

PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

OCTOBER 13, 2025

### The Line Up

## Centre Regional Planning Agency

- Pam Adams, Director
- Jenna Wargo, AICP, Principal Land Use Planner

Westmoreland County
Department of Planning and
Development

- Joshua Spano, Deputy Director
- Jillian Caswell, Planner II

# Breaking Boundaries: The Functions and Benefits of Making Regionalism Work in PA

Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association Annual Conference



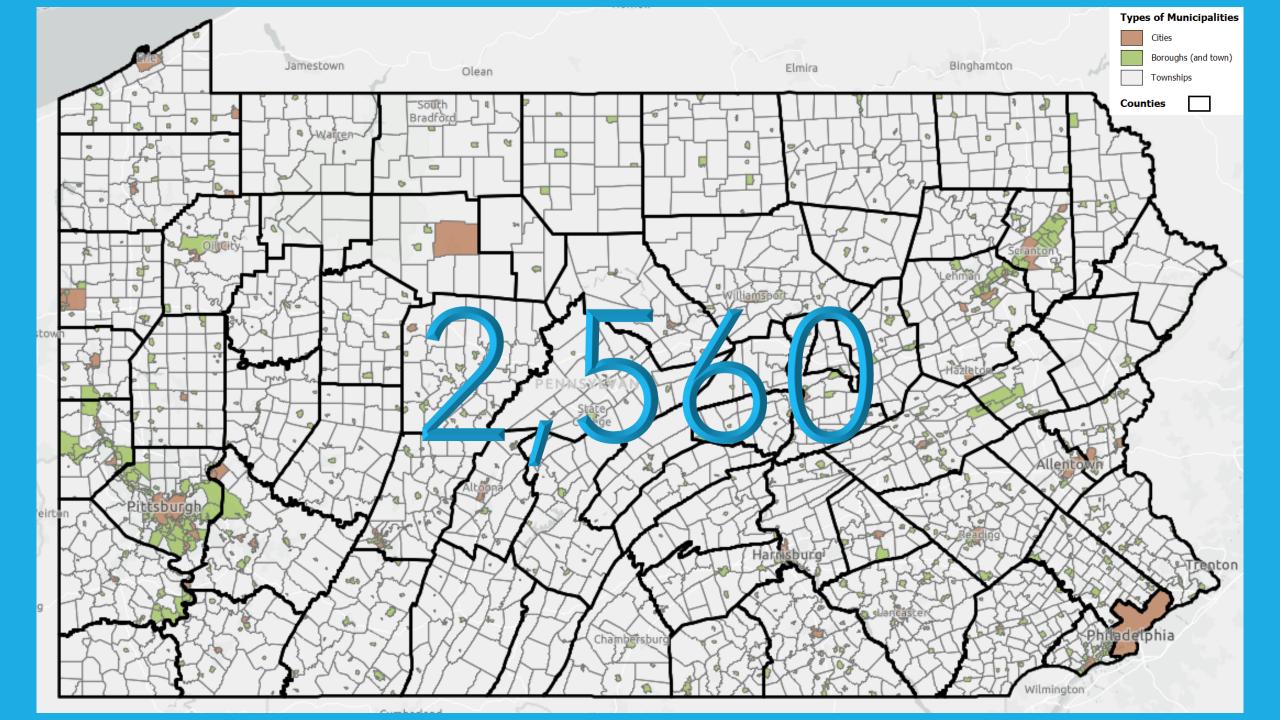
Pam Adams
Director
<a href="mailto:padams@crcog.net">padams@crcog.net</a> | 814-231-3050</a>



October 13, 2025

- Why regionalism matters
- Functions of Regionalism
- Benefits







- Climate Change
- Housing Crisis
- Political Discourse

# Yesterday's tools won't solve today's problems



# SUSTAINABLE GEALS DEVELOPMENT GEALS

1 NO POVERTY



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



13 CLIMATE ACTION



2 ZERO HUNGER



B DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



15 LIFE ON LAND



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



**5** GENDER EQUALITY



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



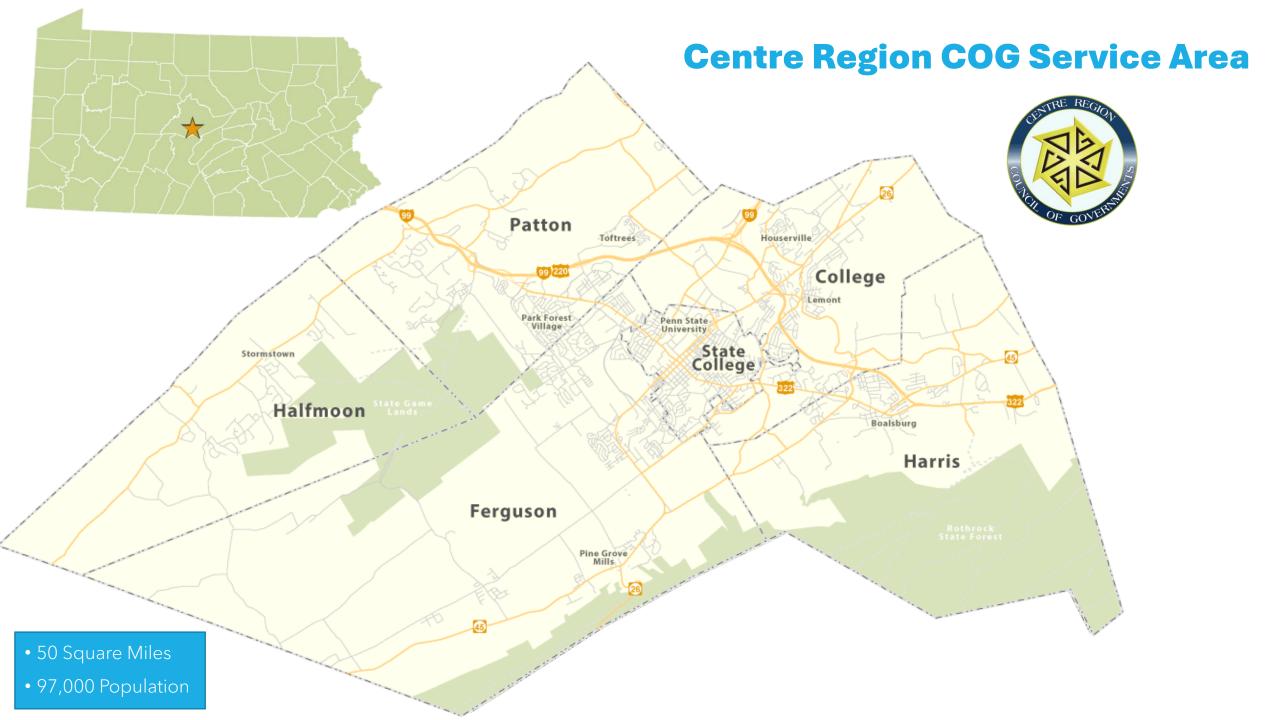
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION







## Legal Authority

### Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes - Title 53

Municipalities can delegate any function, power, or responsibility to another municipality or a newly created governmental unit.







