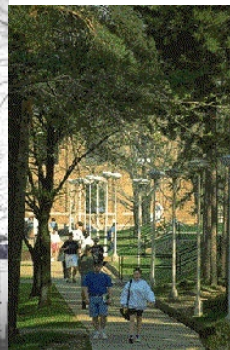
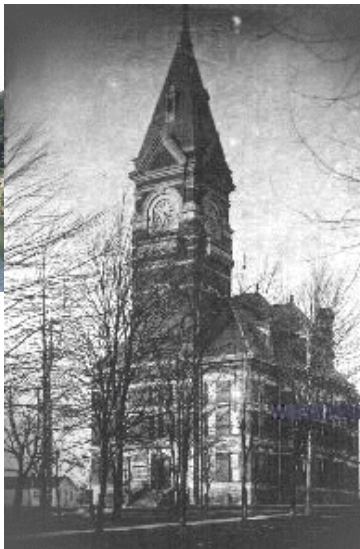


CLARION COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

VOLUME I

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT AND VISION BUILDING



Prepared by the

CLARION COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Assisted by

GRANEY, GROSSMAN, RAY AND ASSOCIATES
Harrisville, Pennsylvania

**CLARION COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

VOLUME I

**CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT
AND
VISION BUILDING**

1999

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**CLARION COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION**

for the

COUNTY OF CLARION

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CLARION COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This document represents Volume 1 of a new comprehensive plan for Clarion County. As an introduction, it is helpful to explain precisely what a comprehensive plan is and what such a plan means to Clarion County, its communities, and its citizens.

Planning is simply an active effort by anyone or any group to prepare for the future. Preparation for the future should entail examining trends, attempting to introduce where those trends lead to, and developing a strategy and actions which will allow a community to preserve its good aspects and avoid problems. A comprehensive plan (as the name infers) is simply an effort to create a formal plan which examines the aspects of a community and how they interrelate. The foremost aspect of such a comprehensive plan should be striving for balance. For example, a good and efficient transportation system is crucial to a community. However, if all roads in a community were four-lane limited access, it would have a negative effect on property values, quality of life, and safety. There must then be a balance among all aspects of planning – the economic, the social, and the natural environment on which we depend.

The ideal in planning is that the community can have “it all”: good jobs; high quality of life; and safe, friendly, livable communities.

In Pennsylvania, counties are required to prepare a comprehensive plan by Act 247, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code also sets forth a minimum standard for a comprehensive plan. A plan must include:



- ▶ A plan for land use
- ▶ A plan for housing
- ▶ A plan for community facilities and public utilities
- ▶ A plan for transportation

The Code also states that planning, by counties, may delve into many areas besides this minimum standard. Plans may include and address such issues as energy conservation, historic preservation, and capital improvement budgeting.

Clarion County does have an adopted comprehensive plan, and is thus in compliance with Act 247. However, this plan was completed in 1970 and has not been updated since that time. Much of the data, which assumptions about the County's future were based upon, dates from 1970. Though the plan was a very detailed and comprehensive effort, much of the data is simply outdated, and does not provide a sufficient information base for local leaders to use to make informed decisions about Clarion County's future. For that reason, an update was begun in 1998.

This is the first volume of that update. From the onset of this project, the Planning Commission and County Commissioners were committed to an intensive widespread public participation process. Prior to any significant data-gathering, an effort was made to enlist the citizens and community leaders in defining issues for future study and beginning to outline overall visioning for Clarion County. The following material represents the results of that process.

At a series of five public meetings, and through a widely distributed attitude survey, the members of the Clarion County community have given the Planning Commission direction about what issues are important and what should be done to reach the ideal of Clarion County's future: a sound and prosperous economy, an attractive and diverse physical environment, and healthy communities with a strong quality of life.

The citizens of Clarion County have set the agenda and work program for the new Comprehensive Plan through the visioning process and citizens' survey. Volume II will present objective analysis to develop an information base on those issues. It will compare and analyze trends in demographics, land use, housing, the environment, and public facilities so the community can understand better where it is at and where it is going. Volume III will represent the molding of citizen desires and objective trends into a plan for the future. It will identify where the community desires to go within the context of achieving the vision.

The citizens of Clarion County have set the agenda and work program for the new Comprehensive Plan through the visioning process and citizens' survey.

The Clarion County Citizens' Survey

As a participatory planning process, the citizens' survey represents one of the central features of the Comprehensive Plan. At the beginning, options were discussed. The first was to mail a survey to every household in the County. At a cost of \$14,000 for postage alone, this was not feasible. The two financially feasible choices were either a statistically significant random mail survey or a wide distribution of surveys with no attempt at statistical validity.

The first option would have given everyone a theoretically equal chance at inclusion in the survey. However, based upon recent experience, at this realm, it was believed that a sample would need to reach 1,000 or more households, 60 percent of whom would not bother to respond.

The survey was viewed by all local leaders like voting; an exercise in participatory

The Clarion County Planning Commission and County Commissioners wanted the survey to be a chance for any member of the community with an interest in the future to have more than a theoretical chance to participate. The survey was viewed by all local leaders like voting – an exercise in participatory democracy. It was

realized initially that a bias in the sampling would occur, but the bias would be toward those who are more likely to take active interest and action in their community – voters, volunteers, and activists.

Toward that end, a series of news releases were sent out and 2,000 surveys were printed. Copies of the survey and boxes for the return of completed surveys were made available at 13 locations throughout the County:

- The Clarion County Courthouse
- Public Libraries:
 - Carlson Library, Clarion
 - Clarion Free Library, Clarion
 - East Brady Public Library, East Brady
 - Eccles Leshner Memorial Library, Rimersburg
 - Foxburg Free Library Association, Foxburg
 - Knox Public Library, Knox
 - New Bethlehem Area Free Public Library, New Bethlehem
- Senior Centers:
 - Clarion Senior Center, Clarion Office Complex, Clarion
 - Leeper Senior Center, Leeper
 - New Bethlehem Senior Center, New Bethlehem
 - Rimersburg Senior Center, Rimersburg
- The Clarion University Union

In addition, a staffed booth distributed and picked up surveys at the Clarion Autumn Leaf Festival from noon to dusk and at a County Recycling Saturday. Finally, surveys were

distributed and returned at the Clarion County Association of Township Supervisors Convention.

In total, 404 completed surveys were returned. Forty-seven of these were from those attending the Township Supervisors Convention. These were very likely to be local appointed or elected officials. Therefore, those results were tabulated separately. The remaining 357 were from other sources.

In context of the method of surveying discussed previously, it is worthwhile to compare the citizens' survey respondents to the population as a whole.

The average age of a survey respondent was 44.3. According to the 1990 Census, the typical age of a County resident was 33. Over 72 percent of survey respondents were homeowners. Seventy-two percent of the County's occupied housing units were owner-occupied in 1990. Sixty-seven percent of survey respondents were female as compared to 51 percent of County residents as a whole. Within the context of the natural bias of this type of survey (toward respondents likely to vote, be active in community service, be property owners), respondents to the survey represent a fairly good portrait of the typical Clarion Countian.

With knowledge that the instrument is valid comes the task of using the survey as a tool. At this stage of the planning process, it was the intent of the survey to ask some simple questions, which are asked and answered as follows:

Question: *Are County residents happy living here?*

Answer: Ninety percent say they are.

Question: *What are the residents top five reasons for living here?*

Answer:

1. Scenic beauty
2. Small town/rural atmosphere
3. Good place to raise children
4. Neighborliness of people
5. Educational opportunities

Question: *What are residents' reasons not to like living here?*

Answer:

1. Lack of employment opportunities
2. Lack of recreational opportunities
3. Lack of historic/cultural attractions
4. Lack of health care facilities and services
5. Worries about crime

In spite of problems, citizens believe the future will improve or stay about the same by a 5-to-1 margin (2-to-1 for improved future, 3-to-1 for a similar future).

Question: *What should be the priority issues in guiding the County into the future?*

Answer:

1. Protecting rural and residential areas from incompatible development
2. Revitalizing small towns
3. (Tie) Increasing local government cooperation
(Tie) Preserving woodlands for recreational use
4. Preparing long-range community plans to guide the County into future growth.
5. Increasing the number of small and locally based businesses.

Lower Priorities:

Attract large business
Sustainable harvesting of forest resources
Protecting open space

Lowest Priorities:

Housing initiatives

Question: *What do citizens see as potential problems facing the County?*

Answer:

1. Unsafe disposal of toxic material/large waste facilities
2. Stream pollution
3. Loss of forest land (tie)
Deteriorated houses/abandoned buildings (tie)
4. Inadequate sewage disposal

5. Loss of habitat for wildlife and native plants

Their Perception of Problems:

Severe

- Toxic waste
- Stream pollution
- Lack of sewage
- Deteriorated buildings

Moderate

- Stormwater
- Loss of forest land/habitat

Not a Problem

- Too many people, houses, and buildings

Finally, the survey looked at citizen opinion on specific areas which the Comprehensive Plan should address. Citizen thoughts can be summarized as follows:

Land Use Regulations:

Citizens are widely divided on this issue and have very personal opinions. The one area of consensus is that where land use is regulated, it should be at the local or County level of government. Some confusion can be seen in that 2 to 1 support protective zoning, while half “oppose all zoning.”

Economic Development:

There are mixed feelings on tax breaks for businesses to relocate to the County. Citizens believe the greater priorities should be: first, helping local businesses expand and stay; and second, helping local residents develop their own small businesses.

Community Facilities/Transportation:

The great areas of consensus were for greater planning and cooperation for all levels of government in Clarion County. The construction of new highways was a very low priority.

Citizens were given opportunity to add general statements to the end of their surveys, and many chose to do so. The most common specific comments were a variety of concerns about industrial emissions from a fiberboard plant. Other comments reiterated those expressed in

TOWN HALL MEETING RESULTS

the survey – help small businesses, revitalize small towns, reclaim degraded streams, and provide developed recreation.

The Elected Officials' Survey

As mentioned previously, surveys distributed as part of an elected officials convention were tabulated separately. The main purpose was to discuss any areas where citizen and local leaders' opinions might differ. There were only a few substantial areas of differences:

- ▶ Officials were uniformly happy living in Clarion County.
- ▶ Local officials believed future priorities should include elderly housing opportunities and efforts to build community spirit.
- ▶ Local officials gave higher priority to the lack of sewage disposal.
- ▶ Local officials were less supportive of land use regulations than citizens.

The Town Hall Meetings

Simultaneous to the survey process, the County sponsored a series of five town hall meetings. The first four were held during the evening at locations throughout the County, as shown on the attached map. The final session was held at Clarion during the day and was targeted toward community, government, and business leaders.

At each session, the facilitators sought information by asking a number of questions:

- What is the greatest strength of your community?
- What is the greatest weakness of your community?
- What is the worst/best future you can imagine?

The facilitators made sure every person had an opportunity to answer each question. Every response was then entered on large flip charts. Finally, every participant was given an equal number of stickers to be placed next to the entries they felt were most important. Citizens could split their “votes” whichever they wished among several priorities or focus on one overriding issue. The greatest three priorities from each meeting follow. The (+) or (-) symbol indicates whether it was negative or positive, strength or weakness. The procedure was not followed at New Bethlehem due to low attendance. Any reoccurring mention was given priority.

