

Linking County and Municipal Planning Through Regional Planning



a presentation for the
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Conference

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Hello!

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How Did We Get Here?

Linking County and Municipal Planning
Through Regional Planning
In Westmoreland

2016



Image Source: unsplash.com, Tyler Callahan



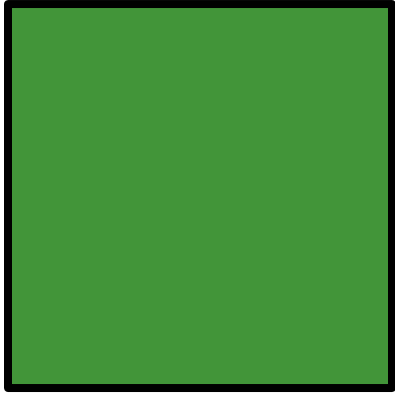
Image Source: theenglishfarm.com

2005 Comprehensive Plan

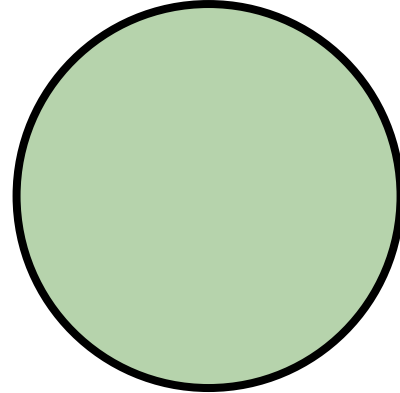


Image Source: customon.com

So How Do You Link County and Municipal Planning?



1
County



65
Municipalities

So How Do You Link County and Municipal Planning?

