Club, Elks, Marconi, Historical
Society, Ministerial Association, Education
Foundation, Leechburg Area Community Association
(LACA), Leechburg Volunteer Fire Company, Lower
Kiski Ambulance, Gilpin/Leechburg Area Park,
Leechburg Lions and the Sokol

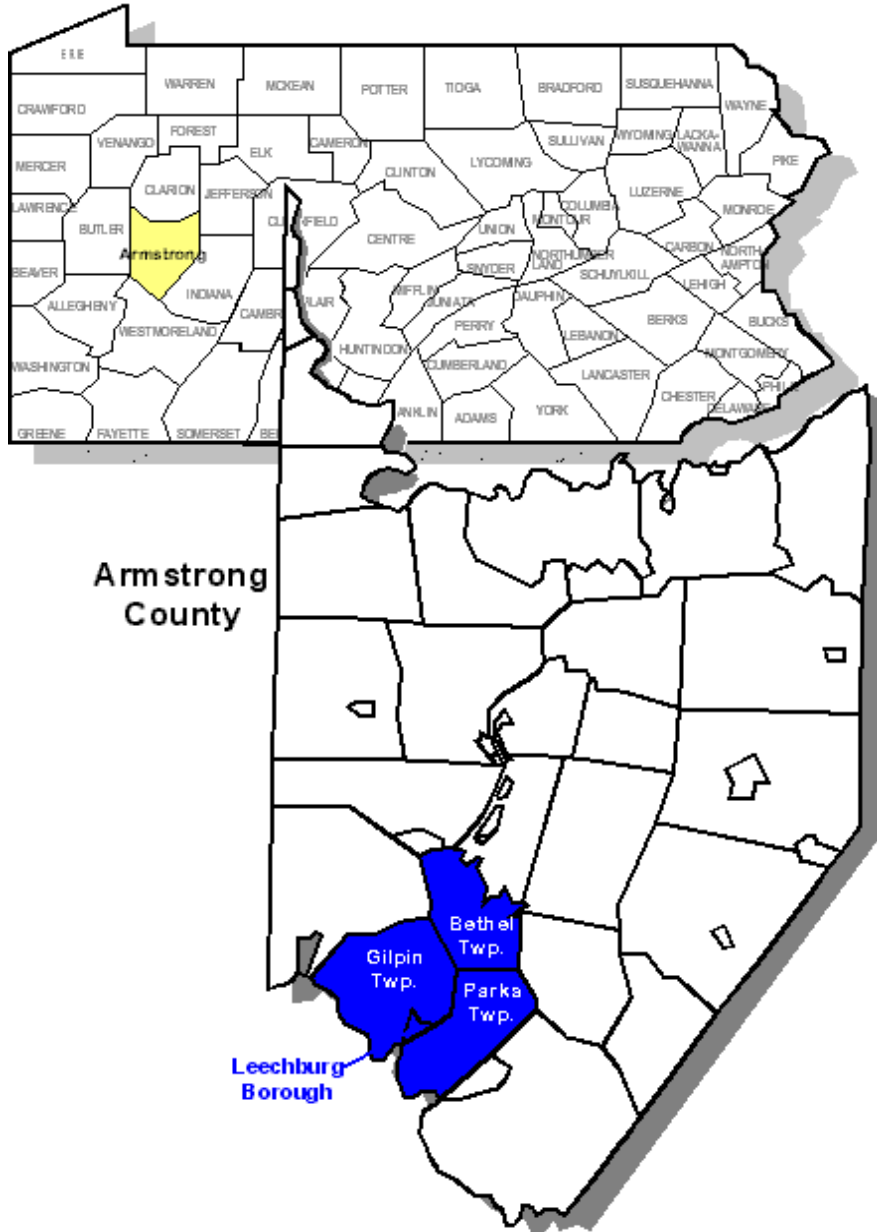
Map 2 - Gilpin Township Base Map

Map 3- Parks Township Base Map

Map 4 - Bethel Township Base Map

Map 5- Leechburg Borough Base Map

PART I



**THE BACKGROUND STUDIES
FOR THE
2008 SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGIONAL
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

CHAPTER 1

THE HISTORY OF THE
SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY
REGION

THE HISTORY OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

The development of the communities of Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Township and Leechburg Borough can be attributed to a number of factors including: the existence of natural resources, the early success of industrial pursuits, and the establishment of transportation networks throughout the area. While the current character and resources of the Region are a direct result of this historical development, these resources can play significant roles in the current educational, recreational, and economic development of the area, which add significantly to the quality of life of the area's residents. An encapsulated history of the area and a review of historic resources of the County, Townships and Borough are provided below.

The character of a community derives from the historical events which shaped its history. This narrative will provide an encapsulated history of Armstrong County and Bethel, Gilpin, and Parks Townships and Leechburg Borough. This history serves as a basis for other sections of this Comprehensive Plan, and as a foundation for potential historic preservation activities in these communities.

Brief History of Armstrong County

The early history of the area of present-day Armstrong County includes land once owned by American Indians, claimed by the French, exploited by early trappers and traders, and occupied by early American settlers. The Lenni-Lenape or Delaware and Shawnee tribes were native to the region; however the tribes of the Six nations claimed the area by right of conquest. Into the eighteenth century, this area was occupied by the villages of these tribes.

By the 1740s, trading posts were established in many of these villages, and trappers and traders regularly passed through the region. In 1749, an expedition led by French army officer Celoron de Blainville succeeded in burying lead plates along the Allegheny River and subsequently claimed the region for France. As the century progressed, hostilities increased among the Indians, Europeans, and colonists, and the area of Armstrong County experienced skirmishes with local Indian groups.

The Delaware Indians frequented the area during their early westward movement from the Susquehanna River Basin. Their large and notable settlement, located in what is now Kittanning, was prominent in the pre-revolutionary history of the area. The village was known as Kit-Han-Ne and was inhabited from 1730 until it was destroyed during the French and Indian Wars. Many of the Indian raids in the areas of western Pennsylvania, and parts of Maryland and Virginia emanated from this site. Col. John Armstrong led troops in an attack on the village on the morning of September 8, 1756. Most of the village was destroyed and the Indian Leader, Captain Jacobs, was killed.

After the Revolutionary War, settlement of the region increased, although the threat of Indian uprisings lingered. General Wayne's Treaty with the Indians at Fort Greenville, Ohio, promoted permanent settlements in western Pennsylvania. Early settlers of the county included David Todd, James Clark, William Green, James Kirkpatrick, Michael Mechling, James Claypool, Andrew Sharp, and Absalom Woodward. By 1800, there were approximately 2,500 people in the area.

This increased population led to the formation of Armstrong County from parts of Allegheny, Westmoreland, and Lycoming Counties on March 12, 1800. The county was named for Major General John Armstrong, who led the expedition against the Indians at Kittanning. General Armstrong also served in the Continental Congress and the Revolutionary Army.

The Allegheny River, Crooked Creek, Kiskimintas River, Taylor Run and tributaries of each were the waterways which were used as transportation corridors by native peoples and the early pioneers. The Allegheny River was used by small boats, rafts, and skiffs. Later large boats and steamboats followed the river and transported goods, people, agricultural produce, and other raw products to and from commercial, population and industrial centers. Pickles Eddy, a short distance below Kelly Station on the east bank of the Allegheny River, where the river curves to the west, was one of the places where the boatmen tied their craft and spent the night. The floor of Pickles Tavern was often filled with sleeping boatmen. Logansport was another well known boat landing spot along the river. Crooked Creek, the largest tributary to the Allegheny River, provided access to the east from the region.

As permanent settlements became established, early settlers exploited the natural resources found in the area. Agriculture and related business activity grew throughout the region. Early industrial activity followed. The first grist and flour mill was built and began operations in 1805-06. The second such venture was Beatty Flour Mill which was established in 1855 on Taylor Run in the area now known as Center Valley.

The early settlers discovered the shallow and deep coal veins in the region. The era of the coal and coke industries is linked to the period of America's industrial development and westward expansion. The rich local coal deposits in the immediate region made the manufacturing of coke to fuel the Pittsburgh steel mills a profitable business venture. Small coal mines dotted the terrain. Some mined coal for family use while others developed small commercial ventures. During the period of America's industrial expansion and again during the period of preparation for the First World War, coal mining became a thriving industry employing many local workers.

River transportation was replaced by rail service. Railroads were not bound to the fixed courses of the waterways but could be built to serve expanded territories. The Pittsburgh to Kittanning Railroad was completed in 1856. A freight, passenger station with Post Office was opened at Kelly Station in 1860.

Innovations in transportation, downsizing of steel production, and a shift to use of other cleaner forms of fuel, reduced the need for the area's coal. By the late 1950s, coal production declined. Many of the towns which depended upon employment in the coal or steel industries experienced a reduction in population as families left the area to seek employment. Armstrong County experienced decades of high unemployment, population decline, and community disinvestment. Through economic development programs, grants, and other assistance, the county is beginning to build a more diversified economy.

Historic Maps

The maps located within this section of the Comprehensive Plan, are copies of early maps comprising the region. These are provided for information, historic perspective, and to illustrate the changes which have taken place over time.

Map 6 - Historical Armstrong County 11x17

Creation of the Townships

In 1878, a number of early inhabitants petitioned Allegheny Township for a division of territory. There was reluctance to change existing school districts. The court ordered a vote and the majority favored the division into three townships: Bethel, Parks, and Gilpin.

History of Gilpin Township

Gilpin Township is closely associated with Leechburg because children attend the Leechburg Area School District. Leechburg is the retail and commercial center which serves the township. The township has growth potential since improvements to Route 66 were completed in the early 1950s.

Indians occupied the section of Gilpin Township where the Kiski and Allegheny River valleys meet. The Indian Village, Atteques, was located at Schenley. Conrad Wiser was an early missionary to the Indians and visited the village in 1748. Early settlers included Philip Bolen, James Coulter, and the John, Philip, Peter and Nicholas Klingensmith families.

Some of what is now Gilpin Township was part of "Old Westmoreland." The land at the point of the two rivers was first surveyed by John Montgomery in 1766. General Brodhead sent scouts to spy on the Indians in the Schenley area in 1799. As late as 1838, there were traces of a round fort which was built on land now owned by the Schenley Industrial Park. This fort was three and one-half feet high and occupied three acres. In 1935, an Indian burial ground was discovered during construction of a sewer at Schenley. The site contained skeletons, tomahawks, and stone vessels.

In 1814, the Klingensmith Gristmill was built near Bagdad. Nearby, a sawmill was operated by Jacob Riggle. The Penn Oil Works was built near the Schenley Distillery in 1856 to distill coal oil. Because of petroleum drilling at the site, the business was closed. Other businesses which exploited the local resources included the Breton, Johnston and Company which began operations of an oil works at Aladdin in 1860. Later the same plant was operated by Dr. W. H. C. Tweddle which makes lubrication oil and paraffin. The process consumed 8,000 barrels of oil a month. The business was later purchased by Standard Oil. Aladdin was incorporated as a borough in 1876.

Another early industrial enterprise was the brick making plant at Johnetta which began production in about 1900. The plant produced an excellent grade of reddish brown brick. The plant was in operation for 20 years. During that period, some of the bricks used to construct the Alcoa plant at New Kensington were produced at the site. Brick homes for employees were erected. The business ceased operation in 1920.

One of the first Post Offices in Western Pennsylvania opened at the Point, called Kiskiminetas in 1824. John Royer was the first Postmaster. The first Schenley Post Office opened in 1862.

The first school was constructed in 1812, on the then Peter Klingensmith farm. James Stitt was the teacher. The Shady Grove School was built before 1835 on the Schenley Road. Both schools were constructed from unhewn logs and had slab doors. The windows were made from paper dipped in bear's grease. Other schools included the old Georgetown School erected in 1890. The Consolidated School was erected in 1939. Spruce College operated for a time in the area. The Rev. J. A. Campbell was the first county school superintendent.

The first service of the Forks Church was held in the home and barn of John Hill in 1812. The congregation formally organized in 1817. The first church was erected at the junction of the Allegheny and Kiskiminetas Rivers and was named for its location. The first church was in use for 50 years. A second church was built on the Leechburg-Kittanning Road in 1891. This church burned in 1905 and was replaced by the present building.

As the railroads became popular for travel and the transportation of goods and raw products, Kiski Junction became a thriving passenger terminal. The site included a modern station and housing for crews.

The dam on the Allegheny River at Schenley was built in 1922. This dam was constructed to facilitate river traffic which was a major means of transportation. The dam made the shipment of coal, sand, gravel, and other products by barge possible.

The Mt. Joy Grange was chartered in 1875 with 35 original members. Daniel Gosser was the first master of the organization. Throughout its history, several times the organization was dormant but each time was reorganized.

The Gilpin Fire Department was founded in 1942 and a variety of fire equipment, vehicles, and pumpers were part of the inventory. In 1969, an emergency truck to handle auto accidents and river rescue was added.

The Gilpin Police Department was founded in 1971 with part-time policemen who used their own vehicles. Since that time, a patrol car has been purchased. The officers maintain law and order for the citizens of the township and coordinate with surrounding communities when needed.

The township is the site of the Leechburg Area Pool and Gilpin/Leechburg Area Park. The pool and park are adjacent to each other and offer recreational opportunities including picnicking, tennis, baseball and softball for the citizens of the Region. The pool and park are operated by two separate nonprofit entities.

History of Parks Township

Prior to settlement of the land, Indians roamed the region. Delaware Indians frequented the Riverview area. Numerous Indian relics including weapons and tools have been found. Following reduction of strife with the Indians, settlers came to the area in greater numbers. A catalyst in the reduction of strife was Conrad Weiser, one of Pennsylvania's most noted travelers for journeys throughout Pennsylvania from 1737 to 1748 to explore, make contact and negotiate treaties with the Native Americans. His most famous and final journey was in 1748 from Paxtang (Harrisburg) to Logtown (now the site of Ambridge) to "brighten the chain of friendship" with the western Indians, but was primarily to claim the Ohio and Allegheny country for the English Colonies. His party traveled on the Kiskiminetas Path, also known as Traders Path – an old trail, along which many Indian towns existed, that ran from the Allegheny River near the New Kensington and Tarentum area crossing the Kiski River and through Parks Township. "Kiskiminetas Old Town" was a Delaware Indian town across the river from Carnahan Run at the site where Peter LeFevre later ran his ferry for traders and settlers from 1800-1825. The site currently houses a bowling alley and drive-in theatre.

Parks Township was named for Robert Parks who settled the land in 1814. Incorporated in 1878, Parks Township, along with Bethel and Gilpin Townships, was formed out of the obsolete Allegheny Township of Armstrong County. His original purchase was 400 acres from the Alexanders in 1818 who had bought the land from John Montgomery in 1807. Mr. Montgomery was the original owner and first called the

area a “Farmer’s Delight.” A patented land grant by that name issued by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania exists and is dated March 4, 1773. Robert Parks later added another 250 acres. In 1858, Robert Parks died at the age of 90. He is buried on a private plot on his acreage. The old barn, built in 1835, is still in use today. Parks served in the Revolutionary Army and came to the area in a covered ox-drawn wagon with his wife and six children. The original ox yoke is still on the farm.

The Parks farm originally operated as a dairy known as Farmer’s Delight Dairy. Milk was delivered by a boatman who rowed across the Kiski River to the first customer, Thomas W. McCausland, who was then part owner of the Hyde Park Foundry. The first pasteurizing plant in the community was added to the farm in 1944. The dairy closed in the 1970’s and is now the site of Parks Bend Industrial Park, an expanding state of the art industrial park and business incubator.

Early settlers included Stitt, Hill, Foster, Guthrie, Heckman, Altman, Shaner, Kepple, McIntire, Lanning, Kearney, Greenberry, Wilson, Painter, Girt, Wyant, Gourley, and Crosby. Descendants of these early families can be found living in the township today. Early pioneer families lived in log cabins and were largely self-sufficient. Family farms produced the food and agricultural products to be traded for needed goods and services. Clothing was produced on home looms. The women frequently walked barefoot to church in Leechburg and stopped outside to put on their stockings and shoes.

The best-known gristmill in the state was established along Carnahan’s Run by Stitt in 1818. The building was constructed of logs and used water from the stream for power. The mill had two burrs, one to grind cattle feed and the other to grind flour. These grinding stones were purchased in France, shipped to Baltimore and transported to the site over the mountains by ox team. John Stitt’s sons, Levi and Frantz, built the second mill on that site in 1847 and it operated until it was destroyed by the flood of 1880. The Stitt’s had such a good reputation that the phrase “as good as wheat in Stitt’s Mill” was used across the country to denote quality and integrity.

A township landmark was the Klingensmith’s store started by Josiah W. Klingensmith on his farm in 1874. Wagons were used for purchase of farm products and the delivery of goods from the general store. Delivery was made to families living in Parks, Gilpin, Kiskiminetas, and Bethel Townships. A post office was established in the store in 1881. Two names were proposed, Dime and Egg, with Dime being selected. Mr. Klingensmith was the first Postmaster. In President Cleveland’s second term, Amos Altman was appointed as Postmaster. The store was later operated by his sons, John A., Frank W., and Paul; and a partner, Elmer G. Vantine. Three generations of the family were involved in the continual operation of the store for 76 years.

Levi Stitt was a master mechanic who worked first for the Apollo Iron & Steel Company and later for the American Sheet and Tin Plate Company. He was instrumental in the erection of the Vandergrift Mill. As a young boy, he walked barefoot to see the turning of the great wheels and the opening of the Rogers & Burchfield Mill in Leechburg. John R. Long was the company engineer.

There were many coal mines in the region which provided employment for a number of workers. The importance of the coal mines, coke production, and steel making in the regional economy began to be downsized by the 1950s.

The first school in Parks Township was located on a branch of Carnahan’s Run in 1812. The first teachers were John Criswell and Samuel Taggart. Another school was near St. Paul’s Lutheran Church on the eastern branch of Carnahan’s Run and Townsend Adams was its teacher in early days. Parks Township is “famous” for having the first graded school in this section of the county. As far back as 1866 there was a schoolhouse near Stitt’s Mill, also known as “Laurel Point.” The name reflected the fact that the site was on an elevated location just at the edge of the stretch of table-land. The directors, having been

petitioned to build another school in a distant part of the township, decided to double the capacity of the one here by building another room and grading the school. The township citizens did not appreciate their foresight and took them to court. However, the court very justly decided in the director's favor. Parks Township, while located in Armstrong County, is presently part of the Kiski Area School District, which is located in Westmoreland County.

William Hill, one of the township's outstanding citizens, taught school at the Hill School for many years. He was the grandson of Jacob Hill who settled in Parks Township in 1837. Jacob Hill was a member of the State Assembly. He rode horseback to Greensburg and then took the stagecoach to Harrisburg to attend sessions.

The St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, better known as Highfield, was organized in 1871. The original building was extensively repaired in 1908 and a Sunday School was added in 1930. A Parish Hall was constructed in 1949. A new church was built at the intersection of Dime Road (Alt. Route 66) and Airport Road in 1991. Another early church in the township was the Morning Star Baptist Church, located in the Village of Kiskimere, and chartered in 1918 with 18 members.

Laurel View Cemetery, more familiarly known as Stitt's Cemetery, is located on land set aside by the Stitt heirs. Shaeffer's, Porter's, Kepple's, and Wonders are other old cemeteries in the township. Graves of the founders, early settlers, and veterans of early and current wars are found in these cemeteries. Three very old cemeteries also exist along Ridge Road, Piper Hill Road (near the old site of the Highfield Church), and in Riverview.

The Laurel Point Grange was organized in 1890. Such organizations played a very important role in the early social life of the area. The Laurel Point is still active today.

The towpath of the Pennsylvania Canal ran along or on what is now Route 66 from above Apollo to Leechburg. A dam at Leechburg backed up water along the entire length of the Kiski River past Parks Township to the North Apollo area. In 1906, after trains replaced the canal as the main method of transportation, an "electric railway" – the trolley – was established. The trolley line ran from Leechburg to Apollo following the seven-mile level section along the old towpath of the Pennsylvania canal and the seven miles connecting Leechburg to Apollo through North Vandergrift, presently Route 66. The trolley remained a major link for travelers until well after the depression when the automobile became the primary means of transportation.

Riverview and Keppel Hill combined residential community was established about 1912 on the Susan Keppel farm. The family name was later changed to Kepple through popular use. This farm was located on the Elderton tract which was deeded and signed by the Mayor of New York in 1794. It was purchased and has remained in the Keppel family since that date. Today, the community has about 400 homes, a fire company and two churches. George McMurty tried to purchase the William Keppel farm in order to establish his steel mill. Keppel was offered \$50,000.00 but felt he could not secure his family's future through the sale and instead kept farming. McMurty then purchased land across the river and built the present site of Vandergrift.

North Vandergrift was built as a steel worker's town in 1904. The people crossed the Kiski River to the mill in Vandergrift via a pontoon footbridge, until a larger bridge was built in 1933, connecting the towns. In 1905, Thomas J. Rowley established a grocery and general store in North Vandergrift, which is still operated by his descendants today.

Gilbert K. Myers brought aviation to the area.. Drafted into the Air Corps in World War I, he purchased an airplane and flew it from Betties Field in Allegheny County to a large tract of ground on a hill in Parks

Township. Two years later he purchased a Curtis airplane and started the Leechburg Airport. He provided a passenger and sight-seeing service and offered student instruction at the site. In 1940 and 1941, student pilots of World War II flew here. In 1946, Myers opened a flying school to train pilots under the Veterans GI Bill. The school was later expanded to include aircraft engine and mechanics training. The airport closed in the 1970s.

In 1995, the new Township Community Building, located in North Vandergrift, was completed. The building provided for the operations of the Tax Collector, the Township Secretary and the Police Department, plus a public meeting room. The building was constructed entirely by a volunteer workforce and donations.

Today much of the township still contains farmland interspersed with small communities and new home developments.

History of Bethel Township

The first elections were held in Bethel Schoolhouse Number 4 in 1878. The Township was named for this schoolhouse and nearby church.

As the Indian problems decreased, the population in the area increased. Many of these early settlers were Scotch, Irish, and German. The wilderness was cleared, crops planted, and log cabins built. Over time, small settlements were created. Many of these early population centers were located along the waterways which also acted as early transportation corridors for both goods and people.

Alexander Walker migrated to America from Ireland. He acquired a large tract of land in Westmoreland County and built the first grist mill on Crooked Creek. He became a respected early settler and was elected as one of the first Westmoreland County Commissioners.

His son, Robert, was trained to be a farmer and miller. He erected a gristmill north of his father's mill. He built the unique tunnel water-powered mill at Tunnelville in 1836. To power the mill, he dammed the creek and cut a tunnel under what is now known as "The Peninsula," an elevated finger of land in the reservoir area. A village grew in the area and was known as "Walker's Mill". This area is now the site of the Crooked Creek Flood Control Dam and the Crooked Creek State Park. The gristmill stone from the mill can be seen in the stone house of Robert Galbraith.

Crooked Creek Dam was started in 1937 and was completed following World War II. Part of the dam is located in Bethel and part in Manor Township. The Crooked Creek State Park is located in Bethel Township and provides a variety of recreational opportunities including boating and swimming. Known for its open space and natural beauty, the park is enjoyed by residents and visitors.

An old water powdered grist mill is found at the site and is now under water. During construction of the dam, the Tunnelville Compressing Station of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, Gas Division, was moved to a new location northwest of the present spillway and outlet works. The Banks Compression Station at Suckerville was vacated and relocated on the Edward Walker farm just northeast of the Walker Bridge.

Samuel Walker, the second son of one of the first settlers, lived on a farm which is still operated by descendants. The farm is located in Bethel Township. The old barn on the homestead was built in 1849 by Samuel Walker and is still in use today.

Early industrial and commercial activity included the Beatty Saw Mill, the S. B. Blacksmith Shop, a limestone quarry, a livery stable, the Hudson Brothers Sand and Gravel, and a number of stores and shops. At one time, sugar cane was pressed into molasses at the Michael Beatty farm on the Logansport Road. Tax records indicate that a number of physicians were practicing in the area. The Big Pipe Gas Line was laid through Kelly Station before 1900.

Coal mining was associated with the early history of the area. The first records of coal mining operations date from 1881. Henry Crial of Center Valley was the first coal miner of record. Small mines were located in the township. The Provident Coal Company began operations in 1902. Mining towns soon sprang up in Kelly Station, Glen and Logansport. Other mines were operated by the Raridan Coal Company, Logansport Coal and Coke Company, and the Glendale Coal Company. Some of these operators built company houses. A coal mine explosion killed three men at the Banks Pump Station in 1924.

In 1856, the Allegheny Railroad opened for travel having one set of tracks through the area. Kelly Station was established in 1860. The station was named for Hamilton Kelly who acted as the sheriff, station agent, and postmaster. The station store burned down in the late 1990s.

Whiskey was distilled at Logansport at the site of the old farm known as the Bird Bottom tract from about 1900 to 1962. Named for Squire Thomas Logan, Logansport was a small factory town located along the Allegheny River. Logan lived in the old brick dwelling that was a landmark for the steamboat landing.

The Logans sold the land to Hespenshide and Bowers, the first distilling company to operate in the area. Gukenheimer and American Distilling were later operators. The first successful products were Logan and Guckenheimer Whiskeys and Pennsylvania Straight Rye. Thomas sold his interest to his partners who created the Logansport Distillery Company. At the time of Prohibition, the distillery could not find a salable product, so the plant was abandoned for a number of years.

The Allegheny Chemical Company leased the distillery during the 1920s to produce industrial alcohol but the operation was not profitable. In 1933, the Pennsylvania Distillery Company purchased the facility prior to the repeal of Prohibition. A fire destroyed the distillery warehouse and thousands of barrels of whiskey. In the early 40s, Joseph S. Finch & Company purchased the property and began producing several brands of commercial whiskey and industrial alcohol. Facing national competition and labor problems, the Finch Company went out of business in 1952. At this time, the Schenley Distillery Company purchased the entire Bird Bottom tract and turned the property into a storage facility. When Schenley sold the operation to the Lucas Coal Company, the production of alcohol in the area became a thing of the past.

The Lucas Coal Company originally considered turning the site into a washing facility because of the abundance of spring water. But the company lacked the financial resources to invest in the property. During the oil crisis in the late '70s, there was reported interest in turning the plant into a site for the manufacturing of gasohol. Today, the property belongs to Rosebud Mining Company.

In 1835, a free public education system was created. The 1881 tax assessment indicated that there were five schoolhouses. At one time, the following one room schools were located in the Township: Bethel, Heilman, Boyd, Smail, and Spruce Run. The Taylor Run School had two rooms.

In 1884, the Troy Hill District was divided into two districts, Speers and Boyd. The Speers School was built on the Speers Property and the Boyd School was located on the Samuel Boyd farm. Two of the early school directors were Samuel Boyd and David Householder. These men were carpenters and were

involved in construction of the Boyd School house. Some of the former pupils became future teachers. The last classes were taught at the Boyd School in 1942. In 1945, the school was sold at auction and purchased by David McKelvey, a great grandson of Samuel Boyd. The school was torn down and the lumber used to build the McKelvey home.

The Bethel School was the last one room school house operating in the area. The school was later purchased by Bethel Church and torn down in 1966. The Heilman School was closed in 1937. In 1936, the township began to pay for high school tuition. Prior to this time, students paid for their own secondary education and transportation.

The former Bethel Elementary School, now owned by Ken Skomo of Die Tech Machine Shop, was constructed in 1953. The building had six classrooms and a kitchen. Later an addition was added. In 1966, the Bethel Elementary School became part of the Armstrong School District.

There were a number of lodges associated with the history of the township. The Patriotic Order Sons of America, was organized by 1919. This patriotic and religious organization held meetings in rooms above the Fiscus Store until the early '30s when they disbanded. Gowns, guns, and other equipment were appropriated by the officers of the State organization. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Lodge No. 979, was organized in 1888 at White Rock and moved to Center Valley in 1915, but no longer exists. The hall was used at one time as a roller skating rink. The Lady May Rebekah Lodge No. 1249 was organized in 1946 in the I. O. O. F. Hall in Center Valley.

The Crooked Creek Presbyterian Church was the first church organized in the township. First called the Union Church, a congregation of 15 original members was established in 1825. The 150th Anniversary was celebrated in 1975.

The Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church was founded by pioneers in 1833. The first pastor was Rev. David Earhart, the grandfather of the late Amelia Earhart. The corner stone for the present church was laid in 1878. The building is still in use but over the years has undergone extensive repairs and improvements. One member is a fourth generation descendant of one of the original church officers.

The congregation of the Homewood Baptist Church began holding its meetings in the Claypole Schoolhouse in 1877. The first church was destroyed by fire in 1928 and was later rebuilt.

Cemeteries of the area include veterans from the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and both World Wars. The grave of Anthony Fennell from the Indian Wars is located in the Homewood Baptist Cemetery. Many of these early graves are located in the Crooked Creek Cemetery and the Bethel Lutheran Cemetery.

The Bethel Township Volunteer Fire Department provides fire protection for the residents. The Fire Department was organized in 1960. The Firehall was built by volunteer labor on 1.8 acres adjacent to Bethel Church. The Junior Firemen of Bethel Township assist with fund raising and provide other community services. The Ladies' Auxiliary sponsors round and square dances, bake sales, and serves public dinners and wedding receptions as ways of providing support.

The Bethel Township Starlettes were organized in 1969. The drum, march and drill team is self-supporting. The group performed during the Bethel Township Centennial Celebration.

The 1936 flood caused considerable damage throughout the township. The Crooked Creek Dam was completed in 1940 to provide flood protection for the area. The Tunnelville Compressing Station of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, Gas Division, was moved to a new location northwest of the present

spillway and outlet works. The Crooked Creek State Park provides recreational opportunities for the residents and visitors to the area.

The Bethel Township Municipal Building was constructed in 1968. An addition including an office and meeting room was added. The building is used for regular meetings of the Bethel Township Supervisors and equipment storage. Bethel Township celebrated its Centennial on September 15-17, 1978.

History of Leechburg Borough

Leechburg history begins with the arrival of the first settlers in the late 17th century. William Penn arrived from England to govern Pennsylvania in 1682. By 1822 there were eight families living in what was called “White Plains” of the Kiski Valley. These pioneers cleared the forest and began to establish farms in the area..

By 1826, when the survey began for the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal, the town had been renamed “Friendship” because of the hospitality of the residents. The path of the Kiski was considered the logical route for the canal to connect Pittsburgh to Philadelphia.

The Canals

Friendship’s fortunes expanded when David Leech arrived in 1827 to build a canal lock and big dam across the Kiski. The waters of the Kiski were made navigable by the blasting of the waterfalls at Apollo in 1811, which helped pave the way for these construction projects. The first dam was built by David Leech at the end of Main Street which was 27 feet high and 574 feet long. A second dam, 990 feet down river from the original site at the foot of First Street, remained a favorite fishing spot until the 1889 Johnstown Flood washed it away. The base of the structure is still visible.

The dam, Leech’s canal, and locks gave the town an economic boost. These projects brought construction workers and created the town’s first growing pains. Canal laborers earned 50 cents a day and were given a place to sleep and eat. The completed canal brought business and visitors of all kinds who needed housing and entertainment.

Leech was an enterprising man who profited handsomely from the construction of the canal. In addition to his grist and saw mills, he owned a fulling mill to process wool and a fleet of canal boats that traveled between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. His mills were powered by the waters of the canal. He turned the operation of the grist mill over to his son, Addison, in 1857. That mill remained open until 1944 when it was closed by owner Harry May.

The name of Leechburg gradually came into use between 1827 and 1839. The local newspaper, grandly named *The Columbian and Freeport-Leechburg and Warren Advertiser*, began publication in 1839, according to Beers’ Westmoreland County History. An 1841 copy of this newspaper is found in the Freeport Public Library. Tradition indicates that the name did not come into use until the borough was incorporated in 1850, although the newspaper was using the name as early as 1839.

The Railroads

While the canal was very important to the early growth of Leechburg, in reality, it was slow and unreliable. By 1853, the North Western Railroad Company built a line connecting the Pennsylvania Railroad’s Indiana branch at Blairsville with the Cleveland and Mahoning Valley Railroad’s New Castle

branch. This was to give the Pennsylvania Railroad direct access to Cleveland and the western states. By 1858, the railroad had completed most of the grading and ballasting of the route from Blairsville to Allegheny Junction. We know it as Kiski Junction.

Eventually the Pennsylvania Railroad merged with the New York Central company to form the Penn Central Railroad. In time, the Penn Central became part of Conrail. In 1999, the Norfolk and Southern Railroad took over the lines in the Kiski Valley. The line right-of-way to the north of Schenley were deeded over from Conrail to the Allegheny Land Trust's Rails-to-Trails program and has become part of the Allegheny Trail.

Over the years, rail traffic had decreased to occasional trains passing through the area. As a result of the decreased traffic, the company removed one set of track on the Westmoreland County side of the river. Although train traffic has increased considerably since 1990, there are no current plans to replace the track .

The Trolley

On March 23, 1906, the Pittsburgh and Allegheny Valley Street Railway Company's trolley line between Leechburg and Apollo opened for business. In most places, the track was laid along the tow-path for the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal. As few people owned automobiles, the trolley served as the main mode of transportation in the valley until St. Patrick's Day of 1936.

Bridges

The first plans to cross the Kiski at Leechburg were started in 1832. These plans called for the construction of a bridge atop the big dam at the foot of First Street. Although 200 shares of stock were sold at \$25 a share, this bridge was never built.

In 1846, Hugh Callen built the first bridge, but the wooden trestle structure was declared unsafe. It was torn down and replaced by a structure of stone piers and abutments. This bridge was destroyed by a flood in 1861 and rebuilt in 1862. A flood again robbed Leechburg of a bridge in 1875. The first steel bridge was built in 1890 and held up against floods in 1904 and 1907. That bridge was replaced with the present structure in 1935. One set of piers of one of the former railroad bridges is located at the site of the walking bridge and the other piers are in the water near the Allegheny Ludlum Bridge.

Steel

The waters of the canal were used to operate the early grist mills, saw mills, and the early steel industry in the valley. The first steel mill opened in Apollo in 1856. When William Rogers and Thomas Burchfield came down river from Apollo in 1871 and established the Siberian Iron Works on the site of what is now the Leechburg Plaza, Leechburg's economy expanded.

The plant remained open until 1900 when it was taken over by the U.S. Steel Company. At one time, U.S. Steel owned all the mills in Leechburg. Following consolidation, the business was renamed the American Sheet and Tin Plate Company. This company remained in business until the 1930s. With the closing of the company, steel production ceased in the community.

Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corporation got its start in 1897 as the West Leechburg Steel and Tin Plate Co. The company was renamed the West Leechburg Steel Co. in 1904. It became a division of Allegheny Steel Company on July 31, 1936. On August 15, 1938, Allegheny Steel Co. and Ludlum Steel merged to form Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corp. The division remains as a vital part of Allegheny Teledyne.

Coal

Leechburg once played an important role in coal mining. Prior to 1868, there were many privately owned mines. That year, Joseph Beale started commercial mining in the valley. He owned the Westmoreland Coal Company, the Beale Mine, the Valley Coal Company, the Aladdin Coal Company and the Dennis Mills Mine. Many other mining and coal companies were operating during this time including the Leechburg Colliery and the American Sheet and Tin Plate Co.

Mining expanded in the Leechburg area in 1882 when Steven Hicks opened several mines under the name of the Leechburg Mining Company. In 1977, mining in the Leechburg Area terminated when the Martin Portal closed.

Map 7 - Historical South Central Armstrong County Region 11x17

CHAPTER 2

THE PHYSIOGRAPHY AND
ENVIRONMENT OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL
ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

THE PHYSIOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

The South Central Armstrong County of today is largely a product of its natural environment. The municipalities present cannot be properly understood, their futures cannot be accurately anticipated, and their tomorrows cannot be responsibly planned without thoroughly examining this environment. Our civilization's technology has been developed to the point that humanity can overpower many of the limitations of the natural world. Mountains can be moved, wetlands can be filled in, and drainage patterns can be changed. Unfortunately, natural processes usually continue around human development and often — in the long run — overpower it if it stands in nature's way. A wise community adapts its plans and development to fit its environment, which not only saves the community from a long, costly, and possibly futile struggle with nature but also provides the benefits of a more harmonious habitat.

Location

Armstrong County lies in west central Pennsylvania, approximately 50 miles north of Pittsburgh. The County covers approximately 657.9 square miles. The Allegheny River, Redbank Creek, and the Kiskiminetas River form the northern and southwestern boundaries. The county borders Indiana and Jefferson Counties on the east, Butler County on the west, Clarion County on the north, and Westmoreland County on the south.

Gilpin Township

Gilpin is located next to the southwestern most corner of Armstrong County covering approximately 16.4 square miles. The Allegheny and Kiskiminetas Rivers make up its northern, western and southern borders. To the east the Township is bordered by Leechburg Borough to the southeast, Parks Township to the east and Bethel Township to the northeast. Within the Township are the villages of Schenley, Aladdin, Forks Church, and Georgetown.

Parks Township

Parks is located in the southwestern portion of Armstrong County covering approximately 14.8 square miles with the Kiskiminetas River making up its southern most border. Across the Kiski River is Westmoreland County where the town of East

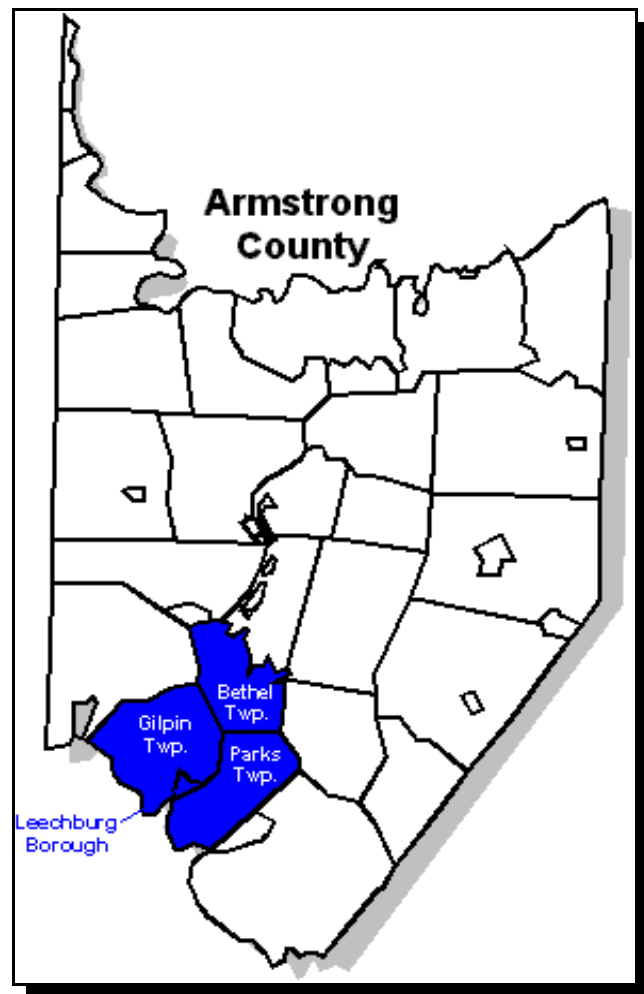


Figure 1
Regional location

Vandergrift lies as well as the Borough of Vandergrift. To the south is Kiskiminetas Township which makes up the southernmost point of Armstrong County. Apollo and North Apollo Boroughs are also located to the south on Route 66, Parks Township's major transportation corridor. Within the Township are the villages of Dime, N. Vandergrift, Kepple Hill, Riverview and Kiskimere.

Bethel Township

Bethel is located towards the south central portion of Armstrong County. The Township covers approximately 15.3 square miles. The Township's westernmost border is the Allegheny River while the northern border is Crooked Creek and Crooked Creek Lake/Reservoir. To the east is Burrell Township, to the south is Parks Township, and to the southwest is Gilpin Township. Portions of the Township are only five (5) miles from the county seat of Kittanning along the Township's major transportation corridor, Route 66. Within the Township are the villages of Kelley Station, Logansport, Tunnelsville and Center Valley.

Leechburg Borough

Leechburg is located central to the Gilpin and Parks Township region. The Borough is small covering approximately .4 square miles with a density of 2,386 persons per square mile in 2000. Like the two townships, the Borough is defined by its border on the Kiski River. To the south, east, and west lie the "C" shaped border of the Borough defined by the Kiski River. Gilpin Township is located to the north and Parks Township is located to the east although not contiguously.

Climate

Gilpin Township

Gilpin Township lies along the northernmost border of the Southwestern Plateau climatic division. The climate is humid continental. Most weather systems that affect the area develop in the Central Plains or the Midwest and are steered eastward by the prevailing winds. The topography is rolling and hilly and elevation ranges from 900 to 1,200 feet above mean sea level. Because of the rugged topography, any generalization about temperature and precipitation may be inaccurate. For example, because of the north facing slopes and cold-air drainage, nighttime temperatures are lower in low-lying areas than in many areas on hillsides. Slightly more rainfall can be expected on west-facing places on higher elevations than on east-facing places at the same elevations.

The average temperatures are about 50°. Annual precipitation is about 40 inches. Summers are warm and pleasant. Cloud cover is at a minimum in the summer and the area receives about 60% of available sunshine, and nights are usually clear. Winter is moderately cold but not particularly harsh. Snow cover of one inch or more is noted on about 50 days per winter. The prevailing winds of spring blow from the southeast in spring and from the south in fall.

Parks Township

Parks Township lies along the northernmost border of the Southwestern Plateau climatic division. The climate is humid continental. Most weather systems that affect the area develop in the Central Plains or the Midwest and are steered eastward by the prevailing winds. The topography is rolling and hilly and elevation ranges from 900 to 1,200 feet above mean sea level. Because of the rugged topography, any generalization about temperature and precipitation may be inaccurate. For example, because of the north

facing slopes and cold-air drainage, nighttime temperatures are lower in low-lying areas than in many areas on hillsides. Slightly more rainfall can be expected on west-facing places on higher elevations than on east-facing places at the same elevations.

The average temperatures are about 50°. Annual precipitation is about 40 inches. Summers are warm and pleasant. Cloud cover is at a minimum in the summer and the area receives about 60% of available sunshine, and nights are usually clear. Winter is moderately cold but not particularly harsh. Snow cover of one inch or more is noted on about 50 days per winter. Prevailing winds blow from the southwest in spring and from the south in fall.

Bethel Township

Bethel Township lies along the northernmost border of the Southwestern Plateau climatic division. The climate is humid continental. Most weather systems that affect the area develop in the Central Plains or the Midwest and are steered eastward by the prevailing winds. The topography is rolling and hilly and elevation ranges from 900 to 1,200 feet above mean sea level. Because of the rugged topography, any generalization about temperature and precipitation may be inaccurate. For example, because of the north facing slopes and cold-air drainage, nighttime temperatures are lower in low-lying areas than in many areas on hillsides. Slightly more rainfall can be expected on west-facing places on higher elevations than on east-facing places at the same elevations.

The average temperatures are about 50°. Annual precipitation is about 40 inches. Summers are warm and pleasant. Cloud cover is at a minimum in the summer and the area receives about 60% of available sunshine, and nights are usually clear. Winter is moderately cold but not particularly harsh. Snow cover of one inch or more is noted on about 50 days per winter. Prevailing winds blow from the southeast in spring and from the south in fall.

Leechburg Borough

Leechburg lies along the northernmost border of the Southwestern Plateau climatic division. The climate is humid continental. Most weather systems that affect the area develop in the Central Plains or the Midwest and are steered eastward by the prevailing winds. The topography is rolling and hilly and elevation ranges from 400 to 600 feet above mean sea level. Because of the topography, any generalization about temperature and precipitation may be inaccurate. For example, because of the north facing slopes and cold-air drainage, nighttime temperatures are lower in low-lying areas than in many areas on hillsides. Slightly more rainfall can be expected on west-facing places on higher elevations than on east-facing places at the same elevations.

The average temperatures are about 50°. Annual precipitation is about 40 inches. Summers are warm and pleasant. Cloud cover is at a minimum in the summer and the area receives about 60% of available sunshine, and nights are usually clear. Winter is moderately cold but not particularly harsh. Snow cover of one inch or more is noted on about 50 days per winter. Prevailing winds blow from the southeast in spring and from the south in fall.

The data in this section was taken from *Soil Survey of Armstrong County, Pennsylvania*, by the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1977).

Topography

Topography, which is defined as the three-dimensional form of an area's land surface, is a direct result of underlying geologic structures and weathering conditions. Hard, resistant bedrock withstands wind and water erosion, and results in areas of high elevation. Softer rocks erode to form valleys and gently sloping land. The topography and geology of an area affect the decisions and activities of that area's residents, developers, and investors in countless ways. Hence, these factors must be considered when people:

- determine the ability of a piece of land to support heavy structures,
- locate new water supplies,
- classify prime agricultural soils,
- identify soils that are not suitable for septic systems,
- pinpoint areas that have a significant risk of being flooded,
- determine where slopes are too steep for development,
- identify trends of past and present growth and development,
- project future land use patterns,
- construct new transportation routes,
- locate public utilities and community facilities,
- estimate the cost of replacing a public utility or community facility structure, and
- perform countless other tasks that are dependent on the physical environment.

The information shown in this section was taken from the United States Geographical Survey 1-50,000 County Series **Map 8** for Armstrong County.

Slope

The slope of a piece of land determines what types of construction and development are feasible on that parcel. Slope can have a significant effect on excavation requirements, sewage disposal alternatives, and total construction costs. Slope is expressed as a percentage, and is defined as the inclination of the surface of the land in question relative to that land's horizontal datum. For instance, one percent slope is equivalent to a one foot vertical deviation over one hundred feet of horizontal distance. The four major slope categories are listed below.

- **0-8% slope:** Land that has a slope in this range is generally suitable for intensive land development, such as industrial parks, commercial/retail complexes, and high-density residential neighborhoods. Slab-on-grade buildings, large-scale structures, major highways, and geometric layout schemes are usually feasible. Furthermore, slopes in this range pose no limitations to traffic circulation.
- **8-15% slope:** Intensive or large-scale land development becomes less economically practical in this slope range. Certain types of commercial and industrial development may be prone to major limitations and may require special engineering, design, and construction techniques. The normal grade may be too steep for major traffic. However, single-family homes on large lots, townhouses, garden apartments, and terraced developments are still generally feasible.
- **15-25% slope:** Land in this slope range can generally sustain less active land development. Low-density residential development is usually feasible, although some clustering techniques can still be used. Although traffic circulation is severely limited, contour-induced limitations can be overcome at a cost.

-
-
- **25% slope or greater:** Development on land in this slope range is not usually encouraged, as it may result in serious erosion, drainage, or access problems. Development on such slopes is often not economically possible whatsoever. These lands are often best used as recreational or conservation areas.

Map 9 shows the sloped areas. Slope provides one facet of the developmental constraints which are prevalent in this area.

An area's geology affects human activities in many of the same ways and for many of the same reasons as that area's topography does. The information contained in this section is from *Soil Survey of Armstrong County, Pennsylvania*, prepared by the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1977).

Gilpin Township

Map 8 shows that Gilpin is composed primarily of the Glenshaw Formation, which includes sandstones, shales, thin limestones, and coal deposits. The Allegheny Group is also present primarily along Kiskiminetas River, Allegheny River, Crooked Creek and associated tributaries. The group is composed of conglomerates, sandstones, shales, Vanport limestone, and clays with eight coal horizons. The Casselman Group is present in a scattered formation throughout the Region. This group is composed of shale, siltstone, coal, sandstone and may be associated with landslides.

The information below will study Gilpin Township's geologic makeup categories in detail.

- **Allegheny Group** - Cyclic sequences of sandstone, shale, clay, limestone, and coal: includes valuable clay deposits and Vanport limestone; commercially valuable Freeport, Kittanning and Brookville-Clarion coal deposits present; the base is at the bottom of Brookville-Clarion coal seam.
- **Glenshaw Formation** - Cyclic sequences of shale, sandstone, red beds, and thin limestone and coal; includes four marine limestone or shale horizons; red beds are associated with landslides; the base is at the bottom of the Upper Freeport coal seam.
- **Casselman Formation** - Cyclic sequences of shale, siltstone, coal, sandstone, red beds, thin impure limestone; red beds are associated with landslides; base is at the bottom of the Ames Limestone area.

Parks Township

Map 8 shows that Parks is composed primarily of the Glenshaw Formation, which includes sandstones, shales, thin limestones, and coals. The Allegheny Group is also present primarily along Kiskiminetas River and associated tributaries. The group is composed of conglomerates, sandstones, shales, Vanport limestone, and clays with eight coal horizons. The Casselman Group is present in a scattered formation throughout the Region. This group is composed of shale, siltstone, coal, sandstone and may be associated with landslides.

The information below will study Parks Township's geologic makeup categories in detail.