Knox

- 1) Out-migration (-)
- 2) Quality of workforce (+) (Tie)
- 2) Many interchanges on I-80 (+) (Tie)
- 2) Public water and sewer at most interchanges (+) (Tie)
- 2) Lack of intergovernmental cooperation (-) (Tie)
- 3) Cluster of businesses in manufactured housing (+)

New Bethlehem

- 1) Water pollution (mines and sewage (-)
- 2) Loss of young people (-)
- 3) Boarded up buildings/closed businesses (-) (Tie)
- 3) Cook Forest (+) (Tie)

Strattanville

- 1) Landfill (-)
- 2) Lack of job opportunities (-)
- 3) Cook Forest (+)

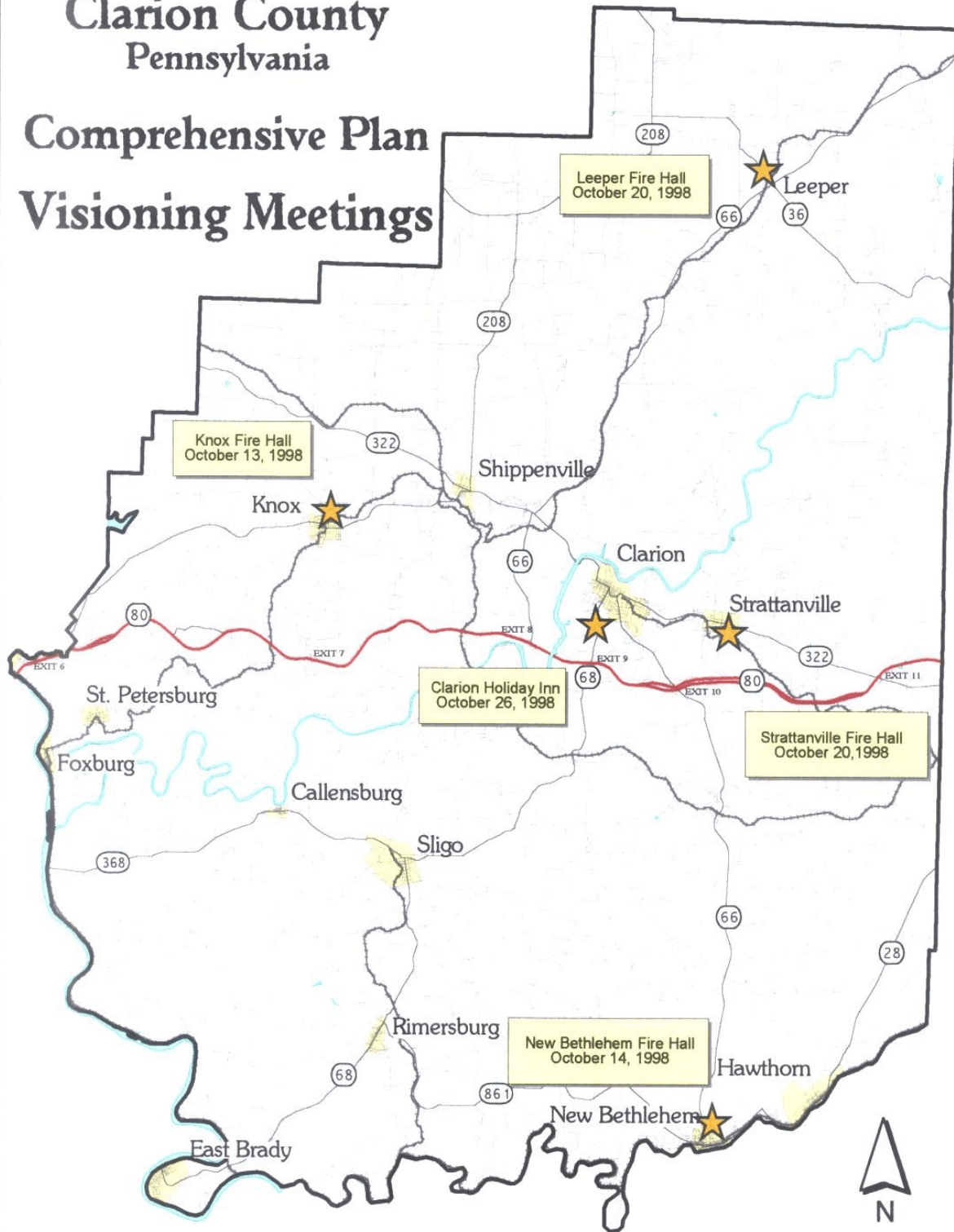
While some items mentioned were indicative of localized situations, there was some common ground. Three of the four groups mentioned an **environmental concern or issue**. **Lack of intergovernmental cooperation** was mentioned twice, as was **lack of jobs, out-migration of the young**, and the importance of **public water and sewer**. These five areas augment the survey in adding to the list of planning issues.

Preliminary Trends Analysis

Because the visioning sessions were held in the evenings and were specifically targeted toward the average citizen, it was felt a specific session should be held to attract local officials, persons with a professional interest in the Plan, and other community leaders. This meeting was held in the day time, at the Clarion Holiday Inn. It should be mentioned that,

Clarion County Pennsylvania

Comprehensive Plan Visioning Meetings



though the target group was community leaders, the advertising process was identical, and private citizens could, and did, attend.

Because this was the final meeting of the first round, it was decided to begin interjecting some trends analysis as food for thought into the visioning process. This was not meant to be a complete economic/demographic analysis, but to begin integrating facts into planning for future objectives. The presentation centered around major demographic and economic trends.

Trend One - The County's past population change has been erratic, with no consistent growth or decline. The table illustrates population change for the entire County from 1950-1990.

| <u>Population</u> | <u>1950</u> | <u>% Change</u> | <u>1960</u> | <u>% Change</u> | <u>1970</u> | <u>% Change</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>% Change</u> | <u>1990</u> | <u>% Change</u> |
|-------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| | 38,344 | (-0.2) | 37,408 | (-24) | 38,412 | (+2.7) | 43,362 | (+12.9) | 41,699 | (-3.8) |

Source: U.S. Census Reports

This inconsistent performance can also be seen in the varied experience of municipalities within the County. According to recent (1996) projections, some are growing, some are declining:

TABLE 2**CLARION COUNTY - 1996 POPULATION ESTIMATES**

| Place | 1990 | 1996 (Estimated) | Numeric Change |
|--|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ashland Township | 1,019 | 1,051 | 32 |
| Beaver Township | 1,840 | 1,875 | 35 |
| Brady Township | 78 | 36 | -42 |
| Callensburg Borough | 205 | 205 | 0 |
| Clarion Borough | 6,457 | 6,484 | 26 |
| Clarion Township | 3,306 | 3,369 | 63 |
| East Brady Borough | 1,047 | 1,028 | -19 |
| Elk Township | 1,526 | 1,575 | 49 |
| Emlenton (pt.) Borough | 10 | 10 | 0 |
| Farmington Township | 1,927 | 1,980 | 53 |
| Foxburg Borough | 262 | 252 | -10 |
| Hawthorn Borough | 528 | 511 | -17 |
| Highland Township | 573 | 603 | 30 |
| Knox Borough | 1,182 | 1,154 | -28 |
| Knox Township | 1,281 | 1,297 | 16 |
| Licking Township | 483 | 480 | -3 |
| Limestone Township | 1,686 | 1,771 | 85 |
| Madison Township | 1,423 | 1,457 | 34 |
| Millcreek Township | 407 | 410 | 3 |
| Monroe Township | 1,314 | 1,413 | 99 |
| New Bethlehem Borough | 1,151 | 1,111 | -40 |
| Paint Township | 1,730 | 1,754 | 24 |
| Perry Township | 1,076 | 1,110 | 34 |
| Piney Township | 515 | 514 | -1 |
| Porter Township | 1,564 | 1,571 | 7 |
| Redbank Township | 1,576 | 1,595 | 19 |
| Richland Township | 490 | 487 | -3 |
| Rimersburg Borough | 1,053 | 1,056 | 3 |
| St. Petersburg Borough | 349 | 350 | 1 |
| Salem Township | 893 | 911 | 18 |
| Shippenville Borough | 474 | 463 | -11 |
| Sligo Borough | 706 | 695 | -11 |
| Strattanville Borough | 490 | 500 | 10 |
| Toby Township | 1,153 | 1,145 | -8 |
| Washington Township | 1,925 | 1,982 | 57 |
| Total | 41,699 | 42,205 | 506 |
| Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990/1998 | | | |

Trend Two - The structure of the population is changing, with fewer young people and an increase of older people.

TABLE 3

**POPULATION CHANGE
CLARION COUNTY - 1980-1990**

| | 1980 | | 1990 | |
|--|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Pre-School (0-4) | 2,931 | (6.8) | 2,424 | (5.8) |
| School Age (5-19) | 11,818 | (27.2) | 9,809 | (23.5) |
| Young Adults (20-34) | 10,969 | (25.3) | 10,286 | (24.7) |
| Mature (35-64) | 12,577 | (29.0) | 13,387 | (32.1) |
| Older (65+) | 5,067 | (11.7) | 5,793 | (13.9) |
| Total | 43,362 | (100.0) | 41,699 | (100.0) |
| Source: U.S. Census of 1980, U.S. Census of 1990 | | | | |

Over a ten-year period, Clarion County gained 726 persons over the age of 65, and 810 persons over 35. The total number of persons under 18 declined by 2,516. This trend can also be seen in declining birth rates. In 1985, there were 544 live births. By 1990, there were only 497 births in the County.

Trend Three - In spite of these structural changes and declines, births still exceeded death in the 1980s by a margin of 1,344. Out-migration is the main reason for erratic population figures.

TABLE 4

**CLARION COUNTY
MOST ACTIVE OUT-MIGRATION AGE
COHORTS IN 20-YEAR PERIOD**

| 1970-1975 | 1975-1980 | 1980-1985 | 1985-1990 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 20-29 | 25-29 | 0-4 20-39 | 0-4 20-29 30-49 55-59 |
| Source: Consultant's computations | | | |

The sum purpose of this trends analysis is to develop an objective projection of future population. Projections are not predictions; they are merely mathematical “what-if” scenarios. Projection I shows what would happen if the long-term twenty-year trend continued. Method Two, zero net, assumes there would be no in-migration or out-migration. In either case, they show a very stable population base.

Future Projections:

Method I

1990 - 41-699
1995 - 41,670* (-29, or -0.1%)
2000 - 41,560* (-110, or -0.3%)
2005 - 41,296* (-264, or -0.6%)
2010 - 40,884* (-412, or -1.0%)

*Projections are based on the 1970-1990 average net migration rate.

Method II

1990 - 41,699
1995 - 41,793** (94, or 0.2%)
2000 - 41,851** (58, or 0.1%)
2005 - 41,517** (-334, or 0.8%)
2010 - 41,182** (335, or 0.8%)

**Projections are based on zero net migration.

If these projections become reality, the population characteristics will also change. By 2010, there will be an additional 1,300 citizens of retirement age, and correspondingly fewer school-age children and workforce-age adults.

Trend Four - After lagging behind for several years, the economy seems to be catching up to the State and nation.

| Labor Market Area | 1999 Annual Average Unemployment Rate |
|-----------------------------|--|
| United States | 4.5%* |
| Pennsylvania | 4.4% |
| Armstrong County | 6.3% |
| Pittsburgh MSA | 4.3% |
| Forest County | 7.7% |
| Elk County | 6.1% |
| Venango County | 5.9% |
| Clearfield-Jefferson County | 7.4% |
| Clarion County | 4.9% |

*1998

The situation has not always been the case. As recently as four years ago, the County unemployment rate was consistently a full point above the nation's.

Trend Five - There have also been structural changes in the employment base. This has been seen in a consistent decline in mining-manufacturing, and a replacement of those jobs in retail trade.

| Sector | Jobs in July 1997 | Jobs in July 1998 | Change |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Manufacturing | 2,900 | 2,700 | -200 |
| Mining | 300 | 200 | -100 |
| Retail Trade | 3,600 | 3,900 | +300 |
| Services | 2,700 | 2,700 | 0 |

The primary purpose of the preliminary trends analysis was to provide local leaders with an information base for further discussion during the last visioning session. It is interesting to note that their responses were very well attuned to the citizenry, as seen in the following top five priorities:

- 1) Lack of public water and sewer (-)

- 2) A future where industrial development occurs where the community wants it to occur
- 3) Avoiding a future where toxic pollutants destroy the County for quality businesses.
- 4) Polluted groundwater/no sewage (Tie)
- 4) High school students with low skill levels (Tie)
- 4) I-80 corridor as an asset (Tie)
- 5) A future where young people stay in Clarion County

This session also explored some additional features of the top two priorities. The first recommendation was to produce a master list of all possible future water or sewer projects for planning purposes. The first step toward the master list was the preparation of an infrastructure survey, attached to this Plan as a special study topic.

In total, the visioning sessions and town hall meetings, combined with related activities, such as presentations to various groups, made thousands in the County aware of the Plan and brought in an actual input of over 600 persons.

Summary of Findings and Initial Recommendations

Following the last of the visioning meetings and the tabulation of the survey results, the Planning Commission met several times to summarize the wealth of data into the most important reoccurring issues. The Planning Commission then summarized all of the input into the following eleven critical issues (listed in no priority).