Fire and EMS

Parks

Library



Fire and EMS



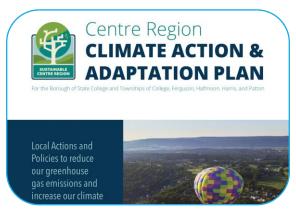
Parks



Library



Codes



Regional Planning



Refuse & Recycling



- Multi-municipal contract
- Self funded administrator
- Control costs
- Consistent messaging

## Refuse and Recycling



# Crossing Boundaries, Sharing Vision

## Together, our climate goals become achievable.

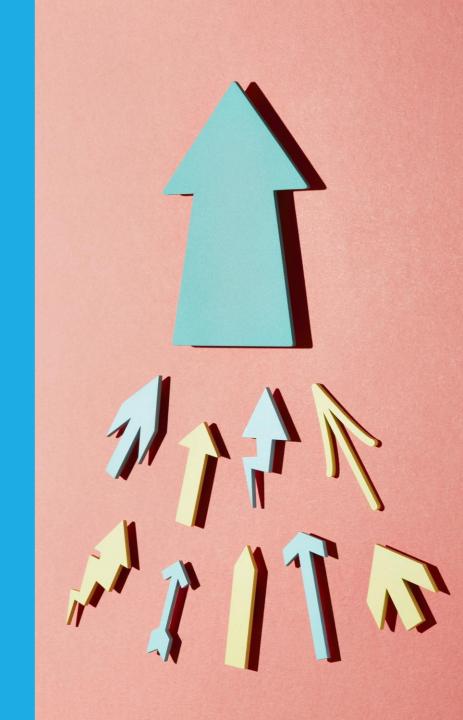
Shared Sustainability Goals







Cost savings, efficiency, and shared prosperity.



## Power in Partnerships: Energy PPAs

Bigger scale = better deals





## Power in Partnerships: Energy PPAs

Bigger scale = better deals











## Resilient + Reliable Future

### Planning for the next generation



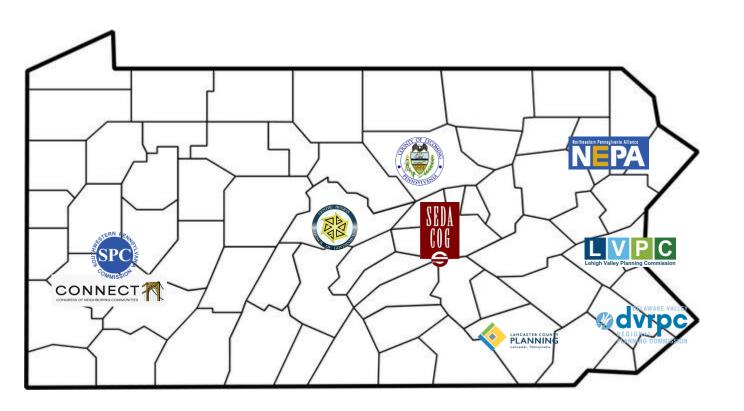




# **Community Collaboration**

- Promote an understanding
- Build broader ownership
- Guide decision making and prioritization

## Regionalism is already alive in Pennsylvania



- Multi-municipal zoning
- Regional growth boundaries
- Agricultural preservation
- Economic development
- Housing
- Transportation
- Energy programs

## Roadmap for regional high-quality services

Identify a Shared Need

Build Intermunicipal Trust

Start Small

Formalize and Scale



# What could YOUR community do together?





## Thank you!



Pam Adams
Director
<a href="mailto:padams@crcog.net">padams@crcog.net</a> | 814-231-3050</a>



# Breaking Boundaries: The Functions and Benefits of Making Regionalism Work in PA

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**Jenna Wargo, AICP**Principal Land Use Planner





October 13, 2025

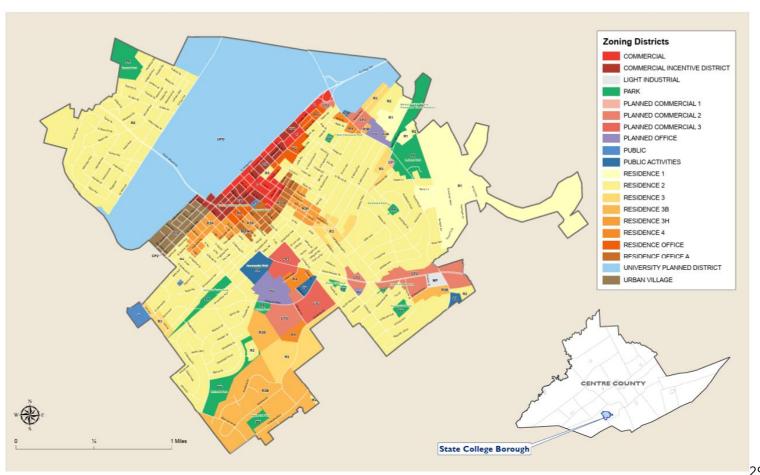






## The Challenge

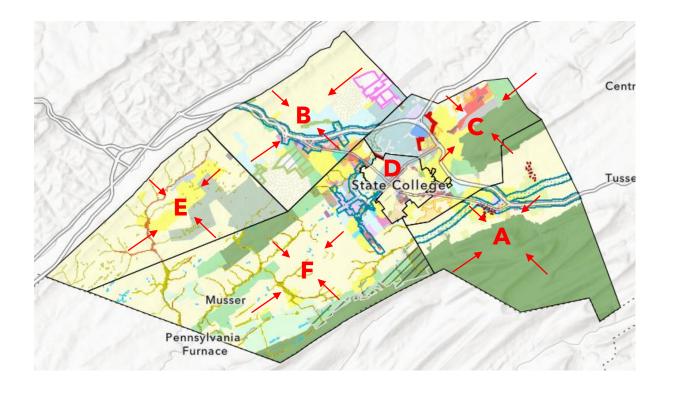
- Fragmented development patterns
- Smaller municipalities forced to plan for all land uses
- Competition instead of cooperation



## Competition

### Results:

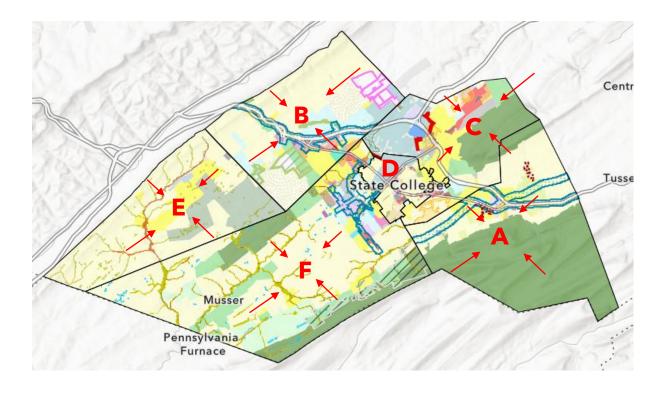
- Duplicated infrastructure
- Oversupply of industrial space
- Increased sprawl and traffic
- Strained municipal services