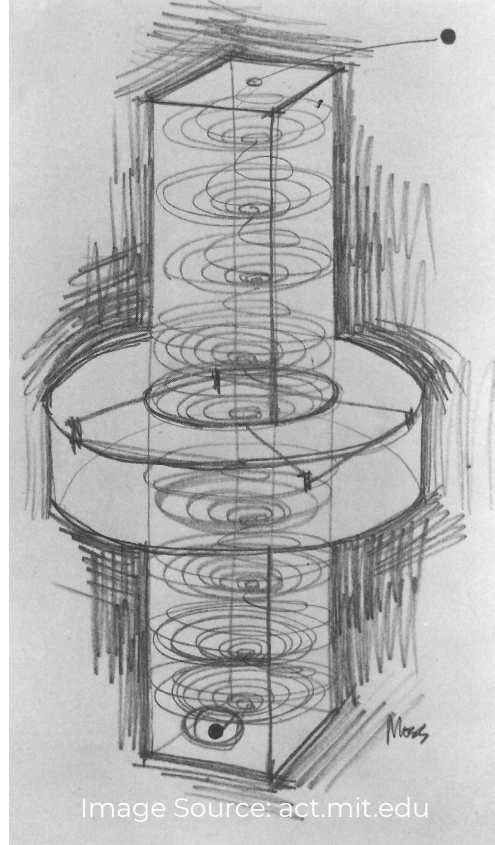


Image Source: act.mit.edu

2018



2018



Planning Districts Approach

65

Municipalities

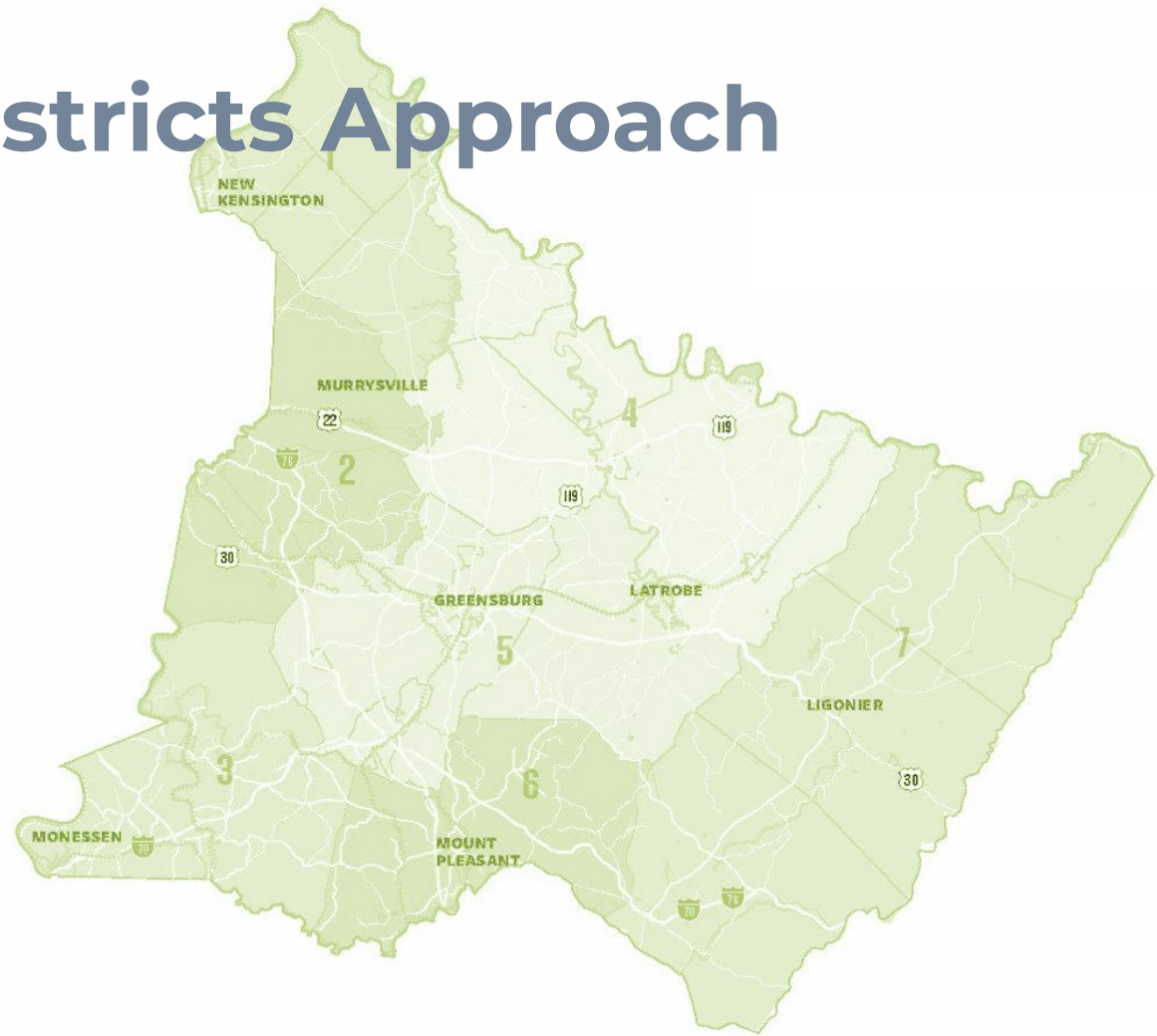




Planning Districts Approach

7

Districts



Our Situation

- Implementation of the comp plan relies on collaboration and coordination at multiple levels
- Local government is fragmented, resources are scarce, and there are many decisions to be made
- Municipalities don't exist in a vacuum

Our Situation

- Gulf between regional intentions and local implementation
- Limited capacity at the local level

< 30%

have a
professional manager

< 15%

have a
professional planner*

Guiding Concepts

1. County planners and regional partners are best suited to deliver planning and technical assistance
2. Local government is best suited to understand local needs/wants and to carry out recommendations in the plan
3. Collaboration between the two is the formula for implementation

Planning Districts Approach



Shared Services & Regional Decision Making

*Regional problems
deserve
regional solutions*



Information Sharing Among Municipalities

*Best practices and new
approaches can be shared,
when a platform is prepared*



Bridge Divide Between Need & Resources

*A lack of capacity keeps local
municipalities distant from
resources*



Transparency With the Public & Developers

*Communication of regional
needs is simpler than dozens of
identical, individual needs*



Informed Decision-Making

*Good decisions
depend on
good information*



Efficient Public Service Delivery

*Thinking regionally
recognizes
economies of scale*

What's the Process?