- ▶ **Historic and Economic Preservation in Older Downtowns**
- ▶ **Abandoned Strip Mines and Acid Mine Drainage**
- ▶ **The Future of Landfills in the County**
- ▶ **Ensuring the Natural Landscape Always Remains Scenic and Beautiful**
- ▶ **Affordable Rental Housing Needs**
- ▶ **Retaining Young People in the Community**

- ▶ **Community-Based Economic Development (supporting and growing local businesses)**
- ▶ **Setting Priorities to Upgrade Water and Sewer for Public Health and Environmental Protection**
- ▶ **Analysis of Traffic Congestion in Growth Areas**
- ▶ **Developed Recreation Needs - Parks and Ballfields**
- ▶ **Coordinating with Clarion University**

The list allowed the Planning Commission to take three actions:

1. Draft a succinct Vision Statement that would give focus to subsequent phases of the Comprehensive Plan and summarize in a few pages the real purpose of this planning process. The Vision Statement is reproduced here, in full, in the next section.
2. Rewrite the work program to ensure that Volumes II and III of the County Comprehensive Plan address citizen concerns. The Volume II/III work program is attached as an appendix to this Plan.
3. Make a series of preliminary recommendations for each facet of the Plan:

Historic Resources: Many citizens expressed both affection and concern for small towns and downtown commercial areas. One option to revitalize such areas may be through historic preservation.

Recommendation: Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan should collect and summarize any material available on historic buildings in small towns and determine local interest and activity in preservation.

- ▶ **The Natural Environment:** Environmental issues are very important to Clarion County residents. The typical resident regards the County as a scenic and beautiful place to live, but has great concern about how certain types of development could be a threat to the local environment.

Recommendation: Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan should collect data on the extent of abandoned strip mines and their condition and acid mine drainage and its

effect on water quality. This should be done with an eye toward effective problem solving.

The land use analysis to be undertaken in Volume II should examine the options that Clarion County has for input into the planning process for new or expanded landfills. There should be a clear understanding of the State-permitting process, the market and regulatory criteria that waste disposal companies seek, and local options through subdivision/land development or zoning ordinances.

► **Scenic Resources:**

Clarion County is a very scenic place. While it is difficult to quantify, some effort should be made to list a few of the outstanding places.

Recommendation: The Plan should discuss especially scenic areas and any threats to that beauty, as well as the impact of the natural landscape on every aspect of the County.

- **Housing/Demographics:** Housing was not a general priority among County residents with one major exception – widespread concern about abandoned, dilapidated buildings throughout the County. A secondary issue was the concern about high costs of rental housing, due primarily to the presence of Clarion University and student rental needs. Finally, there is a construing concern about out-migration, which must be stemmed to prevent continued population decline.

Recommendations: Examine the range of options available as tools to deal with abandoned homes and buildings (demolition, rehabilitation/resale, board-up ordinances).

Analyze projected enrollments at Clarion University and its effect on future rental markets. Examine feasibility of targeted family, private-market rental housing.

Find if other communities have had success in population retention efforts.

- **Economic Development:** There is a real preference in Clarion County for small to medium-sized, locally based businesses.

Recommendation: Analyze how much of a role each sector plays in creating jobs and wealth, including the size of businesses. Such analysis will allow an informed local response.

- ▶ **Community Facilities/Public Utilities/Transportation:** The presence of public water and sewer can avert many environmental problems. However, in rural Clarion County, there are many places which still need these facilities. To date, the problem has been addressed in a somewhat fragmented fashion, with local Act 537, and a variety of funding sources. Citizens also gave priority to developed recreation – playgrounds, ballfields, and community centers. The largest employer in the County, Clarion University, is also a community facility. Finally, some interchange areas with commercial development are seeing some traffic congestion.

Recommendation: There is a real need to get updated public water and sewer information into one place to use as a basis in setting future priorities. Priorities should make an effort to include environmental protection, possibly greater than economic impact.

The means to get to the future is summarized in the Vision Statement. To quote the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, *“It’s hard to think about the future.”* The Vision Statement is a product of the process and is an attempt to control the future by understanding where the community should be in the future. Again, as stated in the Center for Rural Pennsylvania’s Handbook for Community Visioning, *“The product, the vision statement, is important for keeping the community on track. The statement can be thought of as a compass used to guide a community through the ups and downs of economic, social, and political change. If the statement is truly community developed and supported, changes in the political landscape will have little impact. In addition, the statement can be used to assess whether new initiatives and programs are compatible with what residents want their community to be. Communities will always be presented with new opportunities (new factories, highways, government programs, etc.), but it is up to the residents to determine if these opportunities will either hinder or help the community in achieving its vision for the future.”* It is hoped that this vision will become a first step in reaching a successful future for Clarion County.

CLARION COUNTY VISION STATEMENT

This vision statement was produced by the citizen members of the Clarion County Planning Commission, but it is not our vision – it is our effort to succinctly summarize what the citizens and local leaders have told us through numerous town hall meetings and completed written surveys.

We envision a Clarion County where choices are made at the community level and not pre-determined by outside conditions. This choice should include that of our communities to chart their destiny, and for individuals to create fulfilling lives for themselves. The limiting factor on the range of choices should be the moral weight of membership in the community and responsibility to each other. In reference to this, it is our vision that each action be preceded by the questions – What will this do to my community? How will this affect my neighbor?

We envision tangible results from this overall vision of a balance between individual and community. This leads to another essential balance – the needs of the people and the land as manifest through the economy. We envision a Clarion County which is a pioneer in “win-win” solutions which create prosperity while enhancing the environment.

SOCIAL VISION

- ▶ Young people have the choice of remaining in their community to pursue a wide variety of job and business opportunities. There should be such opportunities available for all levels of skill and education.
- ▶ Older people have the choice of remaining within the community where they have spent their lives. Their need for care or other limitations should not force their relocation.
- ▶ Recognizing that much of the community will remain rural, we envision the traditional rural virtues remaining in place to replace public facilities and services. In the absence of local police presence, neighbors protect each other. In the absence of institutional living, those who need care are cared for by their neighbors. It is our vision that County and local governments encourage this.

ECONOMIC VISION

We envision a Clarion County where steady, sustainable levels of growth occur. The definition of steady and sustainable is a product of the residents of pre-existing development. We envision that steady, sustainable growth occurs throughout Clarion County – a very different situation than alternating areas of explosion and decline.

- ▶ Recognizing the desirability of certain locations adjacent to interchanges, involvement will be directed at preserving the quality of life for pre-existing residents.
- ▶ We envision a new renaissance for the small villages and boroughs away from the I-80 corridor through the concerted efforts of the community.
- ▶ Economic prosperity comes from within Clarion County, rather than being dependent on the whims of the greater national/global economy. This entails assisting businesses, building consumer loyalty to Clarion County products and finding ways to tie land-based sectors to value-added activities.

ENVIRONMENTAL VISION

We envision the continuation of the high-quality environment and scenic landscapes for which Clarion County is so well known. Within the context of the false argument of “jobs versus the environment,” we see a county with both high-quality jobs and a high-quality environment, through our commitment to the whole community.

- ▶ We envision a new commitment to rectify environmental degradation which occurred in the past. This is hoped to be manifest in the restoration of abandoned mine lands and the improvement of streams polluted by acid mine drainage or lack of effective sewage treatment.
- ▶ Recognizing that there have lately been significant land use and environmental conflicts in many areas of the County, we envision a solution in which sound planning preempts future conflicts through the site selection and land development process. Where conflicts have already occurred, the County will serve as a mediator, minimizing conflict through problem-solving processes.
- ▶ Recognizing that much of our rural communities’ livelihood is based upon land-based wealth, we envision new ways in which this can continue, becoming both a source of greater prosperity and environmental security. We see a Clarion County landscape characterized by profitable family farms, private stewardship forests, and the sound use of natural resources, such as re-mining, followed by modern reclamation.

CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS

**CLARION COUNTY CITIZENS SURVEY:
COUNTY RESIDENTS CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE NEXT CENTURY
RESULTS #2 - 357 RETURNED SURVEYS - AS OF MAY 13, 1999**

Clarion County is preparing a new Comprehensive Plan. The Plan will be a guide to set goals and find projects to make our communities better places to live. To help County officials to understand citizen desires, we are distributing this survey throughout Clarion County. Your answers will be used to help the County Planning Commission and other County officials chart a course for Clarion County for the next ten years. **All replies will be kept strictly confidential.**

We would like to begin by asking how you feel about Clarion County as a place to live. Do you consider it: (Circle the number of the answer that best describes your feelings.)

| | | |
|----|----------------------|-----|
| 1. | Very Desirable | 140 |
| 2. | Somewhat Desirable | 134 |
| 3. | Somewhat Undesirable | 20 |
| 4. | Very Undesirable | 7 |

Do you like living in Clarion County? Yes 292 No 32

How would you rate Clarion County in regard to each of the following characteristics?

| | <u>Excellent</u> | <u>Good</u> | <u>Fair</u> | <u>Poor</u> |
|----|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | (Circle one answer for each item.) | | | |
| a. | 100 | 176 | 51 | 18 |
| b. | 64 | 171 | 86 | 23 |
| c. | 210 | 106 | 19 | 4 |
| d. | 135 | 136 | 50 | 16 |
| e. | 14 | 71 | 154 | 97 |
| f. | 70 | 161 | 86 | 17 |
| g. | 62 | 121 | 106 | 45 |
| h. | 72 | 155 | 86 | 24 |
| i. | 49 | 132 | 111 | 41 |
| j. | 56 | 131 | 121 | 33 |
| k. | 61 | 166 | 83 | 30 |
| l. | 136 | 147 | 38 | 9 |
| m. | 97 | 148 | 79 | 14 |

As you look ahead to the next five or ten years, do you expect that Clarion County will become a more or less desirable place to live? (Circle one answer.)

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|-----|
| 1 | More Desirable | 88 |
| 2 | Will Stay About the Same | 155 |
| 3 | Less Desirable | 46 |
| 4 | Don't Know | 21 |

During the next five years, what priority do you believe should be given to each of the following issues in order to preserve and/or enhance the quality of life in Clarion County?

| <u>Highest Priority</u> | <u>High Priority</u> | <u>Moderate Priority</u> | <u>Low Priority</u> | <u>Don't Know</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|

(Circle one answer for each item.)

What priority would you give to...

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|-----|-----|-----|----|----|
| a. | Preparing long range community plans to guide the County into the future growth? | 103 | 119 | 78 | 8 | 12 |
| b. | Guiding the quality of development? | 93 | 131 | 68 | 15 | 8 |
| c. | Increasing the number of large businesses/ industries? | 61 | 84 | 113 | 56 | 9 |
| d. | Increasing the number of small and locally based businesses/industries? | 98 | 138 | 61 | 15 | 8 |
| i. | Encouraging development of the tourism industry? | 61 | 117 | 107 | 27 | 7 |
| j. | Protecting open spaces from development | 89 | 73 | 98 | 45 | 10 |
| k. | Encouraging the sustainable harvesting of forest resources? | 56 | 87 | 85 | 65 | 16 |
| l. | Preserving woodlands for recreational use? | 108 | 102 | 72 | 21 | 11 |
| m. | Revitalizing small towns? | 115 | 110 | 71 | 15 | 7 |
| n. | Protecting rural and residential areas from incompatible development? | 122 | 95 | 67 | 17 | 14 |
| o. | Increasing training to develop local community leaders? | 96 | 98 | 78 | 26 | 16 |
| p. | Increasing cooperation among local governments | 108 | 108 | 68 | 18 | 13 |
| q. | Building community spirit? | 72 | 108 | 94 | 31 | 1 |
| r. | Assist in providing affordable opportunities for new home buyers? | 25 | 40 | 36 | 8 | 2 |
| s. | Assist in providing affordable opportunities for rental housing? | 15 | 32 | 48 | 14 | 3 |
| t. | Assist in providing affordable opportunities for elderly housing? | 23 | 41 | 36 | 9 | 2 |

How great a problem do you feel each of the following is in Clarion County?

| | <u>Severe Problem</u> | <u>Minor Problem</u> | <u>Not A Problem</u> | <u>Don't Know</u> |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | (Circle one answer for each item.) | | | |
| (a) Highway congestion | 74 | 163 | 78 | 10 |
| (b) Stormwater/runoff | 52 | 142 | 82 | 42 |
| (c) Adequate sewage treatment and disposal | 92 | 115 | 75 | 43 |
| (d) Current mining and drilling places | 83 | 98 | 76 | 67 |
| (e) Too many people, houses and buildings (overcrowding) | 28 | 70 | 197 | 33 |
| (f) Loss of hunting and fishing opportunities | 58 | 91 | 147 | 34 |
| (g) Loss of open spaces | 72 | 100 | 129 | 33 |
| (h) Soil erosion | 60 | 120 | 79 | 71 |
| (i) Loss of habitat for wildlife and native plants | 89 | 98 | 95 | 48 |
| (j) Loss of agricultural land to development | 75 | 109 | 99 | 46 |
| (k) Loss of forest land | 102 | 99 | 87 | 42 |
| (l) Stream pollution | 154 | 99 | 34 | 46 |
| (m) Unsafe disposal of toxic material/large waste facilities | 146 | 90 | 38 | 56 |
| (n) Loss of wetlands | 85 | 107 | 74 | 60 |
| (o) Deteriorated housing and abandoned buildings | 102 | 145 | 52 | 36 |

Land Use/Environment

I am against all zoning or land use regulations which restrict any use of any private land.

