

Creating Walkable Communities in PA - Local, Regional and State Perspectives

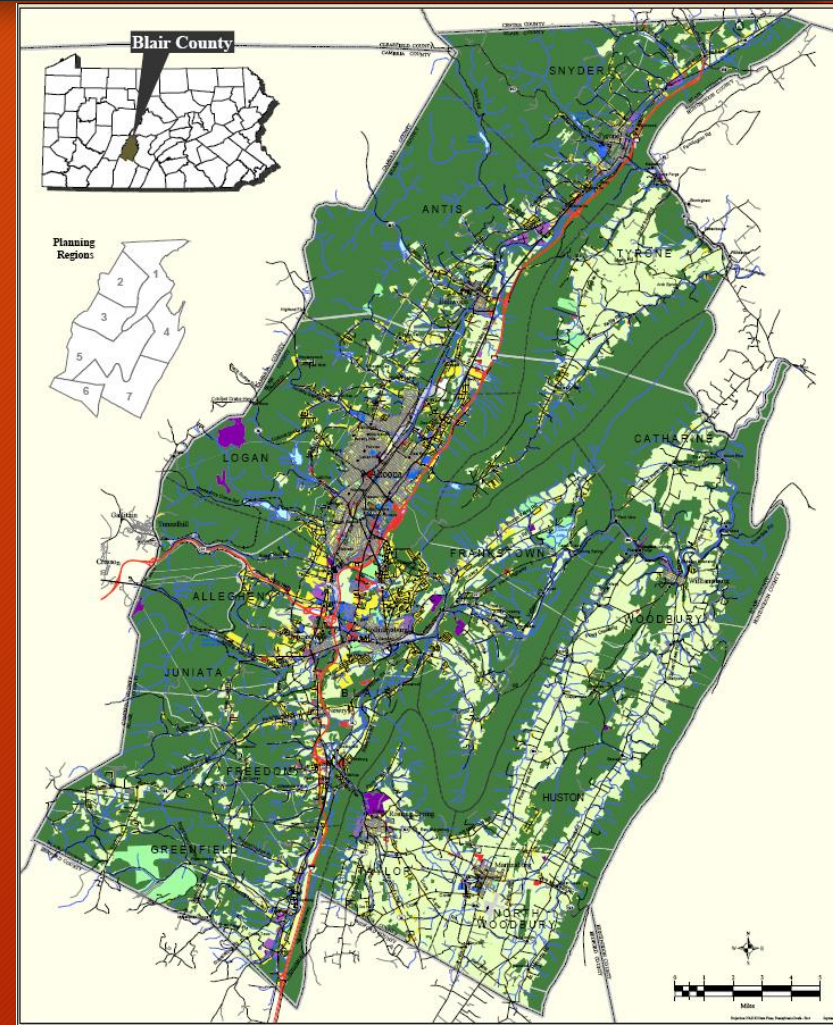
PA Chapter of the American Planning Association 2015 Conference

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Blair County Planning Commission

Blair County

- Population - 127,089 as of 2010 Census
- 25 Municipalities
 - 1 City, 9 Boroughs and 15 Townships
- Urban Core vs. Rural/Morrison's Cove



Blair County Planning Commission

- No countywide Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance
- No regulatory powers concerning land development
- Advisory in nature and can only make recommendations
- Difficult to ensure that developments provide sidewalks and proper walkability
- Development approvals decided by municipal officials
 - Not all municipal leaders seem to be concerned with walkability

Sidewalk Ordinances

- Blair County Municipalities with Sidewalk Ordinances
- 17 municipalities have some form of Sidewalk Ordinance
- 8 municipalities do not have any reference to sidewalk requirements

	Yes	No
City of Altoona	X	
Bellwood Borough		X
Duncansville Borough	X	
Hollidaysburg Borough	X	
Martinsburg Borough		X
Newry Borough		X
Roaring Spring Borough	X	
Tunnelhill Borough		X
Tyrone Borough	X	
Williamsburg Borough		X
Allegheny Township	X	
Antis Township	X	
Blair Township	X	
Catharine Township	X	
Frankstown Township		X
Freedom Township	X	
Greenfield Township	X	
Huston Township	X	
Juniata Township		X
Logan Township	X	
North Woodbury Township	X	
Snyder Township	X	
Taylor Township	X	
Tyrone Township		X
Woodbury Township	X	
Total	17	8

Sidewalk Ordinances, continued

- Not all municipalities have sidewalk ordinances
- Even if a municipality has a sidewalk ordinance, it may not be enforced
- Not all land uses require sidewalks
- Ordinance language is sometimes worded to allow waivers/variances for omitting sidewalks or to leave the decision up to municipal officials to determine sidewalk need
- Altoona - very strict with sidewalk requirements and rarely allows waivers

What can we do?

- County review process
 - Sometimes successful when suggesting inclusion of sidewalks and walkability measures
- Municipal outreach
 - Explain benefits of sidewalks and walkability
 - Provide information on funding opportunities for pedestrian infrastructure
- Engage public and special interest groups
 - Voice concerns to municipal leaders over lack of pedestrian infrastructure and desires for increased walkability
- Ensure future planning calls for the inclusion of adequate pedestrian infrastructure

PA WalkWorks Program

- Successes
 - Three routes within City of Altoona
 - Handful of walkers and groups utilizing the routes
 - Many citizens expressing interest in the program
 - Have already started planning for future WalkWorks communities and routes
- Obstacles
 - Routes currently located only within Altoona, excludes rural and distant citizens
 - While interest is high, public has been slow to actively adopt the program
 - Municipal concerns over liability



Thank You!