

## **The Strategic Management Planning Program (STMP)**

As Greene County's leaders strive to better position the County for future growth and development, they felt that it was important to complete an analysis of its management operations, policies and procedures, programs and services, and finances. This process was completed through a Strategic Management Planning Program (STMP) grant provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED) and administered by the Governor's Center for Local Government Services.

The STMP provides financial and technical assistance to Pennsylvania's governments to address financial, administrative, and economic development issues through the preparation of a multi-year financial plan and a management review of their municipality. The assessment of the managerial and financial policies, procedures and practices currently being employed by Greene County will result in short- and long-term strategies that County officials can consider implementing to strengthen their fiscal capacity and stability, service delivery and economic development programs and strategies.

The ultimate goal will be to determine how to best achieve long-term fiscal sustainability for Greene County by increasing the tax base, decreasing the reliance on minerals, and decreasing expenses across the entire general fund to balance the budget.

The objectives of the STMP program as it relates to Greene County are to:

1. Strengthen current multi-year financial planning processes for the County
2. Identify and address financial difficulties being experienced by the County
3. Assess possible revenue creation for a County that has limited taxation ability
4. Engage in an assessment of managerial policies, procedures, and practices relative to operations and service delivery and provide recommendations to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity of financial and human resources
5. Provide a mechanism by which the County may adopt prioritized short- and long-term goals and objectives for subsequent adoption and implementation
6. Develop the internal managerial and administrative capacity within the County so that officials and department heads can develop, adopt, monitor, and implement multi-year financial management plans and incorporate them into the annual budget process
7. Conduct related studies that will improve the management, financial administration, operations, and economic development activities within the County. This will include but not be limited to:
  - a. an analysis of the appropriate structure, command, scheduling, and staffing levels of each department

- b. a review of current practices compared to established “best practices” and standards of excellence for local government service delivery
  - c. a review of all current collective bargaining agreements and recommendations regarding cost containment and cost sharing for relevant departments and operations
- 8. Implement a system of multi-year revenue and expenditure financial monitoring and trend analysis so that the County can anticipate and plan for future financial circumstances – including an analysis of retirement plans, liability and health insurance coverage and cost
- 9. Identify, and establish the adoption of, “best practices” for the management of the County and develop standards that support financial stability
- 10. Explore the opportunities for promoting inter-County and regional cooperation strategies and cost-sharing opportunities among the County’s local governments
- 11. Further the integration of sound community and economic development strategies to encourage the economic growth of a local government’s tax base over a multi-year period

## **Project Approach**

The STMP process was focused on the how to best achieve long-term fiscal sustainability for Greene County. The final report is a comprehensive approach for County officials so that they can expand the County's internal capacity to develop, adopt, monitor, and implement a multi-year financial management plan and incorporate this process into the annual budget activities.

In discussions with County officials prior to the start of the planning process, some of their expectations for the STMP Report included:

- Areas where costs can be cut without sacrificing service delivery
- How to create a "nest egg" for the County; they presently do not have one in place
  - Can this money be used as match money for potential federal, state, ARC, PennDOT, FHA, etc. grants?
- Explore partnerships with surrounding counties, including West Virginia counties bordering Greene County
- Update relevant plans / reports to help the County move forward
- Identify all county initiatives – to stay up to date
- Improve outreach to the Townships and Boroughs in the County
- Identify current / possible multi-municipal efforts
- Identify potential funding sources
- How to entice companies / people to move to Greene County
- Local Universities / Colleges – work with them to utilize their internship programs
- Identify a "Forward Vision" – can't remain stagnant
- How to replace the decrease / loss in revenues from industries in the County

The fiscal sustainability of Greene County will rely on monitoring of the information being used and developed along with the implementation of accountability measures for those who are involved in the budget process. Included in this approach was the preparation of short-term and long-term financial and managerial objectives that strengthen the fiscal capacity of Greene County's government / departments as well as the identification of long-term community and economic development strategies that strengthen the County's current and future tax base. These strategies were based on Best Management Practices and successful policies that have been implemented by other municipalities throughout the Commonwealth.

The development and implementation of a multi-year financial management program for Greene County started with an assessment of the County's financial condition and an analysis of the financial trends impacting the County and the region. The assessment

also included an audit of the County's departments and the identification of its financial management priorities.

The consultant team was charged with developing a plan that meets the specific needs and critical issues confronting Greene County. The Plan also included the following measures that County officials can utilize to effectively manage the municipality's financial position and achieve / maintain long term fiscal and economic viability:

- expenditure reduction
- revenue enhancement
- implementation of long-term community and economic development strategies for tax base stabilization
- adoption of best management practices to achieve operating efficiencies
- pursuit of intergovernmental cost-sharing strategies

As stated in the STMP guidelines, the components addressed in this planning process to meet the individual and specific needs for Greene County included the following six (6) steps:

- Step 1: Financial Condition Assessment – A trends analysis of historic financial data and an assessment of current budget performance was completed to establish a realistic baseline of Greene County's historic and current financial condition.
- Step 2: Financial Trend Forecasting – An analysis of projected future revenues, expenditures, and economic / demographic trends was completed for multi-year period so that Greene County officials can understand the County's future financial position and take action / immediate steps to counteract any negative trends.
- Step 3: Emergency Plan for Fiscal Year 2021 – If the above analysis identified a critical cash flow situation that may impact on the health, safety and welfare of residents, an Emergency Plan will be included to address actions to be taken during a six (6) to twelve (12) month timeframe to avoid a fiscal emergency.
- Step 4: Management Audit – A management audit of all major departments and operations was performed that included summaries of budget and personnel information for each department.
- Step 5: Multi-Year Plan Adoption – The Plan includes an identification of Greene County's top three financial management priorities. Additional priorities were identified for departmental level and interdepartmental objectives.

- Step 6: Multi-Year Plan Implementation – A master implementation schedule was created that specifies the key deadlines for each objective set forth in the Plan.

In addition to the tasks addressing the financial and management conditions, the scope of work included issues specific to Greene County such as an evaluation and assessment of the duties and responsibilities of the County Commissioners that include:

- administration of all fiscal affairs of the County
- management and maintenance of all County-owned buildings
- record-keeping pertaining to all proceedings
- overseeing purchases
- supervision of all County employees

To assist the County Commissioners in developing overall goals, a review of managerial procedures, operations and service delivery of the following major offices and departments was completed: Chief Clerk; Finance; Human Resources; Buildings and Grounds; Planning and Community Development; Recreation; Human Services; Emergency Management and 911 Communications Center; Tax Assessment; County Prison; Clerk of Courts; Controller; Coroner; District Attorney; Prothonotary; Recorder of Deeds / Register of Wills; Sheriff; and Treasurer.

The following (specific) elements of the Plan focused on issues that have an impact on the overall sustainability of Greene County:

- Land use practices
  - Review of the county's current Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and the SALD Process
- Infrastructure Planning

The Greene County STMP planning process will help to align financial objectives, focus energy and resources, drive governmental / intergovernmental operations in the same direction and ensure that employees and / or other stakeholders are working toward common goals and efficient operations. Based on internal "Development Discussions" conducted by County officials, the following priorities (goals) for the County were incorporated into the STMP process:

- Business Assistance
- Housing Needs
- Infrastructure Planning (including Water, Sewage, Broadband and other utilities)
- Education
- Recreation

Each of the elements of the STMP included an implementation strategy for the priority issues identified during the process. The conclusions, outcomes and recommendations were based on research, interviews, and the acquisition of existing information (reports, studies, plans, policies, etc.). The recommendations were prioritized based on the County's most critical needs and the implementation process ensures that resources are focused on areas of highest priority.

## **Greene County Profile**

### History

Long before Pennsylvania was granted to William Penn in 1681 by King William II, the lands that would eventually become Greene County were originally inhabited by Indigenous American peoples that included the Sachem Six Nations (Iroquois Confederacy). Reminders of their time spent in the region are recognized through paths – Catfish, Warrior, Mingo, Catawba, etc. – that were used over 5,000 years ago for flint mining, fur trading and hunting.

Two of the most important pathways used by Indian tribes that traversed the lands in Greene County were the Warrior and Catawba trails. The Warrior Trail begins in Greensboro (Monongahela River) and ends in Moundsville, WV (Ohio River). The original path continued westward to Flint Ridge, OH. To move north and south, the Catawba Trail (aka “Great Catawba Indian Warpath”) included a system of pathways through the Appalachian Valley that extended from New York to locations south including Tennessee and Georgia.

As the United States began to take shape, British astronomers and surveyors Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon were hired to settle a boundary dispute between two property owners for lands that would become Pennsylvania and Maryland. Mason and Dixon started their work in 1763 in Philadelphia and working from east to west, followed a straight line to a location (Brown’s Hill) about three miles southwest of Mount Morris in 1767. Their efforts – famously known as the Mason-Dixon line – fell about twenty-one miles short of their goal and this end point is the present-day southwest corner of Pennsylvania and Greene County. Pennsylvania would become a state twenty years later in 1787.

Pennsylvania’s early growth resulted in new counties being formed across the Commonwealth. When Washington County was further divided into two counties, the southern portion would become Greene County. Named for the Revolutionary War General Nathanael Greene, the County was established on February 9, 1796. Greene County’s formation allowed its settlers to use the lands for productive activities rather than enable absentee landowners to purchase lands in this part of Pennsylvania for speculation.

Greene County had fertile fields, rolling hills, vast woodlands, and many natural resources and features that led to an influx of new residents from the New England area as well as European Countries that included the: English, Irish, Scotch, Scotch-Irish, and Germans. These immigrants helped to spur industries in the County such as agriculture / wool

production, flour mills, whiskey distilleries, coal mining, glass and pottery making, and oil and gas production. Annual events such as fairs and festivals are still held to celebrate some of these industries and their importance on the growth and development of the County.

Six original municipalities were established in the County when it was formed, and thirteen additional municipalities were created during the period of 1796 to 1860. Through legislation passed by the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1796 stating that the new county seat had to be created near the center of the County, the Borough of Waynesburg would be established as the County Seat on January 29, 1816. One individual was responsible for governing Greene County from the time of its formation until January of 1876, when the county's residents began electing three commissioners to oversee its administrative, fiscal and governmental affairs.

Improvements to the Monongahela River in the mid 1800's, specifically the construction of the slack water system of dams and locks, proved to be a benefit to Greene County. The creation of large uninterrupted pools of water allowed goods and people to be transported to locations such as the City and Pittsburgh and beyond, thus opening new markets and helping to grow the local economy. At about the same time period, the development of a road network in the state and the country helped move goods and people to points not accessible by water.

Toward the end of the 1800's, railroads were being expanded to parts of Greene County to transport coal from the many mining operations in the County. As it became easier to provide coal to the coke and steel producers, the coal mining industry would become one of the most important components of the local and regional economy. Although there are only a few mines still active today, reminders of its history and heritage can be seen in the coal patch towns, gob / spoil piles, and markers paying homage to the men and women who died in mining disasters throughout the County.

Greene County's history has also included other significant events that have helped to influence what it is today. Some of these include the construction of Jackson's Fort and Garard's Fort in 1774, the first Jacktown Fair in 1866 – which is one of the oldest continually run fairs in the country, the establishment of Waynesburg College in 1849, and the completion of the Greene County section of Interstate 79 that was constructed in the 1960 / 70's.

#### Sources:

1. Archambault, A. Margaretta, ed., A Guide Book of Art, Architecture, and Historic Interests in Pennsylvania, John C. Winston Company, Philadelphia, 1924



2. [https://www.livingplaces.com/PA/Greene\\_County.html](https://www.livingplaces.com/PA/Greene_County.html)
3. <https://www.co.greene.pa.us/history>
4. Samuel P. Bates, History of Greene County, Pennsylvania (Chicago: Warner, Beers and Company), 1888.
5. Helene Smith and George Swetnam, A Guidebook to Historic Western Pennsylvania, 2d. ed., 256-271 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press), 1991.
6. <https://explorepahistory.com/hmarker.php?markerId=1-A-297>
7. Louis Waddell, Historical Sketch of Greene County (Pennsylvania Heritage Magazine – December 1976).
8. Greene County website - <https://www.co.greene.pa.us/>

### The County Today

Located in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania, Greene County is bounded by Washington County to the north and Fayette County to the east and the West Virginia counties of Marshall to the west and Wetzel and Monongalia to the south.

The county seat for Greene County is Waynesburg Borough which is the location of the Greene County Courthouse and the County's various departments. The County is part of the 14th United States Congressional District, the 46th Pennsylvania Senate District, and the 50th Pennsylvania House District.

Greene County is one of sixty-seven counties in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is classified as a sixth-class county. The Pennsylvania County Code, for the purposes of legislation and regulations, created nine classifications of counties according to their total population and are identified as:

- (1) First Class – a population of 1,500,000 or more
- (2) Second Class – a population between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000
- (3) Second Class A – a population between 500,000 and 1,000,000
- (4) Third Class – a population between 210,000 and 500,000
- (5) Fourth Class – a population between 145,000 and 210,000
- (6) Fifth Class – a population between 90,000 and 145,000
- (7) Sixth Class – a population between 45,000 and 90,000; counties having a population between 35,000 and 45,000 can, by ordinance or resolution of the commissioners elect to be a sixth-class county
- (8) Seventh Class – a population between 20,000 and 45,000 and counties with a population between 35,000 and 45,000 which have not elected to be a sixth-class county
- (9) Eighth Class – a population of less than 20,000

The language from the Pennsylvania County Code that further explains how counties are classified along with how their classification can change based on population increases or decreases is included as Appendix 1.

Twenty-four counties in Pennsylvania that are classified as sixth class – which includes Greene County – make up the largest group of the nine classifications. This is double the amount of those included in the third-class which has the next highest number of counties. The sixth-class counties include:

- Armstrong County
- Bedford County
- Bradford County
- Carbon County
- Clarion County
- Clearfield County
- Clinton County
- Columbia County
- Crawford County
- Elk County
- **Greene County**
- Huntingdon County
- Indiana County
- Jefferson County
- McKean County
- Mifflin County
- Perry County
- Pike County
- Somerset County
- Susquehanna County
- Tioga County
- Venango County
- Warren County
- Wayne County

A complete list of the counties in Pennsylvania and their designated classifications are identified in Appendix 2.

Providing guidance and leadership to its member counties, the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) serves as a clearinghouse for information related to legislation, education, media, insurance, technology, and other issues. The services that CCAP provides are important to Greene County's elected and appointed officials so that they can continue to provide the leadership needed to move the county forward in an effective and efficient manner.

### *Governance, Administration and Management*

As mentioned above, county governments in the Commonwealth are regulated by the Pennsylvania County Code and other applicable laws. In accordance with the County Code, county governments are to be composed of the following officers elected to four-year terms:

- three county commissioners
- three auditors or one controller

- one treasurer
- one coroner
- one recorder of deeds
- one prothonotary
- one clerk of courts
- one clerk of the orphan's court
- one register of wills
- one sheriff
- one district attorney
- two jury commissioners

In addition to the elected officials, the County Code empowers the Board of Commissioners to appoint the following officials:

- chief clerk
- deputy treasurer
- solicitor
- chief deputy
- deputy recorder of deeds
- deputy register of wills
- departmental directors
- other county deputies, assistants, clerks, and employees

The three-member Board of County Commissioners govern the County as the executive and legislative officers and their powers enable them to establish ordinances, resolutions and policies that ensure the health, safety, and welfare of its residents. Some counties have adopted a home rule charter or optional plan form of government that is available under the Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law (PA Act 62 of 1972).