Agree strongly - 45 Agree somewhat - 91 Disagree - 126 Not sure - 67

I support land use regulations which protect my property and community from development which would threaten our quality of life or property values.

Agree strongly - 182 Agree somewhat - 98 Disagree - 20 Not sure - 26

In general, where there is regulation, I think that land use is regulated best at the _____ level of government. (Chose the best answer to complete the sentence.)

Township or Borough - 165 County - 105 State - 39 Federal - 15

Economic Development

Rural areas like Clarion County are often perceived as lacking jobs and economic opportunity, but strong in quality of life issues, such as low crime, pleasant living, friendly people.

Businesses which locate to Clarion County should receive a tax break from local governments.

Agree strongly - 76 Agree somewhat - 131 Disagree - 94 Not sure - 32

Too much growth and development can cause a community to lose its quality of life.

Agree strongly - 86 Agree somewhat - 150 Disagree - 65 Not sure - 20

New businesses should be concentrated in or near areas needing revitalization, rather than sites away from current development.

Agree strongly - 85 Agree somewhat - 144 Disagree - 51 Not sure - 36

Local governments and community organizations only have limited resources to attract and retain businesses.

Where should priorities be? Fill in the blank with one letter for each of the following:

A = Top Priority B = Second Priority C = Third Priority D = Fourth Priority

Help local residents to develop their own small businesses. A - 123 B - 109 C - 45 D - 42

Help local businesses expand and stay in Clarion County. A - 181 B - 82 C - 32 D - 20

Attract new industry from outside the community. A - 109 B - 73 C - 63 D - 67

Promote and improve local quality of life to bring in high-tech information-age businesses. A - 103 B - 70 C - 67 D - 67

Community Facilities/Transportation

Local governments must provide certain services to the community (public safety, road maintenance, etc.). Other services, such as recreation, can make the community a better place to live.

Clarion County needs more community and local recreation facilities, such as ballfields, gyms, libraries, and community centers.

Agree strongly - 127 Agree somewhat - 127 Disagree - 50 Not sure - 18

Where feasible, public water and sewer systems should be extended to areas which lack those services in Clarion County.

Agree strongly - 168 Agree somewhat - 121 Disagree - 21 Not sure - 15

It is more important to maintain existing water and sewer lines and treatment plants than to make new extensions.

Agree strongly - 86 Agree somewhat - 136 Disagree - 75 Not sure - 24

All levels of government in Clarion County should seek ways to plan together for future development.

Agree strongly - 232 Agree somewhat - 71 Disagree - 7 Not sure - 8

All levels of government in Clarion County should seek ways to consolidate services, and share equipment and facilities.

Agree strongly - 177 Agree somewhat - 106 Disagree - 12 Not sure - 18

For Clarion County, the maintenance of existing roads and highways is more important than building new roads and highways. True 242 False 26 Unsure 45

Now, we want to ask you a few questions about yourself. All information is confidential and will not be identified with your name.

How long have you lived in Clarion County? (Average - 28.1) Years

Name of the borough or township in which you live: _____

- | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Paint - 17 | East Brady - 9 | Fryburg - 1 | Piney - 1 |
| Clarion Borough - 25 | Sligo - 3 | Hawthorn/New Bethlehem - 1 | Foxburg - 1 |
| Clarion Township - 8 | Shippenville - 1 | Perry - 1 | |
| Millcreek - 5 | Beaver - 7 | Leeper - 1 | |
| Clarion - 85 | Knox - 7 | Salem - 2 | |
| Limestone - 10 | Rimersburg - 14 | St. Petersburg - 2 | |
| Madison - 14 | Redbank - 6 | Porter - 4 | |
| Knox/Beaver - 1 | Ashland - 5 | New Mansfield - 1 | |
| New Bethlehem - 10 | Emlenton - 1 | Highland - 4 | |
| Farmington - 20 | Richland - 1 | Hawthorn - 2 | |
| Strattanville - 7 | Washington - 5 | Licking - 1 | |
| Monroe - 12 | Elk - 7 | Toby - 10 | |

Are you? (Circle one.) Male - 123 Female - 256

How old were you on your last birthday? (Average - 44.3) Years

Do you or your family own or rent your current dwelling?

- Own (or are buying) - 234
- Rent - 68
- Other - 22 _____?

Check ALL of those that apply to you:

- Employed Full-time - 139
- Employed Part-time - 51
- Homemaker - 70

- Student - 45 Clarion University 28 Other School 17
 - Retired - 97
 - Unemployed - 13
 - Self-employed/Business Owner - 38
- If employed, what is your occupation? _____

Maintenance, contractor, University administrator, receptionist, lab technician, domestic, librarian, carpenter/landfill inspector, customer relations, manager, sales - retail services, contractor, administrator, contractor, contract, screen printer, manager, research in biology, R.N., work study, truck driver, County employee, professional generalist, bookkeeper, professional, seasonal renter, personnel, editor, care for kids, surveyor, CPA, attorney, officer worker, secretary, office manager, teacher’s aid, factor worker, consultant to environmental nonprofits, pastor, nurse, child care, commercial printer, Presbyterian pastor, dairy farming, sign shop, restaurant, CPA, professional, antique dealer, steelworker, case management, clerk typist, professor, human services, attorney/professor, faulty - Clarion University, teacher, sales, odd jobs - painting, engineer.

Check ALL that apply to you or others in your household.

- Do volunteer work in Clarion County - 196
- Participate in one or more community service organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, church groups, etc.) - 195
- Served as a local appointed or elected official - 65
- Voted in the last general election - 246

If we have not covered things you consider important, please use the space provided or attach extra paper to give us your comments.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the survey. Please place your survey for return in one of the boxes provided at the Courthouse or the location where you received this survey. If you have any questions about this survey or Clarion County’s Comprehensive Plan, please contact Twila Rifenberrick at (814) 226-4000.

COMMENTS:

We love Clarion, the area — problem areas: traffic on Main, on 5th; fiberboard plant, too many small businesses closing, very poor shopping opportunities for specialty gifts ★ I think you need to do a survey on children and youth and the way people feel they and officers conduct their jobs. ★ Stop destroying the environment - stop the fiberboard plant! ★ Stop the environmental destruction! ★Clarion County is in need of more jobs, but there should be a way to keep the community small and friendly the way it is now. ★ Interested parties should read the book “Save Our Land” regarding multi-use zoning and pedestrian-friendly development. ★ Although some situations/problems are applicable throughout the County, there are some problems unique to Clarion Borough. Most, but not all, of these problems are related to the university. Tradeoffs are involved here. The university provides educational and cultural opportunities to the residents. However, housing costs in the borough are too much because of the university. There are also increased problems related to some

of the students: crime, noise, speeding, traffic, litter, and a lack of respect for the permanent resident. One byproduct of this is an increased police cost to the borough. If not for the university, I don't believe we would need as large of a police force as we have now. The residents would also have a better quality of life and fewer headaches. Although it is not all of the students causing the problem, those that do hinder any attempt to establish a positive relationship between the borough and the university. And, even though these students are adults, the university has a responsibility to help reduce these problems. They also need to contribute financially to pay for the costs which results from these problems. (2) I also feel that the County and townships need to weigh very carefully any situation in regards to zoning and land use in the rural areas of the County. Rural is just that - RURAL. Whether it is because people from other areas have camps or second homes in these areas, it seems there are some who want to run these rural areas like a town or city. Although I don't think it has occurred in our County yet, there are other regions where restrictions and conflicts have occurred because of folks from other areas (i.e., cities mainly) have moved into rural areas demanding the same services and zoning that they had where they came from. They want the best of both worlds, and ruin the area they moved into. One result — increased, and in many cases, prohibitive taxes which sometimes results in the poorer residents having to sell the property. Other times, farmers are hassled because of the hours they need to work (sometimes on tractors at night) or the smell from the manure. If one doesn't want to smell manure, don't move to the country. This needs to be looked at very carefully. (3) There also needs to be a revitalization of our main streets. I find it very sad when I look at Main Street, Clarion today as compared with twenty-thirty years ago. It was the life blood of the community and still should be. Although the information I have is second hand, one problem which contributes to this situation is the overpricing of the rents and leases by the landlords. It stops some people from considering opening their own store. In addition, although some of the chain stores down at Exit 9 offer bargains to the consumer, it should be remembered that the profits from those enterprises are sent back to their respective headquarters and are not available for reinvestment in the local area. Solutions? I wish I knew. (4) In regards to your economic development questions, I have troubles with your first question. Although you have space limitations, my question would be what businesses would qualify for a tax break? Certain number of employees? Location in the County? Type of business? My understanding is the Wal-Mart moved in? Did some businesses close? As stated above, their profits are not reinvested in our area. The types of jobs that provided aren't that great (part-time and low pay). Did they really deserve a tax break? Could they have afforded to move into the area without tax breaks? I really don't think they needed any assistance. If there are going to be breaks offered, I really think they should be given to independent, small businesses who will be more concerned about the area and who will reinvest in the area. (5) Perhaps it is a false perception, it also seems that crime has been on the increase in the County (although we're still better than in more urban areas). Either robberies, fights, and assaults, harassment, and the like are on the increase, or the local media is doing a better job at reporting these instances. In regards to quality of life, this problem definitely needs to be addressed. (6) I'm not sure of the official name of it, but the County could use a senior citizen home like the one in Indiana, PA - St. Andrews Village. They have apartments (small) where the seniors live independently, yet also have a dining hall and activities available to the residents if they wish to use them. In addition, they have an intensive care giving which is quite beneficial. It is there

when the residents need that help and it enables a resident to get the needed care while his or her spouse can live in the other wing and be close by. I have known of cases where some of our local seniors have to move away to live at one of those places. It can be a sad and traumatic experience for them after having spent their entire lives in Clarion County. If such facilities were available in our area, not only would it benefit the seniors themselves, but also their families and friends. The families could retain closer contacts for visits, to help their relatives and improve the quality of life for all involved. (7) I would like to add that I feel any area of this Plan should be very well thought out before implementation. Too much is at stake and too many people could be affected. There will always be conflicts and differences of opinion and a careful balance will be needed. For example, take the local coal industry. When it was going strong, the area definitely benefitted economically. People could support their families and this, in turn, benefitted various businesses and merchants. However, the earth was badly scarred and many of our streams and water supplies are still polluted to this day. Were the tradeoffs worth it? Some will say yes, some will say no. Perhaps, at this time, it was worth it. But, with the industry's demise, we are still paying for the prosperity we once enjoyed. Perhaps back in those days, we should have tried harder to strike the needed balance. There will always be differences of opinion about policy matters. ★ I think Clarion County residents are resistant to change, prejudiced against outsiders and minorities. Those in power here should take a look at why so many people under 35 prefer to move to the city. Clarion is on its way to becoming a retirement community.★ A comprehensive plan is desperately needed. This town could offer much more if there was cooperation amongst the agencies and local government.★ The Chamber of Commerce could do a much better job promoting local businesses (the variety is amazing). But the Clarion Chamber seems to concentrate almost exclusively on Autumn Leaf Festival. How about building up local businesses that run all 52 weeks at the year. There is a strong bias at a local school against children transferring from parochial schools. This needs to stop. It is bad for kids and the administration and punishes families for being good parents. Public schools need to reward scholarship and academic effort more than sports and popularity.★ The fiberboard plant has shown to be an excellent example of how a relatively small development can greatly degrade an environment. It is an eye score, a pollutant, and a very small economic confiscator. It is a great example of poor planning. I hope we can learn from our mistakes. (I am not living in River Hill, nor has my property been affected. But, the plant has been a great deterrent to the quality of life in general.)★ I believe zoning that permits slum landlords to help ruin this community should be changed. Too many local townspeople own and permit students and others to create eye scores, causing other properties to lose value.★ The “water quality” of most streams in the County have been severely affected by extractive industries such as coal mining, gas drilling, and timbering. Loss or disturbance of “wetland” areas has also eliminated the ability of these natural systems to aid in keeping our waters clean and safe. While State laws supercede a county's authority to regulate mining, the County could present a strong argument in deciding if a permit is granted. With our municipal supply drawn from the Clarion River, and supply systems being run to outlying communities, it should be of the “very highest priority” to act in protecting and improving our water resources. Land regulations are desperately needed, with an accompanying focus on enforcement of existing health and safety and landlord-tenant laws to address situations where substandard housing and poorly maintained properties are allowed to exist and expand. These conditions exist