## Competition

#### Results:

- Duplicated infrastructure
- Oversupply of industrial space
- Increased sprawl and traffic
- Strained municipal services



## Competition

#### Results:

Duplicated infrastructure

Oversup space

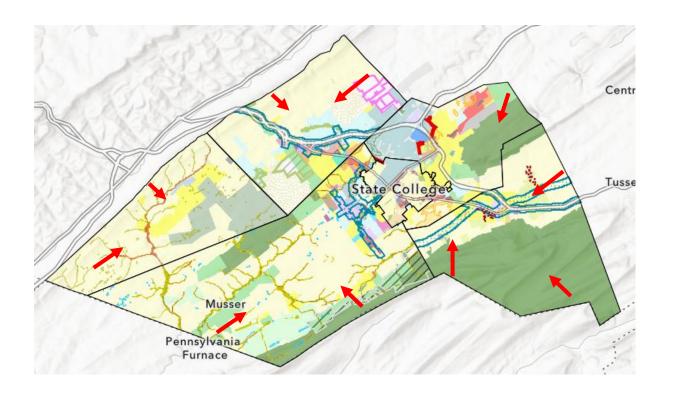
Increased traffic

Strained municipal services



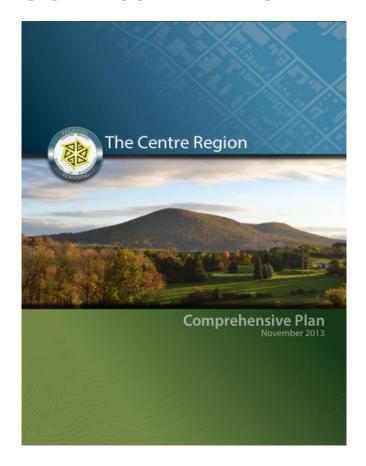
### The "What If" Moment

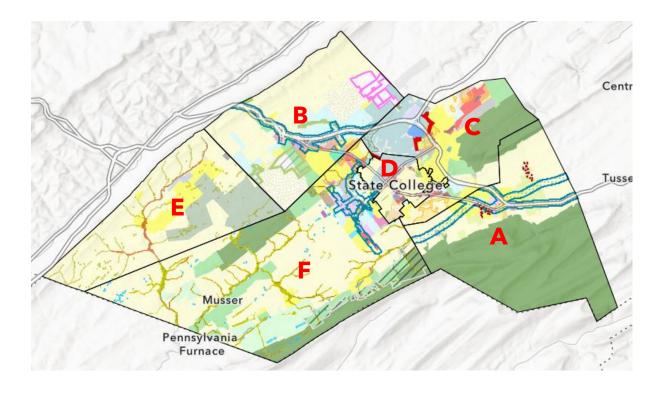
What if instead of 6 municipalities competing... we had 6 municipalities collaborating?



## **The Solution**

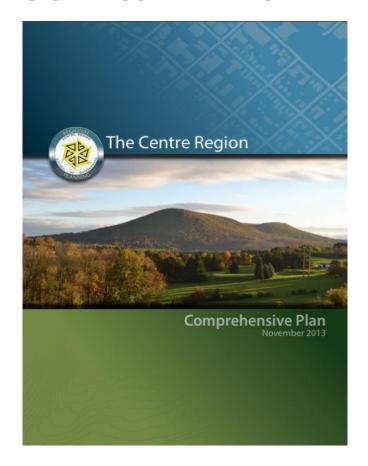
#### **REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

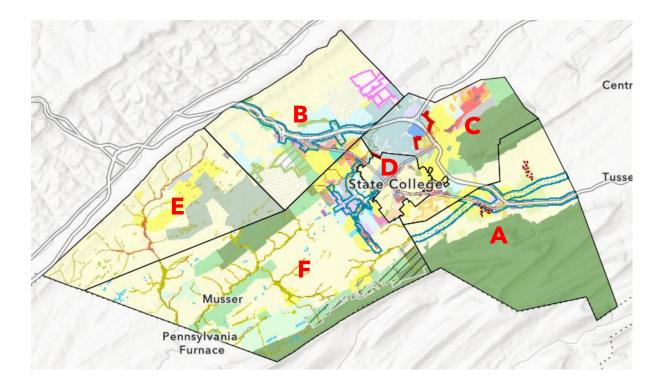




## **The Solution**

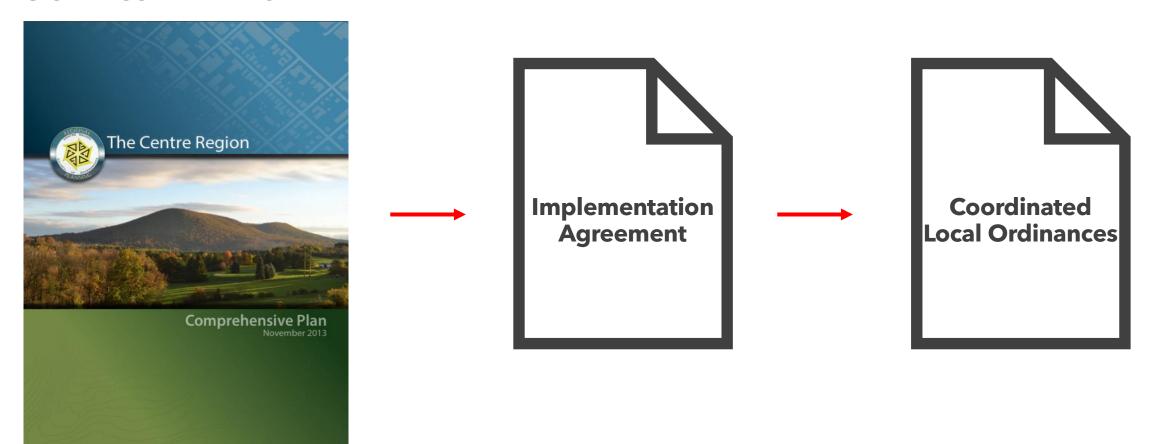
#### **REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**





