



**2017 MULTI-MUNICIPAL  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW  
AND  
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**  
Greater Williamsport Alliance Planning Area  
Lycoming County, Pennsylvania





## **Plan Adoptions**

**WILLIAMSPORT CITY COUNCIL** – Adopted October 26, 2017

**DUBOISTOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL** – Adopted December 7, 2017

**SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL** – Adopted November 13, 2017

**ARMSTRONG TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** – Adopted August 10, 2017

**LOYALSOCK TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** – Adopted August 22, 2017

**OLD LYCOMING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** – Adopted September 12, 2017

\*Please refer to Appendix F for the Adopted Municipal Resolutions

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## Chapter 1: Plan Overview

### Introduction

*This 2017 Greater Williamsport Alliance (GWA) Planning Area Comprehensive Plan Review and Implementation Strategy has been shaped by the issues currently identified as priorities within this multi-municipal Planning Area.*

#### **THIS 2017 GWA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

is the culmination of months of planning, information and data gathering, trend analysis, collaboration, deliberation, task coordination, visioning, and prioritization that teamed dozens of public- and private-sector leaders and stakeholders from within and beyond the GWA Planning Area. Their skill sets, expertise, and institutional and individual insights have resulted in this focused, collaborative blueprint for both growing and preserving quality of life in this area of Lycoming County, Pennsylvania.

An exhaustive comprehensive planning effort for the GWA Planning Area was last conducted over ten years ago, and resulted in a multi-municipal plan completed and adopted in 2005. During the 2016 review process, the issues, priorities, and key recommendations in the 2005 document were re-validated as a planning

baseline for this update. The 2017 Plan translates the adopted 2005 Plan into a set of achievable goals by providing a succinct implementation strategy to address current priorities of the GWA Planning Area.

Stakeholders from the GWA Planning Area have expressed that “quality of life” is their first and foremost reason for choosing to live here, and thus an asset to be preserved for future generations. GWA Planning Area Team (PAT) members recognized that daily decisions and choices by residents, businesses, community leaders, landowners, policy makers, and policy enforcers can exert enduring effects on this area’s current and future quality of life for residents of the Planning Area.

People, economy, and natural resources help provide and shape:

- Safe environments for raising families
- Invigorating settings for education
- Stimulating opportunities for business and industry
- Scenic landscapes.

The six municipalities in the GWA Planning Area offer a wide range of housing options, a diverse spectrum of business environments, and an array of multi-modal transportation options. Presence of Lycoming College and the Pennsylvania College of Technology affords residents of this Planning Area ready access to career and continuing education in liberal arts and technical fields.

Scenic landscapes of the GWA Planning Area include West Branch Susquehanna River, Loyalsock Creek and Lycoming Creek corridors, the forested northern face of Bald Eagle Mountain, and rolling foothills of the Appalachian Plateau. The GWA Planning Area also hosts historic structures and neighborhoods, outstanding examples of 19th and 20th century architecture, and beautiful gardens, parks, and riverfronts within an ever-evolving urban core.

While many conditions described in the 2005 plan are valid descriptors today, some significant changes have occurred in the GWA Planning Area over the past decade. Perhaps foremost is arrival of the Marcellus Shale natural gas industry. Based on its close location to the drilling fields and the quality and proximity of its transportation routes, Williamsport metro area was identified as an ideal area to locate regional offices for many companies and workers who flocked here during the initial boom period between 2008 and 2011.

Short-term impacts of the natural gas industry stimulated growth of downtown Williamsport (especially the hospitality industry) and the local business community. The industry also caused a well-documented spike in cost of rental housing that increased difficulty of many local residents to obtain affordable housing. The gas industry's long-term impact on the GWA Planning Area will depend largely on national and global market forces. Certainly, one challenge for the GWA Planning Area over the coming years will be to accommodate the fluctuating presence of the natural gas industry while building a more diversified and resilient economy and housing market.

Another significant factor affecting the GWA Planning Area has been the heroin and opioid epidemic, which affects not only the urban core of the City, but every municipality in Lycoming County. The struggle against addiction and drug-related crime has taxed our municipalities and public institutions at a time of often-declining state and federal financial aid. The strain caused by the drug problem exacerbated the already-stressed and fragmented public safety system, including emergency medical services (EMS), police, and fire services. Many of these public service agencies are struggling to meet increasing state and federal mandates for training requirements and other certification standards.

*Some Key Developments Since 2005*

- Trade & Transit Centre–Phase II
- Church Street Transportation Center
- Pine Street Revitalization
- Several New Hotels
- Liberty Arena
- Downtown Movie Theater
- Faxon Corner Development
- Downtown Apartments
- Memorial Homes
- Grove Street Commons
- Bowman Field Enhancements
- Susquehanna River Walk
- Market St. Bridge & I-180 access
- UPMC/Susquehanna Health Campus Expansion & Renewal
- Penn College's Madigan Library
- JV Brown--Welch Children's Wing
- Pathway to Health
- Kohls Department Store
- River Valley Regional YMCA
- Via Bella Roundabouts
- Lycoming College Planetarium



*Renovated Downtown Movie Theater in Williamsport*

The GWA Planning Area has become increasingly noted for the quality and abundance of its outdoor recreation amenities. The Planning Area takes pride in:

- Construction of the Susquehanna River Walk
- Expansion and revitalization of the GWA municipalities' park systems
- Renewed attention to designating and maintaining safe bicycle routes within the City
- Increased connectivity between recreation features.

As a result, residents who choose to live in the more densely settled region of Lycoming County have greater access than ever before to the natural world, whether a neighborhood park just down the street, West Branch Susquehanna River, Loyalsock & Lycoming Creeks, or the vast mountains surrounding this area.

This 2017 GWA Comprehensive Plan Review and Implementation Strategy is a living document, meant to capture current desires of our communities and provide targeted implementation strategies to achieve those goals. It satisfies the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC - Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247 as reenacted and amended) requirement for reviewing the adopted comprehensive plan every decade.

It is worth noting that the timing of this update process has been simultaneous with a civic engagement project called "Heart of Williamsport" which was facilitated by the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership. Although the focus of this project was geographically focused in the City of Williamsport only, it was intended to supplement the public input process. Through various forms of interactions, this program collected over 900 qualitative responses and interactions. The project focused on reaching individuals that represented diverse viewpoints and underrepresented populations. It was able to identify community values, community character, concerns and ideas for action to further supplement the results of this plan and process. Please see Appendix C for more information and findings related to this project.

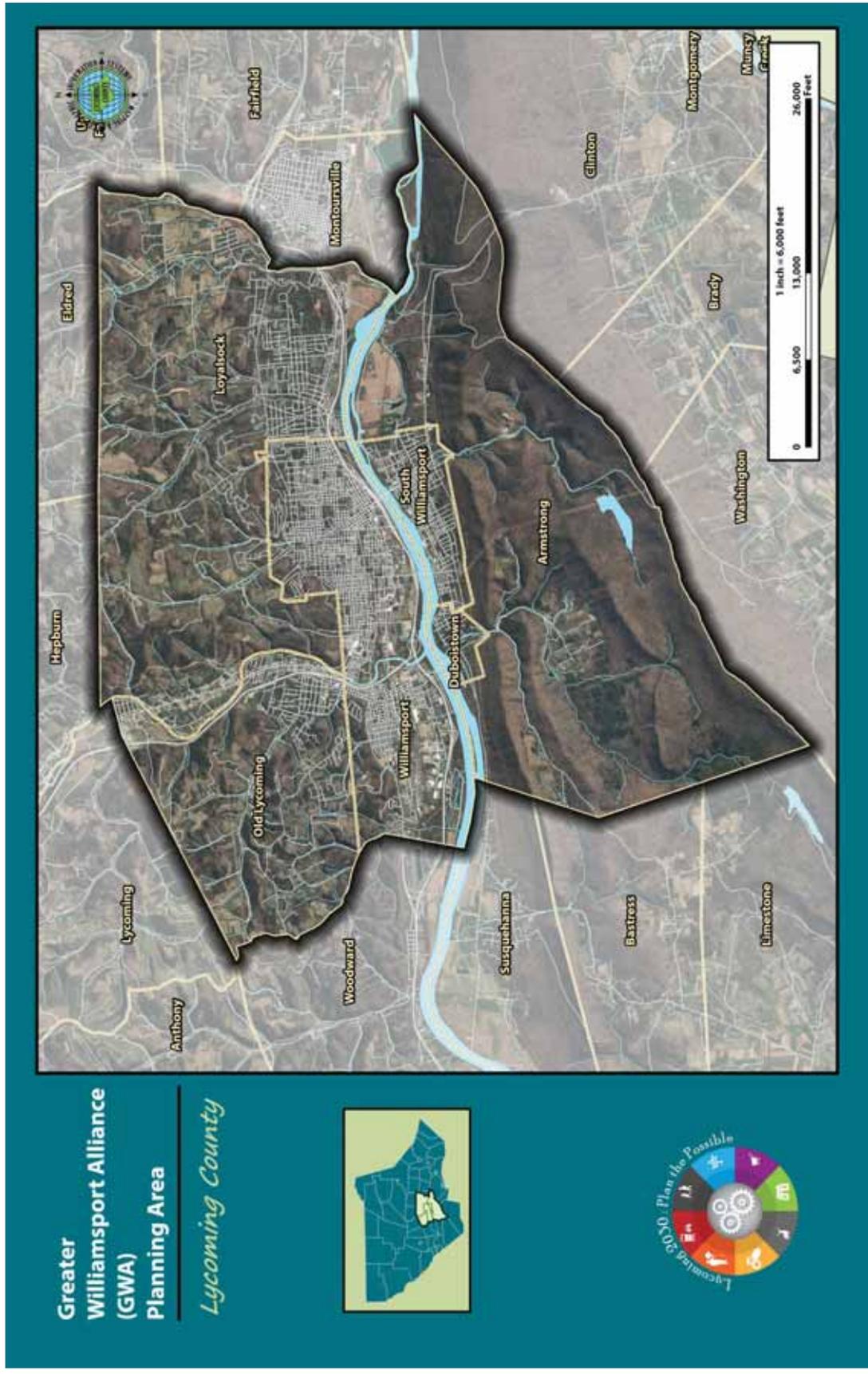
A key feature of this 2017 document is the set of well-defined priority issues and key projects that best address those issues.

Municipal governments in the GWA include:

- City of Williamsport
- Borough of South Williamsport
- Borough of Duboistown
- Township of Loyalsock
- Township of Old Lycoming
- Township of Armstrong



*Pictured from left top, clockwise: Kohl's, Liberty Arena, Trade and Transit Phase II, and the Church Street Transportation Center are of some of the many recent infrastructure investments in the Planning AreaArea*



## GWA Summary Profile

### GEOGRAPHY

**Location:** Lycoming County, Northcentral Pennsylvania, USA

**Total Area:** 68.7 square miles or 43,864 acres

**Floodplain Area:** 6.6 square miles

**Major Watersheds:** Susquehanna River Basin, Loyalsock Creek watershed, Lycoming Creek watershed

**Land Cover as Percentage of Total GWA Area (University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Laboratory):** 61% tree canopy, 24% otherwise vegetated, 12% developed, 3% water and wetlands

### POPULATION

**Population (2010 Census):** 53,610 persons; 3.4 % decrease since 2000

#### Figure 1. Median Ages

Township of Armstrong	42.1
Borough of Duboistown	46.5
Township of Loyalsock	51.8
Township of Old Lycoming	49.7
Borough of South Williamsport	38.3
City of Williamsport	30.3

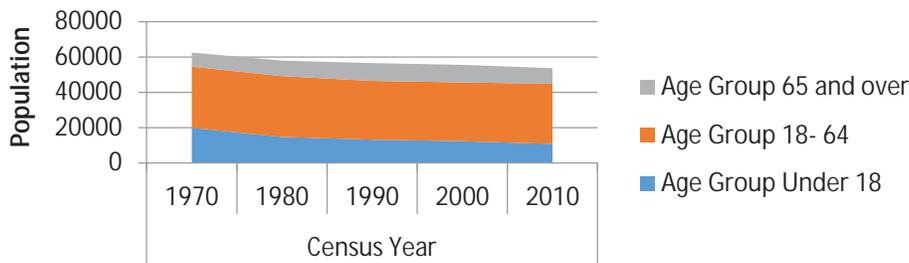
*Source: 2014 American Community Survey Estimates*

#### Figure 2. Population in Each Census, 1960-2010

Year	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Armstrong	606	727	724	676	717	681
Duboistown	1,358	1,468	1,218	1,201	1,280	1,205
Loyalsock	9,047	10,581	10,763	10,644	10,876	11,026
Old Lycoming	3,996	4,616	5,220	5,526	5,508	4,938
South Williamsport	6,972	7,153	6,581	6,496	6,412	6,379
Williamsport	41,967	37,918	33,401	31,933	30,706	29,381
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63,946</b>	<b>62,463</b>	<b>57,907</b>	<b>56,476</b>	<b>55,499</b>	<b>53,610</b>

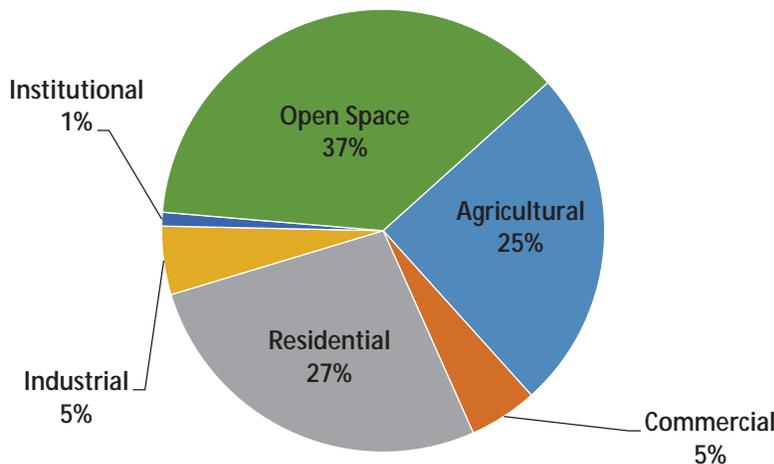
*Source: US Census Bureau*

**Figure 3. Population Composition by Age, 1960-2010**



**ZONING**

**Figure 4. Current Zoning as Percentage of Total Area**



**INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES**

Locally-Owned Roads (Pennsylvania Department of Transportation [PennDOT] data): 339.6 miles

State-Owned Roads (PennDOT data): 156.1 miles

Major Transportation Routes: I-180, US-15, US-220, PA-554, PA-654

School Districts: Williamsport Area, Loyalsock Township, and South Williamsport Area

Water and Sewer Providers: Williamsport Municipal Water Authority-Williamsport Sanitary Authority (WMWA-WSA), Lycoming county Water and Sewer Authority, Duboistown Sewer Department, Old Lycoming Area Authority, Loyalsock Sewer Department

Housing Units (2014 American Community Survey Estimate): 24,042

**ECONOMY**

**Figure 5. Median Household Income**

Township of Armstrong	\$54,250.00
Borough of Duboistown	\$50,789.00
Township of Loyalsock	\$46,843.00
Township of Old Lycoming	\$45,268.00
Borough of South Williamsport	\$42,861.00
City of Williamsport	\$33,537.00

Source: 2014 American Community Survey Estimates

**Top county employers with presence in the GWA Planning Area (PA Dept. of Labor & Industry):**

- UPMC/Susquehanna Health System
- Pennsylvania College of Technology
- Williamsport Area School District
- Weis Markets, Inc.
- Lycoming County Government
- PA State Government
- Lycoming College
- Brodart
- U.S. Government
- Shop Vac, Inc.
- Hope Enterprises
- Primus Technologies
- Lycoming Division/Textron
- Little League Baseball
- Wire rope, Inc.
- Wegmans

## Plan Organization

*The plan is designed to be succinct, focused, and action-oriented with emphasis placed on the implementation steps.*

This document incorporates a review of the 2005 GWA multi-municipal comprehensive plan with emphasis on developing implementable strategies to address the current set of prioritized issues. This review is organized into four sections:

The Plan Overview section presents background of the GWA Planning Area including highlights of its 2005 Comprehensive Plan, geography, and demographics.

The Implementation Strategy section identifies nine (9) priority issues determined to be most important within the GWA Planning Area, out of the top 14 thematic issues commonly identified across all multi-municipal planning areas during the 2015-2017 comprehensive planning process.<sup>1</sup> Following each priority issue is the PAT's "top viable project(s)" and implementation plan, as well as a list of additional projects chosen by the PAT to be highlighted in the plan. The PAT will continue to meet at least twice a year to evaluate implementation progress. After completion of a top project under one or more of the priority issue categories, the PAT will have the opportunity to complete an implementation plan for the other projects on the list and create specific Project Delivery Teams (PDT) to begin implementation of the additional project(s). The PDT will include individuals responsible for planning and executing a particular project. The PDT will be prepared to provide status updates on project implementation at each PAT meeting.

The Growth Area and Future Land Use Maps section provides details about any areas of the multi-municipal Planning Area for which the PAT has recommended changes in designated growth area boundaries, future growth area boundaries, and/or future land uses.

Appendices constitute the final section of this document, including the following:

- A. Plan Process
- B. Planning Advisory Team Meeting Summaries and Reports
- C. Results of Research and Analysis
- D. Reference Maps
- E. Plan Consistency and Plan References
- F. Acronyms List
- G. Adopted Municipal Resolutions

Current priority issues are listed in Table 4.

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<sup>1</sup> See Thematic Issues List at the end of Appendix A

The Current Priority Issues

Issue		Comprehensive Plan Topical Areas								
		Agriculture	Community Development	Community Facilities & Infrastructure	Economic Development	Heritage, Culture & the Arts	Land Use	Natural Resources	Public Safety	Transportation & Mobility
										
#1	Changing Economy vs Local Workforce	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
#2	Local Government Fragmentation	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
#3	Outdoor Recreation		X	X	X	X	X	X		X
#4	Multi-modal Transportation System Deficiencies	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
#5	Cultural & Historic Resources	X			X	X	X	X		
#6	Drugs		X		X				X	
#7	Downtowns		X		X	X	X			X
#8	Water Quality	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
#9	Water, Sanitary Sewer, & Stormwater Infrastructure Needs		X	X	X		X	X	X	



## Chapter 2: Implementation Strategy

### Priority Issue #1



**The economy is changing and our communities and workforce are not optimally positioned to realize our untapped economic potential and become more resilient.**

**Back Story** The economy of the Greater Williamsport Alliance Planning Area is diverse and multi-faceted. Williamsport is the County seat and primary economic center of Lycoming County. Approximately 53,600 people live within the GWA Planning Area, which covers approximately 68 square miles of land. Most of the urbanized area is within a mile north and south of the Susquehanna River.

As described in the Plan Overview section of this document, the Greater Williamsport Area offers a wide range of housing options, a diverse spectrum of business environments, and an array of multi-modal transportation infrastructure. Furthermore, its incorporation of the Little League World Series, institutions of higher learning, a significant presence of arts and culture facilities, and a close proximity to Marcellus Shale natural gas industry activity, as well as generally favorable proximity to major metropolitan markets along the east coast, positions the GWA Planning Area positively in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for economic success.

Several of the County's top employers are located within the Planning Area including Susquehanna Health System - UPMC, Penn College of Technology, Lycoming College, Williamsport Area School District, Aramark Facility Services, and Lycoming County government. In addition, according to the American Community Survey, the GWA contains approximately 45 percent of the County's total workforce as of 2015. As home to many of the County's primary economic drivers and a significant percentage of the workforce, it is important that the GWA maintain its role as the economic engine for the County.

Since 2005, alone, hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested to improve transportation infrastructure, new housing and hotel accommodations, entertainment and recreation facilities, retail establishments, and educational and healthcare facilities (some of these key developments are noted on page 9 of this document). These investments continue to build and enhance a robust and sustainable local economy that links its population with its workforce, education and housing to its health, wellness and quality of life. With this being said, the question remains: how does the GWA continue to recognize and capitalize on its untapped economic potential and become more resilient?

Looking at recent data, as of 2015, the American Community Survey estimates that Lycoming County is home to over 14,000 jobs in the healthcare, education and social assistance industry with more than half of these (7,469) located in the GWA Planning Area. These figures represent an increase of 881 jobs (13.4 percent increase) between 2010 and 2015. Over the same period, jobs in this sector increased by 1,062 across the entire County, which illustrates that nearly all of the growth in this sector countywide is occurring in the GWA Planning Area.

As this industry now represents one of the largest, if not the single largest, industry in the County, there are significant opportunities to leverage this recent success to drive further positive economic benefit to the Planning Area and the region.

The GWA economy is also supported by numerous other strong segments such as finance and insurance (1,191 jobs), real estate and rental leasing (321 jobs), accommodation and food services (3,067 jobs), and arts, entertainment, and recreation (336 jobs). All of these economic sectors grew between 2011 and 2016. Many of these growing sectors are also mutually supportive. For example, as the natural gas, education, and healthcare industries continue to expand, these new jobs support many local businesses, which drives growth in the food service, entertainment, and real estate sectors, among others.

To support a robust economy in the GWA, it is important to reinvest in traditional economic sectors while also capitalizing on emerging economic drivers such as the healthcare, education, and plastics and petrochemicals industries. To achieve economic resilience, the Planning Area must both reinvest in its historically strong economic sectors and adapt to changing opportunities. Some examples of this include:

- Expanding education and training opportunities: ensure the labor force, including both youth and displaced adult workers, are well trained and educated to support the 21st century job market.
- Diversifying local and regional economies: strengthen weaker or declining industry sectors, and solidify or enhance stronger and emerging sectors.
- Improving utilization of land for economic development: ensure every parcel of land is achieving its full potential. This includes capitalizing on opportunities for commercial, educational, and industrial land uses while also addressing housing needs.

Additionally and notably, the County's geographic location and natural assets provide it not only continuous economic potential, but also a competitive advantage to attract businesses and industries desiring good access to major interstates and cities along with location within a tremendously rich local and regional landscape of scenic beauty, forested hills, agricultural valleys, and abundant waterways. These assets provide incentives for the County to attract and retain talent. The urbanized area of the GWA is well positioned to accommodate growing business sectors, and has great potential to develop into an asset-based development model. Lycoming County's location as the gateway to the PA Wilds offers further opportunities to GWA communities to link to a large-scale regional community and economic development initiative that strengthens the connection between the traditional economy and the area's natural assets.

Continuing progressive response to and effective competition in the changing economy require first and foremost that **the GWA Planning Area ensure that its current assets are protected and maintained**. In 2016, the GWA PAT decided that **the 20-mile-long flood protection system that serves 40 percent of real estate in three of the six GWA communities was the single greatest threat to and opportunity for maintenance and pursuit of economic resilience**.

The flood protection system in the GWA includes a series of levees that protect the City of Williamsport, South Williamsport Borough, sections of Loyalsock Township to the east, and sections of Old Lycoming Township to the

west. Most levees in the GWA were authorized after the 1936 flood, and were completed in the 1955-1956 periods by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in partnership with local municipalities. Following Tropical Storm Agnes in 1972, Bull Run Levee was constructed by USACE to protect the area of Loyalsock known as the Golden Strip. After construction of the levee system, the sponsoring municipalities assumed responsibility for operation, recurring maintenance, and periodic recertification. Local levee owners or Non-Federal Sponsors (the City of Williamsport, South Williamsport, and Loyalsock Township) must meet certification rules by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). USACE also identified issues during regularly scheduled inspections. The levees have held and have protected the GWA since 1956. However, the recertification process of these levees has become a significant financial challenge to these municipalities, particularly when the recertification engineers discover costly problems.

**Priority Issue Overview** Levees in the GWA protect areas that include the City of Williamsport, Old Lycoming Township, South Williamsport, and Loyalsock Township. Of the \$2.7 billion in real estate in these communities, the levees protect 40%, as determined by 2004 County Assessment data. Locations of borough city, city and county governments are within the protected floodplains, as well as commercial and industrial areas. Maintaining existing economic well-being of the County depends on preventing the Susquehanna River from causing potentially catastrophic damage. Current levees in GWA measure approximately 20 miles in length. An estimate of construction cost for a system this size would be around \$150 Million in today’s dollars, not including land acquisition and relocation of utilities. Construction of this system in concert with USACE would necessitate a local share of \$50+ million. Currently, the levee recertification costs are estimated at \$12-15 million. A non-accredited levee through FEMA would have implications for property owners regarding building requirements and mandatory purchase of flood insurance.<sup>i</sup>

The following charts show assessed value of all properties in each of the four municipalities compared to all properties protected by the levee. As indicated, significant portions of the tax base in these communities are protected by the current flood protection system.