- **Allegheny Group** - Cyclic sequences of sandstone, shale, clay, limestone, and coal; includes valuable clay deposits and Vanport limestone; commercially valuable Freeport, Kittanning and Brookville-Clarion coal deposits present; the base is at the bottom of Brookville-Clarion coal seam.
- **Glenshaw Formation** - Cyclic sequences of shale, sandstone, red beds, and thin limestone and coal; includes four marine limestone or shale horizons; red beds are associated with landslides; the base is at the bottom of the Upper Freeport coal seam.

-
-
- **Casselman Formation** - Cyclic sequences of shale, siltstone, coal, sandstone, red beds, thin impure limestone; red beds are associated with landslides; base is at the bottom of the Ames Limestone area.

Bethel Township

Map 10 shows that Bethel is composed primarily of the Glenshaw Formation, which includes sandstones, shales, thin limestones, and coals. The Allegheny Group is also present primarily along Allegheny River, Crooked Creek and associated tributaries. The group is composed of conglomerates, sandstones, shales, Vanport limestone, and clays with eight coal horizons. The Casselman Group is present in a scattered formation throughout the Region. This group is composed of shale, siltstone, coal, sandstone and may be associated with landslides.

The information below will study Bethel Township's geologic makeup categories in detail.

- **Allegheny Group** - Cyclic sequences of sandstone, shale, clay, limestone, and coal; includes valuable clay deposits and Vanport limestone; commercially valuable Freeport, Kittanning and Brookville-Clarion coal deposits present; the base is at the bottom of Brookville-Clarion coal seam.
- **Glenshaw Formation** - Cyclic sequences of shale, sandstone, red beds, and thin limestone and coal; includes four marine limestone or shale horizons; red beds are associated with landslides; the base is at the bottom of the Upper Freeport coal seam.
- **Casselman Formation** - Cyclic sequences of shale, siltstone, coal, sandstone, red beds, thin impure limestone; red beds are associated with landslides; base is at the bottom of the Ames Limestone area.

Leechburg Borough

Map 10 shows that Leechburg is composed primarily the Allegheny Group present primarily along Kiskiminetas River and associated tributaries. The group is composed of conglomerates, sandstones, shales, Vanport limestone, and clays with eight coal horizons. The remainder of the Borough is composed of the Glenshaw Formation, which includes sandstones, shales, thin limestones, and coals.

The information below will study Leechburg Borough's geologic makeup categories in detail.

- **Allegheny Group** - Cyclic sequences of sandstone, shale, clay, limestone, and coal; includes valuable clay deposits and Vanport limestone; commercially valuable Freeport, Kittanning and Brookville-Clarion coal deposits present; the base is at the bottom of Brookville-Clarion coal seam.
- **Glenshaw Formation** - Cyclic sequences of shale, sandstone, red beds, and thin limestone and coal; includes four marine limestone or shale horizons; red beds are associated with landslides; the base is at the base of the Upper Freeport coal seam.

The types of soils present within a given location have a direct relationship to agriculture, construction, and development. Soil type determines agricultural productivity, natural drainage characteristics, building foundation requirements, and sewage disposal requirements. The information presented in this section was taken from the *Soil Survey of Armstrong County, Pennsylvania*, by the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1977). Those specifically interested in the engineering and site planning constraints of the Region's soil types should consult Tables 2-6.

A soil association is a landscape that has a distinctive pattern of soils in defined proportions. It typically consists of one or more major soils and at least one minor soil. It is usually named for the major soils. The soils in an association occur in other associations, but in different patterns. A map showing soil associations is useful to people who want to have a general idea of the soils in a survey area.

A map showing the arrangement of soil associations is usually useful to people who want a general idea of the soils in an area, who want to compare different parts of the area, or who want to know the location of large tracts that are suitable for a certain kind of land use. Such a map is a useful general guide in managing a watershed, a wooded tract, or a wildlife area, or in planning engineering works, recreational facilities, and community developments. It is not a suitable map for planning the management of a farm or field, or for selecting the exact location of a road, building, or similar structure, because the soils in any one association ordinarily differ in slope, depth, stoniness, drainage, and other characteristics that affect their management. The section below describes the soils in detail.

There are five general soil associations in Armstrong County. The Region contains portions of four soil associations and **Map 11** graphically depicts the associations. A full explanation of the associations are offered below for each municipality.

Gilpin Township

Weikert-Gilpin Association - This association consists of long, narrow, steep, dissected areas adjacent to rivers, creeks, and streams. The soils were formed from weathered and interbedded shale, limestone, and sandstone.

- This association makes up about 27% of the county and 40% of the Township. About 50% of the association is Weikert soils, 25% is Gilpin soils, and 25% is minor soils.
- The Gilpin soils are moderately deep and well drained. They have a higher available moisture capacity than Weikert soils.
- Among the minor soils are Hazelton and Ernest soils on uplands and Pope and Melvin soils on flood plains.
- Steep slopes severely limit the use of the soils in this association. Much of the association is wooded, and areas that were cleared are now reverting to natural vegetation. Some of the most scenic areas of the county, as well as many areas that have been strip mined, are in this association.

Gilpin-Weikert-Ernest Association - This association consists of small, gently sloping and sloping ridgetops and benches and moderately steep hillsides. There are many narrow valleys cut by streams. The soils are formed in material weathered from shale, siltstone, and sandstone.

- This association makes up about 24% of the County and 20% of the Township. About 40% of the association is Gilpin soils, 25% is Weikert soils, and 10 % is Ernest soils. Minor soils make up about 25%.
- The Gilpin soils are moderately deep, well drained, and medium textured. They are on uplands.
- The Weikert soils are shallow, well drained, shaly, and droughty.
- The Ernest soils are deep and moderately well drained. They have a fragipan in the subsoil and a seasonal high water table.
- Among the minor soils are Wharton, Cavode, Rayne, and Hazleton soils.
- The dissected landscape and complex slopes of the soil of this association make farming with modern machinery difficult. Much of the association was farmed in the past but is now idle and returning to natural vegetation. Some areas are suited to limited urban development.

Wharton-Rayne-Cavode Association - This association consists of uplands that are dissected by small streams and drainageways. The soils formed in material weathered from interbedded clay, shale, siltstone, and sandstone.

- This association makes up about 21% of the County and 30% of the Township. About 34% of the association is Wharton soils, 22% is Rayne soils, and 16% is Cavode soils. Minor soils make up 28%.
- The more gentle slopes in this association make farming with modern machinery less difficult than in some of the other associations. Many areas need artificial drainage. If drained, they are suitable for general field cropping. In many places, slow permeability and a seasonal high water table are limitations for on lot sewage disposal.

Rainsboro-Melvin-Steff Association - This association consists of broad acres adjacent to large creeks and rivers. The soils are underlain by stream sediment.

- This association makes up about 9% of the County and 10% of the Township. About 28% of the association is Rainsboro soils, 23% is Melvin soils, and 14% is Steff soils. Minor soils make up 35%.
- Most of the early towns and boroughs of Armstrong County were in this association, and much of the recent urban development has been on the terraces adjacent to these towns. Railroads and early highways were built on this association because construction was easy on the gently sloping hills.

Further development on the flood plains is limited by the hazard of flooding. Sites for development on the terraces should be investigated carefully because many areas have a high water table. Many of the terraces have been quarried for sand and gravel.

Parks Township

Weikert-Gilpin Association - This association consists of long, narrow, steep, dissected areas adjacent to rivers, creeks, and streams. The soils are formed in material weathered from interbedded shale, limestone, and sandstone.

- This association makes up about 27% of the County and 60% of the Township. About 50% of the association is Weikert soils, 25% is Gilpin soils, and 25% is minor soils.
- The Gilpin soils are moderately deep and well drained. They have a higher available moisture capacity than Weikert soils.
- Among the minor soils are Hazelton and Ernest soils on uplands and Pope and Melvin soils on flood plains.
- Steep slopes severely limit the use of the soils in this association. Much of the association is wooded, and areas that were cleared are now reverting to natural vegetation. Some of the most scenic areas of the County, as well as many areas that have been strip mined, are in this association.

Gilpin-Weikert-Ernest Association - This association consists of small, gently sloping and sloping ridgetops and benches and moderately steep hillsides. There are many narrow valleys cut by streams. The soils are formed in material weathered from shale, siltstone, and sandstone.

- This association makes up about 24% of the County and 20% of the Township. About 40% of the association is Gilpin soils, 25% is Weikert soils, and 10 % is Ernest soils. Minor soils make up about 25%.
- The Gilpin soils are moderately deep, well drained, and medium textured. They are on uplands.
- The Weikert soils are shallow, well drained, shaly, and droughty.
- The Ernest soils are deep and moderately well drained. They have a fragipan in the subsoil and a seasonal high water table.
- Among the minor soils are Wharton, Cavode, Rayne, and Hazleton soils.
- The dissected landscape and complex slopes of the soil of this association make farming with modern machinery difficult. Much of the association was farmed in the past but is now idle and returning to natural vegetation. Some areas are suited to limited urban development.

Wharton-Rayne-Cavode Association - This association consists of uplands that are dissected by small streams and drainageways. The soils are formed in material weathered from interbedded clay, shale, siltstone, and sandstone.

-
-
- This association makes up about 21% of the County and 30% of the Township. About 34% of the association is Wharton soils, 22% is Rayne soils, and 16% is Cavode soils. Minor soils make up 28%.
 - The more gentle slopes in this association make farming with modern machinery less difficult than in some of the other associations. Many areas need artificial drainage. If drained, they are suitable for general field cropping. In many places, slow permeability and a seasonal high water table are limitations for on lot sewage disposal.

Rainsboro-Melvin-Steff Association - This association consists of broad acres adjacent to large creeks and rivers. The soils are underlain by stream sediment.

- This association makes up about 9% of the County and 20% of the Township. About 28% of the association is Rainsboro soils, 23% is Melvin soils, and 14% is Steff soils. Minor soils make up 35%.
- Most of the early towns and boroughs of Armstrong County were in this association, and much of the recent urban development has been on the terraces adjacent to these towns. Railroads and early highways were built on this association because construction was easy on the gently sloping hills.
- Further development on the flood plains is limited by the hazard of flooding. Sites for development on the terraces should be investigated carefully because many areas have a high water table. Many of the terraces have been quarried for sand and gravel.

Bethel Township

Weikert-Gilpin Association - This association consists of long, narrow, steep, dissected areas adjacent to rivers, creeks, and streams. The soils are formed in material weathered from interbedded shale, limestone, and sandstone.

- This association makes up about 27% of the County and 40% of the Township. About 50% of the association is Weikert soils, 25% is Gilpin soils, and 25% is minor soils.
- The Gilpin soils are moderately deep and well drained. They have a higher available moisture capacity than Weikert soils.
- Among the minor soils are Hazelton and Ernest soils on uplands and Pope and Melvin soils on flood plains.
- Steep slopes severely limit the use of the soils in this association. Much of the association is wooded, and areas that were cleared are now reverting to natural vegetation. Some of the most scenic areas of the County, as well as many areas that have been strip mined, are in this association.

Gilpin-Weikert-Ernest Association - This association consists of small, gently sloping and sloping ridgetops and benches and moderately steep hillsides. There are many narrow valleys cut by streams. The soils are formed in material weathered from shale, siltstone, and sandstone.

-
-
- This association makes up about 24% of the County and 45% of the Township. About 40% of the association is Gilpin soils, 25% is Weikert soils, and 10 % is Ernest soils. Minor soils make up about 25%.
 - The Gilpin soils are moderately deep, well drained, and medium textured. They are on uplands.
 - The Weikert soils are shallow, well drained, shaly, and droughty.
 - The Ernest soils are deep and moderately well drained. They have a fragipan in the subsoil and a seasonal high water table.
 - Among the minor soils are Wharton, Cavode, Rayne, and Hazleton soils.
 - The dissected landscape and complex slopes of the soil of this association make farming with modern machinery difficult. Much of the association was farmed in the past but is now idle and returning to natural vegetation. Some areas are suited to limited urban development.

Wharton-Rayne-Cavode Association - This association consists of uplands that are dissected by small streams and drainageways. The soils are formed in material weathered from interbedded clay, shale, siltstone, and sandstone.

- This association makes up about 21% of the County and 5% of the Township. About 34% of the association is Wharton soils, 22% is Rayne soils, and 16% is Cavode soils. Minor soils make up 28%.
- The more gentle slopes in this association make farming with modern machinery less difficult than in some of the other associations. Many areas need artificial drainage. If drained, they are suitable for general field cropping. In many places, slow permeability and a seasonal high water table are limitations for on lot sewage disposal.

Rainsboro-Melvin-Steff Association - This association consists of broad acres adjacent to large creeks and rivers. The soils are underlain by stream sediment.

- This association makes up about 9% of the County and 10% of the Township. About 28% of the association is Rainsboro soils, 23% is Melvin soils, and 14% is Steff soils. Minor soils make up 35%.
- Most of the early towns and boroughs of Armstrong County were in this association, and much of the recent urban development has been on the terraces adjacent to these towns. Railroads and early highways were built on this association because construction was easy on the gently sloping hills.
- Further development on the flood plains is limited by the hazard of flooding. Sites for development on the terraces should be investigated carefully because many areas have a high water table. Many of the terraces have been quarried for sand and gravel.

Leechburg Borough

Weikert-Gilpin Association - This association consists of long, narrow, steep, dissected areas adjacent to rivers, creeks, and streams. The soils are formed in material weathered from interbedded shale, limestone, and sandstone.

- This association makes up about 27% of the County and 100% of the Borough. About 50% of the association is Weikert soils, 25% is Gilpin soils, and 25% is minor soils.
- The Gilpin soils are moderately deep and well drained. They have a higher available moisture capacity than Weikert soils.
- Among the minor soils are Hazelton and Ernest soils on uplands and Pope and Melvin soils on flood plains.
- Steep slopes severely limit the use of the soils in this association. Much of the association is wooded, and areas that were cleared are now reverting to natural vegetation. Some of the most scenic areas of the County, as well as many areas that have been strip mined, are in this association.

Map 11 - Soil Associations 11x17

How Soils Affect Planning and Land Use¹

This section is designed to assist community planners, developers, policy makers, and individual land owners in determining the most suitable use for a particular area. This explanation details certain general land uses as well as the soil properties that affect their development.

Sewage Lagoons: These are shallow ponds constructed to hold sewage (at a depth of 2 to 5 feet) long enough for bacteria to decompose the solids. A lagoon has a nearly level floor and sides that are made of compacted soil material. The sides and floor should be compacted to a medium density and the lagoon as a whole should be protected from flooding. The soil properties that may affect lagoon flooding are permeability, organic matter content, slope; if the floor needs to be leveled, the depth to and condition of bedrock. The soil properties that may affect the sides of the lagoon are the engineering properties of the embankment material as interpreted from the Unified Soil Classification System and the amounts of stones in this material.

Dwellings with Basements: This concerns homes or other buildings of three stories or less in height that have no more than an 8-foot excavation for basements. The soil properties that may affect the construction and maintenance of such basements are the depth to water table, the shrink-swell potential, the depth to bedrock, the kind of bedrock, the soil texture, the percent slope, the potential frost action, and the hazard of flooding.

Lawns and Landscaping: This concerns lawns at homes where enough lime and fertilizers are used for lawn grasses and ornamental plants to grow. Suitable soil material is needed in sufficient quantities so that desirable trees and other plants can survive and grow well. Among the important soil properties for lawns and landscaping are the depth to bedrock or layers that restrict water and roots, the soil's texture, the slope, the depth of the water table, and the presence of stone or rock in the soil.

Local Roads and Streets: This concerns roads and streets that (1) have an all-weather surface; (2) are expected to carry automobile traffic all year; (3) have a sub-grade of underlying soil material; (4) have a base consisting of gravel, crushed rock, or soil material stabilized with lime or cement; (5) have a flexible or rigid surface such as asphalt or concrete; (6) are graded to shed water; (7) have ordinary provisions for drainage; (8) are built mainly from soil at hand; and (9) have cuts and fills that are less than 6 feet in depth. Local roads and streets are most affected in design and construction by the soil's load supporting capacity, the stability of the sub-grade, and the workability and quantity of the cut and fill material. The AASHTO and Unified Classifications of the soil material, as well as the shrink-swell potential indicate the road's traffic supporting capacity. Wetness and flooding affect the stability of the material. Slope, depth to hard rock, content of stones and rocks, and wetness affect the ease of excavation and the amount of cut and fill needed to reach an even grade.

Sanitary Landfill: A sanitary landfill is a method of disposing of refuse. The waste is spread in thin layers, compacted, and covered with soil. Landfill areas are subject to heavy vehicular traffic. Some soil properties that affect the suitability of an area for landfill use are ease of excavation, hazard of polluting groundwater, and trafficability. The best soils for this use have moderately slow permeability, withstand heavy traffic, are friable, and are easy to excavate.

¹The section did not attempt to recreate the vast amount of data in *Table 6* (pages 32 through 39) of the *Soil Survey of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania*. These pages are highly useful for land use considerations and should be referenced prior to major land use decisions.

Before other types of development -- such as recreational facilities, camping areas, paths, trails, picnic areas, playgrounds, golf courses, dwellings without basements, and high density developments — are sited. The *Soil Survey of Westmoreland County* should be thoroughly referenced to find the most appropriate soil areas.

Flood Plains and Wetlands

Flood Plains

The 100 year flood plains for the Region are depicted on **Map 12** and are derived from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) for the Region's municipalities. These indicate areas that within a 100-year period have a high probability of flooding. New construction in these areas is limited to special situations.

Gilpin Township

The primary flood plains for Gilpin Township lie along the Allegheny and Kiskiminetas River. Long extensions of the flood plain run along Elder and Brady Runs. A flood plain also exists along the southeastern border of the Township extending along Guffy Run which eventually meanders into Parks Township.

Parks Township

The primary flood plain for Parks Township lies along the Kiskiminetas River. Two other flood plains run along Guffy Run which forms part of the border between Parks and Gilpin Townships. Also a large flood plain runs along Carnahan Run and associated tributaries from the Kiski River past Dime.

Bethel Township

The primary flood plains for Bethel Township lie along the Allegheny River and Crooked Creek and its smaller tributaries towards the reservoir. Another extensive flood plain lies along Taylor Run from the Allegheny River past Kelly Station and Center Valley.

Leechburg Borough

The primary flood plains for Leechburg Borough lie along the Kiskiminetas River. Historically, floods have caused great damage to the Borough's infrastructure; however, modern flood control devices have greatly removed, if not eliminated any possibility of flooding in the area.

Wetlands

Wetlands are transitional lands between terrestrial and aquatic systems, in which the water table is at the surface, the water table is near the surface, or the surface is covered by shallow water. The saturated soil in a wetland is very fertile, and usually supports an abundance of vegetation that is adapted for life in such conditions. Thus, wetlands are very rich and contain a diverse array of species. Wetlands additionally act as a filter, improving the quality of the water that drains from them. They also aid in flood control by temporarily retaining floodwaters. Hence, the identification of these resources is important for both the protection of the wetlands and the maintenance of human life and property. However, wetlands can be difficult to develop due to their soils. Thus, the identification of an area's wetlands is also important to properly defining its development constraints.

The Pennsylvania Dam Safety and Encroachments Act of 1978 defines natural or artificial lakes, ponds, reservoirs, swamps, marshes, streams, floodways, and wetlands as “regulated waters of the Commonwealth,” and places them under the jurisdiction of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Pennsylvania’s wetlands can usually be placed into one of the following classifications.

- *Scrub-shrub wetlands*- Scrub-shrub wetlands are inhabited by spicebush, swamp honeysuckle, highbush blueberry, winterberry, alder, willows, other woody shrubs, and trees less than 20 feet in height. Approximately 28% of Pennsylvania’s wetlands are in this classification.
- *Forested wetlands*- Forested wetlands are wet habitats where large woody trees (usually over 20 feet in height) are found. Trees may include red or silver maple, river birch, blackgum, green ash, and similar trees. Approximately 45% of Pennsylvania’s wetlands are in this classification.
- *Emergent wetlands*- Emergent wetlands are vegetated by grasses, sedges, rushes, and other herbaceous plants that emerge from the water or soil surface. Approximately 14% of Pennsylvania’s wetlands are in this classification.

Regionally the wetlands are scattered and minor due to the great amounts of hills and valleys. These areas are shown on **Map 12** along with the 100 year flood plains.

Mined Regions

Map 13 depicts the places where mining has occurred in the past. Large pockets of coal were found along the Kiski River in the Freeport Coal Seam. Large portions of Gilpin, Parks and Leechburg were mined throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s. Mined areas are also found near Kelly Station in Bethel Township. These areas are important to recognize because of the potential risk of mine subsidence. For example, many houses in Leechburg were being damaged by the subsidence occurring over the last 20 or 30 years. Recently, the Borough completed filling in the mined areas with concrete to further subsidize problems and prove a stable area for building within the community.

Map 12- Flood Plains and Wetlands 11x17

Map 13- Mined Regions 11x17

Findings

- The climate of the region is moderate enough to support a variety of agricultural activities.
- The topography of the region is such that some areas are more suitable for development than others.
- There are places where the slopes are too steep for development and others where the slope is questionable for development.
- There are coal deposits scattered throughout the municipalities of the region. Currently most of these resources are not considered economically viable. However, as the need for energy escalates, resources diminish and new technologies emerge. Extraction of the coal reserves from the area may become economically feasible.
- The kinds of soil present in an area impacts the type of suitable development.
- Some of the areas may have problems with percolation tests for on lot sewage disposal systems.
- There are areas within the region where flood plains are present limiting development.
- Wetland areas are scattered and minor within the region.
- There are areas within the region where past mining operations took place. These areas represent a potential for mine subsidence and are therefore problematic for development. The entire Leechburg Borough has experienced mine subsidence abatement. The entire Borough has been stabilized through a DEP project.

CHAPTER 3

THE EXISTING LAND USE OF
THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG
COUNTY REGION

THE EXISTING LAND USE OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

Introduction




Although the manner in which a plot of land is being used is never fully permanent, it is never fully fluid either. A farm can be changed into a residential subdivision much easier than that subdivision can be changed back into a farm. A forest can be changed into an industrial park much easier than that industrial park can be changed back into a forest. Thus, a poor choice of how to use a plot of land can haunt a local community long after that choice is made. Avoiding such choices is the purpose of land use planning.

Before a community may properly plan its future land use patterns, however, it must first determine how its land is currently being used. Determining how Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships' and Leechburg Borough's land is currently being used is the purpose of this chapter. During the spring of 2001 and an update in the fall of 2002, a windshield survey was conducted of all the tracts of land in the Townships and the Borough. The survey attempted to assign each tax plot with an existing land use. For example, if the land was occupied by a residential dwelling, then the plot of land was assigned to the "residential" category. The tables in this chapter itemize the results of the windshield survey. Following the tables are several explanations of the definitions for each category. Additionally, the existing land uses in the tables were placed on individual municipal maps, which can be found in this chapter after the table and explanation for each municipality.

The Method Used to Survey

Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships' and Leechburg Borough's Existing Land Uses

As was mentioned, a windshield survey was used to determine the existing land use of the Region's municipalities. A windshield survey is completed by driving the entire area for the purpose of determining what type of use each tax plot of land has been subjected to, if any. All areas are unique in their makeup, however, land uses can be categorized in all cases. The categories and their definitions used for this study are listed and explained below.

-  Single Family Residential - Land that is placed in this category are occupied by single-household detached structures, manufactured housing and other derivations of typical housing.
-  Two Family Residential - Land that is placed in this category are occupied by buildings occupied by two family residential structures, such as duplexes.
-  Multi Family Residential - Land that is placed in this category are occupied by buildings occupied by multi-family residential structures, such as apartment buildings.



Commercial - Land that is placed in this category is occupied by businesses that are largely oriented toward providing goods and services requested by households on a frequent basis such as grocery stores, restaurants, golf courses, and retail sales.



Industrial - Land in this category is occupied by businesses or developments that house manufacturing, shipping, wholesaling or other types of raw material conversion that is distributed to retail businesses.



Public/Semi-Public - Land that is placed in this category is occupied by governmental functions or nonprofit, citizen-oriented activities such as municipal buildings, churches, schools, fire companies, and parks.



Wooded/Forested - Land that is placed in this category is forested, either naturally or commercially. Included in this category may be tracts of land that were bordering a farm not cleared for agricultural use. The windshield survey does not try to determine the ownership of land tracts, but rather the existing use of the land.



Agricultural - Land that is placed in this category is mostly being used either for pasture or for the cultivation of cash or feed crops. Note that a mostly agricultural lot that also includes a residence (i.e., a farmhouse) is classified as agricultural. In some cases the lands classified in this area may not be currently used for agriculturally purposes. Because of the nature of a windshield study, there is no contact with landowners to determine if the land has produced over \$1,000 of commercial crops (hay, corn, wheat, etc.) in the last calendar year. The windshield survey determines agricultural lands to be those that appear to have the facilities (barn, silo's, tractors and other equipment) to for farming activities with adequate amounts of cleared and possibly fenced areas.



Vacant - Land that is placed in this category is either not presently developed or may not be placed in any of the other categories. Vacant land includes formerly developed land where buildings or structures may have been removed; former agricultural land which has been cleared of trees and undergrowth and is currently open for development; and natural or man-made open fields and pastures, land from strip mine reclamation and/or former farming activities or natural open areas.

Existing Land Use Characteristics

Gilpin Township

The Township contains 16.50 square miles or 10,560 acres which are generally being used as follows.

TABLE 1

EXISTING LAND USE Gilpin Township					
Category	Acres	Percent of Developed Area	Percent of Gross Area	Percent of Regional Gross Developed Area	Percent of Regional Gross Area
Single Family Residential	940	59%	9%	22%	3%
Multi-Family Residential	2	0%	0%	0%	0%
Commercial	62	4%	1%	1%	0%
Industrial/Railroad	151	9%	1%	3%	1%
Public/Semi-Public	202	13%	2%	5%	1%
Roads/Streets/Highways	240	15%	2%	6%	1%
TOTAL DEVELOPED	1,597	100%	15%	37%	5%
Wooded/Forested	4,018		38%		13%
Agricultural	4,945		47%		16%
TOTAL UNDEVELOPED	8,963		85%		30%
TOTAL AREA	10,560		100%		35%

Source: 2001-2002 RCS&A, Inc. Windshield Survey

This section discusses the characteristics of the Township’s built environment detailed in **Map 14** and **Table 1**.

Single Family Residential

Townships typically dedicate a large portion of their developed land to the housing of residents.

Multi-Family Residential

Depending on the character of the township, multi-family housing can vary greatly in acreage, but is usually very minor unless large apartment, townhouse or condominium complexes have been constructed.

Commercial

Commercial areas of townships typically makeup 2-8% of the township’s developed lands.

Industrial

Depending on the character of the township, industrial lands can vary greatly in acreage.

Public/Semi-Public

These lands are typically occupying a little more than 5% of the gross area of any particular township.

Agricultural

Depending on the character of the Township, agricultural lands can vary greatly in acreage, but usually make up a significant amount of the gross land area. For most rural townships in western Pennsylvania, this is either the largest or second largest dedication of gross land area.

Wooded/Forested

Depending on the character of the Township, wooded and forested lands can vary greatly in acreage, but usually make up a significant amount of the gross land area. In fact, in many rural Townships in western Pennsylvania, this is the largest dedicated undeveloped land use.

Vacant

Purely vacant lands are never a large category in a windshield survey. If lands have never been occupied, they are most likely wooded or part of a farm that has not readily used the land. Vacant lands are those that at one time were developed, or in the process of being developed, but for one reason or another development did not occur.

The next page shows the existing land use map. The map contains the Township's lot lines. The map serves as the foundation for two very important maps that have been developed in the Future Land Use Plan Elements section. The first map, Development Opportunities and Constraints Map, combines all existing development (all residential, commercial, industrial, and public/semi-public), steep slopes, flood plains and geologic hazards into a map that shows where types of development can and cannot occur in the future. The map will then derive a figure of the total acres of land left to be developed in Gilpin Township. The map will then be expanded into a future land use map where the consultant firm and planning committee will estimate where and what type of development will occur in the Township over the next 10 to 20 years.

Map 14 - Existing Land Use - Gilpin

Parks Township

The Township contains 14.90 square miles or 9,536 acres which are generally being used as follows.

TABLE 2

EXISTING LAND USE Parks Township					
Category	Acres	Percent of Developed Area	Percent of Gross Area	Percent of Regional Gross Developed Area	Percent of Regional Gross Area
Single Family Residential	720	54%	8%	17%	2%
Multi-Family Residential	3	0%	0%	0%	0%
Commercial	38	3%	0%	1%	0%
Industrial/Railroad	290	22%	3%	7%	1%
Public/Semi-Public	98	7%	1%	2%	0%
Roads/Streets/Highways	185	14%	2%	4%	1%
TOTAL DEVELOPED	1,334	100%	14%	31%	4%
Wooded/Forested	6,077		64%		20%
Agricultural	2,125		22%		7%
TOTAL UNDEVELOPED	8,202		86%		27%
TOTAL AREA	9,536		100%		32%

Source: 2001-2002 RCS&A, Inc. Windshield Survey

This section discusses the characteristics of the Township's built environment detailed in **Map 15** and **Table 2**.

Single Family Residential

Townships typically dedicate a large portion of their developed land to the housing of residents.

Multi Family Residential

Depending on the character of the township, multi-family housing can vary greatly in acreage, but is usually very minor unless large apartment, townhouse or condominium complexes have been constructed.

Commercial

Commercial areas of townships typically makeup 2-8% of the township's developed lands.

Industrial

Depending on the character of the township, industrial lands can vary greatly in acreage.

Public/Semi-Public

These lands are typically occupying a little more than 5% of the gross area of any particular township.

Agricultural

Depending on the character of the township, agricultural lands can vary greatly in acreage, but usually make up a significant amount of the gross land area. For most rural townships in western Pennsylvania, this is either the largest or second largest dedication of gross land area.

Wooded/Forested

Depending on the character of the township, wooded and forested lands can vary greatly in acreage, but usually make up a significant amount of the gross land area. In fact, in many rural townships in western Pennsylvania, this is the largest dedicated undeveloped land use.

Vacant

Purely vacant lands are never a large category in a windshield survey. If lands have never been occupied, they are most likely wooded or part of a farm that has not readily used the land. Vacant lands are those that at one time were developed, or in the process of being developed, but for one reason or another development did not occur.

The next page shows the existing land use map. The map serves as the foundation for two very important maps that have been developed in the Future Land Use Plan Elements section. The first map, Development Opportunities and Constraints Map, combines all existing development (all residential, commercial, industrial, and public/semi-public), steep slopes, flood plains and geologic hazards into a map that shows where types of development can and cannot occur in the future. The map will then derive a figure of the total acres of land left to be developed in Parks Township. The map will then be expanded into a future land use map where the consultant firm and planning committee will estimate where and what type of development will occur in the Township over the next 10 to 20 years.

Map 15 - Existing Land Use - PARKS

Bethel Township

The Township contains 15.3 square miles or 9,779 acres which are generally being used as follows.

TABLE 3

EXISTING LAND USE Bethel Township					
Category	Acres	Percent of Developed Area	Percent of Gross Area	Percent of Regional Gross Developed Area	Percent of Regional Gross Area
Single Family Residential	589	59%	6%	14%	2%
Multi-Family Residential	3	0%	0%	0%	0%
Commercial	29	3%	0%	1%	0%
Industrial/Railroad	31	3%	0%	1%	0%
Public/Semi-Public	194	20%	2%	4%	1%
Roads/Streets/Highways	146	15%	1%	3%	0%
TOTAL DEVELOPED	992	100%	10%	23%	3%
Wooded/Forested	6,992		72%		23%
Agricultural	1,795		18%		6%
TOTAL UNDEVELOPED	8,787		90%		29%
TOTAL AREA	9,779		100%		32%

Source: 2001-2002 RCS&A, Inc. Windshield Survey

This section discusses the characteristics of the Township's built environment detailed in **Map 16** and **Table 3**.

Single Family Residential

Townships typically dedicate a large portion of their developed land to the housing of residents.

Multi-Family Residential

Depending on the character of the township, multi-family housing can vary greatly in acreage, but is usually very minor unless large apartment, townhouse or condominium complexes have been constructed.

Commercial

Commercial areas of townships typically makeup 2-8% of the township's developed lands.

Industrial

Depending on the character of the township, industrial lands can vary greatly in acreage.

Public/Semi-Public

These lands are typically occupying a little more than 5% of the gross area of any particular township.

Agricultural

Depending on the character of the Township, agricultural lands can vary greatly in acreage, but usually make up a significant amount of the gross land area. For most rural townships in western Pennsylvania, this is either the largest or second largest dedication of gross land area.

Over the last several decades, agricultural land has quickly decreased. Nevertheless, agriculture is still a significant concentration in the region. Many municipalities in Pennsylvania have attempted to arrest the loss of agricultural lands through the Agricultural Security Law (Act 43 of 1981) by forming Agricultural Security Areas (ASA). The areas are land that must remain primarily undeveloped and available for agricultural uses. Since 1993, Bethel Township has submitted and had approved 1,870.149 acres of land for ASA's through the applications of 28 agricultural land owners. The tracts of land were itemized according to county tax parcel and varied greatly in size from 1.18 acres to 121.

Wooded/Forested

Depending on the character of the township, wooded and forested lands can vary greatly in acreage, but usually make up a significant amount of the gross land area. In fact, in many rural townships in western Pennsylvania, this is the largest dedicated undeveloped land use.

Vacant

Purely vacant lands are never a large category in a windshield survey. If lands have never been occupied, they are most likely wooded or part of a farm that has not readily used the land. Vacant lands are those that at one time were developed, or in the process of being developed, but for one reason or another development did not occur.

The next page shows the existing land use map. The map serves as the foundation for two very important maps that have been developed in the Future Land Use Plan Elements section. The first map, Development Opportunities and Constraints Map, combines all existing development (all residential, commercial, industrial, and public/semi-public), steep slopes, flood plains and geologic hazards into a map that shows where types of development can and cannot occur in the future. The map will then derive a figure of the total acres of land left to be developed in Bethel Township. The map will then be expanded into a future land use map where the consultant firm and planning committee will estimate where and what type of development will occur in the Township over the next 10 to 20 years.

Map 16 - Existing Land Use - BETHEL

Leechburg Borough

The Township contains 0.45 square miles or 313.6 acres which are generally being used as follows.

TABLE 4

EXISTING LAND USE Leechburg Borough					
Category	Acres	Percent of Developed Area	Percent of Gross Area	Percent of Regional Gross Developed Area	Percent of Regional Gross Area
Single Family Residential	159	60%	51%	4%	1%
Multi-Family Residential	3	1%	1%	0%	0%
Commercial	38	14%	12%	1%	0%
Industrial/Railroad	26	10%	8%	1%	0%
Public/Semi-Public	28	11%	9%	1%	0%
Roads/Streets/Highways	10	4%	3%	0%	0%
TOTAL DEVELOPED	264	100%	84%	6%	1%
Wooded/Forested	49		16%		0%
Agricultural	0		0%		0%
TOTAL UNDEVELOPED	49		16%		0%
TOTAL AREA	313		100%		1%

Source: 2001-2002 RCS&A, Inc. Windshield Survey

This section discusses the characteristics of the Borough's built environment detailed in **Map 17** and **Table 4**.

Single Family Residential

Boroughs typically dedicate the majority of its land to the housing of its residents.

Multi-Family Residential

Depending on the character of the borough, multi-family housing can vary greatly in acreage.

Commercial

Commercial areas of boroughs typically makeup 3-15% of their gross land area.

Commercial

Commercial areas of the boroughs typically makeup 10-15% of their developed land area.

Industrial

Depending on the character of the borough, industrial land uses can vary greatly in acreage.

Public/Semi-Public

These lands are typically occupy about 5% of the developed area of any particular borough.

Wooded/Forested

Depending on the character of a borough, wooded and forested lands can vary greatly in acreage, but usually does not make up more than 10-15% of its gross land area.

Vacant

Purely vacant lands are never a large category in a windshield survey. If lands have never been occupied, they are most likely wooded or part of a farm that has not readily used the land. Vacant lands are those that at one time were developed, or in the process of being developed, but for one reason or another development did not occur.

The next page shows the existing land use map. The map serves as the foundation for two very important maps that have been developed in the Future Land Use Plan Elements section. The first map, Development Opportunities and Constraints Map, combines all existing development (all residential, commercial, industrial, and public/semi-public), steep slopes, flood plains and geologic hazards into a map that shows where types of development should and should not occur in the future. The map will then derive a figure of the total acres of land left to be developed in Leechburg. The map will then be expanded into a future land use map where the consultant firm and planning committee will estimate where and what type of development will occur in the Borough over the next 10 to 20 years.

Map 17 - Existing Land Use - LEECHBURG 11x17

Findings

- There is some publicly owned land within the region including Crooked Creek State Park.
- Leechburg is the immediate commercial and service center for most of the region. Improvements to the downtown area include street improvements and streetscape activities, including trees, planters, street lights and parking would improve the appearance, safety, and livability of the area. A facade program to encourage improvements and/or rehabilitation would also have a positive impact upon appearance of the community.
- Agricultural uses represent a significant amount of the overall non-public land use. Agriculture security programs may be useful to reserving this land for agricultural uses.
- There is a large amount of undeveloped land due to steep slopes and other unsuitable conditions impacting development. Preserving this land as open space and for recreational uses adds to the rural character and charm of the region.
- Leechburg Borough has a limited amount of land available for development compared with the Townships. In-fill development should be encouraged in suitable areas within Leechburg.
- The Townships should identify the type, location, intensity, and timing of desired future growth and formulate appropriate land use management policies.
- Attractive signage at the gateways of each municipality would create a sense of destination and arrival.
- Infrastructure improvements will be needed to support growth for the communities comprising the region.

See **Map 18** on the next page for a regional summary of the existing land use.

Map 18 - Regional Existing Land Use

CHAPTER 4

THE PEOPLE OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL
ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

THE PEOPLE OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

The Region's people are clearly their most vital resource. This chapter will analyze the composition of this population, how this composition has changed, and how it may continue to change in the future. This analysis will center around variables such as population growth and decline, population density, age structure, gender and racial composition, household size and structure, and various socioeconomic factors. Each of these variables can reveal information that is essential to properly planning for the collective future of the Region and the individual future of Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships' and Leechburg Borough's. Where it is applicable, Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships' and Leechburg Borough's demographic statistics will be compared to Armstrong County and the Commonwealth as a whole.

Population Change

As is typical of Pennsylvania, the majority of the growth in rural regions since 1970 has occurred primarily in the townships, often offsetting the losses experienced in the boroughs. The result has been rural county growth, in certain areas. Overall, Armstrong County has experienced population declines throughout the 1980s and 1990s, after modest growth in the 1970s. In the 2000 United States Census, Armstrong County lost 1.5% of its population since 1990, for a total of 72,392 residents. The County lost a total of 6.9% of its resident population since 1980. The County, like the Pittsburgh region as a whole, has had an adjustment period after rapid population losses throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Currently with the increase in tourism throughout Pennsylvania, less urbanized counties, as compared to Allegheny, are beginning to show population growth and Armstrong County is hoping to capitalize on the growth trend. New employment opportunities, beautiful natural surroundings, new highway access, open space and a general willingness to travel longer distances for employment opportunities have made areas in and around the Region a prime location for future potential growth.

Gilpin Township

In 2000, the United States Census of Population and Housing indicated that Gilpin Township had 2,587 people, representing a decreased of its resident population by 7.7% since 1990 and 12.8% since 1980. This trend was also present during the 1980s when the Township lost 5.5% of its population. Recent estimates by the Census Bureau and Penn State Data Center predicted a trend towards slight growth for the Township with a 1998 population of 2,848. This growth projection was based on migration rates, births, deaths and past trends. The 1990, United States Census of Population and Housing determined that, at that time, Gilpin Township had 2,804 residents. This was a 5.5% decrease from the Township's 1980 population of 2,967. The Township lost population from 1970 to 1980, although at a much slower rate of 0.6%. See **Table 5** for a summary of the regional population statistics.

Parks Township

In 2000, the United States Census of Population and Housing indicated that Parks Township had 2,754 people. The resident population increased 0.5% since 1990 from an 11.8% loss of population since 1980. Recent estimates by the Census Bureau and Penn State Data Center predicted a trend towards slight growth for the Township with a 1998 population of 2,835. This growth was based on migration rates, births, deaths and past trends. The 1990, United States Census of Population and Housing determined that, at that time, Parks Township had 2,739 residents. This was a significant 12.3% decrease from the Township's 1980 population of 3,123. The Township lost population since 1970 although at a slower rate of 10.1%.

Bethel Township

In 2000, the United States Census of Population and Housing indicated that Bethel Township had 1,290 people increasing its resident population 2.3% since 1990, but decreasing by 4.4% since

1980. Recent estimates by the Census Bureau and Penn State Data Center predicted a trend towards slight growth for the Township with a 1998 population of 1,297. This growth was based on migration rates, births, deaths and past trends. The 1990, United States Census of Population and Housing determined that, at that time, Bethel Township had 1,261 residents. This was a 6.5% decrease from the Township's 1980 population of 1,349. From 1970 to 2000 the Township gained population at a rate of 14.4%.

Leechburg Borough

In 2000, the United States Census of Population and Housing indicated that Leechburg Borough had 2,386 people continuing to decline in its resident population, which amounted to a 4.7% loss since 1990. The 1990 United States Census of Population and Housing determined that, at that time, Leechburg had 2,504 residents. This was a 6.6% decrease from the Borough's 1980 population of 2,682. Since the Borough's peak population of 4,489 in 1930, the population loss is equal to 67.4% of its residents.

TABLE 5

POPULATION CHANGE, 1970-2000							
Place	Population Change				Percent Change		
	1970	1980	1990	2000	1970-80	1980-90	1990-00
U. S.	203,302,031	226,542,199	248,709,873	283,968,909	39.7	9.8	14.2
Pennsylvania	11,800,766	11,864,720	11,881,643	12,281,054	4.1	0.1	3.4
Armstrong County	75,590	77,768	73,478	72,392	-4.2	-5.5	-1.5
Gilpin Twp.	3,086	2,967	2,804	2,587	-16.2	-5.5	-7.7
Parks Twp.	3,045	3,123	2,739	2,754	-9.6	-12.3	0.5
Bethel Twp.	1,128	1,349	1,261	1,290	14.4	-6.5	2.3
Leechburg Bor.	2,999	2,682	2,504	2,386	-20.4	-6.6	-4.7
REGION	10,258	10,121	9,308	9,017	-12.1	-8.0	-3.1

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Population Projections

Gilpin Township

Table 6 shows the total population of Gilpin Township in each of the past eight U.S. Censuses (i.e., 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000). This Table also shows a projected population for the Township in the years 2010 and 2020. This projection was created using a curve-fitting/extrapolation technique. A geometric curve was selected using several input evaluation procedures, including a coefficient of relative variation test. This curve was then fitted to the Township's census statistics and extended through 2000 to 2020. This projection should be interpreted as "If the population growth and decline patterns that the Township has exhibited through the past half-century continue through 2020, influenced by migration, deaths and births, then the Township's population in 2020 will be..."

TABLE 6

POPULATION GROWTH AND DECLINE in Gilpin Township, 1930-2020			
Year	Gilpin Township	Numerical Change	Percent Change
1930	2,779	-	-
1940	2,929	150	5.4
1950	3,061	132	4.5
1960	3,229	168	5.5
1970	3,086	-143	-4.4
1980	2,967	-119	-3.9
1990	2,804	-163	-5.5
2000	2,587	-217	-7.7
2010 (projected)	2,696	109	4.2
2020 (projected)	2,743	47	1.7

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Parks Township

Table 7 shows the total population of Parks Township in each of the past eight U.S. Censuses (i.e., 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000). This Table also shows a projected population for the Township in the years 2010 and 2020. This projection was created using a curve-fitting/extrapolation technique. A geometric curve was selected using several input evaluation procedures, including a coefficient of relative variation test. This curve was then fitted to the Township’s census statistics, and extended through 2000 to 2020. This projection should be interpreted as “If the population growth and decline patterns that the Township has exhibited through the past half-century continue through 2020, influenced by migration, deaths and births, then the Township’s population in 2020 will be ...”

TABLE 7

POPULATION GROWTH AND DECLINE in Parks Township, 1930-2020			
Year	Parks Township	Numerical Change	Percent Change
1930	2,576	-	-
1940	2,781	205	8.0
1950	2,893	112	4.0
1960	3,032	139	4.8
1970	3,045	13	0.4
1980	3,123	78	2.6
1990	2,739	-384	-12.3
2000	2,754	15	0.5
2010 (projected)	2,835	81	2.9
2020 (projected)	2,953	118	4.2

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Bethel Township

B **Table 8** shows the total population of Bethel Township in each of the past eight U.S. Censuses (i.e., 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000). This Table also shows a projected population for the Township in the years 2010 and 2020. This projection was created using a curve-fitting/extrapolation technique. A geometric curve was selected using several input evaluation procedures, including a coefficient of relative variation test. This curve was then fitted to the Township's census statistics, and extended through 2000 to 2020. This projection should be interpreted as "If the population growth and decline patterns that the township has exhibited through the past half-century continue through 2020, influenced by migration, deaths and births, then the Township's population in 2020 will be..."

TABLE 8

POPULATION GROWTH AND DECLINE in Bethel Township, 1930-2020			
Year	Bethel Township	Numerical Change	Percent Change
1930	666	-	-
1940	950	284	42.6
1950	1,214	264	27.8
1960	1,300	86	7.1
1970	1,128	-172	-13.2
1980	1,349	221	19.6
1990	1,261	-88	-6.5
2000	1,290	29	2.3
2010 (projected)	1,312	22	1.7
2020 (projected)	1,387	75	5.7

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Leechburg Borough

L **Table 9** shows the total population of Leechburg Borough in each of the past eight U.S. Censuses (i.e., 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000). This Table also shows a projected population for the Borough in the years 2010 and 2020. This projection was created using a curve-fitting/extrapolation technique. A geometric curve was selected using several input evaluation procedures, including a coefficient of relative variation test. This curve was then fitted to the Borough's census statistics, and extended through 2000 to 2020. This projection should be interpreted as "If the population growth and decline patterns that the borough has exhibited through the past half-century continue through 2020, influenced by migration, deaths and births, then the Borough's population in 2020 will be..."

TABLE 9

POPULATION GROWTH AND DECLINE in Leechburg Borough, 1930-2020			
Year	Leechburg Borough	Numerical Change	Percent Change
1930	4,489	-	-
1940	4,275	-214	-4.8
1950	4,042	-233	-5.5
1960	3,545	-497	-12.3
1970	2,999	-546	-15.4
1980	2,682	-317	-10.6
1990	2,504	-178	-6.6
2000	2,386	-118	-4.7
2010 (projected)	2,311	-75	-3.1
2020 (projected)	2,248	-63	-2.7
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing			

Household Composition

Families as a percent of households is a very important planning statistic which reveals the relative stability and future growth of a municipality or region. Families are the backbone of a community. They generally invest time and effort in civic activities and join in local events. They frequently are homeowners providing tax revenues, for municipalities, and spend expendable income which supports important local businesses. Non-family households can also be homeowners such as young single residents or older widows. In some cases, non-family households may be renters who live in buildings or converted houses owned by others. Renters represent a more transient population. Often these renters become future homeowners and families.

Gilpin Township

The Township's families as percent of households has shifted in the last 30 years rather atypically. In the 1960s, it was a very family-oriented community with over 85% of its households representing family units. By 1980, the percent of families had dropped to 78%, mirroring the State and County. However, by 1990 the percent of families had rebounded to almost 83%, while the State and County continued to decline. Often municipalities experiencing population losses show a drastic increase in transient renter populations, leading to the decline in property values, and families moving away for employment or other reasons. Despite these trends, the Township remains very family oriented. See **Table 10**.

Parks Township

The Township's families as percent of households has shifted in the last 30 years following national patterns. In the 1960s, it was a very family-oriented community with over 84% of its households representing family units. By 1990, the percent of families had dropped to 73.3% following the County's similar decline to 73.7% and the State at slightly above 70%. As mentioned previously, often municipalities experiencing population losses show an increase in transient renter populations as families move for employment or other reasons. The Township has remained very family oriented.

Bethel Township

The Township's families as percent of households has shifted in the last 30 years following national patterns, however the Township intended to be more family oriented. In the 1960s, it was an extremely family-oriented community, with over 87% of its households representing family units. By 1990, the percent of families had dropped to 80.7% following the County's similar decline to 73.7% and the State at slightly above 70%. As mentioned previously, often municipalities experiencing population losses show a drastic increase in transient renter populations, as families relocate for employment or other reasons. The Township remains very family oriented.