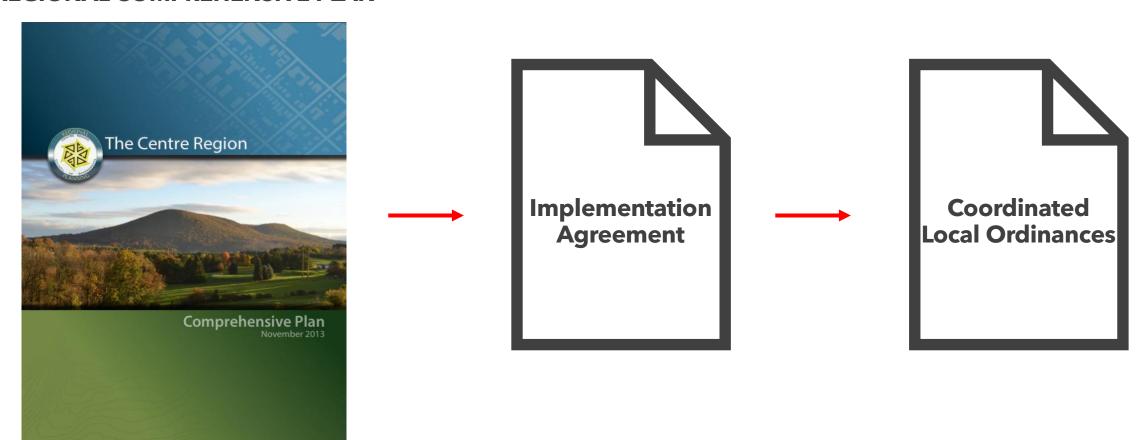
### **The Solution**

#### **REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



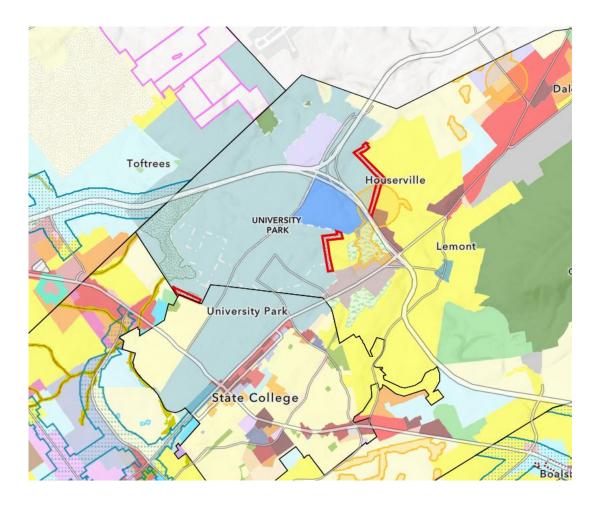
#### **The Solution**

#### **REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



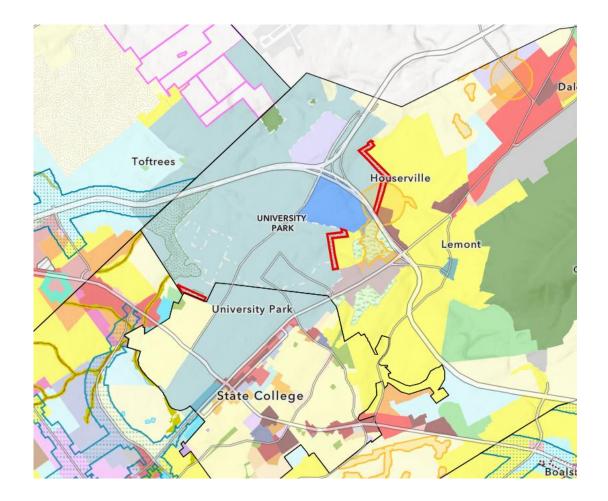
#### **Shared Zoning**

One zoning district, multiple municipalities, one vision.



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One zoning district, multiple municipalities, one vision.



## Regional Growth Boundary + Sewer Service Area

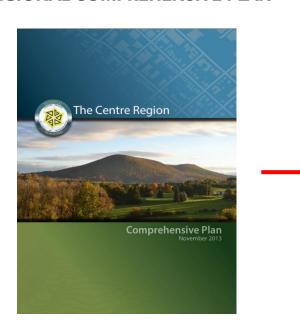


# Regional Growth Boundary + Sewer Service Area

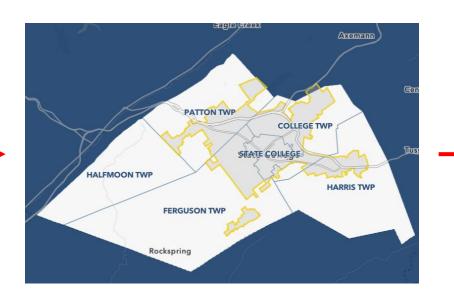


#### **Guess what?**

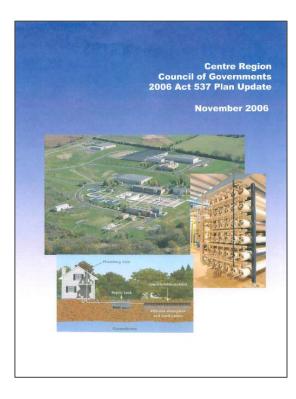
#### **REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



#### **REGIONAL GROWTH BOUNDARY**

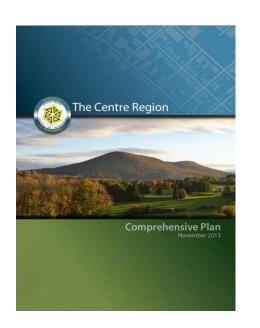


Act 537 Plan

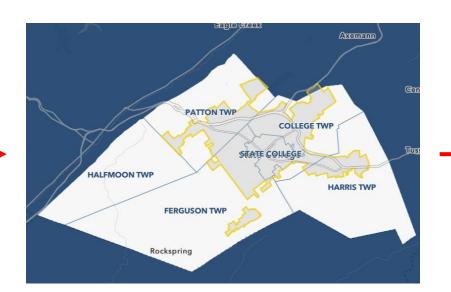


#### **Guess what?**

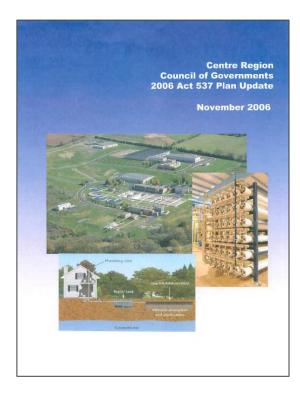
#### **REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



#### **REGIONAL GROWTH BOUNDARY**



#### Act 537 Plan



## Thank you!



**Jenna Wargo, AICP**Principal Land Use Planner



# FROM FRAGMENTATION TO COLLABORATION: THE PLANNING DISTRICT APPROACH PROCESS

WESTMORELAND COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT JOSHUA SPANO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR JSPANO@WESTMORELANDCOUNTYPA.GOV