The Greene County Commissioners are responsible for the administration of all fiscal affairs of the County, management and maintenance of all County-owned buildings, record-keeping pertaining to all proceedings, overseeing purchases, and supervision of all County employees. The Commissioners oversee the functions of the following offices and departments in Greene County:

- Office of the Chief Clerk
- Finance Office
- Human Resources Office
- Buildings and Grounds Office
- Planning and Community Development Department
- Recreation Department

- Human Services Department
- Emergency Management / 911 Communications Center
- Tax Assessment
- Greene County Prison
- Clerk of Courts
- Controller
- Coroner
- District Attorney
- Prothonotary
- Recorder of Deeds/Register of Wills
- Sheriff
- Treasurer

In addition to the executive and legislative functions of Greene County, the legal system ensures that the laws affecting Greene County are interpreted and enforced in a fair and equitable manner. Administration of this system includes two presiding judges who sit on the Court of Common Pleas along with three magisterial district judges who are responsible for the first level of judicial authority. Judges of the Court of Common Pleas and the District Magistrates are elected by the County's residents.

Greene County is home to the State Correctional Institution (SCI) Greene, a county jail, and local state police barracks, all of which are located in Franklin Township. The Greene County sheriff's office, located in Waynesburg, and the county's local municipalities law enforcement officials provide protection through individual or regional police departments or from the Pennsylvania State Police.

In an effort to streamline Greene County's development and planning efforts, the commissioners rebranded the Economic Development Department. A change in name to the Greene County Planning and Community Development Department also included the creation of a Development Team.

The Development Team facilitated a series of meetings – Development Discussions – that resulted in the following priorities for Greene County:

- Business Assistance
- Housing Needs
- Infrastructure Planning – to include Water, Sewage, Broadband and other utilities
- Education
- Recreation

The Team also identified strategies to address these priorities including: building a network of resources for business development; creating a Countywide Economic Development COVID Response Task Force; holding more frequent Housing Insight and Planning (HIP) Teleconferences; developing a Countywide Infrastructure Plan; initiating discussions with technical training schools / universities; and prioritizing recreational activities and future recreational development opportunities.

### *Greene County's Municipalities*

Greene County has twenty-six (26) municipalities within its borders – twenty townships and six boroughs. There are no cities or home rule municipalities in Greene County. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 578 square miles – 576 square miles is land, and 2.0 square miles is water.

The Townships in Greene County include:

- Aleppo
- Center
- Cumberland
- Dunkard
- Franklin
- Freeport
- Gilmore
- Gray
- Greene
- Jackson
- Jefferson
- Monongahela
- Morgan
- Morris
- Perry
- Richhill
- Springhill
- Washington
- Wayne
- Whiteley

The Boroughs in the County consist of:

- Carmichaels
- Clarksville
- Greensboro
- Jefferson
- Rices Landing
- Waynesburg (County Seat)

### *Educational Facilities*

Elementary, middle and high school students in Greene County can attend one of the five public school districts that provide educational and extracurricular opportunities. They are the:

- Carmichaels Area School District
- Central Greene School District

- Jefferson Morgan School District
- Southeastern Greene School District
- West Greene School District

Additionally, the Greene County Career and Technology Center (CTC) serves the students from the five Greene County school districts as well as adult students. Located on the campus of the Central Greene (Waynesburg) High School and Elementary School, the CTC provides training in several fields including Automotive Collision and Body Repair, Automotive Technology, Building and Construction Occupations, Computer Networking Technology, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Electrical Occupations, Emergency and Protective Services, Health Assistant, Precision Machining, and Welding. A licensed practical nursing program is also available for adults. (Source: [https://www.greenectc.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC\\_ID=1170542&type=d&pREC\\_ID=1420094](https://www.greenectc.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1170542&type=d&pREC_ID=1420094)).

Founded in 1849, Waynesburg University – a private Christian school located in Waynesburg Borough – offers over seventy undergraduate programs as well as many graduate and doctoral programs. Some of these programs including nursing, counseling, and criminal justice, rank among the best in the nation. Approximately 1,400 undergraduate students attend Waynesburg University and contribute over 50,000 hours of service learning and community / civic engagement yearly. Students may also compete on one of the university's twenty (20) NCAA Division III athletic teams or participate in one of the fifty (50) clubs and organizations on campus. (Source: [www.waynesburg.edu/](http://www.waynesburg.edu/)).

Along with Waynesburg University, Greene County is within a reasonable distance to many quality post high school educational opportunities provided by the following universities and colleges:

1. Washington and Jefferson College
2. California University of Pennsylvania
3. Penn State – Fayette Campus
4. West Virginia University
5. University of Pittsburgh
6. Carnegie Mellon University
7. Robert Morris University

In 1996, the United Mine Workers Association Career Centers, Inc. was created to identify, recruit, train and place long term dislocated mine workers in living wage jobs. The UMWACC's Ruff Creek Campus, located in Washington Township, is being used as an adult vocational training facility offering mechatronics and a Commercial Truck Driving

License Training Program (CDL) for residents of Greene, Washington, Beaver, and Fayette Counties and Northern West Virginia. Plans for the facility are to also offer diesel classes and cybersecurity classes in the future.

### Demographics and Socioeconomics

Dating back to the early census figures recorded for Greene County, there was a steady increase in population growth from 1800 to 1890. After a small decrease leading up to the 1900 census, the County continued to grow up until 1950. As stated earlier in this report (Greene County Profile – History), much of this population growth was due to immigrants who settled in the region looking for work and a place to start a new life.

The decade between 1950 and 1960 saw Greene County lose about thirteen percent (13%) of its population and the decline continued until 1970. From 1970 to the most recent census in 2020, the County experienced population gains and losses over this period. During the most recent decade (2010 to 2020), the county saw a loss of approximately seven (7) percent of its residents. This was the biggest loss among all the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) counties when compared locally.

The total population figures for Greene County from 1800 to 2020 are identified in the table below.

Total Population: Greene County (1800 to 1920)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>
1800	8,605	1920	30,804
1810	12,544	1930	41,767
1820	15,554	1940	44,671
1830	18,028	1950	45,394
1840	19,147	1960	39,424
1850	22,136	1970	36,090
1860	24,343	1980	40,476
1870	25,887	1990	39,550
1880	28,273	2000	40,672
1890	28,935	2010	38,686
1900	28,281	2020	35,594
1910	28,882		

Appendix 3, located in the Appendices of this report, contains the total population figures (1930 to 2020) for the counties that make up the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

(SPC). This ten-county region is located in the southwestern corner of the Commonwealth and includes Greene County.

When compared to the other sixth class counties in the Commonwealth, Greene County had the fourth highest population loss between 2010 and 2020. Greene's percent change was behind those of Susquehanna, Venango, and Warren Counties. This information is identified in Appendix 4 of the Appendices.

The population losses for Greene County were spread out among its boroughs and townships during this past decade. Only one municipality – Greensboro Borough – showed an increase over this period. The other twenty-five municipalities ranged in losses from 0.04 percent (Jefferson Township) to a high of 31.05 percent (Jackson Township). Appendix 5 includes the data showing the changes for all of the municipalities in the County.

### *Per Capita Income*

Statistics released from the 2020 Census also included per capita income for the counties in Pennsylvania. Per capita income is the mean income computed for every man, woman, and child in a particular group. It is derived by dividing the total income of a particular group by the total population. (US Census Bureau definition)

The following table shows Greene County's per capita income compared to the other counties in the SPC region. The County's per capita figure of \$49,103 ranked seventh among the ten SPC counties.

#### Per Capita Income by (Pennsylvania) County – 2020 SPC Region

Allegheny County	\$68,777
Armstrong County	\$51,200
Beaver County	\$55,449
Butler County	\$64,732
Fayette County	\$48,007
<b>Greene County</b>	<b>\$49,103</b>
Indiana County	\$44,472
Lawrence County	\$49,059
Washington County	\$62,473
Westmoreland County	\$57,951
 SPC Region	 \$55,122



Pennsylvania \$61,700

Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis – Prepared by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania

The following table shows Greene County's per capita income compared to the other sixth class counties in Pennsylvania. Greene ranked ninth out of the twenty-four sixth-class counties and the 2020 per capita income (\$49, 103) was higher than the average of this classification which was \$48,157.

Per Capita Income by (Pennsylvania) County – 2020  
Sixth Class Counties

Armstrong County	\$51,200	Indiana County	\$44,472
Bedford County	\$46,246	Jefferson County	\$48,971
Bradford County	\$45,979	McKean County	\$47,361
Carbon County	\$56,868	Mifflin County	\$44,242
Clarion County	\$45,427	Perry County	\$50,095
Clearfield County	\$50,648	Pike County	\$53,289
Clinton County	\$46,338	Somerset County	\$47,035
Columbia County	\$47,464	Susquehanna County	\$49,114
Crawford County	\$46,356	Tioga County	\$45,319
Elk County	\$53,592	Venango County	\$47,125
<b>Greene County</b>	<b>\$49,103</b>	Warren County	\$46,793
Huntingdon County	\$43,555	Wayne County	\$49,172

PA Sixth Class Counties (Average = \$48,157)

Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis – Prepared by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania

*Rural Designation*

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania (CRP) provides a designation for municipalities in the State as either urban or rural. This helps with funding allocations for various projects and services, planning initiatives, and social / economic programs.

Pennsylvania's definition of rural and urban is based on population density which is calculated by dividing the total population of a specific area by the total number of square land miles of that area. In 2010, Pennsylvania's population was 12,702,379 and it had a land area of 44,743 square miles according to the US Census Bureau. Utilizing the

calculation to determine population density, the State's arithmetic mean value is 284 persons per square mile.

In 2010, a County or school district was determined as rural if the number of persons per square mile within the county or school district was less than 284; those that had 284 persons or more per square mile were considered urban. The CRP's definition identified forty-eight (48) counties as rural and nineteen (19) counties as urban in Pennsylvania. Approximately twenty-seven (27) percent (3.5 million people) of the State's 12.7 million residents lived in a rural county in 2010. Greene County, which had sixty-seven (67) persons per square mile was classified as a rural county.

Over the past decade (2010 – 2020), Pennsylvania saw its population increase to a total of 13,002,700 residents and its land area decrease by one square mile to 44,742 square miles. The 2020 population density figure for the State is 291 people per square mile.

Even with the increase in Pennsylvania's population, in 2020 the same number of counties were classified as rural (48) and urban (19) according to CRP's definition. Residents living in rural counties dropped slightly to 3.4 million residents or twenty-six (26) percent of the state's 13.0 million residents. With the loss of population over the past ten years, Greene County has a population of density of 62 persons per square mile according to the 2020 US Census.

The Commonwealth's counties range from eleven (11) persons per square mile in Cameron County, which is the most rural county in the State to 11,937 persons per square mile in Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania's most urban county. Greene County ranks tied for sixteenth according to least number of persons per square mile (62) with Clarion County. The complete list of Pennsylvania's counties and their corresponding population densities is found in the Appendices as Appendix 6.

## Financial Management Program

### Step 1 – Financial Condition Assessment

This component of the STMP planning process includes the completion of a trends analysis of historic financial data and an assessment of the current budget performance that will be used to establish a realistic baseline of Greene County's financial condition.

The financial trend analysis included the compilation of data from previous audits as well as the current year to determine existing trends. Some of the specific tasks included: a review of all existing County funds; a review of historical financial data; a review and analysis of contracts / vendors for various services, collective bargaining agreements, insurance policies (workers compensation, property, professional liability), etc.; a review of the capital plan and inventory of assets (infrastructure, building, equipment and vehicles); and a review of existing policies and procedures for financial accounting (banking, receipts, disbursement handling, separation of duties, etc.).

*"The goal of the STMP is to determine how to best achieve long term fiscal stability for Greene County by increasing the tax base, decreasing reliance on minerals and **decreasing expenses across the entire general fund to balance the budget.** In order to achieve that goal, guidance must be provided to county officials to **develop the internal capacity within the County so they are able to develop, adopt, monitor and implement multi-year financial management plans and incorporate this process into the annual budget.**"*

### Summary

*Greene County maintains four major governmental funds – the General Fund, Capital Projects Fund, Behavioral Health Fund and Children and Youth Services Fund. In addition to these four major funds, the County also maintains 24 special revenue funds and a fiduciary (pension) fund. For purposes of this analysis, major emphasis and time was dedicated to the review and analysis of the General Fund, and other major funds. In addition to reviewing audited financial statements, in person interviews were conducted with a majority of the department directors, elected row officers and with each of the County Commissioners. A series of recommendations was presented to the Commissioners individually in late March 2021. Those recommendations have been edited and are included in this analysis.*

## THE PAST: 2015 – 2020

### GENERAL FUND

#### *Budget to Actual Variance – Coloring outside of the lines:*

For five of the past six years, Greene County has exceeded budgeted expenditures in the General Fund while at the same time, budgeted revenues have underperformed. Table 1 summarizes the figures found in Attachment 1, “Budget to Actual Variance” which details the variances between the actual revenues and expenses of the General Fund and the budget for the years 2015 through 2020.

*Table 1 – Summary of Variance between Budget and Audited Revenues and Expenditures*

Budget Category	Budget to Actual Variance
Revenues	(\$3,029,067)
Expenditures	(\$2,557,786)
Other Financing Sources (Uses)	<u>\$3,736,785</u>
<b>Net Change in Fund Balance</b>	<b>(\$1,850,068)</b>

Audited revenues fell short of budget by \$3,029,067 million, while audited expenditures were \$2,557,786 million greater than budget. The variance between budget and actual Financing Sources (Uses) was a positive \$3,736,785 million, leading to an overall variance between budget and audited revenues and expenditures of (\$1,850,068), or an average variance from budget of \$308,345 per year.

### Revenues

Table 2 expands upon the audited revenue-to-budget variance shown in Table 1. The primary revenue generators for the County are Taxes, Charges for Services and Intergovernmental Revenue. Overall, these three revenues comprised \$18 million of the total \$17.2 million budgeted as revenues<sup>1</sup> in 2020.

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<sup>1</sup>2020 Budget and Actual revenues from the County of Greene, Pennsylvania Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2020, page 7.

**Table 2 – Budgeted to Audited Revenue Variance 2015 – 2020**

Revenue Category	2015 Variance	2016 Variance	2017 Variance	2018 Variance	2019 Variance	2020 Variance	Total Variance
Taxes	(\$149,342)	(\$348,159)	\$114,133	(\$330,550)	\$391,239	52,367	(\$270,312)
Licenses, Permits, Fines & Forfeits	(5,758)	12,548	(28,544)	17,040	(12,206)	25,654	8,734
Intergovernmental	(90,514)	46,236	102,435	52,892	891,213	(104,702)	897,560
Charges for Services	(66,109)	(2,763,940)	(2,698,264)	558,442	146,207	871,769	(3,951,895)
Other Revenue	<u>8,012</u>	<u>46,297</u>	<u>132,142</u>	<u>63,885</u>	<u>61,264</u>	<u>(24,754)</u>	<u>286,846</u>
Total Revenue	(\$303,711)	(\$3,007,018)	(\$2,378,098)	\$361,709	\$1,477,717	820,334	(\$3,029,067)

The greatest variance between (revised) budget and (audited) revenues was in the line-item Charges for Services. Specifically, between 2016 and 2017, revenue received was \$5,462,204 less than what was budgeted. According to the Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) section of the audit report, the Charges for Services line item was used to account for the receipt of Act 13 funds. This line-item is offset by the Transfers Out (expense) line item<sup>2</sup>. Transfers Out represent Act 13 funds that were transferred to the Capital Projects Fund<sup>3</sup>.

Table 3 analyzes the variances from budget to actual of these two offsetting accounts. Overall, actual revenue received (Charges for Services) was \$3,951,895 less than what was budgeted while transfers to the Capital Projects Fund (Transfers Out) was \$2,748,771 more than what was budgeted.