Leechburg Borough

The Borough's families as percent of households has shifted in the last 30 years following national patterns, however the Borough tended to be more family oriented. In the 1960s, it was an extremely family-oriented community, with over 75% of its households being family units. By 1990, the percent of families had dropped to 61.9% following the County's similar decline to 73.7% and the State at slightly above 70%. As mentioned previously, often municipalities experiencing population losses show a drastic increase in transient renter populations. The Borough's rather rapid declines should serve as a red flag. As we will discuss in the Housing Chapter, indicators which signals an increase in transient populations, and the number of renters includes housing conversions to duplexes and apartments, absentee landlords dominating large portions of the local housing stock, and decreasing number of families living in the area's housing stock.

TABLE 10

FAMILIES AS PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS, 1990-2000										
Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania										
Place	Families			Households			Families as Pct. of Households			% Change 1980-2000
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	
Pennsylvania	3,134,322	3,155,989	3,208,388	4,219,606	4,495,966	4,777,003	74.3	70.2	67.2	-9.6
Armstrong County	21,713	20,853	20,548	28,066	28,309	29,005	77.4	73.7	70.8	-8.4
Gilpin Twp.	833	865	768	1,071	1,046	1,034	77.8	82.7	74.3	-4.5
Parks Twp.	869	787	794	1,121	1,074	1,108	77.5	73.3	71.7	-7.6
Bethel Twp.	379	373	379	445	462	501	85.2	80.7	75.6	-11.2
Leechburg Bor.	782	708	645	1,180	1,144	1,109	66.3	61.9	58.2	-12.2
REGION	2,863	2,733	2,586	3,817	3,726	3,752	75.0	73.3	68.9	-8.1

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Racial Composition

In this discussion the racial composition summarizes the total persons reported as belonging to one racial minority population category such as black or Asian. The minority population in the County and the Region is relatively small. Armstrong County had 1.2% minority population in 1980, 1.1% in 1990 and 857 or 1.2% in 2000. Bethel Township had the smallest minority population at only 1.0% in 1990 and 6 people, or only .5% in 2000. Gilpin Township's minority population was slightly higher at 1.3% in 1990, and 36 people, or 1.4% in 2000. Parks Township's minority population was nearly 4.0% in 1990 and 115 people, or 4.2% in 2000. The Commonwealth's figure was at 9.2%, and showed very little change from 1980 to 1990. Since 1990, the State's minority population increased to 1,654,627 or 13.5%.

Gilpin Township

Education is a primary measure of the quality and flexibility of a community's labor force. In the post manufacturing, service-oriented economy of today, it correlates highly with income. Generally in 1990, as shown in **Table 11**, the population of Gilpin Township could not be described as achieving advanced educational levels. Whereas almost 75% of all persons over the age of 25 in Pennsylvania have high school diplomas, only 64.1% of the Township's residents possess high school diplomas. The County's percentage is higher than Gilpin, but falls short of the Commonwealth's educational statistics for this category.

Since 1990, Gilpin has drastically improved the educational levels of its residents. The percentage of high school graduates has improved from a level well below the State in 1990 to levels comparable to the rest of the Commonwealth in 2000. Where Gilpin was statistically the least educated municipality in the Region in 1990, the Township has caught up to, exceeded, or was comparable with the Region and Armstrong County in all educational categories.

Parks Township

Education is a primary measure of the quality and flexibility of a community's labor force. In the post manufacturing, service-oriented economy of today, it correlates highly with income. Generally, as shown in **Table 11**, the population of Parks Township could not be characterized as achieving advanced educational levels. Whereas almost 75% of all persons over the age of 25 in Pennsylvania have high school diplomas, only 71.6% of the Township's residents possess high school diplomas. The County was similar to the Region, but falls short of the Commonwealth's educational statistics.

In 1990, Parks Township residents were only moderately behind the statewide averages in terms of high school educated residents. Parks Township, along with the Region, has improved the education levels of their residents since 1990, but at a slower rate than Gilpin and Leechburg, mostly because they were already more comparable. While Parks has improved the advanced educational levels of its residents, it still lags significantly behind the Region and State levels.

Bethel Township

Education is a primary measure of the quality and flexibility of a community's labor force. In the post manufacturing, service-oriented economy of today, it correlates highly with income. Generally, as shown in **Table 11**, the population of Bethel Township could not be characterized as achieving advanced educational levels. Whereas almost 75% of all persons over the age of 25 in Pennsylvania have high school diplomas, 70.6% of the Township's residents possess high school diplomas. According to the 1990 Census information, the County was similar to the Region, but falls short of the Commonwealth's educational statistics.

Much like Parks Township, the education levels of the Bethel Township residents in 1990 were comparable to the State and the Region. Since 1990, the educational levels have improved significantly, especially in the area of advanced educational degrees.

Leechburg Borough

Education is a primary measure of the quality and flexibility of a community's labor force. In the post manufacturing, service-oriented economy of today, it correlates highly with income. Generally, as shown in **Table 11**, the population of Leechburg Borough cannot be described as achieving advanced educational levels. Whereas in 1990 almost 75% of all persons over the age of 25 in Pennsylvania had high school diplomas, only 67.8% of the Borough's residents possess high school diplomas. The County was similar to the Region, but falls short of the Commonwealth's educational statistics.

Overall in 1990, Leechburg Borough and Gilpin Township statistically were the least educated municipalities in the Region, except in the category of advanced degrees where Parks Township's attainment was the lowest in the region. Since 1990, Leechburg Borough has grown into the most educated municipality in the Region and compared favorably to the State in nearly all categories.

Overall

From 1980 to 1990, the disparities between the Region and the Commonwealth increased when compared to the number of college graduates. Almost 18% of the Commonwealth's citizens over 25 years of age hold at least a bachelor's degree, while 12.5% of the Region's residents had such a degree. Reflected in this statistic are the employment opportunities available in the area. As will be shown in the economic section, the employment opportunities in the area were not favorably comparable with the State trends involving growth in the service and technology sectors. The County's figures were slightly higher compared to the Region, but much lower when compared to the State. This is very typical of rural municipalities with economies once traditionally based largely on manufacturing and other blue collar occupations and industries.

From 1990 to 2000, when a comparison is made between the Region and the State, the Region has managed to keep pace or improve upon the educational achievement trends of statewide residents. Exceptional gains have been made in the Region in terms of reducing the number of residents without a high school diploma. The Region is now very comparable to statewide averages. Further gains have been made improving the percentages of persons with advanced educational degrees in the Region. However, the Region still lags behind the State in this category. Areas such as Leechburg Borough and Parks Township have improved this category by over 8% since 1990, reflecting a tremendous improvement in the number of college educated residents in the region.

TABLE 11

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 1990-2000												
Place	Less Than High School Diploma				*High School Graduates				**Advanced Educational Degrees			
	1990		2000		1990		2000		1990		2000	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Pennsylvania	1,994,278	25.3	1,496,105	18.1	5,878,654	74.7	6,770,179	81.9	1,825,677	23.2	2,335,435	28.3
Armstrong Co.	14,522	28.9	10,144	20.1	35,253	71.1	40,494	79.9	6,159	12.4	8,190	16.1
Gilpin Twp.	725	35.9	357	18.8	1,294	64.1	1,538	81.2	266	13.2	343	18.1
Parks Twp.	520	28.4	411	20.9	1,311	71.6	1,556	79.1	172	9.4	307	15.6
Bethel Twp.	251	29.4	191	19.9	604	70.6	342	80.1	107	12.5	198	20.8
Leechburg Bor	585	32.2	295	17.4	1,229	67.8	1,402	82.6	268	14.8	397	23.4

*Includes persons with some college and advanced degrees. **Indicates persons receiving an Associates, Bachelors or Graduate Degree. Does not include persons who graduated high school and have some college education but no degree.

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Age Distribution

Three of the most important demographic groups in any human population are children, females in the most common child bearing years (i.e., ages 14 to 45), and senior citizens (i.e., ages 65 and up). Children (under the age of 18) are important because they are the future of the population. Women in the child-bearing years are important because they represent the population's ability to reproduce itself. Senior citizens are important because of the special services that they often require. See **Table 12** for details.

Youth

In 1990, the Region had more young people than would be expected of a rural Pennsylvania area with long term declining populations and an eroded employment base. In 1990, 13.3% of Pennsylvanians were under the age of ten, which decreased to 12.6% by 2000. In 1990, about 11.6% of the Region's residents were below ten years of age, which remained fairly steady in 2000. Since 1980, the number of youth has been decreasing in the Region whereas the number of youth in the State and County was stable or growing. The Region's under 18 population declined from 28.5% of the population in 1980 to 23.7% in 1990, representing a significant shift. The shift continued throughout the 1990s with the under 18 population again declining a few percentage points to 21.6% in 2000. The Region's percentage was still fairly similar and above the State in 1990 (23.5%), but did not compare favorably since that time as the State's percentage increased in 2000 to 23.8%, indicating a less than average number of children and teenagers living in the Region in 2000.

Young Families

Another important statistic for the Region is the number of working age residents, particularly young professionals of ages 20 to 39. These age cohorts are the working age future of the area. Many of these young employed persons are buying big ticket items such as first homes, household goods, appliances, and automobiles fueling the local economy. These residents also provide expendable income for the purchases of local goods and services such as groceries and entertainment. About 27.7% of the Region's residents belonged in this age group in 1990, which compares modestly with Pennsylvania's 29.1% and Armstrong County's 28.1%. The Region was stable in this category due to the average to high percent of people in the 30-39 category. A very typical trend of rural Pennsylvania is that young adults often leave the area, at least temporarily, seeking educational or employment opportunities. Indeed, this is the case in the Region's 20-29 category, especially for Bethel Township. The area's future then depends on encouraging those youth to return and raise a family. The Region faces a challenge in this area.

Middle Aged/Empty Nesters

Similar in importance are the number of residents between 40 and 65 years of age. These cohorts are generally the wealthiest of all age groups and better established in a career. A high percentage typically own homes, and they are often in the latter child raising years. About 26.7% of the Region's residents, 27.4% of Armstrong Countians, and 26.8% of Pennsylvanians belong to this age group. The Townships, led by a higher percent of this age group in Gilpin Township, are very strong in this category. As noted in the next paragraph, Leechburg's population base is largely elderly; therefore, the middle aged category represents fewer numbers of the overall population.

Elderly

The Region contains an average to slightly high percent of elderly (i.e. 65 and older). About 15.4% of Pennsylvanians were senior citizens in 1990; about 19.6% of the townships' residents were elderly, increasing from 12.4% in 1980. It is highly probable that the increase will continue well through 2020. The trend, nationwide and especially concentrated in southwestern Pennsylvania, is going to impact the Region's tax base which is an important factor in providing the necessary services for the larger elderly population. In 1990, about 6.3% of Pennsylvanians were over the age of 75 which increased to 7.7% in 2000. About 8.2% of the Region's residents were in this category in 1990, while the total was nearly 10% in 2000.

When discussing the Region's age distribution, it is worthy to note that the elderly (75+) populations are distributed rather evenly throughout the Townships ranging from 6.2% of the population in the considerably young Bethel Township area to 10.2% in the slightly older than average aged Gilpin Township area. The concentration of elderly, which greatly increases the regional statistics, was the 13.5% elderly living in Leechburg in 2000. In fact, over 26% of Leechburg's population base had reached retirement age by 2000. Comparably, Pennsylvania's population structure showed just slightly greater than 15% in the 65 or greater category in 1990 and 2000.

Overall

The largest disparity in age groups for the Region when compared to the State is the doubling of the percentage of people in the 55 to 74 range. In summary, the Region as a whole had higher percentages of

persons in the 45 and over age groups when compared to the State. Conversely, the Region's municipalities had lower percentages of residents representing the age cohorts under 44 years of age, with the exception of residents in Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships who are between 35 and 44. Bethel Township was a relatively higher number of young children.

TABLE 12

AGE DISTRIBUTION PERCENT OF POPULATION BY 5 OR 10 YEAR COHORTS, 2000 Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania									
Place	Percent of Persons Ages. . .								
	< 10	10-19	20-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-85	85+
Pennsylvania	12.6	13.9	18.8	15.9	13.9	5.0	4.2	5.8	1.9
Armstrong Co.	11.8	13.6	16.4	16.1	14.1	9.9	9.1	6.8	2.1
Gilpin Twp.	10.2	12.9	13.5	17.0	15.3	10.0	10.7	8.3	1.9
Parks Twp.	11.4	12.6	15.8	16.8	15.6	9.4	9.7	6.9	1.8
Bethel Twp.	13.3	11.9	15.6	16.6	17.0	10.5	9.0	5.2	1.0
Leechburg Bor.	11.0	11.8	16.9	14.0	13.8	8.8	10.2	9.2	4.3

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Median Age

U.S., PA and the County: According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the median age for Pennsylvania was 38.0 years of age, increasing sharply from the 1990 median age of 34.0 years, the second highest among all of the states. In 2000, the U.S. median age was 35.3, ranking Pennsylvania as now having the 3rd oldest resident population in the U.S., behind West Virginia and Florida, which were at 38.9 and 38.7, respectively. Armstrong County's median age was 35.6 years in 1990 and skyrocketed to 40.4 in 2000, placing it as the twelfth oldest citizen population among Pennsylvania Counties. Neighboring Westmoreland County was older, at 41.7 years of age.

The Region: The median age of Gilpin Township's residents in 1990 was 35.5 years of age, which increased to 43.2 in 2000. The median age of Parks Township's residents in 1990 was 38.6 years of age, which increased to 41.1 in 2000. The median age of Bethel Township's residents in 1990 was 36.1 years of age, which increased to 41.3 in 2000. The median age of Leechburg Borough's residents in 1990 was 40.3 years of age, which increased to 42.7 in 2000. The Region's median age was 37.6 in 1990 and increased to 42.1 in 2000.

Place of Birth

The place of birth is not a particularly important statistic for planning purposes, but it does provide a sense of where people who live in the Region originated. In Pennsylvania just over 77% of residents who lived in the State in 2000 were also born in the State. In smaller areas, like Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough, and in more central locations within the State, this percentage usually increases. This is the case for the Region, where about 93% of the residents were born in Pennsylvania. Armstrong County is similarly very high compared to the State at 93.3% in 1990, and just over 90% in 2000.

TABLE 13

PLACE OF BIRTH, 1990-2000				
Place	Born in State of Residence			
	1990	1990	2000	2000
Pennsylvania	9,527,402	80.2%	9,544,251	77.7%
Armstrong County	68,560	93.3%	66,607	90.2%
Gilpin Twp.	2,595	92.9%	2,402	92.8%
Parks Twp.	2,550	91.2%	2,597	94.3%
Bethel Twp.	1,187	94.1%	1,216	93.7%
Leechburg Bor.	2,183	89.1%	2,143	90.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Dependent Populations

Those persons who require special services due to criminal activity or physical and/or mental incapacities, are termed dependent on services provided by municipalities. This is a measure of the populations ability to mobilize without assistance or self-care limitation. The Townships and Borough listed “zero” in nursing homes and “none” in mental hospitals or correctional institutions because such facilities do not exist within the Region.

In the Region, the highest percentages of dependent persons belong to the category described as no mobility or self-care limitations. In other words, the majority of residents do not have any disabilities which require special services and have not been incarcerated in a correctional institution. However, all communities need to provide special services for a certain number of people. The statistics described below and shown in **Table 14** list those numbers of people.

In 1990, the Region had 569 residents with a mobility, self-care or mobility and self-care limitation. This was 6.3% of the total population. The Commonwealth had almost 700,000 residents with the same limitations or 5.8% of the population. Armstrong County was similar with only slightly more than 4,694 residents limited in some capacity or 6.4% of its residents.

TABLE 14

DEPENDENT POPULATION, 1990						
Place	Correctional Institutions	Nursing Homes	Mental Hospital	Mobility Limitation Only	Self-Care Limitation Only	Mobility and Self-Care Limitation
Pennsylvania	42,930	106,454	7,535	252,828	246,659	195,065
Armstrong County	46	572	0	1,752	1,526	1,416
Gilpin Twp.	0	0	0	101	79	48
Parks Twp.	0	19	0	48	25	55
Bethel Twp.	0	0	0	17	25	7
Leechburg Borough	0	0	0	101	28	35
REGION	0	19	0	267	157	145

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Findings

When discussing a region, general trends are analyzed, although it is assumed that elements that comprise the region will differ. Such is the case when discussing the population characteristics of the South Central Armstrong County Region. A common concern is the continuing loss of population despite housing growth and local infrastructure improvements. Attracting young families should be a priority for all of the communities comprising the Region. The Region has lost 12.1% of its population since 1970, a total of 9,017, as reported in the 2000 Census. With that said, Bethel and Parks Townships have shown growth, and the population losses have slowed for Gilpin and Leechburg.

CHAPTER 5

THE HOUSING OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL
ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

THE HOUSING ANALYSIS OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

This section of the Plan reviews and analyzes the housing stock in the South Central Armstrong County Region. Field survey information is augmented by demographic and housing data from the 1990 and 2000 Census, and with locally generated information concerning housing character, style and conditions. The integration and synthesis of this information provides a profile of the condition and character of the housing stock. Where it is applicable, Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships' and Leechburg Borough's housing statistics will be compared to Armstrong County and the Commonwealth as a whole.

Number of Housing Units

Gilpin Township

In 2000, there were 1,114 housing units in the municipality, indicating a loss of 132 units since 1990. In 1990, Gilpin Township had 1,245 total housing units—a 14.1% increase from the 1,091 units in 1980, as seen in **Table 15**. This represents growth considering the population declined by over 5%. Although it is possible, and often probable, for housing units to increase despite losses in population, the aforementioned number is somewhat misleading. The reason for the large change in housing units was the manner the 1980 Census used in counting vacant seasonal units. According to new construction figures for the 1980s, the Township added 10.0% of its total housing stock, accounting for 124 units. The gain from 1980 to 1990 in total units was 154 units. Data suggests that the 1980 Census missed a significant number of vacant seasonal housing units, especially when realizing the Census had the vacant seasonal units for the municipality growing by 286.7% from 1980 to 1990. The correction in the 1990 Census shows a large gain in seasonal vacant units, accounting for at least the 30 housing units missing in the 1980 to 1990 growth. In most cases throughout Armstrong County, approximately 50% of the new construction taking place in the 1980s is absorbed into the total unit counts, offsetting the losses in older housing units. The 1990 correction means that the growth in housing was most likely reduced by a minimum of 5-6%. NOTE: Although Gilpin Township's housing figures differ to a significant degree for many categories, the vacant units were correctly counted in 1980 and show a minor loss in line with the municipalities' other housing statistics. This was most likely the case in Gilpin Township as well. The 2000 Census should provide accurate trend analysis data for the Township since the category and techniques for counting seasonal and vacant housing were very similar to the 1990 Census.

Parks Township

In 2000, there were 1,186 housing units in the municipality an increase of 40 units since 1990. In 1990, Parks Township had 1,146 total housing units a modest 4.0% decrease from the 1,194 units in 1980 as seen in **Table 15**. During the 80s, the Township added 15.8% of its total housing stock, or 181 units. Assuming the 1980 and 1990 U.S. census were largely correct, data suggests that the Township lost 229 older housing units since 1980, replacing them with newer construction from 1980 to 1989. The number of housing units constructed is the highest in the Region; however, the losses in population (12.3%) and the lower housing values should be a concern for the Township. It should be noted that this trend is rather typical of boroughs throughout the County and the Commonwealth. Parks Township close proximity to Apollo, North Apollo, Vandergrift, and Leechburg and the character of the Township may indicate that Township's population adopts lifestyles more similar to the adjacent more concentrated municipal centers. The majority of the Township's population lives in borough-like settings and are affected by borough-like trends. Residents are slowly moving out of the more dense boroughs and cities, opting for longer commute times to work accompanied by a more rural living atmosphere and greater space available in rural townships. Boroughs and cities are largely developed leaving little space available for housing construction, especially the large subdivisions commonly developed today. Also, more boroughs have been willing to extend infrastructure such as sewer and water into the townships. The neighboring communities of Gilpin Township and to a lesser degree Bethel Township reflects these current trends.

Bethel Township

In 2000, there were 656 housing units in the municipality, which is an increase of 40 units since 1990. In 1990, Bethel Township had 616 total housing units a substantial 27.3% increase from the 484 units in 1980 as seen in **Table 15**. This figure represents substantial growth considering the population declined by over 6.5%. Although it is possible, and often probable, for housing units to increase despite losses in population, the aforementioned number is largely an aberration. The reason for the large change in housing units is that in the 1980 Census vacant seasonal units were under counted. According to new construction figures for the 1980s the Township added only 13.3% of its total housing stock, accounting for 82 units. The gain from 1980 to 1990 in total units was 132 units. Data suggests that the 1980 Census missed a significant number of vacant seasonal housing units, especially when discovering the Census had the vacant seasonal units for the municipality growing by 294% from 1980 to 1990. The correction in the 1990 Census shows a large gain in seasonal vacant units accounting for at least the 50 housing units missing in the 1980 to 1990 growth. In most cases throughout Armstrong County, approximately 50% of the new construction taking place in the 1980s is absorbed into the total unit counts, affecting the losses in older housing units. The 1990 correction means that the growth in housing was most likely reduced by a minimum of 14-16%.

Leechburg Borough

In 2000 there were 1,193 housing units in the Borough, which is a loss of 50 units since 1990. In 1990, Leechburg Borough had 1,243 total housing units a small 2% decrease from the 1,267 units in 1980 as seen in **Table 15**. The County's overall gain in housing units was much slower than Pennsylvania, especially considering the largely miscounted seasonal and vacant units in the County's municipalities. Pennsylvania's housing growth was impressive at over 20%. Armstrong County, despite losses in population, grew at 5.3% in housing. There were 31,757 housing units in Armstrong County in 1990.

TABLE 15

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS, 1980-2000							
Year	Pennsylvania	Armstrong County	Gilpin Township	Parks Township	Bethel Township	Leechburg Borough	REGION
1980	4,509,332	30,162	1,091	1,194	484	1,267	4,036
1990	4,938,140	31,757	1,245	1,146	616	1,243	4,250
2000	5,249,750	32,387	1,114	1,186	656	1,193	4,149
80-90 # Change	428,808	1,595	154	-48	132	-24	214
% Change	9.5	5.3	14.1	-4.0	27.3	-1.9	5.3
90-00 # Change	311,610	630	-131	40	40	-50	-101
% Change	5.9	1.9	-11.8	3.4	6.1	-4.2	-2.4

Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Owner-Occupied Units

Gilpin Township

In 2000, there were 721 owner-occupied housing units out of 1,193 total units. The owner-occupied rate was 65.0%, increasing from just under 59% in 1990. In 1990, 952 of the 1,245 occupied housing units in the Township were lived in by their owners (**Table 16**). This was an owner occupancy rate of 76.5% compared to the Pennsylvania rate of 60.1%. This rate places the Township above the median in owner occupancy among Pennsylvania's minor subdivisions. Since 1980 the owner occupancy rate had declined for the Township from 84.1%. However, the 1980 owner-occupied rate is exaggerated due to the absence of a large amount of seasonal and vacant housing units. The rate was more accurately close to 79%. Armstrong County had a lower percent of owner-occupied housing units as percent of total units at 68.1%. The Township's owner-occupancy rate was very typical for rural townships in this part of Pennsylvania. Fortunately for the Township, the very solid percent of owner-occupied housing means less general deterioration of housing stock.

Parks Township

In 2000, there were 900 owner-occupied housing units out of 1,186 total units. The owner-occupied rate was 65.0% , increasing from just under 59% in 1990. In 1990, 867 of the 1,146 occupied housing units in the Township were lived in by their owners. This was an owner occupancy rate of 75.7% compared to the Pennsylvania rate of 60.1%. This rate places the Township above the median in owner occupancy among Pennsylvania minor subdivisions. Since 1980, the owner occupancy rate had increased for the Township from 74.2% due to a significant number (27 or 11.5%) of rental unit losses. Armstrong County had a lower percent of owner-occupied housing units as percent of total units at 68.1%. The Township's owner-occupancy rate was very typical for rural townships in this part of Pennsylvania. Fortunately for the Township, the very solid percent of owner-occupied housing means less general deterioration of housing stock.

Bethel Township

In 2000, there were 453 owner-occupied housing units out of 656 total units. The owner-occupied rate was the highest in the Region at 83.1%, increasing from 76.5% in 1990. In 1990, 409 of the 616 occupied housing units in the Township were lived in by their owners. This was an owner occupancy rate of 66.4% compared to the Pennsylvania rate of 60.1%. This rate places the Township slightly above the median in owner occupancy among Pennsylvania minor subdivisions and nearly comparable to national figures. Since 1980 the owner-occupancy rate had declined for the Township from 79.9%. However, the 1980 owner-occupied rate is exaggerated due to the absence of a large amount of seasonal and vacant housing units in the 1980 Census counts. The rate was more accurately close to 68%. Armstrong County had a higher percent of owner-occupied housing units as percent of total units at 68.1%. The Township's owner-occupancy rate was slightly low for rural townships in this part of Pennsylvania. Fortunately for the Township, the adequate percent of owner-occupied housing means less general deterioration of housing stock.

Leechburg Borough

In 2000, there were 721 owner-occupied housing units out of 1,193 total units. The owner-occupied rate was 65.0% increasing from just under 59% in 1990. In 1990, 718 of the 1,243 occupied housing units in the Borough were lived in by their owners. This was an owner occupancy rate of 57.8% compared to the Pennsylvania rate of 60.1%. This rate places the Borough slightly below the median in owner-occupancy among Pennsylvania minor subdivisions and according to national figures. Since 1980, the owner occupancy rate had declined for the Borough from 60.5%. Armstrong County had a higher percent of owner-occupied housing units as percent of total units at 68.1%. The Borough's owner-occupancy rate was average for small boroughs with a declining population in this part of

Pennsylvania. Fortunately for the Borough, the adequate percent of owner-occupied housing means less general deterioration of housing stock.

Overall, homeowners tend to maintain their properties well. However, some renters and landlords often have less incentive to upkeep their properties to the same degree as a homeowner. Absentee landlords, vacant buildings, negligent renters and homeowners partially contribute to the problem of deteriorated housing.

TABLE 16

OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS, 1980-2000							
Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania							
Year	Pennsylvania	Armstrong County	Gilpin Township	Parks Township	Bethel Township	Leechburg Borough	REGION
1980	2,950,642	21,205	917	887	387	767	2,958
1990	3,176,121	21,615	952	867	409	718	2,946
2000	3,406,337	22,408	926	900	453	721	2,997
90-00 # Change	230,216	793	-26	33	44	3	51
% Change	7.2	3.7	-2.7	3.8	10.8	0.4	1.7
1990 % Total	70.6%	68.1%	76.5%	75.7%	66.4%	57.8%	74.1%
2000 % Total	71.3%	69.2%	83.1%	75.9%	68.1%	65.0%	72.2%

Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Renter-Occupied Units

Regionally, since 1990, there has been a loss of rental units in all municipalities except for a one-unit gain in Parks Township.

Gilpin Township

In 1990, 119 rental units were occupied in the Township. The total number of rental units decreased by 11 in 2000. Rental units made up less than 10% of the housing stock which was below average for Pennsylvania townships as seen in **Tables 17 and 18**. Between rentals and owner-occupied housing, nearly 87% of the housing stock is accounted for in the municipality. Add in the vacant units and the housing package for Gilpin Township is complete.

Due to the less than average percent of rental units, housing diversity is limited in the Township. Nearly 82% of the housing stock represents typical single family houses or detached structures. Another 12% or 150 units are mobile homes. Westmoreland, Armstrong, Greene and Somerset Counties (mostly rural) average between 5% and 12% of their total housing units in mobile homes. For example, Armstrong County had over 3,897 mobile homes in 1990 or 12.3% of its housing stock. Westmoreland County had over 12,000 units or 7.9% of its total housing stock. In total 1,167 (94%) of the Township's 1,245 units are single family homes or mobile homes include rental units. The rental units in the Township consist primarily of single family houses that were converted to rental units or units attached to a single family house. Only 11 of the 119 rental units in the Township are multi-family units. Of the eleven, eight (8) are duplexes, and three (3) are three-to-four room units. Clearly, the available housing choices for singles and young families are extremely limited.

Parks Township

In 1990, 207 rental units were occupied in the Township. In 2000, 208 rental units were occupied in the Township. Rental units made up less than 19% of the housing stock which is slightly above average for Pennsylvania townships as seen in **Tables 17 and 18**. Between rentals and owner-occupied housing, nearly 94% of the housing stock is accounted for in the Municipality. Add in the vacant units, and the housing package for Parks Township is complete.

Despite a much larger than average percent of rental housing units, housing diversity is limited in the Township. Nearly 80% of the housing stock represents typical single family houses or detached structures. Another 13.6% or 156 units are mobile homes. Westmoreland, Armstrong, Greene and Somerset Counties (mostly rural) average between 5% and 12% of their total housing units in mobile homes. For example, Armstrong County had over 3,897 mobile homes in 1990 which was 12.3% of its housing stock. Westmoreland County had over 12,000 units or 7.9% of its total housing stock. In total, 1,063 (94%) of the Township's 1,146 units are single family homes or mobile homes, including the rental units. The rental units in the Township consist primarily of single family houses turned into rental units or units attached to single family houses. Only 39 of the 207 rental units in the Township are duplexes (21), 3 to 4 room units (9), or complexes with 5 to 9 units (9). Clearly, the housing choices for young singles and families are somewhat limited.

Bethel Township

In 1990, 53 rental units were occupied in the Township. The total number of rental units decreased by a handful of units for 2000. Rental units made up less than 8% of the housing stock which was rather low for Pennsylvania townships as seen in **Tables 17 and 18**. Between rentals and owner-occupied housing, nearly 87% of the housing stock is accounted for in the Municipality. Add in the vacant units, and the housing package for Bethel Township is complete.

Despite a larger than average percent of rental housing units, housing diversity is limited in the Township. Nearly 82% of the housing stock represents typical single family houses or detached structures. Another 16.2% or 100 units are mobile homes. Westmoreland, Armstrong, Greene and Somerset Counties (mostly rural) average between 5% and 12% of their total housing units in mobile homes. For example, Armstrong County had over 3,897 mobile homes in 1990 which was 12.3% of its housing stock. Westmoreland County had over 12,000 units or 7.9% of its total housing stock. In total 604 (98%) of the Township's 616 units are single family homes or mobile homes including the rental units. The rental units in the Township consist almost exclusively of single family houses turned into rental units or units attached to single family houses. Only 2 of the 53 rental units in the Township are duplexes and 7 are mobile homes. All others are single family home converted to rental units. Clearly, the housing choices for singles and young families are very limited.

Leechburg Borough

In 1990, 426 rental units were occupied in the Borough. That total had decreased to 388 by 2000. Rental units in Leechburg comprise 32.5% of all occupied units, this figure was slightly higher than average for PA boroughs as seen in **Tables 17 and 18**. Between rentals and owner-occupied housing, over 92% of the housing stock is accounted for in the Municipality. Add in the vacant units, and the housing package for Leechburg is complete.

Due to the numbers of rental units, housing diversity is adequate in the Borough. Nearly 65% of the housing stock represents typical single family houses or detached structures. Another 11.1% or 138 units are duplexes or other 2 unit structures of a similar nature. Another 10% are in larger apartment complexes of 20 or more units where 103 families live. A numeric overview of the Renter-Occupied Housing units for the region is presented below in **Table 17**.

TABLE 17

RENTER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS, 1980-2000							
Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania							
Year	Pennsylvania	Armstrong County	Gilpin Township	Parks Township	Bethel Township	Leechburg Borough	REGION
1980	1,268,957	6,861	129	234	58	413	834
1990	1,319,845	6,694	119	207	53	426	805
2000	1,370,666	6,597	108	208	48	388	752
90-00 # Change	50,821	-97	-11	1	-5	-38	-53
% Change	3.9	-1.4	-9.2	0.5	-9.4	-8.9	-6.6
1990 % Total	3.3%	21.1%	9.6%	18.1%	8.6%	34.3%	12.6%
2000 % Total	28.7%	22.7%	10.4%	18.8%	9.6%	35.0%	20.0%

Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Vacant Housing Units

As is the case in any municipality, a large percent of housing units are categorized as owner occupied or rental. A certain amount of vacant units in a municipality is necessary to provide opportunities for families and other people to find adequate housing if desiring to relocate into the area. A rate of only 1-2% would indicate few properties for sale and limited opportunities for turnover. A limited number of properties for sale may mean stagnation with the real estate market; which may result in an erosion of the local tax base. A rate higher than 10% to 12% may indicate that there are economic forces slowing housing sales such as high out-migration rates or a combination of other socio-economic factors that have negatively affected the turnover of the local housing stock.

Armstrong County's percentage of vacant housing in comparison to its total housing stock was 10.4% in 2000, down slightly since 1990. The Pennsylvania vacant housing unit percentage was 9.0%, an increase of 2% since 1990.

Gilpin Township

In 2000, the Township's 7.2% vacant housing percentage represented a significant improvement from 1990. In 1990, the Township's 14.0% vacant housing percentage was high compared to Pennsylvania's figure of 7.6%. The 174 vacant units were reasonable considering that 114 or 65.5% were seasonally used and another 12 were rented seasonally. Twenty-nine (29) units were unoccupied and of little economic use. A concern may be the rate of increase in the number of vacant units since 1980 from 45 units to 174. This is most likely due to changes in Census definitions of vacant and seasonal units as mentioned in earlier sections. The County's rate of vacant housing was slightly higher than the State's at 10.9%.

Parks Township

In 2000, the Township's 6.6% vacant housing percentage represented a significant improvement since 1990. In 1990, the Township's 11.6% vacant housing percentage was high when compared to Pennsylvania's at 7.6%. The 72 vacant units were worrisome considering that only 7, or 9.7%, were seasonally used and another 13 were rented seasonally. A slightly high number of vacant (27 units) or (37.5%) were unoccupied either for sale or for rent and of little economic use. How long the vacant units remain on the market determines the degree of concern. The County's rate of vacant housing was slightly higher than the State's at 10.9%.

Bethel Township

In 2000, the Township's 23.6% of vacant housing units represents a decrease since 1990. In 1990, the Township's 25.0% vacant housing percentage was extremely high when compared to Pennsylvania's at 7.6% in this category. However, the total 154 vacant units appear to be reasonable considering that 132 units, or 85.7%, were seasonally used and 5 units were rented seasonally. A low number of vacant units (13 units) were unoccupied and of little economic use. A concern may be the rate of increase in vacant units since 1980 from 39 units to 154. However, this is most likely due to changes in Census definitions of vacant and seasonal units as mentioned in earlier sections. The County's rate of vacant housing was slightly higher than the State's at 10.9%.

Leechburg Borough

The Borough's 7.9% vacant housing rates were comparable to Pennsylvania's 7.6% rate of total housing stock in 1990. The 99 vacant units were very reasonable considering that 60 or 61% were active on the real estate market for sale or rent. Thirty-six (36) units were unoccupied and of little economic use. The County's rate of vacant housing was slightly higher than the State's at 10.9%.

TABLE 18

VACANT HOUSING UNITS, 1980-2000							
Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania							
Year	Pennsylvania	Armstrong County	Gilpin Township	Parks Township	Bethel Township	Leechburg Borough	REGION
1980	289,726	2,096	45	73	39	87	244
1990	442,174	3,448	174	72	154	99	499
2000	472,747	3,382	80	78	155	84	313
90-00 # Change	30,573	-66	-94	6	1	-15	-186
% Change	6.9	-1.9	-54.0	8.3	0.6	-15.2	-37.3
1990 % Total	7.6%	10.9%	14.0%	11.6%	25.0%	7.9%	12.1%
2000 % Total	9.0%	10.4%	7.2%	6.6%	23.6%	7.0%	7.7%

Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Value of Housing Units

In 2000, the median value of an owner-occupied housing unit in Pennsylvania was \$97,000, a 40% increase since 1990 when the median value was \$69,700. In Armstrong County, the median value was \$64,500. This was an increase of 45.6% since 1990 when housing values were at \$44,300 (see Table 19). As expected, due to the ages of the housing stock and the slightly depressed real estate market in the County, the value was below average for the Commonwealth. However, for the first time in several decades the housing value increased during the last decade. The increase in Armstrong County median housing values have outpaced those for Pennsylvania.

Note: Housing value is a rather subjective database when taken from the census because the census simply asks homeowners to check the category of their estimated housing value based on \$5,000 categories. For example, the census asks "is your house worth less than \$15,000, \$15,000 to \$19,999..." and so on until the category of \$500,000 or greater. The census then calculates low, medium, and high value medians for each municipality. In many cases, individuals may overvalue or undervalue their

homes, skewing the data. For this reason, the data is never relied upon for tax purposes or anything greater than trend analysis. Nevertheless, the data is the most comprehensive and conveniently available for this analysis and enables one to create a comparison of the relative values of housing between applicable municipalities.

Gilpin Township

The Township's average median housing value in 2000 was around \$73,500. This was a 42% increase since 1990 when the median value was \$53,200. Since 1980, Gilpin Township retained the highest median housing values in the Region and has generally outpaced the County's median values. The Municipality has experienced tremendous growth in housing units valued from \$100,000 to \$149,000 (17%) since 1990.

Parks Township

The Township's average median housing value in 2000 was around \$64,000. This was a 47% increase since 1990 when the median value was \$43,500. Since 1980, Parks Township has retained the third highest median housing values in the Region and has more than outpaced the County's median values. The Municipality has experienced strong growth in housing units valued from \$100,000 to \$149,000 since 1990, but the primary responsibility for its 47% growth in median value was the large reduction in the number of housing units classified as less than \$50,000 in value. The reason for the improvement in this category is a combination of the razing of some extremely low valued units and homeowner capital improvements.

Bethel Township

The Township's average median housing value in 2000 was around \$72,500 which was a 39% increase since 1990 when the median value was \$52,100. Since 1980, Bethel Township has retained the second highest median housing values in the Region. The Municipality has experienced strong growth in housing units valued from \$100,000 to \$149,000 (12%) since 1990; however, the housing stock valued between \$50,000 and \$99,000 has been stagnant, representing just over 50% of the total units in both 1990 and 2000. The reduction of housing units in the "less than \$50,000" range was less than in many municipalities in the County.

Leechburg Borough

The Borough's average median housing value in 2000 was around \$59,500, which was a 46.5% increase since 1990 when the median value was \$40,600. In 1980, Leechburg Borough had the second highest median housing values in the Region, along with Bethel Township. From 1980 to 1990, the housing values increased at a much slower pace than those located in the neighboring townships. However, since 1990, the Municipality has experienced tremendous growth in number of housing units valued from \$50,000 to \$99,000 (31%). The reason for the growth in the aforementioned range were economic forces that increase housing values over time, thus promoting many of the lower valued units from the less than \$50,000 range in to the higher value brackets and an influx of home improvement capital spurred by lower interest rates and low investment capital requirements in the Borough.

TABLE 19

HOUSING VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS, 1980-2000																		
Value Range	Pennsylvania			Armstrong County			Gilpin Township			Parks Township			Bethel Township			Leechburg Borough		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
*Units	2,392,367	2,581,261	2,889,484	15,451	15,519	16,785	710	719	729	587	603	676	257	262	317	690	638	648
Less than \$50,000	53.1	32.1	15.1	77.3	59.0	32.6	69.3	45.9	25.7	87.4	61.1	34.2	77.4	46.6	25.9	81.2	71.0	35.5
\$50,000 to \$99,999	3.2	39.4	37.4	21.5	36.8	50.1	29.2	47.7	44.9	12.4	36.0	47.2	21.4	51.5	51.4	18.3	27.0	58.5
\$100,000 to \$149,999	0.2	15.3	24.3	1.0	3.6	11.3	1.4	5.4	22.2	0.2	1.7	12.0	1.2	1.5	15.5	0.6	1.7	5.1
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0.0	7.0	11.9	0.2	0.5	4.6	0.1	0.7	4.1	0.0	0.8	4.3	0.0	0.4	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
\$200,000 plus	0.0	6.1	11.4	0.0	0.3	1.4	0.0	0.7	3.1	0.0	0.3	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.0
Median Value	\$39,100	\$69,700	\$97,000	\$31,980	\$44,300	\$64,500	37,000	53,200	75,600	27,500	43,500	64,000	33,800	52,100	72,300	33,800	40,600	59,500
*Not a 100% sample																		
Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing																		

Rent

Median rents are calculated as the amount of money a person will pay to rent living space in the municipality under consideration. This figure is calculated on a per person basis. Therefore, the rent in a household of two persons is divided among those persons equally. For example, if the rent in a two bedroom apartment is \$500 per month, the rent per person is only \$250. Regardless of the actual monetary values derived for each municipality, the criteria and data collection methods are consistent for all areas and provide a comprehensive comparison between municipalities.

Gilpin Township

Table 20 represents a summary of the 1990 median contract rents for the study area. Rents for Gilpin Township were \$219 a month—68% of the median for Pennsylvania. The median rent for Armstrong County was \$205, compared with the Pennsylvania figure of \$322 dollars a month. Most of these units are single family detached structures serving as the primary rental unit.

Parks Township

Table 20 represents a summary of the 1990 median contract rents for the study area. Rents for Parks Township were \$219 a month, representing 68% of the median for Pennsylvania. The median rent for Armstrong County was \$205 compared with a Pennsylvania’s median rent of \$322 dollars a month. Most of these units are single family detached structures.

Bethel Township

Table 20 represents a summary of the 1990 median contract rents for the study area. Rents for Bethel Township were \$213 a month—66% of the median for Pennsylvania. The median rent for Armstrong County was \$205 compared with a figure of \$322 for Pennsylvania. This is typical rent for these types of rental structures.

Leechburg Borough

Table 20 represents a summary of the 1990 median contract rents for the study area. Rents for Leechburg Borough was \$21—65% of the median for Pennsylvania. The median rent for Armstrong County was \$205 and for Pennsylvania, \$322 dollars. This is typical of areas with single family detached structures serving as the primary rental unit.

Table 20

CONTRACT RENT, 1990-2000												
Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania												
Value Range	Pennsylvania		Armstrong County		Gilpin Township		Parks Township		Bethel Township		Leechburg Borough	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total Units	611648	1,348,824	6,103	6,274	719	93	207	204	39	38	899	401
Rent < \$250	9.3%	14.2%	64.7%	26.2%	60.9%	18.3%	67.6%	25.4%	56.4%	29.0%	49.2%	29.4%
\$250 to \$499	31.3%	43.8%	25.4%	59.4%	12.4%	46.2%	28.0%	57.8%	25.6%	52.6%	21.6%	56.9%
\$500 to \$749	29.3%	25.8%	0.2%	30.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	9.0%
\$750 to \$999	12.5%	6.7%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
\$1,000 or more	5.2%	3.7%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	1.5%
No Cash Rent	3.1%	5.8%	9.6%	10.9%	26.7%	35.5%	11.6%	16.7%	17.9%	10.5%	29.2%	3.2%
Median Rent	\$322	\$438	\$205	\$306	\$219	\$288	\$219	\$303	\$213	\$288	\$211	\$299

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Age of the Housing Stock: A Comparative Analysis

The year of housing unit construction is one of the most interesting facts to reconstruct a mental and physical image of the communities' housing stock. For example, a municipality with most of its housing built prior to 1939 indicates a historical downtown or a housing area with similar architectural styles, lot sizes, and infrastructure. On the other hand, a municipality with most of its housing built during the 1970s shows suburbanization with larger housing, modern in design, on larger lots, in a more rural setting.

Figure 2 compares the four communities housing construction years as of 1990—Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough. Figure 3 compares the Region's housing construction years as of 2000. Pennsylvania's housing stock was primarily built prior to 1970, with 71.8% of the total housing stock completed before the beginning of that decade. Nearly half of this total was constructed prior to 1939, by far the largest cohort. Other housing booms took place in the 1950s, '60s, '70s, and '80s with approximately 12% to 14% of the housing stock constructed per decade.

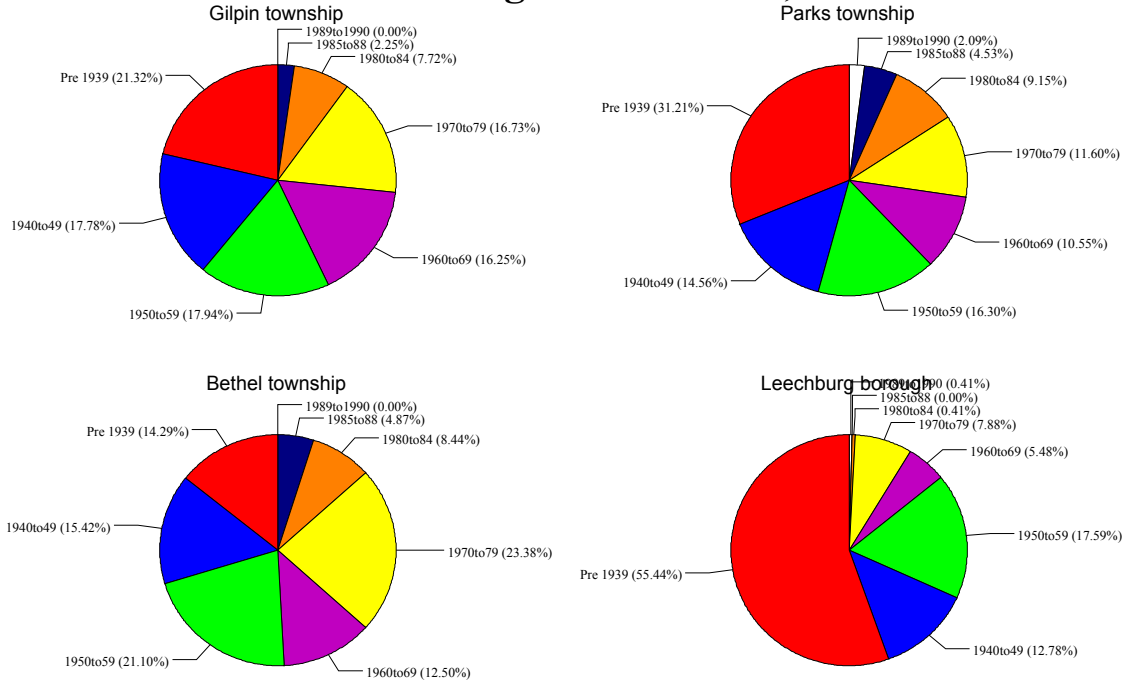
Gilpin Township

The Township's housing is generally much newer than the Commonwealth. Almost 40% of Gilpin Township's stock was built prior to 1949. During the 1950s and '60s, when many communities were experiencing consistent 12%-14% housing growths per decade, the Township's housing grew at a higher 16%-18% total for both decades. The Township experienced great housing growth during the 1970s, which continued with some housing construction in the '80s and '90s.

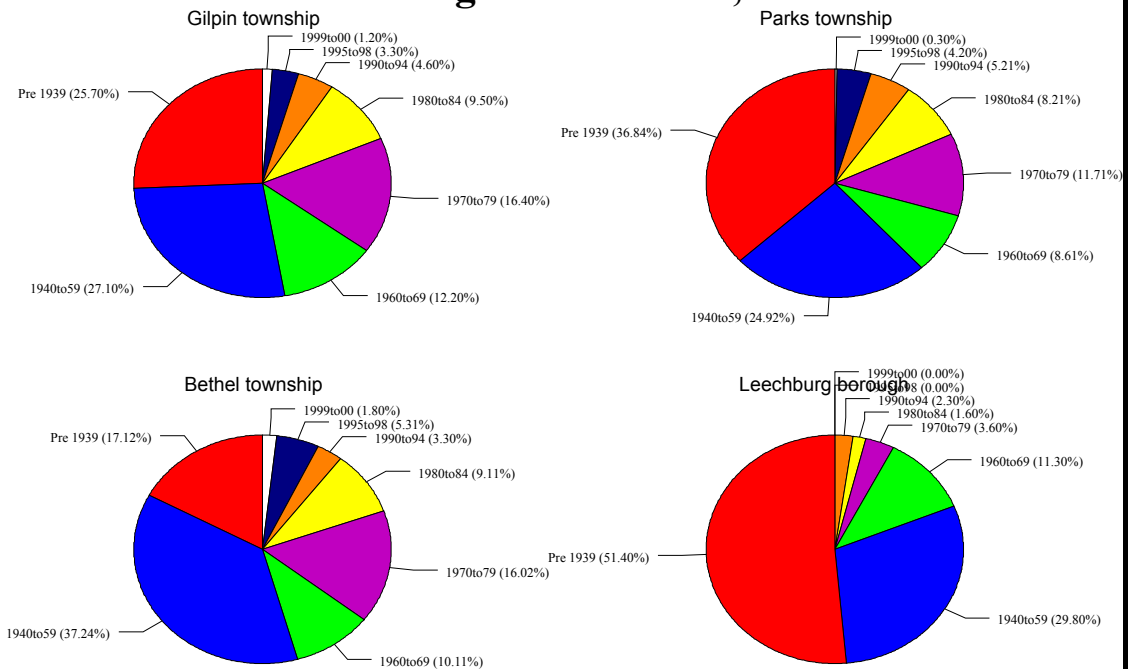
Parks Township

The Township's housing is slightly newer than the Commonwealth and the County. Almost 46% of Parks Township's stock was built prior to 1949. During the 1950s and '60s, when many communities were experiencing consistent 12%-14% housing growths per decade, the Township's housing grew at a similar rate. The Township experienced moderate housing growth during the 1970s, which continued with some housing construction in the '80s and '90s.