	City of Williamsport					
	All Properties		Levee Protected Area			
Occupant	Total number of properties	Total assessed value	Number of properties protected by levee system	Percent protected by levee system	Total assessed value behind levee system	Percent tax base protected by levee system
Apartments	321	\$78,179,620.00	249	77.6%	\$57,496,720.00	73.5%
Commercial	899	\$239,860,330.00	762	84.8%	\$204,940,150.00	85.4%
Industrial	74	\$68,681,210.00	61	82.4%	\$55,751,310.00	81.2%
Institutional/Other	426	\$403,998,790.00	334	78.4%	\$264,697,650.00	65.5%
Total Residential	7,762	\$577,329,740.00	3,287	42.3%	\$188,655,810.00	32.7%
Owner Occupied Residential	4,412	\$381,464,570.00	1,459	33.1%	\$94,473,720.00	24.8%
Other Residential	3,350	\$195,865,170.00	1,828	54.6%	\$94,182,090.00	48.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,482</b>	<b>\$1,368,049,690.00</b>	<b>4,693</b>	<b>49.5%</b>	<b>\$771,541,640.00</b>	<b>56.4%</b>

Table 1.1 Borough of City of Williamsport Properties Protected by Levee

Borough of South Williamsport						
	All Properties		Levee Protected Area			
Occupant	Total number of properties	Total assessed value	Number of properties protected by levee system	Percent protected by levee system	Total assessed value behind levee system	Percent tax base protected by levee system
Apartments	27	\$8,830,030.00	14	51.9%	\$4,118,810.00	46.6%
Commercial	129	\$26,920,910.00	92	71.3%	\$14,722,170.00	54.7%
Industrial	18	\$6,690,990.00	14	77.8%	\$5,921,040.00	88.5%
Institutional/Other	64	\$33,354,510.00	36	56.3%	\$5,650,020.00	16.9%
Total Residential	2,361	\$208,127,870.00	543	23.0%	\$41,182,570.00	19.8%
<i>Owner Occupied Residential</i>	1,539	\$144,099,050.00	289	18.8%	\$22,743,070.00	15.8%
<i>Other Residential</i>	822	\$64,028,820.00	254	30.9%	\$18,439,500.00	28.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,599</b>	<b>283,924,310</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>\$71,594,610.00</b>	<b>25.2%</b>

Table 1.2 Borough of South Williamsport Properties Protected by Levee

Township of Loysock						
	All Properties		Levee Protected Area			
Occupant	Total number of properties	Total assessed value	Number of properties protected by levee system	Percent protected by levee system	Total assessed value behind levee system	Percent tax base protected by levee system
Apartments	30	\$32,574,330.00	6	20.0%	\$1,428,630.00	4.4%
Commercial	246	\$146,879,150.00	128	52.0%	\$99,347,860.00	67.6%
Industrial	16	\$9,358,010.00	7	43.8%	\$6,574,670.00	70.3%
Institutional/Other	99	\$68,476,140.00	12	12.1%	\$879,160.00	1.3%
Total Residential	4,181	\$570,337,130.00	488	11.7%	\$55,109,780.00	9.7%
<i>Owner Occupied Residential</i>	3,079	\$462,569,210.00	354	11.5%	\$42,154,690.00	9.1%
<i>Other Residential</i>	1,102	\$107,767,920.00	134	12.2%	\$12,955,090.00	12.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,572</b>	<b>\$827,624,760.00</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>\$163,340,100.00</b>	<b>19.7%</b>

Table 1.3 Loysock Township Properties Protected by Levee

	Township of Old Lycoming					
	All Properties		Levee Protected Area			
	Total number of properties	Total assessed value	Number of properties protected by levee system	Percent protected by levee system	Total assessed value behind levee system	Percent tax base protected by levee system
<b>Occupant</b>						
Apartments	18	\$6,691,530.00	5	27.8%	\$1,814,350.00	27.1%
Commercial	100	\$27,201,300.00	54	54.0%	\$18,200,480.00	66.9%
Industrial	15	\$6,439,210.00	2	13.3%	\$1,189,350.00	18.5%
Institutional/Other	148	\$12,585,280.00	18	12.2%	\$3,981,240.00	31.6%
Total Residential	2,077	\$212,920,480.00	113	5.4%	\$7,533,270.00	3.5%
<i>Owner Occupied Residential</i>	1,544	\$174,556,130.00	56	3.6%	\$4,163,760.00	2.4%
<i>Other Residential</i>	533	\$38,364,350.00	57	10.7%	\$3,369,510.00	8.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,358</b>	<b>\$265,837,800.00</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>\$32,718,690.00</b>	<b>12.3%</b>

Table 1.4 Borough of South Williamsport Properties Protected by Levee

**Key Implications** A levee breach or failure could occur at any time. Ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation of the system is vital to its stability and reliability. As levees age, it is important to ensure that these operate optimally. If a levee is not recertified, many homes and businesses in the Williamsport Central Business District and beyond would be forced to pay for costly flood insurance. Additionally, in the event of a levee breach or failure, the Federal Government would have no obligation to assist in financing recovery efforts for thousands of homeowners.

Indirect costs of levee failure would be devastating to GWA. In the City of Williamsport alone are more than 14,000 employed people. During cleanup and repair of the City, many of these people may be unemployed, and the City would lose income on taxes as well. Loss of sales to local employers could range from \$7 million to \$70 million each year, depending on percent of damage, if these employers would have to close due to flood damage (see Table 1.1 below generated by the Lycoming County Planning Department). The levee system protects local businesses from this loss every time a flood occurs, and has done so since 1956. Even if employers are not directly affected, they may temporarily lose workers because of damage to their workers' homes. Damage to essential businesses, such as grocery stores, could create issues for people in the area. These indirect costs do not include potential damage to utilities or infrastructure in the City, costs of which could greatly increase during the time necessary for the City to recover.

Below is a list of indirect economic loss depending on percent of damage and years necessary for local businesses to recover after a major disaster. The numbers below result from calculations involving insertions of estimated market values into a formula by World Bank Finance and Markets Global Practice Group inserted. However, the list does not account for the full value of contents or inventory damaged.

Indirect Economic Losses From a Levee Breach					
		Percent of Damage			
		10% Damage	25% Damage	50% Damage	100% Damage
Total indirect (output) economic losses	Damage Amount	\$53,576,683.79	\$133,941,709.49	\$267,883,418.97	\$535,766,837.94
	1 Year Recovery	\$7,031,939.75	\$17,579,849.37	\$35,159,698.74	\$70,319,397.48
	2 Year Recovery	\$14,063,879.50	\$35,159,698.74	\$70,319,397.48	\$140,638,794.96
	3 Year Recovery	\$21,095,819.24	\$52,739,548.11	\$105,479,096.22	\$210,958,192.44
	4 Year Recovery	\$28,127,758.99	\$70,319,397.48	\$140,638,794.96	\$281,277,589.92
	5 Year Recovery	\$35,159,698.74	\$87,899,246.85	\$175,798,493.70	\$351,596,987.40

Table 1.5 Indirect Economic Losses from a Levee Breach, PCD



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

A view from the Susquehanna River Walk showing the Williamsport Levee protecting its downtown infrastructure

## Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue

### LEVEE CERTIFICATION

The flood protection system that serves the Greater Williamsport Planning Area includes a series of levees and tie-backs that protect the City of Williamsport, South Williamsport Borough, sections of Loyalsock Township to the East, and sections of Old Lycoming Township to the West. The Bull Run Levee protects the east side of GWA in Loyalsock, notably the Golden Strip. Meeting FEMA Certification requirements and addressing USACE deficiencies are essential to the GWA and Lycoming County as a whole.

The project is multiphase. First is to examine USACE deficiencies by levee and chart a plan to seek funding to resolve the issues. Next is to address any deficiencies with the FEMA Certification. Finally, is to undertake necessary a study to identify future effective configurations of the levee system and its maintenance and rehabilitation.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County

*Flooding along the "Golden Strip" in Loyalsock during Hurricane Agnes in 1972*

### **HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

Once certified, the area behind a levee is considered protected, and property owners do not have a regulatory requirement to purchase flood insurance. This is the case in the Greater Williamsport area. Ensuring proper operation of the levee system protects life and property.

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – This issue must be led by the non-federal sponsors – City of Williamsport, Borough of South Williamsport, Old Lycoming Township, and Loyalsock Township. Consideration to the following is necessary: identifying and securing funding necessary to repair the levee system and address deficiencies, and developing alternatives for funding ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation.

Other Partners – The Lycoming County Planning Department and the County Commissioners should provide support to these non-federal sponsors.

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	REVIEW THE LATEST USACE REPORTS FOR IMPROVEMENTS, WHICH NEED TO BE COMPLETED. REVIEW THE REPORT RESULTS OF THE FEMA LEVEE CERTIFICATION STUDY BUILD A WORKING PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM	2014-12/31/2017	CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT LOYALSOCK TOWNSHIP SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT BOROUGH OLD LYCOMING TOWNSHIP COUNTY OF LYCOMING PCD PA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION WILLIAMSPORT SANITARY AUTHORITY
2	PRIORITIZE WORK AND SEEK FUNDING FOR USACE SYSTEM REPAIRS AND UPGRADES	JANUARY 2017-JANUARY 2020	PCD, NON-FEDERAL SPONSORS
3	DEVELOP A COALITION TO ADDRESS ONGOING MAINTENANCE AND MEANS OF FUNDING IT.	JANUARY 2017-2020	PCD

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

The Levee Non-Federal Sponsors, working with stakeholders as a Project Delivery Team, will continue to work with the State and community to help fund rehabilitation of levees in order to reduce risk to life and property should a levee breach. This team will seek assistance in efforts to continue accessing funds from the Levee Rehabilitation Assistance Program (LRAP) and the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), which are currently pending for reauthorization per the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). The Project Delivery Team will also work with FEMA to determine if the FEMA Levee Analysis and Mapping Approach (LAMP) (analysis of non-accredited levees) is necessary.

**Additional Projects, Programs and Initiatives for this Issue**

- FLOOD PROOFING**

Seek funding for commercial building flood proofing. Many commercial buildings in the County are in floodplains. Flooding events often put these commercial operations out of commission for lengthy periods

afterwards because they are not built to today's flood-proofing standards. Techniques can be employed to dry and flood-proof commercial structures to reduce damages and insurance costs.

- **FLOOD PROTECTION**

Investigate flood protection methods to allow expansion of commercial areas and protect residents of Old Lycoming Township.

- **FLOODPLAIN PROPERTIES**

Work with County, State, and federal agencies such as USACE and FEMA to continue to acquire lands within floodplain.

- **PARK AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION**

Develop a Master Plan for Williamsport's Park Avenue Neighborhood that will stimulate engagement by the area's property owners and residents, and create a long-term investment plan to strengthen the connection between the City's central business district (CBD) and UPMC's main campus. The Plan will provide a template and strategy for reinvestment and redevelopment in this central City of Williamsport neighborhood that will offer potential for increased density at strategic locations, rejuvenate a neighborhood that has lost much of its original fabric, and offer UPMC Susquehanna an opportunity to capitalize on the Pathway to Health gateway entrance from the highway and downtown.

- **ADOPT/ENFORCE PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODES**

Ordinances should address garbage accumulation, junkyards, abandoned cars, structures in blight/disrepair, etc., to protect/maintain visual quality and community character.

- **NATURAL GAS SERVICE EXPANSION**

Expand/improve natural gas service to areas not currently served.

- **BRODART NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (BNIP)**

Continue/expand BNIP in the City of Williamsport to revitalize the neighborhood around the Memorial Homes development.

- **ROUTE 15 SOUTH GATEWAY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

A redevelopment plan would include a strategy for transitioning underutilized properties along Route 15 into attractive business development that supports the anchor of the corridor - the Little League World Series Complex. This would include transportation, land use, economic development (including rehabilitation of existing residential structures), bike lanes, street trees, lighting, banners, and green infrastructure. The project should also include plans and analysis for physical improvements to direct safe travel patterns and the potential reduction in billboards along the corridor.

- **BECHT SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT**

Redevelop the vacant Becht School property in Loyalsock Township.

- **INSTITUTIONAL USE ZONING**

Create an Institutional Use zone within Old Lycoming Township to accommodate institutional uses such as substance abuse treatment centers.

- **FACILITATE SHARING MUNICIPAL SERVICES TO IMPROVE COST-EFFECTIVENESS**

Encourage municipalities to create/join a Council of Governments (COG) to gain more cost-effective service arrangements.

- **EXPLORE ECONOMIC INCENTIVES TO SUPPORT AGRICULTURE**

Explore the Commonwealth's initiatives that support agriculture.

- **FACILITATE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN DESIGNATED GROWTH AREAS**

Advocate for new, expanded, modernized public sewer and water systems. Develop and maintain highways, roads, and bridges for business needs. Expedite completion of sections of I-99 and Central Susquehanna Valley Throughway. Assist businesses to gain access to rail freight service.

- **ENHANCE STATE OF ART TELECOMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITY IN DESIGNATED GROWTH AREAS**

Install advanced telecommunications infrastructure in designated growth areas.

- **PURSUE FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECTS THAT SUPPORT ECONOMIC RESILIENCY**

Advocate for flood mitigation programs and projects throughout Lycoming County.

- **STRENGTHEN AIR SERVICE TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC RESILIENCY**

Design, permit, and construct a new airport terminal. Expand air-service related businesses and airside commercial facilities. Construct an alternate airport access road.

- **CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO RETAIN AND ATTRACT YOUNG ADULTS**

Encourage growth of entry-level jobs for the professional workforce of college graduates.

- **REJUVENATE DOWNTOWNS OF OUR COMMUNITIES AND REVITALIZE WILLIAMSPORT'S CBD**

Reduce vacancy rate of “street level” stores. Promote adaptive reuse of “second floor” space in commercial office buildings. Establish a “college town” environment that welcomes colleges into the CBD.

- **RECRUIT BUSINESSES AND ADD MORE JOBS TO EXISTING FIRMS**

Strengthen technical and trades training provided to Lycoming County residents to achieve a competitive advantage for existing local businesses and for business recruitment.

- **STRENGTHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO BETTER PREPARE GRADUATES TO ENTER THE LABOR FORCE**

Encourage public school vocational training curriculum coordinators to design programs that meet the needs of industry and business.

- **IMPROVE ADULT EDUCATION OPTIONS**

Work with the PA CareerLink® to expand the labor resource pool——identify where the work force is “under-utilized” and provide pathways for improving skill levels of local workers. The Central Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board’s *Industry Partnership* program collaborates with two business sectors—manufacturing and healthcare—to better understand their needs and to further develop appropriate training programs for the workforce. This program is also working with the PA CareerLink®, Title II Adult Basic Education Providers, and the Pennsylvania College of Technology on a pilot project to implement a new Integrated Education Training program.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County

*Planning Area levee protecting nearby homes as flood levels rise during 2011’s Tropical Storm Lee*



**Priority Issue #2****Fragmentation of local government in Pennsylvania is a barrier to efficient delivery of some public services.**

**Back Story** Most Pennsylvania counties are “fragmented” into a large number of small municipalities. In fact, 2,562 local governments are in Pennsylvania, and Lycoming County has 52 of them. In Pennsylvania, many government rules, regulations, and policies are left to the local level of government to administer. Likewise, each municipality provides many services separately. This fragmentation can also result in a lost opportunity for improved cost efficiency and enhanced service delivery.

Governments at the township, borough and city levels constitute the local forms of government in Pennsylvania. As such, it allows citizens easy accessibility to government officials. This enables the maximum degree of local citizen dialogue related to policymaking, service delivery, and taxation. In general, this form of government is viewed as accessible, accountable, and effective. However, while small, local governments provide accessibility and accountability, many examples around the Commonwealth highlight shortfalls of Pennsylvania’s fragmented structure of government.

For example, many municipalities find it difficult to recruit adequate numbers of citizens and trained professionals to serve on their legislative bodies, boards, and commissions. Moreover, all local governments are required to provide certain capital-intensive services, such as water, sewer, and emergency services, and to manage administrative functions. This could be considered redundant overhead in areas with small populations and tax base. Over time, expectations of local governments have changed from perspectives of both the State government and citizen. Growing responsibilities assumed by local governments are not always easily fulfilled within traditional structure(s) of local government. However, PA municipalities have devised many creative solutions Pennsylvania to meet the needs.

Pennsylvania has built up an array of viable regional-scaled entities, such as COGs, metropolitan planning organizations (MPO), rural planning organizations (RPO), and various other regional planning-type councils, commissions, and organizations. In addition, a growing number of the following has emerged: multi-municipal cooperatives, joint efforts, and mergers related to provision of police, fire, EMS, zoning, codes, sewer, water, stormwater, and other infrastructure and public work programs.

A good local example of multiple municipalities joining forces to work toward a common goal is that of six multi-municipal comprehensive planning efforts in Lycoming County including the GWA Planning Area. Another excellent example is the Lycoming County MS4 Coalition. MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) is an unfunded federal mandate of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Moreover, because Lycoming County municipalities are in the Susquehanna River Basin and Chesapeake Bay watershed, they are required to

prepare Chesapeake Bay Pollution Reduction Plans (CBPRP) that define how they will reduce sediment and nutrient levels, including nitrogen and phosphorous.

The MS4 program is permitted and enforced at the state level through PA Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP). To lessen the municipal cost burden of the MS4 program, in 2011, nine municipalities and one college came together to form the Lycoming County MS4 Coalition. Together they fund a county staff position, the MS4 Planner that manages all of their permits and completes the required six minimum control measures. The Coalition allows them to share costs in permit fees, training, implementation of best management practices (BMP), and consultant fees. The Coalition has operated successfully since its formation, keeping participants in regulatory compliance, while maintaining effective economies of scale.

During the 2017 Comprehensive Plan update, GWA PAT members acknowledged that fragmented government services have affected their Planning Area. **Of particular concern was ability to provide adequate and essential emergency services by police, fire, and EMS due to decrease in volunteer capacity within communities other than Williamsport, intensive certification requirements, and lack of sustainable financial resources.** While GWA PAT members were concerned about all three areas of emergency service, fire and EMS were foci of more intense analysis and discussion.

**Priority Issue Overview** Fire and EMS agencies that serve the GWA Planning Area, as well as the six municipal governments themselves, were increasingly concerned about their ability to provide adequate levels of EMS and fire services to residents of these municipalities. Adequate levels of EMS are dictated by the 2009 Pennsylvania EMS System Act 37 (EMS Act), which established further requirements for service coverage and certification standards. As in other rural communities around the State, local EMS providers are also experiencing declining numbers of volunteers. In short, fire and EMS agencies are increasingly challenged to provide these essential and required services because of four interrelated factors:

- Increasing service requirements—greater time commitment for training
- Decreasing staff capacity—fewer volunteers
- Increasing cost to provide certification training and essential equipment
- Funding limitations to support the above.

In 2010, at the request of the Lycoming County Commissioners, the Governor's Center for Local Government Services at Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) conducted a study to evaluate fire services in central Lycoming County. This was part of a regionalization effort during that time known as Greater Lycoming Emergency Service Alliance (GLESA). The fire departments that participated in the study included City of Williamsport, Old Lycoming Township, Duboistown Borough, South Williamsport Borough (Citizens, Independent, and First Ward), and Montoursville Borough (Willing Hand Hose Company). Several of the fire companies provide fire protection to other municipalities. The Duboistown Volunteer Fire Company and the South Williamsport companies cover Armstrong Township. The Willing Hand Hose Company of Montoursville covers Fairfield and Upper Fairfield Townships. Loyalsock Township was the only GWA municipality not participating at that time.

The study found that the volunteer fire departments in Duboistown Borough, Montoursville Borough, Old Lycoming Township, and South Williamsport Borough (Citizen's, Independent, and First Ward) were struggling to maintain a consistent level of service due to a decrease in the number of volunteer firefighters. Additionally, the City of Williamsport Bureau of Fire was facing continued increased cost of operations that may eventually result in a decrease in current level of service. Purpose of the project were to review current methods of deployment, funding, and organizational structure at the time; and then to identify best practices and recommend potential cooperative partnerships that will improve service to citizens of the community.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*Old Lycoming Township Volunteer Fire Company*

The study resulted in the following five main recommendations to achieve performance standards and improve the system:

1. Continue the existing collaboration by formalizing the Williamsport Area Regional Fire Alliance as a non-profit or an association.
2. Functionally consolidate certain aspects of fire administration and operations under the Williamsport Bureau of Fire.
3. Increase use of Williamsport Bureau of Fire members in volunteer stations through contract staffing.
4. Develop paid incentives for volunteer firefighters and establishment of duty crews.
5. Develop a regional fire commission to establish a regionalized fire and EMS department.

Since the time of that study, certification requirements have increased, the volunteer base has continued to decrease, and one fire company merger has occurred in South Williamsport. In 2016, an effort to merge all three South Williamsport fire companies (First Ward, Citizen's Fire, and Independent) resulted in a merger of First Ward and Citizen's Fire Companies into the South Williamsport Fire Department (SWFD). Independent Fire Company was decertified, rendering it inoperable. In addition, in April 2014, provisions of the EMS Act took effect specifying that all EMS agencies, including those throughout Lycoming County, must provide 24/7 coverage in order to respond to a dispatched request for EMS assistance. The EMS Act does permit EMS agencies to provide less than 24/7 services if they participate in a county-level EMS response plan approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Fourteen Regional EMS Councils in the Commonwealth administer the EMS Program for the PA Department of Health. The Lycoming Tioga Sullivan (LTS) EMS Council serves the Counties of Lycoming, Tioga, and Sullivan.

In addition to requirements of the EMS Act, local municipal codes also regulate provision of emergency services. Old Lycoming, Armstrong, and Loyalsock Townships are all Townships of the Second Class. The Second Class Township Code requires a township to “be responsible for ensuring that fire and emergency medical services are provided within the township by the means and to the extent determined by the township, including appropriate financial and administrative assistance for these services.”<sup>ii</sup> South Williamsport and Duboistown Boroughs are governed by a code specifying that a Borough will “...be responsible for ensuring that fire and emergency medical services are provided within the borough by the means and to the extent determined by the borough, including appropriate financial and administrative assistance for these services.”<sup>iii</sup> The City of Williamsport is governed by the Third Class City Code. In addition, these six municipalities are also required by their respective codes to consult with these emergency service providers to discuss needs within their municipalities.

According to the EMS Act, all EMS certification examinations recognized by the Commonwealth are required to align with the National EMS Education Standards. To comply with these standards, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification requires 150 hours of training plus co-requisites including two on-line courses and a 2.5-hour Hazardous Materials (Haz-Mat) Awareness class. Cost of this training exceeds \$900. Currently, a Basic Life Support Ambulance must be staffed by one person trained to EMT standards or higher and one Emergency Medical Responder (EMR). The EMR may be the driver if credentialed as a driver which requires an additional 16-hour driving course. The extensive training hours and costs required to be a volunteer fireman or EMS personnel are making it difficult for new recruits to commit the time required to become certified while meeting the demands of a career and family.

Lower volunteer recruitment numbers, resulting in decreased capacity to provide required services, compounds cost and time required to secure increased training and needed equipment. This is a statewide issue. Since 1985, the number of volunteers in PA has declined from 152,000 to 70,000. There are 2,462 fire companies in PA, and the majority of them are volunteer companies. Across the State, volunteer agencies are challenged to maintain services while suffering from a declining pool of volunteers. Lack of volunteers has hit the volunteer fire departments and emergency service agencies especially hard. EMS is provided over an area of 1,200 square miles in Lycoming County through several service methods, including hospital-based life support services, paid and volunteer fire department-based units, paid duty crews, and all-volunteer crews.

**Capacity** – Currently, the following EMS agencies provide services to these municipalities in Ly coming County:

- Williamsport: Williamsport Bureau of Fire (only paid department)
- South Williamsport: SWFD
- Duboistown: Duboistown Fire Department
- Old Lycoming Township: OLT Volunteer Fire Co.
- Loyalsock Township: Loyalsock Volunteer Fire Co.
- Armstrong Township: relies on Duboistown, South Williamsport, and Loyalsock
- Paramedic Services to PAT – UPMC/Susquehanna Regional EMS.





Firefighting capacities and capabilities of local fire departments are critical to future growth and development potential in Lycoming County and its municipalities. If adequate capacity cannot be sustained and increased due to limitation of capabilities and/or funding, and/or for other reasons, businesses and industries seeking new locations or expansions at current locations will also be limited. Firefighting capacity and advanced safety training and equipment related to service of haz-mat operations are also critical. It is important that fire and EMS services also be considered essential infrastructure during planning and feasibility phases of new development.

**Trends** – During the five-year period between 2012 and 2016, call volumes within the two counties served by the Lycoming/Sullivan 911 Center have declined, but the number of fire/EMS incidents has increased. Types of 911 calls have also been changing. In recent years, personal care and assistance requests have increased significantly, as opposed to traditional emergency situations. Within the GWA Planning Area, these trends are generally consistent, but further analysis is needed.

Lycoming/Sullivan County 911 Center Activity 2012-2017 Year to Date (YTD)						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Up to 8/2017
Fire/EMS Incidents	17,378	16,915	17,314	18,856	18,601	13,062
Police Incidents	43,068	40,403	41,397	42,532	43,773	32,872
Total 911 Calls	61,598	59,836	60,628	58,223	56,295	35,659
Working Fires	126	97	125	113	137	98
2nd Alarm Fires	19	18	27	11	12	10
3rd Alarm Fires	1	2	3	2	2	2
MVA w/entrapment	74	46	80	75	64	31
Water Rescues	19	11	17	11	20	10

Table 2.1 Lycoming/Sullivan County 911 Center Activity 2012-2017

The GWA was interested in exploring creation of a model EMS delivery response system for the County, such as an EMS Authority or umbrella organization. There is desire to consider county support for shared planning/bookkeeping/auditing for fire and EMS, and a paid position to act as a resource for multiple entities.