**Table 3 – Variance between Budget and Actual Charges for Services and Transfers Out**

	2015 Variance	2016 Variance	2017 Variance	2018 Variance	2019 Variance	2020 Variance	Total Variance
Charges for Services	(66,109)	(2,763,940)	(2,698,264)	558,442	146,207	871,769	(3,951,895)
Transfers Out	<u>(49,100)</u>	<u>2,544,919</u>	<u>3,687,285</u>	<u>(329,486)</u>	<u>(1,534,451)</u>	<u>(1,570,396)</u>	<u>2,748,771</u>
Total Variance	<u>(115,209)</u>	<u>(219,021)</u>	<u>989,021</u>	<u>228,956</u>	<u>(1,388,244)</u>	<u>(698,627)</u>	<u>(1,203,124)</u>

<sup>2</sup> County of Greene, Pennsylvania Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2016, page X (MD&A)

<sup>3</sup> County of Greene, Pennsylvania Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2015, page XI (MD&A)

It should be noted that the amount of Act 13 funds that the County will receive in any year is not known at the time of budget adoption, and the revenue fluctuates from year-to-year dependent upon factors that the County does not control. However, for purposes of this analysis, the revised budget is used. This revised budget certainly would account for any fluctuation in what was originally anticipated to be received in Act 13 funding and what was received. Therefore, there should be little fluctuation between actual revenue and revised budget. A statement in the 2016 MD&A attempts to clear this up: *"In late 2016, the County decided on the use of the Act 13 Impact Fee's (sic) received during the year and as the Board of Commissioners decided to defer a substantial amount of that funding into the 2017 General Fund budget, the revenue received under Charges for Services in 2016 was lowered and the transfer out of those funds to the Capital Reserve fund that was anticipated did not take place."*<sup>4</sup>

For the period 2015 – 2019, the County expended a majority of the Act 13 funds through the General Fund, deferring them from one year to the next and balancing each year's successive budget with the remnants of the previous years' allocations. At the same time, funds that were budgeted to be transferred to the Capital Projects Fund were not transferred. In 2020, the County received \$4,673,249 in Act 13 Funds. Of that amount, \$1,110,000 was transferred to the Children and Youth Services budget and the balance of Act 13 funds (\$3,563,249) were transferred to the Capital Projects Fund.

**Table 4 - Variance between Budget & Actual – Intergovernmental Revenue**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
<b>Intergovernmental</b>	(90,514)	46,236	102,435	52,892	891,213	(104,702)	897,560

The second greatest variance between budget and actual was in the Intergovernmental Revenue line item. Intergovernmental Revenue exceeded budget in each year except 2015 and 2020, ending the six-year period with an excess of revenue over budget of \$897,560. Most of that gain occurred in 2019 (\$891,213) and is referenced in the MD&A as "an increase in revenue brought in by other governments."<sup>5</sup> As is further discussed in the next section of this report, the County relies on funding from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for specific programs and services. Budget stalemates on the State level will cause fluctuations in the amount of revenue received by the County, depending on the length of the stalemate.

<sup>4</sup> County of Greene, Pennsylvania Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2016, page XV (MD&A)

<sup>5</sup> County of Greene, Pennsylvania Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2019, page 12

**Table 5 – Variance between Budget & Actual – Real Estate Tax**

	2015 Variance	2016 Variance	2017 Variance	2018 Variance	2019 Variance	2020 Variance	Total Variance
<b>Taxes</b>	(\$149,342)	(\$348,159)	\$114,133	(\$330,550)	\$391,239	52,367	(\$270,312)

The variance between Taxes and budget for the six-year period was a negative \$270,312. The variance between revised budget and actual collections is indicative of the volatility of the real estate tax assessment in Greene County, which continues to be heavily driven by coal assessments. The 2015 MD&A states that: *"Despite strong Act 13 revenues and grant revenues, one major taxpayer failed to pay \$641,000 in taxes in 2015. While these taxes were collected in early 2016 and should be indicative of an increase in fund balance in the current year, 2015 ended with expenses exceeding revenue specifically because of these taxes were paid late (sic)."*<sup>6</sup> The 2016 and future years' MD&A remain silent on why there were variances between revised budget and audited collections.

## Expenditures

**Table 6 – Variance between Budget and Actual - Expenditures**

	2015 Variance	2016 Variance	2017 Variance	2018 Variance	2019 Variance	2020 Variance	Total Variance
<b>Administration</b>	453,175	104,610	(433,385)	(911,358)	(10,918)	476,703	(321,173)
<b>Judicial</b>	(386,985)	(337,687)	(274,004)	(153,050)	(316,939)	115,785	(1,352,880)
<b>Public Safety</b>	97,947	(257,077)	(83,307)	26,515	46,609	(30,603)	(199,916)
<b>Airport</b>	515	(18,914)	(1,837)	(20,074)	(35,758)	10,558	(65,510)
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>	(37,438)	(172,987)	(127,206)	(21,332)	100,938	120,496	(137,529)
<b>Conservation &amp; Economic Development</b>	17,765	65,598	1,079	(23,911)	(88,412)	(15,915)	(43,796)
<b>Debt Service</b>	(85,673)	(82,969)	(86,127)	(89,405)	(92,808)	0	(436,982)
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<u>59,306</u>	<u>(699,426)</u>	<u>(1,004,787)</u>	<u>(1,192,615)</u>	<u>(397,288)</u>	<u>677,024</u>	<u>(2,557,786)</u>

As Table 6 shows, Greene County spent more than budgeted in four out of the six years reviewed. Notably, 2020 was the only year where expenses were significantly less than budget, ending a five-year tradition of (near) deficit spending.

The largest variance between budgeted and audited (actual) expenditures from 2015 through 2020 was in the Judicial Department, where over the six-year period, actual expenditures exceeded revised budget by \$1,352,880. While the Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) in the 2015 and 2016 audits is silent on the variance between

<sup>6</sup> County of Greene, Pennsylvania Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2015, page XI (MD&A)

budget and actual expenses, the 2017, 2018 and 2019 MD&A's each reflect upon the overage, as follows:

- 2017 MD&A: "Other notable Final-to-Actual variances were seen in higher than anticipated expenses in General Government – Judicial (\$274,004) due to increases in personnel and overtime in the courts system..."<sup>7</sup>
- 2018 MD&A: "Other notable Final-to-Actual variances were seen in higher than anticipated expenses in General Government – Judicial (\$153,050) due to increases in personnel and overtime in the courts system..."<sup>8</sup>
- 2019 MD&A: "Other notable Final-to-Actual variances were seen in higher than anticipated expenses in General Government – Judicial (\$316,939) due to increases in personnel and overtime in the courts system..."<sup>9</sup>

A review of the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures report produced by the County for the Courts for the period 2015 – 2020 provides some additional detail. Table 7 shows the variance between revised budget and actual salaries and wages for the Courts functions. While it is clear that some of the variance between budget and actual is attributable to wages, there were other factors at play as well. These factors are explored in more detail in the next section.

**Table 7 – Variance between Revised Budget and Actual Salaries and Wages Judicial<sup>10</sup>**

	2015 Variance	2016 Variance	2017 Variance	2018 Variance	2019 Variance	2020 Variance	Total Variance
<b>Courts</b>	(132,808)	(13,897)	(25,167)	(18,602)	(21,777)	21,560	(190,691)
<b>Magistrate 1</b>	(5,550)	(9,918)	(19,660)	(18,164)	(29,000)	(21,728)	(104,020)
<b>Magistrate 2</b>	(14,542)	(22,679)	(22,857)	(25,641)	(27,127)	(21,446)	(134,292)
<b>Magistrate 3</b>	(13,060)	(12,533)	(19,311)	(21,804)	(24,463)	(11,565)	(102,736)
<b>Totals</b>	<u>(165,960)</u>	<u>(59,027)</u>	<u>(86,995)</u>	<u>(84,211)</u>	<u>(102,367)</u>	<u>(33,179)</u>	<u>(531,739)</u>

The Administrative line items brought in the second highest variance between revised budget and actual expenditures, with the total six-year variance amounting to \$321,173. During the year 2017, actual expenditures in Administration exceeded budget by \$433,385 and in 2018, expenditures exceeded budget by \$911,358. In both years, the Management Discussion and Analysis points to the expenditure of Act 13 funds as the

<sup>7</sup> County of Greene Pennsylvania Financial Statements Year Ended December 31, 2017, Page 16

<sup>8</sup> County of Greene Pennsylvania Financial Statements Year Ended December 31, 2018, Page 16

<sup>9</sup> County of Greene Pennsylvania Financial Statements Year Ended December 31, 2019, Page 15

<sup>10</sup>The Judicial Component includes: Clerk of Courts, Courts, Coroner, District Attorney, District Magistrate, Register & Recorder, Prothonotary, Sheriff, Public Defender and Domestic Relations. Only salaries and wages (line item 61105) are included in this Table. Analysis that includes other personnel related benefits is explored in later sections.

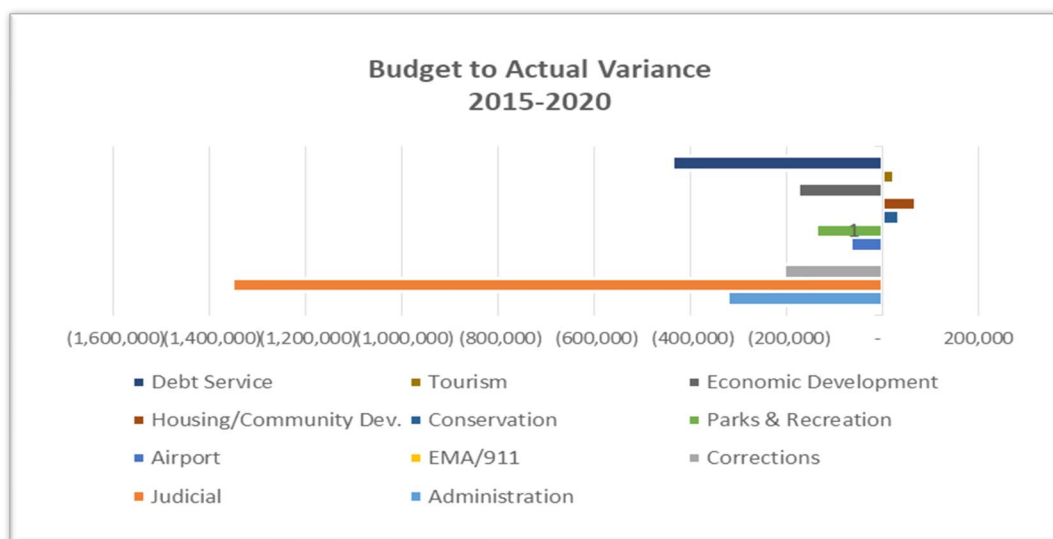


culprit for the overage between budget and actual expenses in Administration (see page 16 of each years' audit for actual reference).

Finally, debt service, which was not separately budgeted as an expense, accounted for a variance from budget by the actual amount of the repayment of a capital lease, or \$436,982<sup>11</sup> over the five-year period 2015 to 2019. In 2020, the audit indicates that the total amount of budget (\$131,292) was met by a total expense of the same amount. In 2011, the County took out a 60-month lease for the purchase of 28 copiers (\$411,033). The final payment on the 2011 lease was made in 2016 and was wrapped into a subsequent lease with Ford Business Machines in the amount of \$447,649 for 60 months for copiers. The remaining balance of this lease was paid in full in 2020 and the County entered into a subsequent lease with Ford Business Machines. The lease agreement runs through 2025, requiring annual principal and interest payments of \$83,888.<sup>12</sup>

Chart 1 breaks down the expense categories in more detail, showing that over the six-year period, Housing and Community Development, Tourism and Emergency Management / 911 spent less than what was budgeted, while all other departments exceeded budget<sup>13</sup>.

*Chart 1*



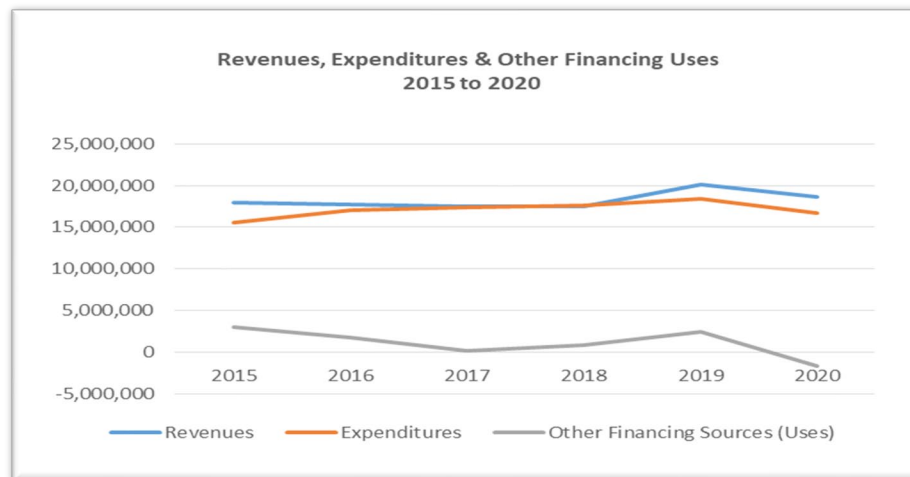
<sup>11</sup> Note that debt service only refers to the Capital Lease repayment and not to the repayment of interest and principal on the General Obligation Bonds, which are repaid through a Debt Sinking Fund.

<sup>12</sup> Maher Duessel Independent Auditor's Report for the year ended December 31, 2020, Notes to the Financial Statements, Note 10, Long Term Debt Obligations, Page 41.

<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that the Controller's office remained at or below budget in each year except 2017. This office is included in "Administration."

## General Fund (2015-2020) Statement of Revenues and Expenditures – Breaking it Down

Chart 2



This section of the report takes a deeper dive into the major sources of revenue and expense over the last six years. Attachment 2 provides a comprehensive look at the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the County for the six-year period 2015-2020. Chart 2 looks at this six-year period from a bird's eye view. Revenues were relatively flat from 2015 – 2018, averaging \$17.65 million per year. Between 2018 and 2019, overall revenues jumped by \$2.6 million. But in 2020, revenues slid by \$1.46 million from the 2019 high to finish at \$18.6 million. Expenditures, on the other hand, increased by \$1.5 million between 2015 and 2016, remained relatively flat between 2016 through 2018, averaging \$17.3 million per year. Like revenues, expenses increased between 2018 and 2019, but by significantly less (\$.806 million). Total expenses for 2020 finished the year at \$16.7 million, the lowest level since 2015. Overall, “Other Financing Uses” overpowered “Other Financing Sources,” leading to an additional \$9.9 million spend over the six-year period. Other Financing Uses were vastly dissimilar year-to-year, but averaged \$1.6 million over the six-year period.

Table 8 expands upon Chart 2, by adding the total of each year's activity – the *Net Change in Fund Balance*. As of January 1, 2015, Greene County enjoyed a General Fund balance of \$4,774,851. As of December 31, 2019, the General Fund Balance had decreased by \$3,466,330 to \$1,308,521. The year 2020 marked the first time during the 6-year period that the fund balance grew, instead of declining. As of December 31, 2020, the fund balance for Greene County settled in at \$1,563,869; \$3.2 million less than the balance of December 31, 2015.

**Table 8 – Summary of Audited Revenues, Expenditures and Net Change in Fund Balance 2015-2020**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals
<b>Revenues</b>	17,900,890	17,779,692	17,492,951	17,446,600	20,067,880	18,601,533	109,289,546
<b>Expenditures</b>	15,534,821	17,052,894	17,395,753	17,558,470	18,364,087	16,714,514	102,620,539
<b>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</b>	<u>(2,990,910)</u>	<u>(1,755,099)</u>	<u>(191,365)</u>	<u>(852,571)</u>	<u>(2,458,373)</u>	<u>(1,631,671)</u>	<u>(9,879,989)</u>
<b>Net Change in Fund Balance</b>	<u><b>(624,841)</b></u>	<u><b>(1,028,301)</b></u>	<u><b>(94,167)</b></u>	<u><b>(964,441)</b></u>	<u><b>(754,580)</b></u>	<u><b>\$255,348</b></u>	<u><b>(3,210,982)</b></u>

Based upon the previous discussion of variances between budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures, it should come as little surprise that the net change in fund balance over the course of the six years was a decrease of \$3,210,982. Five out of the six years reflect a negative change in fund balance, indicating that expenditures overwhelmed revenues in each of those years, except for 2020.