Year of Housing Construction, 1990



Year of Housing Construction, 2000



Figures 2 and 3
Source: US Census of Population and Housing

Bethel Township

The Township's housing is generally newer than the Commonwealth and the Region as a whole. Only 30% of Bethel Township's stock was built prior to 1949. During the 1950s and '60s when many communities were experiencing consistent 12%-14% housing growths per decade, the Township's housing grew at a higher average of 16% for both decades. The Township experienced great housing growth during the 1970's at over 23%, which continued with strong housing construction in the '80s and 90's.

Leechburg Borough

The Borough's housing is generally much older than the Commonwealth and the Region, as could be expected in a long established borough. A very high 55.4% of the Borough's stock was built prior to 1939. During the 1950's and 60's when many communities were experiencing consistent 12-14% housing growths per decade, the Borough's housing grew at 17.6% in the 50's and 5.5% in the 60's. Leechburg Borough experienced minor housing growth during the 1970's, which continued with little to no construction in the 80's or 90's.

Findings

- There were 4,149 housing units in the Region in 2000.
- Housing units increased in Parks and Bethel Townships since 1990, while Leechburg Borough lost housing units for the third straight decade.
- Gilpin Township lost housing units since 1990, off-setting significant gains throughout the 1980s.
- The housing units of the townships in the Region remain predominantly owner-occupied to a much greater extent than the County or State.
- Rental opportunities in the Region have changed little since 1990, thus remaining scarce in the Townships and 35.0% of Leechburg's housing stock.
- Bethel Township continues to have a large number of vacant housing units which are primarily used as seasonal housing.
- For the third straight decade, housing values in Gilpin Township are the highest in the Region.
- Housing values in Bethel Township are very similar to Gilpin Township; both municipal median values exceed the County by a significant margin, but remain less than State levels.
- The oldest housing stock and the largest concentration of historic houses are located in Leechburg Borough.

CHAPTER 6

THE ECONOMY OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL
ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

THE ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

The economic and workforce structure of a community determines much of its future growth and development. That structure is a combination of the economic characteristics of its residents and the job possibilities available within its boundaries. One critical element determining the economic character and potential of a municipality is location.

This chapter will examine the statistical facts reflecting Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships' and Leechburg Borough's economy and workforce structure. The number of residents participating in the labor pool, unemployment, occupation structure, employment by industry, education, place of work, income and poverty will be examined for each municipality and compared to the Region, Armstrong County, and the State. The results will help the municipalities to realize their strengths and shortcomings and develop a plan to address any economic problems.

Labor Force Participation Rate

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) is a figure that represents the total number of persons 16 years of age or older that are working or actively seeking work. The Census defines persons as not in the labor force if they have not actively pursued an employed position within the last six months or have not worked within the last year and are no longer searching for employment. This category includes persons of retirement age and young persons not seeking employment.

Armstrong County had 57,940 persons of working age in 1990. Of these residents 31,203 were employed or seeking work and 26,737 did not participate in the labor force; therefore, the County's LFPR was low at 53.9% (**Table 21**). In 2000, the County's LFPR increased to 55.7%, thus slightly closing the discrepancy with Pennsylvania as a whole. Pennsylvania had 5,797,937 residents in the labor force in 1990 out of 9,392,816 persons over 16 years of age for a LFPR of 61.7%. This rate increased 3% from 1980 to 1990 as did the County's. From 1990 to 2000, the LFPR for the State had stagnated, gaining only 0.1%. The U.S. in 1990 had 125,182,378 persons in the labor force out of 191,829,271 total persons over 16 years of age for a LFPR of 65.3%, which had increased slightly since 1990 to 66.9% in 2000.

In 2000, the male LFPR for Armstrong County was 64.6%—a slight decrease since 1990 when the male LFPR was 66.3%. Conversely, the LFPR for females in the County increased to 44.7% from 42.6% in 1990. In 2000, the Commonwealth's LFPR for males was 69.2%—a decrease since 1990 when the LFPR was 71.7% for male participation. Female LFPR has increased to 55.7% since 1990 when the value represented 52.8% female involvement in the active workforce. In 1990, the U.S. had a male LFPR of 74.4% and a female rate of 56.7%, which has increased very slightly for males, and over 4% for females by the year 2000.

TABLE 21

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (LFPR), 1990-2000 (Employed Civilian Persons As Percent of Persons Over 16 Years of Age)			
Place	1990	2000	90-00 % Change
U.S.	65.3%	66.9%	1.6%
Pennsylvania	61.7%	61.8%	0.1%
Armstrong County	53.9%	55.7%	1.8%
Gilpin Township	48.6%	53.1%	4.5%
Parks Township	55.1%	52.8%	-2.3%
Bethel Township	59.7%	60.1%	0.4%
Leechburg Borough	48.3%	53.5%	5.2%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Gilpin Township

In Gilpin Township in 1990 there were 2,315 persons of working age, representing 82.5% of the total population of 2,804. Of these 2,315 persons 16 years or older, there were 1,191 persons who did not participate in the active workforce leaving 1,124 active workers seeking work or employed. The labor force participation rate for the Township in 1990 was 48.6%. In 2000, the LFPR has increased substantially to 53.1%, by far the largest gain in the Region except for Leechburg and a much larger increase than the county, state or U.S. See **Table 21** above for a summary listing of comparison LFPRs.

In 1990, sex by employment status shows that Gilpin Township had 60.1% of its male population 16 and older participating in the labor force, and a very low 34.9% of its female active in the labor force for the area (**Table 22**). By 2000, the percent of the total female participation in the active labor force increased substantially. The male rate also increased but to a lesser degree.

TABLE 22

DETAILED LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (LFPR), 1990-2000 (Civilian Persons As Percent of Persons Over 16 Years of Age) GILPIN TOWNSHIP													
1990						2000						1990-2000	
Total Males	Males in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Females	Females in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Males	Males in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Females	Females in Labor Force	LFPR	Change LFPR Male	Change LFPR Female
1,121	678	60.1%	1,149	401	34.9%	1,049	679	64.8%	1,084	453	41.9%	4.7%	7.0%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Parks Township

In Parks Township in 1990 there were 2,135 persons of working age, 77.9% of the total population of 2,739. Of these 2,135 persons 16 years or older, there were 958 persons who did not participate in the active workforce, leaving 1,177 active workers seeking work or employed. The labor force participation rate for the Township in 1990 was 55.1%. In 2000, the LFPR decreased overall to less than 53%. Parks Township was a minority in comparison with the other municipalities in the region that lost a percentage of its labor force participants since 1990. Reasonable explanations for this

might include a large number of persons entering retirement age, a major layoff in an area dominated by a limited range of employment opportunities, or a serious downturn in the economy that impacted local industry. While some of these factors may have occurred, the number of persons entering retirement age in the municipality does not outpace the Region or the County.

In 1990, sex by employment status shows that Parks Township had a similar rate compared to the County average of 66.1% of its male population 16 and older participating in the labor force, and a moderate 45.0% for its female labor force participation (**Table 23**). Since 1990, the LFPR for males has significantly decreased, while the female active participants remained steady.

TABLE 23

DETAILED LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (LFPR), 1990-2000 (Civilian Persons As Percent of Persons Over 16 Years of Age) PARKS TOWNSHIP													
1990						2000						1990-2000	
Total Males	Males in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Females	Females in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Males	Males in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Females	Females in Labor Force	LFPR	Change LFPR Male	Change LFPR Female
1,020	675	66.1%	1,115	502	45.0%	1,091	660	60.4%	1,125	509	45.2%	-5.7%	0.2%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Bethel Township

In Bethel Township in 1990 there were 980 persons of working age, 77.7% of the total population of 1,261. Of these 980, there were 395 persons who did not participate in the active workforce leaving 585 active workers seeking work or employed. The labor force participation rate for the Township in 1990 was 59.7% of persons over the age of 16 who were either employed or seeking employment. Since 1990, the LFPR increased slightly to just over 60%, due to the large increase in the number of females entering the workforce by the year 2000.

In 1990, sex by employment status shows that Bethel Township had a significant 74.5% of its male population 16 and older participating in the labor force, and a moderate 46.1% female labor force participation (**Table 24**). Since 1990, the male LFPR has dropped to average levels for the County, while the female LFPR has increased very substantially nearly reaching the levels of female workforce participation found on a nationwide basis. The almost 54% female LFPR is by far the most substantial in the Region and one of the highest in Armstrong County.

TABLE 24

DETAILED LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (LFPR), 1990-2000 (Civilian Persons As Percent of Persons Over 16 Years of Age) BETHEL TOWNSHIP													
1990						2000						1990-2000	
Total Males	Males in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Females	Females in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Males	Males in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Females	Females in Labor Force	LFPR	Change LFPR Male	Change LFPR Female
486	357	73.4%	494	395	46.1%	545	357	65.5%	503	271	53.9%	-7.9%	7.8%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Leechburg Borough

The following tables show that in Leechburg Borough in 1990 there were 2,041 persons of working age—84.4% of the total population of 2,386. Of these 2,041, there were 1,056 persons who did not participate in the active workforce, leaving 985 active workers seeking work or employed. The labor force participation rate for the Borough in 1990 was 48.3% of persons over the age of 16 who were either employed or seeking employment. Since 1990, the LFPR has increased to 53.5%, a 5.2% increase. The highest increase in the Region is almost entirely due to the addition of 6.4% of the over 16 female population joining the workforce. The primary factor for the major leap by Leechburg Borough and Gilpin Township during the 1990s was the late arrival of females into the workforce. In 1990, both municipalities had very low female LFPR's.

In 1990, sex by employment status shows that Leechburg Borough had 66.7% of its male population 16 and older participating in the labor force, and a 35.4% female labor force participation for the area (Table 25).

TABLE 25

DETAILED LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (LFPR), 1990-2000 (Civilian Persons As Percent of Persons Over 16 Years of Age) LEECHBURG BOROUGH													
1990						2000						1990-2000	
Total Males	Males in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Females	Females in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Males	Males in Labor Force	LFPR	Total Females	Females in Labor Force	LFPR	Change LFPR Male	Change LFPR Female
901	601	66.7%	1,140	384	36.6%	813	549	67.5%	1,093	470	43.0%	0.8%	6.4%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Unemployment

In 2000, data from the U.S. Census, Bureau of Labor and Statistics for the decennial census, shows Armstrong County's annual unemployment rate to be 6.2%, or 54th in the State. The rate for the State was 3.5%, and for the U.S. the rate was 3.8%.

In 1980, the United States unemployment rate was 7.1% and declined 2% to 5.1% in 1990. The Commonwealth's rate change was slower, moving down 1.4% from 7.4% in 1980 to 6.0% in 1990. Armstrong County had a relatively high unemployment rate of 10.6% in 1980, which declined 2.4% to 8.2% in 1990. The PA Department of Labor and Industry statistics show that in the last two decades Armstrong County has been ranking 54th in unemployment rates in the county rankings.

Gilpin Township

As shown in Table 26, the 1990 unemployment rate of 5.7% in Gilpin Township was low considering the countywide rates which averaged around 8.2%. Since 1990, the unemployment rate for Gilpin Township continues to be among the lowest in Armstrong County. In the year 2000, the unemployment rate for the municipality dropped to a very low 1.6%, by far the lowest rate in the Region. The Township's unemployment rate indicates that those residents seeking work did not have a great deal of trouble finding work.

TABLE 26

LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT DATA, 2000 (Civilian and Armed Forces Persons 16+) Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania						
Labor Force Status	Pennsylvania	Armstrong County	Gilpin Township	Parks Township	Bethel Township	Leechburg Borough
Persons 16 +	9,693,040	57,954	2,133	2,216	1,045	1,906
In labor force	6,000,512	32,338	1,132	1,169	628	1,019
Not in labor force	3,692,528	25,616	1,001	1,047	417	887
<i>Percent in labor force</i>	61.9%	55.8%	53.1%	52.8%	60.1%	53.5%
Civilian labor force	5,992,886	32,304	1,132	1,169	628	1,019
Employed	5,653,500	30,308	1,114	1,121	577	977
Unemployed	339,386	1,996	18	48	51	42
<i>Unemployment Rate</i>	3.5%	6.2%	1.6%	4.1%	8.1%	4.1%
Armed forces	7,626	34	0	0	0	0

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Parks Township

As shown in **Table 26** above, the 1990 unemployment rate of 10.0% in Parks Township was very high considering that the overall countywide rate averaged 8.2%. Parks unemployment rate has improved tremendously, dropping 6% since 1990. However, this covers the fact that the Township had a significant loss of persons participating in the labor force. Without detailed studies it cannot be determined positively, but a reason for the drop in LFPR and the large drop in unemployment rates may be the long term effects of working age people not being able to find work, thus falling out of the “actively pursuing” status and the into the “not participating in the workforce” category.

Bethel Township

As shown in **Table 26** above, the 1990 unemployment rate of 3.8% in Bethel Township was extremely low considering the countywide rates which averaged 8.2%. Since 1990, the unemployment rate has increased substantially to 8.1%. During the 1990s many females in the municipality entered the workforce, which may mean they were actively pursuing but having a hard time finding gainful employment.

Leechburg Borough

As shown in **Table 26** above, the 1990 unemployment rate of 4.2% in Leechburg Borough was extremely low considering that the countywide rate averaged 8.2%. Since 1990, the unemployment rate has remained relatively unchanged. In short, the Borough’s unemployment rate indicates that those residents seeking work did not have a great deal of trouble finding work. With the somewhat low labor force participation rate, one could expect a higher unemployment rate; however, when this data is coupled with the age structure of the Borough, it is evident that the large number of elderly are retired and not seeking employment.

Occupational Structure

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, approximately 40.4% of the labor force may be categorized as blue collar based on the description of their job, i.e., farming, forestry, and fishing; precision production, craft, and repair services; household, protection and other; operators, fabricators, and laborers; and transportation. Since 1990, the percent of people employed in traditional blue collar jobs decreased by over 3%. The continually increasing employment opportunities are in the managerial, professional, technical sectors such as computers, sales and administration fields.

Gilpin Township

In Gilpin Township, and for the labor shed as a whole, the percentage of blue collar workers is close to 56.8% decreasing from 59.5% in 1990. The percentage of blue collar workers in the Township is high compared to the State, but this is not surprising considering the traditional manufacturing base of the County. However, the diversity of employment is not as great as in other parts of the State or surrounding counties. In Armstrong County the percent of persons employed in blue collar fields was 58.5%. Pennsylvania's blue collar employment was much lower at 40.4%. **Table 27** below provides a summary of employment by occupation for 1990 and 2000.

In the Township in 1990, executive, managerial, and administrative occupations and professional specialty occupations were significantly under-represented in Gilpin Township, where only 40.6% of the population were employed in these typically higher paying fields when compared to the State's 55.8%. In the Township, transportation and agricultural workers were found in average numbers compared to the State as a whole. The problem areas, and reasons for the disparity in median household incomes between the Township and the State, is that the Township had a significantly large percent of people in the service industries and general labor—typically lower paying fields—and many less in management or professional positions. Diversification and attaching industry requiring a skilled work force to the Township will be keys to future higher wages.

Parks Township

In Parks Township the percentage of blue collar workers is just over 58%. In 1990, the blue collar employment in the municipality was 64%. The 6% drop was the largest in the Region. Diversity of employment is not as great as in other parts of the State or surrounding counties. In Armstrong County, the percent of persons employed in blue collar fields is 58.5%. Pennsylvania's blue collar employment is much lower at 40.4%. **Table 27** below provides a summary of employment by occupation for 1990 and 2000.

In the Township in 1990, executive, managerial, and administrative occupations and professional specialty occupations were significantly underrepresented in Parks Township, where only 36.2% of the population were employed in these typically higher paying fields when compared to the State's 55.8%. In the Township, transportation and agricultural workers were found in average numbers compared to the State as a whole. The problem areas, and reasons for the disparity in median household incomes between the Township and the State, is that the Township had a significantly larger percentage of people in the service industries and general labor—typically lower paying fields—and many less in management or professional positions.

Bethel Township

In Bethel Township the percentage of blue collar workers is almost 59%, dropping nearly 4% since 1990 when the blue collar employment was extremely prominent at 63% of the employed population. Diversity of employment is not as great as in other parts of the State or surrounding counties. In Armstrong County, the percent of persons employed in blue collar fields is 58.5%. Pennsylvania's blue collar employment is much lower at 40.4%. **Table 27** below provides a summary of employment by occupation for 1990 and 2000.

In the Township in 1990, executive, managerial, and administrative occupations and professional specialty occupations were significantly underrepresented in the Township where 36.9% of the population were employed in these typically higher paying fields when compared to the State's 55.8%. In Bethel Township, transportation and agricultural workers were found in average numbers compared to the State as a whole. The problem area, and reason for the disparity in median household incomes between the Township and the State, is that the Township had a significantly large percent of people in general labor—a typically lower paying field—and many less in management or professional positions.

Leechburg Borough

In Leechburg Borough in 1990, executive, managerial, and administrative occupations and professional specialty occupations were only slightly underrepresented in the Borough where 44.9% of the population were employed in these typically higher paying fields when compared to the State's 55.8%. In the Borough, transportation and agricultural workers were found in below average numbers compared to the State as a whole.

In Leechburg Borough, the percentage of blue collar workers is the lowest in the Region at slightly over 50%, decreasing from 55% in 1990. Diversity of employment is greater than in other parts of the Region and compares favorably with the State and surrounding counties. In Armstrong County, the percent of persons employed in blue collar fields is 58.5%. Pennsylvania's blue collar employment is much lower at 40.4%. **Table 27** below provides a summary of employment by occupation for 1990 and 2000.

TABLE 27

OCCUPATION OF WORKERS, 1990-2000 (Percent of Employed Persons 16+) Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania												
Category	Pennsylvania		Armstrong County		Gilpin Township		Parks Township		Bethel Township		Leechburg Borough	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Employed Persons 16+	5,348,132	5,653,500	28,624	30,308	1,060	1,114	1,059	1,121	548	577	900	977
Managerial and professional specialty	24.1%	32.6%	14.8	22.1	16.8	23.2	9.2	18.1	11.1	21.7	18.8	23.3
Technical, sales, and administrative	31.7%	27.0%	24.7	21.9	23.8	19.7	27.0	23.1	25.8	20.1	26.1	26.0
Farming, forestry, and fishing	1.7%	0.5%	3.8	1.3	0.8	0.2	0.8	0.0	1.5	0.3	0.0	0.0
Precision production, craft, and repair, Transportation	16.0%	16.3%	23.5	25.2	23.3	25.4	28.1	25.2	22.8	27.9	18.8	25.3
Services - Household, Protection & other	13.1%	14.8%	14.4	16.6	14.9	17.8	15.4	17.4	12.7	18.2	18.1	14.4
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	12.5%	8.9%	18.6	12.9	20.5	13.6	19.5	16.1	26.1	11.8	18.3	10.4

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Occupational Forecasts

The need for diversification in certain fields becomes obvious when considering the PA Department of Labor and Industry's forecasting of major job openings in occupation groups for 2005. **Table 28** shows losses of total employment in operators, fabricators, laborers, clerical and agriculture, while growth should occur, to the largest extent, in professional and technical positions and service occupations.

TABLE 28

JOB OPENINGS IN MAJOR OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS, 2005 Pennsylvania			
Occupational Group	Pennsylvania Annual Openings due to . .		
	Replacement Needs	Employment Increase	Total Job Openings
Executive, Admin., and Managerial	8,525	4,315	12,840
Professional, Paraprofessional and Tech.	23,000	20,735	44,235
Marketing and Sales	19,155	5,400	24,555
Admin. Support, Clerical	19,660	-275	19,660
Service Occupations	22,355	11,875	34,230
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1,950	-375	1,950
Precision Production, Craft and Repair	12,470	1,175	13,645
Operators, Fabricators and Laborers	18,360	-2,595	18,360

Source: PA Department of Labor and Industry, Bureau of Research Statistics, Pennsylvania Workforce 2000

The PA Department of Labor and Industry specifically forecasts growth within the aforementioned occupations as summarized in **Table 29**. The technical, professional and personal service industries are due for substantial growth. If there are opportunities for growth in the Region, these occupations should be encouraged.

TABLE 29

OCCUPATIONS WITH HIGHEST GROWTH RATE, 2005 Pennsylvania			
Occupational Group	Pennsylvania Annual Openings due to . .		
	Estimated 1994 Employment	Projected 2005 Employment	Percent Increase
Personal and Home Care Aides	9,450	17,600	86.2
Electronic Pagination Systems Workers	1,400	2,600	85.7
Computer Engineers	5,000	9,150	83.0
Systems Analysts	22,200	40,600	82.9
Home Health Aides	14,800	26,700	80.4
Human Services	8,500	15,200	78.8
Teachers	12,100	20,450	69.0
Computer Support	2,250	3,750	66.7
Corrective and Manual Arts Therapists	150	250	66.7
Pattern Makers, Wood	150	250	66.7
Physical Therapists	6,150	10,050	63.4
Residential Counselors	13,700	22,100	61.3
Occupational Therapists	3,850	6,200	61.0
Teacher Aides	15,100	24,300	60.9
Manicurists	1,400	2,250	60.7

Source: PA Department of Labor and Industry, Bureau of Research Statistics, Pennsylvania Workforce 2000

Employment by Industry

Gilpin Township

The Census of Population and Housing provides information describing the employment characteristics of Gilpin Township residents broken down by industrial classifications. In 1990, the employment of the Region's residents could be classified in two categories; nondurable manufacturing and retail trade. Consequently, that leaves the Region much less diversified and dependent upon a class of employment to a greater extent than the State and even the County to some extent. The relative percentages of the Region's workforce in these categories has decreased by 3% to 4% between 1990 and 2000, as summarized in **Table 30**. A third category which has shown growth between 1990 and 2000 is in the Educational and Health services. The Region also has a higher percent of persons employed in mining although this number is significantly less than it was 20, 30 or even 40 years ago.

Parks Township

The Census of Population and Housing provides information describing the employment characteristics of Parks Township residents broken down by the industrial classification. In 1990, the employment of the Region's residents could mostly be classified in two categories; nondurable manufacturing and retail trade. Consequently, that leaves the Region much less diversified and dependent upon a class of employment to a greater extent than the State and even the County to some extent. The relative percentages of the Region's workforce in these industries has decreased by 3% to 4% between 1990 and 2000, as summarized in **Table 30**. A third category which has shown growth between 1990 and 2000 is in the Educational and Health services. The Region also has a higher percent of persons employed in mining although this number is significantly less than it was 20, 30 or even 40 years ago.

Bethel Township

The Census of Population and Housing provides information regarding the employment characteristics of Bethel Township residents broken down by the industrial classification. In 1990, the employment of the Region's residents could mostly be classified under two categories; durable manufacturing and retail trade. Consequently, that leaves the Region much less diversified and dependent upon a class of employment to a greater extent than the State and even the County to some extent. The relative percentages of the Region's workforce in these industries has decreased by 3% to 4% between 1990 and 2000, as summarized in **Table 30**. A third category which has shown growth between 1990 and 2000 is in the Educational and Health services. The Region also has a higher percent of persons employed in mining, although this number is significantly less than it was 20, 30 or even 40 years ago.

Leechburg Borough

The Census of Population and Housing provides information regarding the employment characteristics of Leechburg residents broken down by the industrial classification. In 1990, the employment of the Region's residents could mostly be classified under two categories; durable manufacturing and retail trade. Consequently, that leaves the Region much less diversified and dependent upon a class of employment to a greater extent than the State and even the County to some extent. The relative percentages of the Region's workforce in these industries has decreased by 3% to 4% between 1990 and 2000, as summarized in **Table 30**. A third category which has shown growth between 1990 and 2000 is in the Educational and Health services. The Region also has a higher percent of persons employed in mining, although this number is significantly less than it was 20, 30 or even 40 years ago.

TABLE 30

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, 1990-2000												
Category	Pennsylvania		Armstrong County		Gilpin Township		Parks Township		Bethel Township		Leechburg Borough	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Employed Persons 16+	5,000,000	5,653,500	28,624	30,308	1,060	1,114	1,059	1,121	548	577	900	977
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries	2.4	1.3%	9.2	4.2	3.3	0.6	3.2	0.7	6.4	1.4	0.7	0.0
Construction	6.1	6.0%	6.7	7.1	6.4	7.1	8.1	7.0	4.6	5.0	5.8	8.4
Manufacturing, nondurable	20.0	16.0%	22.4	21.7	36.2	31.3	30.7	22.2	31.6	27.2	31.3	29.3
Wholesale trade	4.3	3.6%	3.3	3.0	1.9	2.3	5.4	3.6	6.9	4.0	1.3	2.6
Retail trade	17.1	12.1%	17.1	12.5	17.5	12.2	18.2	14.8	16.8	12.3	23.9	16.5
Transportation, communications and utilities	6.9	8.0%	9.3	8.6	3.6	6.1	5.4	5.3	4.9	7.0	6.5	3.7
Finance, insurance, real estate	6.5	6.6%	3.1	3.3	1.5	4.8	4.1	2.5	3.6	2.9	3.4	7.2
Business, personal and repair services	6.9	8.5%	5.4	4.9	7.0	3.4	6.5	9.4	2.4	5.0	8.1	2.5
Educational and Health services	17.9	21.9%	15.0	19.5	16.0	15.9	9.0	16.5	13.5	17.9	10.6	16.8
Entertainment, recreation services	1.0	7.0%	0.6	6.5	0.5	7.5	1.6	8.7	0.4	9.4	7.8	6.1
Other professional and related services	6.5	4.8%	5.3	5.7	4.2	6.6	4.1	6.9	5.7	4.3	3.1	5.0
Public administration	4.0	4.2%	2.5	3.0	7.2	1.9	3.6	2.3	3.3	3.6	4.6	2.0

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Employment by Place of Work

Gilpin Township

Place of work indicates if residents of a municipality work in the State, in their home county or in their home municipality. In the Commonwealth, there were 5,348,132 employed residents, 74.9% of which worked in their county of residence (Table 31). In Armstrong County, far fewer residents worked in the County, 61.7%. This can be expected since the County's close proximity to the Pittsburgh labor and employment shed draws significant numbers of workers. In 1990, nearly 52% of Gilpin Township's workers left the County for employment. To a lesser degree, only 15% stayed in Gilpin Township for work. Clearly, local employment is not a factor in choosing Gilpin Township or the other regional municipalities as a place to live.

Parks Township

Place of work indicates if residents of a municipality work in the State, in their home county or in their home municipality. In the Commonwealth, there were 5,348,132 employed residents, 74.9% of which worked in their county of residence (Table 31). In Armstrong County, far fewer residents worked in the County, 61.7%. This can be expected since the County's close proximity to the Pittsburgh labor and employment shed draws significant numbers of workers. In 1990, nearly 57% of Parks Township's workers left the County for employment. Only 5% of the workforce stayed in Parks Township for work. Clearly, local employment is not a factor in choosing Parks Township or the other regional municipalities as a place to live.

Bethel Township

Place of work indicates if residents of a municipality work in the State, in their home county or in their home municipality. In the Commonwealth, there were 5,348,132 employed residents, 74.9% of which worked in their county of residence (**Table 31**). In Armstrong County, far fewer residents worked in the County, 61.7%. This can be expected since the County's close proximity to the Pittsburgh labor and employment shed draws significant numbers of workers. However, to a lesser extent, in 1990, in Bethel Township, 33% of workers left the County for employment. Nevertheless, only 1.2% or so stayed in Bethel Township for work. Clearly, fewer workers are employed in the area, compared to most of the municipalities comprising the Region.

Leechburg Borough

Place of work indicates if residents of a municipality work in the State, in their home county or in their home municipality. In the Commonwealth, there were 5,348,132 employed residents, 74.9% of which worked in their county of residence (**Table 31**). In Armstrong County, far fewer residents worked in the County, 61.7%. This can be expected since the County's close proximity to the Pittsburgh labor and employment shed draws significant numbers of workers. In 1990, 51.5% of Leechburg Borough's workers left the County for employment. A larger number of residents work in Leechburg as compared to those who work in their townships of residence. To a certain degree Leechburg is the local employment center for the Region.

TABLE 31

PLACE OF WORK, 1990-2000												
Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania												
Place of Residence	Pennsylvania		Armstrong County		Gilpin Township		Parks Township		Bethel Township		Leechburg Borough	
	1990	2000**	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
*Employed Persons 16+	5,348,132		28,092		1,055		1,048		541		887	
Worked Out of State	231,407		165		12		0		2		0	
<i>Percent</i>	4.3%		0.6%		1.1%		0%		0.4%		0%	
Outside County	1,110,200		10,772		547		596		174		457	
<i>Percent</i>	20.8%		38.3%		51.8%		56.9%		32.2%		51.5%	
Outside of MCD	3,738,213		23,731		908		999		534		646	
<i>Percent</i>	69.9%		84.5%		86.1		95.3%		98.7%		72.8%	
*Not a 100% sample.												
*2000 Census data for this category will be available in 2003												
Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing												

Economic Status of Households

The economic status of households determines the relative economic value of the wage earners occupying a single structure or housing unit. This is a very important statistic which reveals many facts about the community's ability to support itself.

Income

Gilpin Township

Household incomes in Gilpin Township are examined in detail in **Table 32** below. In comparison to many rural townships with an employment concentration in durable manufacturing and retail trades, laborers and other general work, the median family incomes are comparable to the State and

County. Despite having less concentration of households earning more than \$50,000, the median family incomes are well above many rural areas in the surrounding parts of the state. However, the Township and Region have an income disparity as a large percent of households either earn between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year or are nearing poverty levels at \$15,000 annually.

Parks Township

Household incomes in Parks Township are examined in detail in **Table 32** below. In comparison to many rural townships with an employment concentration in durable manufacturing and retail trades, laborers and other general work, the median family incomes are comparable to the State and County. Despite having a significantly less concentration of households earning more than \$50,000, the median family incomes are well above many rural areas in the surrounding parts of the State. However, the Township and Region have an income disparity as a large percent of households either earn between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year or are nearing poverty levels at less than \$19,000 annually.

Bethel Township

Household incomes in Bethel Township are examined in detail in **Table 32** below. In comparison to many rural townships with an employment concentration in durable manufacturing and retail trades, laborers and other general work, the median family incomes are comparable to the State and County. Despite having a significantly less concentration of households earning more than \$50,000, the median family incomes are well above surrounding areas. The Township's income distribution is more balanced when compared to the other municipalities, nevertheless, a higher percent of persons earn between \$15,000 and \$20,000 than in the State or County.

Leechburg Borough

Household incomes in Leechburg Borough are examined in detail in **Table 32** below. In comparison to many rural townships with an employment concentration in durable manufacturing and retail trades, laborers and other general work, the median family incomes are comparable to the State and County. Despite having a significantly less concentration of households earning more than \$50,000, the median family incomes are well above many rural areas. The Borough's income distribution is more balanced when compared to the other municipalities, nevertheless a higher percent of persons earn between \$15,000 and \$20,000 than in the State or County.

TABLE 32

HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME GROUP, 2000												
Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania												
Household Income in 1999:	PA Households		Armstrong County		Gilpin Township		Parks Township		Bethel Township		Leechburg Borough	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total Households	4,779,186	100.0	28,932	100.0	1,038	100.0	1,103	100.0	512	100.0	1,089	100.0
Less than \$10,000	465,860	9.7	3,177	11.0	78	7.5	136	12.3	31	6.1	152	14.0
\$10,000 to \$14,999	333,381	7.0	2,859	9.9	99	9.5	88	8.0	21	4.1	121	11.1
\$15,000 to \$24,999	657,266	13.8	5,433	18.8	160	15.4	251	22.8	111	21.7	216	19.8
\$25,000 to \$34,999	633,953	13.3	4,386	15.2	117	11.3	149.0	13.5	83	16.2	165	15.2
\$35,000 to \$49,999	809,165	16.9	5,593	19.3	195	18.8	205.0	18.6	117	22.9	215	19.7
\$50,000 to \$74,999	929,863	19.5	4,726	16.3	281	27.1	215.0	19.5	111	21.7	121	11.1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	457,480	9.6	1,585	5.5	59	5.7	39	3.5	16	3.1	50	4.6
\$100,000 plus	492,218	10.3	1,173	4.0	49	4.7	20	1.8	22	4.3	49	4.5
Median Household Income	\$40,106		\$31,557		\$38,958		\$29,915		\$36,087		\$27,434	

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Median Household Incomes

Gilpin Township

As mentioned, Gilpin Township's incomes are low, but overall very comparable and increasing at a much higher rate than the State. As shown in **Table 33**, in 2000 the median family income was \$38,958, or 97% of the State's median income of \$40,106. In 1990, the median family income in the Commonwealth was \$29,069; in the Township it was \$25,230, or 86.7% of the State's median income level. In 1980, the Township's median family income was over 100% of the Commonwealth's income. Since 1980 the State has increased its median household income 237.5% while the Township has lagged slightly behind at 228.7%.

Parks Township

As mentioned, Parks Township's incomes are slightly lower but comparable to other rural Pennsylvania communities. The concern is that the disparity has grown since 1980 between the State median income growth and the Township's increases. As shown in **Table 33**, the 2000 median income was \$29,915, an increase of 29% since 1990, but only 74.5% of the State's median income levels. In 1990, the median family income in the Commonwealth was \$29,069; in the Township it was \$23,202, or 79.8% of the State's median income levels. In 1980, Parks Township's median family income was 93% of the Commonwealth's. Since 1980 the State has increased its median household income 237.5%, while the Township has lagged behind at 190.5%.

Bethel Township

As mentioned, Bethel Township's incomes have not maintained the advantage of the late '70s and early '80s when earnings were more than the State, but overall tend to be comparable to current rural Pennsylvania trends. As shown in **Table 33**, the 2000 median income for Bethel Township was just over \$36,000, a 43.4% gain since 1990, which outpaces the State's increase in median income levels. In 1990, the median family income in the Commonwealth was \$29,069; in the Township it was \$25,163, or 86.2% of the State's figure. In 1980, the Township's median family income was over 100% of the Commonwealth's income. Since 1980, the State has increased its median household income 237.5%, while the Township has lagged slightly behind at 204.8%.

Leechburg Borough

As mentioned, Leechburg's incomes are low for the Region and a concern is that the disparity is growing. As shown in **Table 33** the median income of Leechburg in 2000 was \$27,434—a 34% gain since 1990. The Borough's growth in income levels still lags behind the Region and the State; however, the rate of the disparity has substantially slowed through the 1990s. In 1989, the median family income in the Commonwealth was \$29,069; in the Borough it was \$20,476, or 70.4% of the State. More significant is the loss of ground since 1980. In 1980, the Borough's median family income was nearly 100% of the Commonwealth's income. Since 1980, the State has increased its median household income by 137.5% , while the Borough has lagged significantly behind at 163.4%.

TABLE 33

INCOME, 1980-2000 Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania								
Name	Median Household Income					Per Capita Income		
	1980	1990	2000	1980-1990 % Change	1990-2000 % Change	1980	1990	2000
Pennsylvania	\$16,880	\$29,069	\$40,106	72.2	38.0	\$7,075	\$14,068	\$20,880
Armstrong County	\$15,446	\$27,024	\$31,557	75.0	16.8	\$6,189	\$10,565	\$15,709
Gilpin Twp.	\$17,035	\$25,230	\$38,958	48.1	54.4	\$6,639	\$13,130	\$17,520
Parks Twp.	\$15,696	\$23,302	\$29,915	48.5	28.4	\$6,485	\$9,683	\$13,818
Bethel Twp.	\$17,699	\$25,163	\$36,087	42.2	43.4	\$5,862	\$10,174	\$18,122
Leechburg Bor.	\$16,791	\$20,476	\$27,434	21.9	34.0	\$7,296	\$12,065	\$16,242

Source: U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates Program and Housing and Population Statistics

Poverty

Poverty statistics presented in census publications were based on a definition originated by the Social Security Administration in 1964 and subsequently modified by Federal Interagency Committees in 1969 and 1980 and prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget in Directive 14 as the standard to be used by Federal agencies for statistical purposes.

At the core of this definition was the 1961 economy food plan, the least costly of four nutritionally adequate food plans designed by the Department of Agriculture. It was determined that families of three or more persons spend approximately one-third of their income on food; hence, the poverty level for these families was set at three times the cost of the economy food plan. For smaller families and persons living alone, the cost of the economy food plan was multiplied by factors that were slightly higher to compensate for the relatively larger fixed expenses for these smaller households.

The total income of each family or unrelated individual in the sample was tested against the appropriate poverty threshold to determine the poverty status of that family or unrelated individual. If the total income was less than the corresponding cutoff, the family or unrelated individual was classified as "below the poverty level."

The poverty thresholds are revised annually to allow for changes in the cost of living as reflected in the Consumer Price Index. In the U.S., the average poverty threshold for a family of four was \$12,674 in 1989. In 1980, the Commonwealth had 10.5% of its residents below the poverty threshold for their size of family. In 1990, the poverty rate for Pennsylvania grew slightly to 11.1%. **Table 34** shows the high level of poverty associated with the area.

TABLE 34

POVERTY STATUS OF TOTAL PERSONS, 1979-1999 Gilpin, Parks, and Bethel Twps., Leechburg Bor., Armstrong County and Pennsylvania							
Municipality	1979 Below Poverty Level			1989 Below Poverty Level			1999
	Persons for whom poverty status is determined	# Below	% Below	Persons for whom poverty status is determined	# Below	% Below	
Pennsylvania	11,864,720	1,245,796	10.5	11,536,049	1,283,629	11.1	11.0
Armstrong County	77,768	7,543	9.7	73,478	9,305	12.7	11.7
Gilpin Twp.	2,967	246	8.3	2,804	242	8.6	7.0

Parks Twp.	3,123	390	12.5	2,739	482	17.6	15.1
Bethel Twp.	1,349	121	9.0	1,261	129	10.2	7.3
Leechburg Bor.	2,687	255	9.5	2,504	254	10.0	11.6

Source: 1980 and 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Findings

- In 2000, the male LFPR for Armstrong County was 64.6%, a slight decrease since 1990 when the male LFPR was 66.3%. Conversely, the LFPR for females in the County increased to 44.7% from 42.6% in 1990.
- The primary factor for the increase by Leechburg Borough and Gilpin Township during the 1990s in terms of LFPR was the late arrivals of females into the workforce. In 1990, both municipalities had very low female LFPR's.
- Parks Township's unemployment rate has improved tremendously, dropping 6% since 1990. However, this includes the significant loss of persons participating in the labor force.
- The labor force of the Region remains largely blue collar with approximately 57%-59% of the local workforce employed in traditional blue collar industries such as manufacturing, labor, construction, etc.
- Blue collar jobs are traditionally lower paying than managerial, technical and other professional "white collar" positions, but despite this, the income levels in Gilpin and Bethel Townships have grown significantly since 1990 and have closed the gap between local and state median incomes.
- The State's blue collar employment level dropped to just over 40% in 2000.
- In Leechburg, since 1980, the State has increased its median household income 237.5%, while the Borough has lagged significantly behind at 163.4%.
- Since 1980, the State has increased its median household income 237.5%, while Gilpin Township has lagged slightly behind at 228.7%.
- Poverty levels have steadied or decreased for the Region's municipalities except for Leechburg Borough.

CHAPTER 7

THE TRANSPORTATION OF THE SOUTH
CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

TRANSPORTATION OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

An examination of the transportation network of the South Central Armstrong County Region forms the basis for ensuring an efficient movement of goods, people and services throughout the area. Transportation is the framework on which a community bases many of its decisions regarding land use and zoning. This part of the background studies will review traffic volumes on many of the state and locally maintained roadways, high traffic intersections, PennDOT's twelve-year plan, trails, air and railroad infrastructure. The goal of this section is to identify transportation related shortcomings for inclusion on PennDOT's twelve-year plan and to identify various projects for which grant money is available.

Functional Classification of Streets, Highways and Roads

The Region's streets, roads and highways vary in functional class, length, cartway widths, number of lanes, year built, year resurfaced, surface type, traffic volumes, special restrictions, and levels of service. The typical categories of functional service types are defined by the Federal Department of Transportation and described below and summarized on **Map 19**.

- **Arterial, major:** Major arterial roads handle high volumes of traffic generally traveling long distances. These roads usually have at least four lanes of traffic in both directions and have limited access.
- **Arterial, minor:** Minor arterials are streets with signals at important intersections and stop signs on side streets. These streets collect and distribute traffic to and from collector streets. Minor arterials are the central means of travel and commerce in the Region and include State Route 66.
- **Collectors:** Collectors are streets that collect traffic from local streets and connect with major and minor arterials.
- **Local street:** A local street provides vehicular access to abutting properties and discourages through traffic. This class of street carries traffic to and from collectors and serves adjacent land use; it contains loop streets, residential streets, cul-de-sacs, alleys and parking connectors.
- **Cul-de-sac street:** A cul-de-sac is a street with a single common ingress and egress and a turn around at the end.
- **Dead end street:** A dead end street has a single common ingress and egress.
- **Service street:** A service street runs parallel to a freeway or expressway and serves abutting properties.
- **Dual street:** A dual street has opposing lanes separated by a median strip, center island, or other form of barrier, and can be crossed only at designated locations.
- **Expressway:** An expressway is a divided multi-lane major arterial street for through traffic, with partial control of access and with grade separations at major intersections.
- **Freeway:** A freeway is a limited access highway with no at-grade crossings.
- **Paper street:** A paper street is one that has never been built, but is shown on an approved plan, subdivision plat, tax map, or official map.
- **Public Road:** Any road under the jurisdiction of and maintained by a public authority and open to public travel.

Information of state maintained roads in the South Central Armstrong County Region has been summarized from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's Roadway Management Information System (RMIS) State Roadway Summary for District Office 10-0.

Traffic Volumes

This section identifies all arterial and collector streets in the Townships and Borough and presents the associated average daily traffic (ADT) counts. One ADT count is equivalent to one vehicle passing a checkpoint in one direction one time. Therefore, this information is highly valuable to determine busy roadways, volume problems, busy intersections and under utilized passageways.

Table 35 lists the all arterial and collector streets and roads in the Townships and Leechburg Borough and the associated average daily traffic (vehicle trips) on each roadway. The counts were taken from PennDOT's RMIS for 2002 and averaged for individual segments of each roadway. The information is also presented in **Map 19** found on the following page.

TABLE 35

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (ADT) Major and Minor Arterials and Collectors Roads and Streets, 2002 South Central Armstrong County Region	
Route Number/Name	ADT Current Estimate for 1999
Route 66/56 (Leechburg)	14,000
Route 56 (Vandergrift)	12,000
Route 66	3,600-6,600
Route 66 Alt.	5,000-10,000
Hungry Hollow Road	1,500
Upper Mateer Road	1,200
Ice Pond Road	1,300
Airport Road	500-950
Slate Point	500
Logansport Road	400
Novinger Road	300
Spruce Hollow Road	200
Stitts Road	50
Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, District 10, Roadway Management Information System, 2002	

Map 19 - Functional Classification of Streets

Map 20 also shows the traffic volumes between intersections. **Map 20** is found on Page 104. The busiest intersections in the Region are as follows:

<u>No.</u>	<u>Intersection</u>	<u>ADT</u>
1.	Route 66, 56 and 66 Alt. (N. Vandergrift)	12,000
2.	Route 66 and Bridge to 56 (Leechburg)	14,000
3.	Route 66 and 66 Alt.	6,600
4.	Route 66 Alt. and Hungry Hollow Road at Dime	5,400
5.	Route 66 and Ice Pond Road	3,100

Map 20 - ADT - Traffic Volumes

Pennsylvania Act 120 was passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Shaffer in 1970. It established the Department of Transportation, State Transportation Commission and the 12-Year Transportation Program. The Act requires PennDOT to "prepare and submit every even numbered year, prior to the first day of September, to the State Transportation Commission for its consideration—a program which it recommends to be undertaken by the Department of Transportation during the following twelve fiscal years."

Update Process

During the summer of the ODD numbered years, (example 2003 and 2005) the Department provides, in cooperation with its planning partners, a schedule for the new program update, procedural guidance and financial guidance to Department partners.

During the fall of the ODD numbered years, The State Transportation Commission, the Department, MPOs (Metropolitan Planning Organization) and LDDs (Local Developmental District) conduct public involvement activities to identify candidate projects for consideration in the upcoming program cycle.

During the winter of the odd number years, the Department updates estimated costs/schedules for all candidate projects and projects to be carry over projects onto the new program.

The Department finalizes project priorities and project information. MPOs and LDDs establish their project priorities and project information.

The MPOs, LDDs and the Department share candidate lists of highway, bridge and transit projects for possible inclusion into the new program. Rail Freight and Aviation projects are also solicited by their respective sponsors.

During the spring of the even numbered years, MPOs and LDDs meet individually with the Department to review all candidate projects and to negotiate/resolve any remaining issues. All project data (highway, bridge and transit) is stored in a database (MPMS) and is shared with all planning partners.

The MPOs and LDDs develop a preliminary draft Transportation Improvement Program (highway/bridges and transit) and submit that information to the Department and appropriate negotiations are concluded. MPOs, LDDs, Department and State Transportation Commission reach agreement on the respective portions of the program, perform air quality analyses (if necessary), and open 30 day public comment periods.

In late spring, the MPOs and LDDs close 30-day public comment periods, formally approve individual portions of the program, and submit their portions of the program to the Department.

During the summer of the even numbered years, the State Transportation Commission approves the 12-Year Program. On behalf of the Commonwealth, the Governor and the Secretary submit the STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program) which is the first four-year period of the 12-Year Program to the FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) and FTA (Federal Transportation Authority) for approval.

In the fall of the even numbered years, the Department obtains joint approval from the FHWA and the FTA for the new program.

Important Points Concerning 12-Year Program

The District usually cannot work on any phase (engineering, right-of-way, or construction) until that phase is in the first four year period of the 12-Year Program. However, the Secretary of Transportation can approve advance design for projects listed in the second four-year period.

- Large projects can be split phased (i.e., Design, first four years; Right-of-Way, second four years; Construction, third four years).
- Projects let for construction prior to October 1 of odd numbered years are not carried over into the next 12-Year period.

- Types of Projects on 12-Year Program
- SAMI (Safety and Mobility Initiative)
- Safety Corridors
- Interstate Restoration
- Major Capital Improvements (Bypasses and Relocations)
- State and Local Bridge Bill

The following, **Table 36**, is a listing of *all* projects in Armstrong County under the jurisdiction of the PennDOT District 10 Office.

Table 36

PennDOT ARMSTRONG COUNTY 2002 Transportation Projects			
Project	Type	12-year Plan Phase	Cost (000)
04 SPC MPC 3-R	Highway Restoration	1st	4,941
05 SPC MPC 3-R	Highway Restoration	1st	4,000
Armstrong Wetland Banking	Highway Restoration	1st	100
Kittanning Trail	Transportation Enhancement	1st	400
Northpoint Trail Phase I	Transportation Enhancement	1st	109
Bulter-Freeport Trail Exit	Transportation Enhancement	1st	484
Kittanning Trail No. 2	Transportation Enhancement	1st	300
Rock Furnace Trail	Transportation Enhancement	1st	349
SR 66 Expressway	Preventive Maintenance	1st	3,800
SR 68 Kaylor Rd Overpass	Safety Improvement	1st	120
SR 210 Power Plant Rd North 3-R	Highway Restoration	1st	2,660
SR 268 Lemon Rd Interchange	Safety Improvement	1st	1,005
SR 268 West Kittanning Congestion	Congestion Reduction	1st	1,000
US 422 Worthington Signals	Safety Improvement	1st	295
SR 4023 Tarton Rd.	Highway Restoration	1st	4,645
SR 4023 Tarton Rd.	Highway Restoration	2nd	1,870

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, District 10, Roadway Management Information System, 2002

Local Road Conditions

This section highlights road and streets within the regions municipalities that are in need of repair or reconditioning.

Gilpin Township

Considering the many miles of roadway and the challenging terrain of Gilpin Township, the major roadways that service a large majority of persons are in moderate to good condition. The exceptions are the roads listed below that are in need of repair.

1. Stullville Road - This road serves well over 12 houses and several farms and runs from Godfrey Road to Schenley Road. It is in poor condition because of major portions that have degraded to the subsurface. It is in need of resurfacing.

2. Lessig Road - This road services about 2 dozen homes and some farms. The road is in poor condition and needs to be resurfaced from Forks Church Road to Coal Bank Road.