**Cooperative Relationships** In addition to the issues described above, strong communication between volunteer fire departments and municipal governing bodies is of utmost importance. Because townships and boroughs are required to ensure provision of adequate fire and EMS services in the municipality, and volunteer fire departments are the primary entities providing these services in Lycoming County (and particularly in the Planning Area), an open and transparent relationship between these entities is essential. Most importantly,

both parties should have a mutual understanding and agreement about annual budget, funding needs, service delivery parameters and requirements, operational management, and problems encountered. If this is not already occurring, a healthy working relationship that responds to these objectives must be cultivated.

**Key Implications** If the six municipalities in the GWA Planning Area and the fire and EMS agencies do not find ways to more effectively work together to provide more efficient EMS and fire delivery services in their municipalities, the following five results are possible:

- Further increases in program administrative costs for municipalities
- Failure to provide residents of these municipalities the required and needed level of EMS service
- Failure of the municipalities to meet requirements of Pennsylvania EMS System Act 37 of 2009 and their respective municipal codes
- Necessity for municipalities to hire emergency service and fire personnel, which would impose a substantial cost burden and other related fiscal challenges
- Necessity for municipalities to cut other existing programs and services on which local residents rely.



*Firefighters extinguish a house fire along Isabella Street in Williamsport, March 2017*

**Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue****EXAMINE COST EFFECTIVENESS AND PERSONNEL EFFICIENCY OF FIRE AND EMS SERVICES IN THE GWA PLANNING AREA AS A PREREQUISITE TO THE COUNTY EMS RESPONSE PLAN**

The six municipalities and their respective fire and EMS agencies will work together to evaluate their abilities to provide a readily accessible and efficient level of EMS services to the residents of this Planning Area, and meet service requirements of the EMS Act. The agencies will examine and assess their individual and collective resources, services, capacities, management structures, training requirements, costs, and funding potentials in support of the proposed *Countywide EMS Response Plan*.

Fire and EMS agencies of the GWA Planning Area will work with their municipal governments to identify specific shortcomings and needs within these municipalities. They will also help provide the necessary data and information to a third-party consultant to support development of the Countywide EMS Response Plan and assist with its implementation.

The following is a sample of types of data and information that the third-party consultant will need to adequately complete the assessment and offer viable recommendations to the County's EMS Response and Staffing Task Force. Recommendation is for Planning Area municipalities in the Planning Area and the EMS agencies to begin collecting this information prior to hire of a consultant.

**Volunteer Fire Departments and EMS Providers within or serving the PAT – data needed:**

- Service area
  - Service call volume trend over last 5 years
  - Response time
  - Where are the gaps of providing 24/7 service?
- 
- # of paid staff and volunteers
  - Average salary of employee
  - Identify the changes from volunteer to paid programs (EMS)
  - Average age of volunteer (Are the youth and/or younger residents volunteering?)
- 
- Annual budget (expense and revenue)
  - Level of financial commitment from local governments
  - Funding received from County and for what purpose
  - Who and how are operations managed?
  - What reporting methods are used by each? Same, different?
- 
- Costs for equipment / technology
  - Training costs (trend over time)
  - Training time commitment (trend over time)

- Facility costs
- 
- Statutory requirements for training (provide statute/name and identify any changes that have occurred)
  - Other training requirements?
  - Training consortium in county provided for fire departments? If yes, what is the amount of subsidy to whom and how much?
- 
- Are there any specific examples of problems related to provision of services?

The Countywide EMS Response Plan is expected to provide a framework for how EMS agencies will collectively manage, administer, and provide services in these six municipalities, and the other parts of Lycoming County, when unable to provide 24/7 staffing coverage. The Plan will include recommended formal agreements among participating agencies and municipalities, and additional strategies for how they will provide readily accessible service coverage throughout this six-municipality area in Lycoming County.

In preparation for the proposed Countywide EMS Response Plan, GWA municipalities should reconsider the following five recommendations of the GLESA study:

1. Continue the existing collaboration by formalizing the Williamsport Area Regional Fire Alliance as a non-profit or an association.
2. Functionally consolidate certain aspects of fire administration and operations under the Williamsport Bureau of Fire.
3. Increase use of Williamsport Bureau of Fire members in volunteer stations through contract staffing.
4. Develop paid incentives for volunteer firefighters and establishment of duty crews.
5. Develop a regional fire commission to establish a regionalized fire and EMS department.

### **HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

The six municipalities of the GWA Planning Area are committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of their residents; and to meeting requirements of their respective municipal codes for providing EMS services and requirements of Pennsylvania's EMS Systems Act 37. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the traditional structure of EMS service delivery to remain effective in the 21<sup>st</sup> century because of the following factors:

- Mix of geography and terrain: dense urbanized area, as well as low-density population areas, some very rural and remote;
- Mixture of paid and volunteer service providers; and
- Changing demographics and family responsibilities.

Responding to these concerns, the Lycoming County Department of Public Safety (DPS) has begun working with the EMS Response and Staffing Task Force to address requirements and challenges of providing sufficient service

to these six municipalities and other municipalities in the County. The development of an *EMS Response Plan* in Lycoming County will meet the requirements of Act 37, as well as provide a blueprint for how each EMS Agency will assist in the provision required and critically important EMS services.

Once funding is successfully secured to develop the Countywide EMS Response Plan, a consultant will be hired. In advance of that, local PAT members can begin the dialogue and collect needed data and information. This will help ensure a coordinated and effective planning process.

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – GWA PAT

Other Partners – Fire Chief’s Board, Hospitals, Lycoming County Department of Public Safety (DPS), and Department of Planning and Community Development (PCD) will participate and support this effort.

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	GWA PAT TO ESTABLISH A PDT (STEERING COMMITTEE)	EARLY 2018	FIRE RESPONDERS EMS UNITS MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS PCD & DPS STAFF
2	CONVENE STEERING COMMITTEE TO DEFINE THE SHORTCOMINGS AND NEEDS OF THE FIRE AND EMS SERVICE PROVIDERS IN PAT	JANUARY 2018 – JULY 2018	STEERING COMMITTEE PCD & DPS STAFF
3	DEFINE LIST OF DATA NEEDS AND BEGIN COLLECTION OF INFORMATION IDENTIFY FUNDING NEEDS AND POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	JANUARY 2018 – JULY 2018	STEERING COMMITTEE
4	PARTICIPATE IN THE EMS RESPONSE PLAN FOR LYCOMING COUNTY	JULY 2018 – APRIL 2019	ALL
5	FORMULATE SOLUTIONS	JULY 2018 – ONGOING	STEERING COMMITTEE PCD & DPS STAFF CONSULTANTS
6	BEGIN IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREED UPON SOLUTIONS	ONGOING	LOCAL GOVERNMENTS STEERING COMMITTEE OTHERS – TO BE DETERMINED (TBD)

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

Shared Municipal Services grants through DCED's Local Government Services department are applicable for at least the planning phases. Additional applicable funding sources will be identified by the Steering Committee in the July 2018 – April 2019 timeframe.

**Additional Projects, Programs, and Initiatives for this Issue****1. CONSIDER REGIONAL, MULTI-MUNICIPAL ZONING OPTIONS, SUCH AS JOINT MUNICIPAL ZONING ORDINANCES**

Develop joint ordinances for purposes of regulating future growth in a cooperative manner, which is allowable under Article VIII-A under the PA MPC. This offers opportunity for municipalities to meet requirements of providing for all uses across multiple municipalities. It offers opportunity to create a joint planning commission and/or zoning hearing board.

**2. ENCOURAGE CONSISTENCY IN ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF ZONING PRACTICES WITH OTHER MUNICIPALITIES IN THE PLANNING AREA.**

This could include better utilization of zoning tools available, training of zoning personnel, and assistance with interpretation of zoning regulations.

**3. DEVELOP ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS COMPATIBLE WITH LAND USE PATTERNS AND DENSITIES THAT DEFINE THE LOCAL CHARACTER OF COMMUNITIES.****4. RECREATION AUTHORITY**

Expand purposes of the Lycoming County Recreational Authority to address recreational needs, oversight, and management of facilities beyond the Golf Course.

**5. CONSIDER RE-ESTABLISHING REGULAR GWA MEETINGS.****6. EXPLORE BEAUTIFICATION OPTIONS AND GATEWAY OPPORTUNITIES IN/AROUND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS.****7. WORK WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS, THE COLLEGES, AND THE COUNTY TO ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES.****8. COLLABORATE WITH RELIGIOUS AND NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS, WHERE APPROPRIATE, TO ADDRESS MYRIAD COMMUNITY ISSUES AND CONCERNS.**

**Priority Issue #3**



**Outdoor recreation resources are not fully developed, protected, and promoted.**

**Back Story** Lycoming County is known for its beautiful mountains, wide valleys, miles of hiking trails, scenic bikeways, and pristine streams and creeks. Recreational resources of the GWA Planning Area include many of these same amenities and are key reasons why many residents choose to live, work, and play in these six municipalities. In short, these natural and recreational resources are among the greatest assets of this Planning Area. Residents of the GWA communities desire to develop or expand these existing recreation assets, as well as improve access to them, so that residents and visitors alike can more fully capitalize on the benefits these provide:

- Opportunities for positive community impacts
- Enhanced quality of life
- Improved health benefits
- Expanded transportation options (e.g., trails)
- New educational opportunities
- Economic growth

GWA PAT members identified the natural beauty and scenery of Greater Williamsport as the top strength of this Planning Area. Likewise, potential to capitalize on outdoor recreation resources very close to the urbanized area was selected as the top opportunity for this Planning Area.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County

*Outdoor enthusiasts enjoy a walk along the nationally recognized Susquehanna River Walk*

**Priority Issue Overview** During the GWA Comp Plan public outreach, desire for more outdoor recreation opportunities was among the top four priorities listed by respondents (see Appendix C for survey results). Consensus among PAT members and the public is threefold:

- Expand existing recreation assets.
- Add to the area’s recreational resources.
- Improve access to these recreational venues.

This issue was well documented in the 2005 adopted GWA multi-municipal comprehensive plan. That document identified development of new recreational opportunities as a key strategy to enhance the community’s infrastructure. Specifically, the adopted 2005 GWA Comprehensive Plan offered two major recommendations:

- Implement recommendations from the Lycoming County Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space/Greenway Plan.
- Develop community greenway plans that contain implementation strategies at the local level.

Additionally, the same strategy was outlined in the Lycoming County Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2006. Both the 2005 GWA multi-municipal plan and the 2006 Lycoming County plan discuss a strategy of increasing usage of existing recreational and other community facilities. In the 2008 Lycoming County Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space/Greenway Plan was an expanded discussion regarding optimal ways to fully develop, protect, and promote outdoor recreation and scenic areas.

Since 2006, some major additions the GWA Planning Area’s recreation resources have occurred. Opened in 2010, the immensely popular Susquehanna River Walk has the following attributes:

- Provides a paved 33-mile loop trail overlooking the Susquehanna River
- Sits atop the levee system in Williamsport, South Williamsport, and Loyalsock Township
- Connects with the Loyalsock Township and Montoursville Bikeways to the east and the South Williamsport Borough Park traveling south
- Now includes an additional access/parking area at the foot of Hepburn Street in the City of Williamsport.

Opened in 2012, the County’s 1.2-mile Conservation Learning Trail (pictured below) on the grounds of the County’s Lysock View Complex in Loyalsock Township offers a living learning outdoor experience.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*Hikers can take in nature on the scenic single-track trail*



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*Educational displays showcase information on indigenous wildlife in the area*

While these projects represent a solid beginning to enhance recreation opportunities in the GWA Planning Area, many more opportunities still are available and must be advanced.

During the 2016-2017 comprehensive planning process, outdoor recreation was found to be a significant concern for the general public. A 2016 survey involved more than 1000 people in both online format and in-person interviews (during public events). Ranked parks and trails fourth out of a list of 12 when respondents asked to identify where they would prefer to see public resources invested.

Respondents were also asked what they liked most about Lycoming County and wanted to see preserved. This open-ended question resulted in the public’s selection of 22 different areas desired for preservation. When categorized, survey results revealed the following:

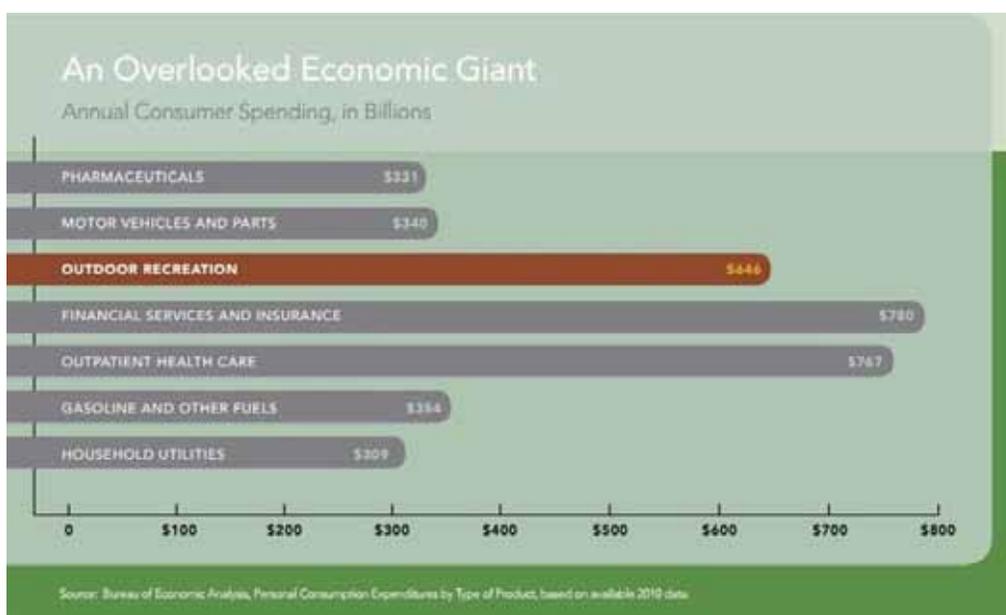
- Natural beauty—#1
- Parks & Trails—#3
- Other forms of Outdoor recreation—#5

The take-away is that Lycoming County residents, including GWA citizens, apparently strongly value outdoor recreation and scenic beauty. In view of these findings, the 2016 GWA PAT has set forth a set of broad strategies to pursue over the next 10 years:

- Explore connectivity options for bikeways, walkways, and greenways.
- Encourage new development to include pedestrian and bike facilities.
- Appropriately regulate new and expanding developments within floodplains.
- Continue to develop recreational areas for the benefit of residents and visitors.
- Continue to develop regional recreation areas for the benefit of the region.
- Encourage greenway efforts, such as Miller’s Run Greenway, and tie them into Susquehanna Greenway Partnership efforts.
- Encourage recreational uses of floodplain areas, with appropriate regulation.
- Continue to explore opportunities for the GWA municipalities to collaborate with the PA Wilds.

Furthermore, a 2010 report detailing annual consumer spending by the U.S. Department of Commerce concluded that Americans spend nearly \$646 billion dollars a year for outdoor recreation.

**Figure 7. Annual Consumer Spending, in Billions**



Given the geographic and demographic diversity of the GWA Planning Area, it is not surprising that GWA PAT members had reached a three-way tie for the Top Viable Project for this region. The three top projects include:

- Susquehanna River Walk Extension and Access Improvements
- Millers Run Greenway
- Bald Eagle Mountain Ridge Trail.

**Key Implications** Failure to expand outdoor recreation options and access would represent a tremendous missed opportunity for this Planning Area. Need to enhance and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation and enjoyment of natural and scenic aspects of this area has a broad consensus of support within the community. Additionally are generally recognized economic, social, and health benefits of a superior outdoor recreation infrastructure. Expansion of outdoor recreation is a recognized crucial component of the quality of life throughout the GWA Planning Area.



*Located in Williamsport, the Hiawatha Riverboat is one of the most popular attractions in central Pennsylvania—offering 6 days a week of public cruising and available for private charter rental*

### Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue (First of Three)

#### SUSQUEHANNA RIVER WALK EXTENSION AND ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

The Susquehanna River Walk Extension Project will connect the existing River Walk with Susquehanna State Park, as well as improve connections to the existing River Walk. The main part of the project consists of a 2.4--mile extension of the existing Susquehanna River Walk. In addition, improvements to the River Walk access will be pursued.



*As a destination, the Susquehanna River Walk is utilized by residents and tourists alike for sightseeing, fishing, and jogging*

#### **HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

The Susquehanna River Walk is a walkable and bikeable recreation and transportation route providing a scenic connection to multiple parts of the City of Williamsport, including the CBD, Pennsylvania College of Technology, Lycoming College, and Susquehanna State Park.

#### **PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – Lycoming County PCD and Susquehanna Greenway Partnership

Other Partners – City of Williamsport, Pennsylvania College of Technology, Lycoming College, Susquehanna Economic Development Association (SEDA)-COG Joint Rail Authority, Williamsport Sanitary Authority, USACE, PennDOT, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), DCED

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

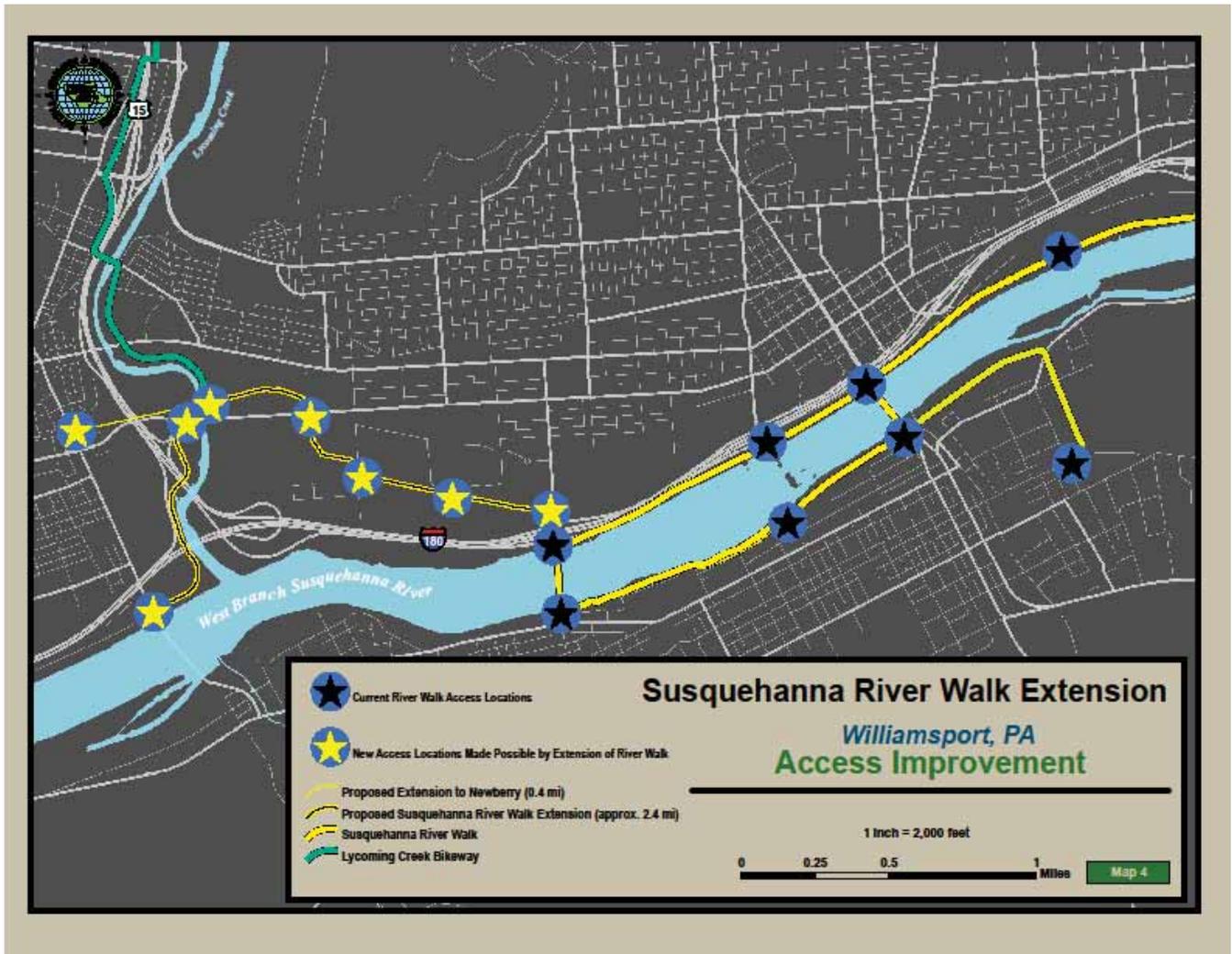
STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	SELECT PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM	FIRST YEAR	GWA PAT
2	PLANNING AND DESIGN TO DETERMINE FINAL ROUTE OF RIVER WALK EXTENSION FROM MAYNARD STREET TO SUSQUEHANNA STATE PARK, INCLUDING NEWBERRY CONNECTION ➤ DCNR GRANT SECURED IN EARLY 2017	YEAR ONE-YEAR TWO	PCD, CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT, PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY, PENNDOT, USACE, DCNR
3	PLANNING AND DESIGN OF BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN UNDERPASS AND NEW RIVER WALK CONNECTION AT BASIN STREET	YEAR TWO	SEDA-COG JRA LYCOMING COLLEGE, CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT, SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, PCD.
4	BEGIN CONSTRUCTION OF RIVER WALK EXTENSION	YEAR TWO-YEAR FOUR	PCD, CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT, PENNDOT, PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY, USACE, DCNR
5	CONSTRUCT BIKE & PEDESTRIAN UNDERPASS & NEW RIVER WALK CONNECTION AT BASIN STREET	YEAR THREE – YEAR FOUR	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, SEDA-COG JRA
6	FEASIBILITY/PLANNING AND DESIGN OF RIVER WALK CONNECTION TO SOUTH REACH ROAD	YEAR FIVE - YEAR SEVEN	CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT, PCD, DCNR, USACE, PENNDOT, SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP
7	CONSTRUCTION OF RIVER WALK CONNECTION TO SOUTH REACH ROAD	YEAR EIGHT	CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT, PCD, DCNR, USACE, PENNDOT, SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

Potential funding sources for this project include PA DCNR, PennDOT Multimodal Funds, Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funds, PA DCED Multimodal Funds, and Act 13 Legacy Funds.

The following map displays the proposed River Walk extension project:

Figure 6. Susquehanna River Walk Extension



Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue (Second of Three)



**FIGURE 7. MILLERS RUN GREENWAY**

This project will establish a greenway and trail along Millers Run in Loyalsock Township to connect the Susquehanna River Walk with the township’s schools and recreation center. The Millers Run Greenway will be a multi-use trail that connects the Susquehanna River Walk to multiple recreation assets in Loyalsock Township, including Bruce Henry Park, the Loyalsock Community Center, James Short Park, and the township’s community swimming pool. The trail would be multi-functional and utilized for both transportation and recreational purposes. This trail would serve multiple users, including pedestrians, joggers, bicyclists, and others. Connectivity with residential developments, schools, recreation areas, and business districts also represent important functionalities of this trail.

Funding has been secured for two sections of Phase 1 through PennDOT’s TAP Grant. This includes the connection from the Loyalsock Community Center to James Short Park/Pool Complex and the connection from Bruce Henry Park to Northway Road.

**HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

This project expands and capitalizes on existing outdoor recreation infrastructure by extending the River Walk to connect with existing municipal parks. It runs through a densely populated community, providing new options for non-motorized commuting to school and work, and an additional access point to the River Walk. It also reconnects the community to an impaired urban stream, creating new opportunities for nature observation while encouraging stewardship and restoration of the resource. Perhaps most important, this project provides a safe route for township residents to access the River Walk without having to navigate traffic on East Third Street and Northway Road.

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – Loyalsock Township

Other Partners – Loyalsock Township School District, Diamond Pointe Apartments, USACE, PennDOT, PADEP, Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, Lycoming County PCD

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	PLANNING AND DESIGN OF PHASE I – 1A: LOYALSOCK COMMUNITY CENTER TO JAMES SHORT PARK/POOL COMPLEX 1B: BRUCE HENRY PARK TO NORTHWAY ROAD	FIRST YEAR TAP GRANT RECEIVED FROM PENNDOT 2017	LOYALSOCK TOWNSHIP, PENNDOT, SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, PCD
2	PLANNING AND DESIGN OF PHASE 2 – BRUCE HENRY PARK TO EAST THIRD STREET	YEAR TWO	LOYALSOCK TOWNSHIP, SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP
3	CONSTRUCTION OF PHASE I	YEAR TWO – YEAR THREE	LOYALSOCK TOWNSHIP
4	PLANNING AND DESIGN OF PHASE 3– EAST THIRD STREET TO THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER WALK	YEAR THREE	LOYALSOCK TOWNSHIP, SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, PENNDOT
5	CONSTRUCTION OF PHASE 2	YEAR THREE-YEAR FOUR	LOYALSOCK TOWNSHIP
6	CONSTRUCTION OF PHASE 3A & 3B	YEAR FOUR – YEAR FIVE	LOYALSOCK TOWNSHIP

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

Potential funding sources include PA DCNR programs, PennDOT TAP Funds, and Act 13 Legacy Funds.

**Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue (Third of Three)**

**BALD EAGLE MOUNTAIN RIDGE TRAIL**

Establish the Bald Eagle Mountain Ridge Trail through southern Lycoming County, connecting to Lock Haven in Clinton County. The Ridge Trail is envisioned as a multi-use recreation and conservation corridor linking the River Towns of the West Branch Susquehanna River. The Ridge Trail proposal uses existing and new trail and roadway segments to create a unified and formalized trail from Muncy to Lock Haven.

**HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

The Bald Eagle Mountain Ridge Trail would encourage diverse, non-motorized recreation (hiking, biking, and equestrian use), creating a recreational amenity for residents and visitors. The Trail would connect people to the beauty and heritage of the mountain landscape, while interpreting and conserving important habitats and water resources. The Ridge Trail would build public-private partnerships and encourage regional coordination and cooperation in the project’s construction and sustainable operations and maintenance.



Photo Credit: Brian Auman

*Mountain bikers prepare for an exciting trail ride*

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – Susquehanna Greenway Partnership

Other Partners – Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce (WLCC), Lycoming County Visitors Bureau, DCNR, DCED, PennDOT, Lock Haven City Authority, WMWA, Lycoming County Water and Sewer Authority (LCWSA), Lycoming County, Clinton County

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

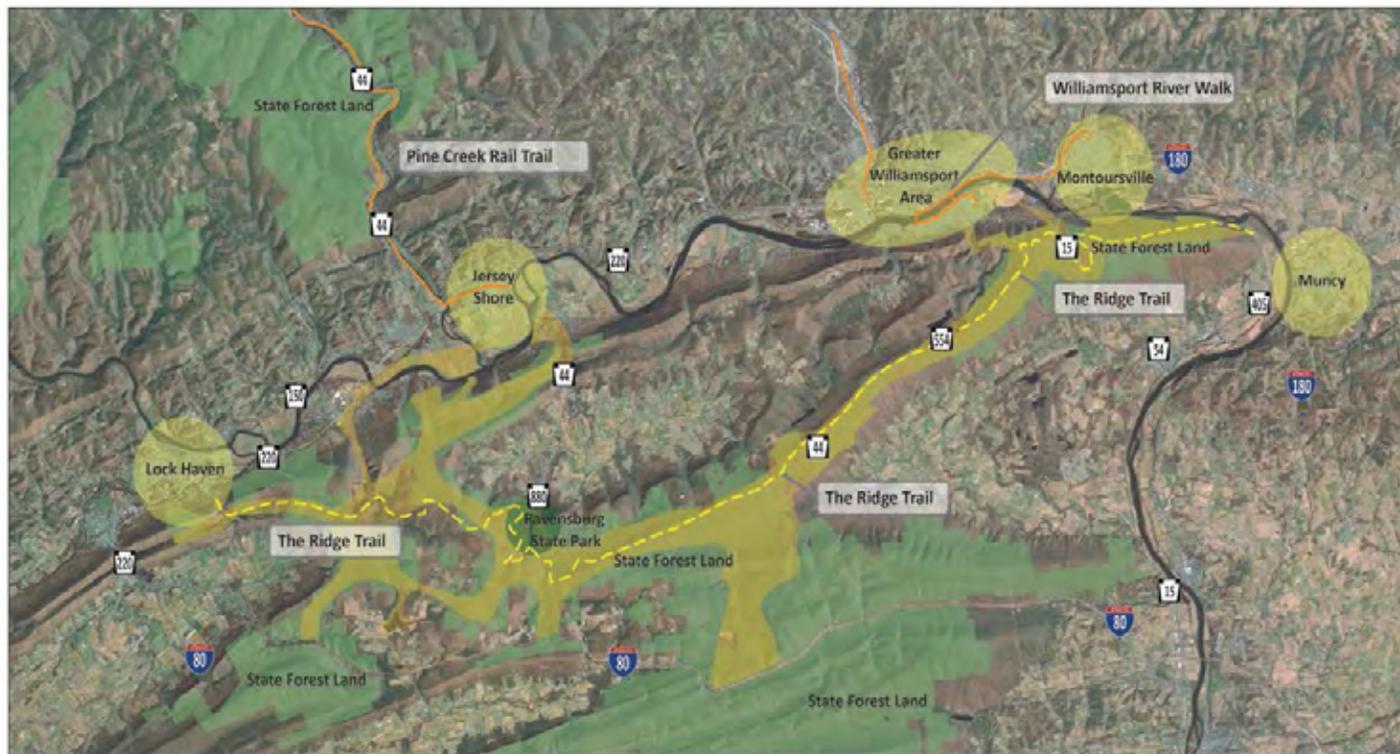
STEP No.	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	FORM A PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM/STEERING COMMITTEE	FIRST YEAR	GWA PAT
2	SEEK ADOPTION OF RIDGE TRAIL MASTER PLAN IN LYCOMING COUNTY AND CLINTON COUNTY WITH SUPPORT FROM DCNR	FIRST YEAR	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR, LYCOMING COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, CLINTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
3	LAUNCH PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR PROJECT	FIRST YEAR	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, WLCC, CCVB
4	PHASE 1 - SUMMIT TRAIL DESIGN AND PERMITTING	YEAR ONE – YEAR TWO	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR, WMWA, ARMSTRONG TOWNSHIP
5	PHASE 1 - SUMMIT TRAIL AND SUMMIT TRAIL HEAD	YEAR THREE	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY

STEP No.	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	CONSTRUCTION		PARTNERSHIP, DCNR, WMWA, ARMSTRONG TOWNSHIP
6	PHASE 1 - LOCK HAVEN CITY AUTHORITY LANDS DESIGN AND PERMITTING	YEAR TWO	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR, LOCK HAVEN CITY AUTHORITY
7	PHASE 1 - LOCK HAVEN CITY AUTHORITY TRAILS, CASTANEA AND ZINDELTRAIL HEAD	YEAR THREE	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR, LOCK HAVEN CITY AUTHORITY
8	PHASE 1 - CONSTRUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION / SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROJECTS	YEAR THREE	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR, WMWA
9	PHASE 2 - FALLING SPRING DESIGN AND PERMITTING	YEAR FOUR	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR
10	PHASE 2 - SAWALT TRAIL DESIGN AND PERMITTING	YEAR FOUR	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR
11	PHASE 2 - FALLING SPRING TRAIL AND PINE AND RAVENSBURG TRAIL HEAD CONSTRUCTION	YEAR FIVE	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR
12	PHASE 2 - SAWALT TRAIL AND WHITE DEER TRAIL HEAD CONSTRUCTION	YEAR FIVE	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR
13	PHASE 3 - SKYLINE DRIVE DESIGN AND PERMITTING	YEAR SIX	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR
14	PHASE 3 - ARMSTRONG ROAD DESIGN AND PERMITTING	YEAR SIX	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR
15	PHASE 3 - SKYLINE DRIVE TRAIL AND SKYLINE AND SUMMIT TRAIL HEAD CONSTRUCTION	YEAR SEVEN-EIGHT	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR
16	PHASE 3 - ARMSTRONG ROAD TRAIL AND ARMSTRONG AND CLINTON TRAIL HEAD CONSTRUCTION AND SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROJECTS CONSTRUCTED	YEAR SEVEN-EIGHT	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR, LCWSA
17	PHASE 4 - ROUTE 15 CROSSING DESIGN AND PERMITTING	YEAR EIGHT	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR, PENNDOT
18	PHASE 4 - ROUTE 15 CROSSING CONSTRUCTION	YEAR NINE-TEN	SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP, DCNR, PENNDOT

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

Potential funding sources for this project include PA DCNR, PennDOT Multimodal funds, TAP funds, PA DCED Multimodal funds, and Act 13 Legacy Fund.

Figure 8. Bald Eagle Mountain Ridge Trail Map



Source: Brian Auman Landscape Architecture

**Additional Projects, Programs and Initiatives for this Issue****• GWA PARKS IMPROVEMENT**

Continued improvements to parks within the GWA Planning Area, including softball field lighting in Short Park (Loyalsock Township), facilities improvements and managerial staff capacity for South Williamsport Park Complex, and various enhancements to Brandon Park and Memorial Park (City of Williamsport).

**• GWA POOLS IMPROVEMENTS**

Continued improvements to the public pools within the GWA area, including Memorial Park Pool (Splash Cove) and the Loyalsock Township pool, wading pool, and waterpark.



*Memorial Park Pool*

**WEST END SPORTS COMPLEX**

The proposed West End Sports Complex, in the City of Williamsport, is a multi-faceted project that would provide many different recreational activities for people to enjoy in the GWA community. It is projected to be a four soccer field complex adjacent to the I-180 corridor, four softball/youth baseball field, and one collegiate baseball field complex at the site of current Elm Park. Two adult-size softball fields for intramural and adult leagues on Penn College property (behind the current transfer station off West Third Street) are also under consideration. Additional future opportunities have been identified for improvements of the minor and tee ball fields at the Original Fields complex for two additional youth baseball fields. All of these properties would be connected by the River Walk Extension Project currently is currently planned from Maynard Street to Susquehanna State Park.

This project would maximize existing parking in the areas around Bowman Field and Memorial Park. It would also enhance bicycle parking with added capacity to meet needs of those participating in soccer (or other uses) at the soccer field complex.

Given the close proximity to Memorial Park, the proposed Sports Complex would have the added advantage of offering families coming to the area for tournament play the opportunity to access a variety of other

recreational amenities, including the swimming pool during the summer season. It also would provide them opportunity to either walk or bike the Susquehanna River Walk utilizing the future extension from Maynard Street to Susquehanna State Park. Future consideration can be given to the addition of amenities associated with the adjacent Lycoming Creek for water activities such as canoeing and kayaking. This project could also spur economic development, given its location adjacent to the former carnival grounds identified as lands ripe for redevelopment.

## Priority Issue #4



**Our multi-modal transportation system, particularly the airport, has deficiencies in safety, physical condition, and availability of facilities in some areas of the County.**

**Back Story** The GWA Planning Area is blessed with an interconnected multi-modal transportation system that provides safe and efficient access to major regional markets, as well as access to the local community. The major highway routes in the PAT area are I-180, US 15, and US 220, which are four-lane highways on the National Highway System. Some sections of this set of roads are part of the future Interstate 99, which will serve as a north-south connector between the PA Turnpike and I-86 in New York State.

PennDOT is designing major access management improvements along US 220 to the immediate west of the GWA Planning Area, to enhance public safety and provide more efficient ingress and egress to developing areas. PennDOT is also designing and constructing major roadway reconstruction projects along 4<sup>th</sup> Street in Newberry and along West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in the Williamsport's CBD.

The GWA Planning Area is the hub of Lycoming County's excellent public transit system, consisting of River Valley Transit (RVT)—the fixed-route provider and STEP (the Lycoming-Clinton Counties Commission for Community Action) —the shared-ride provider. RVT currently has a fleet of 29 buses of which six are fueled by compressed natural gas (CNG). By mid-2018, RVT will have an estimated 18 CNG vehicles that render (62% of the fleet CNG-fueled). RVT transports over 1.3 million passengers a year, an average of 4,300 passengers per day. RVT has 19 routes that serve 20 municipalities, including the City.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*The newly constructed Trade and Transit Center II*

The Lycoming Valley Railroad and Norfolk Southern provide shortline and Class 1 rail service, respectively, to area industries and long haul freight operations, especially coal transport along the Harrisburg-Buffalo Mainline. In the City of Williamsport, safety improvements have recently been made at the Rail Road Crossings at Arch Street and Howard Street by SEDA-COG. In addition, as part of this PennDOT Safety Improvement Program, the railroad grade crossing at Depot Street was abandoned and a quiet zone was established. The quiet zone will prohibit trains from using their horns in the residential section of Newberry, Williamsport.

This Planning Area is also served by the Williamsport Regional Airport, immediately adjacent to the GWA in the Borough of Montoursville. The airport provides local residents and businesses access to commercial air service to Philadelphia with connections to numerous other global market destinations.

The GWA area includes abundant urban trails, such as the Susquehanna River Walk, Loyalsock Bikeway, and Lycoming Creek Bikeway that provide alternative transportation and recreation opportunities. In addition to bikeways as a recreational amenity, the City of Williamsport's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee has actively promoted bicycle infrastructure as a form of transportation infrastructure. Official bike routes in the City were mapped in the 1970s; however, pavement markings or wayfinding elements were never incorporated. In 2016, this committee updated the official city bike map to identify streets and corridors that would provide the best connections between residential areas,



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*Lycoming Creek Bikeway*

destinations such as schools and business districts, and the River Walk (see Appendix D for 2017 City Bike Map). Along with the updated bike map, the committee recommended a suite of ordinance amendments that would render the existing traffic code, planning code, and zoning code compliant with "complete streets" standards (design of streets to meet needs of all users without prioritizing any particular mode of travel). City Council adopted these amendments in 2017, paving the way for development of a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian safety effort in the City.

The City of Williamsport's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee also facilitated a survey with both an online and an intercept portion (361 online/95 intercept). They found that:

- Over 50% of respondents were at least occasional bicycle users.
- The number of bicycle commuters would increase by 50% if riding a bicycle were made "easier and safer" in the city.
- Half of the people who stated that they currently "never" ride a bicycle would take up bicycle riding if steps were taken to increase safety and ease.

When asked what factors would lead people to consider riding a bicycle to be easier and safer, people overwhelmingly identified infrastructure deficiencies (such as lack of bicycle lanes or poor pavement) rather than focusing on un-addressable factors such as "weather." More than half of respondents felt that riding a bicycle in the City of Williamsport is currently unsafe, and 96% responded that the city government should take action to make riding a bicycle "easier and safer."

The City Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee continues to seek ways to engage and coordinate with the efforts of surrounding municipality organizations. Furthermore, the WATS MPO developed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee that will provide technical guidance to the MPO board regarding projects and programs centered around bicycling and walking as transportation throughout the County. The Committee will also work on developing a limited, achievable, strategic framework for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that can be incorporated into the long-range transportation plan. Committee meetings will serve as a forum for local communities and organizations to obtain feedback and coordinate on bicycle and pedestrian projects and initiatives that they are considering to pursue.

**Priority Issue Overview** Despite the strong multi-modal transportation network described above, some transportation assets in the Planning Area suffer from deficiencies that impair mobility and pose potential safety risks. A list of some key issues and concerns includes the following:

- Complete streetscape enhancements and the Susquehanna River Walk expansions.
- Ensure that safe pedestrian mobility and transportation mode alternatives are an integral consideration in all downtown revitalization efforts and traffic calming plans.
- Improve pedestrian crossings and create bicycle lanes at locations currently unsafe or currently underutilized by cyclists and pedestrians due to lack of infrastructure/safety.
- Improve transportation corridors from main arteries to critical facilities.
- Consider establishing a second connection to Commerce Park Drive by extending Basin Street because the Commerce Park dead-end situation poses economic development and public safety issues.
- Consider establishing a connection from Reach Road to Wahoo Drive.
- Consider other pedestrian and bike connections to enhance the off-road travel network, such as Millers Run Greenway.

Another significant transportation concern is the state of bridges. Bridges in Lycoming County are, on average, over 50 years old. In the County, 157 additional state and local bridges are not currently structurally deficient, but any deterioration in deck, substructure, or superstructure would result in a rating of structurally deficient upon their next inspection.

In 2008, more than 6,000 bridges on state roads in PA were structurally deficient. PennDOT has cut that number nearly in half in less than 10 years. How many structurally deficient bridges are on local roads in PA is unknown because PennDOT has an incomplete inventory. In Lycoming County alone are 204 locally owned bridges. Approximately 50 of these bridges are currently designated as in accordance with federal government bridge inspection criteria. This designation means these bridges typically cannot carry legal loads (40 tons in PA), or have other problems that require short-term attention or the bridge may be closed to traffic.

Bridge closure will affect public safety such as emergency response, and hinder economic development. Currently, Lycoming County is the only county in PA that inspects all locally owned bridges 8 feet or greater in span length. Federal Government regulations require inspection of all publicly owned bridges over 20 feet long; however, these regulations do not require inspection of bridges under 20 feet. Lycoming County maintains that not inspecting these smaller bridges makes little sense, as serious safety issues can still arise should a smaller

bridge collapse. Therefore, the Lycoming County has the best available data on all locally owned bridges. The Lycoming County Planning Department has completed a preliminary priority ranking of these bridges that considers bridge condition and functionality.

To respond to this issue, Lycoming County operates an innovative local bridge inventory and inspection program. Therefore, spending can be effectively targeted to bridges that need it most. By working with PennDOT District 3 to prioritize work on structurally deficient state bridges in the County, and developing a bundling program for local bridges, Lycoming County has a real chance of being the first and only county in PA to have addressed the “backlog” of bridge maintenance and repair problems.

The Lycoming County Planning Department is currently evaluating funding options for the bridge bundling program whereby groups of bridges can be designed and constructed in a more cost-effective manner rather than undertaking individual bridge projects separately. Already, PennDOT is realizing substantial cost and timesaving's by bundling groups of state-owned bridges into larger contracts as part of its PA Rapid Bridge Replacement Program. Presently, this PennDOT program is limited to only state-owned bridges (is not applicable to locally owned bridges).

In addition to the issues discussed above, GWA PAT members' focused on two major areas of concern:

- Need for Airport Improvements
- The Pathway to Health.

Regarding concerns about the airport, the existing terminal building was originally constructed in 1947, and although several renovations have been completed, no major renovations to the exterior of the terminal building have occurred. Consequently, the building exterior is in very poor condition, the building is cosmetically unappealing, and overall, the building lacks energy efficiency. Many recurring problems plague the facility. Furthermore, the current facility lacks adequate space to handle an increased volume of passengers, has specifically limited security holding areas, and lacks a fully automated baggage carousel. The largest deficiency, however, is lack of available space and facilities to accommodate a new airline service. Addition of another airline would be expected to increase usage of the airport, as well as produce additional revenue for the Airport Authority and its tenants. The Williamsport Regional Airport contributes (directly and indirectly) an estimated \$65,000,000 annually to the local economy (estimates from PennDOT Bureau of Aviation Economic Impact of Aviation Report). Improvements would increase this economic impact.

The Pathway to Health is a top priority for the PAT because it represents a long-standing commitment to the UPMC-Susquehanna Health Systems of public infrastructure investment to upgrade the vehicular and pedestrian route from I-180 to the hospital campus, which is in the center of a city neighborhood. This supports the commitment of hundreds of millions of dollars invested by the hospital in its upgraded facilities since deciding to remain in the City in the early 2000s. Two of four phases have been completed, one is underway, and the final phase will complete this project, laying the groundwork for future multi-use investments to subsequently support the project.

**Key Implications** A public survey in 2016 as part of the comprehensive planning process and involved more than 1,000 people. The respondents were asked to choose as many as five areas for investment of public resources. The third most chosen response was “roads, bridges and sidewalks.” Notably, while no structurally deficient bridge is in imminent danger of failure, and all have undergone regular inspections to ensure they are safe to use, action is still needed. Continued delay in addressing structurally deficient bridges may result in bridge closures or weight limits that would negatively impact emergency response and access to residents and businesses. The Williamsport Regional Airport is in dire need of replacement for reasons of burdensome maintenance, technical obsolescence, and public safety. The transportation route for emergency vehicles traveling to the Williamsport Regional Medical Center is the focus of the Pathway to Health initiative. That project addresses health and safety concerns.

Regarding the Williamsport Regional Airport, many consequences of not constructing a new passenger terminal, include the following:

- Continued high maintenance and replacement cost of failing systems
- Current size functionally obsolete and no longer adequately serving current aviation-related services
- Inability to fulfill regulatory demands or industry standards that have been changing continually since 9/11
- Restriction on ability to recruit additional air service that would promote competitive pricing and provide additional destinations wanted and deserved by the business community
- Future air service in jeopardy because of ongoing retirement of turboprop aircraft by American Airlines and conversion to larger regional jets
- Continued increase in cost of construction.



Photo Credit: Bassett Engineering

*Structurally deficient bridge segment*

### Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue (First of Two)

#### SUPPORT THE AIRPORT AUTHORITY'S CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TERMINAL AND NEW ACCESS ROAD AT WILLIAMSPORT REGIONAL AIRPORT

To address existing facility deficiencies and position the airport for long-term viability, this project would create a new 30,000-square-foot terminal facility that is modern and energy efficient, and has space to house two additional airlines. This project would include state-of--the-art passenger processing and security systems with a secured holding room that would comfortably accommodate up to 200 passengers—more than five times the capacity of the current hold area.

This project is consistent with the Williamsport Area Transportation Study Long Range Transportation Plan adopted by the Williamsport Metropolitan Planning Organization in December 2013. Need for this project is also supported in an Airport Terminal Replacement Feasibility Study approved by the Federal Aviation Administration in 2014.

#### **HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

The Williamsport Regional Airport Terminal Building Replacement addresses the above-cited deficiencies in physical facilities and airline operations and services. By addressing these current limitations, the airport's value as a transportation facility, quality of life asset, and economic driver would expand expanded.

This project could positively impact the regional economy by providing opportunity to add more flights to more destinations at competitive air fares via stimulation of more airline competition. Current annual economic impact of the airport is approximately \$66 million (based on a PennDOT Bureau of Aviation commissioned study) supporting 253 jobs directly related to airport operations and tenants. This project is anticipated to create opportunities to expand positive economic impacts of the airport. A modern full service airport could also help recruit additional industries to the area, as well as better support current employer air service needs, especially with likely resurgence of Marcellus Shale activity. This project will include a building design that would that will allow future expansion to ensure the facility is able to continually respond to changing demand and operational needs.



Photo Credit: Williamsport Regional Airport

*A plane takes off from the Williamsport Regional Airport*

This project would also improve ingress and egress at the terminal through a separate but related project that would extend Montour Street to connect with Airport Road and provide a second access to the airport.

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – Williamsport Municipal Airport Authority

Other Partners – County of Lycoming, PennDOT Bureau of Aviation, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), First Community Foundation Partnership, PA DCED, Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce, Senator Gene Yaw, Representative Garth Everett



*Artist rendition of the new airport terminal*

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	ADVERTISE FOR BIDS	JANUARY 2017	AIRPORT AUTHORITY
2	AWARD CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS	MARCH 2017	AIRPORT AUTHORITY
3	INITIATE CONSTRUCTION	JULY 2017	AIRPORT AUTHORITY
4	COMPLETE CONSTRUCTION	FALL 2018	AIRPORT AUTHORITY

**FUNDING STRATEGY**

Committed Funding Source	Amount
Act 13 (County of Lycoming)	\$ 3,000,000
State Transportation Capital Budget	\$ 5,000,000
Redevelopment Capital Assistance Program (RCAP)	\$ 3,000,000
Passenger Facility Charge	\$ 1,500,000
DCED Multi-Modal Transportation Funds	\$ 1,500,000
FHWA TEA-21 Earmark	\$ 1,172,000
First Community Foundation Partnership	\$ 1,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 16,172,000</b>

**Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue (Second of Two)****PATHWAY TO HEALTH**

The Williamsport Pathway to Health project is a joint, public-private partnership among the City of Williamsport, the County of Lycoming, and UPMC-Susquehanna (formerly Susquehanna Health System).

UPMC-Susquehanna is the largest employer in the City and the County, and is one of the most important organizations stabilizing the economies of both. Completion of this complex, multi-phase project was ranked as the second highest priority transportation project by GWA PAT members.

Nearly 15 years ago, UPMC-Susquehanna was evaluating the option of leaving the City for a greenfield site east of Williamsport. After substantial review, analysis, and dialogue, UPMC-Susquehanna committed to remain in the City and make a \$250 million private investment to extensively renovate and expand its Williamsport Hospital complex. This multi-year project included construction of the new Patient Tower and Health Innovation Center, and site design improvements to the campus. The decision to remain in the City was achieved in large part because Lycoming County and the City of Williamsport significantly committed to improvements in the transportation infrastructure to modernize corridors leading to the hospital.



Image Credit: Susquehanna Health Systems  
*UPMC - Susquehanna Health in Williamsport*

A more direct route was designated from I-180 to the doorstep of the hospital. Identified as the “Pathway to Health,” this connecting link not only helps bring motorists from I-180 to the hospital campus, but also upgrades a safe pathway for pedestrians to enable residents of the city and the region to better access the new healthcare facilities.

The Pathway to Health project has received widespread public support as it has developed over the past 10 years. A project of this magnitude and size was intended to proceed in multiple phases as funding opportunities would be identified and resources would be secured.

Phases I and II of the Pathway to Health, which have been completed, included new concrete sidewalks, curbs, handicapped-accessible curb ramps, safety lighting, new traffic signals (including EMS pre-emption capability), signage, paving improvements, and landscaping.

Phase III will be constructed in summer 2017. In January 2017, funding for Phase IV was awarded in the amount of \$798,500 to complete the final phase by the end of 2018. Phase IV will also include a gateway into the Historic District of the City.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*The Pathway to Health promotes accessibility and safety*

See Appendix D – Reference Map for Pathway to Health Plan

**HOW THE PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

The Pathway to Health project promotes the federal-level Healthy Communities Initiative by facilitating pedestrian access to the hospital. It also enhances emergency response to the hospital by streamlining the approach to the hospital for emergency services vehicles through traffic signal pre-emption—cutting emergency response time in half from that under prior conditions.