just outside of Clarion Borough, as well as throughout the County. Nuisance laws and land use regulations should be discussed between County and local officials.★ Stop using our beautiful country for a garbage dump -- not only Clarion County, but all of Pennsylvania - PLEASE!★ A third turning lane on Route 322 East of Clarion would open up a ton of development in the area - from the college - 9th Avenue to Sealy Mattress.★ Our children need more basketball courts and tennis courts and similar things to keep them busy. Bored children and teenagers normally end up in trouble.★ Education systems need to be updated to comply with the needs of today's higher tech requirements for the area, and even our country, to move ahead in today's competition. If anything, we are falling behind.★ I think local citizens should have more say about big projects such as the building of the new jail. Could use better public transportation. Some of our representatives should mature and stop acting like spoiled children.★ We need a much stronger subdivision ordinance and improved enforcement authority for the Planning Commission. This should include P.C. funding for field work and inspection. We need a Countywide concept plan for water and sewerage facilities extension and development, coordinated with existing facilities and obvious areas now developing. We need leadership and protection to prevent our rural areas from becoming easy targets for dumping wastes. Our Planning Commission should be more proactive in encouraging and fostering inter-municipal planning efforts.★ We must do something to get rid of the fiberboard plant off Route 322 on the River Hill and make sure that nothing like that comes into this County again.★ High priority that County Commissioners get together.★ I think we should get something like a YMCA that everybody can participate in.★ Need more opportunities for disabled, especially working part time even if from home using a computer and Internet.★ How do we feel about Clarion County as a place to live? Very desirable until the fiberboard plant was built.★ We are very unhappy about the fiberboard plant. We retired from the Pittsburgh area thinking we were going to have clean air.★ (1) I believe Clarion County roads need improving, both State and Township - way too many potholes and broken berms. (2) I believe businesses need to pay taxes - don't give them tax exemption for 12 years - 3 is enough. (3) I wish each community in Clarion County could get one or two new businesses which employ 30 to 50 people. (4) I am against Rails-to-Trails - don't want strangers coming into this area committing crimes - we have enough criminals here. (5) I wish each community that has major festivals like ALF, Cookie Daze, Riverfest, etc. would not close down their main streets. These events don't seem to do much for the County as a whole. They are just bothersome for us who want to travel through that community without stopping.★ During AFL week, we need more traffic control to move traffic at a better pace.★ Much better cooperation with our County government.★ We moved to this County because we like the way it is. We don't want any more development. Everything is nice. Please do keep out the pornography and sexually oriented businesses. This was a really big thing we noticed when we checked out this County. There was none. Please keep it that way. Thank you.★ IMAGE a Clarion where ... (1) There is a handsome greenspace in the major town centers — with a play space for children (not just cannons), a garden area with seating, a “memory” garden commemorating loved ones living or dead. (2) There is a community center available within walking distance of town residents with programs and facilities for youth, families, singles, and seniors. (3) Bike paths make biking an acceptable, safe alternative to too many cars. (4) Cultural events regularly, including music and dancing. (5) The air quality is better due to reduction in huge trucks cutting through towns and

environmental controls at fiberboard plants and the like. (6) Handsome signage, not glaring overpowering signs and lights. (7) People tend their trees carefully, planting additional young trees before older ones sicken, and where trimming is done for aesthetics and tree health not the butchery provided by power-line companies. (8) The owners of downtown property were community-minded enough to charge fair prices and help bring in new healthy business (like Ms. Kaufman has). (9) There were exciting efforts at widespread recycling of building materials, “wastes” (not toxic materials) from business, green-building restoration projects, energy and water conservation efforts, and small appliance repair to reduce throwaways — the sky’s the limit with leadership!★ Bike and hiking trails.★ Not sure the questions on this were worded well or clearly -- felt uncomfortable trying to answer some. I’m afraid the wording will produce answers that won’t accurately reflect feelings and true beliefs. Good idea — not so good implementation.★ We can’t close our minds to new business, but we must try to preserve what we have and find a common link between new and old. We need to help keep our people working in and around Clarion County, instead of traveling outside the area. Help small business get a start to stay in Clarion/around Sligo, New Bethlehem, Rimersburg.★ Some of these questions are very vague and intentionally misleading and misinforming. What happened to education and for stronger communities, more citizen participation than this incomplete survey which is biased toward certain views subliminally? Support the libraries we have first and start planning more for the “Boomers” later life. Don’t get caught short.★ Survey is great idea — somewhat poorly constructed for actual data interpretation. Where are questions concerning education? It is vital to attracting businesses and professionals. Libraries are educational facilities not recreational. Need to upgrade and maintain current recreational facilities before considering new. The importance of maintaining existing water and sewer lines and treatment plants should become more local issue.★ Instead of building “new” recreational facilities, try fixing existing sites first.★ Residents that pay taxes should have decent roads, especially the end of Piscataqua Drive, Leeper.★ Improve the end road on Piscataqua Drive, add gravel or blacktop.★ Too many college kids.★ Clarion’s natural beauty is going to waste. There are roads all along the river and these could be turned into a tourist attraction - bike, paths, hiking trails. There are no playgrounds in town, only cannons!★ Let the ice cream man in the borough.★ Having lost my home due to zoning and the expansion of Clarion State University, I am dismayed beyond belief pertaining to housing in the Borough of Clarion. Regardless of the pride local leaders have in Clarion Borough, housing and overcrowded living conditions are more severe than the homes and streets were in the Redevelopment area that was deemed unstandard. Good luck to those of you sincerely interested in the Clarion County Planning Commission and the course of the future. Hopefully, your efforts won’t be used solely for the purpose of getting “federal dollars” and a million-dollar industry - namely, Clarion State University.★ Have existing businesses, such as McMillen Bloedel, clean up their act, and their smell. ★ We need more retraining programs to help adults better their lives.★ I think it would be a community spirit-building thing if our local newspaper reported news rather than local government gossip. I think it is time that either the political representatives start implementing their jobs or professionals, or the people they serve start demanding professional service. At this point, with all the personal agendas taking the forefront, I don’t see how they will ever have time to seriously become involved with any community planning projects such as this one, and that is a real loss to our lovely place we all call home.★ Winter Road Maintenance - Compared

to surrounding counties, Clarion has to be the worst. Traveling from Clarion to my parent's home in Armstrong, you can definitely tell where the county line ends. This past weekend, I was traveling in Ohio when they were calling for a snowstorm. ODOT had trucks lined up along the road about every 5 miles on both sides waiting for the snow. In Clarion, maybe the next afternoon you'll see a plow truck. Also, another problem is the maintenance of Grand Avenue Extension (Clarion) or the lack thereof. It is shown on borough maps as being in the Borough. However, there is absolutely NO maintenance done to it. There are washouts that you could lose your car in! And never once has it been plowed in the winter. Why should I pay taxes to help pay for maintenance when none is ever done on the road that I live on?!★ With all the rail beds being abandoned in the area, the County should take a stronger role in preserving them and converting them to multi-purpose recreational trails.★ Local government needs to support environmental groups working to protect air, water, and land.★ County should promote: public transportation, recreational trails (example - abandoned railroads), playgrounds in Clarion Borough and other population centers that people can walk to, County parks - develop further.★ Environmental issues are a major concern. Economic growth that makes us ill or kills us is undesirable. We should not have to sacrifice our good health for jobs (for example, the fiberboard plant was not a good long-term investment for the County).

LOCAL OFFICIAL SURVEY RESULTS

**CLARION COUNTY CITIZENS SURVEY:
COUNTY RESIDENTS CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE NEXT CENTURY
RESULTS #1 - 47 RETURNED SURVEYS
(TOWNSHIP CONVENTION)**

Clarion County is preparing a new Comprehensive Plan. The Plan will be a guide to set goals and find projects to make our communities better places to live. To help County officials to understand citizen desires, we are distributing this survey throughout Clarion County. Your answers will be used to help the County Planning Commission and other County officials chart a course for Clarion County for the next ten years. **All replies will be kept strictly confidential.**

We would like to begin by asking how you feel about Clarion County as a place to live. Do you consider it: (Circle the number of the answer that best describes your feelings.)

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|----|
| 1. | Very Desirable | 20 |
| 2. | Somewhat Desirable | 17 |
| 3. | Somewhat Undesirable | 2 |
| 4. | Very Undesirable | 0 |

Do you like living in Clarion County? Yes 44 No 0

How would you rate Clarion County in regard to each of the following characteristics?

| | <u>Excellent</u> | <u>Good</u> | <u>Fair</u> | <u>Poor</u> |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | (Circle one answer for each item.) | | | |
| a. Neighborliness of the people | 14 | 26 | 3 | 2 |
| b. The environment (air, water, etc.) | 13 | 23 | 7 | 2 |
| c. Scenic beauty | 29 | 12 | 5 | 0 |
| d. Place to raise children | 19 | 20 | 5 | 0 |
| e. Employment opportunities | 2 | 14 | 18 | 11 |
| f. Affordability | 3 | 28 | 13 | 1 |
| g. Recreational opportunities | 4 | 23 | 14 | 3 |
| h. Community spirit | 5 | 24 | 13 | 3 |
| i. Historic and cultural attractions | 0 | 21 | 20 | 4 |
| j. Health care facilities and services | 3 | 29 | 10 | 3 |
| k. Freedom from crime | 6 | 22 | 15 | 1 |
| l. Small town/rural atmosphere | 16 | 26 | 3 | 0 |
| m. Educational opportunities | 8 | 24 | 13 | 0 |

As you look ahead to the next five or ten years, do you expect that Clarion County will become a more or less desirable place to live? (Circle one answer.)

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|----|
| 1 | More Desirable | 9 |
| 2 | Will Stay About the Same | 26 |
| 3 | Less Desirable | 4 |
| 4 | Don't Know | 3 |

During the next five years, what priority do you believe should be given to each of the following issues in order to preserve and/or enhance the quality of life in Clarion County?

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Highest <u>Priority</u> | High <u>Priority</u> | Moderate <u>Priority</u> | Low <u>Priority</u> | Don't <u>Know</u> |
| (Circle one answer for each item.) | | | | |

What priority would you give to...

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|----|----|----|---|
| a. | Preparing long range community plans to guide the County into the future growth? | 14 | 18 | 12 | 0 | 1 |
| b. | Guiding the quality of development? | 10 | 22 | 9 | 3 | 0 |
| c. | Increasing the number of large businesses/ industries? | 13 | 16 | 13 | 3 | 0 |
| d. | Increasing the number of small and locally based businesses/industries? | 15 | 23 | 6 | 0 | 1 |
| i. | Encouraging development of the tourism industry? | 5 | 17 | 17 | 4 | 1 |
| j. | Protecting open spaces from development | 6 | 12 | 18 | 8 | 1 |
| k. | Encouraging the sustainable harvesting of forest resources? | 9 | 7 | 16 | 11 | 2 |
| l. | Preserving woodlands for recreational use? | 8 | 19 | 9 | 7 | 2 |
| m. | Revitalizing small towns? | 9 | 21 | 11 | 1 | 2 |
| n. | Protecting rural and residential areas from incompatible development? | 8 | 20 | 8 | 6 | 2 |
| o. | Increasing training to develop local community leaders? | 9 | 20 | 11 | 4 | 1 |
| p. | Increasing cooperation among local governments | 8 | 28 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| q. | Building community spirit? | 10 | 19 | 12 | 1 | 1 |
| r. | Assist in providing affordable opportunities for new home buyers? | 8 | 18 | 15 | 3 | 1 |
| s. | Assist in providing affordable opportunities for rental housing? | 5 | 12 | 19 | 7 | 2 |
| t. | Assist in providing affordable opportunities for elderly housing? | 14 | 9 | 15 | 5 | 2 |

How great a problem do you feel each of the following is in Clarion County?

| | <u>Severe Problem</u> | <u>Minor Problem</u> | <u>Not A Problem</u> | <u>Don't Know</u> |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | (Circle one answer for each item.) | | | |
| (a) Highway congestion | 10 | 27 | 6 | 1 |
| (b) Stormwater/runoff | 5 | 30 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) Adequate sewage treatment and disposal | 19 | 15 | 7 | 3 |
| (d) Current mining and drilling places | 8 | 18 | 13 | 3 |
| (e) Too many people, houses and buildings (overcrowding) | 1 | 22 | 16 | 3 |
| (f) Loss of hunting and fishing opportunities | 17 | 15 | 9 | 3 |
| (g) Loss of open spaces | 9 | 23 | 8 | 3 |
| (h) Soil erosion | 8 | 21 | 8 | 6 |
| (i) Loss of habitat for wildlife and native plants | 15 | 15 | 11 | 2 |
| (j) Loss of agricultural land to development | 16 | 16 | 10 | 2 |
| (k) Loss of forest land | 13 | 19 | 8 | 4 |
| (l) Stream pollution | 17 | 16 | 7 | 4 |
| (m) Unsafe disposal of toxic material/large waste facilities | 14 | 18 | 7 | 5 |
| (n) Loss of wetlands | 3 | 10 | 25 | 6 |
| (o) Deteriorated housing and abandoned buildings | 9 | 23 | 9 | 3 |

Land Use/Environment

I am against all zoning or land use regulations which restrict any use of any private land.