3. Truby Hill Road - This road connects from Lovers Leap Road and runs east to Hungry Hollow Road. The road is very rural, hilly and largely services only a few farms and wooded areas, but is in very poor condition.

4. Shuster Hollow Road - This road runs off of Evergreen Road and dead ends into a farm. The road is in decent condition off of Evergreen, but degrades slowly to poor condition. The road does not service more than 6-8 homes and is challenged by the terrain, but should be resurfaced over the next 2-5 years.

5. Jack Road - This road is in the northern corner of the Township and is very rural and hilly. However, the road is planned to have water service in the next few years and has open lands which could be developed. As a precursor to that development, the road should be resurfaced from Rowe Road to the Gilpin Township border.

6. Johnetta Road - Runs from Route 66 to the Gilpin border at the Allegheny River. The road serves over 35 houses, some farming areas and some wonderfully hilly and wooded terrain. The road is in poor condition and should be resurfaced.

Parks Township

Parks Township has a challenging role in the network of roadways for the region. The terrain is very severe in places, making the construction and maintenance of local roads more expensive and time consuming. The diversity of the roadways also makes maintenance difficult. The more urban areas of North Vandergrift, Kepple Hill, Riverview and Kiskimere have tightly woven networks of roads. The ratio of land area dedicated to roadways versus private ownership is much higher in a rural setting, meaning these dense areas have a lot of roadways for the Township to service. Likewise, the rural roads also present a challenge as they traverse steep slopes or only serve a few farms.

Overall, the 25.88 miles of roadways the Township maintains are in decent condition. However, there are many roads in the area that are either in need of repair or are unpaved, narrow and traversing difficult terrain. The following list highlights some of these roadway issues in Parks Township.

North Vandergrift

1. Grant Street - This street serves the north eastern most part of North Vandergrift “up on the hill.” The road, as entered from Dime Road, is in moderate condition with a pothole or two, but degrades into areas with enough potholes to warrant being in this section. The road is also one of the narrowest and steepest in the Township at the end near Route 66/56. However, the widening or smoothing of the steep run of the road is not likely due to terrain and development limitations.

2. Alleys and Minor Issues - As is almost always the case of more concentrated development, there are some alleys that are in need of patchwork within the area.

Kepple Hill/Riverview

1. Pleasant View Drive-Kepple Hill seems to have two (2) distinct areas: the roads and housing to the west of Pleasant View Drive and the areas east of Pleasant View Drive, plus Penn Avenue, West Penn Road and Urban Street of Riverview were repaired and tarred and chipped in 2005. The roads to the west of Pleasant View Drive were repaired and tarred and chipped in 2006. All of these roads are presently in good conditions; however, several driveway pipes need replaced to correct drainage problems. These roads serve approximately four hundred (400) homes.

2. Kepple Avenue/Kepple Hill Road-Kepple Hill Road is a section of Kepple Avenue approximately one-half mile long that connects the Villages of North Vandergrift and Kepple Hill. It is a very steep, curvy road located along the outside edge of the hillside overlooking SR 66 and River Road, which run along the Kiskiminetas River. The severe rains and weather conditions of January 2005 caused the hillside to start moving and sliding, carrying sections of the road with it. The road was closed and blocked off January 10, 2005. Core samples were drilled, soil analysis test conducted, and engineering studies completed. There are four (4) major slide areas, requiring the entire road be reconstructed. The closing of this road has redirected all traffic to and from Kepple Hill to West Penn Road, which is a narrow, steep road connecting SR 66 (River Road) to Pleasant View Drive. These roads serve approximately four hundred (400) homes, plus the Parks Township Fire Hall, the Parks Township Municipal Authority, and two (2) churches. Estimated cost to rebuild and reopen the road is between \$500,000 and one million dollars.

Kiskimere

1. Kiskimere Road, Mary Street, Johnson Street, Jane Street, and Eisenhower Street-The roads and streets of the Village of Kiskimere were repaired and tarred and chipped in 2005. They remain in good conditions; however, several driveway pipes need replaced to correct drainage problems.

Rural Parks Township

1. Unpaved Roads-There are a number of roads in the Township that remain unpaved, gravel based and narrow. Areas of these roads have been damaged by washout, making normal car travel slow and rough. The following roads are unpaved in Parks Township: **Piper Hill Road**, which serves approximately seven (7) houses and steeped and wooded terrain. **Hickory Road**, which serves seven (7) houses and a few farms of Chestnut Road. **Slate Point Road**, which is the most northeastern road in Parks township, this is unpaved from Ridge Road to the east of the Township. The **western end of Maple Road**, which is a very steep, dirt hill. The **western end of Garvers Ferry Road**, and **Shipman Road**, which is also a very steep dirt road. Dirt and Gravel Road Grants were used on Maple Road in 2005, Garvers Ferry Road in 2006, and the northern end of Hickory Road in 2007. Future grants should be used for the southern end of Hickory Roads, Piper Hill Road, Slate Point Road, and Shipman Road.

2. Ash Road-Ash Road was tarred and chipped in 2004; however there are some drainage issues that need resolved, including some driveway pipes that need replaced.

3. Oak Road-Oak Road is in poor condition and needs to be resurfaced. Crossover pipes and driveway pipes need replaced to address major drainage issues.

4. Locust Road-Locust Road is in poor condition and needs drainage issues addressed and needs resurfaced.

Bethel Township

Bethel Township has 20.98 miles of roads to maintain and 17.45 of state maintained roads, the least amount of roads of the three townships, but due to the very steep and hilly terrain, the job of maintaining these roads is not an easy one. Nevertheless, the Township's roads, through many are not paved, are in moderate to good condition. The list below highlights the roads that are in poor condition due to potholes and erosion, plus those that are unpaved and serve more than a few houses or serve as connectors to other roads within the Township.

1. Pine Hollow Road - This road traverses some of the most severe, rustic and beautiful terrain in the Township. It also does not serve any houses directly after the few near the Logansport Road intersection. It is paved but is in need of some patchwork or paving. It is understandable that the rest of this road is unpaved and is covered by very little gravel. Amounting to mostly a solid path, it is not even maintained by the Township in the winter since alternate routes to Claypool Hill and Shearer Road are available. Nevertheless, it makes this list due to the criteria established. Upgrading this road is not a necessity, but may be a long term goal for the Township.

2. Kerr Road and Kerr Bottom Road - Kerr Road is tar and chip and serves a few residences, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Environmental Learning Center and the private drive named Kerr Bottom Road. The road is in decent condition, but paving the way would make for much better service to the Learning Center and the 4 houses on Kerr Bottom Road.

3. Baker Road - This road runs between Grantz Hollow and Spruce Hollow Roads and serves about 7 houses and some beautifully wooded areas. The road is very narrow and unpaved. The road is in decent condition with a tar and chip finish, but could be considered for minor widening and paving.

4. Graham and Gilcrest Roads - Both roads run from Spruce Hollow Road into Parks Township. The roads are slightly narrow and tar and chip finish, but in good condition. They serve some houses and some farms. Considering paving these roads should be a joint decision between Parks and Bethel Townships.

5. Stoney Hill Road - This road serves a few houses and agricultural areas and runs into Gilpin Township. Major portions of the land on this road is occupied by Texas Keystone Utilities for gas reserves and power lines. Considering paving these roads should be a joint decision between Gilpin and Bethel Townships.

6. Coal Bank Hollow Road - This road runs off of Lakeview Road near Route 66. It only serves a few houses at the beginning of the road and the surface is dirt with gravel base. The rest of the road serves a private residential land and is dirt with a gravel base.

Leechburg Borough

The large majority of the Borough's streets are in moderate to good condition. Below is a list of streets that should be given a high priority involving future repair work. Leechburg conducts an annual road survey and paving is done each year. The roads are prioritized by condition, frequency of use and financial limitations. The Borough's 5-year paving plan is updated annually.

1. First Street - First, Second and Third Streets are the major north-south routes (collectors) that make up the grid of the Borough. First Street provides access to all of the Borough's Avenues (east-west grid local streets) and is the only connector to Gilpin Township other than River Road (Route 66) and the small Evergreen Road located on the northwestern outskirts of the Borough. The surface has degraded significantly with large areas crumbling to the subsurface of gravel. In the fall of 2002, the street was resurfaced. from north of Monroe Avenue to Lincoln Avenue.

First Street is the only collector in the Borough in need of major repair within the next few years. The items listed below are roadways that will normally only affect the residents housed on the particular street.

2. Locust Street - This road is located on the Gilpin Township border in the north west portion of the Borough. It runs along a wooded slope on the west side, therefore, only services houses on its eastern boundary. Nevertheless, it is riddled with potholes and is in need of resurfacing within the next several years. This street is shared between Leechburg Borough and Gilpin Township.

3. Alleys and Lanes - There are many alleys and a few lanes in the Borough in need of patchwork. This is a minor point since many of these would only be used by the few structures located on the throughway. However, Passavant Way is an exception. Passavant Way services the northern end of Veterans Memorial Field and housing units are located on its northern boundary. Located next to the street is a rather abandoned tennis court and what could be a nice area for a playground. At the time of this study the street was in poor condition with a multitude of potholes. The street was resurfaced in the fall of 2002, visually improving the area around the football field and providing decent access to the land and houses behind the stadium. Passavant Way is a shared street between Leechburg Borough and Gilpin Township.

Findings

- The communities should participate in PennDOT's Twelve-Year Planning Process.
- The municipalities should identify the transportation needs and improvements of the region.
- The municipalities should work with the county and elected state representatives to place their priorities on the list of future projects.
- Problematic and dangerous intersections and highways should be identified and the communities should work to have appropriate signals installed or other remedial actions completed to address safety concerns.
- The communities should work together with regional and county organizations to lobby for improvements to Route 28 and the extension of Route 66 as an improved highway serving the area.
- The municipalities should conduct annual road and paving inspections and identify areas which need attention. Leechburg conducts an annual road survey and paving is done each year. The roads are prioritized by condition, frequency of use and financial limitations. The Borough's 5-year paving plan is updated annually.
- Long term plans, especially concerning the improvements of roads in the townships, should be formulated and resources secured for completion of needed projects.
- The municipalities may wish to explore the possibilities of sharing road equipment and purchasing needed supplies in large quantities. This is done on a limited basis in the region.

CHAPTER 8

THE COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC
UTILITIES OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL
ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

THE COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

The quality of life in any given community is largely determined by the scope of that community's public facilities and infrastructure. This chapter examines the Region's existing and planned community facilities, focusing on recreational opportunities, police protection, fire fighting protection, ambulance services, public water systems, solid waste disposal, and public utilities. Mapped resources in this chapter include school districts, community facilities such as parks, municipal buildings, fire halls, churches, schools, cemeteries and clubs, and water and sewer service areas.

Educational Facilities

The region is served by three public school districts: Leechburg, Kiski Area and Armstrong. **Map 21**, located on Page 115, shows the districts on a regional basis. The school districts vary greatly in terms of size and character. Leechburg Area School District serves Gilpin and Leechburg's young residents. It is considered a rural/small town district with graduating classes of around 60 students and less than 1,000 students district-wide. On the other hand, the Armstrong School District, which serves Bethel Township, covers a large majority of Armstrong County serving many municipalities and boasting nearly 7,000 students. The district serves residents from the urban core of Kittanning to the rural landscape of Bethel Township. The Kiski Area School District serves Parks Township's young residents and many communities in Westmoreland County. The district has nearly 5,000 students and is larger than average both within the state and nationally.

Gilpin Township and Leechburg Borough

Gilpin Township and Leechburg Borough are served by the Leechburg School District. The district also serves West Leechburg Borough in Westmoreland County. There are three schools in the district housed in one large facility in Leechburg Borough, which are highlighted in **Table 37**. All of the young residents of Gilpin and Leechburg attend these schools. The district is small by national and state standards having just over 62 teachers and a graduating class of under 60. The state average number of teachers is over 170, while the national average is over 180.

TABLE 37

LEECHBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT						
School	Location	Grades	Students	Teachers	Student-Teacher Ratio	High School Diplomas
David Leech Elementary	200 Siberian Avenue Leechburg, PA 15656	KG-5	406	25.5	15.9	53
Leechburg Middle School	215 1 st Street Leechburg, PA 15656	6-8	282	28	10.1	
Leechburg High School	215 1 st Street Leechburg, PA 15656	9-12	218	9	24.2	
District Totals	-	-	906	62.5	-	-

Source: CCD public school district data for the 2000-2001 school year.

Parks Township

Parks Township is served by the Kiski Area School District. The district serves Parks Township with the rest of the district's service area located in Westmoreland County. The district is considered rural and urban fringe. There are nine schools in the district, which are highlighted in **Table 38**. The only school within the Township is the Laurel Point Elementary. After graduating from the Elementary, Parks Township residents attend the Kiski Area Intermediate and then the Kiski Area Senior High School. The district's size is above average by national and state standards having just over 230 teachers and a graduating class of under 340. The state average number of teachers is over 170, while the national average is over 180.

TABLE 38

KISKI AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT						
School	Location	Grades	Students	Teachers	Student-Teacher Ratio	High School Diplomas
Allegheny - Hyde Park Elementary	300 School Rd. Leechburg, PA 15656	KG-6	709	35	20.3	337
Bell Avon El.	Kier Street Salina, PA 15680	KG-6	276	17	16.2	
Kiski Area High School	200 Poplar St. Vandergrift, PA 15690	9-12	1459	71	20.5	
Kiski Area Intermediate High School	200 Poplar St. Vandergrift, PA 15690	7-8	828	36	23	
Laurel Point El.	1141 Airport Rd. Vandergrift, PA 15690	1-6	120	6	20.5	
Mamont El.	RR 2 Export. PA 15632	KG-6	302	14	21.6	
North Washington El.	600 Route 66 Apollo, PA 15613	KG-3	97	3	32.3	
Vandergrift El.	420 Franklin Ave Vandergrift, PA 15690	KG-6	602	35	17.2	
Washington El.	180 Route 66 Apollo, PA 15613	1-6	231	16	14.4	
District Totals	-	-	4624	233	-	-

Source: CCD public school district data for the 2000-2001 school year.

Bethel Township

Bethel Township is served by the Armstrong School District. The district serves a large number of municipalities in Armstrong County. The district covers one of the largest geographical areas in the state. There are thirteen schools in the district, which are highlighted in **Table 39**. Young residents from Bethel Township attend the Lenape Elementary School and the Ford City JSHS. The district is very large by national and state standards having just over 6,800 students, 430 teachers and a graduating class of about 425. The state average number of teachers is over 170, while the national average is over 180.

TABLE 39

ARMSTRONG SCHOOL DISTRICT						
School	Location	Grades	Students	Teachers	Student-Teacher Ratio	High School Diplomas
Dayton Elem.	Grant Avenue Dayton, PA 16222	KG-6	302	21	14.4	427
East Franklin Elem.	705 Butler Rd. Kittanning, PA 16201	1	160	9	17.8	
Elderton Elem.	Lytle Street Elderton, PA 15736	KG-6	247	15	16.5	
Elderton JSHS	Lytle Street Elderton, PA 15736	7-12	458	36	12.7	
Ford City JSHS	Fourth Avenue Ford City, PA 16226	7-12	785	48.5	16.2	
Kittanning Area Ms.	210 N McKean St. Kittanning, PA 16201	6-8	620	43	14.4	
Kittanning SHS	1200 Orr Ave. Kittanning, PA 16201	9-12	847	52	16.3	
Kittanning Twp Elem.	RR 6 Box 212 Kittanning, PA 16201	KG-6	251	23	10.9	
Lenape Elem.	2300 Center Ave. Ford City, PA 16226	KG-6	894	51.5	17.4	
North Buffalo Elem.	RR 4 Kittanning, PA 16201	KG-6	290	11	26.4	
Shannock Valley Elem.	Box 325 Rural Valley, PA 16249	KG-6	499	28	17.8	
West Hills Ele.	838 Butler Rd. Kittanning, PA 16201	2-5	783	43	18.2	
West Shamokin JSHS	RR 2 Box 154a Rural Valley, PA 16249	7-12	654	45	14.5	
District Totals	-	-	6790	426	-	-

Source: CCD public school district data for the 2000-2001 school year.

Recreational Facilities

Armstrong County is home to many natural resources, public parks and recreational areas. These recreational resources are listed below, including descriptions of types of activities and facilities for each. See **Map 23** toward the end of this chapter for the location of these recreational and other community facilities.

Regional Resources

1. Crooked Creek Lake - Located from the northeast corner of Bethel Township to Ford City. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates and maintains this expansive lake and reservoir system.

Visitors can pursue a variety of outdoor activities at the project with the numerous well maintained facilities available for their enjoyment. For those who enjoy the outdoors, a visit to Crooked Creek can be a rewarding experience.

The lake and its miles of scenic shoreline provide unlimited opportunities for water-based recreation. A boat launch with ample trailer parking is available for boating and water-skiing enthusiasts. Swimmers and sunbathers will especially appreciate the lake's sandy, peninsula beach.

The great variety and abundance of fish found in the lake have lured many fishermen to its waters. Crooked Creek Lake has yielded many fine catches of bass, muskie, sunfish, and crappie.

Picnicking is enjoyed at Crooked Creek. There are several picnic areas maintained by the Corps that are provided with tables and charcoal grills. Six picnic shelters are provided with picnic tables and grills.

Crooked Creek Resources:

Campsites with Electricity-*NO*

Campsites without Electricity-*YES*

Showers-*NO*

Restrooms-*YES*

Drinking Water-*YES*

Sanitary Dump Station-*YES*

Picnic/Day Use-*YES*

Launch Ramp-*YES*

Marina-*NO*

Visitor Info. Center-*YES*

Amphitheater - *Yes*

Trails - *Yes*

2. The Armstrong Trail - In 1992, the Allegheny Valley Land Trust (AVLT) began the process of converting 52 miles of former Conrail right-of-way into a recreational rail-to-trail. With AVLT acting as owner-developer, and the Armstrong Rails-to-Trails Association providing support, the trail is being constructed under ISTEA funding.

The trail begins in Schenley, Gilpin Township, Armstrong County, PA, and follows what is predominantly the eastern shore of the Allegheny River northward, finally reaching East Brady in southern Clarion County. AVLT also controls 4 miles of the former Lawsonham Low-Grade line adjacent to Redbank Creek, the boundary between Armstrong and Clarion. A full range of wildlife is present, including deer, bear, and many species of birds. The surface is mostly unimproved, varying from ballast to cinders. It is completely accessible via mountain bike or on foot, and mountain biking and hiking enthusiasts are encouraged to visit. There are also ample opportunities for fishing, swimming, canoeing/kayak touring, and camping. AVLT allows primitive camping on trail property with a permit.

The towns along the trail (Schenley, Ford City, Manorville, McGrann, Kittanning and East Brady) are representative of American small towns, and offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities. Both Ford City and Kittanning play host to numerous examples of beautiful architecture. The area features excellent street cycling, with several good places to view the Allegheny River. Area tourist information is available via the Armstrong County Tourism Bureau.

A 1.2-mile asphalt-topped section was completed in the town of Ford City in October of 1997, and is being enjoyed by an ever-increasing number of walkers, cyclists, and in-line skaters. It has been augmented by an 1100-foot-long section of limestone-topped trail to the south. A 1.1-mile limestone-topped section between the boroughs of Manorville and Kittanning was finished in September of 1998. Plans for the future include trail development in and north of Kittanning Borough, and a demonstration project in the town of Templeton.

Trail Access Points

Kelly Station- The access road (SR 2030) for this area lies approximately 6.5 miles north of Leechburg. Look for Purple's Saloon on the left as you drive north on Route 66. Turn left onto SR 2030 and follow it to Kelly Station Rd., taking care to turn left at the "Y" intersection (look for the Lock and Dam #6 sign). Once in Kelly, turn right parallel to the trail and drive towards Lock #6. Find a parking place out of the way of the gate, and of the access for the handicapped fishing area.

Logansport- The road to this site is located on Cook's Summit, approximately 1 mile north of Purple's Saloon. Sighting Alternative Rt. 66 means that you have gone too far. Turning onto this road, proceed past the Bethel Township Municipal Building. Continue straight, following what appears to be the main road. Turn right at the "T" and follow this road, SR 2029, to its end. The trail is directly in front of the gate, between you and the river*.

*This area features excellent access for canoeing/kayak touring.

See **Figure 4** for a map of the trail areas.

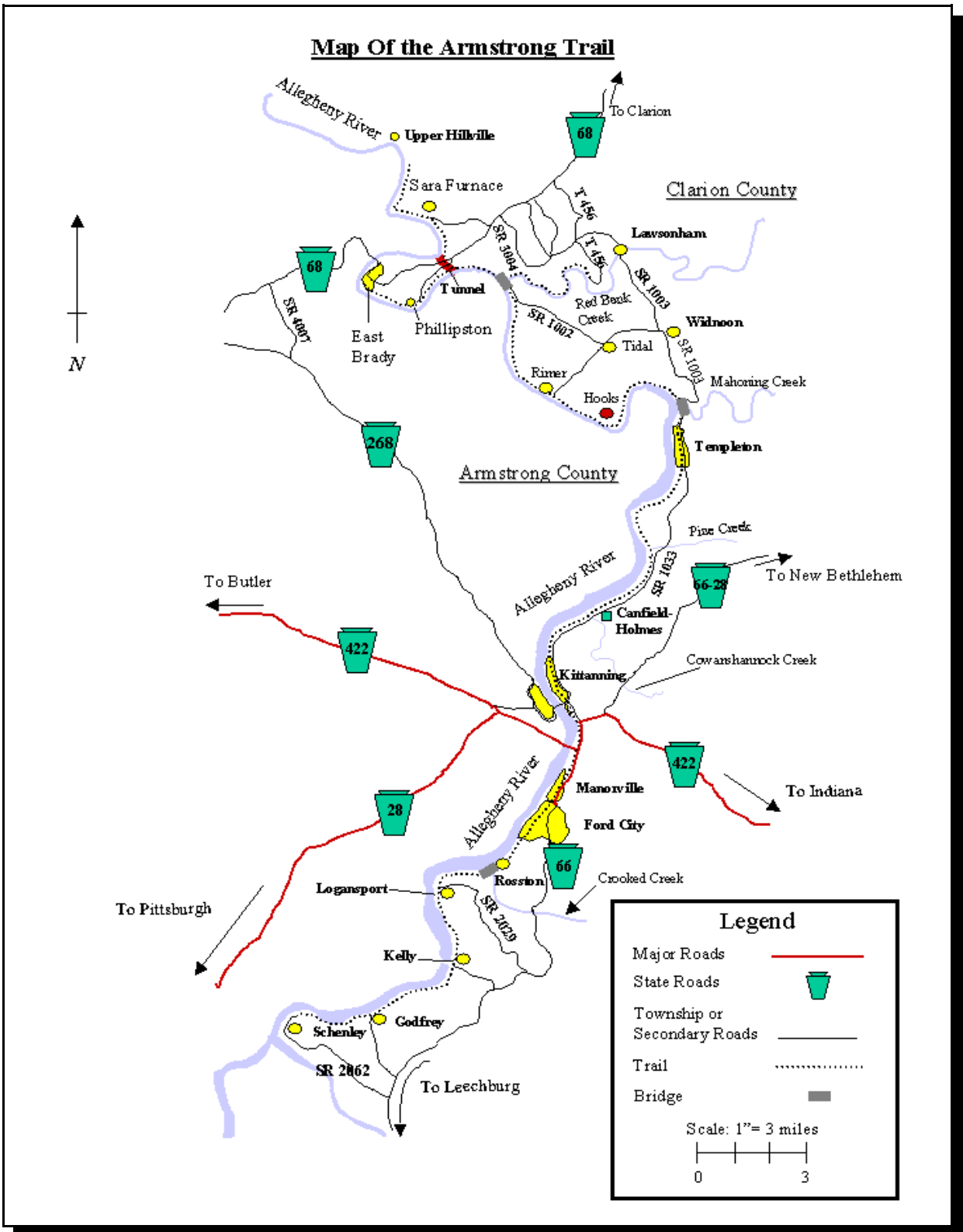


Figure 4

3. Crooked Creek Horse Park - A privately operated recreational area, the horse park is 97.5 acres and lies within the Crooked Creek Park and Lake system. It is operated by the **Fort Armstrong Horsemen's Association Inc.**, separate from the main park which is operated by the Army Corp of Engineers. The horse park is a multi-use facility and offers just about everything for the horseman from dressage shows to a full scale rodeo. There is camping with full hook-ups as well as primitive camping in more remote areas along with restrooms with showers. There are two barns with a total of 148 stalls. There are approximately 35-40 miles of permanently marked trails with one 20-mile loop and one 35-mile loop and several smaller loops. The trail system is all maintained by volunteers. The trails are challenging with lots of short hills and no long climbs. Plenty of water crossings and all types of footing will be encountered.

The trail system consists of many miles of trail over varying terrain. There are loops, which can be enlarged into bigger loops, and legs, which can be used to join other loops and legs. The following is a description of the loops and legs of the system of trails.

Covered Bridge Trail - 8 Miles

Starting out at the main entrance of the horse park, follow the white arrows and dots on to Brown Hill Road and Kerr Road for 1 mile. At this point, you will see a trail to your right turn into the woods, marked with an arrow on an old building. This trail is moderate to difficult as it winds down into Elbow Run Valley and then back up onto the top thru the forest. Follow the trail into an old abandoned strip mine and out onto a dirt road. At this point you will have traveled 1.25 miles from Kerr Road. Make a right turn on the dirt road and, for the next mile the trail goes past some private property and no trespassing signs, but it's OK. You are also on a hiking trail known as The Baker Trail, which is marked with yellow rectangles. Remember to follow the white dots as the horse trail does not always follow The Baker Trail. Continue on the old jeep road, which will lead down into Horney Camp Run Stream Valley and the Covered Bridge. At this point, you have gone a total of 4 miles from the Horse Park. From the Covered Bridge, the trail continues on fields and roads for 4 more miles to Cochrans Mills.

Horney Camp Run - Peninsula Loop Trail - 5 Miles

At the Covered Bridge cross Horney Camp Run stream and go a few yards on a jeep trail and you will see a right turn into the woods. This will start the 4-mile round trip Peninsula Loop Trail. Except for one short climb and descent, it is flat and very beautiful with spectacular views of the lake.

Boat Launch Trail - 5 Miles

Leave the Horse Park from behind the barns and follow the trail markings along a grassy diversion into the woods and down over the hill to a crossing at Crooked Creek. Follow a pipeline either straight ahead (but thru a boggy area) or take a left to bypass the bog on a switchback trail up to the top. Pass the Environmental Center in the park and cross Huston Road before entering and returning to the woods. Down a steep hill and across a ravine and up the other side, brings the trail out of the woods onto a short stretch (2/10th of a mile) of blacktop road. CAREFUL here as the road is narrow with a metal guard-rail and no berm. Use caution as boats being towed to the launching area pass through here. On arriving at the launch area remember, NO horses in the lake please! The next 2.6 miles is remote and scenic and the trail winds its way up and down the hillsides around the lake. This trail comes out on Robbs Fording Road. The next 4 miles is all on roads of varying surfaces, and is referred to on the map as the Polka Hollow Trail. Or go 1 mile on Robbs Fording Road and you will see a gate to your left. Ride around the gate to the Beaver Dam Trail.

The Beaver Dam Trail - 1 Mile

This trail is only 1 mile and is flat and ends on Cochrans Mills Road. From here you can turn left onto Cochrans Mills Road and follow the road for 1/2 mile to the Burrell Township Fire Hall, where you connect with the Cochrans Mills trail loops. An alternate route to the road would be to stay on Cochrans Mills Road for 20 feet or so and turn left into the woods and follow the Wall Trail (CAUTION, this trail is not for the faint-of-heart!). The Wall Trail goes to Cochrans Mills where the old and new road bridges cross Crooked Creek.

Manor Mineral Loop Trail - 12.5 Miles

Passing under the new bridge, the next 3.2 miles of trail is beautiful and remote with excellent footing and crosses the creek twice. Arriving at Rearick's Crossing Bridge, you can shorten the loop trail by 2.8 miles by crossing the bridge, or you can continue on up stream and cross the creek at Manor Minerals Crossing, and return back to Rearick's Crossing Bridge. Here you can retrace your steps back to Cochrans Mills, or continue on up the trail to the Donkey Farm, where sometimes the donkeys will bray you a

warm welcome. Following the Donkey Farm Drive a short distance, to the right you will see a gate with a stop sign. Go around the gate and you can follow this trail back down to the Manor Mineral trail. Or, continuing on out the drive the trail turns right into an old strip mine and then into some beautiful woods for a descent down to State Route 2025. The trail then begins the 4 miles of road back to the Boat Launch Trail, or after 1 mile of road, takes the first right turn for 1.5 miles on Knell Road back to the Burrell Township Fire Hall and Cochrans Mills Road. Here you can take a spur trail back to Cochrans Mills and Crooked Creek.

Cherry Run Loop Trail 3.3 Miles

This is a beautiful and fairly easy trail, which starts at Cochrans Mills and makes a loop of 3.3 miles. At the far end of the trail, a ½ mile spur leads to Cherry Run Road and an alternate parking area. The trail crosses Cherry Run stream four (4) times. It then returns to Cochrans Mills.

At Cochrans Mills you can pick up the return trail to the horse park by going up the trail to Cochrans Mills road and crossing the road (caution as this is a high speed road). From Cochrans Mills Road it is 8 miles back to the horse park by way of the Covered Bridge trail. Or, you can return to the horse park via the Beaver Dam trail and the Boat Launch Trail for about nine (9) miles.

Local Resources

1. *The Leechburg-Hyde Park Walking Bridge* - This very special 530 foot bridge across the Kiskiminetas River was first built in 1886 for trains to cross the river. The 1889 Flood destroyed the bridge which was rebuilt in 1901 to be destroyed again in 1904. During the 1920s the bridge was damaged from time to time until 1955, when steel was used to construct the floor. The bridge remains in good condition.

2. *The Gilpin/Leechburg Area Park* - The 24 acre park, located in Gilpin Township, adjacent to the Leechburg Area Pool, is both spacious and beautiful. The park has five (5) picnic pavilions with picnic tables, a children's play area with swings, and a new activity center. The park contains two (2) tennis courts, two (2) basketball courts, three (3) ballfields, a sand volleyball court (pool area), an exercise course, rest room facilities, a handicapped walkway and handicapped play equipment.

The park has several areas in need of upgrades that should be addressed: The tennis and basketball courts are in poor condition. The surfaces are cracked with weeds growing through the surface. The netting on both are in poor condition. The ballfields are maintained in moderate condition. Landscaping to the entrance of the park would improve the atmosphere of the park. The park is owned by Armstrong County.

3. *Parks Township Playgrounds* -The Township maintains three (3) small residential parks. The first is Kepple Hill Park, located across from the Fire Hall on Dalmation Drive in Kepple Hill, which contains one (1) pavilion with picnic tables, a swing set, basketball and tennis courts, and benches. The second park, North Vandergrift Park, is located in North Vandergrift on Jefferson Street and borders the bridge to Vandergrift. The park covers approximately 1/4 acre along the Kiskiminetas River and an area has been cleared to provide a scenic view of the river for park visitors. It contains one (1) pavilion with picnic tables, five (5) benches, a half basketball court, and a central gymnasium play area with three slides and various climbing components. The park was upgraded in 2003 with a grant from DCNR and now has handicap accessible features. The third park, Kiskimere Park, is located at the end of Johnson Street next to the Morningstar Baptist Church and contains one (1) pavilion with picnic tables, a swing set, and a basketball court. In 2007, a central gymnasium play area with three (3) slides and various climbing components, limestone pathways, ground mulch, and handicap accessible features were installed in both the Kepple Hill and Kiskimere Parks through a grant from DCNR.

4. *Leechburg Riverfront Park* - The Leechburg Riverfront Park is located on River Avenue along the Kiskiminetas River between First and Second Streets below the rail lines, which were purchased by Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corporation and given to the Borough of Leechburg. The bocci courts are owned by the Marconi Lodges. The park area is small, limited by steep terrain and the constricted area between the rail-right-of-ways and the river. Park facilities include some picnic tables and other seating areas.

5. *Leechburg Playgrounds* - Leechburg maintains two small playgrounds. One is located on Campbell Avenue. The fenced area covers approximately 1/5 acre and contains 2 sand diggers, a picnic table, a grill, a swing set and a gymnasium plus a few other small pieces of equipment. The park is in moderate

condition. Another park is located in front of the Allegheny Ludlum Administrative Building on Kiski Avenue. It is fenced and covers about 1/6 acre with a swing and a few other pieces of equipment. The park is in good condition.

Police Protection

Gilpin Township

Gilpin Township maintains a twenty-four hour police force. The department consists of one (1) full-time officer and six (6) part-time patrolmen.

Parks Township

Parks Township maintains a part-time police force. The department consists of one (1) full-time police chief and one (1) full-time officer.

Bethel Township

Bethel Township maintains a part-time police force year around. The department consists of one (1) part-time officer. Police protection for Bethel Township is handled by the Pennsylvania State Patrol when the Township's officer is not on duty.

Leechburg Borough

The Borough maintains a twenty-four hour police force. The department consists of three (3) full-time officers and ten (10) part-time patrolmen.

Fire Protection

Gilpin Township

Gilpin Township maintains a Volunteer Fire Department with an active member list of 42. The Station has a 1999 Pumper, a 1972 Pumper, a 1980 mini pumper, 1984 tanker, a 1969 rescue vehicle, a 1963 air truck, a 1960 pumper and rescue vehicle. New additions will include a Rescue/Air truck which arrived in 2001, replacing the 1969 rescue vehicle and the 1963 Air Truck. In 2000, the department answered 94 calls averaging between from 80 to 110 a year. There are no plans for any new buildings. The current building is rented on the weekends and holds bingo during the week.

Parks Township

Parks Township maintains a Volunteer Fire Department with two stations; one on Kepple Hill and the other near Dime. The station maintains a 50-60 persons volunteer list who answer about 100 calls per year. In 2000, the station had 86 calls and as of the first quarter, they had answered 22. The equipment includes a 2003 pierce fire truck, a 1994 pumper, one (1) squad van and a 4-wheel-drive brush truck that was donated by the Forestry Department. They also have two (2) pumpers and a brush truck at the Dime substation. There are no current plans for purchases or expansion/construction of buildings. The current building is ten (10) years old and in excellent condition. The building doubles as a hall and is rented the majority of weekends during the summer. During the week, bingo games are scheduled.

Bethel Township

The Bethel Township Volunteer Fire Company was incorporated July 7, 1960, and is located next to the Lutheran Church on Bethel Church Road. The company has a 1970 International Tanker, a 1996 one-ton GMC Utility donated by the Township, a 1976 3/4-ton brush truck., a 1982 Chevy Pumper/Tanker, and a 2001 International four-door Pumper/Tanker.

Leechburg Borough

LThe Leechburg Volunteer Fire Company was founded in 1890 and continues to prosper. The Fire Company is located at 268 Canal Street. The trucks were housed in the Municipal Building on Second Street until January 2003 when a new, large truck garage was dedicated. The cost of the new construction was roughly \$260,000. A service truck and an antique pumper are housed at the Campbell Avenue garage. The firefighting apparatus consists of a 1999 American-LaFrance pumper, a 1982 Pierce pumper, a 1966 American LaFrance 70-foot Areochief snorkel truck, a 1982 Chevrolet service truck that was obtained as surplus from the Forestry Department, a firefighting vehicle dating back to 1935, and a Seagrave pumper with an operable brass pump.

Emergency Medical Services

Emergency medical care response for **Leechburg Borough and Gilpin Township** is handled by the Lower Kiski Valley EMT's and is dispatched through 911. Emergency medical care response for **Bethel Township** is handled primarily by the Ford City Ambulance Company or by the Lower Kiski Valley EMT's on request and is dispatched through 911. Emergency medical care response for **Parks Township** is handled by the Vandergrift Ambulance Company, the Lower Kiski Valley EMS or the Apollo branch of the Oklahoma Ambulance Services and is dispatched through 911.

See Map 22 on the next page for the location of all aforementioned community facilities, including churches, clubs, cemeteries and municipal buildings.

Water Facilities

Gilpin Township

The Gilpin Township Water Authority maintains water service lines to portions of the Township through bulk water purchases from the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County. The service areas are identified on **Map 23**.

Parks Township

The Parks Township Municipal Authority maintains lines and purchases water from the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County. The lines service the Kepple Hill, Riverview and North Vandergrift areas completely, plus additional outlying areas along Route 66, Route 66 Alt. and Airport Road.

Bethel Township

Overall, Bethel Township does not currently have a public water source; however, an application has been submitted to establish water services to some population concentrations. Because of the Crooked Creek Lake System, Manor Township Municipal Authority supplies water to residents along Route 66 to Crooked Creek Dam and the Federal Park. After meetings with the Parks Water Authority, the Parks Municipal Authority agreed to provide water service to Bethel Township residents along Alt. Rt. 66 and other township roads. It is anticipated that construction of a storage tank and line construction should start sometime in 2008.

Leechburg Borough

Leechburg Borough's water services are supplied by the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County. The entire community has access to public water service.

Sanitary Sewer Systems

Gilpin Township

Gilpin Township Sewer Authority has completed a multi-million dollar construction project which will provide the central corridor and extensions with sewer service. See **Map 24** for sewer service areas. The authority would like to extend the sewer service to the village of Schenley at some point in the future.

Parks Township

Parks Township Municipal Authority maintains servicing lines to Kepple Hill, Riverview, Pleasant View and North Vandergrift, plus outlying areas along Route 66 and Route 66 Alt.

Bethel Township

Bethel Township does not currently have any public sewer services.

Leechburg Borough

The Kiski Valley Water Pollution Control Authority services all of Leechburg with sanitary sewer services. Currently the lines carry both storm water and grey water. A project that is soon to be underway will separate the lines and upgrade the efficiency and environmental quality of the system.

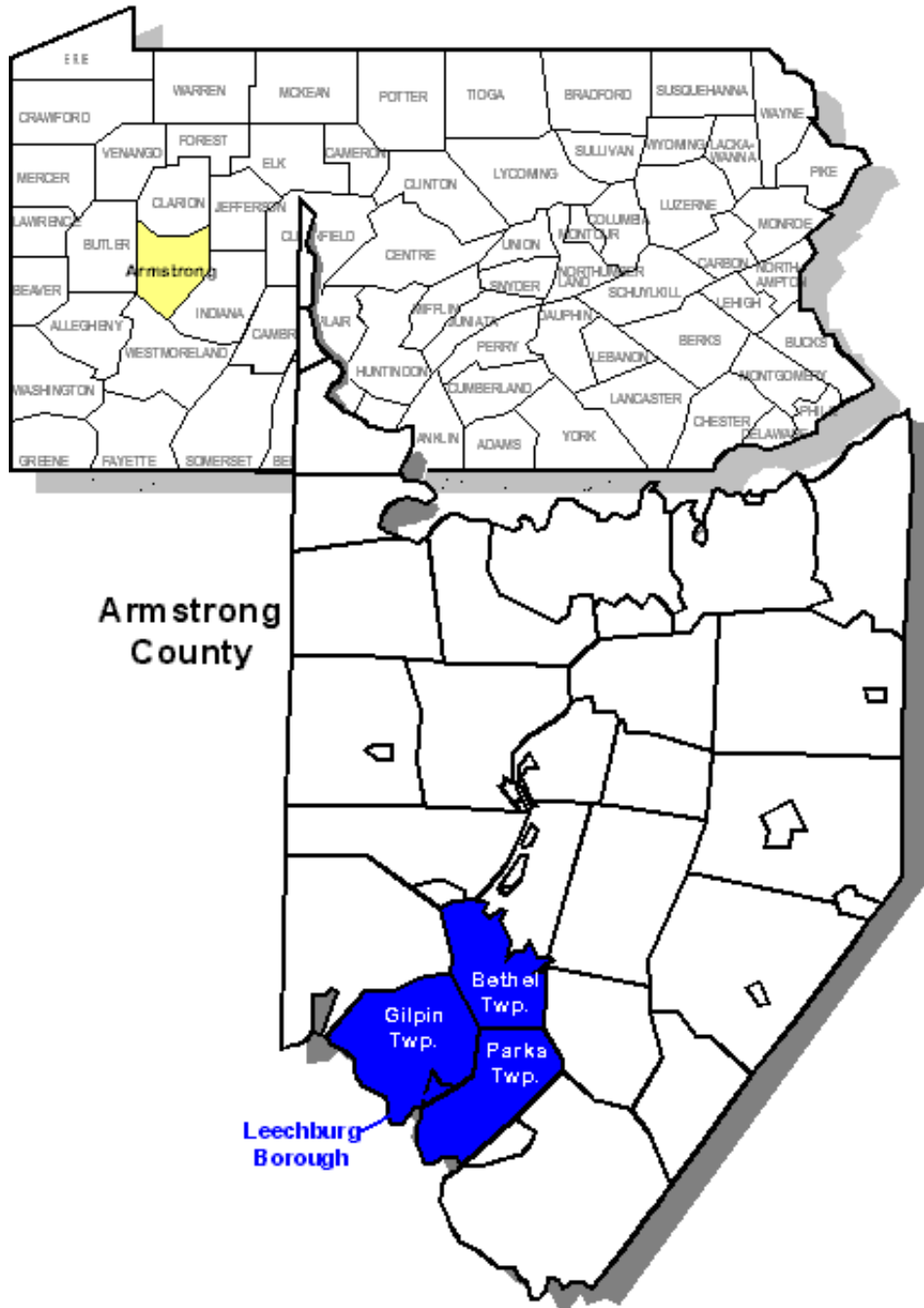
Utilities

- The Region's electric service is provided by Allegheny Power.
- There are two Hydro Dams in the region: one at Kelley Station in Bethel Township and another in Gilpin Township in Schenley.
- Natural Gas is provided by Dominion Peoples, Equitable Gas and T.W. Philips provides service in Bethel and to some in Parks Township.
- Due to the advent of retail wheeling in Pennsylvania, any number of firms may actually provide the electricity that each customer uses. However, the aforementioned electric company will still provide basic distribution services.
- Telephone services are provided by Alltel for the entire region except for parts of Parks Township serviced by Verizon.
- Cable service is provided by Comcast in Gilpin, Bethel and Parks Township.

Findings

- The school districts serving the area have adequate facilities to serve the students from the area. Parents and interested citizens should be encouraged to support the schools and the various programs and extracurricular activities.
- The existing parks and recreational facilities do not appear to be adequate to serve current and future residents. Recreational facilities and programs are needed for children, youth, and adults. Some of the existing facilities are in good condition while others need immediate improvements.
- A project playpark designed for young children may not only provide outdoor recreation but may attract young families to move to the area. Some communities have been successful in building these facilities with limited funds and community volunteer labor. This would be a project to which all residents in the area could contribute and help the region to develop a sense of collective cooperation.
- Fire protection from the volunteer fire companies is adequate to meet current needs. However, throughout the Commonwealth, securing an adequate number of trained volunteers and providing monies for training, purchasing of new equipment and insurance coverage is of major concern. The municipalities should continue to support these organizations and encourage the citizens to do likewise.
- While the communities of the region all have some local police services, since it is expected that both the demand and cost for these services will increase in the future, the municipalities may wish to explore a shared service arrangement regarding the provision of police protection.
- Medical emergency services are currently adequate. Citizens of the region should support these services so that they will continue to be available to meet the needs of residents.
- Water service appears to be adequate in service areas. The communities should continue to work cooperatively together with the providers to ensure adequate future service and to encourage improvements and expansion of service as needed to support future growth.
- Sewer service will be needed to support residential, commercial, and industrial growth. The communities should work together with providers so that infrastructure is available to support future growth.
- Culture, the arts, library services, opportunities for civic and community involvement, and volunteerism are factors which impact the quality of life in an area. The communities should encourage groups and organizations which are involved in such activities.

PART II



**THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS
FOR THE
2008 SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGIONAL
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO THE
SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY
REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

INTRODUCTION TO THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This Plan marks the completion of an intensive effort over the preceding several years which was focused upon the preparation of a Comprehensive Plan for Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough. Based upon the collection and analysis of data describing development as it presently exists and forecasts of anticipated growth and development throughout the Region as it is expected to exist in the future, the Plan was conceived with one major goal in mind -- **that of insuring the future orderly growth and development of Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough, and making the South Central Armstrong County Region a better place in which to live and work.**

The fact that the Comprehensive Plan has been completed, however, should **not** be interpreted to mean that the Region's Planning Program is completed. In actuality, the completion of the Comprehensive Plan marks the beginning of the very vital phase of the Planning Program—that of Implementation. The time for implementation follows adoption of the Plan's concepts and recommendations. Following adoption, the Townships' Supervisors and Borough Council need to insure that the concepts and recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan be acted upon to help the Region to realize its goals, to capitalize upon the Regions' mutual opportunities, and to solve its common problems.

The process of comprehensive planning is a systematic and continuing process intended to aid in solving current problems and in providing for future needs. The process includes the identification and continuous refinement of Goals and Objectives; formulation of development criteria; collection and analysis of pertinent data; consideration of alternative courses of action; policy decisions upon selected courses of action; formulation, maintenance, and updating of the Comprehensive Plan on an ongoing basis; and improvements, programming, and other measures for implementing the Plan. Comprehensive Planning most commonly focuses upon: Land Use, Housing, Economy, Transportation, Community Facilities and Public Utilities, Implementation Tools, and other aspects of the physical, economic, and social development of significance to the Region.

The process of Comprehensive Planning includes: (1) assessing the needs and resources of an area; (2) forming conclusions based upon the analysis of the components of the Townships and Borough; (3) formulating goals, objectives, policies, and standards to guide the long-range physical, economic, and human resources development; (4) preparing plans and programs which (a) identify alternate courses of action in the spatial and functional relationships between the activities to be carried out thereunder; (b) specify the appropriate ordering in time of such activities; (c) take into account other related factors affecting the achievement of the desired development of the area; and (d) provide an overall framework and guide for the preparation of functional and project development plans.²

²Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247, as amended by Act 67 and 68 of 2000, and other subsequent amendments.

Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to provide long-range direction to the future growth and development of Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough by providing a general framework or blueprint to guide future development in such a manner as to achieve the Goals and Objectives. The Plan is intended not only to present solutions to existing problems, but also to identify and anticipate future problems and recommend courses of action for their solution.

Comprised of five closely integrated elements -- (1) Land Use Plan; (2) Economic Development Plan; (3) Housing Plan; (4) Transportation Plan; and (5) Community Facilities and Public Utilities Plan-- the Comprehensive Plan is most necessary to establish a general framework which will guide future orderly growth and development throughout the Region well into the 21st century. It is the aim of this Plan that it be utilized by the elected public officials throughout the South Central Armstrong County Region as a guide for evaluating and making future development decisions as to their desirability and positive contribution to the overall Townships and Borough of the future.

Scope

In providing a general framework to guide future growth and development throughout the Region, most every community component has been considered and analyzed. For the purpose of plan development, community components have been grouped into the five basic Plan Elements including: Land Use Plan (Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional); Housing Plan (Private, Publicly Assisted); Economic Development Plan (Workforce, Labor Pool, Industry Opportunities); and Community Facilities and Public Utilities Plan (Municipal Buildings, Schools, Libraries, Parks and Recreation, Police and Fire Protection, Water, Sewer, and Solid Waste).

Study Design

With the foregoing organizational structure acting as a firm base, a program was conceived for the formulation of the Regional Planning effort. The following presents a summary of the study design being employed:

Part I - Background Studies

- History,
- Physiography and Environment,
- Land Use,
- Population,
- Housing,
- Economy,
- Transportation, and
- Community Facilities and Public Utilities

Part II - Comprehensive Plan

- Public Participation
- Goals and Objectives
- Land Use Plan Element
- Housing Plan Element
- Economic Development Plan Element
- Transportation Plan Element
- Community Facilities and Public Utilities Plan Element

CHAPTER 10

THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG
COUNTY REGION PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION

THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS AND RESULTS

The Public Participation Process

Any Comprehensive Plan to guide the future development of a community is only useful if it reflects the thoughts, opinions and ideas of the residents living in the municipality. Public participation formats such as meetings and surveys are intended to gather those thoughts, opinions and ideas so that goals and objectives can be formulated. The resulting goals and objectives are intended to respond directly to the wants, needs, and visions of the community. Ideally, the formulation of goals and corresponding objectives is a cooperative undertaking by local government officials, the general public, and technical guidance from planning professionals. The South Central Armstrong County Region's Goals and Objectives, presented in the following chapter, have been formulated through a formalized process involving citizen participation in a public "visioning" forum both regionally and in the individual communities, the South Central Armstrong County Region Planning Committee, elected officials of the municipalities, and the Region's planning consultant, Richard C. Sutter & Associates, Inc (RCS&A, Inc.).