#### Westmoreland County

Located in Southwestern Pennsylvania

352,000 ResidenTs

65 MunicipaliTies

1,036 Square Miles

## Planning & Development

Subdivision and Land DevelopmenT

Comprehensive Plan

Technical Resources and Municipal Services Program

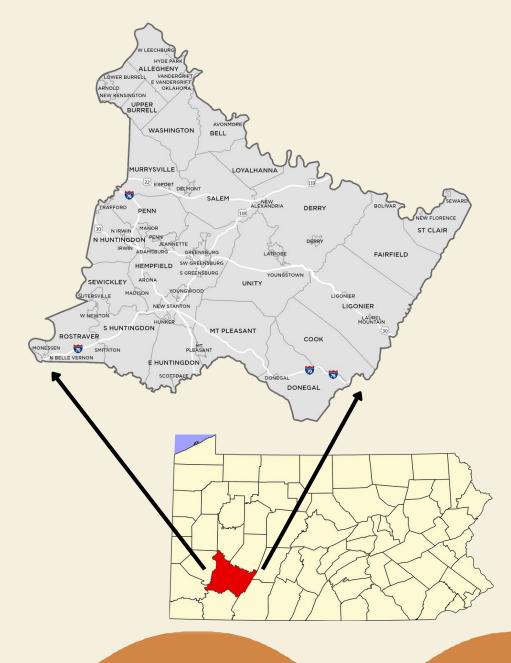
Transportation Planning

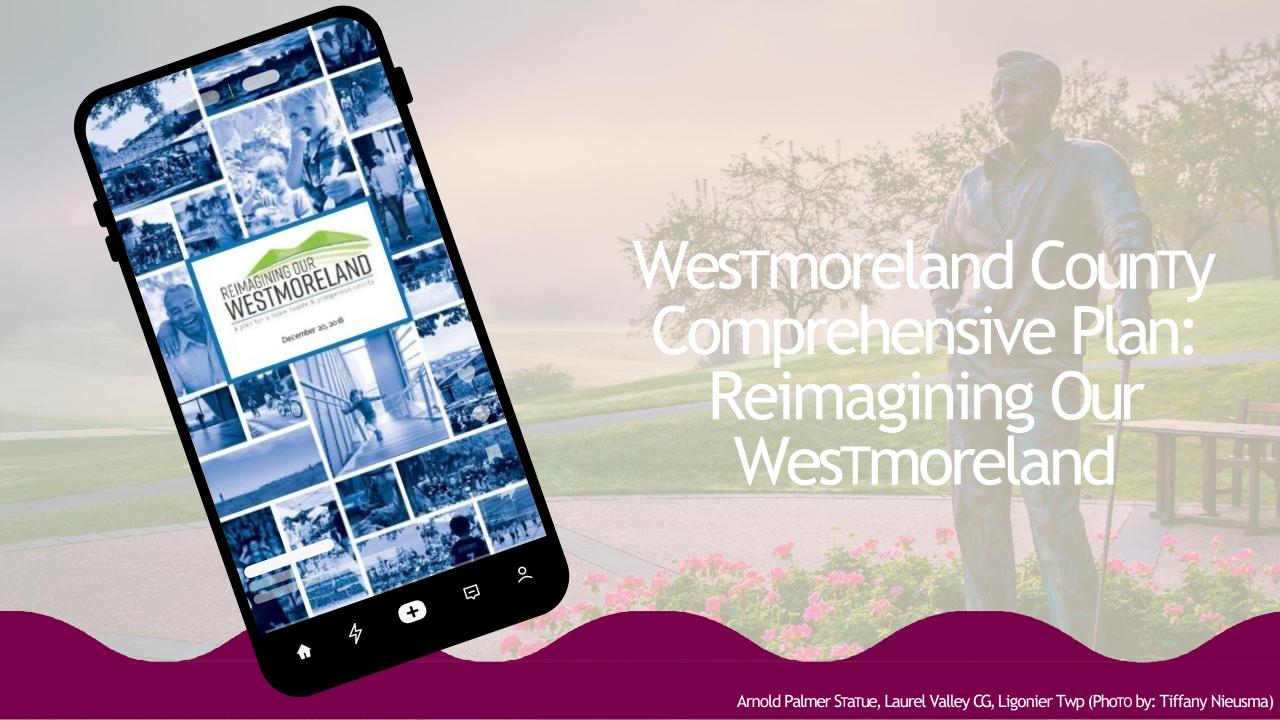
Broadband

Solid WasTe

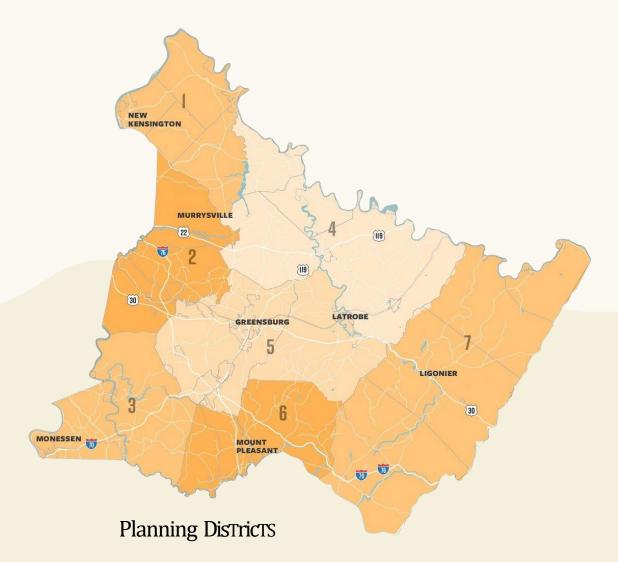
**STormwater** 

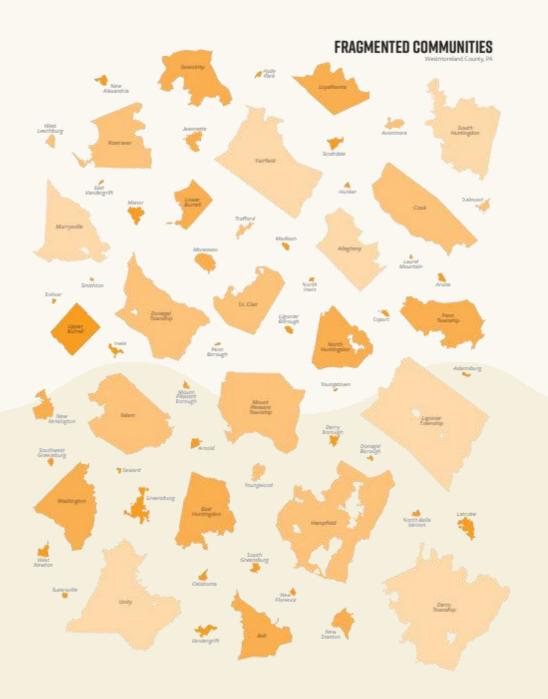
Housing



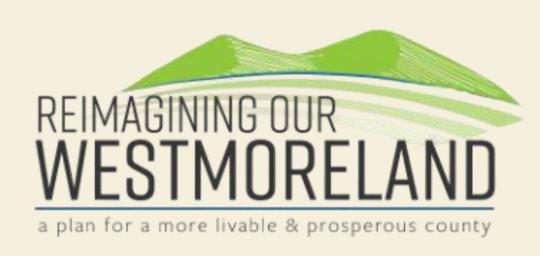


## Fragmentation





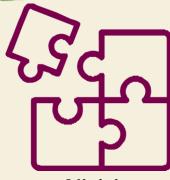




## Regional Thinking...Local Action



PLANNING DISTRICT PROCRESS



Aliniging Strategies



Land Use Planning

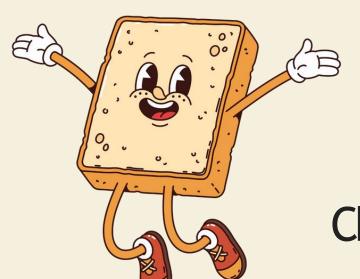


Mobility Planning



Intergovernmental Cooperation

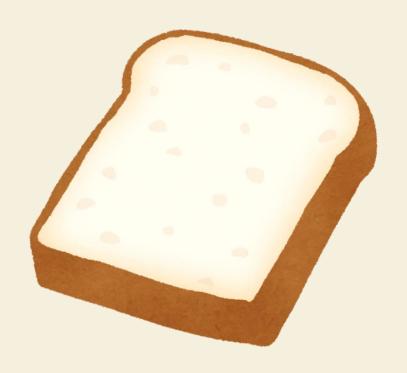




Bread - Astrong, supportive foundation Peanut Butter & Jelly - Main Components

Chips - Complementing the dish, tying it all together

## Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwhich with Chips!





## A Strong, Hearty Foundation

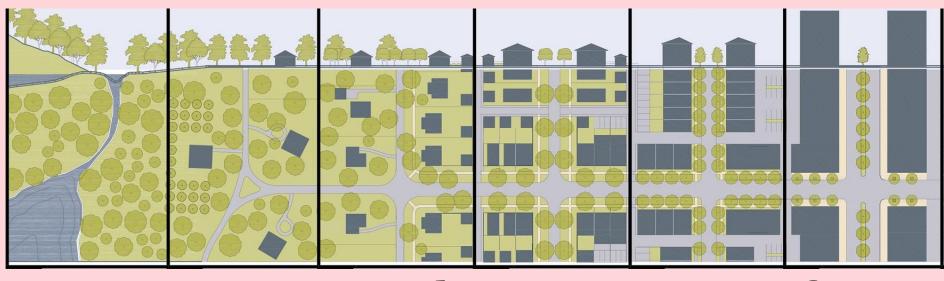


#### CORE OBJECTIVES Align Workforce, Education, Employers, and Entrepreneurship Discover Westmoreland **Reposition Our Towns** Connect with Parks and Nature **Build Healthy and Whole** Communities Plug into the New Economy