1. Contextualization
2. Land Use
3. Mobility
4. Intergovernmental Cooperation

1.



Reimagining Our Westmoreland

1. Align Workforce, Education, Employers, and Entrepreneurship
2. Discover Westmoreland
3. Reposition Our Towns
4. Connect With Parks and Nature
5. Build Healthy and Whole Communities
6. Plug Into the New Economy
7. Create Transportation Choices

Local Issues, Common Opportunity

Contextualization Phase

1. Team building
2. Identify key issues
3. Align issues to core objectives



Local Issues, Common Opportunity

Contextualization Phase

CO 1
Align Workforce,
Education, and
Entrepreneurship

workforce

CO 2
Discover
Westmoreland

marketing
the region

CO 3
Reposition
Our
Towns

blight

land use
best practices
housing
options

CO 4
Connect
With
Parks and Nature

parks and
beautification

trails and
waterways

CO 5
Build Healthy
and Whole
Communities

parks and
beautification

blight

cooperation

land use
best practices
housing
options

CO 6
Plug Into the
New Economy

workforce

CO 7
Create
Transportation
Choices

infrastructure

2.

Land Use

PLACES MATTER



Image Source: miami21.org

Planning District Process

Land Use Phase

1. Reach consensus on land use principles
2. Establish land use objectives
3. Develop a future land use map
4. Develop land use strategies and actions

Fun Fact

41

have zoning

34

have a SALDO



Land Use Principles

1. Growth is inevitable
2. Growth has impacts
3. Land use depends on public decisions
4. Public involvement is essential
5. Impacts of land use decisions extend beyond municipal boundaries
6. Land use priorities vary among individuals and within communities
7. Planning is essential at the smallest and largest scales

Land Use Objectives

Preserve

natural lands, farms,
historic sites,
recreation areas, and
water resources

Enhance

rural centers,
neighborhood
centers, town centers,
urban cores, job
centers, gateways,
and access to
recreation

Transform

blighted
neighborhoods,
abandoned
properties, riverfront,
industrial areas,
brownfields, and
failing commercial
areas