Public meetings were held May 22, 2001 in Gilpin Township, attended by seven (7) people; in Parks Township on May 10, 2001, attended by 21 citizens; in Bethel Township on May 23, 2001, attended by five (5) citizens; and in Leechburg Borough on July 17, 2001, attended by 19 people. At the public meetings a nominal group process was used to gather important information about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) the citizenry felt would best serve the Region's future growth and development. First, attendees were broken into groups. The groups proceeded to answer three questions in a brainstorming format. The questions were: 1) What are the strengths of your community and what actions should be taken to maximize and build upon the strengths? 2) What are the weaknesses of your community and what actions should be taken to reduce the consequences of the weaknesses? 3) What are the opportunities for your community and what actions can be taken to maximize and take advantage of the opportunities of the community? and 4) What are the threats to your community and what actions can be taken to minimize and address the threats to the community? One of the group members acted as a secretary writing down all answers. At this time there were no discussion of the answers. The resulting lists were discussed and voted on to select the top three answers for each question.

The results of the public participation nominal group process form the basis for the Region's Comprehensive Plan Goals and Objectives (in combination with the results of the Background Studies). The results are presented in the next two chapters. The Goals and Objectives, in turn, form the basis of the Region's Plan Elements which serve to guide the future growth and development in the Region for the next 5, 10 to 15 years.

The Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Township Supervisors and Leechburg Borough Council would like to thank all of the citizens who helped to make the South Central Armstrong County Regional Comprehensive Plan truly a "grassroots" plan for the future of the area.

Nominal Group Process Results

This synopsis is the collective information from the public meetings grouped by community. The items with an “*” were perceived as the most vital.

Gilpin Township

QUESTION 1:
What are the strengths of your community?

TABLE 40

<i>GILPIN TOWNSHIP STRENGTHS</i>
*Potential for Growth – Residential, Commercial, Industrial
*Excellent Fire Department – Churches
*Close to Metropolitan Area
All Utilities Available
Low Crime Rate
Small School District – Less Problem Children
Restaurants – Elite and Simple Dining
Park Access – Local and Crooked Creek
Kiski River – Potential for Commercial Use – Dredge
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 1A:

What actions should be taken to maximize and build upon the strengths?

TABLE 41

<i>GILPIN TOWNSHIP STRENGTH ACTIONS</i>
Water – Extensions and Replace Old Lines
Grants for Infrastructure
Update Ordinances
Supervisors
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2:
What are the weaknesses of your community?

TABLE 42

<i>GILPIN TOWNSHIP WEAKNESSES</i>
*Accessibility – No Main Highways
*No Industry Locally – Lack of
*No Communication with Co. Officials Concerning Monies Available
No Stores in Area – Lack of
Lack of Activities for Youth
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2A:
What actions should be taken to reduce the consequences of the weaknesses?

TABLE 43

<i>GILPIN TOWNSHIP WEAKNESS ACTIONS</i>
*Have Supervisors Name Committees to Research Potential for Accessibility to Highways
*Communicate with County Officials and Industry
*Unification in Township to Approach County, State and Federal Officials to Attain Monies
Kiski River Dredging to Promote Industry
Light Industry – Committees to Research through Supervisors – Identify Problems
Go After Tax Breaks
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 3:
What are the opportunities for your community?

TABLE 44

<i>GILPIN TOWNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES</i>
*Park, Pool and Ballfield for Children
*Rural Living
*Potential for Development
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 3A:

What actions can be taken to maximize and address the opportunities of your community?

TABLE 45

<i>GILPIN TOWNSHIP OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS</i>
*Once a Year/6 Months have Supervisors, Authorities together – Meeting for good of Township to Discuss Plans for Potential Projects
*Hire A Person to Research Money Available – Grants and Loans – for Projects
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4:

What are the threats to your community?

TABLE 46

<i>GILPIN TOWNSHIP THREATS</i>
*Industry Moving Away
*Lack of Citizens' Interest in Local Problems
*Tax Structure – Majority are Retired
Population is Down – Working Individuals
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4A:

What actions can be taken to minimize and address the threats to the community?

TABLE 47

<i>GILPIN TOWNSHIP THREAT ACTIONS</i>
*Change Tax Structure to Accommodate all Development – Residential, Commercial – Mainly Commercial
*Web Page for Township
*Newsletter – Churches, Local, Scouts, Park and Pool Information, Dates of Meetings, Firehall Info – Community Service for High School Kids
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

Parks Township

QUESTION 1:
What are the strengths of your community?

TABLE 48

<i>PARKS TOWNSHIP STRENGTHS</i>
*Rural Setting and Mixture of Industrial, etc.
*Good Place to Raise Family
*Low Tax Base
Small Town, Homey Atmosphere
Friendliness
Close Proximity to Urban Areas
Safety and Low Crime Rate
Good Schools
Have "Green Spaces" and the Chance to Preserve Them
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 1A:
What actions should be taken to maximize and build upon the strengths?

TABLE 49

<i>PARKS TOWNSHIP STRENGTH ACTIONS</i>
<u>Low Tax Base:</u>
Maintain Properties
Change Tax Base Structure
Responsible Fiscal Spending
Maintain Jobs
<u>Rural/Industrial Mix:</u>
Control Growth (Land Use Ordinances)
More Citizens' Involvement
Better Roads
Better State Road Access to Surrounding Areas (Improve Infrastructure)
More Citizens Involvement
<u>Good Place for Families:</u>
Keep Crime Rate Low
Maintain Schools
Develop Recreation Areas Including River Area
Better Roads
Better State Road Access to Surrounding Areas (Improve Infrastructure)

<i>PARKS TOWNSHIP STRENGTH ACTIONS</i>
More Citizens' Involvement
Other:
More Involvement From Groups and Stakeholders, Businesses, and the State Representative
Develop Personal Responsibility and Accountability?
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2:
What are the weaknesses of your community?

TABLE 50

<i>PARKS TOWNSHIP WEAKNESSES</i>
*Lack of Communication – Township Government and People
*Better Roads
*Lack of Interest in Parks Township Development
Lack of State Money – Act 537 Plan in Place
Outsiders Lack of Interest in the Caring of Properties for Parks Township
Slum Landlords
Activities for Young People
Day Care
No Zoning
Lack of Housing Ordinances Concerning Vacant Houses
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2A:
What actions should be taken to reduce the consequences of the weaknesses?

TABLE 51

<i>PARKS TOWNSHIP WEAKNESS ACTIONS</i>
Improved Newspaper Coverage
Town Meeting – 3 Locations – N.V. – Dime Building – Kepple Hill to Voice Opinions/Concerns of People of the Township
Continue to try to get Legislators to secure money for the municipality
Police – Re-establish a Crime Watch Program
Police – Enforcement of Ordinances
Police – Slum Landlords – Ordinances of Cleaning
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 3:
What are the opportunities for your community?

TABLE 52

<i>PARKS TOWNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES</i>
*Employment Opportunities – Expansion of Industrial Park/which Increases Tax Base
*Parks and Recreation – Receiving Grants for Continuous Development of Parks
*Land Resources – Rehabilitate Sites/B&W
Voting Opportunities
Tax Base - Low – Encourage Dev.
Size of Township – Easier Access to Township Officials if you really try!
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 3A:
What actions can be taken to maximize and address the opportunities of your community?

TABLE 53

<i>PARKS TOWNSHIP OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS</i>
Expansion of Industrial Park/which increases Tax Base
Receiving Grants for Continuous Development of Parks Township
Rehabilitate Sites – B&W
NOTE: The Board fully supports the efforts to remove the landfill of the B&W site. Safety is a concern - assurances from traffic issues, wrecks and dumping, leakage, contamination. It is and has been the Board's intent and track record of cooperation with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, County and any other agencies that have been necessary to communicate with in order to remediate this problem site as soon as possible. The process has been time consuming since safety is the highest concern. The Township has been in constant contact with many of these agencies for 11 years. It is the Township's understanding that Gilpin, Bethel and Leechburg fully support this issue. We need to improve the coordination of efforts. These aforementioned municipalities should resolve to support and assist Parks Township to have the contamination removed.
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4:
What are the threats to your community?

TABLE 54

<i>PARKS TOWNSHIP THREATS</i>
*Apathy
*Uncontrolled Growth
*No Unity
Young People Leaving
Crime and Drugs
Too Easy for Transients to “trash” areas
Appearance of Some Properties
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4A:
What actions can be taken to minimize and address the threats to the community?

TABLE 55

<i>PARKS TOWNSHIP THREAT ACTIONS</i>
Land Use Planning
Zoning and Building Codes
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

Bethel Township
QUESTION 1:
What are the strengths of your community?

TABLE 56

<i>BETHEL TOWNSHIP STRENGTHS</i>
*Undeveloped Land
*Recreation – Crooked Creek Park and River
*Small Community Atmosphere
Rural Area
Peaceful
Low Crime Rate
Location
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 1A:

What actions should be taken to maximize and build upon the strengths?

TABLE 57

<i>BETHEL TOWNSHIP STRENGTH ACTIONS</i>
Bike and Walking Trail
Get Younger People Involved
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2:

What are the weaknesses of your community?

TABLE 58

<i>BETHEL TOWNSHIP WEAKNESSES</i>
*Need for Water
*Sustaining Volunteer Fire Department
*Community Involvement
Road Improvements
More Police Protection
School Taxes
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2A:

What actions should be taken to reduce the consequences of the weaknesses?

TABLE 59

<i>BETHEL TOWNSHIP WEAKNESS ACTIONS</i>
Work with Neighboring Communities to Extend Their Water Lines to the Township
Township Newsletter - Continue
Variety Store
Gas Station
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 3:
What are the opportunities for your community?

TABLE 60

<i>BETHEL TOWNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES</i>	
*Neighborhood Businesses	
*Land Use Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Zoning ■ Sub-division Ordinance
*Growing Greener – Ag. Security	
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process	

QUESTION 3A:
What actions can be taken to maximize and address the opportunities of your community?

TABLE 61

<i>BETHEL TOWNSHIP OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS</i>
Invite Growing Greener Ag. Extension to explain benefits of the program
Co. Planning Office for explanation of the usefulness of Zoning and Land Development and Sub-division Ordinance
Co. Department of Economic Development
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4:
What are the threats to your community?

TABLE 62

<i>BETHEL TOWNSHIP THREATS</i>
Without Zoning we have No Control on Township Growth
Losing the Youth
Sale of Farms to be Subdivided
Threat of Sprawl
Cell Towers
Landfills
Aging Population
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4A:

What actions can be taken to minimize and address the threats to the community?

TABLE 63

<i>BETHEL TOWNSHIP THREAT ACTIONS</i>
Land-Use Control for Small, Controlled Growth
Zoning for Community Protection
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

Leechburg Borough

QUESTION 1:

What are the strengths of your community?

TABLE 64

<i>LEECHBURG BOROUGH STRENGTHS</i>
*Municipal Services
*Static Tax Rate
*River and Recreation
Stable Resident Population
Youthful Community
Good Housing Stock
Viable Business Community
Solid School System
Full Time Police Protection
Reliable Fire Department/Protection
Active EMT Force/Medical Access
Excellent Recycling Program
Diverse Religious Base
Rt. 66
Mine Stabilization
Proximity – Metro Areas
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 1A:

What actions should be taken to maximize and build upon the strengths?

TABLE 65

<i>LEECHBURG BOROUGH STRENGTH ACTIONS</i>
Better Communication
Council – Plan. Commission - School Board LACA –
Cooperation Between Municipal Entities
Common Community Agenda
Develop and Implement a Marketing Plan for the Borough
Assemble Master Plan for Riverfront Development
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2:

What are the weaknesses of your community?

TABLE 66

<i>LEECHBURG BOROUGH WEAKNESSES</i>
*No Marketing for People Attraction
*Lack of Cooperation/Communication between Civic Groups and Governmental Agencies
*Age and Condition of Infrastructure
Limited Access to Major Highways
Lack of Room for Expansion
NIMBY (not in my back yard)
Jobs
Lack of Industry
Not Enough Activities for Preschool Age Children
Not Enough Activities for Teens
Public Transportation
Lack of Real Estate Agency
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2A:*What actions should be taken to reduce the consequences of the weaknesses?***TABLE 67**

<i>LEECHBURG BOROUGH WEAKNESS ACTIONS</i>
Increase Interest/Communication (Bulletin)
Increase Younger-Age Population Groups
Develop Web Page Involving the School Students
Develop Community Newsletter (Quarterly)
Near to many Universities and Colleges (Pittsburgh Area)
Develop Community Improvement Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ housing■ infrastructure■ main street■ historic district■ recreation*river *riverside park(s)■ improve community portals
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 3:*What are the opportunities for your community?***TABLE 68**

<i>LEECHBURG BOROUGH OPPORTUNITIES</i>
*Affordable Housing/Senior Housing
*Safe Environment
*Sense of Community "Small Town"
Full-time Community Services
Riverside Community
Good Schools/Small Class Size
Primary Care Center
Sustainable Business District
Numerous Social/Civic Organizations
Near two Universities/Colleges
Community Park
Diverse Ethnic Backgrounds
Kiski Junction Scenic Railroad
Hyde Park - Leechburg Walking Bridge
Museum
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 3A:

What actions can be taken to maximize and address the opportunities of your community?

TABLE 69

<i>LEECHBURG BOROUGH OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS</i>
Marketing Plan/PR Group
Community Bulletin Board and Web Page
Increased Community Awareness
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4:

What are the threats to your community?

TABLE 70

<i>LEECHBURG BOROUGH THREATS</i>
*Complacency (Forget: "If it ain't broke don't fix it!")
*Loss of Youth
*Lack of Development
Insufficient Volunteers
Loss of Industry
Housing Rehab.
Lack of Community Unity
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4A:

What actions can be taken to minimize and address the threats to the community?

TABLE 71

<i>LEECHBURG BOROUGH THREAT ACTIONS</i>
Proactive Leadership!
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

Summary**R**egional Commonalities**QUESTION 1:**
*What are the strengths of your community?***TABLE 72**

<i>REGIONAL STRENGTHS</i>
Potential for Growth (townships)
Rural Setting (townships)
Small Town Atmospheres
Low Crime Rates
School System
Recreation/Open Space
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 1A:
*What actions should be taken to maximize and build upon the strengths?***TABLE 73**

<i>REGIONAL STRENGTH ACTIONS</i>
Keep Crime Rates low
Improve Cooperation between Municipal Entities
Get Youth Involved
Improve Infrastructure (water and sewer)
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2:
*What are the weaknesses of your community?***TABLE 74**

<i>REGIONAL WEAKNESSES</i>
Cooperation between Municipal Entities/Civic Groups/Citizens
Accessibility/Road Conditions
Lack of Industry
Declining Youth Base
Infrastructure Conditions/Lack of Infrastructure
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 2A:

What actions should be taken to reduce the consequences of the weaknesses?

TABLE 75

<i>REGIONAL WEAKNESS ACTIONS</i>
Improve Dissemination of Information between Government/Civic Groups and Citizens
Attack Grant Opportunities
Attract Business and Industry
Improve Activities for Youth
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 3:

What are the opportunities for your community?

TABLE 76

<i>REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES</i>
Safe Environment
Rural/Small Town Atmosphere
Potential for Development (Townships)
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 3A:

What actions can be taken to maximize and address the opportunities of your community?

TABLE 77

<i>REGIONAL OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS</i>
Expand Industrial Opportunities
Community Web Pages/Community Promotion
Hire a Regional Grant Writer
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4:
What are the threats to your community?

TABLE 78

<i>REGIONAL THREATS</i>
Losing Youth
Uncontrolled Growth (Townships)
Lack of Growth
Further Loss of Industry
Lack of Citizen Involvement
Loss of Population
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

QUESTION 4A:
What actions can be taken to minimize and address the threats to the community?

TABLE 79

<i>REGIONAL THREAT ACTIONS</i>
Land Use Controls (Parks and Bethel)
Proactive Leadership
Community Web Pages/Newsletter/Other Improvements to Information Dissemination
Community Promotion
Source: 2001 RCS&A, Inc. Nominal Group Process

CHAPTER 11

THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG
COUNTY REGIONAL
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The goals and objectives have been formulated through a formalized process involving citizen participation; elected officials of Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough; the general citizenry; and the Region's planning consultant, RCS&A, Inc.

As a prerequisite to the work performed upon the Goals and Objectives formulation process, a set of definitions has been utilized throughout the process of Goals and Objectives Statement preparation. These definitions follow:

GOALS: "Goals are defined as a general value statement of long-range direction or ideal, unconstrained by time, which identify desired states of affairs toward which activities and resources can be directed. Goals reflect the community's needs and values and give meaning, purpose, and direction to the day-to-day planning and development decisions being made by the municipalities of the study area and other local decision-makers." Progress toward the achievement of Goals can be accomplished through the application of policies and the attainment of short-range objectives and the accomplishment of corresponding projects and programs.

OBJECTIVES: "Objectives are defined as measurable or quantifiable statements. They are specific in nature and are intended to serve the related goals." The attainment of groupings of objectives will ultimately result in positive progress toward the achievement of a given goal.

Purpose

The principal purpose of a statement of Goals and Objectives is to provide a means of direction and guidance to the planning and development activities throughout Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough.

Process

The process of formulating "Goals and Objectives" involves: the inventory and analysis of needs, issues, resources, problems, and opportunities of the study area and its member municipalities; the formulation of long-range goals based upon this inventory and analysis; the formulation of short-range objectives usually one year and three years; and the identification of projects needed to attain these stated objectives. Additionally, through the planning process, a prioritizing of projects is performed. As time passes, a periodic (usually annual) Measure of Attainment is performed. The Measure of Attainment provides an indication of the manner in which the study area and its constituent municipalities are moving toward the achievement of their stated goals and toward the attainment of their objectives and projects. The statement of goals and objectives and the measure of attainment are community executive management tools to improve the allocation of resources (natural, financial, manpower, and time) toward meeting the most critical needs of the County and its constituent municipalities as determined from the evolving recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan components being advanced by the three Boards of Township Supervisors and Leechburg Borough Council.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Included in the Goals and Objectives listed below are the Plan Elements of Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, Community Facilities and Public Utilities and Environment. It is the pleasure of the South Central Armstrong County Region Planning Committee to present the “Goals and Objectives” for South Central Armstrong County Region’s social, physical and economic development for the new millennium and through the next 15 years.

REGIONAL MISSION STATEMENT: To foster the climate for a high quality of life for Borough and Townships’ residents by allowing for moderate, controlled commercial, industrial and residential growth, while maintaining the rural character; providing decent, affordable housing; providing recreational opportunities for families; improving or expanding infrastructure and services; improving municipal cooperation between regional governments and their citizens and civic groups; and providing an efficient, safe, diverse, economical and environmentally sensitive transportation system, preserving bio-diversity, clean water and air.

Regional Goals and Objectives

LAND USE

Goal: To balance the physical, social and economic changes of the area between moderate economic growth, preservation of agriculturally active lands, maintenance of the existing rural character and density, and expanding recreational opportunities.

Objective: To preserve the existing rural character of the area and to preserve land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Objective: To moderately expand commercial activity in the townships, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the rural character of the areas.

Objective: To allow and provide for industrial development in the Region, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the rural character of the areas.

Objective: To allow for expanded recreational developments that serve the local residents.

Objective: To plan for future growth by updating the Regional Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Objective: To preserve and protect economically active farmland.

Objective: To guide development through logical infrastructure development, land use controls, and other applicable policy.

HOUSING

Goal: To insure that every resident has a clean, safe and affordable residence.

General

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Objective: To manage housing development through logical utility extensions, policy or ordinances.

Objective: To assist the many rural residents who find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To foster a strong economic environment within the Region to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, encouraging tourism related commerce, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.

Objective: To promote development of commercial, office and manufacturing activities which will encourage economic growth.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through training, awareness and development of diversified local employment opportunities.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure by removing impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

TRANSPORTATION

Goal: To create an efficient, safe, environmentally sensitive and economical transportation system for all residents of the Region.

Objective: To minimize the environmental impacts of transportation improvements.

Objective: To improve the “gateways” to the communities.

Objective: To improve street and roadway signage in the Region.

Objective: To address line-of-site and bridge repair issues in the local transportation network.

Objective: To continue to maintain and improve the local roadway network.

Objective: To form a regional transportation committee charged with identifying and prioritizing transportation projects for submission to the Metro Planning Organizations for inclusion in PennDOT’s 12-year plan.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

Goal: To increase the standard of living, attractiveness and desirability of the Region through the adequate provision of a wide range of community facilities which are easily accessible to all.

Objective: To insure that an adequate water supply is available to all concentrations of development.

Objective: To improve and expand recreational opportunities within the Region.

Objective: To improve the condition of current sewer and water infrastructure.

Objective: To coordinate sewer and water infrastructure development.

Objective: To maintain the current levels of emergency care that are considered acceptable.

Objective: To explore the possibility of a shared services regional police force.

Objective: To maintain or reduce the current crime rate.

Objective: To create municipal Websites to increase information dissemination.

Objective: To create more activities for youths.

REGIONAL SUPPLEMENTAL SECTION: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The goal of the intergovernmental cooperation section is “...to *improve the coordination and cooperation of local government initiatives within the Region.*” The objectives designed to fulfill this goal are listed below augmented with the supporting policies.

Objective: To encourage the utilization of the Comprehensive Plan to guide decision making by the Supervisors, Councils, Planning Committee, and other local Boards and Authorities to assure that the objectives of this document are accomplished.

Policies:

- Update the plan every 5 years and redistribute the updates.
- Establish a Regional Planning Commission whose task it is to annually review the Comprehensive Plan so that the policies developed in 2008 are still relevant and applicable in 2, 5 and 10 years.

Objective: To establish a system promoting the regional cooperation of the local municipal governments.

Policies:

- Organize a semi-annual meeting of elected local officials discussing the progress on the Goals and Objectives of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

MUNICIPAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Included in the Goals and Objectives listed below are the Plan Elements of Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, and Community Facilities and Public Utilities for the individual municipalities in the SCAC planning area. It is the pleasure of the elected officials from each municipality in the region to present the “Goals and Objectives” for Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough involving the social, physical and economic development for the new millennium and through the next 15 years.

Gilpin Township Ch. 12 LAND USE

Goal: To balance the physical, social and economic changes of the area between moderate economic growth, preservation of agriculturally active lands, maintenance of the existing rural character and density, and expansion of recreational opportunities.

Objective: To preserve the existing rural character and natural features of the area conserving land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Objective: To moderately expand commercial activity in the area, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the rural character of the area.

Objective: To allow and provide for industrial development in the municipality, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the rural character of the areas.

Objective: To allow for expanded recreational developments that serve the local residents.

Objective: To plan for future growth by updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Objective: To preserve and protect economically active farmland.

Objective: To guide development through logical infrastructure development, land use controls and other applicable policy.

Ch. 13 HOUSING

Goal: To insure that every resident has a clean, safe and affordable residence.

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Objective: To encourage the development of moderately priced rental opportunities for young families.

Objective: To manage housing development through logical utility extensions, policy or ordinances.

Objective: To assist the many rural residents who find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Ch. 14 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To foster a strong economic environment within the municipality to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, encouraging tourism related commerce, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.

Objective: To promote development of commercial, office and manufacturing activities, which will provide for growth of the local economy.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through training, awareness and development of diversified local employment opportunities.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure by removing impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

Ch. 15 TRANSPORTATION

Goal: To create an efficient, safe, environmentally sensitive and economical transportation system for all residents of the municipality.

Objective: To minimize the environmental impacts of transportation improvements.

Objective: To improve the “gateways” to the community.

Objective: To promote the development of recreational trails.

Objective: To improve street and roadway signage in the municipality.

Objective: To address line-of-site and bridge repair issues in the local transportation network.

Objective: To continue to maintain and improve the local roadway network.

Objective: To form a regional transportation committee charged with identifying and prioritizing transportation projects for submission to the Metro Planning Organizations for inclusion in PennDOT’s 12-year plan.

Ch. 16 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

Goal: To increase the standard of living, attractiveness and desirability of the municipality through the adequate provision of a wide range of community facilities which are easily accessible to all.

Objective: To insure an adequate water supply that is available to all concentrations of development.

Objective: To improve the condition of current sewer and water infrastructure.

Objective: To coordinate sewer and water infrastructure development with neighboring municipalities' existing and future growth patterns.

Objective: To improve, maintain and/or expand recreational opportunities within the municipality.

Objective: To maintain the current levels of emergency care that are considered acceptable.

Objective: To explore the possibility of a shared services regional police force.

Objective: To maintain or reduce the current crime rate.

Objective: To create a municipal Website to increase information dissemination.

Objective: To create more activities for youths.

Parks Township

Ch. 12 LAND USE

Goal: To balance the physical, social and economic changes of the area between moderate economic growth, preservation of agriculturally active lands, maintenance of the existing urban and rural mix and densities, and expand recreational opportunities.

Objective: To encourage “in-fill” development within existing densely developed “urbanized” areas to take advantage of existing infrastructure and concentration of services.

Objective: To preserve the existing natural landscapes and active agricultural areas to conserve the land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Objective: To allow for the moderate expansion of commercial activity in the area, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the natural scenic physical features and character of the rural areas.

Objective: To allow and provide for industrial development in the municipality, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the natural scenic physical features and character of the rural areas.

Objective: To allow for expanded recreational developments that serve the local residents.

Objective: To plan for future growth by updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Objective: To preserve and protect economically active farmland.

Objective: To guide development through logical infrastructure development, land use controls and other applicable policy.

Ch. 13 HOUSING

Goal: To insure that every resident has a clean, safe and affordable residence.

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Objective: To allow for and encourage the development of moderately priced rental housing.

Objective: To manage housing development through logical utility extensions, policy or ordinances.

Objective: To assist the many rural residents who find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Objective: To limit rural housing sprawl through land use ordinances, while encouraging new housing development in the more urbanized areas.

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Objective: To rid the Township of abandoned buildings.

Ch. 14 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To foster a strong economic environment within the municipality to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, encouraging tourism related commerce, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.

Objective: To promote development of commercial, office and manufacturing activities, which will provide for growth of the local economy.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through training, awareness and development of diversified local employment opportunities.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure by removing impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

Ch. 15 TRANSPORTATION

Goal: To create an efficient, safe, environmentally sensitive and economical transportation system for all residents of the municipality.

Objective: To minimize the environmental impacts of transportation improvements.

Objective: To improve the “gateways” to the community.

Objective: To improve street and roadway signage in the municipality.

Objective: To address line-of-site and bridge repair issues in the local transportation network.

Objective: To continue to maintain and improve the local roadway network.

Objective: To form a regional transportation committee charged with identifying and prioritizing transportation projects for submission to the Metro Planning Organizations for inclusion in PennDOT's 12-year plan.

Ch. 16 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

Goal: To increase the standard of living, attractiveness and desirability of the municipality through the adequate provision of a wide range of community facilities which are easily accessible to all.

Objective: To insure that an adequate water supply is available to all concentrations of development.

Objective: To update the older sewer and water infrastructure.

Objective: To expand the number of residents with sewer and water services.

Objective: To coordinate sewer and water infrastructure development with neighboring municipalities' existing and future growth patterns.

Objective: To improve and expand recreational opportunities within the municipality.

Objective: To identify areas for trail development, especially along the riverfront south to North Apollo and north to Leechburg, eventually linking to camping areas in Gilpin Township.

Objective: To maintain the current levels of emergency care that are considered acceptable.

Objective: To explore the possibility of a shared services regional police force.

Objective: To maintain or reduce the current crime rate.

Objective: To create a municipal Website to increase information dissemination.

Objective: To create more activities for youths.

Bethel Township **Ch. 12 LAND USE**

Goal: To balance the physical, social and economic changes of the area between moderate economic growth, preservation of agriculturally active lands, maintenance of the existing rural character and density, and expanding recreational opportunities.

Objective: To preserve the existing natural scenic vistas, the rural character of the area and the land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Objective: To moderately expand commercial activity in the area, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the natural scenic vistas of the area.

Objective: To allow and provide for industrial development in the municipality, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the rural character of the areas.

Objective: To allow for recreational developments that serve the local residents.

Objective: To plan for future growth by updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Objective: To preserve and protect economically active farmland.

Objective: To guide development through logical infrastructure development.

Ch. 13 HOUSING

Goal: To insure that every resident has a clean, safe and affordable residence.

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Objective: To allow for and encourage the development of moderately priced rental housing.

Objective: To assist residents who find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Ch. 14 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To foster a strong economic environment within the municipality to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, encouraging tourism related commerce, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.

Objective: To promote development of commercial, office and manufacturing activities, which will provide for growth of the local economy.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through training, awareness and development of diversified local employment opportunities.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure by removing impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

Objective: To expand the uses for the riverfront areas along the Allegheny River and Crooked Creek.

Ch. 15 TRANSPORTATION

Goal: To create an efficient, safe, environmentally sensitive and economical transportation system for all residents of the municipality.

Objective: To minimize the environmental impacts of transportation improvements.

Objective: To improve the “gateways” to the community.

Objective: To improve street and roadway signage in the municipality.

Objective: To address line-of-site and bridge repair issues in the local transportation network.

Objective: To continue to maintain and improve the local roadway network.

Objective: To form a regional transportation committee charged with identifying and prioritizing transportation projects for submission to the Metro Planning Organizations for inclusion in PennDOT's 12-year plan.

Ch. 16 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

Goal: To increase the standard of living, attractiveness and desirability of the municipality through the adequate provision of a wide range of community facilities which are easily accessible to all.

Objective: To insure an adequate water supply is available to all concentrations of development.

Objective: To improve and expand recreational opportunities within the municipality.

Objective: To develop public water service infrastructure to dense developments and major transportation routes.

Objective: To develop public sanitary sewer service infrastructure to areas that could support housing developments and/or industrial parks.

Objective: To coordinate any future sewer and/or water infrastructure development with neighboring municipalities' existing and future growth patterns, particularly Parks Township.

Objective: To maintain the current levels of emergency care that are considered acceptable.

Objective: To explore the possibility of a shared services regional police force.

Objective: To maintain or reduce the current crime rate.

Objective: To create more activities for youths.

Leechburg Borough **Ch. 12 LAND USE**

Goal: To balance the physical, social and economic changes of the area between moderate economic growth, preservation of existing commercial storefronts, preserving historic character of downtown buildings and expanding recreational opportunities.

Objective: To preserve the existing character and density of the area and to conserve land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Objective: To encourage "in-fill" development for commercial and residential development.

Objective: To allow for expanded recreational developments that serve the local residents.

Objective: To plan for future growth by updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Objective: To guide development through logical infrastructure updating, land use controls and other applicable land use policies including periodic review and update of Zoning Ordinance.

Ch. 13 HOUSING

Goal: To insure that every resident has a clean, safe and affordable residence and preserve historic homes.

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Objective: To assist the residents who find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Objective: To discourage the conversion of large, older homes from single-family to multi-family rental properties.

Objective: To preserve the historic character of the borough through preservation activities.

Ch. 14 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To foster a strong economic environment within the municipality to keep current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new commercial activities, promote tourism related commerce, and support entrepreneurial efforts.

Objective: To promote current business and encourage new development of commercial and professional offices and business service activities, which will provide for growth of the local economy.

Objective: To improve the ambiance and functionality of the downtown business district.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through training, awareness and development of diversified local employment opportunities.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Objective: To encourage tourism through the promotion of cultural and recreational facilities, the history of the Borough and related historic sites.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure by removing impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

Ch. 15 TRANSPORTATION

Goal: To create an efficient, safe, environmentally sensitive and economical transportation system for all residents of the municipality.

Objective: To minimize the environmental impacts of transportation improvements.

Objective: To improve the “gateways” to the communities.

Objective: To improve street and roadway signage in the municipality.

Objective: To continue to maintain and improve the local roadway network.

Objective: To increase the recreation opportunities along the riverfront, including trail development within the Borough and coordinated with neighboring municipalities.

Objective: To form a regional transportation committee charged with identifying and prioritizing transportation projects for submission to the Metro Planning Organizations for inclusion in PennDOT’s 12-year plan.

Ch. 16 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

Goal: To increase the standard of living, attractiveness and desirability of the municipality through the adequate provision of a wide range of community facilities which are easily accessible to all.

Objective: To separate combined storm and sanitary sewer lines.

Objective: To expand sanitary sewer to the five houses not served.

Objective: To improve the condition of older sewer and water infrastructure.

Objective: To coordinate sewer and water infrastructure development with neighboring municipalities’ existing and future growth patterns.

Objective: To improve and expand recreational opportunities within the municipality.

Objective: To maintain the current levels of emergency care that are considered acceptable.

Objective: To explore the possibility of a shared services regional police force.

Objective: To maintain or reduce the current crime rate.

Objective: To create a municipal Website to increase information dissemination.

Objective: To create more activities for youths.

Objective: To improve the local cultural facilities.

SUMMARY

The results of the goals and objectives are further discussed in the ensuing chapters in this report. In order for goals to be obtainable, objectives must be implemented by elected officials of the governing body through the formulation of policy (political courses of action), which support and forward the objectives of the Region. The definition of policies is as follows:

POLICIES: “Policies are defined as definite courses or methods of action uniquely tailored to aid in the formulation and guiding of the community planning and development decision-making process.” For the effective advancement toward the attainment of goals and objectives and their corresponding projects and programs, specifically designed policies must be formulated. To be most effective, policies must be formulated in light of existing and anticipated conditions and must be applied uniformly and consistently over time. It is through the implementation of policies (the means) that it is intended to achieve the goals and objectives (the ends).

CHAPTER 12

THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG
COUNTY REGION

THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

Introduction

For the municipalities of the SCAC Region to realize their optimum growth potential; derive the maximum benefit from its resources, capabilities, and opportunities; experience economic growth and development; and meet the many needs of its present and future residents, it is necessary that land throughout the Region be designated for its most suitable and appropriate public and private uses. This allocation of land can be best accomplished through the land use planning process within the overall context of the South Central Armstrong County Region's Future Land Use Plan.

Land use planning is comprised of the identification of the location, amount, character, intensity, and timing of the various uses of the land. It proposes a pattern of development which will: insure the harmonious interaction of the various land uses; maintain a balance among the various land uses; minimize the mixing of incompatible uses; and achieve a harmony between development and the natural environment. The impact of the Future Land Use Plan is readily visible and apparent and is a prime determinant of the nature and character of the future community. Additional importance is attached to the Future Land Use Plan by the fact that it will connect and interrelate the Transportation, Housing Plan, and the Community Facilities and Public Utilities elements presented in successive chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

Although comprehensive community planning focuses upon the future, it must be grounded by the conditions of the past and the present. Existing development has been fashioned by the interplay of political, economic, social, and physical forces, some of which if left unchanged will propel development in directions which are not in the best interest of the Region. Earlier generations laid the foundation for existing development. Similarly, this generation is making decisions that will determine the future character of South Central Armstrong County Region for the generations to come.

The Future Land Use plan identifies several important factors that guide development patterns in the Region. One of the major determinants of land development in the Region's municipalities, especially the townships, is the limitation placed on construction because of unique physical features such as steep slopes, wetlands, hydric soils, waterways and existing development. These limiting features are identified in the first section - Development Opportunities and Constraints.

Development Opportunities and Constraints

Many factors contributed to the existing land use pattern throughout the Region; among the most significant are: topography, slope (in particular); natural cover; suitability of soil for agricultural or building purposes; the course of rivers and waterways, flood plains, former trails and existing roadways; existing development; and early settlement patterns. All of the above factors are also important to future land development. Those factors which should be considered to a greater degree in future development include:

- land use interrelationships;
- existing development;
- infrastructure such as sewer and water;
- underlying geologic structure;
- depth to Bedrock;
- soil characteristics -- suitability for development;
- slope;
- seasonal depth of water table;
- subsurface drainage;
- flood plain areas;
- wetlands and marshlands;
- large water bodies;
- environmental factors; e.g., smoke, odors, objectionable noise, fire hazards, heavily traveled thoroughfares, surface water pollution, etc.
- the availability and proximity of employment, basic community facilities, shopping areas, basic public utilities, mass transportation, and major highways; and
- natural amenities.

In developing the Development Opportunities and Constraints Map, many of the above factors were mapped to create a graphic depiction of the places where future development should or will take place. Specifically, constraints in the South Central Armstrong County Region include the 100-year flood plains, wetlands, water courses, steep slope of 25% or greater, existing development, and large water bodies. Opportunities were left as white areas and referred to as undeveloped lands. These undeveloped lands may or may not be suitable for low, moderate or intense types of developments. Refer to **Map 25** for a graphic indication of the *development constraints and opportunities* throughout the Region.

The next step in the Future Land Use process is to determine where development may take place in the next 2, 5 and 10 years. These “future growth areas” are the subject of **Map 26** located on Page 183. It is at this stage that severe limited soils and geologic structures are considered. However, the driving force behind the determined development patterns are the Land Use Goals and Objectives, the subject of the next section in the Future Land Use Plan Element.

The logical extension of the growth areas is to determine the type of development that may occur and/or is desired to occur in the growth areas, as well as determining the most desirable land use patterns for any occurrences of redevelopment of existing patterns. This process creates a Future Land Use Map (**Maps 27 through 30**) located on Pages 184-187. The final step in the Future Land Use Plan Element is to use the Future Land Use Maps as a basis for zoning recommendations. In this plan that would include possible zoning changes to the existing Zoning Ordinances in Leechburg Borough and Gilpin Township, or a basis for creating zoning maps in Parks and Bethel Townships.

Map 25 - Development Opportunities and Constraints 11x17

LAND USE OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

In this section each of the municipalities will be discussed separately. Although many of the goals and objectives are similar between municipalities, their unique characters dictate that many long term needs be addresses individually. As has been the order throughout this plan, Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough will be addressed in that order.

Gilpin Township Ch. 12 LAND USE

The overall Land Use Planning Goal for Gilpin Township is “. . . *to balance the physical, social and economic changes of the area between moderate economic growth, preservation of agriculturally active lands, maintenance of the existing rural character and density, and expand recreational opportunities.*” More important than maintaining the status quo, the municipality must look ahead and anticipate future land use needs. In view of the large amount of undeveloped land throughout the area, the Township is now in an excellent position to lay the groundwork for guiding the development of the areas land resources within the framework of Comprehensive Plan. The Land Use Goals and Objectives are based upon the following premises:

- Development, while basically desirable and often inevitable, must be guided so as to attain the Land Use Goals and Objectives of the municipality.
- Through the exploration of developing a continuing program of comprehensive land use planning and the adoption of adequate development controls and ordinances, and based upon the Comprehensive Plan, conflicts between the various land uses can be minimized.
- The attainment of the future orderly growth and development of the municipality is possible, but only through a united effort of both public and private interests. Private development through cooperation with the units of local government should be shaped by cooperative development decisions.
- Through a planned approach to community development, the municipality is capable of accommodating anticipated development without destroying its outstanding natural and visual resources and characteristics.

Objective: To preserve the existing rural character and natural features of the area conserving land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Policies:

- Through the zoning ordinance protect natural vistas, wetlands, steep slopes, waterways and wooded areas.
- Cooperate with and help to enforce Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Department of Environmental Protection policies that promote protection of the aforementioned natural features.

Objective: To moderately expand commercial activity in the area, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the rural character of the area.

Policies:

- Encourage development that reuses vacant properties located between current development (in-fill).
- Insure commercial developments have available infrastructure including: adequate water supply, sanitary sewer system, storm water drainage facilities, energy supply and modern telecommunications.

-
-
- Insure adequate parking in commercial developments.
 - Provide well-located points of ingress and egress in commercial developments, which are controlled to prevent traffic congestion on adjacent arterial streets or roads.
 - Promote the incorporation of marginal access roads and service roads in future subdivisions and land developments.
 - Provide adequate natural screening to serve as a buffer between commercial uses and adjacent noncommercial uses.

Objective: To allow and provide for industrial development in the municipality, while minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the rural character of the areas.

Policies:

- Insure any potential industrial development areas have available infrastructure including: an adequate water supply, sanitary sewer system, storm water drainage facilities, energy supply and modern telecommunications.
- Insure adequate parking in industrial developments.
- Provide well-located points of ingress and egress in commercial developments, which are controlled to prevent traffic congestion on adjacent arterial streets or roads.
- Promote the incorporation of marginal access roads and service roads in future industrial land developments.
- Provide adequate natural screening to serve as a buffer between industrial uses and adjacent residential uses.

Objective: To allow for expanded recreational developments that serve the local residents.

Policies:

- Continue to explore new areas that would be attractive places for recreational development and update the zoning ordinance through the use of the RC District.
- Within the zoning ordinance allow for the development of riverfront recreational activities.
- Create a five year recreation development plan and apply to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Keystone Grant program annually.
- Begin capital budget allowances for recreational development; i.e., matching funds for grants.

Objective: To plan for future growth by updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Planning Commission whose task it is to conduct an annual review of the Comprehensive Plan so that the policies developed in 2008 will still be relevant and applicable.
- Update the plan every 5 years and redistribute the updates.
- Make the plan and update available over a municipal Website to local residents.

Objective: To use existing agricultural land more effectively.

Policies:

- Encourage the formulation and use of conservation plans and soil surveys as a basis for determining the best use and management of agricultural lands.
- Encourage the use of the Clean and Green Program.

Objective: To preserve and protect economically active farmland.

Policies:

- Identify and inventory all Class I through IV lands that have been improved (i.e., drained or tilled) for agricultural use.
- Encourage cluster developments that require less acreage than traditional subdivisions. Through clustering development it allows large blocks/tracts (100 to 200 acres) of agricultural land to remain active and it reduces the number of parcels being carved out of the farmland for other land uses.
- Limit sprawling developments through the encouragement of mixed-use development such as Planned Unit Developments (PUD's).

Objective: To guide development through logical infrastructure development, land use controls and other applicable policy.

Policies:

- Semi-annually review and update the zoning ordinance to meet changing growth patterns and infrastructure extensions.
- Pace infrastructure development extensions along Route 66 north to Bethel Township and south to Leechburg so that sprawl is not encouraged and in-fill development is encouraged.

Parks Township

Ch. 12 LAND USE

The overall Land Use Planning Goal for Parks Township is “. . . *to balance the physical, social and economic changes of the area between moderate economic growth, preservation of agriculturally active lands, maintenance of the existing urban and rural mix and densities, and expanding recreational opportunities.*” More important than maintaining the status quo, the municipality must look ahead and anticipate future land use needs. In view of the large amount of undeveloped land throughout the area, the Township is now in an excellent position to lay the groundwork for guiding the development of the area's land resources within the framework of the Comprehensive Plan. The Land Use Goals and Objectives are based upon the following premises:

- Development, while basically desirable and often inevitable, must be guided so as to attain the Land Use Goals and Objectives of the municipality.
- Through the exploration of developing a continuing program of comprehensive land use planning and the adoption of adequate development controls and ordinances, and based upon the Comprehensive Plan, conflicts between the various land uses can be minimized.
- The attainment of the future orderly growth and development of the municipality is possible, but only through a united effort of both public and private interests. Private development through cooperation with the units of local government should be shaped by cooperative development decisions.
- Through a planned approach to community development, the municipality is capable of accommodating anticipated development without destroying its outstanding natural and visual resources and characteristics.

Objective: To encourage “in-fill” development within existing densely developed “urbanized” areas to take advantage of existing infrastructure and concentration of services.

Policies:

- Write and adopt a land use management ordinance with the above goals in mind.
- Pace infrastructure development extensions along Alt. Route 66 north so that sprawl is not encouraged and in-fill development is encouraged.

Objective: To preserve the existing natural landscapes and active agricultural areas to conserve the land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Policies:

- Through a land use management ordinance protect natural vistas, wetlands, steep slopes, waterways and wooded areas.
- Cooperate with and help to enforce Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Department of Environmental Protection policies that promote protection of the aforementioned natural features.

Objective: To allow for the moderate expansion of commercial activity in the area, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the natural scenic physical features and character of the rural areas.

Policies:

- Discourage commercial development that is one lot deep along Alt. Route 66, which isolates land behind the development, creates additional traffic problems and encourages sprawl.
- Encourage development that reuses vacant properties located between current development (in-fill), especially in Riverview, Pleasant View and along Route 66 north to Leechburg.
- Insure commercial developments have available adequate infrastructure including water supply, sanitary sewer system, storm water drainage facilities, energy supply and modern telecommunications.
- Insure adequate parking in commercial developments.
- Provide well-located points of ingress and egress in commercial developments, which are controlled to prevent traffic congestion on adjacent arterial streets or roads.
- Promote the incorporation of marginal access roads and service roads in future subdivisions and land developments.
- Provide adequate natural screening to serve as a buffer between commercial uses and adjacent noncommercial uses.

Objective: To allow and provide for industrial development in the municipality, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the natural scenic physical features and character of the rural areas.

Policies:

- Insure any potential industrial development areas have available adequate infrastructure including water supply, sanitary sewer system, storm water drainage facilities, energy supply and modern telecommunications.
- Insure adequate parking in industrial developments.
- Provide well-located points of ingress and egress in commercial developments, which are controlled to prevent traffic congestion on adjacent arterial streets or road.
- Promote the incorporation of marginal access roads and service roads in future industrial land developments.
- Provide adequate natural screening to serve as a buffer between industrial uses and adjacent residential uses.

Objective: To allow for expanded recreational developments that serve the local residents.

Policies:

- Continue to explore new areas that would be attractive places for recreational development and update the zoning ordinance through the use of the RC District.

- If a zoning ordinance were to be adopted it should allow for the development of riverfront recreational activities.
- Create a five year recreation development plan and apply to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Keystone Grant program annually.
- Begin capital budget allowances for recreational development; i.e., matching funds for grants.

Objective: To plan for future growth by updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Policies:

- Establish a Planning Commission whose task it is to conduct an annual review of the Comprehensive Plan so that the policies developed through 2008 are still relevant and applicable.
- Update the plan every 5 years and redistribute the updates.
- Make the plan available over the Internet to local residents.

Objective: To use existing agricultural land more effectively.

Policies:

- Encourage the formulation and use of conservation plans and soil surveys as a basis for determining the best use and management of agricultural lands.
- Encourage the use of the Clean and Green Program.

Objective: To preserve and protect economically active farmland.

Policies:

- Identify and inventory all Class I through IV lands that have been improved (i.e., drained or tilled) for agricultural use.
- Encourage cluster developments that require less acreage than traditional subdivisions. Through clustering development it allows large blocks/tracts (100 to 200 acres) of agricultural land to remain active and it reduces the number of parcels being carved out of the farmland for other land uses.
- Limit sprawling developments through the encouragement of mixed-use development such as Planned Unit Developments (PUD's).

Objective: To guide development through logical infrastructure development, land use controls and other applicable policy.

Policies:

- Write and adopt a land use management ordinance.
- Pace infrastructure development extensions along Alt. Route 66 north so that sprawl is not encouraged and in-fill development is encouraged.

Bethel Township Ch. 12 LAND USE

The overall Land Use Planning Goal for Bethel Township is “. . . *to balance the physical, social and economic changes of the area between moderate economic growth, preservation of agriculturally active lands, maintenance of the existing rural character and density, and expanding recreational opportunities.*” More important than maintaining the status quo, the municipality must look ahead and anticipate future land use needs. In view of the large amount of undeveloped land throughout the area, the Township is now in an excellent position to lay the groundwork for guiding the development of the

areas land resources within the framework of the Comprehensive Plan. The Land Use Goals and Objectives are based upon the following premises:

- Development, while basically desirable and often inevitable, must be guided so as to attain the Land Use Goals and Objectives of the municipality.
- Through the exploration of developing a continuing program of comprehensive land use planning and the adoption of adequate development controls and ordinances, and based upon the Comprehensive Plan, conflicts between the various land uses can be minimized.
- The attainment of the future orderly growth and development of the municipality is possible, but only through a united effort of both public and private interests. Private development through cooperation with the units of local government should be shaped by cooperative development decisions.
- Through a planned approach to community development, the municipality is capable of accommodating anticipated development without destroying its outstanding natural and visual resources and characteristics.

Objective: To preserve the existing natural scenic vistas, the rural character of the area and the land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Policy:

- Cooperate with and help to enforce Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Department of Environmental Protection policies that promote protection of the aforementioned natural features.

Objective: To establish new commercial activity in the area, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the natural scenic vistas of the area.

Policies:

- Identify and market areas attractive for commercial development through the County.
- Make these areas more attractive through the establishment of water and sewer facilities.
- Consider, in the long term, a land use management ordinance.

Objective: To allow and provide for industrial development in the municipality, while responsibly minimizing traffic congestion, infrastructure extension and maintaining the rural character of the areas.

Policies:

- Identify and market areas attractive for commercial development through the County.
- Work with the Armstrong County Economic Development Cooperation to identify possible areas for an industrial park.
- Make these areas more attractive through the establishment of water and sewer facilities.
- Consider, in the long term, a land use management ordinance.

Objective: To allow for expanded recreational developments that serve the local residents.