## A Strong, Hearty Foundation

Land Use... The glue That holds This whole Thing Together

#### Land Use



Less

Enhance Preserve

Transform More

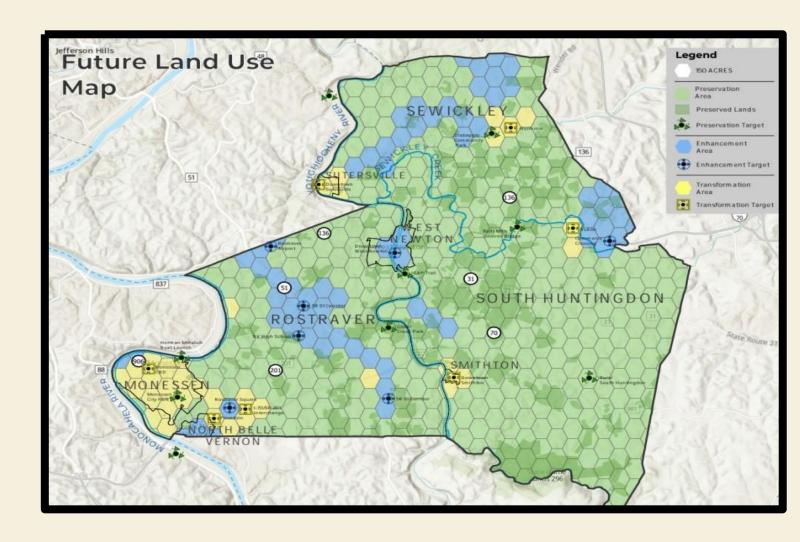
SpecTrum of Change



#### Land Use

Strategies and Actions
Priority Locations
Future Land Use Map





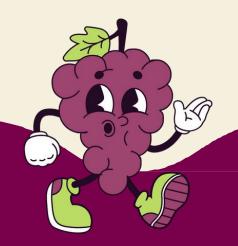


Mobility...Dont Get Stuck in a Sticky Situation



## Mobility

Strategies and Actions
Priority Project Lists
Mapping
Funding Opportunities





#### Planning District Process

Layers



County Comprehensive Plan

Mobility

Land Use

Aligning Strategies

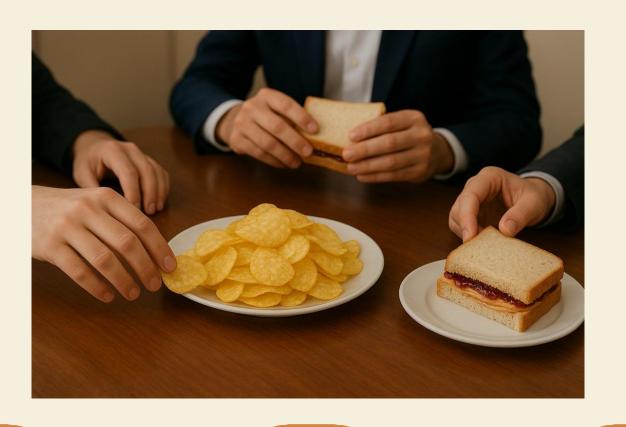




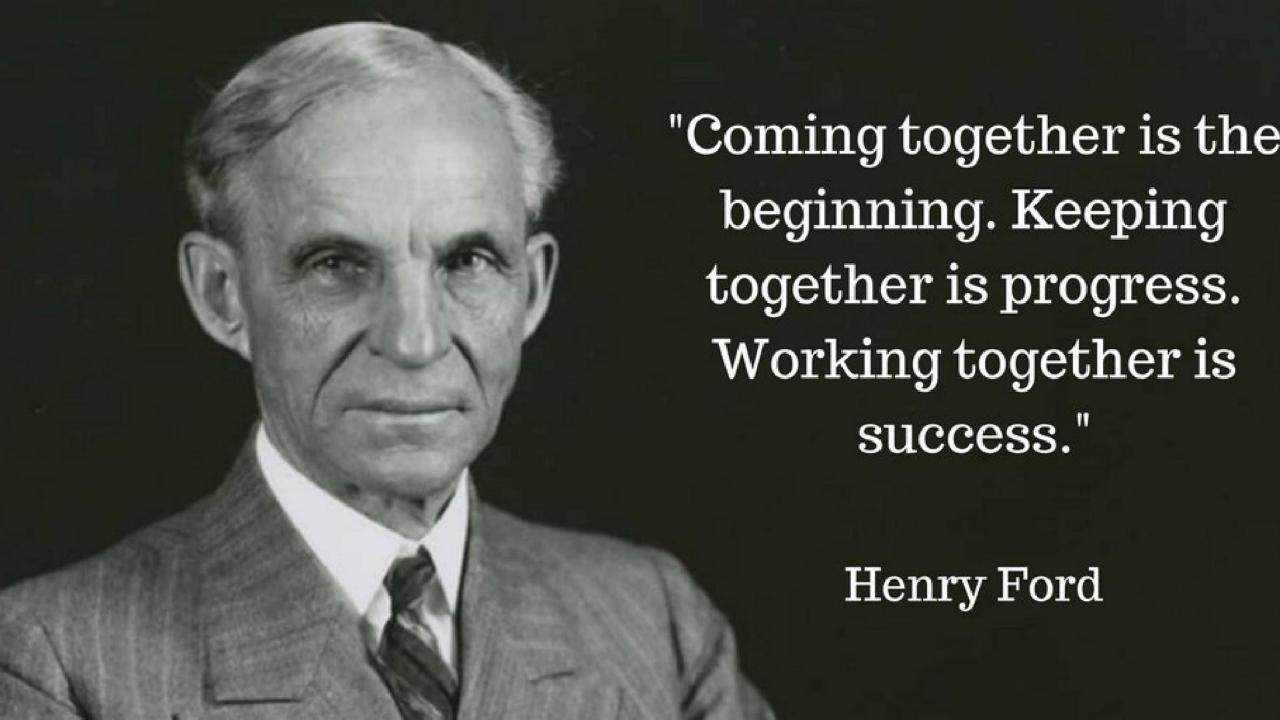
What's a Sandwhich without Chips??

#### Intergovernmental Cooperation

Multi-Municipal Blight Fight
Transit Circuit
Regional Code Enforcement
Council of Government
Marketing/Placemaking
Recreational Assets