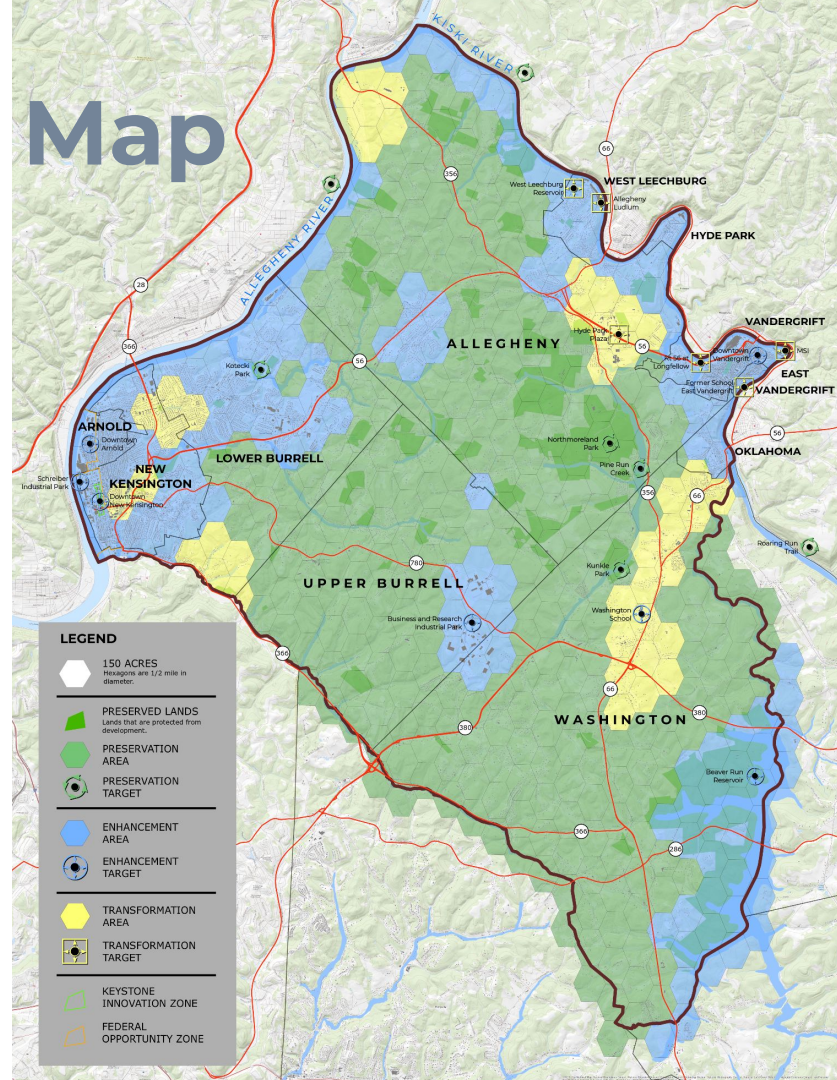


Less

Spectrum of Change

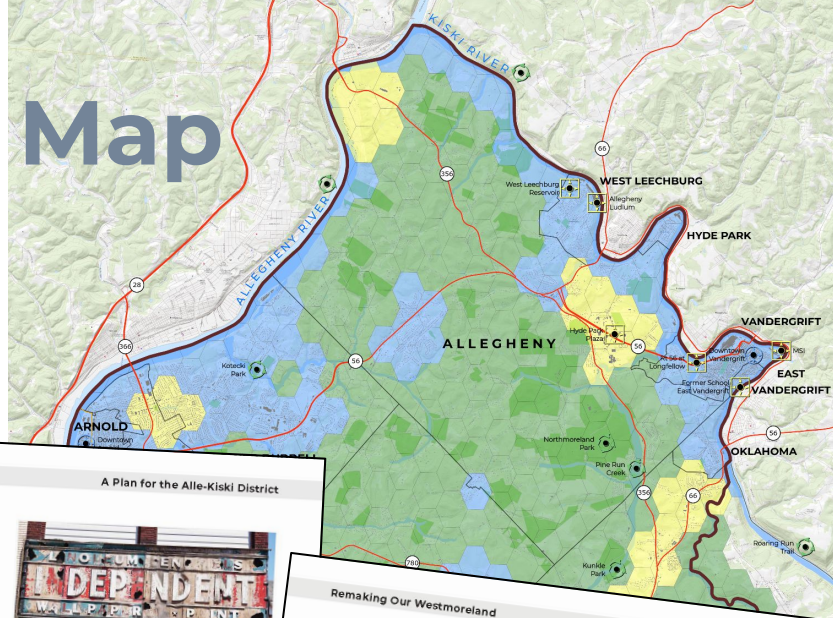
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Future Land Use Map



Future Land Use Map

Land Use Strategies and Actions



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A Plan for the Alle-Kiski District

STRATEGIES FOR PRESERVATION AREAS

- 1. GROW LOCAL**
 - a. Revise zoning ordinances to allow for agritourism as an accessory use on farms.
- 2. PRESERVE OPEN SPACE & PROTECT NATURAL ASSETS**
 - a. Work with the Westmoreland Conservation District, Westmoreland Land Trust, and Westmoreland County Agricultural Land Preservation to preserve areas of significant environmental, ecological, recreational, scenic, or agricultural value.
 - b. Revise zoning ordinances to include agricultural protection zoning (APZ).
 - c. Adopt adjacency and concurrency policies to ensure all future development is within the bounds of existing infrastructure.
 - d. Utilize parks and trails to preserve open space and protect natural assets.
- 3. IMPROVE & SUSTAIN WATER RESOURCES**
 - a. Adopt and enforce the model (or local) stormwater management ordinance.
- 4. GO GREEN**
 - a. Amend zoning ordinances and SALDOs to encourage green infrastructure.
 - b. Revise zoning ordinances to allow for community gardens.