Agree strongly - 14 Agree somewhat - 16 Disagree - 7 Not sure - 7

I support those zoning or land use regulations which protect my property and community from development which would threaten our quality of life or property values.

Agree strongly - 20 Agree somewhat - 14 Disagree - 7 Not sure - 3

In general, where there is regulation, I think that land use is regulated best at the _____ level of government. (Chose the best answer to complete the sentence.)

Township or Borough - 28 County - 9 State - 4 Federal - 4

Economic Development

Rural areas like Clarion County are often perceived as lacking jobs and economic opportunity, but strong in quality of life issues, such as low crime, pleasant living, friendly people.

Businesses which locate to Clarion County should receive a tax break from local governments.

Agree strongly - 7 Agree somewhat - 24 Disagree - 10 Not sure - 3

Too much growth and development can cause a community to lose its quality of life.

Agree strongly - 16 Agree somewhat - 21 Disagree - 5 Not sure - 3

New businesses should be concentrated in or near areas needing revitalization, rather than sites away from current development.

Agree strongly - 10 Agree somewhat - 23 Disagree - 8 Not sure - 4

Local governments and community organizations only have limited resources to attract and retain businesses.

Where should priorities be? Fill in the blank with one letter for each of the following:

A = Top Priority B = Second Priority C = Third Priority D = Fourth Priority

Help local residents to develop their own small businesses. A - 21 B - 11 C - 8 D - 3

Help local businesses expand and stay in Clarion County. A - 28 B - 15 C - 2 D - 1

Attract new industry from outside the community. A - 17 B - 9 C - 6 D - 12

Promote and improve local quality of life to bring in high-tech information-age businesses. A - 13 B - 7 C - 13 D - 10

Community Facilities/Transportation

Local governments must provide certain services to the community (public safety, road maintenance, etc.). Other services, such as recreation, can make the community a better place to live.

Clarion County needs more community and local recreation facilities, such as ballfields, gyms, libraries, and community centers.

Agree strongly - 8 Agree somewhat - 28 Disagree - 8 Not sure - 1

Where feasible, public water and sewer systems should be extended to areas which lack those services in Clarion County.

Agree strongly - 20 Agree somewhat - 17 Disagree - 7 Not sure - 1

It is more important to maintain existing water and sewer lines and treatment plants than to make new extensions.

Agree strongly - 7 Agree somewhat - 22 Disagree - 11 Not sure - 4

All levels of government in Clarion County should seek ways to plan together for future development.

Agree strongly - 29 Agree somewhat - 13 Disagree - 0 Not sure - 2

All levels of government in Clarion County should seek ways to consolidate services, and share equipment and facilities.

Agree strongly - 17 Agree somewhat - 23 Disagree - 3 Not sure - 1

For Clarion County, the maintenance of existing roads and highways is more important than building new roads and highways. True 31 False 6 Unsure 7

Now, we want to ask you a few questions about yourself. All information is confidential and will not be identified with your name.

How long have you lived in Clarion County? (Average 40.7) Years

Name of the borough or township in which you live: _____

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Piney Township - 2 | Paint - 3 | Licking - 3 |
| Ashland - 2 | Beaver - 5 | Toby - 1 |
| Madison - 3 | Monroe - 6 | Beaver/Richland - 1 |
| Highland - 1 | Farmington - 1 | Elk - 1 |
| Washington - 1 | Limestone - 2 | Clarion Township - 1 |
| Salem - 3 | Knox - 2 | Richland - 1 |

Are you? (Circle one.) Male - **28** Female - **14**

How old were you on your last birthday? Average 46 Years

Do you or your family own or rent your current dwelling?

- Own (or are buying) - **42**
- Rent - 0
- Other - 0 _____?

Check ALL of those that apply to you:

- Employed Full-time - **18**
 - Employed Part-time - **14**
 - Homemaker - **5**
 - Student Clarion University 1 Other School 2
 - Retired - **7**
 - Unemployed - **1**
 - Self-employed/Business Owner - **6**
- If employed, what is your occupation?

County employee ★ private business outside County ★ accountant ★ supervisor ★ manager ★ TV repair/auto
★ contractor ★ farmer ★ Township Supervisor ★ clerk

Check ALL that apply to you or others in your household.

- Do volunteer work in Clarion County - **22**
- Participate in one or more community service organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, church groups, etc.) - **31**
- Served as a local appointed or elected official - **40**
- Voted in the last general election - **41**

If we have not covered things you consider important, please use the space provided or attach extra paper to give us your comments.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the survey. Please place your survey for return in one of the boxes provided at the Courthouse or the location where you received this survey. If you have any questions about this survey or Clarion County's Comprehensive Plan, please contact Twila Rifenberrick at (814) 226-4000.

COMMENTS:

We need water and sewage in rural areas. We also need a YMCA or other facilities for the youth (year-round) activities.

INFRASTRUCTURE SURVEY

SPECIAL STUDY TOPIC: THE CLARION COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE SURVEY

Though planning is important, it is equally important, where possible, to begin to implement some small projects or policies that evolve from the planning process. The following material is such a step. At the final public visioning meeting, the group and facilitator began to discuss actions to implement priorities. One need was for a master list of all the conceivable water and sewer projects which are going on across the County. This master list would assist in the County's ongoing financial planning, particularly in the disbursement of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to communities each year. To prepare the master list, a short questionnaire was mailed to each community as a part of the CDBG application packet. Eight questionnaires were returned, with capsule results as follows:

Farmington Township - Currently no water or sewer. The Township has plans over the next 2 to 5 years to develop both a water and a sewer system. The projects would address health and safety, economic development, and environmental protection. The proposed systems would serve the Villages of Leeper and Tylersburg.

Knox Borough - Knox Borough operates both water and public sewer systems. There are no immediate or long-term plans for extension or system expansion.

Limestone Township - Currently has neither a public water or public sewer system. They currently have general long-term plans for both a new sewer and new water system, which they believe would address economic development and health and safety problems.

Foxburg Borough - Foxburg has both public water and public sewer facilities. There are no plans for extension of the public water. However, over the next five years, they would like to make a connection from the Foxburg sewage plant to the Borough of St. Petersburg and parts of Richland Township.

Shippenville Borough - Shippenville operates both a public water and public sewer system. There are no future projects and no identified system problems.

Redbank Township - This township has not public water or sewer, but has a general interest in tapping into a neighboring sewer system. There are no concrete plans.

St. Petersburg Borough - This community has a water system and anticipates an extension of service of Route 58 for health, safety, and development purposes. As mentioned in Foxburg's report, St. Petersburg would like to tap into Foxburg's sewer system within 5 years. The primary obstacle is funding.

Strattanville Borough - Strattanville has both public water and sewer. Beyond the sale of the water system to the Pennsylvania-American Water Company, there are no plans for extensions.

In addition to the more long-term projects mentioned above, Clarion County has been addressing local water and sewer service needs through use of CDBG funds. Projects for 1998 included sewage improvements for Strattanville and water system improvements for Foxburg and Rimersburg. Over the past four years, Clarion County has committed roughly \$1 million in infrastructure aid to nine communities.

VISIONING SESSION RESULTS
KNOX, PA
OCTOBER 13, 1998
KNOX AMERICAN LEGION

Positive:

Clarion Mall (R)
Cook Forest (R)
Museum (C)
Route 68 Strip (E)
River Clarion (R)
County Park (R)
University

Negative:

South Clarion
Old Strip Mines
Poor Fishing
Empty Storefronts
University
Friday Night
Downtown Clarion

Major Changes Over the Past 10 Years

Decline of coal industry (Economy - negative)
Close down glass plants (Marienville and Parker Knox)
Lower employment - Owens Brockway (okay now)
Growth at university
Pick up of mobile home industry
Knox Industrial Park

**KNOX, PA
OCTOBER 13, 1998
VISIONING SESSION RESULTS**

Strengths and Opportunities

Votes

- 6 Workforce
- 6 6 Inter/Exits
- 5 Mobile Home, Modular Housing Ind. Cluster
- 4 Affordable Land
- 4 University - Education
Jobs
- 4 Water and Sewer (Present And Potential)
- 3 VoTech - Training
- 0 Piney Dam - Electric

Threats and Weaknesses

- 8 Out-migration - young
- 6 Water and sewer - all exits but 9
- 6 Lack of intergovernment cooperation
- 4 Poor soils - septic
- 2 Interstate access can equal problems - landfills and chemical dist. and storage
and disposal
- 1 Groundwater red
- 0 Rimersburg - sewer tap-in ban
- 0 Landfill problems (?)
- 0 Fiberboard plant (Environment)
- 0 Lack of recycling

**NEW BETHLEHEM VISIONING SESSION
OCTOBER 14, 1998**

As there were only three attendees, it was conducted more as a focus group than a visioning session.

The first question asked was where do you take out-of-town visitors?

Answers:

The Smucker Factory
Cook Forest
Local park (50+ acres)

The respondents stated there was no place they would avoid taking out-of-town visitors.

The three people were all basically life-long residents, having lived in the area from 23 to 90 years.

They were then asked what has changed the most in their time here:

- Less local businesses (lost 4 hardware stores and a glass plant)
- Loss of shoppers to malls.
- Death of the coal industry.

Today, residents drive to Clarion or even Pittsburgh to shop.

However, the natural beauty and friendliness of the people have remained the same.

Major Problems

Pollution of water supply from past mining.

Redbank Creek is a mixture of sewage and mine drainage.

Loss of young people.

Major Asset

Clarion University

“New Bethlehem is still here for a purpose . . . What is it?”

Worst Future You Can Imagine

More buildings boarded up.

More for sale/rent signs.

No industry left.

Best Future

Town still here.

Things That Should Never Change

Quality of education

Common-sense attitudes

**VISIONING SESSION RESULTS
STRATTANVILLE, PA
OCTOBER 20, 1998
STRATTANVILLE FIRE HALL**

Stayed the Same

Assets

Votes

- 4 Fire company is excellent
- 3 Good water
- 3 Woods
- 2 Small town
- 2 No crime
- 2 Active churches in town
- 1 Friendly people
- 1 Beautiful
- 0 Reasonable land/housing costs

Problems

- 7 Better cooperation in governments
- 5 More jobs
- 0 Too many stop signs
- 0 More shopping stores

What Has Changed the Most?

- 7 Abandoned strip mines
- 6 City water/city sewage
- 5 More things for young people to do.
- 4 Three new factories
- 3 Local stores gone/closed
- 3 High rental and purchase prices because of college students
- 1 State Route 68 to Clarion
- 1 Police - papers do not identify criminals
- 0 Build up from Strattanville to Clarion
- 0 Build up Clarion to Shippenville
- 0 New trailer courts
- 0 More good/sit-down restaurants

**VISIONING SESSION RESULTS
LEEPER, PA
OCTOBER 21, 1998
LEEPER FIRE HALL**

What Has Changed the Most?

Votes

- 2 Number of visitors
- 2 Expansion of university
- 1 Increase in truck traffic
- 0 Clarion
- 0 Exit 9
- 0 Loss of coal and glass industries
- 0 Rise of manufactured housing industry
- 0 Demographics - older citizens rising

Stayed the Same?