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agencies – The City of Williamsport, County of Lycoming, and UPMC-Susquehanna

Other Partners – River Valley Regional YMCA, Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce, Susquehanna Community Health and Dental Center

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	PHASES I AND II	COMPLETED	CITY/COUNTY
2	CONSTRUCT PHASE III	SUMMER 2017	CITY/COUNTY
3	CONSTRUCT PHASE IV	SUMMER-FALL 2018	CITY/COUNTY

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

All funding for the transportation components of the Pathway to Health project has been secured through PennDOT TAP funds with local match from City of Williamsport Community Development funds. The final TAP award was made in January 2017.

**Additional Projects, Programs and Initiatives for this Issue****1. SYLVAN DELL BICYCLE LANES**

Create dedicated bicycle lanes on Sylvan Dell Road within Armstrong Twp., using as an example the design of bicycle lanes on Greevey Road in Loyalsock Township.

**2. CITY BICYCLE ROUTES**

Implement forthcoming recommendations of the City of Williamsport Bicycle Advisory Committee regarding revision of official city bicycle routes.

**3. LITTLE LEAGUE BOULEVARD**

Improve pedestrian crossings at multiple locations on Little League Boulevard in the City of Williamsport, particularly the intersection of Pine Street and Little League Blvd.

**4. COMMERCE PARK DRIVE**

Establish a second connection to Commerce Park Drive and an additional River Walk connection through Basin Street to improve multimodal transportation connectivity in the City of Williamsport and Loyalsock Township.

**5. COMPLETE STREETS**

Develop policies and update ordinances to ensure all street reconstruction projects are evaluated under the “complete streets” guidelines prior to design and development. Complete Streets are for everyone and accommodate all modes of transportation. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

**6. SHARED PARKING**

Explore shared parking opportunities. Easy opportunities may involve locations where daytime businesses can remove restrictions on non-customer’ use of their parking areas after business hours.

**7. RIVER VALLEY TRANSIT (RVT) BUS CONVERSIONS**

Support conversion of River Valley Transit buses from diesel to CNG.

**8. 3<sup>RD</sup> STREET BICYCLE LANES**

Create dedicated bicycle lanes on 3rd Street from Lycoming Creek east to Basin Street within the City of Williamsport.

**9. CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (CBD) TRAFFIC PLAN**

Develop a specific plan for calming traffic in the CBD in the City of Williamsport.

**10. HIGH STREET**

Improve pedestrian crossings at multiple locations on High Street in the City of Williamsport.

**11. REACH ROAD**

Establish a connection from Reach Road to Wahoo Drive to improve transportation connectivity within the City of Williamsport.

**12. SUSQUEHANNA STATE PARK**

Connect the western end of Susquehanna State park to South Reach Road within the City of Williamsport.

**13. LERTA AREA ACCESS**

Establish an additional connection to the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Abatement (LERTA) designated area bounded by Maynard Street, Rose Street, I-180, and the railroad corridor to improve multimodal connectivity to this potential key development site.

**14. RECONSTRUCTION OF MILLIONAIRE DRIVE**

Reconstruct the road leading to Williamsport Area High School, including repaving, creation of a new four-foot-wide sidewalk, and replacement of curbing and stormwater infrastructure.

**15. MILLERS RUN GREENWAY TRAIL**

Establish a greenway and trail along Millers Run in Loyalsock Township to connect the Susquehanna River Walk with the Township's schools and recreation center.



**Priority Issue #5****Significant cultural and historical resources are not adequately documented, protected, and promoted.**

**Back Story** Lycoming County and specifically the Williamsport area are blessed with a growing arts culture and with outdoor walking and biking trails that separately provide many opportunities for residents to express their creativity and enjoy the beauty of the Williamsport area. Leveraged together, these provide an opportunity to grow the economy while providing more opportunity for our creative residents to express themselves.

The County has a rich cultural history and hosts many historic structures and sites. The GWA Planning Area in particular is home base for most countywide arts, culture, and history organizations, such as Lycoming Arts, Lycoming County Historical Society, Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, Williamsport Community Concert Association, Williamsport Civic Ballet, and many others.

The GWA Planning Area includes many of the County's premier arts and cultural venues, including the Avenue of the Arts, and:

- Community Arts Center
- Community Theater League
- Williamsport Scottish Rite
- Pajama Factory
- Mary Welch Theater—Lycoming College
- Klump Auditorium—Penn College of Technology
- Thomas Taber Museum of the Lycoming County Historical Society
- First Friday Celebrations
- Ways Garden
- Downtown art galleries.



Photo Credit: Unknown

*Community Arts Center*

The GWA Planning Area is also home to a myriad of historically significant structures and sites that draw interest from tourists and residents alike, who are eager to explore and appreciate the cultural heritage of this region. The City of Williamsport has a celebrated and designated historic district known as "Millionaire's Row." In 2014, the *Original Little League Field*, on West Fourth Street, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Distinguished designations such as this are honors that generate community pride and contribute to a greater sense of place for those living there.

**Priority Issue Overview** Cultural and historical resources are not new topics—these were included as issues in the 2005 GWA Multi-Municipal Plan. During the 2016-2017 Comp Plan process, GWA PAT members and local citizens listed an expanded array of issues about which they were concerned:

- Recognize the arts and cultural assets as an economic driver.
- Identify and preserve historical transportation routes in the Planning Area.
- Evaluate existing zoning and building codes and subdivision and land development regulations, to ensure these are conducive to promotion of a vibrant and livable community.
- Establish a neighborhood preservation program to support property maintenance and beautification, house-by-house.
- Reestablish the historic sign program.
- Establish neighborhood associations to promote a sense of neighborhood identity, community, and pride in ownership, and to give residents a stronger voice in local government affairs.
- Develop a culture, arts, and heritage trails initiative in any areas designated by municipalities as culturally and historically significant.
- Increase public awareness of cultural and historical resources unique to the area.
- Promote implementation of the Old City/East Third Street Gateway Redevelopment Strategy.
- Promote implementation of the Lower West Branch River Conservation Plan.

While the above items were each favorably supported, GWA PAT members focused on two major issues:

- Harness, protect, and preserve historical resources and assets.
- Promote arts and cultural events by expanding, marketing, and reaching out to a variety of audiences in a more efficient and effective way.

**Historic Resources** Historic resources often help bring a sense of place to our communities and give our communities character. Historic structures are unique properties. In particular, when historic structures are maintained well, property values in surrounding neighborhoods are generally higher. While the GWA is rich with historic sites and structures (the City of Williamsport having the greatest concentration), understanding of what is important to preserve is not clear; nor is a comprehensive approach evident to preserve what is most meaningful. The first step is ensuring that historically significant properties are identified; then appropriate decisions by communities on how to manage those resources can follow.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*Millionaire's Row*

Historical inventorying and preservation initiatives have not been fully addressed since the 2005 Multi-municipal Plan; in fact, most relevant plans and studies that focus on historic structures predate that 2005 plan.

In 1971, Lycoming County Planning Commission completed a countywide historical site survey that identified 273 historic resources within the County. The 1971 report, the "Historic Sites and Landmarks of Lycoming County," served as the foundation for the County's 1974 Historic Preservation Plan. Recommendations of this Historical Preservation Plan are still relevant today, as is the inventory of historic buildings in the Planning Area. This paper inventory has since been digitized, and inventory work has continued.

In 2005, the City of Williamsport completed another inventory of historic resources resulting in a list of 166 Significant Historic Buildings and Sites that were added as an amendment to its Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan. In 2015, the County of Lycoming worked with the City and a consultant to survey each property 50 years old or older within the City of Williamsport. The purpose of this survey was to review, refine, and amend the City's 2005 list of Significant Historic Buildings and Sites. This survey ultimately created a new list of 268 significant buildings. Of the 268, 106 were identified on the 2005 list of Significant Historic Buildings and Sites, and the remaining 162 had been previously unidentified. The survey found that Williamsport's historic building stock includes dwellings, and commercial, industrial, and municipal buildings. Surveyed significant historic structures date from the late 19th, early 20th and mid-20th centuries.



*Restored Historic Home along East Third Street*

Also in 2015, the Lycoming County Department of Planning and Community Development created a Heritage Plan Map as part of its LycoMap series. This interactive map includes sites listed on the County's 1971 historic resource inventory, 1974 historic preservation plan, and the 2015 draft Williamsport Historic Structures Survey. The map also includes sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places and historic districts in Jersey Shore, Muncy, and Williamsport.

Continued efforts are needed to identify, protect, and preserve local historic and cultural assets, and promote cultural activities. To ensure protection of local character and history in all GWA municipalities, it is important to inventory additional historic assets, assess their conditions, and pursue opportunities for preservation. To protect these historic resources, the City has adopted protective ordinances for its Historic District and guards those assets carefully.

Historic preservation efforts throughout the remainder of the GWA Planning Area have been less formalized; however, a Planning Area-focused program would help increase recognition of noteworthy historic and cultural assets throughout the region.

**Arts & Culture** Lycoming Arts is a countywide organization dedicated to promotion of all forms of art, and serves as a lead agency to work with a variety of partners—including businesses, community organizations, and individuals. Since 1995, Lycoming Arts has focused on the City of Williamsport, in particular, fostering the branding of Williamsport as an “Art Town” in order to attract more cultural tourism. It is a brand that can include art, history, baseball, and the outdoors, because it is a unique expression of the people who live in an area. This focus has been deliberate. The City is not only Lycoming County’s hub of population, commerce, services, and tourism, but it is northcentral Pennsylvania’s center of cultural activity. Work done and progress made in the City serve as a model for creative place making around the County and the greater region as well. Lycoming Arts realizes that it is time to start considering expansion of its reach into other parts of the County. Recently, Lycoming Arts published the *Avenue of the Arts* brochure shown below to market Williamsport’s arts and entertainment assets:



Figure 9. Avenue of the Arts Brochure



Expanding diversity and exposure to the arts has been proven to improve and strengthen communities. Arts and cultural experiences may be instrumental in generating the following benefits:

- Enhanced social capital of the community

- Increased sense of collective identity of a place
- Enrichment in the lives of underserved populations, such as low-income and minority families
- Increased programming within schools
- Promotion of volunteerism
- An economic driver for businesses in Lycoming County.

Furthermore, presence of arts organizations and prevalence of arts events may play a role in attracting

Residents and businesses to (re)locate to a community by improving its image and increasing its appeal. It's In particular, Lycoming County is fortunate to serve as the eastern gateway to the Pennsylvania Wilds, which touts the value of the outdoor experience in north central/northwestern PA, and recognizes the value of growing and connecting unique small businesses in the PA Wilds region. Many of these small businesses are focused on the arts and the interpretation of the great outdoors as an art form. Lycoming Arts believes a stronger connection to the PA Wilds organization will allow them to position themselves to promote "where the arts have gone wild."



*"Inspiration Lycoming County" Mural*

Although Lycoming Arts has grown over the past decade, in order to expand its reach, additional capacity will be needed. Moving forward, Lycoming Arts intends to create a business plan, begin fundraising from diverse sources, create a three-year plan for implementation of specific projects, hire an executive director, and consider creating a permanent office/storefront to serve as an informational hub and a retail outlet for local artists.

In a 2016 online survey by Lycoming Arts, respondents felt that the strongest aspects of arts and culture in the County were:

- Variety of programs and events offered
- Level of community support and engagement
- Cultural tourism
- Availability of free programs and events
- Public art installations.

The weakest aspects were inadequately coordinated communication of events and programs, insufficient levels of government funding and policy support, lack of media coverage, and lack of economic development resources available to the arts and culture initiatives.

Respondents felt that top priorities for government support of the arts and culture should be festivals and community events, public art, youth art programs, and general support for arts and culture organizational capacity to carry out these activities.

Strong public interest in historical resources seems apparent, as well as in the arts and culture of Lycoming County. A public survey in 2016 as part of the County comprehensive planning process garnered responses from more than 1,000 people. Respondents were asked what they liked most about Lycoming County and wanted to preserve. Local History and the Arts received the fourth highest number of positive comments.

**Key Implications** If the GWA's historic and cultural resources are not inventoried, documented, developed, supported, celebrated, and protected, risk of losing them is unavoidable. Moreover, loss of these resources may precipitate cascading impacts throughout the GWA Planning Area, including:

- Diminishment of the character and heritage of the GWA Planning Area
- Decreased quality of life for residents
- Reduced recreational and educational opportunities
- Loss of tourism and other potential ripple effects on local economies and land values
- Negative impact on the tax base due to vacancies and reduced land values.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*Historic County Prison now the Cell Block Night Club*

## Top Viable Projects of Regional Significance for this Issue

### LYCOMING ARTS' CULTURE, ARTS, AND HERITAGE TRAILS INITIATIVE

As the first step in expanding the countywide organization's reach, Lycoming Arts seeks to develop a Culture, Arts, and Heritage Trails Initiative.

In Williamsport, Loyalsock, and South Williamsport, a Cultural Trail would be an urban pedestrian/bike trail connecting the River Walk, creek trails, cultural districts (downtown, historic districts, colleges), neighborhoods, historic sites, entertainments, and public art in a way encourages residents and visitors to get out and explore built and natural environments.

Throughout the County's rural areas, multiple and various Cultural Trails would connect river trails, waterways, trails, historic sites, scenic routes, and storytelling sites with pedestrian/bike routes that invite residents and visitors to explore our story, our land, and our natural beauty.

Starting with the Urban Trail network to create a model for Cultural Trail Development, Lycoming Arts is taking the lead on this project in partnership with the Williamsport Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Susquehanna Greenways, and Our Towns. Primary models for this project are the Indianapolis Cultural Trail and the local bike tour *The Tour De Bill* developed by David and Louisa Stone.

To fully realize the intent and ability of the Culture, Arts, and Heritage Trails Initiative, Lycoming Arts plans to augment its volunteer base by hiring a full-time, paid executive director. The organization seeks to become more efficient, focused, and professionalized in implementing events, programs, and projects. The objective is to perform greater marketing and networking outside the immediate area, and enhance creative, place-making opportunities along with municipalities and volunteer organizations throughout the County.

The trail will identify areas designated by municipalities as culturally and historically significant, including bike routes, driving routes, walking tours, Indian pathways, canals, historic structures and sites, arts, cemetery, and Little League tours. Other improvements are also needed to be successful, such as new striping, enhanced crosswalks, bike racks, bike rentals or bike share programs, and signage. This effort will be coordinated with Lumber Heritage Region and PA Wilds.

### **HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

Expanding the capacity of Lycoming Arts will allow it to support a wider variety of project and programs to create regional unity. The Lycoming Arts organization and the Lycoming County arts community in general, have demonstrated that they understand the value of recognizing our community's heritage as a key part of our contemporary arts scene. Local heritage themes are often woven into newly created art, particularly public art installations (the "Inspiration Williamsport" and the "Woodhick" statue on the River Walk are two recent, worthy examples). Expanding the capacity of the Lycoming Arts organization will allow it to take on additional projects to celebrate the arts, culture, and heritage of the GWA region and the County. Foremost among those projects is the planned Culture, Arts, and Heritage Trails Initiative.

Developing the Culture, Arts, and Heritage Trail Initiative as a primarily bike and pedestrian tour would expand the diversity of and exposure to the arts by promoting health, recreation, and tourism.

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – Lycoming Arts

Other Partners – Municipalities of the GWA, Lycoming County PCD, Lycoming County Visitors’ Bureau/Chamber of Commerce, Williamsport Recreation Department and Bike Committee, First Community Foundation Partnership, local businesses, Lycoming College, Pennsylvania College of Technology, public and private school systems, Little League World Series, Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, Central Pennsylvania Film Office, and other community non-profits, Our Towns, and the Williamsport Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	SELECT A PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM (LED BY LYCOMING ARTS); BEGIN MONTHLY PLANNING MEETINGS	FALL 2017/WINTER 2018	LYCOMING ARTS, LYCOMING COUNTY PCD, OTHER PARTNERS
2	CREATE A BUSINESS PLAN TO FUND NEW POSITION; CREATE THREE-YEAR PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION; BEGIN FUNDRAISING & GRANT APPLICATIONS	2018	LYCOMING ARTS, LYCOMING COUNTY PCD, OTHER PARTNERS—CONSIDER USING SCORE
3	ADVERTISE AND HIRE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION	FALL 2018-SPRING 2019	LYCOMING ARTS
4	DESIGN AND DEVELOP THE CULTURE, ARTS AND HERITAGE TRAIL	2019-2021	LYCOMING ARTS, LYCOMING COUNTY PCD, OTHER PARTNERS

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

Potential funding sources include the First Community Foundation Partnership of PA, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, City of Williamsport Recreation Department, Lycoming County Visitors’ Bureau/Chamber of Commerce (including hotel tax revenues), Lycoming Arts membership fees and private donations, and revenues from Lycoming Arts events, such as special fundraisers or merchandise sales. Act 13 recreation funds could support staff time in planning specific events relevant to the fund’s purpose.

**Additional Projects, Programs and Initiatives for this Issue**

**1. COMPLETE THE HISTORICAL STRUCTURES DIGITAL INVENTORY**

The inventory and catalogue of historic structures, as documented in 1971 and 1974, has been successfully digitized by Lycoming County/PCD. The County’s Historical Preservation Plan is over 40 years old. It is a document whose contents and recommendations are still relevant today. For the past 40 plus years, there has been no sustained effort to update the original document’s inventory of historical places and structures.

In 2015, the County of Lycoming completed historic structure surveys of sites in Jersey Shore, Montgomery, Muncy Borough, and Williamsport to begin to review, refine, and amend the County's 1971 inventory of historic sites and landmarks. The resulting reports are initial assessments of the County's historic resources, and will guide development of an updated, countywide historic resource inventory. These lists represent the group of potential additional structures that have become eligible for historical consideration.

**2. RETAIL OUTLET ON THE ARTS**

Create retail outlets to serve as an informational hub to display local artists' works and disseminate brochures for arts venues, including galleries and performing art spaces, maps of cultural and historic trails, and other resources that may be produced by the organization or its partners to help promote arts, culture, and history.

**3. NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

Establish a neighborhood preservation program to support property maintenance and beautification, house-by-house.

**4. RIVER WALK SCULPTURE PARK**

Implement the River Walk Sculpture Park by installing additional public art locations along the River Walk.

**5. AVENUE OF THE ARTS**

Implement the Avenue of the Arts plan along 4th Street in the City of Williamsport.

**6. FAXON CIRCLE**

Enhance and improve the Faxon Circle park area in Loyalsock Township through installation of brick pavers, benches, trees, and landscaping; and placement of a historical marker commemorating the first planned community built in Lycoming County.

**7. HISTORIC SIGN/MARKER PROGRAM**

Implement an arts and historical marker/plaque program to improve neighborhood identify and engagement.

**8. CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT DOWNTOWN HISTORIC CONSERVATION DISTRICT OVERLAY**

Create a downtown historic conservation zoning overlay district to protect the character-defining streetscapes of the downtown neighborhood from out-of-character alterations, new construction, and demolition. Establish a set of design guidelines to maintain the historic character of the district. See JMT's 2015 "City of Williamsport Historic Structures Survey" for additional information and recommendations.



**Priority Issue #6****Drugs, particularly heroin and opioids, are creating significant social, economic, public health, and safety problems across the County.**

**Back Story<sup>iv</sup>** Nationally, drug abuse and drug overdose are becoming a major health problem. According to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School Of Public Health report titled *The Prescription Opioid Epidemic: An Evidence-Based Approach*: “Drug overdose death rates in the U.S. have increased five-fold between 1980 and 2008, making drug overdose the leading cause of injury death.” In 2013, opioid analgesics were involved in 16,235 deaths—far exceeding deaths from any other drug or drug class, licit or illicit. In 2014, nearly 2,500 Pennsylvanians died from drug-related causes, a 20 percent increase from the previous year, according to the PA State Coroners Association. This currently puts PA as seventh in the nation for drug-related overdose deaths.

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), in 2012, an estimated 2.1 million Americans were addicted to opioid pain relievers and 467,000 were addicted to heroin. These estimates do not include an additional 2.5 million or more pain patients who may be suffering from an opioid use disorder because the NSDUH excludes individuals receiving legitimate opioid prescriptions.

Other important national statistics from the September 2014 Report for the Center for Rural PA:

- 4.2 million Americans age 12 and older have used heroin at least once.
- 80% of heroin addicts reported abusing prescription opioids before starting heroin.
- Health care providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for painkillers in 2012.
- Heroin abuse affects one out of every four families.

Significant numbers of people in the Country need treatment and are not receiving it. According to the September 2014 Report for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, the Federal Government reports that only 1 in 10 individuals in the nation who need treatment are able to access it due to a lack funding for addiction services.

Across Pennsylvania, heroin and opioid abuse is becoming a serious epidemic. According the Center for Rural Pennsylvania December 2015 Report, *Heroin: Combating this Epidemic in Pennsylvania*:

- From 2007-2012 over 3,000 Pennsylvanians died from overdoses.
- Overdose deaths increased by an astounding 470 percent over the last two decades.
- More people are dying from overdoses than from car accidents ages 20-44 in Pennsylvania.
- 52,150 Pennsylvanians are receiving addiction treatment services.
- Approximately 760,703 Pennsylvanians remain untreated.
- 70-80% of criminal offenders in Pennsylvania have serious drug abuse problems.

- Access to treatment is also a concern within the State. According to the Center for Rural Pennsylvania's December 2015 report, approximately 1 in 8 Pennsylvanians are not able to access addiction treatment due to a lack of funding.

Importantly, no typical user of heroin is evident. Heroin addiction frequently starts as an opioid addiction. It is cheap and accessible. Heroin addiction brings an increase in crime and is not easy to beat. However, treatment programs can help.

In Lycoming County, the West Branch Drug and Alcohol Commission serves as the Single County Authority (SCA). It has been operating since 1974 as a private, non-profit human service agency for helping people find their way to recovery. The Commission is responsible for facilitating provision of a comprehensive and balanced continuum of care of quality substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services for Lycoming and Clinton County residents. The Commission seeks to reduce addiction, alleviate its effect, and ultimately eliminate abuse and misuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

**Priority Issue Overview** Heroin is rapidly becoming an epidemic throughout Lycoming County; moreover, heroin and opioid abuse crosses all socioeconomic groups, all ages, and all races. This issue is not only a health concern but also affects community and economic development throughout the GWA PAT. Not only does the heroin epidemic taint the image of the community to outside investors, but there are significant workforce concerns as well. In a 2016 Focus Group session with county manufacturers and business owners, they reported that in some industries, only about 30-40% of qualified candidates for jobs pass the drug tests. It is becoming increasingly more difficult to find the qualified workforce to do the jobs needed because of this epidemic. This hinders growth and expansion opportunities, as well as sustainability of some businesses to remain here. Furthermore, the problem is causing additional stresses on EMS service delivery and social service programs in just about every community.

Lycoming County is experiencing the same epidemic as all of rural PA, PA as a whole, and even the United States. According to Lycoming County District Attorney Eric R. Linhardt, in 2012 the heroin epidemic that was devastating Pennsylvania began to impact Lycoming County. Typically, 50-60 heroin overdoses occur in Lycoming County every month; most of these victims survive. However, the death toll in the County has risen from eight in 2012 to 35 in 2016—a 338% increase over a three-year period.

A public survey in 2016 as part of the comprehensive planning process established the level of angst and concern by the public regarding the drug problem and crime that accompanies that issue. Conducted in an online format, as well as in-person interviews at public events, the survey captured responses of more than 1,000 local citizens. The respondents were asked to choose up to five areas where they would most like to invest public resources. Crime and drugs was the second most frequently selected response, garnering more than 70% of all respondents from of a list of 12 potential investment areas.

Even more telling was the response to the question about what residents would like to see changed in Lycoming County. In that survey, crime was by far the most frequently cited.

To address this staggering issue, GWA PAT members considered a number of potential approaches:

- **REHABILITATE** – Support provision of treatment, rehabilitation, education, and counseling to prevent addiction and assist recovery.
- **EDUCATE** – Reach students at a young age to impress upon them the dangers before possible drug use begins.
- **PROTECT** – Continue to evaluate need for a paid police department.
- **ENGAGE** – Promote volunteerism among all populations and young people in particular through use of social media and applications, such as the currently popular Pokemon Go app.

Notably, several methadone treatment clinics are within the GWA, including the City of Williamsport and Old Lycoming Township.

**Key Implications** According to District Attorney Linhardt, from 2012-2016, crime numbers in Lycoming County rose by 20%, nearly erasing all progress since 2008 in reducing crime in the County. The increase was directly attributable to heroin cases. The heroin crisis has not only resulted in an increase of drug possession cases, but in increased shoplifting, driving under the influence (DUI) while impaired by drugs, credit card fraud, prostitution, burglary, and robbery as addicts commit more crimes to support their habit.

Moreover, the heroin and opioid plight is ubiquitous. It is attacking every municipality in the GWA Planning Area regardless of income or educational level of residents. Too many families in these six municipalities have been devastated by the human toll from heroin and opioid addiction. Especially upsetting is when this issue hits their children. All too often, drug-related overdoses have been listed as cause of death.

This has a ripple affect all through the criminal justice system from high probation and parole caseloads to overcrowding in the County prison and clogged court schedules. The Lycoming County Criminal Justice System has worked hard over the last half decade to address and overcome the overcrowding issues in the County Prison. The male overcrowding issue has been on a successful downward trend; however, the female population continues to increase, and overcrowding conditions persist. The county budget has been significantly affected by the heroin epidemic due to multi-faceted criminal justice system cost increases stemming from recidivism with multiple periods of incarceration; tie-up of the court schedule; additional work for the Adult Probation Office (APO), the district attorney, and the public defender's office; and; and additional community resources needed for families and children of defendants.