## Revenues

**Chart 3**

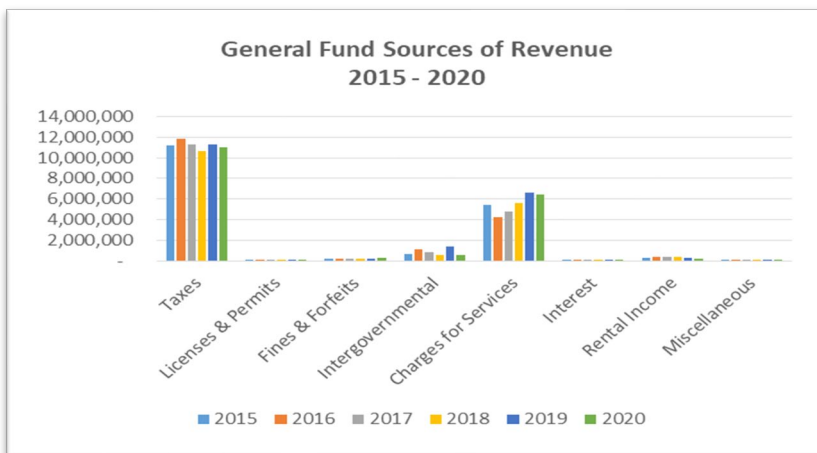
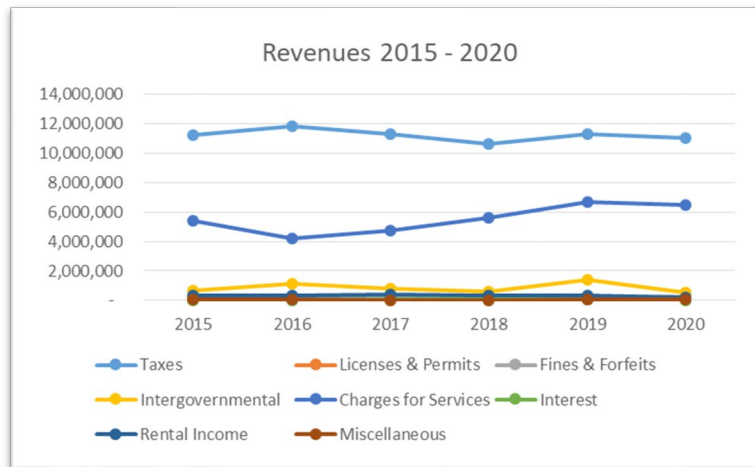


Chart 3 and Chart 4 provide a snapshot of the County's revenue sources by year and by category. As stated earlier, the three primary sources of revenue for the County are Taxes, Intergovernmental Revenue and Charges for Services. All other revenue sources are

considerably less significant to the overall budget for the County, totaling a little over 3.6% of annual revenues over the period studied.

**Chart 4**



As shown in Table 9, Total Revenue increased by just 3.9% between the year 2015 (\$17,900,890) and the year 2020 (\$18,601,533). Taxes, Intergovernmental Revenue and Charges for Services, all of which had been relatively stagnant from 2015 to 2017, increased by \$2.56 million between 2018 and 2019, but declined by \$1.36 million

between 2019 and 2020, with Intergovernmental Revenue leading the pack with a decrease of \$880 thousand.

**Table 9 – Audited Revenues 2015-2020**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Revenue
<b>Taxes</b>	11,205,649	11,790,265	11,259,811	10,629,273	11,309,180	11,038,153	67,232,331
<b>Licenses, Permits, Fines &amp; Forfeits</b>	239,817	227,248	217,156	256,599	256,527	293,654	1,491,001
<b>Intergovernmental</b>	665,428	1,106,281	829,769	595,791	1,402,944	523,569	5,123,782
<b>Charges For Services</b>	5,396,066	4,215,975	4,743,641	5,574,620	6,650,457	6,444,416	33,025,175
<b>Other Revenues</b>	393,930	439,923	442,574	390,317	448,772	301,741	2,417,257
<b>Totals:</b>	<u>17,900,890</u>	<u>17,779,692</u>	<u>17,492,951</u>	<u>17,446,600</u>	<u>20,067,880</u>	<u>18,601,533</u>	<u>109,289,546</u>

## Taxes

Real Estates are the primary revenue source in the Greene County General Fund. Over the six-year period 2015 – 2020, Real Estate Taxes represented an average of 62% of total revenue. Changes in assessed valuation and / or millage have significant impact on the amount of revenue available to spend.

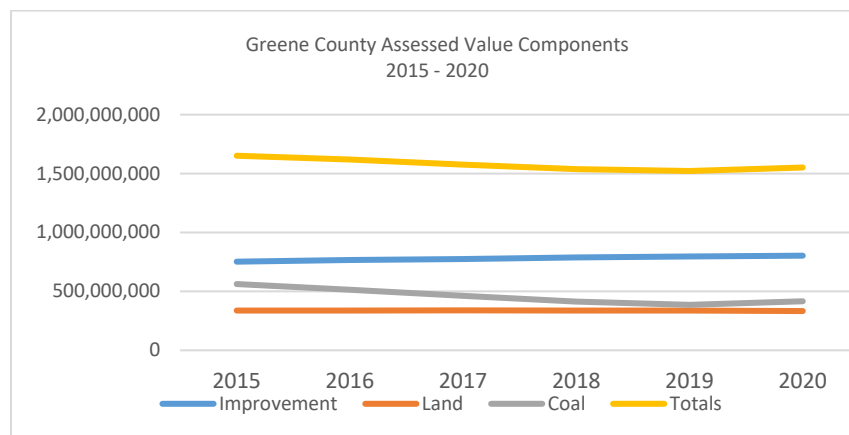
Table 10 shows the three components that comprise assessed value in Greene County and the average percent of total assessed value each of the components represented over the years 2015 – 2020. In Greene County, what is under the land is more valuable than the land itself.

**Table 10 – Components of Assessed Value**

Assessed Value Component	Average Percent of Total Assessed Value 2015-2020
Improvement (Building)	49.5%
Coal / Subsurface Minerals	29.1%
Land	21.4%

For the 6-year period 2015 – 2020, the value of subsurface minerals averaged 29.1% of total assessed value, while combined land and improvements averaged 70.9%. As pictured by the gold line in Chart 5, total assessed value decreased from 2015 (\$1,651,250,118) to 2019 (\$1,521,746,032) but gained back \$30,463,497 in 2020. The assessed value of minerals decreased between 2015 and 2019 but picked up \$30,009,650 in assessed value between 2019 and 2020. The value of the land exhibited little overall change between 2015 and 2019 but dipped by \$5,013,898 between 2019 and 2020. The value of improvements increased each year. The increase in improvements, however, was not enough to offset the loss in mineral value, causing an overall decline in total assessed value over the 6-year period of 99,040,589 (or \$746,271 in tax dollars at face at the 2020 millage rate).<sup>14</sup>

**Chart 5**



<sup>14</sup>The assessed values used for this analysis are those that are provided in the Notes to the Financial Statements in each respective years' audit, compared to information available on the County's assessment website, information provided through the MIT White Page cited later in this document and information provided by Jeremy Kelly, Greene County Planning Division titled "County Millage Rates 2006 – 2021," which is also cited later in this document. There is some inconsistency between the sources in the assessed values for 2018 and 2019. The Chief County Assessor provided the 2019-2022 Assessed Values.

**Chart 6<sup>15</sup>**

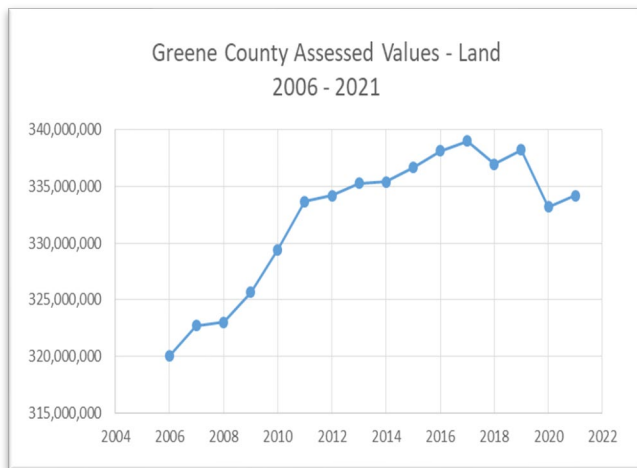


Chart 6 takes a closer look at the assessed value of land over the period 2006 – 2021. While the 6-year snapshot shown in Chart 5 provides evidence of small changes in land values, Chart 6 uses a wider lens. Greene County last reassessed all property in 2003. Following reassessment, it is normal to see some fluctuation in assessed values, as appeals are taken by property owners. While the data available does not include

the actual year of reassessment, it does include subsequent years where the land value, following assessment, should have leveled off. Between 2006 and 2017, the assessed value of land increased by 18,950,391 (\$142,886 in real estate tax dollars at face). The gas well drilling industry was likely responsible for some of that increase, as drilling companies began to purchase / lease properties to capitalize on the Marcellus shale market. As gas prices fell and Marcellus gas drilling companies paused, land values began to fall again, increasing only slightly (\$7,657 in tax dollars at face) between 2020 and 2021. Stable, lasting increases in land value require investment in infrastructure, utilities, and access. Much of Greene County remains undeveloped because the financial resources to make these improvements simply have not existed.

The value of subsurface minerals has historically played a significant role in assessed value. Greene County has been a coal mining mecca since 1892 and holds the title as the highest coal producing County in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Oil and gas wells have been drilled in Greene County since 1886 and 1890 respectively, with a majority of those commodities piped into Pittsburgh<sup>16</sup>. As the coal and gas industries continue to contract due to depletion, lower gas prices and higher health and environmental concerns, the value of the subsurface minerals also continues to decline, significantly affecting the County's overall assessed value.

According to an MIT Environmental Solutions Initiative White Paper Series, March 2021,<sup>17</sup> the assessed mineral value has not kept pace with the rate of inflation. Chart 7 was produced as a part of that White Paper. From 2010 until 2019, mineral value has fallen

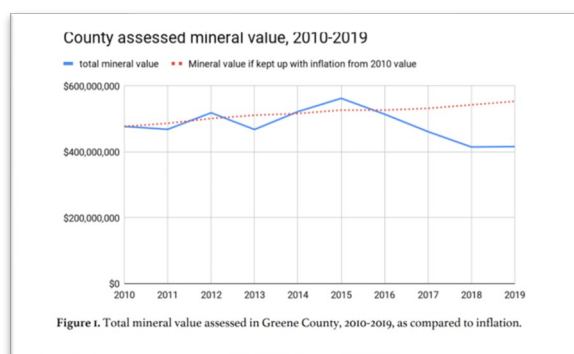
<sup>15</sup> Kelly, Jeremy, Greene County Planning Division, "County Millage Rates 2006-2021" excel spreadsheet.

<sup>16</sup> Stone, Ralph, Clapp, Frederick G. "Oil and Gas Fields of Greene County, PA" Department of the Interior, United States Geological Survey, 1907

<sup>17</sup> White-Nockleby, Caroline, Wahid, Mimi, Boone, Caroline and Delhess, Benjamin, "Changes in the Contribution of coal to tax revenues in Greene County, PA 2010-2019," sponsored by the MIT Environmental Solutions Initiative, Here and Real Project.

while inflation has increased. Chart 8, also produced as a part of the MIT paper, shows the net effect of the continued decline in estimated real estate tax for the period 2003 through 2019. The stars on the graph for the years 2010 and 2011 depict an increase in millage from (2009 – 2010) 6.42 mills to 7.64 mills and then a decrease (2011) from 7.64 mills to 7.535 mills. The millage rate for the County was not changed again until 2021, even though total real estate tax revenue struggled to stay above the line in 2011 and fell permanently below the rate of inflation in 2015.

**Chart 7<sup>18</sup>**



**Chart 8<sup>19</sup>**

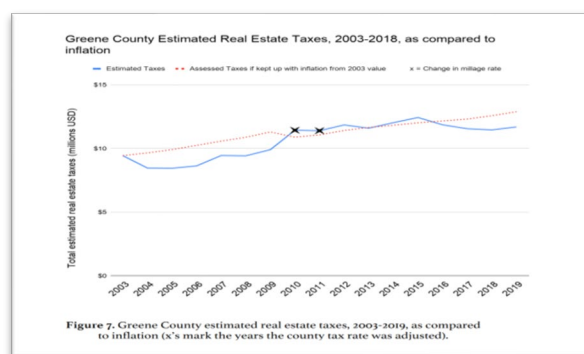


Table 11 provides a snapshot of the increase / decrease of real estate tax revenues from year to year. Between 2015 and 2016, total tax revenue increased by 5.2%. This increase was likely driven by the collection of delinquent real estate in the amount of \$1,207,730<sup>20</sup> of which \$641,000 was attributable to one taxpayer<sup>21</sup>. Total revenue decreased between 2016 and 2018 by 10.4% but rebounded in 2019 (6.4%). The 2020 RET was 2.5% less than 2019 collections, and 1.5% less than total collections in 2015, six years earlier.

**Table 11 – 2015-2020 Real Estate Tax Percent Increase (Decrease) Year to Year<sup>22</sup>**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 <sup>23</sup>
<b>Taxes</b>	11,205,649	11,790,265	11,259,811	10,629,273	11,309,180	11,038,153
<b>% Increase (Decrease) from Previous Year</b>	N/A	5.2%	(4.5%)	(5.9%)	6.4%	(2.5%)

<sup>18</sup>Ibid, page 8

<sup>19</sup> White-Nockleby, Caroline, Wahid, Mimi, Boone, Caroline and Delhess, Benjamin, “Changes in the Contribution of coal to tax revenues in Greene County, PA 2010-2019,” sponsored by the MIT Environmental Solutions Initiative, Here and Real Project, Page 14

<sup>20</sup>County of Greene Statement of Revenues and Expenditures (Unposted transactions included in report) 10300 – Finance, 10330 Tax Claim Bureau, from 1/1/2015 to 12/31/2015 as of 1/21/21

<sup>21</sup> County of Greene, Pennsylvania Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2015, Page XI (MD&A)

<sup>22</sup> Real Estate Tax Revenue is specific to the General Fund only. The revenue in this table does not include revenue derived from separate millage which is dedicated to Debt Service or the Library. Real estate tax revenue shown here includes both current year taxes and revenue received for delinquent taxes from the Tax Claim Bureau.

<sup>23</sup>County of Greene, Pennsylvania Financial Statements and Required Supplementary Information and Supplementary Information for the year ended December 31, 2020 with Independent Auditor’s Report, Maher Duessel, dated June 28, 2021, page 5



## *LERTA Abatements*

For at least the last 20 years, Greene County, the school districts and municipalities have all worked together to offer a Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) for new construction. The current period of the LERTA is 2016 through 2021. During that period, all school districts and municipalities in Greene County offered a 100% tax abatement for new residential construction. This includes new houses, additions to existing houses, modular homes, mobile homes, the construction of accessory structures (i.e., garages, sheds) and some in-home remodeling. The tax abatement period is three years at 100% of the assessed value of the improvement for all three taxing bodies. All school districts and municipalities, with the exception of the Southeastern Greene School District and the municipalities located therein (Greensboro, Monongahela, Dunkard and Greene), offer a 100%, 5-year LERTA for new agricultural and commercial construction.

Table 12 portrays all approved tax abatements for each municipality for the period 2016 through December 2020. Clearly, the abatement process is heavily utilized for residential abatements, with all municipalities except for Gray reporting at least one residential abatement over the 5-year period. Franklin reported the greatest number of overall abatements during the period. According to Jeremy Kelly, Franklin is actively advertising the abatement process. It should be noted that the value of the building permits is *not* the amount of tax abated, nor is it the assessed value upon which the abatement is calculated. These values are shown here for comparative purposes only. Only 32 commercial abatements were granted over the 5-year period. Of those, 23 (72%) were issued in Franklin. There were 77 agricultural abatements issued during the same period, and a total of 315 residential abatements. The County changed the LERTA from a 3 year Residential, 5 year Agricultural and Commercial 100% exemption to a 5-year 100-80-60-40-20 exemption in 2022.