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCEMENT AREAS

- 1. PROVIDE DEVELOPMENT-READY SITES***
 - a. Identify, prioritize, and rehabilitate existing

Beaver Run Farm, Allegheny
Source: Westmoreland County

Beaver Run Dam, West
Source: Westmoreland

Community Garden

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A Plan for the Alle-Kiski District

2. INVEST IN BEAUTIFICATION*

- Identify key corridors, intersections, and gateways for improvement.
- Develop partnerships with community organizations and volunteers to maintain areas.
- Adopt and enforce property maintenance codes to establish standards of quality.
- Incorporate landscaping and design requirements in zoning ordinances and SALDOs, as applicable, to maintain and improve community aesthetics.
- Create and administer facade improvement programs.

3. DEVELOP RECREATIONAL DESTINATIONS*

- Identify potential locations (districtwide) for a regional indoor recreation complex and conduct a feasibility study. Proceed accordingly based on the results of the study.

4. INVEST IN DOWNTOWNS*

- Focus development within the bounds of existing infrastructure in neighborhood centers, town centers, and urban cores.
- Develop downtown master plans.
 - Example: Corridor of Innovation New Kensington.
- Review and update policies and regulations to remove barriers to the development process.
- Implement tactical urbanism or pop-up projects and events to demonstrate desired changes and encourage new development.

5. ADVANCE ENTREPRENEURIALISM

- Revise zoning ordinances to allow for live/work spaces, shared-use facilities, and incubator spaces in rural centers, neighborhood centers, town centers, and urban cores.

Building facade, New Kensington
Source: Westmoreland County Planning

Tactical urbanism, Spring
Source: Utah Urban Design Center

Corner

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12. BOLSTER AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES & SERVICES

- Amend zoning ordinances to allow for a variety of housing types to accommodate senior needs.
- Ensure senior housing and aging-in-community town centers, and urban cores near related services and transit options.

13. AND APPLICABLE STRATEGIES FOR PRESERVATION AREAS

STRATEGIES FOR TRANSFORMATION AREAS

- 1. ELIMINATE BLIGHT***
 - a. Conduct a blight inventory and utilize the Five-Step Fast-Track Blight Plan process.
 - b. Join the Westmoreland County Land Bank.
 - c. Identify and prioritize brownfield and grayfield sites for remediation.
 - Examples: Brasburn Lower Burrell, Allegheny Ludlum West Leechburg, MSI Vandergrift, Allegheny Plaza, Hyde Park Plaza.
 - d. Enforce property maintenance codes.
 - e. Utilize the county's Act 152 Demo Fund to remove structures and eliminate blight.
- 2. CONNECT WITH TECH**
 - a. Collaborate with Westmoreland County IDC, private companies, nonprofits, and local educational institutions to develop makerspaces.
 - i. Example: Corridor of Innovation New Kensington and...

Blighted houses, Arnold
Source: Westmoreland Planning

3.

Mobility



Planning District Process

Mobility Phase

1. Reach consensus on mobility principles
2. Establish mobility objectives
3. Develop mobility strategies and actions
4. Identify and prioritize transportation projects

Mobility Principles

1. Land use and transportation are inextricably linked
2. Transportation has impacts
3. Transportation depends on public decisions
4. Public involvement is essential
5. Impacts of transportation extend beyond municipal boundaries
6. Transportation priorities vary among individuals and among communities
7. Planning is essential at the smallest and largest scales

Mobility Objectives

Align

transportation policy,
investments, projects,
and improvements to
land use priorities