The heroin epidemic is also affecting various departments of Lycoming County, resulting in increased expenses and therefore increased budgets. As this occurs, budget increases in some departments have induced unexpected/negative impacts on other departments. The ripple effect of these budget reductions is to limit or substantially reduce opportunities to implement new priority projects. Moreover, some of these budget decreases have hampered departments in providing their current levels of public service.

The bottom line is that the County Commissioners and staff have had to face the vexing challenge of finding a way to provide balanced resources to all departments and not just those departments directly impacted by the heroin epidemic.

## Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue

### SUPPORT FOUR MAJOR INITIATIVES

#### Support Project Bald Eagle

- Local governments and schools can assist by hosting public educational meetings in their municipal buildings to help the community better understand the nature and extent of the epidemic.
- Municipalities and local Police Departments may consider partnering with the County District Attorney to have Drug Take-Back Programs in addition to the program administered by the District Attorney's office. A drop box, for example, could be set up for unwanted prescriptions or over the counter drugs. These would then be safely disposed of.
- Municipalities may consider using their websites, newsletters, and other means of communication to provide information and education about the issue. For example, Doylestown, PA has a Drug Awareness, Prevention and Education information page on its website to keep the community informed.

#### Support County Re-entry Programing

- Financial assistance from Lycoming County to continue extensive programming particularly related to drug recidivism

#### Support Law Enforcement and Public Education Programs

- Continue to provide financial and staff support for other educational awareness programs, in the community and in the schools.
- Encourage community and parents to educate themselves on prescription drug abuse and overdose while maintaining effective pain management Improve —education in best and safest prescription and pain management practices.
- Encourage municipality's law enforcement agencies to work closely with West Branch Drug and Alcohol and the criminal justice system to understand and adopt effective intervention efforts—police-assisted referrals to treatment models.
- Support municipality first responder and law enforcement naloxone projects.

#### Support Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs

- Work to support the West Branch Drug and Alcohol Commission prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery programs.
- Support Friends and Family Naloxone Project.
- Support the Williamsport Family Practice Center in Old Lycoming Township, which is a Methadone Treatment Clinic.

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

- Lycoming County Government – staff and financial resources TBD
- PA State Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP)
- Federal and state grants.

**Additional Projects, Programs, and Initiatives for this Issue****1. NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS DATABASE**

Following national model of the Urban Institute, establish a regional Community Information System/Neighborhood Indicators Database to provide local governments, institutions, non-profits, and other agencies with block-level information to identify distressed areas and target efforts to those areas to provide the maximum return on investment.

**2. POLICING**

Place more police officers on the street to increase drug interdiction.

**3. SUMMER SPORTS PROGRAMS WITH DRUG EDUCATION**

Develop a collaborative approach with local social service agencies, schools, and colleges to provide an extracurricular and/or summer program for school-aged kids to provide productive and active outlets for them. This can implemented proceed as a sponsorship program by use of local human and financial resources. Drug education would be incorporated into program goals.



Priority Issue #7



**Downtown and village center areas across the County are not thriving or achieving their maximum potential.**

**Back Story** The GWA Planning Area includes three different types of municipal government, four unique downtown experiences, and various combinations of urban/suburban/rural settings. What these six municipalities share in common, however, is depth of their history and heritage—each community was settled more than 220 years ago.

Municipality	Settled	Incorporated
Williamsport	1786	1866
South Williamsport	1790	1886
Duboistown	1773	1878
Loyalsock	1768	1786
Old Lycoming	1773	1785
Armstrong	1795	1842

Downtown of each municipality in the GWA Planning Area reflects the character and culture of its communities.

Williamsport’s downtown is represented by its Central Business District, which serves as the commercial and governmental hub of both the City and the County. Loyalsock and Old Lycoming Townships have well-developed shopping strips—East Third Street and Lycoming Creek Road, respectively. Downtown experiences in the boroughs of South Williamsport and Duboistown can be represented by the major interconnecting arterial road (State Route 654)—Southern Ave/Riverside Drive. Armstrong Township is primarily rural and mountainous, with limited downtown experience along US Route 15.

Population growth and business activity have varied among these six municipalities. Generally, the municipalities have been relatively stable since adoption of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The City’s population has declined a bit, but its CBD activity has undergone a welcomed resurgence. The other five municipalities in the GWA Planning Area have shown modest gains—at best—in population and commercial activity.

**City of Williamsport CBD Revitalization – Achievements**

- Church Street Transportation Center
- Trade & Trade Center Expansion
- AMC Theater Complex
- Housing Above Storefronts
- Redevelopment of Blighted Buildings
- Connection to the River & River Walk
- Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce relocation to old Northern Central Bank Building

Although the City of Williamsport is the most notable downtown experience, each of these six municipalities has a developed area that has served for many decades as a community gathering point for social interactions and commerce.

The GWA has witnessed a number of achievements since 2005 regarding the ultimate goal of promoting downtown revitalization. For almost the entire decade since the last multi-municipal comprehensive plan, members of the GWA met monthly to advance mutually beneficial projects and share best practices in government planning and operation. This commitment led to many partnerships needed to accomplish tasks outlined in the 2005 Plan.

Over the last 10 years, downtown Williamsport has evolved into an eclectic destination for all ages and interests. Redevelopment of Williams Street / West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street corridor into Kohl's Department Store and the Marriot Hotel, development of the Liberty Arena, installation of the Bases Loaded, addition of the Sports Walk between the two, evolution of Pine Square with outdoor patios, music venues, and events now occurring at greater frequency throughout the downtown have collectively advanced the downtown business scene and nightlife atmosphere. A ripple effect of more restaurants, pubs, and merchants in the last decade has also led to increasing interest in renovation and occupation of upper-floor residential units. A combination of public and private, large and small-scale investments are adding up to make a significant difference in the quality of life and attractiveness of downtown Williamsport.

### Priority Issue Overview

During the comprehensive planning process, public interest in the health of downtowns was discernible. A public survey in 2016 as part of this planning process involved more than 1,000 people. Respondents were asked to choose a maximum of five areas for more investment of public funds. From of a list of 12 potential investment areas, the fifth most frequently selected response was "downtowns." Given the importance of the downtown experience to each municipality, it is not surprising that their continued advancement garnered a fair amount of interest and support from both municipal officials and the public.

Defining its downtown allows each municipality to evaluate its most public and commercial environments to determine if these are growing and developing in a manner that reflects the character, image, and function of its downtown that the municipality desires. Each community has a competitive advantage. Understanding what that is and how it can be harnessed to its best advantage is of critical importance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

There is no quick answer; the pathway to a thriving downtown requires a long-term commitment by all members of the community. Moreover, downtown experiences must be uniquely shaped to reflect wants, needs, and desires of each municipality. While no unified template is available to achieve this goal, there are a number of widely recognized factors in a downtown improvement initiative should consider:

- Branding—what defines a community? What is it known for?
- Number and type of vacant properties
- Condition of existing and vacant buildings
- Desired mix of business and other uses
- Small business outreach plan
- Streetscape opportunities
- Gateways and village greens, parks
- After 5 p.m. foot traffic

### Downtown Williamsport Initiatives since 2005

- Main Street Program to revitalize storefronts to improve the downtown experience
- Streetscapes Improvements
- Intersections Improvements
- First Friday Celebrations
- Growers' Market
- Grand Slam Parade
- Williamsport Welcomes the World
- Bases Loaded installation at Market Square
- Sports Walk throughout City
- Liberty Arena

- Downtown living
- Walkable communities
- Marketing to support the vision.

Bearing these factors in mind, GWA PAT members have already begun to discuss a number of actions that could help launch the downtown revitalization initiative, such as:

- Develop zoning ordinances compatible with land use patterns and densities that define the local character of communities
- Ensure that mixed-use zoning is permitted in downtown business districts.
- Promote mixed-use development.
- Implement a split-rate real estate tax to promote infill development.
- Make urban forest improvements to enhance streetscapes and increase stormwater interception.
- Continue to explore more affordable and diverse housing options—especially for seniors.
- Mitigate some of the challenges to creating small business enterprises.
- Develop additional activities in the downtown areas that will increase pedestrian activity during daytime, evening, and weekend hours.
- Work locally and cooperatively with Lycoming County to implement CBDCBD revitalization and community gateway initiatives, such as the Route 15 Gateway and the Old City/East 3rd Street Gateway Redevelopment Strategy.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*South Williamsport*

A consensus among GWA PAT membership that their top Downtown Revitalization priority is Old City/East Third Street Gateway Redevelopment Strategy. This is a “legacy project” intended to uplift a section of Williamsport that had served as the City’s original center over a century ago. The plan includes five major initiatives and focuses on the area east of Market Street and south of Washington Boulevard. A portion of the study area (Mulberry to Chatham St) was re-zoned in 2009 by the City as CBD, and the plan focuses on making that extension of downtown Williamsport a reality.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*Williams Street -- Williamsport*

**Key Implications**

Downtown districts in GWA

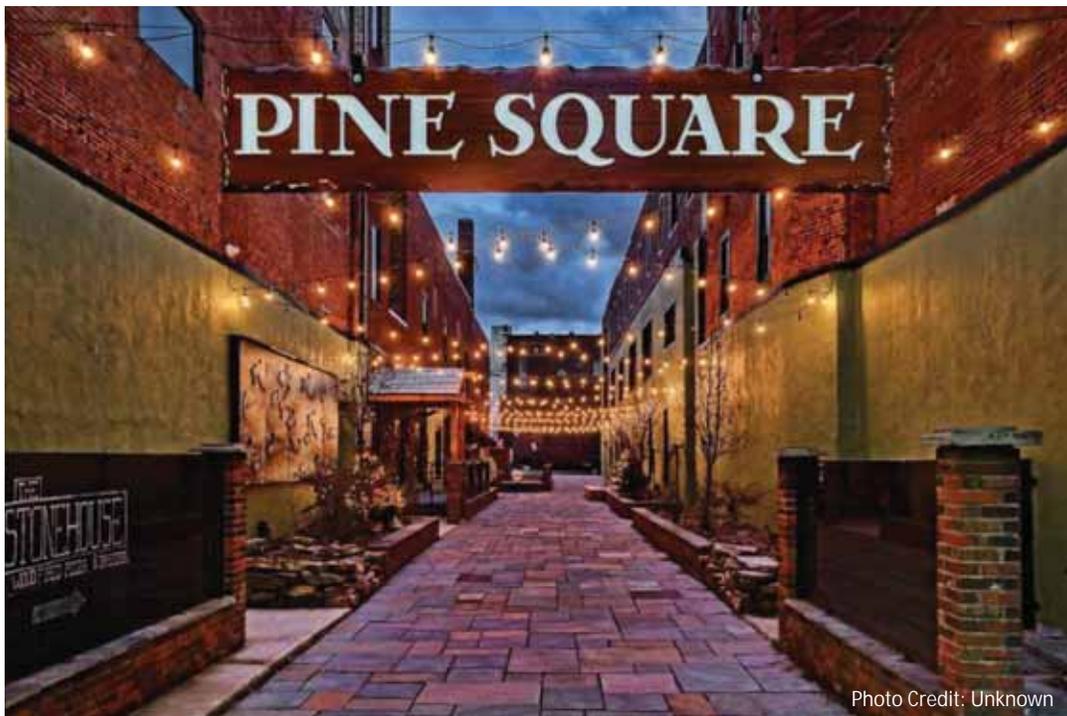
Planning Area communities remain viable locations for residential, governmental, retail, and commercial (re)development. Each downtown in the GWA Planning Area has the opportunity to be a shopping destination for surrounding regions and a location of professional services.

One key to unlock the economic potential of these downtowns is the strength of the connection between community residents and their downtown. Visioning efforts and planning sessions for any downtown revitalization will be successful only to the extent that the public is actively engaged in selecting and shaping the proposed set of projects to implement the vision. Moreover, consensus on a downtown revitalization plan is an essential pre-requisite to seeking grant funding from either state or federal sources.

Failing to address downtown revitalization in a holistic manner may result in:

- Deterioration of these destinations
- Decline of the municipality
- Decreased municipal tax base
- Shrinking revenues and market share lost to outlying areas.

In summary, a vibrant downtown can serve as a magnet attracting future businesses, new residents, and visitors. It enhances the culture and character of the municipality and fortifies the “sense of place.”



*Creation of Pine Square on Pine Street has been a welcome public attraction and is home to several successful restaurants*

**Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue****IMPLEMENT THE OLD CITY/EAST THIRD STREET GATEWAY REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The Old City/East Third Street Gateway Redevelopment Strategy is a plan to revitalize the southeast portion of the City of Williamsport. It is also the third phase of a three-part strategy for improving intermodal connectivity throughout the CBD in Williamsport, called *CONNECT WILLIAMSPORT*. This is a partnership among the City, Lycoming College, River Valley Transit, the County of Lycoming, and many private landowners to revitalize the eastern corridor of the CBD known as “Old City” and the “East Third Street Gateway.” The project encourages private and public investment, and addresses transportation and mobility deficiencies that have stymied economic development for the past several decades. The plan was adopted by City Council in summer 2015 following a year-long collaborative planning process involving the City, County, Lycoming College, a group of stakeholders in the project area known as the East Third Street Gateway Commission, and the public.



*Redevelopment Concepts for East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Corridor*

The plan includes five strategic initiatives to be implemented in a phased approach:

1. **Basin Street Gateway Redevelopment** – The leading strategy and action of the plan is to create a new gateway to Lycoming College from the Basin Street exit off Interstate 180 by redeveloping and realigning Basin Street and constructing new buildings on the college campus. This redevelopment strategy complements the College’s recently completed Master Plan, which looks beyond its current borders as part of its long-term growth and investment strategy.

2. **Traffic and Transportation** – A core strategy of the plan is to rebalance the transportation network to include improved traffic circulation (with some conversions of one-way street to two-way); a cohesively connected sidewalk and greenway system; strategically located, on-street parking; pedestrian amenities; and bicycle routes. For *CONNECT WILLIAMSPORT* Improvement Plan See Appendix D – *Reference Maps*.
3. **Private Development Projects** – Private development will be encouraged at specific locations with market-based real estate projects that will provide positive cash flow to the City in the form of tax revenues. Projects recommended include mixed residential and commercial uses. These projects will become anchors in the redevelopment area.
4. **Branding** – A marketing program will be undertaken to attract investors, businesses, and residents to the Old City area. The branding program is recommended to link the area’s rich history to its future, and to proactively recruit or encourage businesses identified as likely targets through a market study.
5. **Zoning** – Zoning ordinance will be updated to encourage redevelopment that will create a traditional downtown environment in the Old City portion of the study area. Multi-story buildings should be oriented to the street with sidewalks in front and well-designed, right-sized parking behind, with a mix of small- to medium-scale uses. A draft zoning amendment package was created by the project consultants in 2015. City Council subsequently adopted the zoning amendments in May 2017.

The Basin Street Gateway Redevelopment Plan is currently spearheaded by Lycoming College and the City; however, the City and County are actively working with PennDOT to advance traffic and transportation network improvements. To date, \$1 million has been awarded by the First Community Foundation Partnership and nearly \$800,000 of matching dollars has been secured through PA DCED for the streetscape improvement components, focusing on redevelopment of East Third Street and the Basin/Franklin street intersection, and a Green Infrastructure Pathway connecting the college to downtown via Willow Street. Lycoming College has also committed to an ambitious project (including land acquisition) to construct a new building for admissions, academics, leadership programs, and classroom space, and to redesign existing adjacent portions of campus.



*Basin Street Redevelopment Plan*

The foundation of all of these improvements is the ability to establish a sound transportation infrastructure system. Transportation and mobility is the catalyst for private investment. PennDOT recognizes this and has been promoting it across the Commonwealth in recent years. PennDOT’s philosophy of leveraging innovative ideas to support multi-modal transportation and community investment is known as PENNDOT CONNECTS –

*Planning and Engineering 360.* WILLIAMSPORT CONNECTS aligns with this rationale by working to identify transportation projects that leverage private investment to improve the economic health of the City of Williamsport. It includes streetscape improvements, realignment of Franklin Street, connectivity to Lycoming College, alteration of traffic patterns, a connection to the River Walk, and green infrastructure investments on both sides of Market Street, including the Pine Street Redesign / Access Project.

Implementation of the plan’s recommendations will be a decade-long process, as described more fully in the adopted Redevelopment Strategy document. For more information on the Old City/East Third Street Gateway Redevelopment Strategy, see the City Community & Economic Development website.

**HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

The Old City/East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Gateway project is a vision of a re-imagined section of Williamsport’s downtown that had been underutilized and non-descript for many decades. City and county governments along with an institution of higher learning and community business leaders and residents collaborated to develop a plan of growth and redevelopment for the resurging success of downtown Williamsport. The plan respects the neighborhood’s history and aesthetics while advancing 21<sup>st</sup> century community and economic development strategies to attract and retain businesses, people, and investments. This redevelopment plan exhibits an exemplary combination of revitalization strategies from branding and marketing to adaptive reuse, historic preservation, mixed-use development, streetscape improvements, and walkable/bike able connectivity. Development of partnerships between the private and public sector is critical to success and implementation of projects like this one.



*Facades of the Old City District*

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – The lead agencies for the project are the City of Williamsport and Lycoming College, as the majority of study recommendations would be implemented by one or both of these entities.

Other Partners – Additional partners include the East Third Street Gateway Commission, RVTRVT, Williamsport Parking Authority, the County of Lycoming, the Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce, Lycoming County Visitors’ Bureau, and the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania.

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	COORDINATE AND IMPLEMENT TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS “WILLIAMSPORT CONNECTS”	SPRING 2017- 2021	CITY, LYCOMING COLLEGE, COUNTY, PENN DOT
2	ENCOURAGE PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT	SPRING 2017-2021	CITY, GATEWAY COMMISSION, LYCOMING COLLEGE, COUNTY
3	IMPLEMENT ZONING AMENDMENTS OUTLINED IN STRATEGY PLAN	SPRING 2017	CITY, GATEWAY COMMISSION, COUNTY, CITY ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE (ERC)

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

This project will require multiple state/federal/local funding sources in a phased approach over a decade or longer, including significant public and private investment. A detailed funding plan listing many potential sources of grant support and other funding mechanisms is in the plan document.

**Additional Projects, Programs and Initiatives for this Issue**

**1. IMPLEMENT A SPLIT-TAX RATE**

Implement a split-tax rate system within the growth area to incentivize infill development and disincentive vacant buildings, empty lots, and blighted conditions.

**2. REACTIVATE THE LEAD PARTNERS GROUP**

Restart the Lead Partners or similar group to carry out downtown revitalization projects, often through public-private partnerships. This subset of the GWA started in 1999 with a combination of community leaders from the County, City, Our Towns 2010, and the Chamber of Commerce among others. The group worked collaboratively to further mutually beneficial projects, starting with Trade and Transit Center I. The projects on which they worked were catalysts for economic development. It is time to re-establish this defined working relationship.

**3. DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS**

Create a program to improve the appearance of downtowns, including facades; reduce vacancy rates in downtown areas; utilize aggressive code enforcement to eliminate dilapidated conditions where they exist.

**4. DOWNTOWN ZONING DISTRICTS**

Ensure downtown zoning districts encourage mixed-use, increased density where appropriate, and redevelopment.

**5. COLLEGE TOWN INITIATIVE**

Continue to pursue “college town” branding and related investment in downtown Williamsport. This should be a collaborative effort among Penn College of Technology, Lycoming College, the City of Williamsport, and the Williamsport Lycoming visitors Bureau, among others.

**6. SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT SENIOR HOUSING**

Develop senior housing options in South Williamsport within a walkable distance to key amenities, such as transit access, recreation, and other public facilities to serve the elderly residing in southside communities.



**Priority Issue #8**



**Water quality is vital but is also vulnerable to a multitude of threats.**

**Back Story** Most communities and residents within this Planning Area have access to an ample supply of high quality water. Drinking water in the urbanized sections of the GWA Planning Area is provided by WMWA. The rural sections of the GWA Planning Area rely on private water wells. Regardless of the water’s source, GWA PAT members’ primary concern is to maintain the quality and safety of drinking water resources within the Planning Area.

WMWA serves approximately 51,000 residents, is regulated by PADEP, and provides high quality water to the Planning Area for drinking and industrial customers from two different sources:

- Surface water reservoir in Armstrong Township
- Groundwater wells near the mouth of Lycoming Creek as it enters the Susquehanna River.



*WMWA Water Filtration Plant in Armstrong Township*

WMWA has a PA DEP--approved source water protection plan that delineates groundwater supply areas and identifies potential sources of contamination to the water supply. Although the Authority is exceptionally

diligent in following its source water protection plan, it is ever mindful of potential threats to the quality of its source water.

**Priority Issue Overview** Protection of water quality is both a public and private responsibility. There are measures that both public entities can and should implement to protect the County's water systems, as well as actions that private landholders can take to ensure that the quality of drinking water on their land and in public waterways transecting their properties remains optimal for future generations. Members of the GWA PAT have identified three major interrelated issues regarding water quality. Each issue was further defined by GWA PAT members and targeted projects were identified.

Land Conservation. Water quality is known to improve when large tracts of land are acquired and brought into land conservation programs. Depending on location of the conserved piece of property, three water quality benefits can be achieved:

- Conserved land filters stormwater runoff from nearby streets, roads, and highways—many of which carry heavy truck traffic and are scenes of frequent accidents. Runoff from these corridors could carry a variety of pollutants, including salts, nutrients, sediment, automotive fluids, and other typical transportation corridor contaminants. Thus, potential pollutants are removed before this runoff enters waterways.
- Conserved land provides storage for a greater volume of stormwater because wetlands act as a “great green sponge.” Reducing volume and velocity of runoff reduces downstream erosion and peak volumes following rain events.
- Conserved land, especially if it includes forested wetlands, provides shade and cools water, reducing potential for stormwater runoff to create thermal pollution in receiving waters of creeks or rivers.

Sourcewater Protection. Two types of pollution threaten groundwater and surface water sources: Point Source Pollution and Non-Point Source Pollution. Point sources can be attributed to a single identifiable source, such as a sewage pipe or drain, while non-point source pollution occurs from a variety of contaminants found in runoff and precipitation. Potential contaminants that create these threats derive from improper disposal of hazardous chemicals and/or infiltration of man-made products including gasoline, oil, road salt, pesticides, or fertilizer runoff.



Since the 2005 GWA Comp Plan, a new organization has formed that focuses exclusively on sourcewater protection. The North Central Source Water Protection Alliance (NCSWPA) is a consortium of water suppliers and partnering organizations that have sought to increase security and sustainability of our area's water supplies. As a principal member of this organization, WMWA practices a proactive watershed protection program for the watershed surrounding its Mosquito Valley reservoirs, including control and ownership of land, seeking of conservation easements on private holdings, and patrolling and monitoring water quality. About 215 acres of private holdings, including the largest farms, are protected through no-development and agricultural land preservation easements held by WMWA and Lycoming County Agricultural Land Preservation

Board. WMWA is committed to a long-term effort to preserve the quality and quantity of its valuable water supply resource.

Another important facet of this issue is wellhead design and maintenance for private well owners. Currently, no regulations have been established at the state or local level for private well construction. This sometimes leads to improper well construction and higher likelihood of contaminated well water. Common issues include insufficient above-grade casing height, lack of subgrade grout seal around casing, use of a standard well cap, and location of the well in an area of ponding. Collectively, these issues increase potential for infiltration by non-potable surface water, rodent and insect infestation, and bacterial contamination. Additionally, failing private septic systems can significantly degrade the quality of a community's aquifer and introduce disease-causing microorganisms such as E coli, Giadaria, Cryptosporidium, and Hepatitis A into a community's groundwater supply.

The Public Education and Outreach Plan (PEOP) and Public Involvement and Participation Plan (PIPP) are opportunities under the MS4 program for distribution of important information about sourcewater protection to the community.

Urban Forest. According to the U.S. Forest Service, over 30 million acres of America's forests are right in our cities and towns. Urban forests come in many different shapes and sizes. They include urban parks, street trees, landscaped boulevards, gardens, river and coastal promenades, greenways, river corridors, wetlands, nature preserves, shelter belts of trees, and working trees at former industrial sites. Urban forests, through planned connections of green spaces, form the green infrastructure on which communities depend.<sup>v</sup> Trees play a crucial role in controlling runoff of stormwater, increasing infiltration to restore groundwater supplies, reducing erosion, and improving the water quality of receiving streams. According to US EPA, trees control stormwater at the source via several mechanisms:

- Trees intercept water as it falls from the sky, reducing the amount that ever reaches the ground. Holding this water back from becoming stormwater runoff reduces peak flows and reduces damage to stormwater "grey" infrastructure and receiving streams.
- Trees draw water from the soil and eventually release it into the air as water vapor. This process is called transpiration.
- Tree root systems increase soil infiltration capacity and rate, so that even more water sinks into the ground than if the tree would be replaced by grass. Trees can help filter pollutants such as nutrients, sediment, and salt from impervious surfaces that would otherwise run off, unfiltered, into streams.
- While trees are growing, they take up and either store or break down potentially harmful materials found in urban soil. This is called phytoremediation, and it is the reason trees are sometimes used to remediate polluted sites where those materials otherwise may gradually seep into groundwater.<sup>vi</sup>

Urban forests intercept stormwater and improve water quality, but there are more benefits. Trees also:



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

- Provide streetscape enhancement, community beautification, habitat, air purification, shade, and cooling (which reduces energy costs).
- Profoundly affect day-to-day mental health and physical well-being of citizens, as documented by an increasing volume of studies.
- Attract people. Many people consciously prefer to live on a street with trees rather than a street denuded of trees.
- Increase the value of a home. According to the National Arbor Day Foundation, a survey of realtors found that 83% believe that mature trees have a “strong or moderate impact” on salability of homes listed for less than \$150,000. Moreover, 98% agreed that salability of homes listed for over \$250,000 would be improved by mature trees.<sup>vii</sup>

**Key Implications** Regardless of the source of contamination, it is clear that any degradation of source water has a very real impact on our public health, quality of life, and the economy of the Greater Williamsport Planning Area. Access to clean drinking water is essential for a community to survive and prosper. Not only is water necessary to support public health, but reliable water service is also needed to foster development and economic growth.