Policies:

- Continue to explore new areas that would be attractive places for recreational development and update the zoning ordinance through the use of the RC District.
- Within the zoning ordinance allow for the development of riverfront recreational activities.
- Create a five year recreation development plan and apply to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Keystone Grant program annually.

-
-
- **Begin capital budget allowances for recreational development; i.e., matching funds for grants.**

Objective: To plan for future growth by updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Policies:

- Establish a Planning Commission whose task it is to conduct an annual review of the Comprehensive Plan so that the policies developed in 2002 are still relevant and applicable.
- Update the plan every 5 years and redistribute the updates.

Objective: To use existing agricultural land more effectively.

Policies:

- Encourage the formulation and use of conservation plans and soil surveys as a basis for determining the best use and management of agricultural lands.
- Encourage the use of the Clean and Green Program.

Objective: To preserve and protect economically active farmland.

Policies:

- Identify and inventory all Class I through IV lands that have been improved (i.e., drained or tilled) for agricultural use.
- Expand Agricultural Security Areas (ASA's) within the Township.
- Encourage cluster developments that require less acreage than traditional subdivisions. Through clustering development it allows large blocks/tracts (100 to 200 acres) of agricultural land to remain active and it reduces the number of parcels being carved out of the farmland for other land uses.
- Limit sprawling developments through the encouragement of mixed-use development such as Planned Unit Developments (PUD's).

Objective: To guide development through logical infrastructure development.

Policy:

- Develop water and sewer services, particularly along Route 66 and Alt. Route 66, through coordination with Parks and Gilpin (for water) and Gilpin Township (for sewer service).

Leechburg Borough

Ch. 12 LAND USE

The overall Land Use Planning Goal for Leechburg Borough is “... *to balance the physical, social and economic changes of the area between moderate economic growth, preservation of existing commercial storefronts, preserving historic character of downtown buildings and increasing recreational opportunities.*” More important than maintaining the status quo, the municipality must look ahead and anticipate future land use needs. The Borough should develop land use policies to guide the development within the framework of the Comprehensive Plan. The Land Use Goals and Objectives are based upon the following premises:

- Development, while basically desirable and often inevitable, must be guided so as to attain the Land Use Goals and Objectives of the municipality.

- Through the exploration of developing a continuing program of comprehensive land use planning and the adoption of adequate development controls and ordinances, and based upon the Comprehensive Plan, conflicts between the various land uses can be minimized.
- The attainment of the future orderly growth and development of the municipality is possible, but only through a united effort of both public and private interests. Private development through cooperation with the units of local government should be shaped by cooperative development decisions.
- Through a planned approach to community development, the municipality is capable of accommodating anticipated development without destroying its historic character, visual resources, and pedestrian scale.

Objective: To preserve the existing character and density of the area and to conserve land resources unsuited for development or incompatible with it.

Policies:

- Through the zoning ordinance protect and preserve the neighborhoods of the community.
- Encourage development that reuses vacant properties located between current development (in-fill).
- Insure existing commercial developments have adequate infrastructure including storm water drainage facilities, energy supply and modern telecommunications.
- Insure adequate parking in commercial developments and free parking along the business district route.
- Provide well-located points of ingress and egress in commercial developments, which are controlled to prevent traffic congestion on adjacent arterial streets or roads.
- Encourage preservation of the community's historic resources.

Objective: To encourage "in-fill" development for commercial and residential development.

Policy:

- Update the current zoning ordinance with incentives for in-fill development and identify and assist residents with financial assistance for downtown housing development.
- Provide design guidelines to encourage future development that is compatible with existing development.

Objective: To allow for improved recreational developments that serve the local residents.

Policies:

- Continue to explore new areas that would be attractive places for recreational development and update the zoning ordinance accordingly.
- Within the zoning ordinance allow for the development of riverfront recreational activities.
- Create a five year recreation development plan and apply to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Keystone Grant program annually.
- Begin capital budget allowances for recreational development; i.e., matching funds for grants.

Objective: To plan for future change by updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Planning Commission whose task it is to conduct an annual review of the Comprehensive Plan so that the policies developed in 2002 are still relevant and applicable.

-
-
- Update the plan every 5 years and redistribute the updates.
 - Make the Comprehensive Plan available to residents on a municipal Website.
 - Establish an e-mail list of local residents and send updates, meeting minutes and current events in a monthly newsletter.

Objective: To guide development through logical infrastructure updating, land use controls and other applicable land use policies.

Policies:

- Conduct semi-annual review and update the zoning ordinance.
- When separating sanitary and storm sewer lines insure that new lines have additional capacity to service future growth.

The Future Land Use Plan

In preparing the Proposed Land Use Plan for the Region, three alternate concepts of land use arrangement were considered and analyzed. These included the following:

1. *Trend Concept (Corridor) or Status Quo*
2. *Dispersion Concept*
3. *Centers Concept (Multi-nuclei) or Village Concept*

Each of the concepts was analyzed as to its feasibility and desirability in light of the existing land use development pattern, the findings and conclusions reflected in the Background Studies previously prepared in Part I of the Region's Comprehensive Planning Program, and its consistency with the Regional Goals and Policies developed. These alternates are described individually as follows:

Land Use Plan Concept #1 Trend (Corridor): The Status Quo

The most obvious concept of land development and the most easily attained is that characterized by the continuation of present trends and existing policies. Essentially, this concept is highly oriented toward highways and roads with very little development in depth, usually limiting development to areas along a narrow corridor immediately adjacent to highway right-of-ways. Low-density, suburban type scattered residential development would occur along some of the same corridors.

The Trend Concept of development, with increased mobility supplied by the automobile and the highway system constructed to accommodate it, encourages low-density residential construction in suburban areas usually along highways and roads extending outward from existing development. This growth pattern limits the variety of housing available, while increasing the amount of land necessary for residential use. This tendency toward single-family homes on large lots, combined with local building and housing traditions, frequently tends to result in new housing within specific price range and tends to segregate the various types of housing and income groups. As the older centers of the boroughs have deteriorated, those families who can afford to do so will tend to move to the suburban fringe. Furthermore, there is little incentive to encourage the investment necessary to rehabilitate the older and sometimes deteriorating homes of the existing housing inventory.

As residential development becomes more extended geographically, some small commercial establishments can be expected to follow. Instead of complementing and strengthening the commercial activity in the Central Business Districts (CBD) of the existing downtown, the process further drains away the economic vitality of the older established development concentrations. With the absence of land use controls inherent in this pattern of development, industrial development also tends to occur away from the more densely settled areas where land is more expensive and tax rates are higher compared to the outlying rural areas.

With new development confined to narrow strips along highways and roads, there is much pressure on and competition for land within the narrow corridors, with a decrease of pressure on the less accessible

areas, away from the main highways. Therefore, the reservation of open spaces for agricultural uses, recreation areas and large parks becomes more practicable. However, the disadvantages of the land use pattern generated by the trend concept far outweigh the advantages.

As this narrow corridor of development increases in length, the cost of providing infrastructure including water and sewer facilities will become more prohibitive. In fact, it would become economically unfeasible to provide municipal services or facilities to all the development that can be expected to result from this pattern of development.

Paradoxically, the transportation network which encouraged this pattern of development will eventually reach overcapacity and become increasingly inefficient. Travel times between the various activity areas (residence, employment, shopping, recreation, etc.) will increase correspondingly. Traffic will become more congested, eventually resulting in the need for the construction of better and expanded and wider roads and highways. These improvements, in turn, would accelerate development to reach even further out from the existing development concentrations, thereby perpetuating the inherent inefficiencies of the existing trend in land use development. This concept is characterized by little land use control and encourages low-density large lot housing development. This decentralization process requires an excessive amount of land, increases the cost of providing utilities, prevents the economical provision of municipal services and facilities, and weakens the tax base of the existing development concentrations. This land use concept embodies the uneconomical and inefficient use of land resources, and it tends to limit the Region's long-range growth potential.

Land Use Plan Concept #2: Dispersion

This concept is characterized by low-density development throughout the flatter areas of the Region. The Dispersion Concept incorporates the first elements of conscious land use planning.

This concept will distribute future development rather evenly throughout the flatter areas of the Region. New residential development would consist primarily of low-density (one to two units per acre) single-family homes with few multi-family units of medium density (five to eight units per acre). The same building practices and elements of choice would function under this concept as under the foregoing Trend Concept thereby limiting the choices of available housing types.

Commercial and industrial establishments would locate throughout the area, probably along major transportation arteries or at major intersections where they would be readily accessible by automobile. Because of the low-density, dispersed development, the private automobile would be the necessary means of transportation. Trip lengths between activity centers would be long, though perhaps shorter than necessitated by the corridor pattern; and an extensive supporting primary and secondary highway and road network would be necessary.

The demand for flat building land would make the provision of parks and open spaces more difficult. The high quality, flat lands which are now being used for agriculture will be in demand for development as the population expands. With few, if any, land use controls to guide development, much prime agricultural land would be lost, and farming would be compelled to occupy more marginal lands on which it is more difficult and less economical to grow crops. Eventually, income from farming could be lost to those engaged in agriculture and to the Region as a whole.

Such a scattered pattern makes the provision of municipal water and sewer facilities economically unfeasible. However, as the population increases and densities increase accordingly, these utilities could become more feasible in the future. The same difficulty is true for the provision of community facilities such as schools, churches, and police and fire protection.

The pattern of development as generated by the Dispersion Concept comes closer, in some respects, to fulfilling the Regional Land Use Goals and Objectives. Zoning ordinances and the building of public utilities and municipal streets or roads could encourage residential building in those flat areas which lie outside the narrow corridor along the highways.

Some controls could be applied to reserve agricultural land and open space and to regulate commercial strip development, but development density would remain low. This alternative comes one step closer to achieving the Region's Land Use Goals and Objectives; but the Dispersion Concept, in reality, is

inefficient and consumes an excessive amount of land, consequently limiting the Region's growth potential and quality of development.

Land Use Plan Concept #3 Centers (Multi-nuclei): Village Concept

The application of the Centers or Village Concept of land use development is dependent upon a high level of land use control. Marked by the concentration of development in the most suitable and strategic locations throughout the Region, this concept allows for the most efficient and effective use of the Region's land resources. For the most part, these development concentrations would take place within the boroughs and in the townships, immediately surrounding the boroughs and villages throughout the Region. Others could be encouraged at equally strategic locations by the provision of an improved transportation network and adequate public utilities and community facilities. Coupled with this development pattern would be the encouragement of in-fill development within the boroughs and villages.

A variety of low, medium, and high density residential development would be provided in each of these development concentrations. Smaller commercial establishments would be located within neighborhoods throughout these centers with the central business districts being strengthened and revitalized to provide an all-inclusive range of products and services. Industrial/business parks could be encouraged to locate in close proximity to these development concentrations with their supporting infrastructure and services.

With the concentration of the various use areas, trip lengths would be minimized. Travel times between the various development concentrations, either by private automobile or public transportation, would also be minimized. The efficiency of the transportation network is preserved by this pattern of development which provides for extensive open space and undeveloped areas between the various concentrations of development thereby discouraging the classic "strip" development along highway and road corridors.

Land best reserved for agricultural use, open space and view sheds would be protected because of the reduction of land pressure in suburban and rural areas. Water and sewer facilities and the wide range of municipally provided services could be economically provided throughout each of the development concentrations. The living environment would be substantially improved.

Recommended Plan Concept: Plan Rationale

Based upon the Centers (Multi-Nuclei) or Village Concept of land use development, a number of multi-purpose development areas are proposed throughout the Region. Refer to **the Future Growth and Development Areas** and the ensuing **Future Land Use Map**, which has been created for each individual municipality.

For the most part, the development areas are proposed around existing development concentrations; however, a number of new development concentrations at strategic locations are also proposed. These new development areas can be encouraged to occur through local level zoning, improvements to the transportation network, and the provision of adequate public infrastructure, particularly water and sewer. These areas are located near major transportation corridors and in growth areas throughout the Region. Each is designed to contain a wide range of land use activities, with the exception of heavy industry which will be situated on the periphery along major transportation corridors. Over the next ten to twenty years, intensive varied development would be encouraged within these development areas.

A variety of housing types will be encouraged in each of the development areas including low-density (one per 5 net residential acres) and medium-density (two to five per net residential acre). A variety of housing is conducive to growth in the Region by attracting residents with diverse backgrounds, preferences, and abilities who seek diversity in their choices of housing.

There exists a significant relationship between residential density and open space in the Centers Concept of land use. As the population continues to increase, there is a greater pressure to develop remaining vacant land to the extent that residential growth is dispersed. The amenities and efficiency of the total concept is decreased. By limiting spatial spread of residential development, the Centers Concept encourages the construction of some multi-family dwellings and the restoration and continued

maintenance of the existing housing inventory. The “cluster” technique in the development of new housing areas should be strongly encouraged throughout the Region.

As residential growth is encouraged within the various development areas, commercial and industrial growth should be encouraged to locate in close proximity. In addition, the concentration of population in a relatively small area tends to encourage a wider range of cultural and social activities. Another advantage of concentrating residential, commercial, and industrial development is that locally provided utilities, such as water, sewer and solid waste disposal, can be more economically provided and efficiently operated within the growth area.

F u **ture Land Use Category Definitions**



Single Family Residential - Land that is placed in this category are occupied by single-household detached structures, mobile homes, manufactured housing and buildings occupied by multi-family residential structures, such as apartment buildings.



Two Family Residential - Land that is placed in this category are occupied by buildings occupied by two family residential structures, such as duplexes.



Multi Family Residential - Land that is placed in this category are occupied by buildings occupied by multi-family residential structures, such as apartment buildings.



Commercial - Land that is placed in this category is occupied by businesses that are largely oriented toward providing goods and services requested by households on a frequent basis -- such as grocery stores, restaurants, business offices, and retail sales.



Community Facilities/Public Areas - This category includes community facilities such a municipal buildings and municipal properties, emergency services, community centers, churches and schools.

Industrial - Land in this category is occupied by businesses or developments that house manufacturing, shipping, wholesaling or other types of raw material conversion that is distributed to retail businesses.

Recreation/Conservation - Land that is placed in this category is forested, either naturally or commercially. Included in this category may be tracts of land that were forested, but owned by a farm bordering the lot; however, not cleared for agricultural use. The windshield survey does not try to determine the ownership of land tracts, but rather the existing use with which the land is physically occupied.

Agricultural - Land that is placed in this category is to be used either for pasture or for the cultivation of cash or feed crops. Note that a mostly agricultural lot that also includes a residence (i.e., a farmhouse) is classified as agricultural. In some cases the lands classified in this area may not be used agriculturally presently and preserved as undevelopable open space by an ASA.

Map 26 - Regional Future Growth Areas

Map 27 - Gilpin Future Land Use

Map 28 - Parks Future Land Use

Map 29 - Bethel Future Land Use

Map 30 - Leechburg Future Land Use

Parks Township Zoning Recommendations

Rural Residential District - Land that is placed in this category is occupied by single-household detached structures, mobile homes, and manufactured housing. The rural designation should have a minimum lot area attached greater than two (2) acres. This district's regulations are designed to (1) protect the established single family homes in the district, (2) promote similar development in the vacant parts of the district, (3) require proper design standards, and (4) enhance the unique character of this district, its structures, and its quality of life.

Medium/High Density Residential District - Land that is placed in this category is occupied by single-household detached structures, mobile homes, manufactured housing and buildings occupied by multi-family residential structures, such as apartment buildings. The medium/high density designation should have a maximum lot area attached less than 2 acres. Single-household, two-household buildings, apartment complexes and minor commercial activities are allowed in this district as permitted principal uses so that (1) a supply of affordable housing may be provided within the Region, and (2) the district's large, older homes may be partitioned, remain economically viable, and be properly maintained by their owners, (3) to insure that the district retains its predominantly multi-family residential composition and flavor, (4) to guarantee that the district's commercial establishments are compatible with this residential flavor, and (5) to encourage mixed use commercial development within the district. The remainder of this district's regulations are designed (1) to protect the established homes in the district, (2) to promote similar development in the vacant parts of the district, (3) to require proper design standards, and (4) to enhance the unique character of this district, its structures, and its quality of life.

Neighborhood Commercial District - Land that is placed in this category is occupied by businesses that are largely oriented toward providing goods and services requested by households on a frequent basis -- such as grocery stores, restaurants, golf courses, and retail sales. The district's regulations are designed (1) to promote the establishment of neighborhood-oriented businesses in the district, (2) to make sure that these businesses are compatible with their residential neighbors, (3) to allow single-family homes in this district, (4) to insure that future development is built to standards that are appropriate for this district, and (5) to enhance the unique character of this district, its structures, and its quality of life.

Highway Commercial District - Land that is placed in this category is occupied by businesses that are largely oriented toward large scale, intense land uses, commercial activities that typically develop around highway interchanges and office parks. The district's regulations are designed (1) to promote the establishment of highway-oriented and dense commercial businesses in the district, (2) to make sure that these businesses are compatible with their residential neighbors, (3) to allow multi-family homes in this district, (4) to insure that future development is built to standards that are appropriate for this district, and (5) to enhance the unique character of this district, its structures, and its quality of life.

Industrial District - The district is designed (1) to promote a mix of economically viable commercial and industrial uses that are compatible with each other and the uses of adjacent zoning districts; (2) to keep the involved uses from becoming a burden on the environment, appearance, or socioeconomic character of this district and its neighbors; (3) to foster an automobile-friendly environment; and (4) to enhance the character of this district, its structures, and its quality of life.

Agricultural District - Land that is placed in this category is to be used either for pasture or for the cultivation of cash or feed crops. Note that a mostly agricultural lot that also includes a residence (i.e., a farmhouse) is classified as agricultural. In some cases the lands classified in this area may not be used agriculturally presently and preserved as undevelopable open space by an ASA. The regulations imposed on this district are intended to (1) preserve both agricultural and low-density residential uses, (2) allow other uses to locate in the district that will enhance the district's nature, (3) prescribe standards that will ensure proper and appropriate development, and (4) promote this district's unique character and quality of life.

Recreation/Conservation - Land that is placed in this category is forested, either naturally or commercially, areas around water courses, water bodies or park or recreation areas. Included in this category may be tracts of land that were forested, but owned by a farm bordering the lot; however, not cleared for agricultural use. This district's regulations are designed (1) to allow the appropriate development of floodplains or lands with a slope of 25% or more, (2) to protect the community as a whole against the excessive damage that occurs from erosion and other environmental problems that result from random development on these sensitive lands, (3) to protect lands that are especially valuable to the community's recreation or conservation needs, and (4) to enhance the unique character of this district, its structures, and its quality of life.

CHAPTER 13

THE FUTURE HOUSING PLAN
OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG
COUNTY REGION

FUTURE HOUSING PLAN OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

Introduction

As part of the Comprehensive Plan for the South Central Armstrong County Region, a Housing Plan Element has been formulated. Information concerning the housing stock in the Region has been obtained from U.S. Census data, and an on-site and windshield survey conducted by personnel from Richard C. Sutter and Associates, Inc. This Plan Element provides a framework for conservation and rehabilitation of the housing in the Region and provides local officials with the necessary information to implement a housing rehabilitation program. Through the undertaking of a concerted rehabilitation effort, the Region will be able to achieve an upgraded housing stock, higher property values, an improved tax base, and elimination of situations which are having a negative impact on the housing market throughout the area.

The following section, Housing Objectives and Policies, is the cumulative result of the Planning Committee, data analysis, on-site surveys, and significant public participation. The overall goal of housing in the Region has been defined through these sources as “. . .to insure that every resident has *clean, safe and affordable residence.*” Indeed, the goal is broad and is further defined by the specific objectives and policies described in this section. The result of this section is to guide the elected officials in making political decisions concerning housing policy in the Region over the next 10 to 15 years.

HOUSING OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Gilpin Township

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Policies:

- Encourage participation in county, state, and federal programs that assist first time homebuyers, low income families, and handicapped persons.
- Encourage additional economic opportunity through low down payment, low interest, long-term mortgages for new homes and home repairs.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Policies:

- Encourage use of federal, state or local assisted housing rehabilitation programs.
- Promote the County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities as repositories of information on housing programs which could serve the residents with the vital information about loan and lending programs through the state and Federal government.

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Policies:

- Provide technical assistance to those governmental entities that want to pursue housing development.
- Promote the provision of affordable housing for all residents and add a wider choice of low-moderate income housing.
- Through ordinances, offer developer bonuses and prepare requirements for reserving percentage of set asides to encourage development towards moderate income housing in planned subdivisions.

Objective: To manage housing development through logical utility extensions and ordinances.

Policies:

- Through the Comprehensive Planning process, identify and target areas in the municipality that are poised for future residential growth that have existing utilities or are in feasible range for the extension of utilities. These areas should be situated to complement developed areas and reduce possible sprawl.
- Use the Comprehensive Plan, the Act 537 Plan and the Zoning Ordinance to direct the development of sewer lines.
- Encourage the principles of “greener growth” and the clustering of subdivisions as advocated by the Pennsylvania Growing Greener legislation.

Objective: To encourage the development of moderately priced rental opportunities for young families.

Policies:

- Identify and zone appropriately attractive areas for multi-family development.

Objective: To assist the many rural residents who find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Policy:

- Identify and describe all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in the municipality. Devise a comprehensive strategy to increase communication between lending institutions, government agencies, and non-profits in order to combine and target the various programs in order to maximize the number of households being served. For example, low interest loan programs may be targeted to households having moderate incomes (50% to 80% HUD defined median income) while grant programs may be targeted to households having low incomes (below 50% HUD defined median income).

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Policies:

- Promote “aging in place” initiatives to assist the growing numbers of elderly to be able to remain in their own homes with any available means of assistance.
- Support federal, state, and local efforts to reduce the property tax burden on older persons dependent on low incomes.
- Support housing improvement/renovation subsidies for older persons desiring to remain in their own homes. Identify all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in the Region.

Parks Township

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Policies:

- Encourage participation in county, state, and federal programs that assist first time homebuyers, low income families, and handicapped persons.
- Encourage additional economic opportunity through low down payment, low interest, long-term mortgages for new homes and home repairs.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Policies:

- Encourage use of federal, state or local assisted housing rehabilitation programs.
- Promote the County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities as repositories of information on housing programs which could serve the residents with the vital information about loan and lending programs through the state and Federal government.

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Policies:

- Provide technical assistance to those governmental entities that want to pursue housing development.
- Promote the provision of affordable housing for all residents and add a wider choice of low-moderate income housing.
- Through ordinances, offer developer bonuses and prepare requirements for percentage of set asides to encourage development of moderate income housing in planned subdivisions.

Objective: To manage housing development through logical utility extensions and ordinances.

Policies:

- Through the Comprehensive Planning process, identify and target areas in the municipality that are poised for future residential growth that have existing utilities or are in feasible range for the extension of utilities. These areas should be situated to complement developed areas and reduce possible sprawl.
- Use the Comprehensive Plan, the Act 537 Plan and many future land management ordinances to direct the development of sewer lines.
- Encourage the principles of “greener growth” and the clustering of subdivisions as advocated by the Pennsylvania Growing Greener legislation.

Objective: To allow for and encourage the development of moderately priced rental housing.

Policies:

- Through a possible future land management ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan, identify and zone appropriately attractive areas for multi-family development.

Objective: To assist the many rural residents who are able to live on very little means, but find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Policy:

- Describe all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in the municipality. Devise a comprehensive strategy to increase communication between lending institutions, government agencies, and non-profits in order to combine and target the various programs in order to maximize the number of households being served. For example, low interest loan programs may be targeted to households having moderate incomes (50% to 80% HUD defined median income) while grant programs may be targeted to households having low incomes (below 50% HUD defined median income).

Objective: To limit rural housing sprawl through land use ordinances, while encouraging new housing development in the more concentrated developed areas.

Policies:

- Using an Act 537 Plan, the Comprehensive Plan and possible future land use management ordinance identify areas for in-fill and provide information on financial incentives for developing in “urbanized” areas.
- Logically extend sewer and water service at a moderate pace and in small increments so development does not sprawl.
- Encourage the principles of “greener growth” and the clustering of subdivisions as advocated by the Pennsylvania Growing Greener legislation.

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Policies:

- Promote “aging in place” initiatives to assist the growing numbers of elderly to be able to remain in their own homes with any available means of assistance.
- Support federal, state, and local efforts to reduce the property tax burden on older persons dependent on low incomes.
- Support housing improvement/renovation subsidies for older persons desiring to remain in their own homes. Identify all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in the Region.

Objective: To rid the Township of abandoned buildings.

Policies:

- Develop and prioritize a list of buildings to raze.
- Develop price estimates for each case.
- Apply to HUD and Armstrong County for grants or other funding to expedite the razing.

Bethel Township

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Policies:

- Encourage participation in county, state, and federal programs that assist first time homebuyers, low income families, and handicapped persons.
- Encourage additional economic opportunity through low down payment, low interest, long-term mortgages for new homes and home repairs.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Policies:

- Encourage use of federal, state or local assisted housing rehabilitation programs.
- Promote the County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities as repositories of information on housing programs which could serve the residents with the vital information about loan and lending programs through the state and Federal government.

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Policies:

- Provide technical assistance to those governmental entities that want to pursue housing development.
- Promote the provision of affordable housing for all residents and add a wider choice of low-moderate income housing.
- Through ordinances, offer developer bonuses and prepare a set of requirements to encourage a percentage of development for moderate income housing in planned subdivisions.

Objective: To manage housing development through logical utility extensions and ordinances.

Policies:

- Through the Comprehensive Planning process, identify and target areas in the municipality that are poised for future residential growth that have existing utilities or are in feasible range for the extension of utilities. These areas should be situated to complement developed areas and reduce possible sprawl.
- Use the Comprehensive Plan and the Act 537 Plan to direct the development of sewer lines.
- Encourage the principles of “greener growth” and the clustering of subdivisions as advocated by the Pennsylvania Growing Greener legislation.

Objective: To allow for and encourage the development of moderately priced rental housing.

Policies:

- Work with the County and developers to construct townhouses or condos in the Township.

Objective: To assist the many rural residents who find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Policy:

- Describe all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in the municipality. Devise a comprehensive strategy to increase communication between lending institutions, government agencies, and non-profits in order to combine and target the various programs in order to maximize the number of households being served. For example, low interest loan programs may be targeted to households having moderate incomes (50% to 80% HUD defined median income) while grant programs may be targeted to households having low incomes (below 50% HUD defined median income).

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Policies:

- Promote “aging in place” initiatives to assist the growing numbers of elderly to be able to remain in their own homes with any available means of assistance.
- Support federal, state, and local efforts to reduce the property tax burden on older persons dependent on low incomes.
- Support housing improvement/renovation subsidies for older persons desiring to remain in their own homes. Enumerate all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in the Region.

Leechburg Borough

Objective: To encourage home ownership.

Policies:

- Encourage participation in county, state, and federal programs that assist first time homebuyers, low income families, and handicapped persons.
- Encourage additional economic opportunity through low down payment, low interest, long-term mortgages for new homes and home repairs.

Objective: To promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Policies:

- Encourage use of federal, state or local assisted housing rehabilitation programs.
- Promote the County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities as repositories of information on housing programs which could serve the residents with the vital information about loan and lending programs through the state and Federal government.

Objective: To encourage housing development, including housing for all needs and living styles.

Policies:

- Provide technical assistance to those governmental entities that want to pursue housing development.
- Promote the provision of affordable housing for all residents and add a wider choice of low-moderate income housing.
- Through ordinances, offer developer bonuses and prepare set of requirements to encourage a percentage of development towards moderate income housing in planned subdivisions.

Objective: To assist the many residents who find it financially difficult to maintain their houses.

Policy:

- Enumerate all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in the municipality. Devise a comprehensive strategy to increase communication between lending institutions, government agencies, and non-profits in order to combine and target the various programs in order to maximize the number of households being served. For example, low interest loan programs may be targeted to households having moderate incomes (50% to 80% HUD defined median income) while grant programs may be targeted to households having low incomes (below 50% HUD defined median income).

Objective: To insure every senior citizen has access to adequate housing, appropriate to his/her particular needs.

Policies:

- Promote “aging in place” initiatives to assist the growing numbers of elderly to be able to remain in their own homes with any available means of assistance.
- Support federal, state, and local efforts to reduce the property tax burden on older persons dependent on low incomes.
- Support housing improvement/renovation subsidies for older persons desiring to remain in their own homes. Enumerate all of the programs available through direct grants, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and in-kind contribution that can be used to rehabilitate housing in the Region.
- Explore the development of a senior citizen housing complex.

Objective: To discourage the conversion of large, older homes from single-family to multi-family rental properties.

Policy:

- Zone areas that may be prone to conversion for single-family housing units only.

Objective: To preserve the housing character of the borough through historic preservation.

Policy:

- Explore the residents’ desire to have an historic preservation ordinance.

FUNDING AND HOUSING PROGRAMS INFORMATION

Housing Programs

The PA CDBG program provides funds to address community needs such as street improvements, water and sewer improvements, housing rehabilitation, as well as many other community related activities. The PA H&CD program targets its money to Housing Assistance, Community Development, Downtown Pennsylvania, and Economic Development. There are three (3) ways to obtain funding.

1. The Region may solicit the County who may apply directly to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for "competitive" CDBG funds. These funds are set aside for communities which are both “entitlement” and "non-entitlement communities." There is a high degree of competition for these funds and the amount of money is limited to approximately \$15 million statewide.

-
-
2. The Pennsylvania Housing and Community Development Grant (H&CD) Program is a competitive program which provides funds to communities for four (4) general purposes one (1) of which is housing assistance. A housing rehabilitation program would fall under the category of housing assistance. The Region may solicit the County who can apply for up to \$350,000 for any given year. Application must be made to the Department of Community and Economic Development. It is recommended that the communities comprising the region apply for both PA CDBG and PA H&CD funds to initiate the housing rehabilitation program. This program has been recently refined into the Communities of Opportunities Program (COP).

Program Guidelines

To be eligible for the funding, The Region Housing Rehabilitation Program must be concentrated upon low/moderate-income families according to State and Federal guidelines. Grants should be made available to low/moderate-income households to rehabilitate their housing units. It is recommended that the housing rehabilitation program be limited to owner-occupied housing.

Conditions for participation in the program should include:

- Homeowners must have resided in their homes for at least one (1) year prior to making application for rehabilitation assistance.
- The owner must continue to live in the property and maintain it in accordance with Section 8 Housing Quality Standards of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for five years to receive the full benefit of the forgiveness loan.

If the owner of a dwelling is eligible for a forgiveness loan, he must "borrow" the full amount of the loan. As long as the owner remains in and maintains the property as determined by an annual inspection by the Housing Rehabilitation administrating agency, one-fifth of the amount of the loan will be forgiven annually for five years.

If the owner sells or transfers his property in less than five years, the outstanding amount of the loan will be paid from the proceeds of the sale. The funds which are recovered are then available to fund additional rehabilitation activities throughout the County. Loans should only be given to rectify deficiencies and to weatherize the property. Critical deficiencies must be addressed first.

Loans are to be made up to \$9,000. If a balance of the \$9,000 maximum remains after eligible repairs are made, then those funds can be spent for other code deficiencies and weatherization improvements. It is important to note that when a unit is eligible for rehabilitation assistance, the unit must be brought up to the HUD Section 8 Quality Standards. If the maximum amount of the loan is not sufficient to cover these expenses, the owner of the home must come up with the additional amount needed to bring the unit into compliance.

Implementation

The first step in implementing any housing rehabilitation program is to secure the needed funds. The applications, PA CDBG and PA COP, which must be prepared, are rather lengthy and involved. It is recommended that someone who is experienced with the application preparation procedure be retained to prepare the applications.

A Housing Committee will need to take the initiative to provide the public with information they need to participate in the program. Then the committee, and staff will be responsible for reviewing the qualifications of applicants for the program, reviewing work write-ups, securing bids from contractors, and then monitoring and inspecting the housing units when the work is completed. The committee may

receive more applications than there are funds for, and applications will have to be made in subsequent years for additional funds. Following this plan will improve the quality of life in the Region.

Affordable Housing

There is a belief at every level of government that every family should have a choice of affordable housing available to them. The Region's housing goal outlined in the Goals and Objectives section reflects this belief as well.

Affordable Housing Law

Several laws at all levels of government were created to deal with the provision of affordable housing. The Federal Fair Housing Act was enacted to ensure that persons would have available to them a decent home in a suitable environment. New Jersey has been the home to several important cases involving affordable housing at the federal level. The rulings on these cases, Mount Laurel I and II, basically state that communities must provide their share of a region's affordable housing stock and that regulations do not relieve the municipality of this obligation.

Affordable housing programs

Several strategies are available to promote affordable housing. As previously outlined in this section of the plan, rehabilitation of existing homes can be used to provide sound affordable housing.

Weatherization is a form of housing rehabilitation that involves reducing the energy costs of a low income household. Both owner-occupied and rental dwellings are eligible for weatherization service. The Weatherization Program is funded through the Federal Department of Energy and has received a portion of Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds provided by the Department of Health and Human Services. The Bureau of Human Resources should be contacted for more information.

New Housing

The Centers or Village Concept of Land Use Development as presented in the Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan should be closely followed in all new housing development.

If priced within an appropriate range, such a development can serve as affordable housing for senior citizens. With expected growth and redistribution for the Region in population, existing housing and rehabilitation measures will not be enough to meet future demand. New housing should be built within or adjacent to existing development concentrations where water and sewer and other infrastructure are already in place and where accessibility for emergency vehicles (ambulances, fire trucks) is not a problem.

Other Housing Legislation

Affordable Housing and the Law

The Federal Fair Housing Act (as amended in 1990) was created to ensure that every family would have a decent home in a suitable environment available to them. There is a growing body of both statutory and case law which pertains to affordable housing:

Federal Case Law

As mentioned earlier, Mount Laurel I and II: New Jersey has become home to landmark cases involving affordable housing. In the Mount Laurel I Decision, the Supreme Court ruled that communities in growth areas must take their fair share of the region's affordable housing stock.

In Mount Laurel II, the New Jersey and United States Supreme Courts ruled regulations do not relieve a municipality of their obligation to account for their fair share of affordable housing in a region. And,

affirmative measures such as builders' remedies, mandatory set asides, subsidies and mobile home zoning may be used to ensure that the fair share goal is achieved.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Laws Regarding Affordable Housing

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code Section 301(2.1) states that each municipal zoning ordinance is designed to provide for the use of land within the municipality for residential housing of various dwelling types encompassing all basic forms of housing. These forms include single family and two family dwellings, a reasonable range of multi-family dwelling units in various arrangement, mobile homes, and mobile home parks. However, no zoning ordinance will be deemed invalid for the failure to provide for any specific dwelling type. Basically, this provision discourages exclusionary zoning and promotes affordable housing.

Surric V. Zoning Hearing Board of Upper Providence County: This was the 1977 test case that the Pennsylvania Supreme Court established provisions for affordable housing. In particular, it, like the Mount Laurel case, requires communities in growth regions to provide their share of affordable housing.

Funding Sources for Affordable Housing (as of 1999)

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD is the base funding source of many Housing Programs. Their funds are used for developing affordable housing and purchasing mortgages (Fannie MAE, Freddie MAC and Ginny MAE) and for rehabilitation and weatherization. The primary source of direct funding for housing is the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development offers several programs that utilize CDBG monies as a funding source. They are: Entitlement CDBG funds, Competitive CDBG, and Housing and Community Development Funds, now the Communities Program, and the HOME Program.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

The largest funding source for housing is the CDBG program. Both entitlement and competitive funds are eligible for this activity. The CDBG Competitive grants are usually due in Harrisburg in late March. The current maximum grant amount for housing rehabilitation is \$250,000. Applications for funding should be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. It is quite possible to reapply for additional funding to continue the housing program after the first grant funds are expended.

Other State and Federal Affordable Housing Programs

Most federal and state programs for housing are targeted to low and moderate income families or individuals. To address the needs of affordable housing, rehabilitation of existing housing and future housing needs, it is recommended that the following programs be examined and possibly implemented.

Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly (HUD)

The large number of senior citizens in the region creates a substantial demand for elderly housing. This program provides capital advance grants for construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of housing for very low income elderly. Funding is available to CBO's and other developers. Contact HUD Regional Office.

Section 811 Supportive Housing for the Disabled (HUD)

This program, like Section 202, provides capital advance grants for construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of supportive housing. Contact HUD Regional Office.

HOME - Home Investment Partnership Program (HUD, DCED)

This program offers funding and general guidelines to municipal governments while allowing the local government the freedom to tailor implementation strategies for providing affordable housing to their own communities. This program contains the following Goals:

-
-
- Provide affordable housing to low to very low income Pennsylvanians (80 percent of median income)
 - Assist local governments in achieving adequate supplies of affordable housing
 - To foster and strengthen partnerships between the public and private sectors which will increase the production and management of affordable housing.

Low Income Rental Housing Tax Credits (Federal)

The tax credit program is intended to assist in the creation and preservation of affordable multi-family housing for families with low incomes, senior citizens, handicapped individuals, and homeless persons. The program makes available a dollar-for-dollar federal income tax credit up to 70 percent of the project's cost. Contact Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA).

Home Ownership Program (PHFA)

Provides for low interest loans made through local banks to purchasers who have not owned a home in the last three years. Requires a low down payment and subsidizes interest rate. Available for individuals and families only, but a useful way for banks to meet their CRA commitment.

PennHOMES (PHFA, DCED)

A combined resource program to create multi-family rental housing by reducing financing costs. Both for profits and non-profits are eligible. Contact local bank or DCED.

Housing and Community Development Grants (DCED)

This is the Commonwealth's largest pool of state monies for housing and community revitalization. It is a competitive program with the following eligible housing activities: owner occupied rehabilitation, rehabilitation of investor owned properties up to four units, new construction, and site improvements. Contact DCED for further details. This program is now known as the Communities Opportunities Program.

Act 137 Housing Fund

County Commissioners have increased fees for deeds and mortgages to provide a match for other affordable housing programs.

Fannie Mae, Ginny Mae and Freddie MAC (HUD)

In these three programs Federal Funds are used to help low to moderate income and first time home buyers. When implemented, these programs encourage younger families to remain in the local area, aid in slowing down housing turn over, and stimulate a sense of community. Local Real Estate Brokers, Financial Institutions should be contacted for more information and the Regional HUD Office.

Community Service Block Grant Program and Employment and Community Conservation Program

These programs are administered through the Department of Community and Economic Development, Bureau of Human Resources. These programs are targeted toward wider scale (community and neighborhood) type activities. In addition, this Bureau funds the Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) which has the following components:

- Housing Initiative,
- Weatherization,
- Local Initiative,
- Progressive Readiness Employment Program (PREP), and
- Enterprise Zone Extension Credit Program

The status of these programs, including their funding and timing, is unclear at the present time due to changes in the organization of the Department of Community and Economic Development.

Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (IRS)

Tax credits may be taken on improvements made to income producing properties in the Historic District if work meets certain standards set by the Secretary of the Interior.

Locally Based Programs

The region could take several steps related to preserving and promoting its housing stock. These projects could be administered by the County in conjunction with local, civic groups, local financial institutions, and the Regional Planning Committee. The following are suggested projects that the County could undertake:

Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) With Local Banks

Under the guidelines of the Community Reinvestment Act, a Federal Law, local financial institutions must provide funds for community, economic and affordable housing development in the municipalities in which they conduct business.

This vehicle could be used for mortgage programs under the PHFA Home Ownership Program to stimulate home ownership in areas where it is now low, providing low interest loans for housing rehabilitation projects, and developing Senior Housing Units.

Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

Preparation of a revised Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance should promote affordable housing, encourage new housing structures, the preservation of existing sound housing and the demolition of blighted structures. The ordinance writing process would take several years to complete and require substantial public input.

CHAPTER 14

THE FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PLAN OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL
ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

THE FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

Introduction

The following section, Future Economic Development Objectives and Policies, is the cumulative result of the Planning Committee, public surveys, and public participation. The overall goal for economic development in the Region has been defined through these sources as “. . . *to foster a strong economic environment within the Region to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, encouraging tourism related commerce, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.*” Indeed, the goal is broad and is further defined by the specific objectives and policies authored in this section. The result of this section is to guide the elected officials in making political decisions concerning economic development policy in the Region over the next 10 to 15 years.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Gilpin Township

The overall goal for economic development in the Township has been defined through these sources as “. . . *to foster a strong economic environment within the municipality to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, encouraging tourism related commerce, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.*”

Objective: To promote development of commercial, office and manufacturing activities, which will provide for growth of the local economy.

Policies:

- Zone attractive areas for such types of appropriate development.
- Work with the Armstrong County Redevelopment Authority to develop office parks.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through training, awareness and development of diversified local employment opportunities.

Policy:

- Encourage the development of business services, professional positions and other typically “white collar” employment opportunities.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Policy:

- Work with County agencies to develop training programs for local residents.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure by removing impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

Policy:

- Solicit PennDot’s Twelve year plan for improved access to Route 28.

Parks Township

The overall goal for economic development in the Township has been defined through these sources as “. . . *to foster a strong economic environment within the municipality to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, encouraging tourism related commerce, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.*”

Objective: To promote development of commercial, office and manufacturing activities, which will provide for growth of the local economy.

Policies:

- Through future land management ordinances, identify attractive areas for such types of development.
- Work with the Armstrong County Redevelopment Authority to develop office parks.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through training, awareness and development of diversified local employment opportunities.

Policy:

- Encourage the development of business services, professional positions and other typically “white collar” employment opportunities.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Policy:

- Work with County agencies to develop training programs for local residents.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure by removing impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

Policy:

- Solicit PennDot’s Twelve-year plan for improved access to Route 28.

Bethel Township

The overall goal for economic development in the Township has been defined through these sources as “. . . *to foster a strong economic environment within the municipality to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, encouraging tourism related commerce, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.*”

Objective: To promote development of commercial, office and manufacturing activities, which will provide for growth of the local economy.

Policy:

- Work with the Armstrong County Redevelopment Authority to develop office parks.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through training, awareness and development of diversified local employment opportunities.

Policy:

- Encourage the development of business services, professional positions and other typically “white collar” employment opportunities.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Policy:

- Work with County agencies to develop training programs for local residents.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure by removing impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

Policy:

- Solicit PennDot’s Twelve-year plan for improved access to Route 28.

Objective: To expand the uses for the riverfront areas along the Allegheny River and Crooked Creek.

Policy:

- Work with County agencies to develop training programs for local residents.

Leechburg Borough

The overall goal for economic development in the Borough has been defined through these sources as “. . . *to foster a strong economic environment within the municipality to keep our current and new residents working through the retention of current business, attracting new development, encouraging tourism related commerce, and supporting entrepreneurial efforts.*”

Objective: To promote current business and encourage new development of commercial and professional offices and business service activities, which will provide for growth of the local economy.

Policy:

- Zone attractive areas for such types of appropriate development.

Objective: To improve the ambiance and functionality of the downtown business district.

Policies:

- Improve the business district along Market Street and Third Street by submitting an application for the Main Street Program.
- Plant trees, resurface the sidewalks, improve pedestrian right-of-ways and implement free parking along the aforementioned streets.

Objective: To retain the young labor force through training, awareness and development of diversified local employment opportunities.

Policy:

- Encourage the development of business services, professional positions and other typically “white collar” employment opportunities.

Objective: To establish a system for continuing education opportunities to allow persons to develop new skills as technology changes.

Objective: To encourage tourism through the promotion of cultural and recreational facilities, the history of the Borough and related historic sites.

Objective: To improve the local cultural facilities.

Policy:

- Access funding to improve the capacity and facilities at the Public Library.
- Likewise, access funding for museum and historical society improvements.

Objective: To improve transportation and infrastructure by removing impediments to current economic growth areas and activities.

Policy:

- Solicit PennDot’s Twelve-year plan for improved access to Route 28.

Objective: To encourage “quality” tourism related commerce.

Policy:

- Construct kiosks for tourism and local events information in a central place in the Borough.
- Promote roadside gardens in key locations such as entryways to the Borough.

CHAPTER 15

THE FUTURE TRANSPORTATION PLAN
OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG
COUNTY REGION

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION PLAN OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

Introduction

“Good transportation” infers more than merely having nice roads and new bridges since the term covers a range (or modes) of transit from air travel, to roads and rail travel, and including water/sea transportation. Moreover, and as was pointed out, the citizens and businesses of the Region have a greater reliance on rail and air transit than a typical citizen of the area would first assume. The overall goal of the region’s transportation network was defined by the Planning Committee, consultant and public input. The goal is *“...to create an efficient, safe, environmentally sensitive and economical transportation system for all residents of the Region.”*

There is a growing recognition that the Region is indeed a part of an increasingly global economy that depends on a reliable transportation network to bring products and services in and out of the region in efficient fashion in order to compete. The region also recognizes through this process that while we cannot hope to control the “macro” elements that make up the fabric of national (or even international) transportation, we have a shared recognition that there is a responsibility that good transportation policy begins at home and provides that backbone and is the springboard for successful business and industry as well as intergovernmental relationships within the region. The sections offer goals, objectives and actions to be taken to improve the transportation network of the region.

TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Gilpin Township

Objective: To minimize the environmental impacts of transportation improvements.

Policy:

- Plan new roadways with the State’s “Growing Greener” sound land use practices in mind.

Objective: To improve the “gateways” to the community.

Policy:

- Promote entrances into the Township with attractive signage on Route 66, Lover’s Leap Road from Leechburg and Shipman Road from Parks Township.

Objective: To improve street and roadway signage in the municipality.

Policies:

- Continually update the street and roadway directional signage for accuracy.
- Explore posting color coded signs announcing directions towards special attractions.

Objective: To address line-of-sight and bridge repair issues in the local transportation network.

Policy:

- Replace three identified bridges on Evergreen Road.

Objective: To continue to maintain and improve the local roadway network.

Policies

- Prioritize roadway repairs in a long term plan which includes the following:
 1. **Stullville Road** - This road services well over 12 houses and several farms and runs from Godfrey Road to Schenley Road. It is in poor condition because of major portions that have degraded to the subsurface. It is in need of resurfacing.
 2. **Lessig Road** - This road services about 24 homes and some farms. The road is in poor condition and needs to be resurfaced from Forks Church Road to Coal Bank Road.
 3. **Truby Hill Road** - This road connects from Lovers Leap Road and runs east to Hungry Hollow Road. The road is very rural, hilly and largely services only a few farms and wooded areas, but is in very poor condition.
 4. **Shuster Hollow Road** - This road runs off of Evergreen Road and dead ends into a farm. The road is in decent condition off of Evergreen, but degrades slowly to poor condition. The road does not service more than 6-8 homes and is challenged by the terrain, but should be resurfaced over the next 2-5 years.
 5. **Jack Road** - This road is in the northern corner of the Township and is very rural and hilly. However, the road is planned to have water service in the next few years and has open lands which could be developed. As a precursor to that development, the road should be resurfaced from Rowe Road to the Gilpin Township border.
 6. **Johnetta Road** - Runs from Route 66 to the Gilpin border at the Allegheny River. The road serves over 35 houses, some farming areas and some wonderfully hilly and wooded terrain. The road is in poor condition and should be resurfaced.
- Preserve the efficiency of arterials and collectors through proper control of roadside development.
- Reduce to a minimum the conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Require the installation of sidewalks in new subdivisions.

Objective: To form a Regional Transportation Committee charged with identifying and prioritizing transportation projects for submission to the Metro Planning Organizations for inclusion in PennDOT's 12-year plan.

Policies:

- Focus on a connector highway directly to Route 28.
- Improve access roads to areas with high tourist, commercial, or industrial development potential.
- *Aggressively submit roadway concerns for inclusion in the 12-year plan.

*The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) maintains a list of projects throughout planning regions designed to prioritize projects for budgetary allocations. The odd years (i.e., 2003), according to federal fiscal year of October 1st, municipalities are invited to attend public participation panels held by their respective county—in this case, Armstrong County. The meetings take place during the months of June and July. The purpose of the meetings are to receive requests for candidate projects to be placed on the 12-year plan. The requests are forwarded to the respective Multi-municipal Planning

Organization (MPO). The next year, even numbered years, the MPO adopts the plan after prioritizing the requests.

Parks Township

Objective: To improve the “gateways” to the communities.

Policy:

- Promote entrances into the Township with attractive signage on Route 66 from North Apollo, Route 56 after the bridge from Vandergrift, Route 66 from Gilpin Township and Alt. Route 66 from Bethel Township.

Objective: To improve street and roadway signage in the municipality.

Policies:

- Continually update the street and roadway directional signage for accuracy.
- Explore posting color coded signs announcing directions towards special attractions.

Objective: To address line-of-sight and bridge repair issues in the local transportation network.

Policy:

- Continually solicit the State to takeover the bridge on Stitts Run Road. The bridge is currently out of service.

Objective: To continue to maintain and improve the local roadway network.

Actions:

- Prioritize roadway repairs in a long term plan.