Maintain

transportation
infrastructure to
ensure a safe and
high-quality network

Create

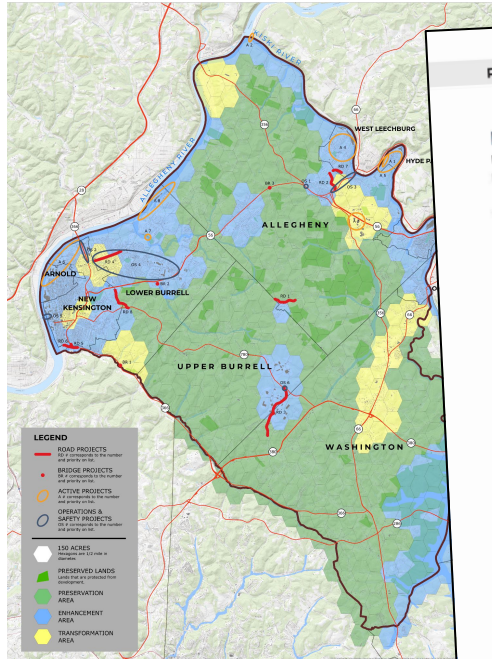
transportation
choices to ensure
accessibility and
mobility for all

Mobility Strategies and Actions



Mobility Strategies and Actions

Transportation Projects



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ROAD PROJECTS

Projects are listed in priority order including road name, location, project type, and municipality.

1. SR 4304/Markle Rd, from near Newell Ln towards Spring Hollow Dr
Preservation or reconstruction
Allegheny Township
2. SR 4091/W Leechburg Rd, from Pleasant Hill Rd to S Leechburg Hill Rd
Preservation or reconstruction
Allegheny Township
3. SR 4032/Hunt Valley Rd/Camp Nancy Rd, from 7th Street Rd towards Turkey Ridge Rd
Preservation or reconstruction
Upper Burrell Township & Washington Township
4. SR 4042/Leechburg Rd, from Craigdel Rd to near Rodgers Dr
Preservation or reconstruction
Lower Burrell
5. PA 366/Greensburg Rd, from Logans Ferry Rd to near Westmoreland Ave
Preservation or reconstruction
Lower Burrell
6. SR 4087/2nd St, from Moss Aly to Freeport St
Preservation or reconstruction
New Kensington & Lower Burrell
7. SR 4050/Pleasant Hill Rd, from municipal line to

BRIDGE PROJECTS

Projects are listed in priority order including bridge number, road name, location, project type, and municipality.

1. Bridge #36211, PA 366/Greensburg Rd over branch of Pucketa Creek
Preservation, rehab, or reconstruction
Lower Burrell
2. Bridge #36766, SR 4081/Wildlife Lodge Rd over Little Pucketa Creek
Preservation, rehab, or reconstruction
Lower Burrell
3. Bridge #36761, SR 4073/White Cloud Rd over PA 56/Leechburg Rd
Preservation, rehab, or reconstruction
Allegheny Township

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MOBILITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Strategies are the specific ways to achieve the mobility objectives, while actions are the steps for implementation.

The following strategies are listed in order of priority as determined by the Alle-Kiski Planning District.



IMPROVE PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Concentrate mixed-use transit supportive development in neighborhood centers, town centers, and urban cores along existing rail lines so that rail services may be feasible.

Source: Amtrak, Unsplash.com

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TRAIL SYSTEMS

Identify strategic locations for local trails and actions to regional trails.

Example: Allegheny Township trail connection to Freeport hub.

Construct connections from trails to residential parks, historical sites, schools, and other destinations.

Extend the trail networks along the Alle-Kiski and Kiskiminnas rivers.

Example: Extension of the Wynn & Clara Way Trail north to Schenley and beyond to Armstrong Trail, and south to Newington.

Investments near trails for pedestrian infrastructure, restaurants, and bike outfitters.



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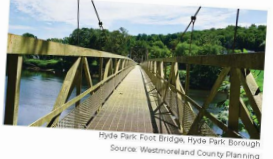
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4.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

**Teamwork
Makes the
Dream Work**



Image Source: latimes.com

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A Plan for the Alle-Kiski District

Remaking Our Westmoreland

A Plan for the
Alle-Kiski District

2020

12

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Land Use

Across the landscape of the Alle-Kiski Planning District, there are many assets and characteristics that make the Alle-Kiski, the *Alle-Kiski* – namely the Allegheny and Kiskiminetas riverfronts, but also its open space and farmland, rich history, neighborhood and urban centers, and industrial legacy.