If this issue is not addressed continuously and proactively, both public and private water systems will face increased risk of contamination from preventable sources of pollution. As contaminants enter a system, the required treatments become more complex, and resulting costs to provide clean and safe water will increase. As contamination escalates, water suppliers run the risk of being forced to shut down wells and identify new sources of water.

Replacement well locations are finite and limited by geography and geology. There are also significant costs and regulatory requirements associated with establishing new well fields and connecting them to the existing infrastructure.

GWA PAT members concern about water quality is not limited exclusively to drinking water sources. Notably, any measures to protect drinking water sources will also increase water quality in our surface waters. This, in turn, decreases the chance of pollution harming human health or the health of wildlife and ecosystems.

GWA municipalities are geographically located in the heart of Lycoming County. This County is noted for its ample and relatively clean water resources—simply stated, this is a quality of life issue. Ability to fish safely, swim, and paddle our streams, lakes, and rivers while enjoying the area’s abundant wildlife is a major reason many people choose to live in and visit our County. In fact, in the 2016 survey conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process, 67% of comments received in regard to the County’s water resources were positive, indicating that the public recognizes and appreciates this resource.



*Hagermans Reservoir*

**Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue (One of Three)****LAND CONSERVATION – THE SYLVAN DELL LAND CONSERVATION PROJECT**

For some time, Lycoming County has been known for establishing partnerships and leveraging public dollars to develop recreational assets throughout the County. This project is of local, regional, and watershed significance; therefore, it will require a multitude of local, regional, and state partnerships to realize and implement the full benefits of its vision and intentions.

The 265-acre Sylvan Dell Land Conservation Project site is along the West Branch Susquehanna River in Armstrong Township, Lycoming County. The site includes approximately 50 acres of wetlands, an indigenous people's archaeology site, and the City of Williamsport's historic Goose Island swimming and boating area from the 1800s.

The site is positioned between the river and the forested foothills and ridges in the state-designated PA Wilds Conservation Landscape area and Lumber Heritage Region. It is less than 1 mile from the Tiadaghton State Forest, a 146,539-acre network of state-owned forestland predominantly within Lycoming County. The site includes approximately 3,790 linear feet of Susquehanna River frontage (floodplain), and is along a PA DCNR-designated Water Trail.

This project aims to preserve the cultural and historic resources of the properties, and to offer outdoor recreation opportunities such as walking/ biking trails and public river access. Protection and enhancement of the riparian and wetland habitat that filters stormwater from a large drainage area will contribute to increased water quality within the West Branch Susquehanna River watershed. Phasing out agricultural practices on the property will allow an increase of permanent vegetation and soil capacity for retaining and processing of stormwater through the hydrologic cycle during and after higher water events.

In Lycoming County, recreation and land conservation are two of the highest and best uses of floodplain property. The County's 2005 Comprehensive Plan and Greater Williamsport Alliance Multi-municipal Comprehensive Plan recognized several goals and objectives that can lead to land conservation. The 2005 GWA Comp Plan identified preservation of natural resources, including open spaces, wetlands, and prime agricultural soils, as a high priority—and specifically the importance of setting aside land for conservation. The 2005 Plan also promoted development of connectors between existing bike routes and pedestrian routes, and participation in development of the Susquehanna Greenway. Since 1996, Lycoming County has been successful in acquiring millions of state and federal dollars to conserve land through securing floodplain buyout properties.

The Sylvan Dell Land Conservation Project vision brings close to home a connection to the natural world for the residents of the Greater Williamsport Area. Given its urban setting and proximity to the region's largest population center, the project will provide a unique nature experience for the County's diverse population, providing to all ages, all abilities, and all income levels. It will also help build a strategic connection from Williamsport area's existing River Walk to Bald Eagle Ridge and the future Ridge Trail.



**HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

The vision of the Sylvan Dell Land Conservation Project is to establish an ecological haven and educational center on the site that offers unique benefits to the community and visitors:

- Residents and visitors can experience healthy/active living through utilizing the site for walking, biking, paddling, and swimming while learning about the diverse heritage and natural resources of the site and region.
- The project helps address Social / Environmental Justice (land accessible to City’s low-income and minority populations).
- K-12 students taking field trips to the land will be given the opportunity to learn the many values of land conservation in an outdoor classroom environment.
- Lycoming College and Pennsylvania College of Technology students can utilize the site for ecological and archaeological research.
- Thousands of visitors from all geographic regions of the United States and the world visit this area each year for the Little League World Series and training camps, and can benefit from the site.

The conservation project will allow for recreational asset expansion adjacent to the South Williamsport Regional Park and connection with regional trail systems, providing active/passive recreation to residents/visitors and preserving the best remaining wetland on the West Branch Susquehanna River. Protecting approximately 50 acres of wetlands fed by unnamed tributaries, originating on Bald Eagle Ridge, and phasing out 215 acres of

heavily farmed lands will contribute to source water protection, just upstream from a public water supply. Strategic habitat enhancement will provide an increased haven for wildlife and many bird species identified on the property such as the Bald Eagle, Green Winged Teal, Pied-billed Grebe, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Scarlet Tanager, and Eastern Towhee.

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – Lycoming County PCD

Other Partners –Armstrong Township, South Williamsport Borough, South Williamsport High School, Pennsylvania Wilds, Lumber Heritage Region, Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce, Lycoming College, Pennsylvania College of Technology, and school districts within the region.

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	LAND APPRAISAL & COST ESTIMATES	2017	PCD STAFF, ARMSTRONG TOWNSHIP
2	SECURE LOCAL MATCH, APPLY FOR LAND ACQUISITION GRANTS	2017-2018	PCD STAFF
3	LAND ACQUISITION & PHASING OUT ACTIVE FARMING TO COVER CROPPING	2018-2019	PCD STAFF, LYCOMING COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, CONSERVATION DISTRICT
3	MASTER SITE PLANNING & PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	2017-2018	PCD STAFF, CONSULTANT, SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, ARMSTRONG TOWNSHIP
4	IDENTIFY & APPLY FOR GRANTS TO SUPPORT SITE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION	2018-2027	PCD STAFF, CONSULTANT, SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, ARMSTRONG TOWNSHIP
5	SITE DEVELOPMENT (HABITAT RESTORATION, TRAIL & RIVER ACCESS CONSTRUCTION)	2018-2027	PCD STAFF, CONSULTANT, SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, ARMSTRONG TOWNSHIP

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

Potential funding sources include PA DCNR, PADEP, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the First Community Foundation Partnership (FCFP) of PA. A PA DCNR grant was submitted in April 2017, and match-funding sources are being identified.

**Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue (Two of Three)**

**SOURCEWATER PROTECTION PROGRAM**

The GWA PAT recommends developing a sourcewater protection program for all public and private water systems, with particular focus on areas immediately surrounding wellheads for public water supplies.

Program components could vary greatly, but may include:

- Participate in regional groundwater studies to protect our vital groundwater resources.
- Review and update ordinances to protect critical sourcewater areas.
- Reduce any requirements for excessive impervious surface coverage; revise such standards with provisions for better stormwater management practices, promoting interception and infiltration of stormwater on site using green infrastructure wherever possible.
- Develop a 911 Spill Response Program or System. This type of initiative could work to develop protocols to protect drinking water by shutting down intakes immediately upon notification of hazardous material spills. Tioga County has developed an innovative program that could serve as a model.
- Work at local and state levels to pursue wellhead design construction standards.
- Develop an educational program for schools, private citizens, and like-minded conservation organizations to help get the message out about the importance of sourcewater protection. Look to other counties for examples. Work with the Lycoming County MS4 Coalition for leadership and opportunities for mutually beneficial messaging.

**HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

Source water protection directly addresses water quality by focusing on proven activities that can reduce the incidence of pollution in public and private water systems.

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – Public water systems (WMWA-WSA in the GWA Planning Area)

Other Partners – North Central Source Water Protection Alliance, Lycoming County Conservation District, Penn State Master Well Owners Network (MWON), Lycoming County MS4 Coalition, municipal governments, watershed organizations, large industries, and schools.

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	STEPS WILL VARY BY SPECIFIC ACTIVITY	AS SOON AS POSSIBLE	WATER SYSTEMS AND LISTED PARTNERS

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

Potential funding sources include various DEP and EPA grants (such as the DEP Environmental Education Grant program), municipal governments, League of Women Voters’ Water Resources Education Network (WREN) grants, and resources from the listed partners above. Growing Greener and other grants can also be used to construct demonstration BMP projects with educational signage. Another source of funding for public education could be any future stormwater fees implemented and collected by MS4 permittees.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*One of many “No Dumping” seals placed throughout the City as a way to promote proper water protection*

**Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue (Three of Three)****IMPROVE THE URBAN FOREST**

The urban forest is made up deciduous street trees, evergreen species, woody shrubs, and perennial plants. Together they provide stormwater infiltration value, habitat, and beautification. Smaller plants can be used very effectively in conjunction with larger trees to create multi-story habitat in appropriate locations, such as parks and infiltration areas where they do not interfere with roadway sight lines. Smaller vegetation can also be used effectively at locations where canopy trees are impractical due to overhead wires, concerns about root intrusion, preferences of adjacent landowners, or other site constraints.

Potential hazards also are associated with tree plantings, including interference with overhead wires; root intrusion into water and sewer pipes, utility lines, and building foundations; sidewalk heaving; and potential for hazards to human life when trees are damaged by causes such as storms, diseases, wildlife damage, drought, and poor adaptation to the planting site. This underscores the need for urban forestry to include “the right tree for the right location for the right purpose.”

Selections of tree species is vital to ensure long-term success and to decrease risk of any maintenance problems or damage to adjacent infrastructure and property. Tree maintenance (especially after immediately planting) is also essential to increase survival rate and thus protect the municipality’s investment. Careful pruning and observation to catch any developing diseases is necessary. Thus, individuals involved with selecting species and maintaining the urban forest should receive appropriate training.

This project primarily focuses on the urban forest on public property. Yet, private landholders, especially large institutions such as schools, hospitals, cemeteries and the like, can contribute significantly to fabric of the urban forest as well. Municipalities should review and update ordinances to ensure that planting of trees and other vegetation is encouraged on private property. Weed ordinances, for example, may sometimes prohibit use of rain gardens or other green infrastructure that a municipality actually wishes to encourage. All ordinances should consider public safety and other considerations listed above, so that private property owners are guided toward making sound decisions in their planting plans.

**HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE**

As described above, increase of urban tree canopy and vegetation in general will reduce volume of stormwater runoff, and reduce pollutant concentration of runoff.

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP**

Lead Agency – Each municipality has primary responsibility to improve the urban forest within its jurisdiction.

Other Partners – Potential partners include the Lycoming County MS4 Coalition and Geographic Information System (GIS) division within the Lycoming Community and Planning Department; non-profit organizations such as Penn State Master Gardeners, local gardening clubs, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, Audubon societies, and watershed organizations; school groups; the Lycoming County Conservation District; and other community

organizations. Shade Tree Commissions or similar volunteer committees can be formed and utilized to provide manpower, community involvement, and oversight.

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	INVENTORY EXISTING URBAN FOREST, USING GIS WHERE AVAILABLE, TO DETERMINE GAPS AND NEW PLANTING LOCATION OPPORTUNITIES.	YEAR 1	MUNICIPALITIES AND PARTNERS LISTED ABOVE
2	CREATE URBAN FOREST REPLACEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN WITH AN ANNUAL SCHEDULE AND BUDGET FOR IMPLEMENTATION. MS4S SHOULD CROSS-REFERENCE DEP-APPROVED CBPRPS AND CBPRPS UNDER DEVELOPMENT TO INCORPORATE RECOMMENDED PROJECTS.	YEARS 1-2	MUNICIPALITIES AND PARTNERS LISTED ABOVE
3	APPLY FOR GRANTS TO FUND REPLACEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF URBAN FOREST	YEARS 1-10	MUNICIPALITIES AND PARTNERS LISTED ABOVE
4	INCORPORATE LINE ITEM BASED ON THE ABOVE PLAN IN ANNUAL MUNICIPAL BUDGET	YEARS 2-10	MUNICIPALITIES
5	IMPLEMENT URBAN FOREST REPLACEMENT & ENHANCEMENT PLAN	YEARS 2-10	MUNICIPALITIES AND PARTNERS LISTED ABOVE
6	UPDATE AND MAINTAIN URBAN FOREST INVENTORY CONTINUOUSLY	YEARS 2-10	MUNICIPALITIES AND PARTNERS LISTED ABOVE
7	SEEK TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES, SUCH AS TREE TENDERS AND ARBORIST CLASSES, FOR KEY STAFF/VOLUNTEERS, SO THAT SPECIES SELECTION AND OTHER DECISIONS ARE MADE WITH THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION AND BEST PRACTICES	YEARS 1-10	MUNICIPALITIES AND PARTNERS LISTED ABOVE
8	CONSIDER CREATING A MUNICIPAL SHADE TREE COMMISSION AND BECOMING A TREE CITY USA WITH MEMBERSHIP IN THE ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION	ONGOING	MUNICIPALITIES

## FUNDING RESOURCES

Municipal general funds are most commonly used to maintain and improve the urban forest, and can be most effectively used as match to leverage grants. Funds generated by stormwater utility fees can also be used to implement urban forest programs where the plantings will help correct stormwater issues. In some cases, tree plantings may be required through municipal ordinances so that developers or property owners are responsible for the cost. Municipalities should also consider asking property and business owners to participate in an “adopt a tree” or “adopt a spot” program to beautify their block.

A number of grant funding streams are available. Grants are more likely to be awarded when the project is part of a strategically planned, annual improvement program as described in the steps above, because this demonstrates long-term commitment, well-considered thought process, and local investment.

Federal grant opportunities: US EPA funds such as Urban Waters Small Grants, Environmental Justice, and 319 grants

State grant opportunities: TreeVitalize and urban riparian buffer grants by PA DCNR. PA DEP Growing Greener, Environmental Education, and other PA DEP grant programs may also be utilized. Finally, tree plantings may be funded in some cases through streetscaping projects funded by various sources of transportation and multi-modal funds, including PENNDOT and PA DCNR; community development grants such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); and downtown revitalization programs.

Corporate, non-profit, and charitable foundation grant funding sources: National Arbor Day Foundation, First Community Foundation, Degenstein Foundation, Susquehanna Greenways, and others. Non-profit and community organizations may also provide free labor, use of equipment, and trees, plants, and other planting supplies.

## Additional Projects, Programs and Initiatives for this Issue

### 1. ON-LOT SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Develop on-lot wastewater management districts for effective on-lot disposal practices.

### 2. LIMIT DENSITY OF DEVELOPMENTS SERVED BY ON-LOT SEPTIC AND ON-SITE WELLS

Discourage high- and medium-density developments served by on-lot septic and on-site wells to help ensure protection of quality and quantity of drinking water.



**Priority Issue #9**



**Water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater infrastructure systems are not sufficient across the County to meet all needs.**

**Back Story** Access to clean drinking water and proper removal and treatment of wastewater and stormwater are essential forms of public infrastructure for a community to survive and prosper. Not only is water necessary to support public health, but reliable water and sanitary sewer service is also needed to foster development and economic growth. Proper water management planning must also account for safe and effective conveyance of stormwater to protect life, property, and the environment, and provision of adequate sanitary sewage facilities.

**Priority Issue Overview** While the GWA Planning Area may have the highest rate of public water and sewer connection of all multi-municipal planning areas in the County, a number of challenges remain:

- Managing sanitary sewage facilities and their conveyance systems
- Ensuring proper stormwater conveyance and treatment
- Maintaining high quality of clean drinking water.

**Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure.** The Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act of 1966, (ACT 537) as amended requires municipalities to adopt an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan. These plans are used to address deficiencies in current septic, sanitary sewer, and treatment facilities, and to prevent future sewage disposal issues that may pose risks to health, safety, and water quality. These plans have been adopted by all municipalities in the GWA Planning Area.



*WSA West Treatment Plant Expansion*

The entirety of the City of Williamsport, as well as the Boroughs of South Williamsport and Duboistown, have public water and sanitary sewer service. Significant portions of Old Lycoming, Loyalsock, and Armstrong townships receive both public water and sewer service, while residents in these townships who live outside the service area utilize residential on-lot sewage disposal systems and on-lot water supply wells.

GWA communities receive public water and sewer service from WMWA-WSA, the largest municipal water and sewer authority in Lycoming County. This organization connects over 51,000 people to its public water and sewer system. Its facilities, particularly its wastewater treatment plants, have undergone extensive investment since the 2005 plan was completed.



Photo Credit: WSA

*WSA Central Treatment Plant Expansion*

These investments were made to comply with various state and federal regulatory requirements, primarily regulations

associated with nutrient treatment under the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), and reduction of Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO), which release untreated or partially treated sewage and stormwater directly into local water bodies. While these upgrades have necessitated increases in rates, rates in the GWA are currently on par with (and in many cases, lower than) those for other public water and sewer systems in the County and the region. This is likely due to the relatively higher population density and density of industry in the GWA Planning Area, which renders such infrastructure more cost-effective than in less densely developed areas.

While all GWA Planning Area communities convey their sanitary sewer flows to one of WSA’s wastewater treatment plants, ownership and maintenance of the sanitary sewer collection and conveyance system within these communities vary. Communities outside the City are considered “Tributary Communities.” They meet regularly with WSA and coordinate together to provide high-quality, efficient, and cost-effective services. They also completed a joint Act 537 Plan, demonstrating the cost-savings of a regional approach to meet such requirements.

**Figure 10. Sanitary Sewer Collection System Ownership**

<i>Municipality with Sanitary Sewer Collection System</i>	<i>Owned and operated by whom in 2005</i>	<i>Owned and operated by whom in 2016</i>
City of Williamsport	WSA	WSA
Borough of South Williamsport	South Williamsport	South Williamsport
Borough of Duboistown	Duboistown Sewer Dept	Duboistown Sewer Dept
Township of Loyalsock	Loyalsock Sewer Dept	WSA
Township of Old Lycoming Township	Old Lycoming Area Authority	Old Lycoming Area Authority
Township of Armstrong	LCWSA	LCWSA

Like WSA, each Tributary Community has significantly invested in its sanitary sewer infrastructure, including construction of several massive sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) holding tanks. In addition to receiving services from WSA, some Tributary Communities also contract with LCWSA to assist with aspects of their municipal systems, such as billing management and infrastructure inspection and maintenance. As management of water, sewer, and stormwater systems has become increasingly technical, complex, and regulation-driven, it has become beneficial for municipal officials to partner with highly trained, specialized organizations such as WMWA-WSA and LCWSA to provide a menu of options for their assistance.

***Water Infrastructure.*** Some regions within the GWA Planning Area, particularly in areas of Old Lycoming and Loyalsock Townships lying along the Lycoming Creek Road corridor, have been identified as lacking adequate water and sewer services. The quantity of water available from private wells has been problematic at several locations in this Planning Area—thus, need to extend public service has been a long-term objective. In addition to water quantity or capacity concerns is necessity to consider public water, if or when on-lot septic systems fail, resulting in groundwater and surface water contamination.

Cost of this public infrastructure has been the major barrier to extending services to these areas. Another barrier is the land parcels themselves. Some of these properties are within floodplains, and the trend has been to reduce density of development in these areas through floodplain buyouts or natural attrition. Future viability of extending public water and sewer to this corridor may depend on development of non-floodplain areas in the corridor for residential, industrial, or other commercial uses. Development of industries that require high amounts of water use can help justify the cost of extending water and sewer lines.

In addition to infrastructure expansion considerations is need to seriously evaluate water capacity and pressure within existing GWA infrastructure. At locations throughout the GWA, deficiencies in fire hydrant capacity pose significant concerns about adequately fighting fires. A hydraulic analysis of existing infrastructure in problem areas has occurred, showing that size and age of pipe is the major issue. Municipalities, authorities, and fire companies are working to improve these deficiencies.

A final concern related to water infrastructure is that lead service lines, from house to curb, still exist in areas of the GWA. This is not usually an infrastructure component that is publicly fundable; however, there is community concern over this issue. These lines must be replaced, and a mechanism for identifying those suspect lines must be determined. It can begin with a public education campaign.

***Stormwater Infrastructure.*** This is clearly the next significant infrastructure challenge facing GWA communities at this time. Stormwater is managed through two major regulatory programs: **Act 167 and MS4 Program**. Pennsylvania's Storm Water Management Act, or Act 167, was enacted in 1978 in response to damaging impacts from accelerated stormwater runoff as land was developed around the State. Act 167 requires counties to prepare and adopt watershed-based stormwater management plans, and requires municipalities to adopt and implement ordinances to regulate development consistent with these plans.

All six municipalities in the GWA Planning Area are currently in compliance with Act 167, falling under the Lycoming County Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan, adopted in 2010, and the companion Lycoming Creek

Stormwater Plan, also adopted in 2010, which specifies enhanced protections for this heavily flooded corridor. Portions of the GWA Planning Area are also covered by the Grafius/Millers/McClures Run Plan, adopted in 1999.

The MS4 Program is a federal regulatory requirement passed through and administered by PADEP. MS4 permittees are designated following U.S. Census Bureau guidelines for urbanized areas. Within Lycoming County, are currently 10 MS4 permittees, six of which are in the GWA: City of Williamsport, Loyalsock Township, Old Lycoming Township, South Williamsport Borough, Duboistown Borough, and the Pennsylvania College of Technology. All GWA municipalities are currently MS4s, except for Armstrong Township, at this time.

Municipalities holding MS4 permits currently include five of the six GWA municipalities (exception is Armstrong Township), and four additional municipalities outside the GWA are part of the Williamsport Urbanized Area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Pennsylvania College of Technology, a GWA stakeholder, is also an institutional MS4 permit holder. MS4 permittees work together as the "Lycoming County MS4 Coalition."



The MS4 Program requires permittees to reduce pollution and stormwater runoff volume and velocity by enacting six basic activities, called Minimum Control Measures (MCM). MS4 permittees in the GWA have held permits since the early 2000s. Together with the other permittees in the County, GWA MS4 communities have formed the Lycoming County MS4 Coalition under the guidance of the County Planning Department. By working together to address many of the MCMs and permit requirements, permittees have been able to control costs while maintaining compliance with these increasingly challenging and complex regulations. Municipal authorities are working with GWA MS4 municipalities to explore ways in which they may assist with MS4 compliance and overall inspection and maintenance of aging stormwater systems.

During the years of 2014-2017, the Lycoming County PCD was able to support the Coalition with a trained staff person focused on meeting the requirements of the this program. As the program evolved, more technical expertise from engineers became more necessary and the water authorities took a more leadership role.

**Key Implications** Proposed extensions of the public sanitary sewer or water systems or both may be highly desirable for certain sectors in the GWA Planning Area. Water system expansions can deal with limited capacity or flow volume issues, which often breed fire safety concerns. Sanitary sewer extensions are normally associated with failing on-lot septic systems and severe health conditions that often attend this situation. In spite of these potential threats to health and safety, extension of water and/or sanitary sewer infrastructure is still a business decision by the servicing authority. Given the tremendous expense of these types of projects, the threshold for making these investments is very rigorous. One overarching factor in any infrastructure project is consistency of that project with the current or planned growth area established by that municipality.

Given the environmental mandates embedded in the CBPRP, and as further detailed by the MS4 program, need to better control and eventually treat stormwater will pose a significant challenge to GWA MS4 municipalities. These challenges are unavoidable and must be addressed thoughtfully, cost-effectively, and with the highest degree of efficiency possible.

**Top Viable Project of Regional Significance for this Issue****MS4 CBPRP IMPLEMENTATION**

The next round of permitting in the MS4 Program will require planning and implementation of numerous stormwater infrastructure projects that are BMPs, to reduce stormwater pollution in compliance with heightening state and federal regulations.

Each MS4 permit holder must go through a planning process to determine where and how to implement BMPs successfully to achieve a 10% reduction in sediment pollution from runoff in the urbanized area, as required in the upcoming five-year permit cycle. (The next permit cycle begins in 2018 and 2019 for Lycoming County's MS4 permittees, who have staggered permit dates.) The name of this plan is the CBPRP.

MS4 permit holders, with assistance of the WSA and LCWSA have already begun the CBPRP planning process. Once CBPRPs are completed in 2017 and 2018, the plans will be reviewed for approval or revision by PA DEP.