North Vandergrift

- ***Grant Street*** - The road as entered from Dime Road is in moderate condition with a pothole or two but degrades into areas with enough potholes to warrant being in this section. The road is also one of the narrowest and steepest in the Township at the end near Route 66/56. However, the widening or smoothing of the steep run of the road is not likely due to terrain and development limitations.
- ***Alleys and Minor Issues*** - As is almost always the case in urban like settings there are some alleys that are in need of patchwork within the area.

Kepple Hill/Riverview

- ***Pleasant View Drive***-Kepple Hill seems to have two (2) distinct areas: the roads and housing to the west of Pleasant View Drive, and Pleasant View Drive itself, and the areas east of Pleasant View Drive. Penn Avenue, West Penn Road and Urban Street of Riverview were repaired and tarred and chipped in 2005. The roads to the west of Pleasant View Driver were repaired and tarred and chipped in 2006. All of these raods are presently in good condition; however, several driveway pipes need replaced to correct drainage problems. These roads sever approximately four hundred (400) roads.
- ***Kepple Avenue/Kepple Hill Road***-Kepple Hill Road is a section of Kepple Avenue approximately one-half mile long that connects the villages of North Vandergrift and Kepple Hill. It is a very steep, curvy road located along the outside edge of the hillside overlooking SR 66 and River Roads, which run along the Kiskiminetas River. The severe rains and weather conditions of January 2005 caused the hillside to start moving and sliding, carrying sections of the road with it. The road was closed and blocked off January 10, 2005. Core samples were drilled, soil analysis tests conducted, and

engineering studies completed. There are four (4) major slide areas, requiring the entire roads be reconstructed. The closing of this road has redirected all traffic to and from Kepple Hill to West Penn Road, which is a narrow, steep road connecting SR 66 (River Road) to Pleasant View Drive. These roads serve approximately four hundred (400) homes, plus the Parks Township Fire Hall, the Parks Township Municipal Authority, and two (2) churches. Estimated cost to rebuild and reopen the road is between \$500,000 and one million dollars.

Kiskimere

- ***Kiskimere Road, Mary Street, Johnson Street, Jane Street, and Eisenhower Street***-The roads and streets of the Village of Kiskimere were repaired and tarred and chipped in 2005. They remain in good condition; however, several driveway pipes need replaced to correct drainage problems.

Rural Parks Township

- ***Unpaved Roads*** - There are a number of roads in the Township that remain unpaved, gravel based and narrow. Areas of these roads have been damaged by washout making normal car travel slow and rough. The following roads are unpaved in the Township: Piper Hill Road which serves about seven (7) houses and steep wooded areas, Hickory Road which serves seven (7) houses and a few farms of Chestnut Road, Slate Point Road which is the most northeastern road in the Township from Ridge Road east, the western end of Maple Road which is a very steep, dirt hill, the western end of Garvers Ferry Road, and Shipman Road which is also a very steep dirt road. Dirt and Gravel Road Grants were used to Maple Road in 2005, Garvers Ferry Road in 2006, and the northern end of Hickory Road in 2007. Future grants should be used for the southern end of Hickory Road, Piper Hill Road, Slate Point Road, and Shipman Road.
- ***Ash Road***- Ash Road was tarred and chipped in 2004, however there are some drainage issues that need resolved, including some driveway pipes that need replaced.
- ***Oak Road***-Oak Road is in poor condition and needs to be resurfaced. Crossover pipes and driveway pipes need replaces to address major drainage issues.
- ***Locust Road***-Locust Road is in poor condition and needs drainage issues addressed and needs resurfaced.

Objective: To form a Regional Transportation Committee charged with identifying and prioritizing transportation projects for submission to the Metro Planning Organizations for inclusion in PennDOT's 12-year plan.

Policies:

- Focus on a connector highway directly to Route 28.
- Improve access roads to areas with high tourist, commercial, or industrial development potential.
- *Aggressively submit roadway concerns for inclusion in the 12-year plan.

*The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) maintains a list of projects throughout planning regions designed to prioritize projects for budgetary allocations. The odd years (i.e., 2003), according to federal fiscal year of October 1st, municipalities are invited to attend public participation panels held by their respective county, in this case Armstrong County. The meetings take place during the months of June and July. The purpose of the meetings are to receive requests for candidate projects to be placed on the 12-year plan. The requests are forwarded to the respective Multi-municipal Planning Organization (MPO). The next year, even numbered years, the MPO adopts the plan after prioritizing the requests.

Bethel Township

Objective: To improve the “gateways” to the communities.

Policy:

- Promote entrances into the Township with attractive signage on Route 66 from Gilpin Township, Alt. Route 66 from Parks Township, Kelly Station Road after the village of Kelley Station and Crooked Creek Dam Road from Manor Township.

Objective: To improve street and roadway signage in the municipality.

Policies:

- Continually update the street and roadway directional signage for accuracy.
- Explore posting color coded signs announcing directions towards special attractions.

Objective: To continue to maintain and improve the local roadway network.

Policies

- Prioritize roadway repairs in a long term plan which includes the following:
 1. **Pine Hollow Road** - This road traverses some of the most severe, rustic and beautiful terrain in the Township. It also does not serve any houses directly after the few near Claypool Hill Road intersection. It is paved for these houses but is in need of some patchwork or paving.
 2. **Kerr Road and Kerr Bottom Road** - The road is in decent condition, but paving the way would make for much better service to the Learning Center and the 4 houses on Kerr Bottom Road.
 3. **Baker Road** - This road runs between Grantz Hollow and Spruce Hollow Roads and serves about 7 houses and some beautifully wooded areas. The road is very narrow and unpaved. The road is in decent condition with a tar and chip finish, but could be considered for minor widening and paving.
 4. **Stoney Hill Road** - Considering paving these roads should be a joint decision between Gilpin and Bethel Townships in order to really be an effective improvement.
 5. **Coal Bank Hollow Road** - This road serves a few houses at the beginning of the road and is paved for that portion, but that portion is in need of patchwork.
- Preserve the efficiency of arterials and collectors through proper control of roadside development.
- Reduce to a minimum the conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Require the installation of sidewalks in new subdivisions.
- Utilize the railroad bed from Schenley to Logansport Road in coordination with Gilpin for trail or a roadway.

Objective: To form a Regional Transportation Committee charged with identifying and prioritizing transportation projects for submission to the Metro Planning Organizations for inclusion in PennDOT's 12-year plan.

Policies:

- Focus on a connector highway directly to Route 28.
- Improve access roads to areas with high tourist, commercial, or industrial development potential.
- *Aggressively submit roadway concerns for inclusion in the 12-year plan.

*The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) maintains a list of projects throughout planning regions designed to prioritize projects for budgetary allocations. The odd years (i.e., 2003), according to federal fiscal year of October 1st, municipalities are invited to attend public participation panels held by their respective county, in this case Armstrong County. The meetings take place during the months of June and July. The purpose of the meetings are to receive requests for candidate projects to be placed on the 12-year plan. The requests are forwarded to the respective Multi-municipal Planning Organization (MPO). The next year, even numbered years, the MPO adopts the plan after prioritizing the requests.

Leechburg Borough

Objective: To improve the “gateways” to the communities.

Policy:

- Promote entrances into the Borough with attractive signage on Route 66 from Parks Township and Gilpin Township.

Objective: To improve street and roadway signage in the municipality.

Policies:

- Continually update the street and roadway directional signage for accuracy.
- Explore posting color coded signs announcing directions towards special attractions.

Objective: To continue to maintain and improve the local roadway network.

Actions:

- Prioritize roadway repairs in a long term plan which includes the following:
 1. **Locust Street** - This road is located on the Gilpin Township border in the north west portion of the Borough. It runs along a wooded slope on the west side; therefore, only services houses on its eastern boundary. Nevertheless, it is riddled with potholes and is in need of resurfacing within the next several years. This is a shared street with Gilpin Township and the borough
 2. **Alleys and Lanes** - There are many alleys and a few lanes in the Borough in need of patchwork. This is a minor point since many of these would only be used by the few structures located on the throughway. However, Passavant Way is an exception. Passavant Way services the northern end of Veterans Memorial Field and housing units located on its northern boundary. Located next to the street is a rather abandoned tennis court and what could be a nice area for a playground. The street is a shared street between Gilpin Township and Leechburgh Borough. It was re-surfaced in 2002. Resurfacing the street was needed not only to visually improve the area around the football field, but to provide decent access to the land and houses behind the stadium.
- Preserve the efficiency of arterials and collectors through proper control of roadside development.
- Improve downtown pedestrian traffic right-of-ways.

Objective: To form a Regional Transportation Committee charged with identifying and prioritizing transportation projects for submission to the Metro Planning Organizations for inclusion in PennDOT's 12-year plan.

Policies:

- Focus on a connector highway directly to Route 28.
- Improve access roads to areas with high tourist, commercial, or industrial development potential.
- *Aggressively submit roadway concerns for inclusion in the 12-year plan.

*The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) maintains a list of projects throughout planning regions designed to prioritize projects for budgetary allocations. The odd years (i.e., 2003), according to federal fiscal year of October 1st, municipalities are invited to attend public participation panels held by their respective county, in this case Armstrong County. The meetings take place during the months of June and July. The purpose of the meetings are to receive requests for candidate projects to be placed on the 12-year plan. The requests are forwarded to the respective Multi-municipal Planning Organization (MPO). The next year, even numbered years, the MPO adopts the plan after prioritizing the requests.

CHAPTER 16

THE FUTURE COMMUNITY FACILITIES
AND PUBLIC UTILITIES PLAN
OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG
COUNTY REGION

THE FUTURE COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES PLAN OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

Introduction

The primary goal for Community Facilities Development throughout the Region is *“to increase the livability, attractiveness and desirability of the Region through the adequate provision of a wide range of community facilities which are easily accessible to all of the citizenry of the Region.”* The purpose of this Community Facilities and Public Utilities Plan is to present recommendations to alleviate those deficiencies which now exist plus to adequately provide for the future community facility needs resulting from the anticipated increase in and redistribution of the Region’s population and development concentrations. An analysis of both existing and anticipated deficiencies upon which the recommendations are based was presented in Part I - “Background Studies” of the Region’s Comprehensive Planning Program. This Plan Element seeks to create an awareness of future needs, to correlate these needs with the Land Use, Housing, Transportation, and Economic Development Plans. Additionally, the Community Facilities and Public Utilities Plan Element is to provide a flexible plan whereby existing facilities combined with proposed facilities can adequately meet future needs of the residents of the Region.

Community Facilities are those basic services provided for the most part, by local government to insure the health, safety, and general welfare and to fulfill cultural desires of the residents of the community. Such facilities include: municipal buildings, schools, libraries, museums and historic sites, park and recreation areas, police and fire protection, hospitals, homes for the elderly, social and welfare services, and correctional facilities.

The number, type, and adequacy of these facilities determine to a large measure the quality and general livability of the environment and the growth potential of the area. These facilities increase the ability of the Region to attract new residents, reduce out-migration, and induce new business and industries to locate within the Region. As a result, the community’s tax base is strengthened and it can realize the maximum return on dollars invested in improved community facilities. Too often, though, community facility needs are not recognized and the necessary programming is not developed on a regional level. Instead, individual cases are handled with crisis decisions being the rule rather than the exception. In addition to inadequately providing for the needs of the citizenry, this uncoordinated and piecemeal approach results in the inefficient use of the limited financial resources of the community through duplication of effort.

*The areas of the region recommended for future water service are presented on **Map 31** later in this chapter. **Map 32** indicates those areas recommended to receive sewer service within a ten -year time frame and those areas proposed to receive sewer service within a ten- to twenty -year time frame.*

*The location, character, and timing of future development as indicated in Chapter 12 in **Map 26 - Future Growth Areas**, has to be utilized as the basis of both the extent and timing of the future water service and the future sewer service plans. The location of both existing and new sewage treatment plants is also indicated.*

Parks and Recreation

The responsibility for providing recreation areas and associated facilities to the residents of the region rests with the municipalities comprising the region. The region benefits from parks and recreational areas. Needs include playgrounds for young children, ball fields and other areas of interest to teenagers and adults, and passive recreational facilities such as picnic areas, to walking trails and paths.

For the purpose of classifying the recreation areas of the region according to their type of use, the following categories, as identified by the National Recreation Association will be used; (1) Parks; (2) Playgrounds; and (3) Playfields. The facilities commonly provided by each of these categories are presented in the following table:

TABLE 80

COMMONLY PROVIDED RECREATION FACILITIES			
Type of Area	Age Groups Served	Facilities Provided	Ideal Size
Park	All Age Groups	Areas for picnics, hiking, fishing, ice skating, and swimming; cook stoves; shelters; toilets; playgrounds; and playfields	40-100 acres
Playground (Including a Playlot)	Pre-school & 6-14 Years	(1) Swings, sandboxes, jungle gyms, space for running, and a paved section. (2) Courts for softball, tennis, handball, and volleyball. (3) Areas for crafts, drama, and storytelling	2-4 acres
Playfields	Young People And Adults	Areas for football, baseball, soccer, archery, and a recreation building	10-15 acres

COMMUNITY FACILITIES OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Gilpin Township

Objective: To insure an adequate water supply is available to all concentrations of development.

Policy:

- Extend water service along Jack Road and north along Route 66 to the Bethel Township border.

Objective: To insure adequate sanitary sewer service is available to all concentrations of development.

Policies:

- Extend sewer service to Schenley, Ice Pond Road, Jack Road and Myers Road.
- Guide future development in an orderly manner consistent and compatible with existing development.

Objective: To improve the condition of current sewer and water infrastructure.

Policy:

- Repair or replace water lines that are 30 or more years old.
- Extend sewer services to the village of Schenley.

Objective: To coordinate sewer and water infrastructure development with neighboring municipalities' existing and future growth patterns.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Infrastructure Planning Committee made up of members from the Gilpin Township Water and Sewer Authorities, the Parks Township Water and Sewer Authorities, the Westmoreland Municipal Authority and at least one elected official from each municipality.
- Establish a semi-annual meeting schedule to discuss water and sewer infrastructure developments so coordination of services could be possible.

Objective: To improve, maintain and/or expand recreational opportunities within the municipality.

Policy:

- Maintain and improve the Gilpin/Leechburg Area Park.
The park has several areas in need of upgrades that could be addressed: The tennis and basketball courts are in poor condition. The surfaces are cracked with weeds growing through the surface. The netting on both are in poor condition. The ballfields are maintained in moderate condition. Landscaping to the entrance of the park could improve the atmosphere of the park.
- Develop a recreation plan.
- Explore recreational improvements to the park that would attract teenagers such as roller blading, skateboarding or other similar activities.
- Execute the recreation plan through the submission of an application for a DCNR Keystone Grant.

Objective: To maintain the current levels of emergency care that are considered acceptable.

Policy:

- Continue to support the firefighting units and emergency medical service organizations. The County's 911 Emergency Response System should be supported and promoted as a vehicle for emergency management planning.

Objective: To explore the possibility of a shared services regional police force.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Planning Commission or a COG between the four municipalities.
- Examine closely the benefits, costs, police coverage and safety implications that could be expected from a regional police force.
- Conduct public meetings and weigh resident response.
- Speak with DCED concerning the funding available through the shared services program.

Objective: To create a municipal Web site to increase information dissemination.

Policies:

- Form a committee to discuss the information that the municipality would agree to place on a Web site.
- Contact the State Association of Boroughs or Township Supervisors concerning domain names, hosting and design.
- If the limited version provided by these organizations is inadequate, RFP for private web developers familiar with local governments.
- Register a domain name, establish web hosting through a company providing such services and review the web design.
- Establish e-mails for all elected officials.
- Decide whether to out source or in-house the Web site maintenance.

Objective: To create more activities for youths.

Policy:

- Explore recreational improvements to the park that would attract teenagers such as roller blading, skateboarding or other similar activities.

Parks Township

Objective: To insure an adequate water supply is available to all concentrations of development.

Policies:

- Establish water service in the northeastern portion of the township. The project that is underway includes a water tower which will help supply water service to parts of Bethel Township.
- Construct the water tower capacity to exceed Township demand to enable sharing of resources with Bethel Township.

Objective: To update the older sewer and water infrastructure.

Policy:

- Repair or replace sewer, storm water or water lines that are 30 or more years old.

Objective: To expand the number of residents with sewer services.

Policy:

- Follow the water tower construction with an expansion of sewer services along Airport Road and north along Alt. Route 66 towards Dime.

Objective: To coordinate sewer and water infrastructure development with neighboring municipalities' existing and future growth patterns.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Infrastructure Planning Committee made up of members from the Gilpin Township Water and Sewer Authorities, the Parks Township Water and Sewer Authorities, the Westmoreland Municipal Authority and at least one elected official from each municipality.
- Establish a semi-annual meeting schedule to discuss water and sewer infrastructure developments so coordination of services could be possible.

Objective: To improve and expand recreational opportunities within the municipality.

Policy:

- Improve the *Kepple Hill Scenic Lookout*.
Overlook Drive itself is very narrow with little or no room to pull off and allow vehicles to pass due to the steep slope and surrounding development. The available area to take in the view is part of a commercial gift shop. Improved public access to the overlook should include a place for a vehicle to pull over and perhaps a public observation deck with a bench and rail.
- Continue to improve the North Vandergrift, Kepple Hill, and Kiskimere Parks by adding walking trails, new playground equipment, installing water fountains, and providing restroom facilities.
- Expand the current parks where land becomes available through donations and acquire funding to construct a recreation area covering 2-4 acres and providing a full range of recreational activities for pre-teens including a small ballfield for softball.
- Explore recreational improvements to the park that would attract teenagers such as roller blading, skateboarding or other similar activities.
- Develop a boat launch ramp area along the kiskiminetas River and explore recreational facilities to utilize the five miles of river frontage bordering the Township.
- Execute the recreation plan through the submission of an application for a DCNR Keystone Grant.

Objective: To identify areas for trail development, especially along the riverfront south to North Apollo and north to Leechburg.

Policy:

- Explore the process of acquiring private property to develop riverfront recreation and access.

Objective: To maintain the current levels of emergency care that are considered acceptable.

Policy:

- Continue to support the firefighting units and emergency medical service organizations. The County's 911 Emergency Response System should be supported and promoted as a vehicle for emergency management planning.

Objective: To explore the possibility of a shared services regional police force.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Planning Commission or a COG between the four municipalities.
- Examine closely the benefits, costs, police coverage and safety implications that could be expected from a regional police force.
- Conduct public meetings and weigh resident response.
- Speak with DCED concerning the funding available through the shared services program.

Objective: To create a municipal Web site to increase information dissemination.

Policies:

- Form a committee to discuss the information that the municipality would agree to place on a Web site.
- Contact the State Association of Boroughs or Township Supervisors concerning domain names, hosting and design.
- If the limited version provided by these organizations is inadequate, RFP for private web developers familiar with local governments.
- Register a domain name, establish web hosting through a company providing such services and review the web design.
- Establish e-mails for all elected officials.
- Decide whether to out source or in-house the Web site maintenance.

Objective: To create more activities for youths.

Policy:

- Explore recreational improvements to the park that would attract teenagers such as roller blading, skateboarding or other similar activities.

Bethel Township

Objective: To develop public water service infrastructure to dense developments and major transportation routes.

Policies:

- Establish water service along Route 66 from Gilpin Township towards and along Alt. Route 66 from Parks Township north to Route 66.
- Establish service along Lakeview, Ridge, Cochran's Mills Road and Grantz Hollow and Spruce Hollow Roads stemming from Alt. Route 66.
- The north west section of Parks Township needs additional capacity and a higher source tower due to terrain limitations to service the area. Explore the development of a joint water tower that would have sufficient capacity to also serve Bethel Township in the southern and central portions along Alt. Route 66.

Objective: To develop public sanitary sewer service infrastructure to areas that could support housing developments and/or industrial parks.

Policies:

- Have an Act 537 Plan completed for the Township.
- Review the content, proposals, and recommendations of the Act 537 Plan.
- Adopt the Act 537 Plan and initiate implementation of the recommendations.
- Prepare and submit applications for financial assistance to PennVest, PA H&CD, PA CDBG, FmHA, CFA and others to keep the cost to local residents of the system improvements manageable.
- Update the Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan every five (5) years.
- Guide future development in an orderly manner consistent and compatible with existing development.
- Look to coordinate efforts, or share capacity, or extend from Gilpin Township.

Objective: To coordinate any future sewer and/or water infrastructure development with neighboring municipalities' existing and future growth patterns, particularly Parks Township.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Infrastructure Planning Committee made up of members from the Gilpin Township Water and Sewer Authorities, the Parks Township Water and Sewer Authorities, the Westmoreland Municipal Authority and at least one elected official from each municipality.
- Establish a semi-annual meeting schedule to discuss water and sewer infrastructure developments so coordination of services could be possible.

Objective: To improve and expand recreational opportunities within the municipality.

Policy:

- Explore the process of acquiring private property to develop riverfront recreation and access.
- Establish a significant park in the Township.

Objective: To maintain the current levels of emergency care that are considered acceptable.

Policy:

- Continue to support the firefighting units and emergency medical service organizations. The County's 911 Emergency Response System should be supported and promoted as a vehicle for emergency management planning.

Objective: To explore the possibility of a shared services regional police force.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Planning Commission or a COG between the four municipalities.
- Examine closely the benefits, costs, police coverage and safety implications that could be expected from a regional police force.
- Conduct public meetings and weigh resident response.
- Speak with DCED concerning the funding available through the shared services program.

Objective: To create more activities for youths.

Policy:

- Explore recreational improvements to the park that would attract teenagers such as roller blading, skateboarding or other similar activities.

Leechburg Borough

Objective: To separate combined storm and sanitary sewer lines.

Policy:

- Complete all phases of the current project addressing these issues.

Objective: To expand sanitary sewer and water service to those few areas that are not served.

Policy:

- During the process of separating storm and sanitary sewer service lines, complete the coverage of sewer services in the Borough.

Objective: To improve the condition of older sewer and water infrastructure.

Policy:

- Repair or replace sewer, storm water or water lines that are 30 or more years old.

Objective: To coordinate sewer and water infrastructure development with neighboring municipalities' existing and future growth patterns.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Infrastructure Planning Committee made up of members from the Gilpin Township Water and Sewer Authorities, the Parks Township Water and Sewer Authorities, the Westmoreland Municipal Authority and at least one elected official from each municipality.
- Establish a semi-annual meeting schedule to discuss water and sewer infrastructure developments so coordination of services could be possible.

Objective: To improve and expand recreational opportunities within the municipality.

Policies:

- Develop a recreation plan.
- Apply for a DCNR Keystone Grant.
- Begin budgeting matching grants funds.
- Along with Gilpin Township, improve the equipment at the Gilpin/Leechburg Area Park.
- Improve/expand the Leechburg Riverfront park located on River Avenue along the Kiskiminetas River between First and Second Streets below the rail lines right-of-way sold by Conrail to Allegheny Ludlum who donated them to the Borough. The park area is small, limited by steep terrain and the area available between the supermarket and the river. The extent of the park is a picnic tables and a few other seating areas.
- Included in the recreation plan are improvements to Hyde Park and the Leechburg Walking Bridge.
- Expand Riverfront Park to connect to the Walking Bridge via a walking trail.
- Explore the process of acquiring private property to develop riverfront recreation and access.

Objective: To maintain the current levels of emergency care that are considered acceptable.

Policy:

- Continue to support the firefighting units and emergency medical service organizations. The County's 911 Emergency Response System should be supported and promoted as a vehicle for emergency management planning.

Objective: To explore the possibility of a shared services regional police force.

Policies:

- Establish a Regional Planning Commission or a COG between the four municipalities.
- Examine closely the benefits, costs, police coverage and safety implications that could be expected from a regional police force.
- Conduct public meetings and weigh resident response.
- Speak with DCED concerning the funding available through the shared services program.

Objective: To create a municipal Web site to increase information dissemination.

Policies:

- Form a committee to discuss the information that the municipality would agree to place on a Web site; i.e., newsletter, minutes, ordinances, forms, etc.
- Contact the State Association of Borough or Township Supervisors concerning domain names, hosting and design.
- If the limited version provided by these organizations is inadequate, RFP for private web developers familiar with local governments.
- Register a domain name, establish web hosting through a company providing such services and review the web design.
- Establish e-mails for all elected officials.
- Decide whether to out source or in-house the Web site maintenance.

Objective: To create more activities for youths.

Policy:

- Explore recreational improvements to the park that would attract teenagers such as roller blading, skateboarding or other similar activities.

Objective: To improve the local cultural facilities.

Policies:

- Access funding to improve the capacity and facilities at the Public Library.
- Likewise, access funding for museum and historical society improvements.

Public Water and Sanitary Sewer Systems Mapping

The need for a sanitary sewer system is probably the most critical community issue facing the Region. Expansion of housing types, especially multi-family housing or an elderly care facility, and the growth of residential living in the area largely depends on it.

Like sanitary sewer systems, public water systems generally expand the amount of development that a given area can support. Although the Region's future development isn't nearly as dependent on public water service as it is on sanitary sewer service, large scale residential, commercial, or industrial developments may still require water service. Thus, public water systems — like sanitary sewer systems — may be coordinated to provide a de facto growth management system for the region. Any such coordination should observe the same growth management concerns given on the previous page.

Map 31 - Recommended Water Service areas 11x17

Map 32 - Proposed and recommended Sewer Improvements 11x17

CHAPTER 17

THE PLAN COMPONENT
INTERRELATIONSHIP STATEMENT

THE PLAN COMPONENT INTERRELATIONSHIP STATEMENT

The synthesis of interrelated activities to resolve issues and problems is always the thrust of community planning. In this regard, there are linkages among the elements of the goals and objectives and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. All are related and should further the overall goal, which is **“To foster the climate for a high quality of life for Borough and Townships residents by allowing for moderate, controlled commercial, industrial and residential growth, while maintaining rural character; providing decent, affordable housing; providing recreational opportunities for families; improving or expanding infrastructure and services, improving municipal cooperation between regional governments and their citizens and civic groups; and providing an efficient, safe, diverse, economical and environmentally sensitive transportation system, preserving bio-diversity, clean water and air.”**

The land use and subdivision recommendations are the means to implement these principles in a regulatory framework. As an example, housing recommendations not only come to terms with demographic trends, rehabilitation needs, and existing conditions, but also further the goals of eliminating blighted structures and complement residential development. All factors aim to increase the quality of life for South Central Armstrong County Region residents. Transportation recommendations may address safety issues and strengthen the transportation system, and also seek to enhance the system and future linkages with arterial roadways and regional transportation networks.

Recommendations for community facilities and services reflect the rural environment of the South Central Armstrong County Region and the need for certain services. Sanitary sewer and potable water recommendations reflect the need for maintaining and improving the existing systems.

Transportation has an effect on land use; land use has an effect on housing; housing has an effect on community facilities and services and public utilities; public utilities affect the community's physiology. There are other numerous interrelationship factors between the various components of the Comprehensive Plan; however, the ones mentioned above are the most noteworthy.

Plan implementation and coordination coupled with South Central Armstrong County Region involvement with the review of subdivision and land development projects suggest the active role the South Central Armstrong County Region Planning Committee should have regarding the redevelopment of the community.

Again, each of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan have a bearing on one another. Also, plan recommendations regarding the various components of the Comprehensive Plan have an effect on neighboring communities. These effects are explained further in the Contiguous Municipalities Statement of this document.

CHAPTER 18

THE CONTIGUOUS MUNICIPALITIES
RELATIONSHIP STATEMENT

THE CONTIGUOUS MUNICIPALITIES STATEMENT

Regional planning provides the means of facilitating the coordination of land use, housing, economic development, transportation, community facilities, public utilities and other planning elements throughout Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough. It is believed that the goals, objectives, and recommendations of this plan are consistent with those of the neighboring municipalities located in this section of Pennsylvania. The contiguous municipalities to the Region include the following in the list below and depicted on **Map 33**:

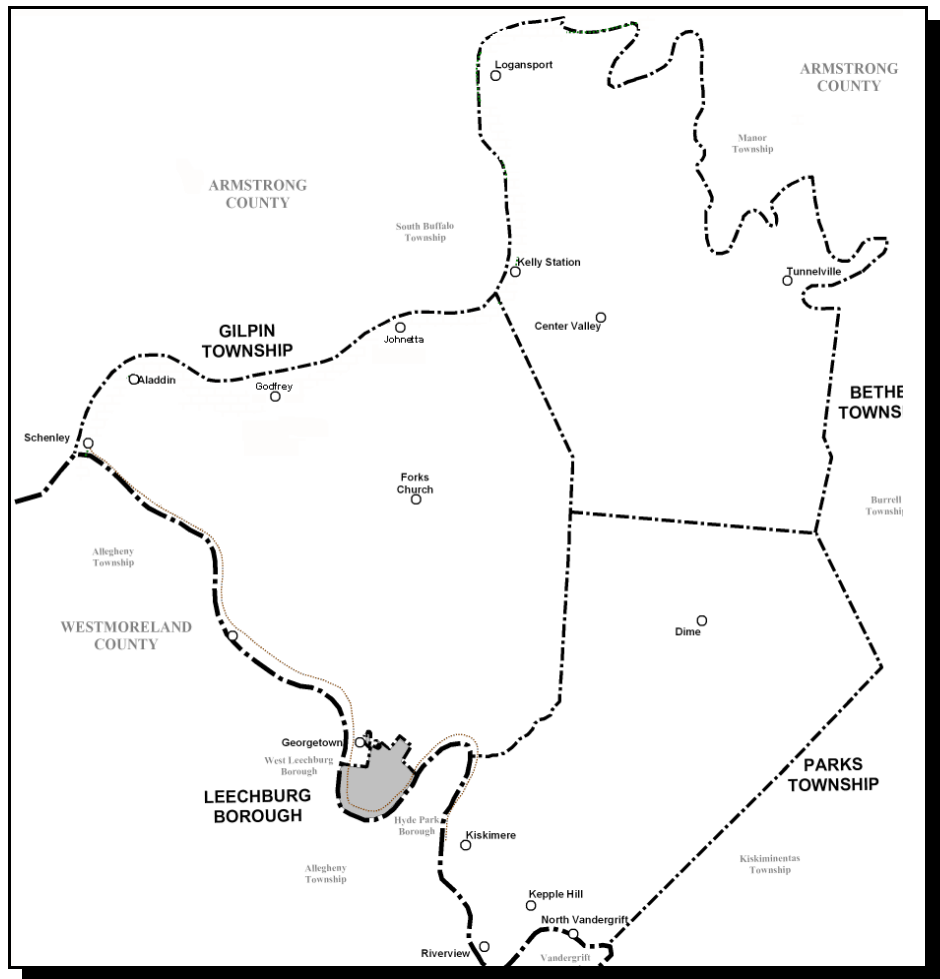
Armstrong County

Manor Township
Burrell Township
Kiskiminetas Township

Westmoreland County

West Leechburg Borough
Hyde Park Borough
Vandergrift Borough
Allegheny Township

A summary of the goals, objectives, and recommendations will be sent to each of the adjacent municipalities for their review and comments. There are no known major conflicts are presented by incompatible land uses being proposed where these municipalities abut Gilpin, Parks and Bethel Townships and Leechburg Borough. The map below illustrates the geographic relationships of the municipalities and the South Central Armstrong County Region.



Map 33

CHAPTER 19

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS
AND STRATEGIES

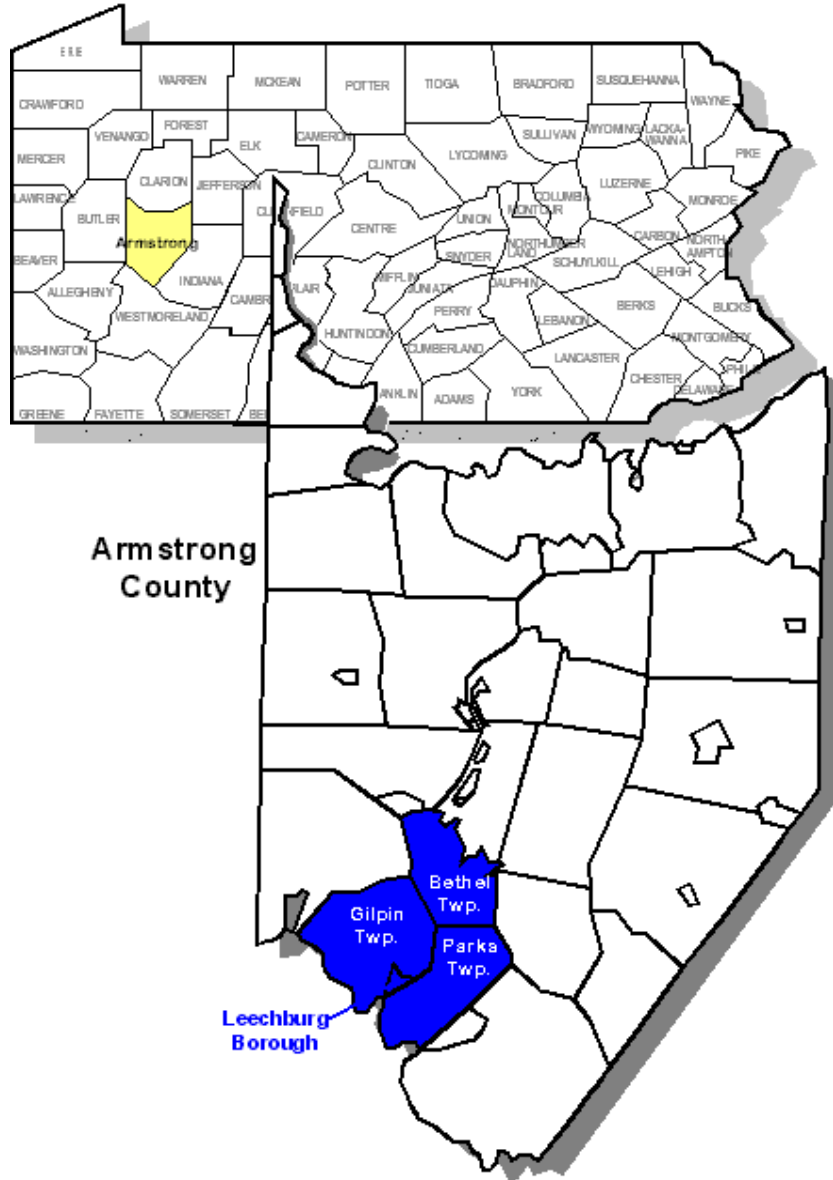
IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

The Comprehensive Plan is presented as a guide for the future orderly growth and development of the community. The Plan has no legal enforcement status to insure its effectuation. The wholehearted support of the Plan by the Borough Council, Township Supervisors, public officials, citizen organizations, and individual citizens is, therefore, most imperative.

In addition to this support, there are a number of other implementation tools which can be used to effectuate the Plan. These include:

1. **Zoning Ordinance:** Parks and Bethel Townships do not have Zoning Ordinances. Gilpin and Leechburg have existing zoning ordinances. As part of the second year of this planning program, a Zoning Ordinance and a Zoning Map should be prepared for Parks Township. The ordinance will reflect the Future Land Use Plan Element of the Comprehensive Plan as well as recent amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code. Leechburg Borough should also consider updating their ordinance. Gilpin Township went through this process in conjunction with the formation of this Comprehensive Plan.
2. **Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance:** This ordinance provides developers and potential subdividers definite indications of the minimum standards required to protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents of the community as well as adhering to generally accepted design standards. The ordinance acts to guide their efforts in relation to the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Plan of the Region.
3. **Housing Revitalization Strategy and Plan:** A Housing Revitalization Strategy and Plan should be undertaken for all regional municipalities. This strategy and plan will include a market analysis and merchant and shopper survey. It will also include: organizational building, analysis of physical environment, the revitalization plan and an action plan. This revitalization strategy and plan will act not only as the basis for the revitalization and conservation of the Region, but will also act to implement the proposed land use pattern of development as recommended in the Future Land Use Plan of the Comprehensive Plan.
4. **Implementation Strategy Matrix:** This strategy is comprised of a list of recommended projects and programs with their respective priority and time frames for implementation. The strategy covers a period of five years into the future. Through this strategy the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan can be carried out and financed thereby promoting the effectuation of the Proposed Land Use Plan. This strategy can act as the basis for a more formal Capital Improvements Program (CIP) which indicates the actual year for each project or program along with the estimated cost and the recommended sources of funding.

PART III



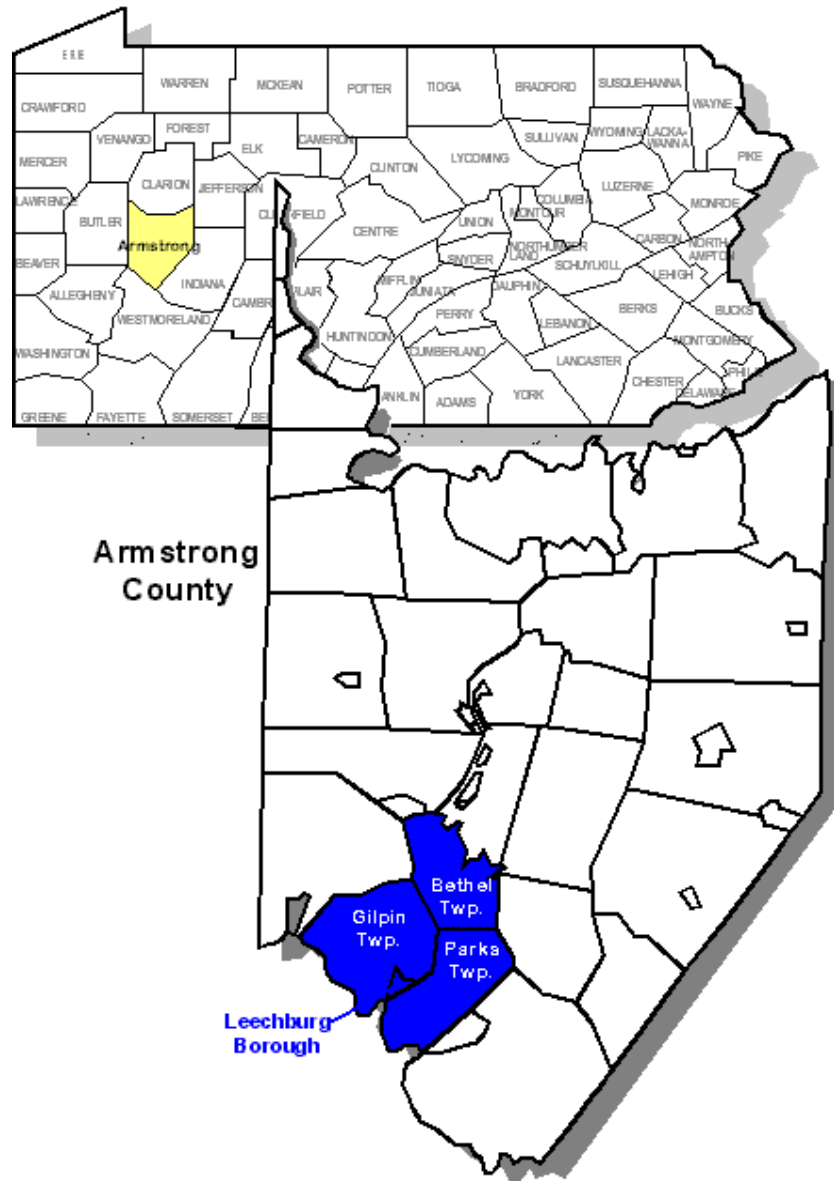
Armstrong
County

Leechburg
Borough

Gilpin
Twp.
Bethel
Twp.
Parka
Twp.

APPENDIX A: 2000 CENSUS DATA FOR THE 2008 SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

PART III



APPENDIX B: Parks Township and Bethel Township Business Listings FOR THE 2007/2008 SOUTH CENTRAL ARMSTRONG COUNTY REGION

2008 Parks Township Business Listing

Business Name	No. Employees	Address (Vandergrift PA 15690)	Phone
Accro Tool, Inc.	5	1129 Industrial Park Rd. Box 21 St	724-845-2840
Adam's Construction	1	1103 Dime Road	742-567-5065
Allegheny Design Mgt.	46	1154 Industrial Park Road	724-845-7336
Andy's Barber Shop	1	1183 Lincoln Street PA	724-567-6377
Artman Escavating	2	1348 Ash Road	724-845-9479
Atlas CNC	2	PO Box 21, Vandergrift, PA 15690	724-845-8927
Mike Bartoe Construction	1	1104 Terrace Ave	724-568-1962
BLC Truck Equipment	1	1875 Dime Road	724-845-2010
Budget Mini Storage	1	3002 River Rd	724-845-1042
Celmark Associates	1	1165 Claypool Ln	724-567-2292
Cousins Insurance Agency	15	1699 Dime Road	724-568-2150
R. V. Coleman, Trucking	14	2910 River Rd	724-568-1669
Composidie, Inc.	1	2690 River Rd	724-727-3466
CBT Creative Consultants	2	1129 Industrial Park Road	724-845-2969
Commonwealth Elevation	1	1170 Lincoln Street	
Continental Bowling Inc. Lee's Lanes	14	2780 River Rd	724-567-5963
Cook Vascular	114	1186 Montgomery Ln	724-845-8621
Crocus Art Design	2	1129 Industrial Park Rd, Suite 114	
Dialysis Clinic	16	1143 Industrial Park Road	724-845-3313
D & L Fire Safety Equipment	1	1199 Pleasant View Drive	724-568-2263
Doo Little Digging	1	1756 Dime Road	724-845-1542
Duke Wryder Corporation	1	1124 Airport Road	724-568-2001
Estermyer & Associates	2	1129 Industrial Park Rd Suite 207	724-842-1111
Evergreen Counseling Services	2	1129 Industrial Park Road Bx 29	724-845-9880
F & L Medical Products	7	1129 Industrial Park Road, Bx 3	724-845-7028
Family Counseling Services	2	1129 Industrial Park Rd Suite 217	724-845-6667
Frickanisce Fine Firearms	1	1124 Airport Road	724-568-2001
Frickanisce Iron Works	7	1124 Airport Road	724-568-2001
Frosty Hollow Hardwoods	4	1127 Frost Hollow Lane	724-568-3440
Tom Gallovich Photography	1	1130 Eagles Nest Road	724-845-9000
Genay Hess, DVM	5	2687 River Road	724-568-2385
Hungry Hollow Hounds Kennels	1	1571 Hungry Hollow Road	724-845-6668
JB Custom Cycle	1	1178 Jefferson Drive	724-568-1326
John's Tours	1	2639 River Road	724-567-7341
Kensington Windows	230	1136 Industrial Park Road	724-845-8133
Kiski Valley Enterprises Inc.	1	1129 Parks Industrial Rd Box 10	724-845-5426
Kiski Valley Upholstery Auto Service	1	2704 River Rd	724-568-2291
Lake's Roadhouse & Motel	3	2847 River Road	724-567-5405
Laurel & Linda Hair	2	2618 River Road Park Rd	724-568-1120
Leading Technologies	70	1153 Industrial Park Road	724-842-3400
James Marsili Auto Service	1	2864 River Road	724-568-2073
Jay's Auto Sales	1	2855 River Road	724-568-9933
Jay's Tire & Auto Service	3	1111 Stitts Run Road	724-568-3353
Marks Smith Construction	1	1105 Claypool Ln	724-568-2647
MJS Construction	1	1177 Lincoln Street	724-567-3325
Minik Used Cars	2	2700 River Road	724-568-3325
Parks Twp Auto Wreckers	1	1144 Upper Mateer Road	724-567-5315

Business Name	No. Employees	Address (Vandergrift PA 15690)	Phone
Parks Twp Municipal Authority	3	1106 Highland Avenue	724-567-7301
Petroleum Testing	1	1129 Industrial Park Rd Suite 117	
Pine View Personal Care Facility	13	1113 Pine View Dr	724-568-3631
Precise Auto Body	25	1190 Dime Road	724-567-7233
Reed Roofing	3	1108 Pump Station Rd	724-567-6029
Reynold's Plumbing & Heating	1	1543 Dime Rd	724-568-2951
Richard Greece Contracting	2	1129 Industrial Park Rd Suite 204	
River Road Six Pack	2	2274 River Rd	724-568-3518
Riverview Mobile Home Sales	8	2623 River Rd	724-567-5647
Rowley Market Gift Shoppe	2	1012 1 st Street	724-567-6511
Sage	1	1129 Industrial Park Rd Suite 100	
Shannon Auto Repairs & Sales	1	2670 River Road	724-568-3644
Shuster's High-Tech Automotive	1	1112 Locust Road	724-568-1999
Skwirut Plumbing & Heating	1	2693 River Road	724-568-2305
Slovak Club of Parks Twp	3	1214 Lincoln Street	724-568-3005
Spedd, Inc.	1	1129 Industrial Park Rd Box 2	724-845-5416
Sports Unlimited	1	1129 Industrial Park Rd Suite 104	724-567-5621
Stitt Machine Company	2	1200 Grant Street	724-567-6745
Strongland Chamber of Commerce	3	1129 Industrial Park Rd. Box 10	724-845-5426
Strongland Roofing Systems	21	1465 Airport Road	724-567-6629
Stu's Truck & Auto Repair	2	1200 Grant Street	724-568-5500
Summerhill Lumber	1	1121 Summerhill Lane	724-845-0900
Suppers Electric	1	1132 Smith Lane	724-845-8877
Teri's Styling Salon	1	1194 Dime Road Ln	724-568-9988
Toolex Mfg. Corporation	65	1159 Industrial Park Road	724-845-8602
Uncle Charley's Sausage	40	1135 Industrial Park Road	724-845-3302
Valley Car Wash	1	3002 River Road	724-845-1042
VNA Professional Nursing	22	1129 Industrial Park Rd Suite 26	800-245-3042
Venango Awning	2	1261 Airport Road	724-567-6296
Waltenbaugh Trucking	1	1361 Lower Mateer Road	724-568-1940
Wilhelmy Fine Particles	1	1129 Industrial Park Road Suite 219	
Wood's Motor Sales	1	2831 River Road	724-568-3321
Young's Auto Repair	2	1294 Airport Road	724-568-2401
Zawalnicki Construction	1	1223 Pleasant View Drive	724-568-3324

Source: Parks Township Supervisors

2008 Bethel Township Business Listings

Business Name	No. Employees	Business Address	Phone Number
Armstrong Veterinary Clinic	3	Dime Rd., Ford City, PA 16226	724-845-2966
Barbeque Ribs	1	793 Evergreen Rd., Leechburg, PA 15656	
Bethel Township Supervisors	4	3218 Ridge Rd., Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-1882
Boylestein Dog Kennel	1	St. Rt. 66, Ford City, PA 16226	
Business Name	No. Employees	Business Address	Phone Number

Bud's Radiator & Auto Service	2	345 Grantz Hollow Road, Vandergrift, PA 15690	724-763-3433
Cappy's Corner	2	326 3 rd Street, Leechburg, PA 15656	724-763-4240
CIM Supply, Inc.	1	PO Box 221, Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-9134
Clip N Dip Grooming & Boarding	1	185 Crooked Creek Dam Rd, Ford City, PA 16626	724-763-9256
Crooked Creek Market	3	1880 St Rt 66, Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-1160
Crotallo Monuments	1	1890 St Rt 66, Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-3062
Dave Peppler, Plumbing & Heating	3	530 Spruce Hollow Road, Vandergrift, PA 15690	724-845-7367
Dean Burton Trucking	1	103 Stoughton Dr, Vandergrift, PA 15690	724-763-1454
Die-Tech, Inc.	25	115 Summit Drive, Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-9336
Don Klingensmith Lawn Care & Snow	1	118 Perry Rd. Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-2717
Doug's Auto Body Shop	1	St. Rt 88, Ford City, PA 16226	
Equitrans	6	3500 Park Lane, Pittsburgh PA 15275	800-654-6335
Goodman's Bait & Tackle Shop	3	1836 St Rt 66, Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-9519
Greenhouse 22	3	1799 St Rt 66, Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-8034
Joe Smail Small Engine Repair	1	1349 St Rt 66, Ford City, PA 16226	724-845-9289
Kiski Valley Opportunities	6	Spruce Hollow Rd. Vandergrift, PA 15690	
Myrt's Rt 66 Café	8	1841 St Rt 66, Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-9629
Pitzer's Crooked Creek Inn	21	171 Crooked Creek Dam Rd, Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-4123
Purple's Saloon	4	1435 St Rt 66 Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-1812
Ric Farester Crane Service	3	176 Peary Rd. Ford City, PA 16626	724-763-2819
Rosebud Mining Co.	50	301 Market St. Kittanning, PA 16201	724-545-6222
Shoemaker Pump Station	2	Equitable Gas, 420 Blvd. of Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15219	800-564-6335
Sithe Energies, Inc	1	1400 Fourth Avenue, Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-9028
TNT Tree Service	3	149 Logansport Rd. Ford City, PA 16226	724-763-6184
William R. Knopp Construction Inc.	5	304 Lakeview Rd, Ford City, PA 16626	724-763-9649

Source: Bethel Township Supervisors