Local Issues...Common Oportunity



#### Planning District Process Layers



County Comprehensive Plan

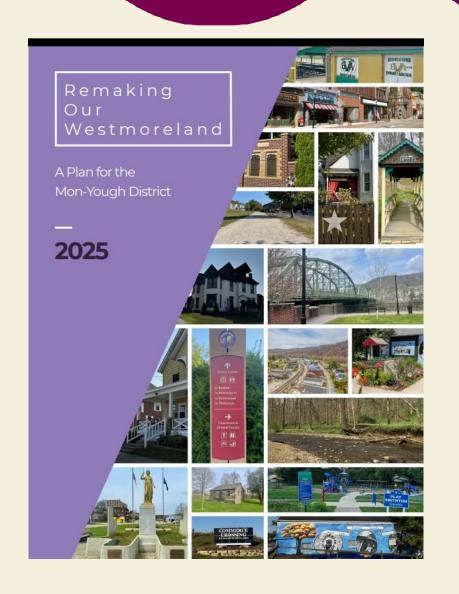
MobiliTy

Land Use

Aligning Strategies

Intergovernmental Cooperation

#### PLANNING DISTRICT PROCRESS



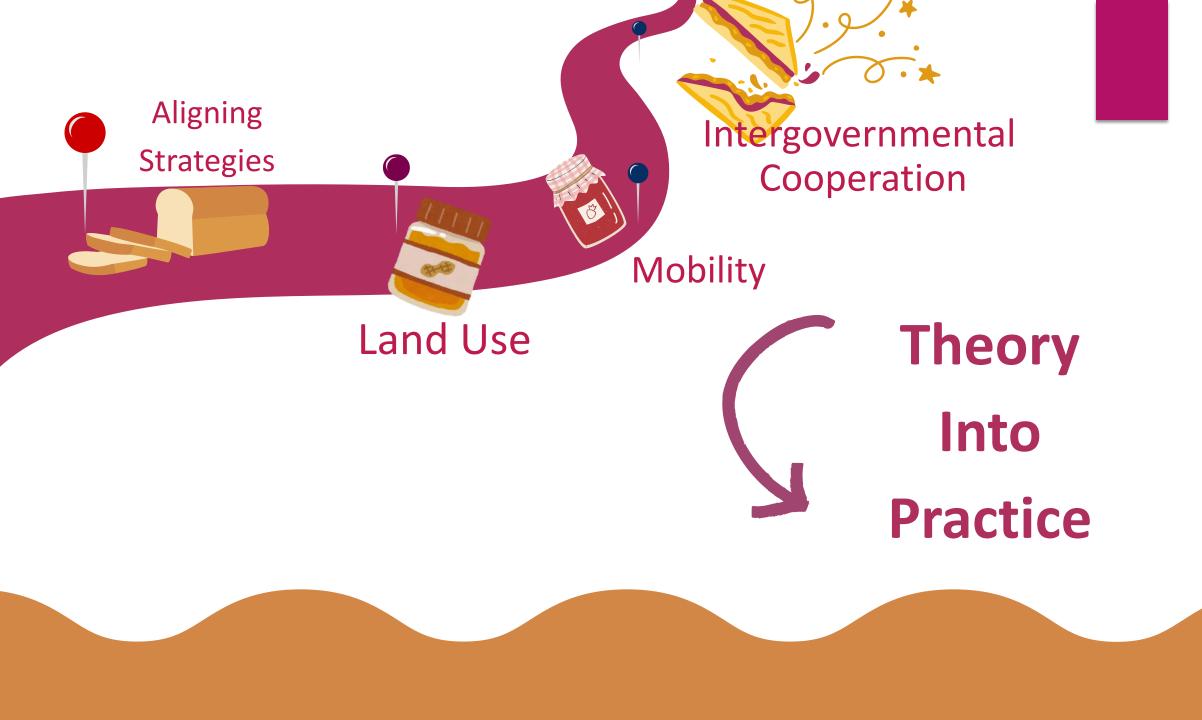


# FROM FRAGMENTATION TO COLLABORATION: THE PLANNING DISTRICT APPROACH CHALLENGES

WESTMORELAND COUNTY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

JILLIAN CASWELL, PLANNER II

JCASWELL@WESTMORELANDCOUNTYPA.GOV





#### **Westmoreland Planning Districts**

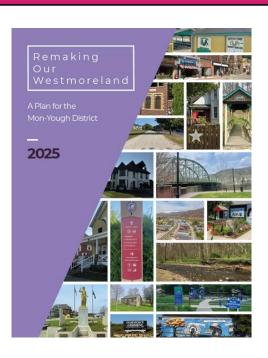
Alle-Kiski Planning
District

Central Planning
District

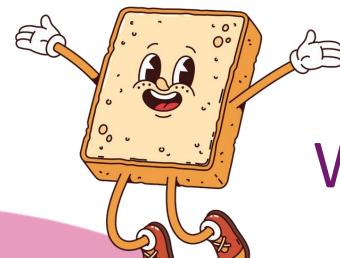
Mon-Yough Planning District











# WORKING AROUND EXISTING COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

## Westmoreland Planning Districts



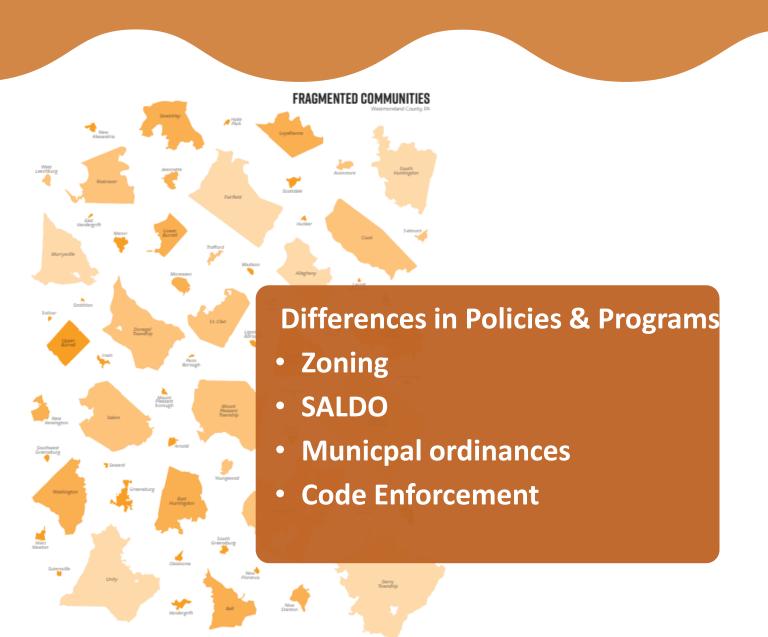
#### **Building Strategy Around Regional Differences...**

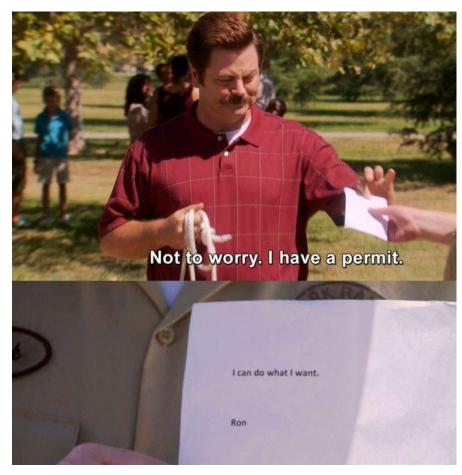


## Sparse Rural Communities V. Dense Urban Communities

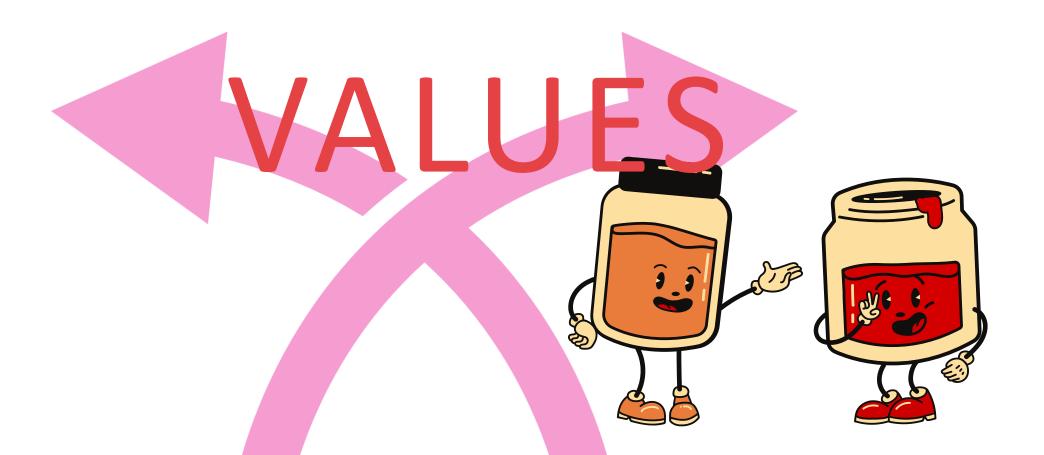