- 16 Cook Forest
- 5 Agricultural base
- 2 Small towns/villages

Assets

- 6 Natural beauty
- 5 Open spaces
- 2 Community spirit

Best Future

Votes

- 16 More and better jobs
- 5 Better wages
- 4 New development but still rural

- 2 Preserved farmland (Miola Twp.)
- 1 Our own waste in our own community
- 1 Nice housing, preserved open space
- 1 Stay like it is now

Worst Future

Votes

- 29 Expanded landfill
- 2 Heavy industry
- 2 4-lane Routes 66 and 36
- 1 Pollution
- 1 Lack of pride
- 1 Expanded road/4-lane highways

Assets

- 6 Wild and Scenic Clarion River
- 5 Good schools
- 3 Community values
- 3 Care about each other
- 2 Small-town atmosphere
- 2 Clean air
- 2 Safe communities
- 1 Peaceful/quiet
- 0 Not a lot of 4-lane roads

Weaknesses

- 34 Landfill
- 11 Too few job opportunities (young people)
- 7 Route 36/66 intersection (no light)
- 2 Lack of public sewer and water (coming)
- 1 Politics
- 0 Dilapidated structures
- 0 Tri-County cross-roads
- Police service
- Jefferson/Clarion

**CLARION COUNTY
VISIONING SESSION RESULTS
OCTOBER 26, 1998**

Assets

Votes

- 7 I-80 corridor
- 4 Quality of life
- 3 Scenic, rural - beautiful
- 2 Near to urban centers
- 1 Natural resources, especially wood
- 0 Unique rural County with university
- 0 Labor force (hardworking, fair price)

Problems

- 32 Lack of water and sewer
- 4 High school students with low skill levels, especially technology
- 3 Lack of electronic infrastructure
- 3 Lack of protection for scenic resources and clean environment
- 3 Lack of paved roads
- 2 Lack of dependable rail
- 1 Too much State public land, especially Game Commission

Best Future

- 12 Industrial development to occur where we want it (near I-80, Rt. 322, Rt. 66, etc.)
- 7 Good comprehensive plan
- 6 Young people stay
- 1 Balancing act - jobs and quality rural environment
- 0 Clarion "on the map"
- 0 Theme park

Worst Future

- 10 Toxic pollutants destroy County for quality businesses
- 7 To meet business needs
- 4 No sewage - polluted groundwater
- 3 Unskilled/untrained workers
- 3 Lack of willing leaders
- 2 Loss of young people
- 1 Too many abandoned, unfilled strip mines
- 1 No jobs
- 1 Loss of glass industry
- 0 University closing
- 0 I-80 becoming a toll road
- 0 More landfills

**CLARION COUNTY
VISIONING SESSION RESULTS
OCTOBER 26, 1998
PRIORITIES**

Sewer and Water

- ▶ Prioritize CDBG - focus more on fewer projects
- ▶ Top priority - health and safety
Second priority - ind. needs - prioritize repair over extension
- ▶ Existing towns have limited capacity.

Master List of All Conceivable Water or Sewer Projects

- ▶ Prioritize sewer over water
- ▶ Water still priority
- ▶ Stormwater separation
Leachate/river pollution
- ▶ Plan can address educational issues about cost of sewer and real health costs

Toxic Pollutants - Quality of Life

- Rural County
- Land is cheap
- Prime target of outside corporation and other states
- If land remains cheap, targeting will continue
- Reciprocal pricing

APPENDICES

Appendix A - St. Petersburg/Foxburg/Richland Township Survey Results

Appendix B - Full Three-Phase Work Program

APPENDIX "A"

The St. Petersburg/Foxburg/Richland Township survey represents the only other citizen survey of recent vintage prepared by a local government in the County. It is included here for comparative purposes, and as a means to broaden the database of public opinion on local issues.

ST. PETERSBURG BOROUGH, FOXBURG BOROUGH AND RICHLAND TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY SURVEY

Introduction: St. Petersburg Borough, Foxburg Borough, and Richland Township are currently in the process of preparing a comprehensive plan. Any plan that is constructed would be completely ineffective without the opinions of you, **the citizens**. This survey is the best tool available to obtain your opinions, needs, and ideas. Please, do take a few minutes to fill out the survey - **your thoughts and ideas are important**.

About You:

Which municipality do you live in?

52 St. Petersburg Borough 23 Foxburg Borough 59 Richland Township

How long have you been a resident? _____ Years - Average - 32.5 years

Do you 122 Own 8 Rent 5 Other?

Do you live in a Single Home 120 Apartment 1 Mobile Home 9 Other 3 ?

Are you a Student 5 Employed 60 Unemployed 6 Retired 60
Not seeking employment 6 ?

If employed, what county? Butler 10 Clarion 42 Venango 12 Other 8 ?

Why do you choose to live in St. Petersburg, Foxburg, or Richland?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Far from big cities - 39 | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural beauty - 71 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Near to big cities - 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Many things to do - 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment - 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> Good schools - 21 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have family here - 72 | <input type="checkbox"/> Low crime rate - 69 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Happened to find a house - 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural atmosphere - 84 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be in a small town - 85 | |

Public Policy: Below is a list of typical local government activities. Please prioritize those in which you think local governments should expend time and money (1 = higher priority, 5 = lower priority).

| | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ___ Road Maintenance | 3 | 4 | 30 | 13 | 9 |
| ___ Public Safety (fund police and fire protection) | 30 | 28 | 33 | 17 | 11 |
| ___ Provide Recreation | 10 | 7 | 31 | 7 | 68 |
| ___ Provide Public Water and Sewer | 42 | 22 | 16 | 7 | 27 |
| ___ Economic Development | 49 | 20 | 18 | 21 | 11 |

The community can also apply for State and Federal grant funds. These funds can be used for a wide variety of local projects. Please prioritize where you think grant funds are needed in the community (1 = highest priority, 8 = lowest priority).

| | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>8</u> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Rehabilitate Rental Housing 43 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 15 | 11 | 21 | |
| Rehabilitate Owner-Occupied Housing 29 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 10 | 18 | 22 | |
| Provide Public Sewer 16 | 31 | 16 | 11 | 4 | 14 | 8 | 8 | |
| Provide Public Water 15 | 25 | 20 | 5 | 18 | 6 | 9 | 11 | |
| Provide Recreation to Residents 6 | 4 | 4 | 16 | 16 | 19 | 7 | 40 | |
| Rehabilitate Roads and Bridges | 26 | 26 | 15 | 15 | 13 | 9 | 43 | |
| Economic Development 41 | 14 | 16 | 13 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 7 | |
| Improve Police/Fire Protection | 19 | 13 | 26 | 13 | 12 | 8 | 511 | |

Land Use: What is your opinion of the use of buildings and land in St. Petersburg, Richland Township, and Foxburg?

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Single-Family Housing | Too Few - 25 | Enough - 86 | Too Much - 2 |
| Apartments | Too Few - 53 | Enough - 54 | Too Much - 3 |
| Shops/Stores | Too Few - 88 | Enough - 27 | Too Much - 0 |
| Business Offices | Too Few - 60 | Enough - 48 | Too Much - 1 |
| Medical Facilities | Too Few - 54 | Enough - 60 | Too Much - 0 |
| Open Land/Forests | Too Few - 25 | Enough - 82 | Too Much - 2 |
| Farms | Too Few - 36 | Enough - 71 | Too Much - 1 |
| Industry | Too Few - 92 | Enough - 22 | Too Much - 2 |
| Recreation | Too Few - 58 | Enough - 54 | Too Much - 0 |
| Churches | Too Few - 6 | Enough - 98 | Too Much - 7 |
| _____ Other (Specify) | Too Few - 0 | Enough - 0 | Too Much - 0 |

What single feature do you think best characterizes the community you live in?

SEE ATTACHED

Below is the 1990 population of each community. Please write in what you think the ideal population of each community should be by the year 2010.

| | <u>1990</u> | <u>2010</u> |
|------------------------|-------------|--|
| Foxburg Borough | 262 | Average - 326.35 - Range - 100 - 1,000 |
| St. Petersburg Borough | 349 | Average - 445.37 - Range - 300 - 1,000 |
| Richland Township | 490 | Average - 536.54 - Range - 350 - 980 |

Community Spirit:

If you could change anything about the community you live in, what would it be?

SEE ATTACHED

What should never change about the community? SEE ATTACHED

What three things do you think are the most important factors to lead your community successfully into the 21st century? SEE ATTACHED

The Boroughs of St. Petersburg and Foxburg and Richland Township have various citizen boards and commissions. If you are interested in serving on one, please put your name, address, and residence below.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

St. Petersburg Borough resident ___ Foxburg Borough resident ___ Richland Township resident ___

If you have any additional comments, please attach a sheet with your thoughts.

Your time and effort is much appreciated. Thank you!

Land Use:

What single feature do you think best characterizes the community you live in?

It is quiet; balanced; small; no single purpose; need of public sewer; the beauty and peace and quiet.; not worried about being mugged; older homes need demolished and replaced; quiet, beautiful, rural; people help one another and are concerned for each other; adequate; natural beauty; peace and quiet, people mind their own business; nice; low crime rate; peaceful, natural beauty; nature; quiet, nice, peaceful, relaxful; country atmosphere; scenic beauty, river and streams; quiet; beautiful scenery and quiet surroundings; seniors, quiet country setting; it is quiet; rural recreational land; peaceful; small-home town community; friendly people; contribution schools and churches make; lack of employment, beautiful surroundings; small town; good schools and low crime; rustic quiet; good neighbors; small- town atmosphere; friendly small town; quiet; a quiet place where relaxation can occur; comfortable; rural; low crime rate; retired low income; churches; backward, "typical" small-town mentality; rural, peaceful, golf-oriented; quiet and peaceful; nice, quiet, small-town atmosphere; quiet and safe; peaceful and quiet; peaceful; pleasant; quiet at times; apathy, poor road maintenance; small town; the small-town atmosphere; small community, single-family housing; friendliness; a small rural town; peaceful - I think the people (young men) should help the fire department; quiet, small and residential; small and family members live there; kindness; good water, good fire protection, clean air; clean and less violent; rural setting; quiet; friendly; quiet; people; friendly people, rural community; quiet, local school, friendly; welfare; safety, friendly, golf and fishing, library; backward progress; I feel safe here; quiet, laid back; peaceful and quiet; quiet, scenic; depressed; quiet; peaceful and quiet and scenic; the small community atmosphere, low crime rate; the small community atmosphere, low crime rate; small and quiet municipality; small, quiet, very rural; natural beauty; typical northwestern Pennsylvania small town - no growth - gradually dying; friendliness of people, close to work; nice area to raise a family; nicer than cities because of the quiet, peaceful environment; quiet; older (senior) citizens; quaint small-town atmosphere; rural; natural rural beauty.

Community Spirit:

If you could change anything about the community you live in, what would it be?

More jobs and things to do; government getting in our lives - trying to tell us what is good for us and shove down our throats what they think we should have or do; people would return to an active participation in governing and young adults would come to serve the Lord; public sewage; be able to talk to Council members and workers without being scolded and belittled. If they are told anything they don't like, they won't speak to you. One vote, by himself, should not allow the Mayor to be elected. We have no community spirit; too many welfare and renters downtown; Palmer Avenue is a disgrace; public sewer; stores, shops; raise the quality of housing and also the people who live in them; children need a place to ride 4-wheelers, mini-bikes, ball games, etc. (Recreation Park) without having problems with neighbors; would add more businesses, especially gas stations; the community needs revitalized in community spirit. It should be inclusive of all individuals in the community and not just those of the old blood lines; more senior citizen apartment buildings for low income seniors; more cooperation; require the welfare recipients to work, keep their properties cleaned up and limit the number of dogs; standard billing for sewage/water in the area; I would like to see a couple more shops and businesses in our community; taxes would not be as high; better teachers at school that are not basic (not one sided); church, sewer, water; update the older properties and clean up the surrounding trash; decrease traffic speeds and volume, eliminate overbuilt elementary

school; start a community building, such as "smiles" in Knox, in the St. Pete school building, at doctors offices also; (roads) 24-hour store (convenience store); nothing; get more and better jobs; less noise from Interstate 80 (mufflers on all jakebrakes on tractors); roads; more jobs, less welfare; to see some of the people getting jobs and off welfare. The ones who are in good health to work and quit using welfare as a crutch; water is no good for drinking - red and stains white clothes; turn old school into a place (hangout) for the kids in grades 7 to 12 (St. Petersburg); public water and sewage; more business; St. Petersburg would get together for more activities; sewers, repaired sidewalks, discourage speeding (for safety); no suggestion; more employment so young need not leave; make the water and sewage more affordable, change the Mayor's power so it has to be a bit more limited, cross walk in Foxburg on North Palmer Avenue - no one uses it - it just takes up a parking place; I would put in a car wash and a decent sized grocery store, also a 24-hour police protection; more businesses and sewage; nothing; provide public transportation; get sewer in and get rid of town cop; sidewalks, more rental homes, too restrictive and zone or even eradicate sexually oriented businesses; ideally, that it would no longer be a "bedroom community" for commutes to other towns and become a thriving town; negative attitudes toward local government; improve income levels for many of our residents; I think it's okay now; more recreation for children and adults; the economic development has been non-existent for way too long; I think if we had better cooperation in civic matters and everyone would work together, things would be much better, too much jealousy; unwillingness to change, lack of enthusiasm; nothing; more citizen participation in community offices; police protection and response; put in sewers; create more high-paying jobs; get in some industries for jobs so community would not be depressed; nothing; negative attitude to anything progressive; sewage; no change; community involvement - the children are needing more activities so they stay out of trouble; none; more activities at the community park for both young and old; keep buildings, streets and sidewalks in good repair - limit the number of road signs - don't save it just because it is old. If beyond reasonable repair, tear it down.