***Table 12 – 2015-2020 LERTA by Municipality and Category***

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Agricultural</b>	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Total Building Permit Value</b>
<b>Aleppo</b>	0	0	3	567,643
<b>Center</b>	3	0	12	1,624,230
<b>Cumberland</b>	17	3	68	11,478,421
<b>Dunkard</b>	0	0	19	2,985,669
<b>Franklin</b>	27	23	75	18,914,095
<b>Freeport</b>	0	0	1	114,225
<b>Gray</b>	0	1	0	800,000
<b>Gilmore</b>	0	0	1	120,000
<b>Greene</b>	0	0	2	70,000
<b>Greensboro</b>	0	0	1	85,000
<b>Jackson</b>	1	0	4	978,000
<b>Jefferson</b>	6	1	33	3,610,164



<b>Monongahela</b>	0	0	12	1,004,000
<b>Morgan</b>	2	0	9	1,525,970
<b>Morris</b>	2	0	10	1,875,500
<b>Perry</b>	2	0	12	1,754,638
<b>Rices Landing</b>	0	0	3	184,500
<b>Richhill</b>	0	0	8	1,369,000
<b>Springhill</b>	0	0	2	190,000
<b>Washington</b>	8	0	9	1,555,656
<b>Wayne</b>	0	0	15	2,092,500
<b>Waynesburg</b>	0	3	2	1,721,500
<b>Whiteley</b>	9	1	14	2,315,500
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>56,936,211</b>

## Charges for Services

*Table 13 – Charges for Services 2015 – 2020*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Revenue
<b>Charges For Services</b>	5,396,066	4,215,975	4,743,641	5,574,620	6,650,457	6,444,416 <sup>24</sup>	33,0254,175

The account classification “Charges for services” is generally defined as an account that is credited when the public pays for a service. For example, a member of the public requests a copy of a record, or there is an entrance fee for a recreation program, like the pools or skating rink. Typically, these charges are a nominal revenue source, accounting for a small percentage of the overall revenue stream. However, in Greene County, Charges for Services is the second largest revenue. Based upon previous analysis, it is known that the County accounted for the receipt of Act 13 revenues in this line-item, muddying the water between what the County is actually charging the public for services and what Act 13 funds were used to balance the budget and / or pay for capital projects. In an attempt to untie the knot, Table 14 provides a look at the Charges for Service by each budgetary grouping for the period 2015 – 2020. It is worth noting that reimbursements identified in the Maximus Cost Allocation Plan for services rendered to specific departments are reflected in the “Transfers In” line-item, not the charges for services line-item.

*Table 14 – Charges for Service by Department 2015-2020*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 <sup>25</sup>
<b>4-H Barn</b>	60	-	(100)	-	40	70

<sup>24</sup>County of Greene, Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance Governmental Funds, Year Ended December 31, 2020, Maher Duessel Independent Auditors Report, Page 5

<sup>25</sup> Unaudited information taken from the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for 1/1/20 – 12/31/20 as of 1/12/21. (Note that there is a \$17,401 difference between unaudited and audited total Charges for Services for 2020).

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 <sup>25</sup>
911 Center	-	12,000	100,000	100,000	-	-
Adult Probation	15,474	3,268	28,786	1,058	462	373
Airport	33,040	32,879	27,466	22,387	27,701	14,952
Buildings & Grounds – GC Office Building	1,689	1,846	1,696	1,797	1,774	-
Buildings & Grounds - Maintenance	149,886	200,645	199,169	232,494	197,428	-
B&G – Other	-	-	75,000	75,000	130,000	-
Clerk of Courts	18,270	36,084	29,717	42,353	38,196	21,374
Comm. Finance	3,205,713	2,144,844	211,000	259,373	792,704	996,033
Conservation	-	20	100,000	100,055	100,000	100,000 <sup>26</sup>
Coroner	2,035	1,650	1,800	2,905	4,225	10,986
CYS	811	-	850,000	1,000,000	800,000	1,100,000
Day Camp	3,220	2,205	2,120	192,950	192,200	2,010
District Attorney	-	-	-	400,114	-	299
Elections	1,689	-	1,130	270	2,970	46
EMA	-	-	-	-	63,000	-
Fairgrounds	700	2,975	1,875	4,350	525	-
GIS System	33,780	31,169	29,750	33,946	27,400	48,445
Harness Barn	-	100	-	60	-	-
Human Resource	600	600	480	840	600	-
Industrial Development Auth.	-	-	30,000	-	-	-
Information Technology	18,055	126,876	109,870	11,628	93,100	113,200
Jail	270,900	182,005	1,423,920	1,289,699	1,622,613	2,032,305
Judges - Courts	-	14,462	26,226	5,893	11,839	370
Judges - Library	2,596	2,323	1,952	1,024	375	-
Juvenile Probation	14,500	-	7,100	-	-	-
Magistrate 1	50,038	72,334	71,017	66,806	66,769	60,025
Magistrate 2	46,240	55,510	46,648	52,199	51,146	41,647
Magistrate 3	56,694	59,185	59,777	41,555	55,734	40,602
Parks & Pools	242,055	276,186	233,096	731,092	819,820	627,058
Planning	206,247	3,760	2,462	1,891	1,985	4,929
Prothonotary	57,661	55,632	62,665	97,645	66,819	40,669
Public Defender	821	-	(2,319)	-	-	-
Purchasing	33	(3,386)	-	-	-	-
Register & Recorder	857,076	806,130	900,285	720,520	692,653	366,187
Sheriff	61,962	49,756	46,813	41,230	756,246	780,989
Tax Claim Bureau	1,550	600	-	-	-	-
Tax Assessment	21,230	17,146	33,901	22,975	11,194	11,584
Treasurer	<u>21,441</u>	<u>27,172</u>	<u>30,337</u>	<u>20,513</u>	<u>21,979</u>	<u>12,862</u>
Totals:	<u>5,396,066</u>	<u>4,215,976</u>	<u>4,743,641</u>	<u>5,574,621</u>	<u>6,651,498</u>	<u>6,427,015</u>

<sup>26</sup>The Conservation Department receives a separate Act 13 allocation. Those funds are also included in Charges for Services.

It is extremely time-consuming and difficult to determine what revenue is actually a product of true services provided to the public and what revenue has added Act 13 funding. There is absolutely no transparency presented in this part of the County's financial statements and this should be changed. It is also difficult to tie actual Act 13 projects to Table 14, without reviewing the General Ledger for each department over the course of the six years to determine what was spent. What is clear is that there have been significant changes in Charges for Services by department over this period and that the changes likely represent where Act 13 dollars have been added. Specific examples include the Children Youth Services (CYS) line-item, which accounted for just \$811 in Charges for Services in 2015 and had no revenue in 2016. Between 2017 and 2020, however, Charges for Services grossed for \$3.75 million. Other examples include the Jail and Parks and Pools.

While analysis of specific charges made by each department for each service offered is outside of the scope of this study, it is recommended that the County annually review charges for service to ensure that they reflect the actual amount of time and money expended to provide the service. Additionally, the County should look to programs that are currently not charging a fee to determine whether or not a fee should be charged. For example, the Tax Abatement Program currently does not require an applicant to pay a fee for applying for a tax abatement. Clearly, the Planning department and Tax Assessor's office are engaged when an application is submitted. A fee should be established in this instance to cover the costs expended by the County to provide the abatement.

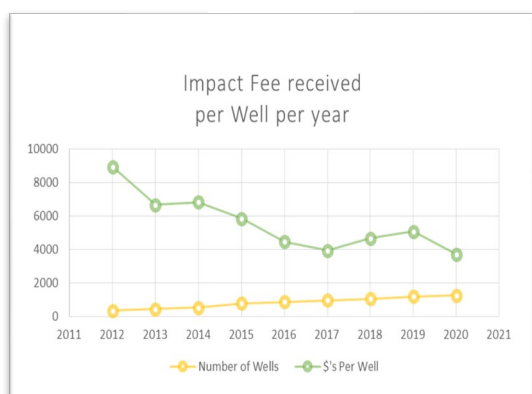
Future years' budgets should either include a separate line item for Act 13 funds or account for Act 13 funds in the Capital Project Fund. It is not possible to perform any additional analysis on this account group without a tremendous amount of time and effort devoted to removing all Act 13 dollars. If all Act 13 dollars were removed, "Charges for Services" would no longer be the second largest source of revenue in the County.

***Table 15 – 2015-2020 Act 13 Revenue***

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Act 13 Revenue	4,549,675	3,940,156	3,794,373	4,946,746	6,002,733	4,673,249
Increase (Decrease) from Previous Year	N/A	(609,519)	(145,783)	1,152,373	1,055,987	(1,329,484)

The County received \$27.9 million in Act 13 revenue over the 6-year period, as shown in Table 15. If it were possible to completely untie the knot between Charges for Services and Act 13 Revenue, this revenue would likely stand as the second highest source of revenue in the County. It is unfortunately as unstable as Real Estate Taxes.

**Chart 9**

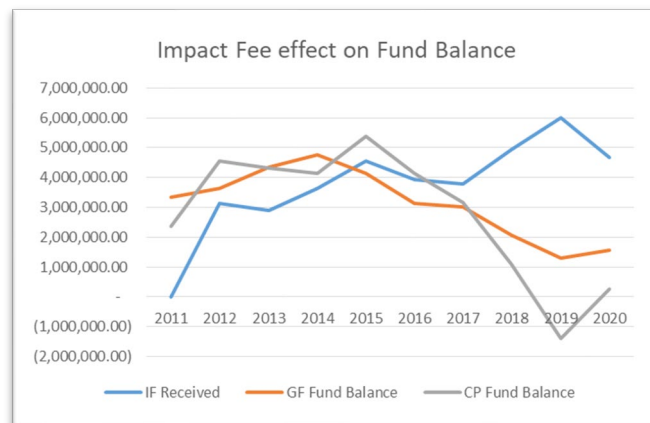


Act 13 Revenue is dependent upon the number of wells drilled (spud), the price of natural gas and the consumer price index. Chart 9 provides a snapshot of the number of wells in Greene County from 2012 through 2020 compared to the amount of funding received per well. As the total number of wells increased, the total funding per well decreased. As of 2020, Greene County was host to 1,257 wells.<sup>27</sup>

Act 13 funds can be used for the following activities: "1) Construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repair of roadways, bridges and public infrastructure; 2) Water, storm water and sewer systems, including construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repair; 3) Emergency preparedness and public safety, including law enforcement and fire services, hazardous material response, 911, equipment acquisition and other services; 4) Environmental programs, including trails, parks and recreation, open space, flood plain management, conservation districts and agricultural preservation; 5) Preservation and reclamation of surface and subsurface waters and water supplies; 6) Tax reductions, including homestead exclusions; 7) Projects to increase the availability of safe and affordable housing to residents; 8) Records management, geographic information systems and information technology; 9) The delivery of social services; 10) Judicial services; 11) Deposit into the municipality's capital reserve fund if the funds are used solely for a purpose set forth in Act 13 of 2012; 12) Career and technical centers for training of workers in the oil and gas industry; 13) Local or regional planning initiatives under the act of July 31, 1968 (P.L. 805, No. 247), known as the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code."<sup>28</sup>

**Chart 10**

As shown in Chart 10, while Greene County received \$32.9 million in revenue between 2012 and 2019, the fund balance in both the General Fund and Capital Projects Fund declined significantly, underscoring the County's reliance on the funding to not only make necessary capital improvements, but also to plug holes in the operating budget, year over year.



<sup>27</sup><https://www.act13-reporting.puc.pa.gov/Modules/PublicReporting/Overview.aspx>

<sup>28</sup>[https://www.puc.pa.gov/NaturalGas/pdf/MarcellusShale/12\\_Ac13\\_FAQs.pdf](https://www.puc.pa.gov/NaturalGas/pdf/MarcellusShale/12_Ac13_FAQs.pdf)

The County received \$4,673,249 in Impact Fees in 2020, followed by the receipt of \$3,215,463 in 2021. The two-year decrease from the 2019 allocation is \$2,787,270. The rapidness of the loss of funding underscores the necessity of the County to eliminate reliance on Act 13 funding, much the same way as it must reduce reliance on coal. The cause of the decrease in Impact Fees is directly tied to COVID. The shutdown of the United States economy from mid-March 2020 through the development and administration of vaccines against the virus in early 2021 clearly negatively impacted / continues to impact this and many other industries.

While there was a significant loss in revenue, both the General Fund and Capital Projects Funds saw increases in the 2020 fund balance, as shown in Chart 10.

The Capital Projects Fund balance at the end of 2019 was negative \$1,386,673, but by the end of 2020, the fund balance was a positive \$246,100. The County deposited \$3,563,249 of its 2020 Act 13 allocation into the Capital Projects account. The County also received \$3,302,161 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) funding. These funds, which were not budgeted, were placed into the Capital Projects fund and used for expenses in accordance with the CARES guidelines. The General Fund balance at the end of 2019 was \$1,308,521. The fund balance at the end of 2020 was \$1,563,869 for a total increase of \$255,348.

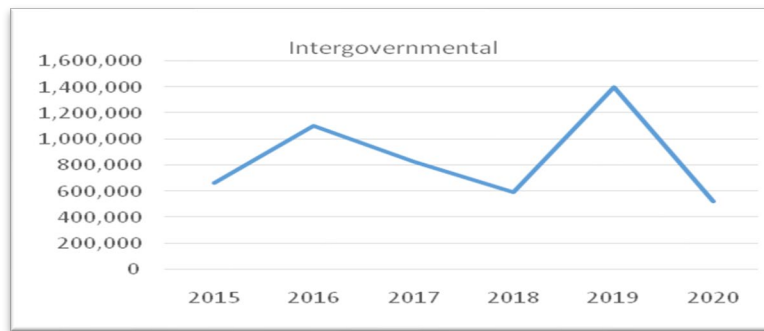
## Intergovernmental Revenues

*Table 16 – Intergovernmental Revenues 2015-2020*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Revenue
<b>Intergovernmental</b>	665,428	1,106,281	829,769	595,791	1,402,944	523,569	5,123,782

The third largest revenue source for Greene County is Intergovernmental Revenues. The County enjoys a series of reimbursements from the Commonwealth for programming. This makes the County subject to the will of the Pennsylvania legislature. During the 6-year period 2015 – 2020, there were two budget impasses, the first between 2015 – 2016 (9 months) and the second between 2017 – 2018 (4 months). During these periods, any state reimbursements were held, and the County was required to use reserves and / or borrow funds to ensure the continuation of essential human services. The Commonwealth operates on a July – June fiscal year, and the County General Fund operates on a January – December fiscal year. In the years of Commonwealth budget impasses, revenue received by the County is delayed into the next year. Intergovernmental revenue for the six-year period averaged \$854 thousand per year, but in the years of the impasse, revenue was depressed, followed by an above average increase in the following year.

**Chart 11**



## Expenditures

**Chart 12**

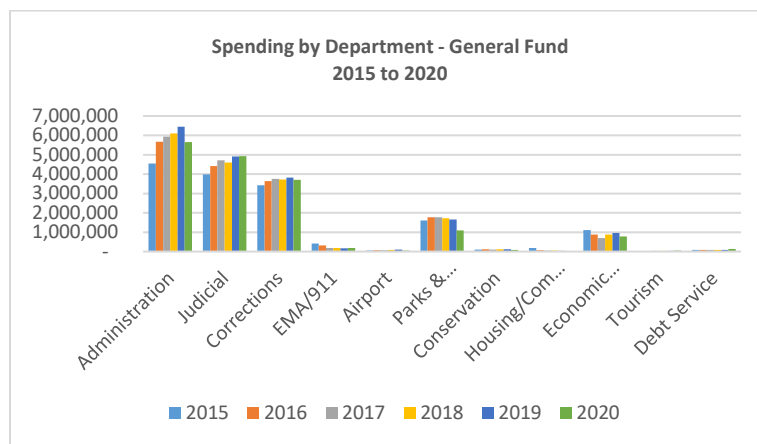


Chart 12 provides a snap shot of the County's major budgetary components and the spending in each over the six year period 2015 – 2020. Administration, Judicial and Corrections expenses encompassed 81.8% of total departmental spending over the six year period. Changes implemented to decrease spending in 2020 are clearly visible in Administration and Parks and Recreation and somewhat visible in Corrections and Economic Development. Expenses in Judicial increased slightly between 2019 and 2020.