### LEVELS OF LOCAL CONTROL





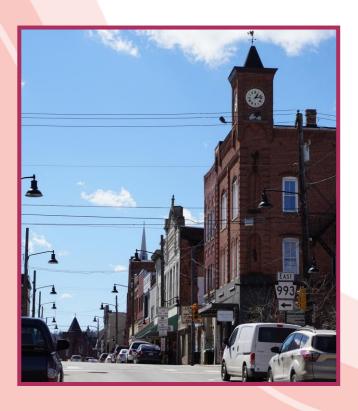
## ALIGNING



## PRESERVATION V. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT







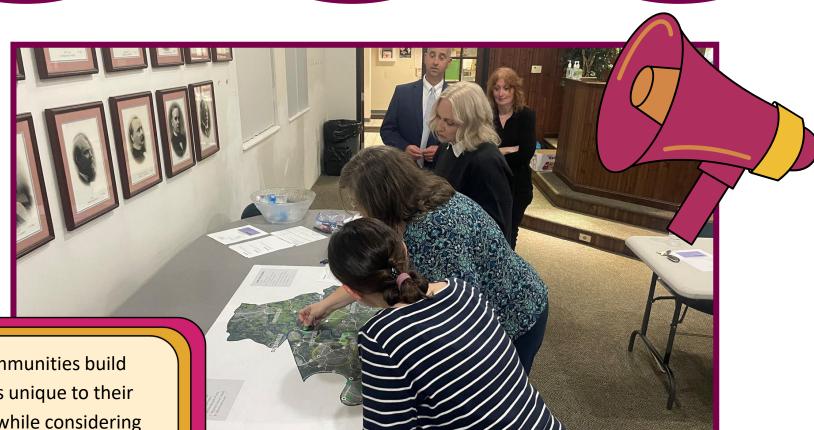
### NIMBYISM...



# HOW CAN WE HELP COMMUNITIES ALIGN VALUES?



## Make sure each community is heard and provides input...



help communities build strategies unique to their priorities while considering regional priorities as well...

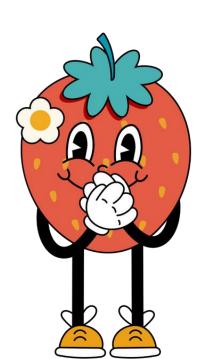
## THIRD PARTY FACILIATATION



### **Personality Types & Leadership Styles**



#### WILLINGNESS & OPENMINDEDNESS









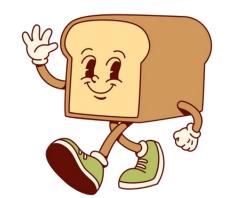
#### **BUILDING A TEAM**



### PLANNING DISTRICT PROCRESS



"You learn it through endless repetition until it belongs to you." — Jacques Pepin, on becoming a great chef





## Centre Regional Planning Agency

### That's a wrap

- Pam Adams, Director
- Jenna Wargo, AICP, Principal Land Use Planner

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