MS4 permit holders must determine how to jointly implement and fund these projects. Costs of implementing these projects to meet permit requirements are likely to be quite significant, but are not yet known by municipal officials and the public. Options for jointly funding these projects must be deliberated in order to manage costs. Permittees are required to show PA DEP that contractual arrangements have been entered into in order to receive "credit" for their share of permit compliance.

Improving stormwater management in GWA urbanized areas and complying with heightened permit requirements will necessitate some significant changes. First, municipalities and municipal authorities must consider incorporating green infrastructure BMPs while scoping all future transportation and redevelopment projects on municipal property. Some of the best opportunities for green infrastructure exist as part of street-scaping and parks projects, where green spaces can be used to create stormwater infiltration and storage facilities. With the increased burdens of the forthcoming permit, green infrastructure can no longer be considered a nicety, but must be seriously evaluated at each location where redevelopment occurs. In addition, green infrastructure opportunities should also be explored at properties owned by non-profit organizations with large campuses, such as schools, colleges, churches, hospitals, and others. Finally, permit requirements will also necessitate increased attention to maintenance and upgrades to existing "grey" stormwater management infrastructure.

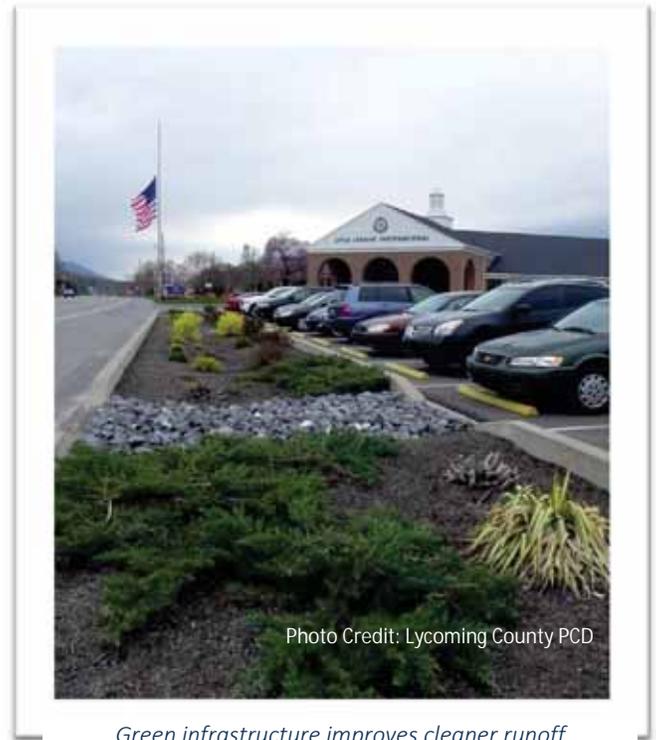


Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*Green infrastructure improves cleaner runoff*

In addition to meeting MS4 implementation regulations, a significant public outreach component is required. Educating the public about ways to reduce stormwater runoff volume and pollution, and how this will improve, water quality and ultimately impact everyone's daily quality of life, is an important element of public education. The MS4 Coalition (and/or each MS4 entity) must conduct at least one public meeting per MS4 permit year, as well as regularly solicit public reporting of suspected illicit discharges.

### HOW PROJECT ADDRESSES THE ISSUE

Implementation of the CBPRP and recommended BMPs will:

- Satisfy PA DEP permit requirements—a primary concern.
- Create additional benefits to the community such as reduced stormwater runoff.
- Reduce pollution to local streams and the Susquehanna River.
- Decrease volumes of stormwater flow during rain events that overburden wastewater treatment plants—an outcome especially needed in areas plagued by inflow and infiltration problems, or where combined sewer systems are present.
- Increase groundwater infiltration.
- Replenish aquifers used to draw drinking water for public sources.
- Repair or replace existing, deteriorated stormwater infrastructure.
- Lessen the burden on infrastructure assuming that a volume reduction may preclude need to replace undersized pipes.
- Create economic and quality of life improvements by decreasing localized flooding and damage to private property.
- Increase street tree canopies and green infrastructure that contribute to community beautification and quality of life as described under the "Improve Urban Forest" discussion.

### PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Lead Agency –Lycoming County MS4 Coalition, including 10 MS4 permittees.

Other Partners –Municipal authorities, consultants selected by permittees to help, Lycoming County Conservation District, Penn State Cooperative Extension, watershed organizations, entities that can provide technical assistance or public education tied to these BMP projects, municipal staff and elected officials, municipal authorities of various types, schools, colleges, libraries, hospitals, and other public and non-profit organizations with publicly accessible properties where BMPs may be feasible, developers, private property owners, mobile home park owners, landlords, and homeowners' associations.



Photo Credit: Lycoming County PCD

*Rain gardens decrease runoff pollution*

STEPS FOR SUCCESS

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
1	FOR JOINT PERMITTEES: HOLD REGULAR CBPRP PLANNING MEETINGS AND WORK SESSIONS FOR GENERAL PERMITTEES: HOLD REGULAR WORK SESSIONS AS NEEDED WITH MS4 PLANNER, CONSULTANTS	JOINT PERMITTEES: NOW THROUGH OCTOBER 2018 GENERAL PERMITTEES: NOW THROUGH AUGUST 2017	MS4 PERMITTEES, ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS, MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES
2	COMPLETE CBPRP TECHNICAL COMPONENTS, INCLUDING: 1. MAPPING OF STORM SEWER SYSTEM IN ITS ENTIRETY, WITH LAND USE. 2. FIGURE CALCULATIONS OF BASELOADS USING LAND USE MAPPING 3. SELECTION OF BMPS 4. FINALIZE CBPRP 5. PUBLIC NOTICE/COMMENT PERIOD/ MEETINGS 6. INCORPORATE PUBLIC COMMENTS INTO PLAN 7. SUBMIT MS4 PERMIT NOI WITH CBPRP	JOINT PERMITTEES: NOW THROUGH OCTOBER 2018 GENERAL PERMITTEES: NOW THROUGH AUGUST 2017	MS4 PERMITTEES, ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS, MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES
3	RESEARCH, DISCUSS, AND DRAFT BMP COST-SHARING AND OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (O&M) METHODOLOGIES AND LEGAL AGREEMENTS	JOINT PERMITTEES: FALL 2017-SPRING 2018 GENERAL PERMITTEES: NOT APPLICABLE UNLESS SELECTING BMPS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY	MS4 PERMITTEES, COUNTY SOLICITOR, MS4 SOLICITORS
4	PRESENT SLATE OF SELECTED BMPS TO MUNICIPAL BOARDS OF ELECTED OFFICIALS FOR REVIEW	JOINT PERMITTEES: WINTER 2017-SPRING 2018 GENERAL PERMITTEES: SPRING 2017	MS4 PERMITTEES, ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS, MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES
5	REVISE/FINALIZE CBPRP DRAFT BASED ON MUNICIPAL ELECTED OFFICIALS' INPUT	JOINT PERMITTEES: SPRING 2018 GENERAL PERMITTEES: SPRING 2017	MS4 PERMITTEES, ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS, MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES
6	PUBLISH DRAFT CBPRPS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT (45 DAY REQUIRED REVIEW PERIOD); CONDUCT PUBLIC MEETINGS	JOINT PERMITTEES: AUGUST 2018 GENERAL PERMITTEES: JUNE 2017	MS4 PERMITTEES
7	REVIEW PUBLIC COMMENTS AND REVISE CBPRPS	JOINT PERMITTEES: SEPTEMBER 2018 GENERAL PERMITTEES: JULY 2017	MS4 PERMITTEES, ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS, MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES
8	MS4 PERMITTEES APPROVE CBPRPS AT PUBLIC	JOINT PERMITTEES:	MS4 PERMITTEES

STEP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF STEP	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
	MEETINGS	SEPTEMBER 2018 GENERAL PERMITTEES: AUGUST 2017	
9	COMPLETED, APPROVED CBRPS DUE TO PADEP	JOINT PERMITTEES: OCTOBER 2, 2018 GENERAL PERMITTEES: SEPTEMBER 15, 2017	MS4 PERMITTEES
10	ANY PLAN MODIFICATIONS MUST BE MADE AS A PLAN UPDATE SUBMITTED TO PADEP; REQUIRED WHEN MODIFICATIONS ARE MADE TO THE LOCATION, TYPE, OR NUMBER OF PROPOSED BMPS OR THE STORM SEWERSHED MAP	ONGOING	MS4 PERMITTEES
11	GWA MUNICIPALITIES TO EVALUATE AND UPDATE STORMWATER ORDINANCES TO INCLUDE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE GUIDANCE AS WELL AS "PRIVATE PROPERTY BENEFITS"	ONGOING	GWA MUNICIPALITIES

**FUNDING RESOURCES**

The planning process will be financed by MS4 permittees. Staff resources are provided by Lycoming County PCD to assist with portions of the plan, including field work and GIS mapping. Each permit-holder will also support (either solely or as a shared commitment) the cost of engineering consultants and/or municipal authority staff who perform necessary technical analysis.

Several funding sources may be available to implement the CBRP over the next five-year permit cycle. These include stormwater utility fees based on impervious surface of all properties; municipal general funds generated through property taxes; and grants from state, federal, or non-profit agencies. Ultimately, it is the permit-holder’s responsibility to implement and maintain the practices necessary to achieve 10% sediment reduction.

**Additional Projects, Programs, and Initiatives for this Issue**

**1. WATER LINE INTERCONNECTOR**

Develop water line interconnector between WMWA-WSA and LCWSA systems.

**2. WATER/SEWER LINE EXTENSIONS**

Expand water and sewer infrastructure where appropriate and needed. Areas identified include Heshbon and Maybee Hill in Loyalsock Township, portions of Old Lycoming Township, and areas of Duboistown Borough.

**3. MOSQUITO VALLEY BRIDGE**

Complete Mosquito Valley Bridge project in Armstrong Township to prevent potential catastrophic damage to existing water infrastructure and water quality.

#### **4. PRIVATE WATER WELL REGULATIONS**

GWA PAT members, along with other municipal and county officials, should consider supporting state legislation that develops/generates private water well regulations to address the health and safety issues described above.

#### **5. EXISTING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEM UPDATES**

Identification, evaluation, and implementation of existing system upgrades to distribution lines and collection lines, and rehabilitation of damaged pipelines are needed.

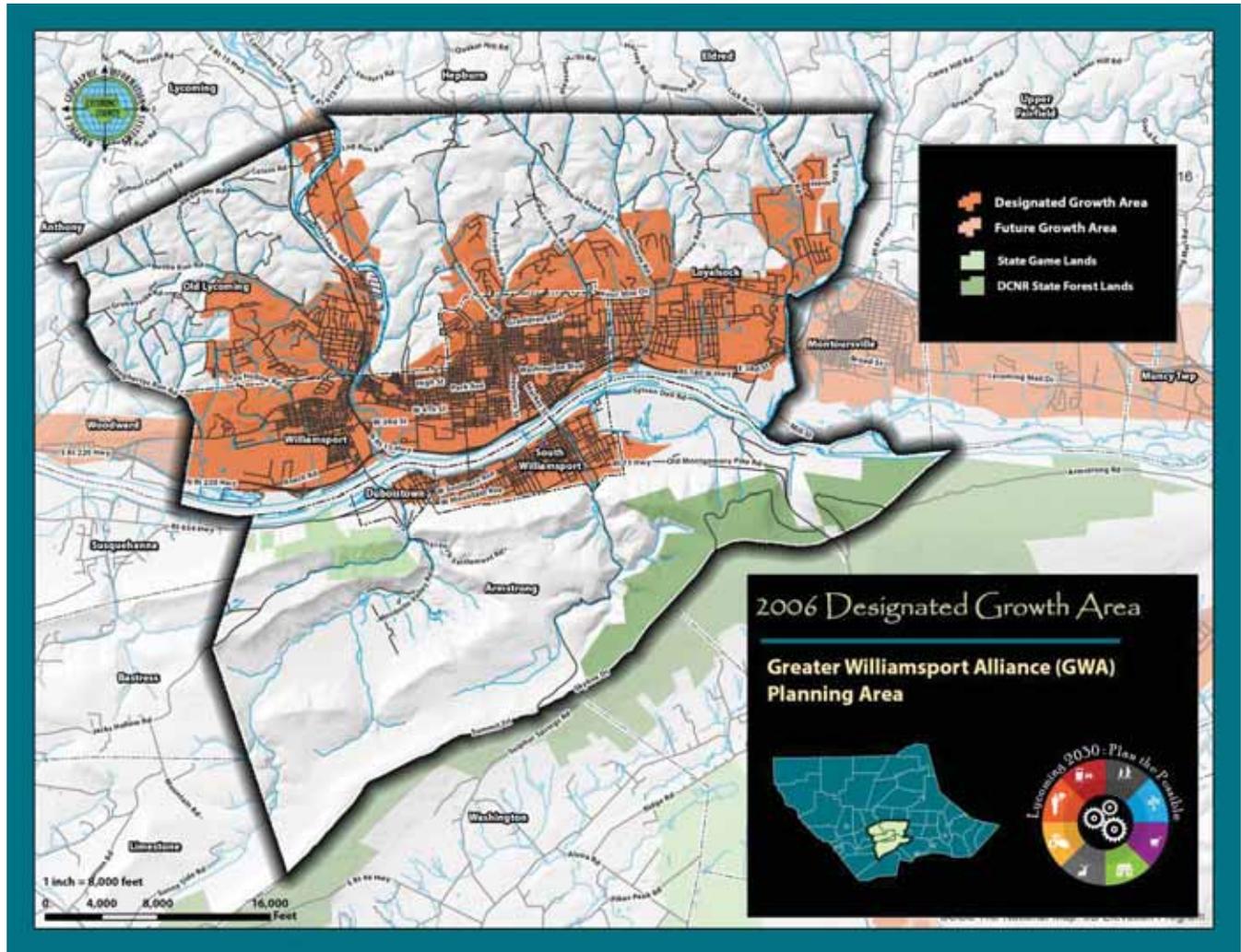
#### **6. LEAD PIPE SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENTS**

Existing lead pipe service lines between house and curb must be identified, mapped, and systematically replaced. This is typically a property owner expense, and little to no public funding exists for this purpose. However, the public health concern regarding lead pipes must be communicated to property owners so that they can begin to pursue financing for this infrastructure investment.



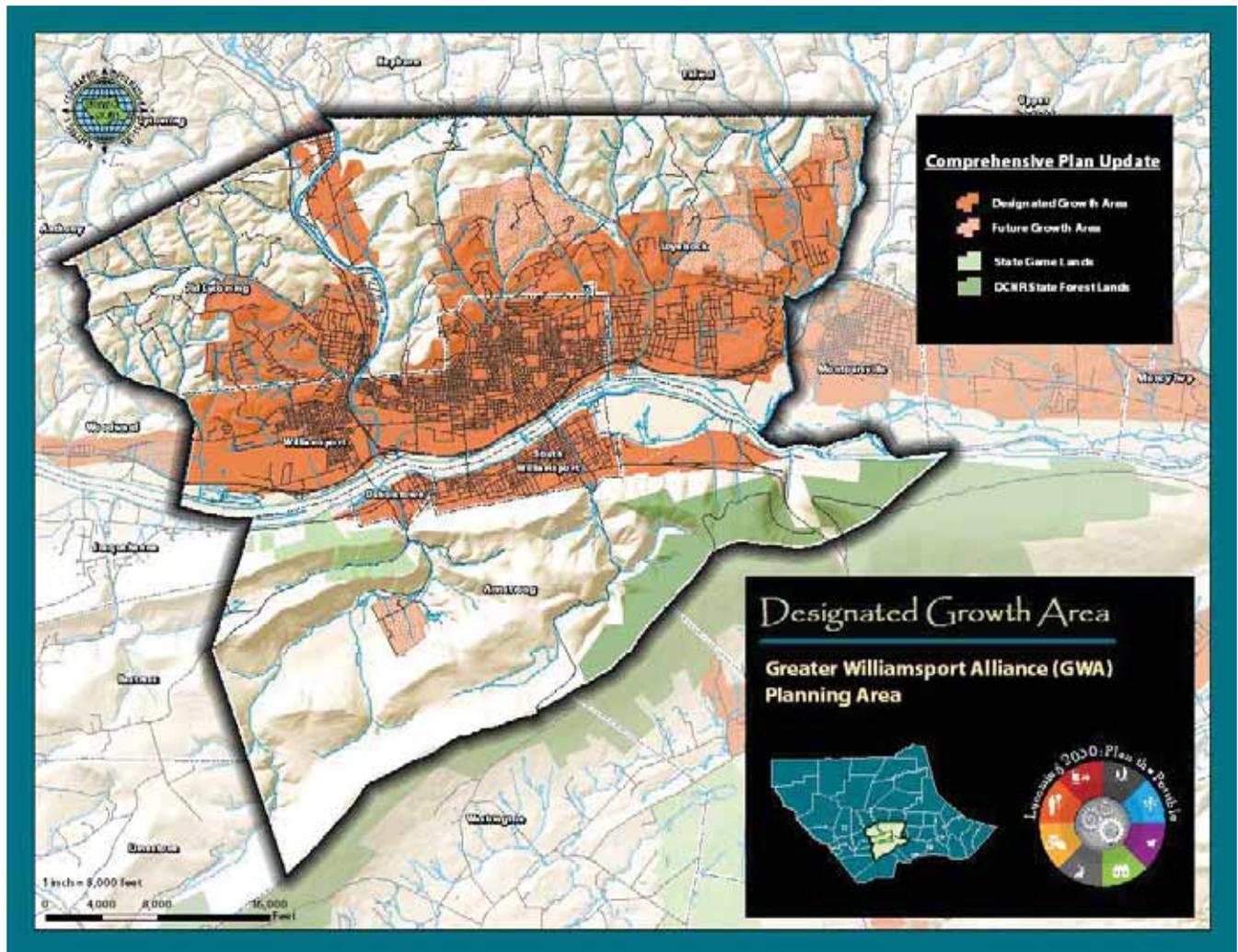
## Chapter 3: Growth Area and Future Land Use Maps

### Current Designated Growth Area Map



In 2005, some minor errors occurred in precision of growth area mapping in several GWA municipalities. These errors have been corrected and are now absent from the above map. Corrected minor areas are in the southwest corner of South Williamsport along W. Mountain Ave and Furey Street; a small area around Valley Street and south of Euclid in Duboistown; and a small area at the end of Spring and Summer Street in Armstrong and an area east of Duboistown along Euclid, both to reflect the current R2 zoning in Armstrong Township. The area along US Route 15, Old Montgomery Pike, and Sylvan Dell Park Road in Armstrong Township is now also considered a Growth Area to reflect the mixed-use zoning district that has been adopted in this township since the 2005 plan adoption. The map on the following page articulates these updates.

2017 Designated and Future Growth Area Map

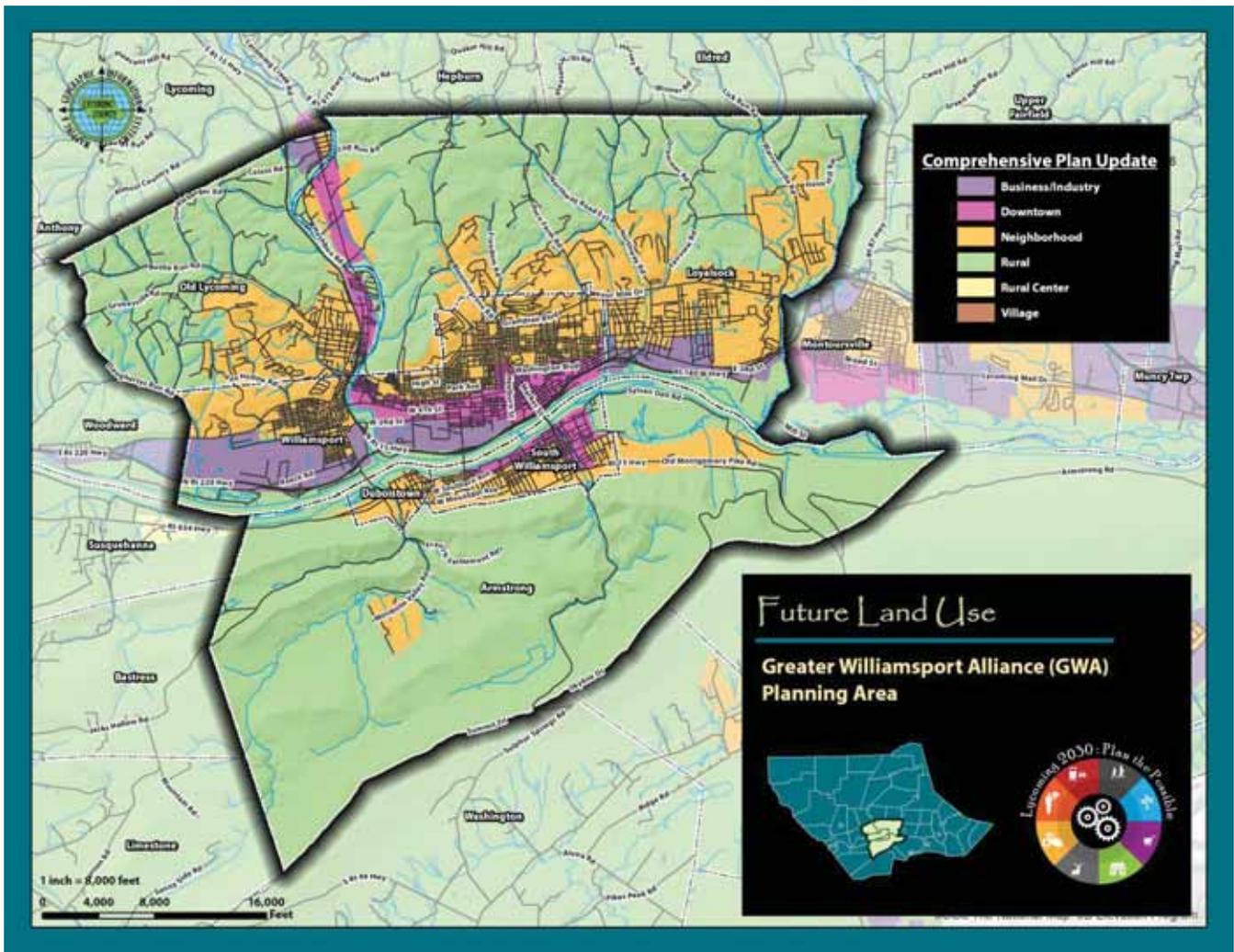


Within areas in Armstrong and Loyalsock Townships, future growth area designations have been expanded since the 2005 adopted plan because of the potential for these areas to receive public water service.

One of these areas is within Armstrong Township, the area north and south of Mosquito Valley road between Huling Lane, Deer Dr., and Retreat Rd. This is near WMWA’s Lower Mosquito Valley Reservoir. Steep slopes surrounding the shaded area on the map limit this future growth area from expanding beyond these bounds.

In Loyalsock Township, the future growth area reflects areas where WMWA has studied the feasibility of extending water service with successful results. These include the following: sections of Becker Hill, Freedom, Willow Brook, Poco Farm roads; an area surrounding Fairview and Hepburn Hill roads, and an area surrounding Heim Hill Road.

2017 Future Land Use Map



There are no changes to the Future Land Use Map in the GWA. Although there were additions to the Designated Growth Areas on the previous page, it was determined by the municipality (Loyalsock) that since infrastructure to those locations is not imminent, the Future Land Use Map at this time will remain unchanged.

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## References

<sup>i</sup> New Construction estimates:

Approximately 20 miles of levee. 5280' per mile x \$1500/foot (conservative estimate) \$158,400,000.00. This would include pump stations but not right-away acquisition and utility relocation, which is a local cost. USACE cost share= 65/35. Local share= \$55,440,000. \$1500/linear foot calculated based on construction estimates of the proposed Montoursville levee. Estimated remediation cost = \$12,000,000 to \$15,000,000.

<sup>ii</sup> The Township Second Class Township Code, Act of May 1, 1933 (P.L. 103, No. 69), as enacted and amended.

<sup>iii</sup> The Borough Code, Act of February 1, 1966 (1965 P.L. 1656, No. 581), as enacted and amended.

<sup>iv</sup> The following resources were also referenced in the development of Issue #6:

Warner M, Chen L, Makuc D, Anderson R, Miniño A. 2011. Drug Poisoning Deaths in the United States, 1980–2008. NCHS Data. Brief, no 81. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2013. CDC Multiple Cause of Death Mortality file. Available at: <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd.html>. Accessed September 14, 2015.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 2013. Results from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings., NSDUH Ser. H-46, DHHS Publ. No. SMA 13-4795. Rockville, MD: SAMHSA.

Kolodny A, Courtwright DT, Hwang CS, Kreiner P, Eadie JL, Clark TW, Alexander GC. 2015. "The Prescription Opioid and Heroin Crisis: A Public Health Approach to an Epidemic of Addiction." *Annu Rev Public Health*36:559-574.

<sup>v</sup> Source: <https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/urban-forests>

<sup>vi</sup> Source: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/201511/documents/stormwater2streettrees.pdf>

<sup>vii</sup> Source: <https://www.arborday.org/trees/benefits.cfm>