## Administration

Expenditures	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
General Government - Administration	4,549,097	5,661,971	5,932,352	6,104,792	6,448,222	5,659,811
Percent Increase (Decrease) from Previous Year	(17.5%)	24.4%	4.7%	2.9%	5.6%	(13.9%)

Between 2015 and 2019, expenses in Administration increased by 20%, or about 4% per year. However, significant changes were made to curtail spending beginning with the budget year 2020. As a result, expenses between 2019 and 2020 decreased by 13.9%. Departments included under the Administration umbrella include the following:

- Commissioners Administration and Finance
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Information Technology (IT) and Planning
- Elections and Budget
- Human Resources and Veterans Affairs
- Buildings and Grounds: Ben Franklin Building, Greene County Courthouse, Greene County Office Building, Fort Jackson, Other Buildings and Maintenance
- Purchasing and Controller
- Tax Assessment Office, Tax Claim Bureau and Treasurer

As previously presented in the Budget to Actual Variance section, for the period 2015 through 2020, Administration spent \$321,173 more than what was budgeted, with a majority of that overspending occurring in the years 2017 and 2018. Between 2017 and 2018, the actual spending for Buildings and Grounds was \$252,125 higher than revised budget. Buildings and Grounds expenses include all of the buildings in the Greene County portfolio, with the exception of the Jail and the Airport. The Maintenance budget includes the wages and medical benefits of the department. It should be noted that over the 6-year period, Wages and Medical benefits were *under budget* by \$147,058. *All* of the overspend was tied to repair and maintenance costs, other professional services and supplies. Table 17 aggregates the budget to actual and variance for Buildings and Grounds for the period 2015 – 2020. The actual amount of spending in excess of the budget was \$296,086. If Maintenance Department Wages and Benefits had come in at budget, the amount spent in excess of budget would have been \$433,144. The County is paying an average of \$1.475 million a year to maintain the buildings where it operates. This amount does not include capital project expenses.

**Table 17 – 2015-2020 Buildings & Grounds**

	2015 – 2020 Budget	2015 – 2020 Actual	2015 – 2020 Variance
<b>Ben Franklin</b>	300,750	378,228	(77,478)
<b>Greene County Courthouse</b>	579,792	724,702	(144,910)
<b>Fort Jackson</b>	454,335	518,428	(64,093)
<b>Greene County Office Building</b>	361,189	391,603	(30,414)
<b>Maintenance</b>	6,258,962	6,171,140	87,822
<b>Other Buildings</b>	<u>584,077</u>	<u>651,090</u>	<u>(67,013)</u>
<b>Totals:</b>	<b><u>8,539,105</u></b>	<b><u>8,835,191</u></b>	<b><u>(296,086)</u></b>

In addition to Buildings and Grounds, the Tax Claim Bureau exceeded budget every single year between 2015 and 2020, with the total overspend totaling \$269,785. The Tax Claim Bureau spent \$290,338 more than what was budgeted in Other Professional Services. A review of the Other Professional Services ledger account for 2020 indicates that the Tax Claim Bureau is very busy processing sales. Infocon Corporation and Palmetto Posting were the single largest expenses during the period. A majority of other expenses are between the Sheriff's Office and Tax Claim and the Recorder of Deeds Office and Tax Claim. The expense of the Tax Claim Bureau is a part of the revenue stream of these two other County departments. It would be interesting to see how much of the revenue generated by these departments is based upon the expense of the Tax Claim Bureau.

Commissioners' Administration exceeded budget by \$169,633 between the years 2015 and 2019. Wages were \$119,503 over budget cumulatively during that period. In 2020, expenses were \$97,708 less than budget. Professional service expenses, which were budgeted at \$55,000, finished the year at just \$128. Wages also came in under budget (\$15,217) for the first time in the 6-year period.

## Transfers Out

The line item "Transfers Out" is included as a part of the Commissioners' Finance budget. As previously stated, this line item was used (in part) to move Act 13 funds from the General Fund to the Capital Projects Fund. Table 18 lists the actual amount budgeted in each year, the actual amount transferred and the variance. Additionally, Table 18 compares the amount of Act 13 funds received to the amount that was transferred from the General Fund to other funds and to the Capital Projects Fund. Over the six-year period 2015 – 2020, the County received \$27,906,932 in Act 13 money. Of that amount, \$5,831,690 was transferred to the Capital Projects fund and \$8,153,812 million was directed to other funds.<sup>29</sup> The remaining balance of Act 13 funds (\$13,921,430) were consumed by the General Fund.

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<sup>29</sup> Transfers Out is the offset to Charges for Services. During this same period, Transfers Out was used to transfer funds to CYS, the Redevelopment Authority, Human Services and other funds.



*Table 18 – General Fund Transfers Out*

General Fund Transfers Out					
Year	Budget	Actual	Variance	Cap Pjt Trf In	Act 13
2015	3,785,512	3,834,612	(49,100)	2,877,811	4,549,675
2016	5,200,638	2,655,719	2,544,919	1,272,344	3,940,156
2017	4,691,829	1,004,544	3,687,285	2,574	3,794,373
2018	1,542,316	1,871,802	(329,486)	79,373	4,946,746
2019	1,787,847	3,322,298	(1,534,451)	603,061	6,002,733
2020	-	996,033	(996,033)	996,527	4,673,249
	<b>17,008,142</b>	<b>13,685,008</b>	<b>3,323,134</b>	<b>5,831,690</b>	<b>27,906,932</b>

## Judicial

*Table 19 – Judicial Expenses 2015-2020*

Expenditures	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
General Government – Judicial	3,978,033	4,422,269	4,704,633	4,597,790	4,908,297	4,929,823
Percent Increase (Decrease) from Previous Year	13.9%	11.2%	6.4%	(2.3%)	6.7%	0.4%

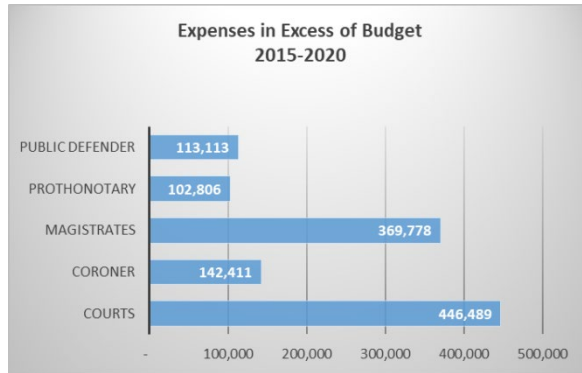
Over the course of the last six years, judicial expenditures increased by 23.9%, or an average increase of 3.9% per year. For purposes of this analysis, judicial expenditures include the following departments:<sup>30</sup> Prothonotary, Public Defender, Register & Recorder, Domestic Relations, Sheriff, Coroner, Clerk of Courts, Court of Common Pleas, Law Library, District Magistrate 1, 2, and 3, District Attorney and Victims Assistance programs. As discussed in the previous section of this analysis, the judicial component was over budget by \$1,352,880 between the years 2015 and 2020. Wages in the Courts and Magistrates' offices were collectively responsible for \$531,739 of that overspend.

Chart 13 shows the top 5 biggest spenders for the 6-year period. The Courts spent \$446,489 more than what was budgeted, followed by the combined Magistrates' offices which overspent by \$369,778. The Coroner, Public Defender and Prothonotary rounded out the group.

<sup>30</sup>Without the Auditors work papers for each year, it is difficult to definitively determine whether or not the departments listed include the exact groupings used for the audit. The analysis in this document makes assumptions that the departments listed are included in the auditors' classifications. There are some inconsistencies in overall totals, but those inconsistencies do not affect the end analysis.

Over the six-year period, the Courts exceeded budgeted line items for not only wages, but also for medical expenses, legal fees, other professional services and postage.

*Chart 13*



The Magistrates collectively contributed \$341,048 in wages that were over budget over the 6 years. Other professional services contributed to the balance of the overage.

The overage in the Coroner's line-item is tied directly to the number of autopsies performed each year, the cost of transportation to and from the facility utilized

in Westmoreland County and the cost of the autopsy and any toxicology work necessary. The cost of the autopsy increased during the five-year period from \$1,450 per body in 2015 to \$1,750 per body by 2019.

The overage in the Prothonotary's office is directly tied to wages between 2015 and 2019. In 2020, Computer services were \$20,456 of a budget of \$3,311. Upgrades were made to the computer systems to provide for online access due to COVID.

Finally, the Public Defender contributed \$113 thousand to the total over spend, mostly through increased legal services and other professional services for the cost of an investigator.

The Sheriff's Department was over budget for the 6-year period by \$6,318, which is a bit misleading. During the 6 years, wages were over budget in 2020 (\$23,810), 2019 (\$23,312), 2017 (\$18,028) and 2016 (\$35,077). Under spending in other line items, particularly rent expense and supplies, reduced the total over spend in the Department.

## Corrections

*Table 20 – Corrections Expenses 2015 - 2020*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Corrections</b>	3,417,708	3,636,170	3,752,604	3,714,837	3,824,093	3,710,005
<b>Percent Increase (Decrease) from Previous Year</b>	5.8%	6.4%	3.2%	(.01%)	2.9%	(2.9%)

Expenses in the Corrections budgetary category grew by 8.6% over the six-year period, or an average annual increase of 1.43%. Corrections includes the Greene County Prison, adult and juvenile probation.

Over the six-year period, wages in the jail were over budget by \$232,302. Medical Services Expense also exceeded budget in five of the six years. The total amount budgeted was \$765,000, the total amount spent was \$865,085. All told, the prison was over budget by \$341,620 for the six-year period.

## Other Departmental Expenditures

*Table 21 – Emergency Management and 911 Expenses 2015-2020*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Emergency Management / 911</b>	414,642	316,407	180,209	181,336	174,019	186,664
<b>Percent Change from Previous Year</b>	(20.6%)	(23.7%)	(43%)	.6%	(4%)	7.3%

It appears that there was a change in the way that the 911 expenses were accounted for between 2015 and 2017. 911 wages, benefits, training, radio, telephone equipment and maintenance are all completely funded by the Commonwealth 911 fund. The 2015 and 2016 budgets included wages, with some funding transferred in. By 2017, the only expenses reported in the budget included rent expense, some utilities, professional service and subscription fees. The Emergency Management position also receives a federal (FEMA) grant to help offset costs associated with the department. Annual allocations of roughly \$63,000 are budgeted and received in each of the years shown. In 2017 – 2020, the total amount spent was roughly \$145,000 per year.

*Table 22 - Airport Expenses 2015-2020*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Airport</b>	51,970	75,324	65,437	87,764	97,348	51,032
<b>Percent Change from Previous Year</b>	(3.5%)	44.9%	(15.1%)	34%	10.9%	(90%)

This line item is relatively small in the General Fund budget but gets its wings in the Capital Projects budget. Over the period 2015 through 2020, \$3,730,264 in Capital Project funds were expended. The Commissioners have recently expended funds at the airport to increase economic opportunities through a subdivision of property that resulted

in three 2-acre lots for development. Additionally, infrastructure improvements were made around the interchange with the airport and sewage facilities were upgraded.

**Table 22 – Parks & Recreation Expenses 2015-2020**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>	1,605,427	1,763,023	1,770,844	1,714,884	1,649,118	1,089,235
<b>Percent Change from Previous Year</b>	(1.6%)	9.8%	.44%	(3.2%)	(4%)	(49%)

This one budget line item includes the following budgets: Day Camps, Fairgrounds, Harness Barn, 4-H Barn, 4-H Building, Auction Building, Cattle Barn, Pole Building 4, Parks and Pools and Trails. Of these, Parks and Pools accounts for expenditures of roughly \$846 thousand annually. Annual salary exceeded budget in each of the 6 years reviewed, as shown in Table 23.

Actual 2020 Salaries & Wages were roughly 40% less than the expenses incurred in 2016 through 2019. The pandemic and subsequent Commonwealth mandated closures rolled out across Pennsylvania beginning in late March of 2020. Governor Wolfe implemented a red-yellow-green system by which counties of the Commonwealth could begin to reopen closed facilities. In late May, the governor announced that yellow and green counties (of which Greene County was one) were able to open public pools, following strict guidelines. At such a late date, the County struggled to staff the pools, but they were officially opened in late June 2020. By the end of July, the County began to close pools and cancel day camp for the season, due to lack of participation and inability to adequately staff essential positions.

**Table 23 – Parks & Pools Wages**

Year	Budget	Actual	Variance
<b>2015</b>	345,487	369,602	(24,115)
<b>2016</b>	355,701	432,869	(77,168)
<b>2017</b>	366,106	431,784	(65,678)
<b>2018</b>	408,754	442,362	(33,608)
<b>2019</b>	372,555	444,491	(71,936)

Year	Budget	Actual	Variance
2020	<u>305,384</u>	<u>315,401</u>	<u>(10,017)</u>
Totals:	<u>2,153,987</u>	<u>2,436,509</u>	<u>(282,522)</u>

Conservative annual average revenue for pavilion rentals and pools, according to Bret Moore, Recreation Director, is about \$230,000. The budget and actual Charges for Services line item for Parks and Pools is shown in Table 23. It appears that between 2015 and 2017, the County was overestimating the amount of revenue that would be received, coming closest to hitting that mark way back in 2015.

*Table 23 – Parks & Pools – Charges for Services*

Year	Budget	Actual	Variance
2015	246,000	242,055	(3,945)
2016	315,000	276,186	(38,814)
2017	315,000	233,096	(81,904)
2018	770,000	731,092	(38,908)
2019	800,000	819,820	19,820
2020	<u>409,997</u>	<u>627,058</u>	<u>217,061</u>
Totals:	<u>2,855,997</u>	<u>2,929,307</u>	<u>73,310</u>

Between 2018 and 2019, the Charges for Services budget increased significantly, likely due to the introduction of Act 13 dollars for project specific initiatives. It is extremely difficult to “guess” what the actual revenue stream from Charges for Services related to pavilion rentals and pool passes was, but based upon earlier years, it was likely \$231,092 in 2018 and \$219,820 in 2019. In 2020, revenues were significantly depressed due to COVID, but it is difficult to see that in Table 23, where for just the second time in the 6-year period, actual revenues outpaced expenditures.

Fairgrounds represents the second largest budgetary expense in the Recreation grouping, with annual expenditures between \$450 thousand to \$500 thousand on average. Most of the expenses in the budget are tied to wages and benefits, with utilities, supplies and maintenance and repairs comprising the balance. The Recreation Director is aware of the need to increase the revenue stream at the fairgrounds. He intends to introduce new

programming to increase participation at the fairgrounds. He is currently reviewing the fee schedules to determine which can be increased.

## Conservation and Economic Development

*Table 24 – Conservation and Economic Development Expenses 2015 – 2020*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Conservation / Development</b>	110,055	122,986	102,590	116,634	119,962	93,262
<b>Housing / Community Development</b>	185,031	77,396	59,700	44,522	44,010	26,865
<b>Economic Development</b>	1,114,514	874,925	700,595	874,052	968,067	784,528
<b>Tourism</b>	22,671	19,454	40,662	32,454	42,143	51,997

The Conservation Department is self-funded, with the County and the Department signing a Memorandum of Understanding in 2021 reducing the County's share of wages to 25% of the Director's salary and benefits. According to Lisa Snyder, all other costs associated with the department are paid for through either Act 13 funds which are specifically allocated to the Conservation Department or through program fees tied to the Chapter 102 and Chapter 105 programs.