What should never change?

Our churches and the feeling of belonging; rural atmosphere; family size atmosphere; the people and the history of our town; our good water; having excellent schools; friendly people, close-knit community; the size; perfectly satisfied with the community the way it is. I live in the country; small and quiet; farms and small shops; friendliness and quiet; going to the rivers to swim, keeping community clean; willingness to help; some old landmarks; friendly small-town atmosphere; rural atmosphere, low crime, quietness, friendly neighbors; nice place to live, friendly people; stay small; rustic atmosphere; small-town atmosphere; quiet; water quality of streams and river; the crime rate; friendly people; it's a clean community and friendly; the crime rate; friendliness, willingness of neighbors to help one another; people; the natural beauty of the area; size; rural setting; preserve the surrounding countryside; rural setting, low crime; people working together fire and ambulance very responsible; At this point, we still feel pretty safe in our town and our homes; the forests, trees, clean air, and good water - no shopping malls or developments should interfere with the beauty or peacefulness; church; small-town friendliness; the clean, small-town feeling, the friendliness of store and post office personnel; historic golf course; quiet, safe, small-town atmosphere; rural living; retain its natural independent ideals of the people and land.

What three things do you think are the most important factors to lead your community successfully into the 21st century?

Jobs, have things for the young of community to do; road repair, road maintenance, school choice - only thing in USA where there is no competition; ability to adapt to change, willing to monitor what is going on in our area and its effects on our families; better leaders, more love than hate; reduce welfare more, make over downtown attract business and industry; employment, public sewer; local leaders with a higher education level and who will work to maintain what we have now, also to work to make what new things that have to be done (water, sewer) have a small effect on environmental possible, hopefully people to be proud of what they have and maintain it better; school system, jobs, our kids; leaders with strong Christian values, unity of people in community - helping one another, businesses and work for those unemployed; education, jobs, housing (a united community); good leaders to motivate the community members to become involved in developing the area, need more business/ industry in the area; businesses, shops/stores, recreation; the new school; employment, more homes, recreation; residents, public golf courses, water/sewage; solid infrastructure, preservation of natural beauty, moratorium on large-scale commercial development; our new school, community services/ activities, new businesses; tourist, better roads, keeping it a small community; roads, water, sewerage; more local industry, better roads and bridges, lower taxes; industry, jobs, more recreation; more businesses and jobs, more funding for business, more community people getting involved; financial security, decent and caring Township workers and board members, getting younger people involved in decisions of their community boards; education, sewage; more business, more people, sewage; upgrade our housing, more jobs in area, more educated people come to area; to at least have one store, recreation, good roads and sidewalks; more work opportunities need to be available in the circle of Butler-Grove City-Franklin-Clarion; increased employment, better schools (tougher academic and discipline standards), more individual and community pride; local employment would help to keep young generation from having to leave the area for jobs; industry to bring more people into the area, better maintenance of roads, recreation areas for the children; more grants (federal), sewage, good water; sewerage "major"; new businesses, lower school taxes, better road maintenance; turning back to God, put punishment in crime; town sewage, curfew needed on regular basis; leaders that think before they act, create more attractive atmosphere for small business, install some kind of sewage system in town; industry, strong churches, Christian-private schools; capitalize on the old beauty, require aesthetic standards of building fronts to improve overall looks of town for tourists and local resident pride; leadership, appropriate monies, community activity in projects; planning, citizen involvement, funding; doing just as they are doing now; business and industry, friendly atmosphere; industry - economic development, a working - sewer system, young people with children; helping out in all civic affairs, being friendly, try to get some business in our community; availability of worthwhile employment, upgrade and maintenance of sewer and water systems (public services), offering quality education in local schools, not just new buildings; quality schools, more youth participation in the churches, entice new business and industry to the area; increase in employment opportunities, upgrade housing standards, upgrade law enforcement; increased income in area, young adults populating the area, job availability increase; more tax base, more regulations for housing upkeep, regulations for barking dogs; more jobs in area are needed, incentives to attract more professional people, incentives to attract traditional families; sewage, roads and bridge upkeep, upkeep of homes; attract industry, develop facilities we have (i.e., river boating recreation), get a high school principal with some common sense; maintain small population, maintain low crime rate, education; more employment; public sewer and road repair; water and sewage, more employed young families, community-sponsored events; proximity to Interstate 80, undeveloped land, proposed sewer system; good water, a good working Borough Council, family-oriented citizens; good leadership, good churches, more businesses; water and sewage upgraded, induce some "light" industry to move in, development of land at I-80, Exit 6, with a motel chain or fast food restaurant; peace and quiet, good neighbors, good fire company; no drug dealers, more apartments for the low-income people,

more jobs; lower taxes, more jobs, more business; serve God - attend church, keep teachers and schools up-to-date, get new industry in territory; new business/expansion of old business, better school administration, more personal involvement by local people; continuing support of schools, provide decent-paying jobs, capitalize on existing assets (rivers, forests); better paying jobs; remain small and quiet; bring in industry that would pay \$12 to \$18/hour (a household can't make it on \$6 or \$7 per hour), hold government meeting when the working person can attend; industries, sewage, leadership; jobs, industry, town pride; community fund raising, Foxburg bridge made into shop (history); economy and good schooling; good leadership by local authority, community spirit uplifted; we are a small area of homes - we really don't need any change; sewage, more business, more job opportunities; more employment, more housing, sewage system; something for the young people, employment, public sewer; more jobs, sewage, people working together; sewage; strong of historic background of area, small community values, need for jobs in county; economic growth, recreational opportunities, the communities working together cooperatively; keeping it safe from crime, jobs, recreation to residents; economic growth, recreational opportunities, the communities working together cooperatively; leadership, organization, cooperation; help - lots of it; more insistence that able-bodied career welfare recipients be made to work, a large segment of our population fit this category; jobs, crime rate, closeness of the community; long-range planning, realistic goals; more growth - or sustained demographics, preservation of natural resources, promote tourism; education, economic growth, education; more industry; sewerage system, some businesses, apartment for seniors; education, protection of environment, medical, fire and emergency assistance availability; more recreational areas, more jobs; good leadership; a forward planning council, a good sewage-water system, proximity to good schools (which we already have); new business/economic development, especially historic tourism; harmonious working relationship between men and women; boosted economics, higher wages, family centers; more jobs, better sewer.

APPENDIX “B”

SCOPE OF SERVICES CLARION COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Element #1 - Base Mapping

A base map of the Clarion County and immediate environs at a scale sufficient to depict major features. This base will incorporate municipal subdivisions, bodies of water, roads, and other significant features.

The mapping will present an accurate base for the overlay of various thematic features. The mapping may be done on Mapinfo, or Maptitude, or ArcView GIS software or other survey modules, utilizing a common format such as M.I.F. Information may be collected using Aerial Photography, County 911 Maps, and other available sources of mapping, such as U.S.G.S. Quadrangle data which would enhance the regional map data. Final data will be in a form usable by Clarion County. With maps available in a computer format, scale can be readily changed to reflect the depiction of various forms of spatial information. GGRA has output capability in full color at three feet by infinite length plots.

Element #2 - Visioning

GGRA believes that comprehensive plans must be something that the citizens of a community or region do for themselves. The role of the consultant is crucial as technician, facilitator, and idea resource, but the final path towards the future must represent local desires and consensus. One means towards learning the goals and objectives of the citizenry is through visioning. For this project, GGRA would work with Clarion County Planning staff to conduct a visioning session in each of the five planning regions. The end results would provide a unique snapshot of sub-County concerns and issues. A sixth session will be held with County leaders, and professionals involved in local affairs.

Element #3 - Community Attitude Survey

While visioning sessions are a good means to gather information from community activists and local leaders, they often do not represent a wide spectrum of citizens. Therefore, a community attitude survey will be used to solicit a wide response of opinion from Clarion County residents on a wide range of issues. GGRA will work with the County to devise a questionnaire, choose a method of sampling/distribution, and tabulate the data into a format which can be used to readily understand citizen opinions.

Element #4 - Background Studies

The Clarion County Comprehensive Plan is structured to begin with listening to citizen/local concerns from the start. This will allow the collection of background information to be relevant to local issues. Background data will be arranged in the following manner and incorporated in the following manner and incorporated into a cohesive 40 to 50 page report.

- A. **Community History:** A brief narrative of Clarion County's past will be written to set the tone for understanding issues.
- B. **Physical Environment/Land Cover, and Use:** Land use is the area where all of the divergent elements of a comprehensive plan converge. Thus, an understanding of the physical setting and human land utilization patterns is the most important factor in the planning process. Utilizing existing information and limited field surveys, a generalized land cover/land use map will be prepared with accompanying narrative.
- C. **Housing Background:** Utilizing available statistical materials, previous windshield surveys, and the results of previous housing rehabilitation initiatives, a concise studying of all housing conditions in Clarion County would be prepared.
- D. **Demographic/Economic Analysis:** The analysis of population, its trends and characteristics is a crucial aspect of any comprehensive plan. Key elements include:
 - ▶ Total population trends over the past three to four Census periods.
 - ▶ Detailed trends for the past two to three Census reports (as data is available), emphasizing age characteristics as well as total population count.
 - ▶ Birth and death data from 1990 to 1996 (or the most recent data published) to compare with Census estimates.
 - ▶ Examine current population characteristics:
 - Age patterns
 - Gender
 - Race
 - Economic profile (median household income, household, and family income profiles, employment/occupation)
 - ▶ Migration patterns (1980-1990)
 - ▶ Population to 2020

GGRA will use existing data as available from reports prepared for Clarion, SPRPC, and similar sources. It also has detailed data available from its own resources (1990 STF-1A and STF-3A files). GGRA has also developed its own population projection program, a cohort survival adjusted for migration approach. This model has shown remarkable reliability. GGRA uses this model to forecast future populations, not just numbers - but in a detailed manner.

The critical issues this element will cover are:

- ▶ **Who lives in Clarion County, Pennsylvania today?**
- ▶ **If present trends continue, what will be the age/gender characteristics for Clarion County in 2000, 2010, or 2020?**

Demographics have important policy implications for the future of the County, its housing needs, economy, municipal services, and recreation.

In addition to population analysis, the County Business Patterns, the Economic Census Series, and other U.S. Department of Commerce statistics will be used to understand the County's business base by sector. This will allow an understanding of Clarion's role in the region's industrial, retail, and service economies.

E. Transportation and Community Facilities: It will be necessary to look at these elements as the infrastructure to support growth and development:

- ◆ Major water and sanitary sewer lines and facilities;
- ◆ Electric, gas, and telecommunications services;
- ◆ Study area roadways, average daily traffic volumes, and planned transportation improvements;
- ◆ Transit, rail, air, bicycle and pedestrian routes and facilities.

GGRA will prepare an analysis of existing and proposed County, Regional, State, and Federal transportation plans and identify major infrastructure issues.

Transportation can be one of the thorniest issues in the Comprehensive Plan. Often, individual municipalities find themselves in a network of plans created on the State and Regional (MPO) planning level. The issues for Clarion County can best be simplified by asking:

- ▶ Are projects truly beneficial to the County and its character, or just a way to move more vehicles through the County?
- ▶ Do projects improve traffic flow for Clarion's citizens?
- ▶ Are there needed safety projects?

- ▶ Do the commercial and industrial sectors have special needs?
- ▶ Is transit adequate?
- ▶ Are there special opportunities for pedestrian routes or bikeways?

Identify and map the following:

- ◆ Parks, open space and recreational facilities public and private
- ◆ Public and private schools, school districts, libraries, and higher education facilities
- ◆ Police and fire stations and service districts
- ◆ Cultural assets