Places matter. How and where a community chooses to grow and develop has lasting economic, environmental, social, and mobility impacts. Are we creating communities where people want to live, work, and play? Are we creating communities that are sustainable, resilient, and economically productive? The communities that are growing and getting the development they desire have thought about their future.



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Mobility

Just as land use defines the location and places worth connecting to and within, transportation connects us to and within the places that matter. The choices made today about growth, redevelopment, zoning, subdivision and land development, and public sewage infrastructure impact future access, mobility, and transportation options available.

How do residents get from place to place? Can they safely walk or bike? Do they have to drive? Is transit available? How long does it take to reach the destination?

Pittsburgh
Source: Nathan Nicholson, Unsplash.com



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A Plan for the

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Across Pennsylvania, municipal boundaries divide geographic, social, economic, and interdependent communities. As a result, there often exists a significant lack of intergovernmental communication, duplication of services, inefficiencies, lack of cross-boundary visioning and planning, and cumbersome coordination and decision-making.

Active cooperation and coordination among local governments through councils of governments (COGs) and other intergovernmental organizations can go a long way to support economic vibrancy and fiscally healthy regions. Additionally, through locally-approved, citizen-based processes, municipal consolidation is another alternative that can lead to improved economic productivity and quality of life among communities.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION IN THE ALLE-KISKI

Consensus for an intergovernmental council (IGC) was developed through significant work performed at the regular planning district meetings and through the intergovernmental working group. In particular, the working group examined various governance options, sought greater cohesiveness as a group, and established thresholds for return on investment.

The Planning District process itself is a degree of intergovernmental cooperation among municipalities of the Alle-Kiski by meeting to discuss common issues and challenges to take action. This document represents action, and the time for action is now.

The PA Intergovernmental Council (53 Pa. C.S.A. § 2301) is the enabling authority for intergovernmental cooperation among municipalities in Pennsylvania. This is a local governments to cooperate with in any action or service that the government has the power to do alone.



After the Plan

- 7 of the 11 municipalities adopted the plan
- Same 7 are participating in the IGC
- Westmoreland County Planning is providing admin support to the IGC
- Westmoreland County Planning is gearing up to start the Planning District process with 15 municipalities central in the county

Items of Note

- Not a large public process
- Done in-house with a county planning staff of 2-5
- *Couldn't this have been part of the county comp plan process?*

Acknowledgements

Susan Hockenberry Coaching & Consulting

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

Thanks!

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Any questions?

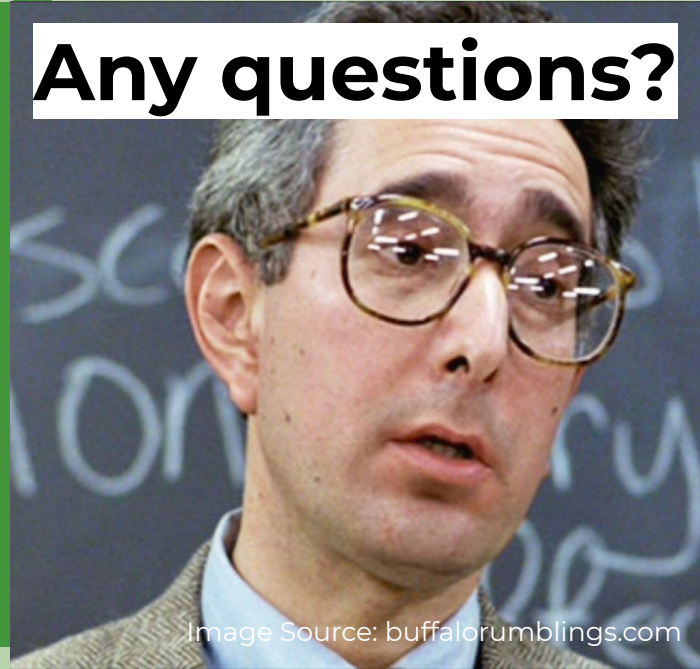


Image Source: buffalorumblings.com