Like the Conservation District, most of the expenses of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) are covered by other sources of revenue. Crystal Simmons, Director: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), has really focused on reducing expenses, while at the same time growing programs for the benefit of the communities and residents.

Actual expenses in the Economic Development budget declined between 2015 and 2017, but regained momentum between 2018 and 2019. Rich Cleveland was hired to head the Economic Development team in March of 2020.

Tourism is funded through the hotel tax, which was amended by Act 18 of 2016, to permit an increase from 3% to 5%. According to JoAnne Marshall, Tourism Director, the tax generated an average of \$175,000 in revenue, in a good year. Greene County increased the tax from 3% to 5% in February 2021. COVID really impacted hotel revenue and therefore the revenue used to operate the Tourism department has declined significantly. Due to COVID, the secretary's position was eliminated in 2020. A separate board oversees the Tourism agency.

## Debt Service

*Table 25 – Debt Service 2015-2020*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>G.O. Bond 2014</b>	4,210,000	3,505,000	2,780,000	2,030,000	1,275,000	515,000
<b>G.O. Bond 2016</b>	5,540,000	5,780,000	5,775,000	5,770,000	5,685,000	5,575,000
<b>Bridge Loan</b>	0	0	0	1,120,000	1,120,000	1,120,000
<b>Copier Lease</b>	<u>81,568</u>	<u>364,680</u>	<u>278,553</u>	<u>189,148</u>	<u>96,340</u>	<u>405,461</u>
<b>Total Long Term Debt</b>	<b>9,831,568</b>	<b>9,649,680</b>	<b>8,833,553</b>	<b>9,109,148</b>	<b>8,176,340</b>	<b>7,615,461</b>

As discussed in the “Coloring Outside of the Lines” section of this analyses, the debt service line item included in the audited financial statements for the General Fund only captures debt associated with a (series of) five-year copier lease(s). Over the course of the period 2015-2020, \$568,274 was spent for the lease of copiers, with additional debt service of \$405,461 incurred in 2020.

Actual debt service for the County is accounted for in the Debt Service Sinking Fund, which is a separate minor fund. The County holds two General Obligation Bonds, as shown in Table 25 and below.<sup>31</sup> It is worth noting that these two bonds are refinanced bonds that were originally taken out in 1998 and 2006 respectively. The interest rates of the original issues were 3.8% - 5.5% (1998 series) and 2.0% - 3.7% (2006 series)<sup>32</sup>. As of December 31, 2020, the debt associated with the 2014 issue was 22 years old and the debt associated with the 2016 issue was 12 years old.

	Balance as of <u>December 31, 2020</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>	<u>Maturity Date</u>
G.O. Bond 2014	\$ 515,000	.32% to 2.40%	2021
G.O. Bond 2016	<u>\$5,575,000</u>	1.00% to 2.375%	2027
<b>Total G.O. Bonds:</b>	<b><u>\$6,090,000</u></b>		

The Fund Balance in the Debt Service Fund as of December 31, 2020, was \$1,439,146. During this period, the Debt Service Fund received a direct allocation from the General Fund, based upon dedicated millage of .695 mills. The real estate tax line items in the budget all have contra account line items established to remove real estate tax dollars from the General Fund and place them in the Debt Service fund on an annual basis, to

<sup>31</sup>County of Greene Financial Statements Year Ended December 31, 2019, Notes to the Financial Statements, Note 10, Page 47.

<sup>32</sup>These bonds have been refinanced several times. The 1998 bond was refinanced in 2008 and again in 2014. The 2006 bond was refinanced in 2011 and again in 2016. On January 6, 2021, these bonds were once again refinanced.

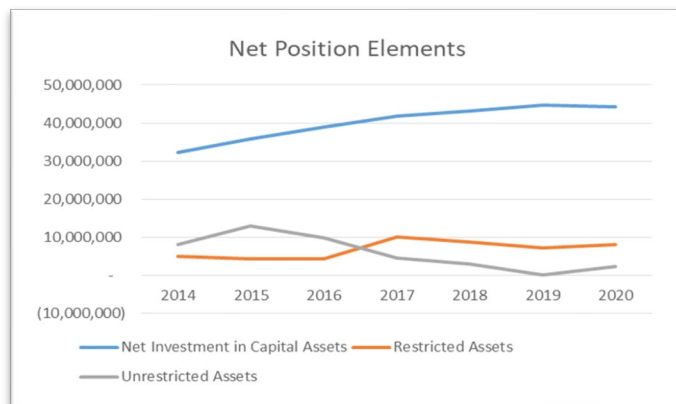
ensure that enough cash has accumulated to make debt service payments and in accordance with the bond indenture agreement.

In addition to the two bonds discussed above, the County received a bank loan in 2018 to finance costs associated with the repair of two bridges. Principal payments on the loan (\$1,120,000) begin in 2022. The term of the loan is 10 years. It should be noted that the balance of long-term debt at the end of 2020 was the lowest it has been in the 6-year period studied.

The 2021 budget adoption reduced the millage dedicated to the Debt Service Fund from .695 mills to .409 mills. On January 6, 2021, the County refinanced the 2016 Bond issue, with interest rates ranging from 2% to 4% and final maturity scheduled for May 1, 2027. In late 2021, \$942,000 was transferred from the Debt Service fund to the General Fund.

## Net Position

**Chart 13**



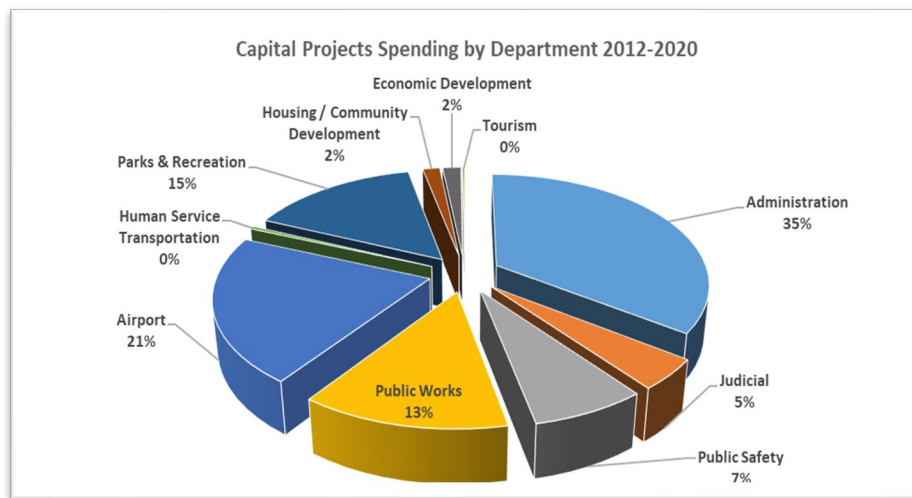
Attachment 3 summarizes Greene County's Statement of Net Position from 2013 through 2020. The statement includes all of the assets, deferred outflows, liabilities, and deferred inflows. Net position is the sum of [assets and deferred outflows]–[liabilities and deferred inflows]. It is similar to a private sector balance sheet. Net position is separated into three categories: Capital Assets, restricted assets and unrestricted assets.

Chart 13 tells a very important story about the Net Position of Greene County as of December 31, 2019. As of the end of 2019, the County had \$44,737,113 invested in Capital Assets, like buildings, bridges and roads, an additional \$7,100,476 of assets were restricted. In other words, these assets were promised or dedicated to a certain program or use. The total amount of unrestricted net assets was a negative \$11,480. By the end of 2020, the County's unrestricted net assets recovered to \$2,242,373. In 2015, Greene County enjoyed a balance of over \$13M in unrestricted net assets. Between 2015 and 2019, that \$13M balance dwindled each year to finally finish in 2019 as a negative. It was as if the County stopped looking down the road and planning for the future.



## CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND

*Chart 14*

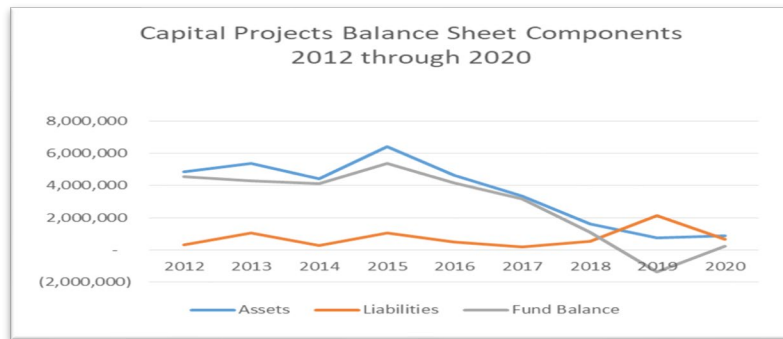


Prior to 2012, the Capital Projects Fund was used to hold the proceeds of bond funds or direct transfers from other funds that were dedicated to projects. Between 2012 and 2014, the remaining proceeds of the

refinancing of the 2008 GOB were expended through the Capital Projects Fund. By the end of 2014, the only funding source for Capital Projects became Act 13 money.<sup>33</sup> This changed in 2020, when the County placed money received from CARES<sup>35</sup> into the Capital Project Fund.

Chart 14 provides a snapshot of Capital Projects spending from 2012 to 2020. As shown in Chart 14, over the course of the nine-year period 2012 – 2020, the County used 35% of the money in the Capital Projects Fund for Administration. Of that amount \$1.2 million was invested into broadband projects through Windstream in 2020. The County used 21% of the money in the Capital Projects Fund for the Airport, while Parks and Recreation projects accounted for 15%, Public Works Projects consumed 13% and Public Safety projects used 7%. Interestingly, the Airport received more funding than Judicial, Tourism, Economic Development, Housing and Community Development, Human Services and Transportation combined, suggesting the perceived importance of this asset to the future growth of the County. More detailed information can be found in Attachment 4, the consolidated Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Years Ended 2012 – 2020.

**Chart 15**



The consolidated Capital Projects Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2020, is included as Attachment 5. Chart 15 presents the changes in Assets, Liabilities and Fund Balance in the Capital Projects Fund for the years ended 2012 through 2020. Similar to the

information originally presented in Chart 10, Chart 15 shows that even though there were influxes of Act 13 funds into the Capital Projects Fund, total assets and fund balance declined, while liabilities increased. As of December 31, 2019, the Capital Projects Fund had a negative fund balance of \$1,386,673. By the end of 2020, the fund regained lost ground and ended the year with a positive fund balance of \$246,100. Liabilities declined between 2019 and 2020 and assets increased slightly.

The Management Discussion and Analysis for each year's audit through 2018 includes a section titled "Capital Projects Fund" that specifically discusses the projects that were done in each year. By 2018, because the balance in the Capital Projects fund had fallen to \$1,074,425, the fund was removed from the Major Funds category in the audit and included as a Minor Fund of the County. The Controller's Office should be contacted for additional information about specific projects that were paid for through the Capital Projects fund.

In 2020, the Capital Projects Fund received CARES funding in the amount of \$3,272,654. Additional revenue in 2020 included the Election Department GEMS Grant (\$396,803) and a Trail grant (\$603,000). Charges for Services included two transfers totaling \$384,500. Finally, funds were transferred in for Infrastructure (\$911,233.48), for software for the Sheriff (\$25,000) and for the Court room sound system (\$59,800). Expenditures for 2020 totaled \$4,078,616. According to the Management Discussion and Analysis of the 2020 audit,<sup>33</sup> the County transferred \$3,563,249 in Act 13 money to the Capital Projects Fund in 2020. This is not, however, supported by the financial statements, which indicate that \$996,527 was transferred into the Capital Projects Fund from the General Fund in 2020.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup>County of Greene, Pennsylvania, Financial Statements and Required Supplementary Information, for the year ended December 31, 2020 with Independent Auditor's Report, prepared by Maher Duessel, page i.

<sup>34</sup>Total transfers out of the General Fund in 2020 were \$3,019,940. Of that amount, \$163,846 went to Behavioral Health, \$1,553,856 went to Children and Youth, \$996,527 went to Capital Reserve and \$305,711 went to other funds.

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FUND

The Human Services division of the County is responsible for the following programs: The Human Services Development funds (HSDF), Homeless Assistance Program (HAP), CDC Funding, Project for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH), State Opioid Response (SOR), PHARE Senior Rehabilitation, PHARE Park View Knoll, Family Center, SAFE Parenting, High Fidelity Wrap Around Services, Intellectual Disability and Autism Services, Mental Health Services, Youth and Young Adult Peer Specialists, Drug and Alcohol Services, Early Intervention Services and Transportation Services.

The department operates under majority revenue from State and Federal agencies, with a small amount of matching funds from the County. The department is vulnerable to state budget cuts and / or state budget stalemates. Because of the funding that the department receives, they operate on a July – June fiscal year, instead of the fiscal year under which the County General Fund operates.

Attachment 6 includes the Human Services consolidated Balance sheet for the years 2015 through 2020. The Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the same period is included as Attachment 7. These statements were prepared from data available in the County's audited financial statements.

*Table 26 – Behavioral Health Revenues 2015-2020*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Revenues:</b>						
<b>Intergovernmental</b>	2,489,292	2,312,444	2,517,554	2,598,331	2,444,798	2,409,913
<b>Interest</b>	247	2,442	4,626	8,749	11,486	5,645
<b>Donations</b>	0	9,104	12,161	557	1,568	15,934
<b>Other Financing Sources</b>	<u>109,045</u>	<u>144,443</u>	<u>159,775</u>	<u>109,958</u>	<u>171,401</u>	<u>163,846</u>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>2,598,584</b>	<b>2,468,433</b>	<b>2,694,116</b>	<b>2,717,595</b>	<b>2,629,253</b>	<b>2,595,338</b>

Human Services received funding for programs from both the Commonwealth and Federal government. The amount of funding is listed in the "Intergovernmental" portion of the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures. The Department receives allocations averaging \$2.46 million annually. Other sources of revenue include interest earnings and

donations. Other financing sources are transfers from the General Fund to Human Services for match requirements on the Early Intervention Program, the Block Grant, the Shared Ride and Intermediate Punishment grants.

*Table 27 – Behavioral Health Expenditures 2015-2020*

<b>Expenditures:</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Human Services	2,506,084	2,378,433	2,601,616	2,622,945	2,536,753	2,395,470
<b>Other Financing (Uses)</b>	<u>92,500</u>	<u>90,000</u>	<u>92,500</u>	<u>94,650</u>	<u>92,500</u>	<u>199,868</u>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>2,598,584</b>	<b>2,468,433</b>	<b>2,694,116</b>	<b>2,717,595</b>	<b>2,629,253</b>	<b>2,595,338</b>

As noted above, the total expenditures for Human Services programs were also consistent over the 6-year period, with average annual costs of 2.5 million dollars. Other financing uses are funds that are transferred to the General Fund to reimburse the County for indirect costs and overhead. This amount increased significantly in 2020, due to a change in the formula utilized to determine overhead costs.

It should be noted that the Human Service Department also receives funds from Children Youth Services (CYS) for programs that it provides.

#### CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES (CYS) FUND

Like Behavioral Health, a majority of the funding for CYS is through State and Federal programs. Transfers in reflects funding supplied by the County for programming, while transfers out reflects funds that are due to either the Behavioral Health Fund or the General Fund. The CYS program relies on 80% state funding, with the balance split between federal and county. Mr. Starostanko, the Director of CYS, states that the department is required to submit a “needs based” budget to the Commonwealth 2 ½ years prior to the year in which they will need the funding. All of the changes are based upon a formula. The department is currently attempting to increase the number of foster parents available to avoid the fees of institutionalizing children. The cost of foster parenting is about 1/3 less expensive. There was a tremendous increase in the number of children coming through CYS several years ago, because of drug addiction and juvenile probation. The caseload went from 60 children to 145 children. In the past year (2020), CYS was able to reduce the volume back to the previous amount of 60 children. The Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the six-year period ended 2020 is included as Attachment 8 and the Balance Sheet is included as Attachment 9.

**Table 28 – CYS Revenues 2015-2020**

Revenues:	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Intergovernmental	2,733,854	3,316,287	4,336,164	4,063,934	5,321,427	4,777,810
Charges for Services	84,059	84,912	66,715	103,503	97,778	55,155
Interest	93	1,545	1,636	2,331	3,479	2,016
Donations	19,239	945	1,848	1,168	2,832	3,060
Other Financing Sources	<u>764,778</u>	<u>949,915</u>	<u>471,964</u>	<u>1,368,784</u>	<u>1,367,000</u>	<u>1,553,856</u>
Total Revenue	3,602,023	4,353,604	4,878,327	5,539,720	6,792,516	6,391,897

Intergovernmental Revenues for CYS increased for the period from a low of \$2.73 million in 2015 to a high of \$5.32 million in 2019, which is consistent with the increase in the caseload that was experienced by the Department. Other financing sources are direct contributions from the General Fund. As discussed in Table 14, there were a series of transfers to CYS in the amount of \$4.85 million between 2017 and 2020.

**Table 29 – CYS Expenditures 2015-2020**

Expenditures:	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Children Youth Services	3,495,635	4,234,654	4,428,884	5,383,504	6,606,058	6,141,898
Other Financing Uses	<u>106,388</u>	<u>118,950</u>	<u>213,461</u>	<u>156,216</u>	<u>186,458</u>	<u>249,999</u>
Total Expenditures:	3,602,023	4,353,604	4,642,345	5,539,720	6,792,516	6,391,897

Expenses in CYS were much higher than funding available for all six years reviewed. The CYS program, like the Behavioral Health program, operates on a July – June fiscal year. Other financing uses represent transfers back to the General Fund and / or to the Behavioral Health fund.

## **THE PRESENT: 2021 – 2022**

The aftershock of 2020 will be felt for many more years. An economic shutdown fueled by a global pandemic, riots due to perceived social injustices and an antagonistic presidential election are the headlines that hit the local papers. As Greene County government lumbered forward, aid started to pour in from the federal coffers, first in the form of Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) funding and soon in the form of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

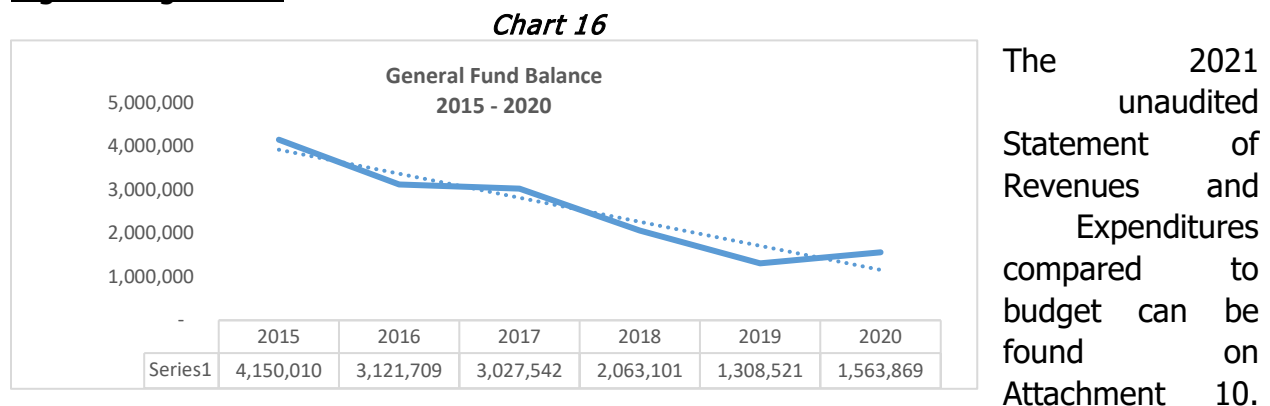
In February 2021, the unemployment rate in Greene County was 8.5%. The total number of people unemployed was estimated at 1,400 out of a total workforce of 16,000. The unemployment rate for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as of February 2021 stood at

7.3%.<sup>35</sup> The vaccine for COVID-19 was being widely administered in the Commonwealth by late Spring 2021 and businesses began to reopen or expand curtailed operations. Some work from home employees once again picked up car keys and headed for the office; many work from home employees are still working from home.

As of September 2021, the unemployment rate in Greene County was 6.7%, compared to Pennsylvania at 6%. The 12-month rate of inflation, from October 2020 to October 2021 was 6.2%. One of the relatively unexpected casualties of the pandemic has been shortages of products and goods driven both by lack of workers and lack of transportation resources. Construction materials, such as sanitary or storm sewer pipe, are unavailable to contractors, eager to begin a plethora of projects funded by the CARES and ARPA dollars. As 2021 ended, yet another variant of COVID-19 hit American shores, fueling President Biden to call for less travel and more shots in arms once again.

The pause of 2020 – 2021 is being followed by a time of inflation, as more and more cash hits homes and Americans, eager to regain what was lost, begin to spend. In late February 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin, ordered the invasion of Ukraine. The immediate fallout on the United States economy is the increase in the price of a gallon of gas to over \$4.25 per gallon.

### Right Sizing – 2021



The Greene County Commissioners adopted the 2021 budget on December 17, 2020. Expenditures were budgeted to exceed revenues by \$1,000,000, with that amount being drawn from existing fund balance<sup>36</sup>. At the end of 2020, the General Fund balance was \$1,563,869.

It is worth noting that the plan to continue to reduce the fund balance is not in line with best governmental practices. The County must maintain a fund balance that can respond to risks while ensuring that tax rates remain stable. The Government Finance Officers

<sup>35</sup><https://www.workstats.dli.pa.gov/Documents/County%20Profiles/Greene%20County.pdf>

<sup>36</sup>2021 County of Greene Unified County Budget, “Proposed 2021 Budget Facts” <https://www.co.greene.pa.us/resources/14273>

Association (GFOA) recommends that at a minimum, the government should maintain *at least* two months of regular operating expenditures, or two months of regular operating revenues as an unrestricted budgetary fund balance.<sup>37</sup> For Greene County, that *minimum* fund balance approximates \$2.9 million.

While the adopted budget planned a \$1,000,000 deficit, the 2021 unaudited Statement of Revenues and Expenditures shows that revenues exceeded expenditures by \$3,865,434. The two primary drivers of the excess of revenues over budget were 1) Charges for Services was budgeted for \$2,584,429.10 and actual revenues received were \$5,551,886.17; 2) The Commissioners authorized a transfer of \$942,000 in idle cash from the Debt Service Fund to the General Fund to offset the \$1,000,000 budgeted deficit.

A comparison of total 2020 revenues / expenditures to total 2021 revenues / expenditures suggests that significant changes occurred in 2021. As shown in Table 30, total revenue received in 2021 exceeded total revenue received in 2020 by \$1,647,643; and total 2021 expenses were \$2,004,837 less than total 2020 expenses.

*Table 30 – Comparison of 2020 Revenues and Expenditures to 2021 Revenues and Expenditures*

	2020	2021 <sup>38</sup>	Variance
<b>Total Revenues</b>	\$19,823,050	\$21,470,693	\$1,647,643
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$19,610,095	\$17,605,258	(\$2,004,837)

## Revenues

In 2021, the Commissioners increased real estate tax millage from 7.535 mills to 9.035 mills. In addition to providing revenue to the General Fund, the County budget dedicates millage to the Library and to Debt Service. The change in millage for the three dedicated sources between 2020 and 2021 is shown below. Total millage was increased by 1.5 mills, with revenue dedicated to the General Fund and the Library increasing and revenue dedicated to the debt service fund decreasing.

<sup>37</sup> “Fund Balance Guidelines for the General Fund,” <https://www.gfoa.org/materials/fund-balance-guidelines-for-the-general-fund>

<sup>38</sup> Unaudited revenues based upon “County of Greene Statement of Revenues and Expenditures – Unposted Transactions Included in this Report” by Department for the period 1/1/21 – 12/31/21 as of February 23, 2022.



*Table 31 – Comparison of 2020 millage rate to 2021 millage rates*

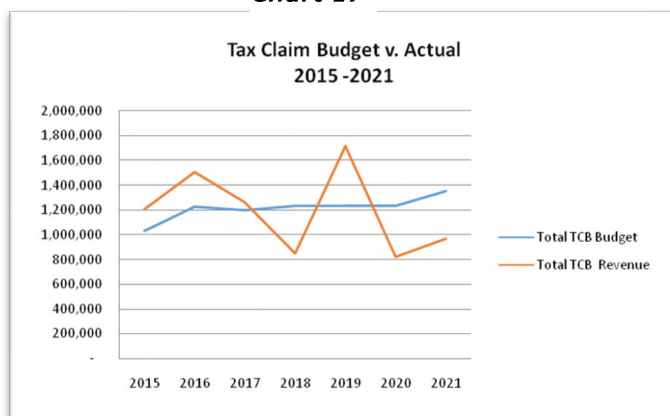
	2020 <sup>39</sup>	2021 <sup>40</sup>	Variance
<b>General Fund</b>	6.77	8.543	1.773
<b>Debt Service</b>	.695	.409	(.286)
<b>Library</b>	<u>.07</u>	<u>.083</u>	<u>.013</u>
<b>Total Millage</b>	<b>7.535</b>	<b>9.035</b>	<b>1.500</b>

As of February 23, 2022, the unaudited net Real Estate Tax revenue received in 2021 was \$1,558,295 higher than net Real Estate Tax revenue received in 2020. The 2021 budget reduced overall contra millage by .273 mills (or \$402,822 at face). The table below portrays the effects of the increase in general fund millage (1.5 mills) and the decrease in contra millage between 2020 and 2021. It should be noted that Tax Claim Bureau collections are also reflected in the contra account revenue. The change in the structure of dedicated millage had the added benefit of revenue retainage in the general fund.

*Table 31 – Comparison of Net Real Estate Tax 2020 to 2021*

<b>Real Estate Taxes:</b>	<b>2020 (Audited)</b>	<b>2021 (Unaudited)</b>	<b>Variance</b>
Real Estate Tax Revenue	12,190,585	13,317,417	1,126,832
<b>Contra RET Revenue</b>	<u>(1,152,432)</u>	<u>(720,699)</u>	<u>431,733</u>
<b>Total Real Estate Taxes</b>	<b>11,038,153</b>	<b>12,596,448</b>	<b>1,558,295</b>

*Chart 17*



Total assessed value decreased by \$76,672,462 between 2020 and 2021. Encouragingly, the total assessed value of building and land increased between 2020 and 2021, but that increase was unsurprisingly offset by a \$97,178,370 decrease in mineral value. Extrapolating penalty and discount back to face, it appears that total current year collections for 2021 were 93% of the assessment. The 2021 budget contemplated total

<sup>39</sup>Correspondence dated November 13, 2019 from the Greene County Commissioners to Cory Grandel, Treasurer, transmitting the 2020 tax duplicate, providing the millage rates and the total taxable real estate value at face.

<sup>40</sup> Correspondence dated December 17, 2020 from the Greene County Commissioners to Cory Grandel, Treasurer, transmitting the 2021 tax duplicate, providing the millage rates and the total taxable real estate value at face.



current year collections (at face) of \$12,536,469, or 94% of certified value. The total variance between revised budget and current real estate tax collection was .6% (\$83,616).

Unlike current year collections, Tax Claim Collections ended 2021 at 70% of budget. The underperformance of Tax Claim collections pushed down the percent of total real estate tax collections compared to budget to 96.3%.

Net Tax Claim revenue received in 2021 was \$389,310 short of the budget. Chart 17 compares actual Tax Claim Bureau collections to the amount budgeted.<sup>41</sup> Clearly, Tax Claim Bureau collections are erratic. These numbers are likely driven to extremes by larger taxpayers, not remitting payment during the current year. When preparing the budget, the Budget Director should meet with the Treasurer and agree upon the next years' budget based upon 1) Whether large taxpayers are unpaid at budget time; 2) The likelihood of payment at tax claim; 3) The history of the delinquent payers. This is not an exact science, but with a little bit of communication, the gap between budget and actual may be narrowed. Additionally, by reviewing past trend analysis, the Budget Director may be more accurately able to assign a budget number. Additional efforts to fast lane properties that are delinquent through the upset sale process may induce late payers to make payment earlier.

The County received \$4,441,886 in Charges for Services in 2021, eclipsing the revised budget by \$2,967,457. Of that amount, \$3,215,463.31 was received by the Treasurer in Act 13 reimbursements. The balance (\$1,226,423) is a combination of revenues with the largest sources coming from Parks and Pools (\$210,222), the Register & Recorder (\$546,141) and the District Magistrates (\$207,680).

**Chart 18**

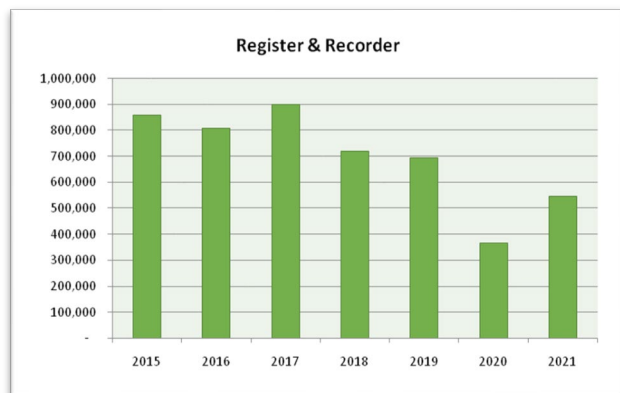


Chart 18 captures one the effects of the pandemic. Revenue collected by the Register and Recorder dipped dramatically in 2020 and was slow to catch back up with pre-pandemic revenues. According to Donna Tharp, the elected Register of Wills and Recorder of Deeds, the closing of the Courthouse in 2020, coupled with oil, gas and coal industry slow / shutdowns impacted the recording and

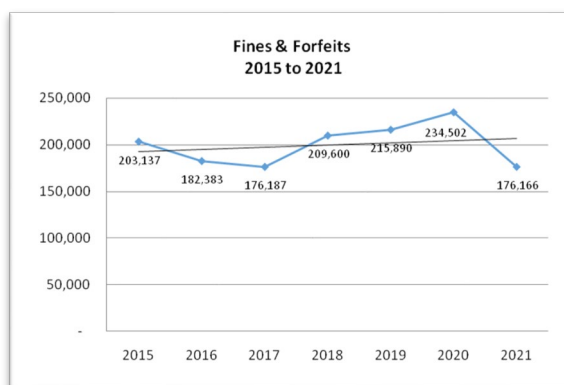
<sup>41</sup> For purposes of this analysis, departmental worksheets printed January 12, 2021 were utilized. The numbers shown in the graph and in the analysis are net of the contra accounts.

search revenue traditionally received by her office.

Act 13 revenues received in 2021 were lower than any year in the period 2015 – 2021. As shown in Table 12 earlier, Act 13 Revenues have averaged \$4.5 million per year. The funds received in 2021 were from well activity in 2020, during the height of the pandemic.

**Chart 19**

Fines & Forfeits are received by the Clerk of Courts. The 2021 revised budget was \$247,000. The revised budget was set too high based upon the actual revenue trend, as shown in Chart 19. The Clerk of Courts has not collected \$247,000 in any of the past seven years. Trend analysis is helpful when preparing budgets so that errors like this are minimized.



Actual revenue received fell short of budget by about 30% (\$70,834.09). As shown in Chart 19, revenue received from Fines and Forfeits in 2021 was significantly below the trend line. Ms. Wise, the Clerk of Courts responded to interview questions in late January 2021. She stated that defendants are losing jobs and are unable to make payments owed. She was working to fill vacant positions so that her office has the capacity to work on collections efforts and / or to outsource collections efforts to a third party. She also stated that her office experiences high employee turnover, which results in the need to (re)train, slowing collections efforts. Collections in 2020 mark the high point of the 7-year look back, while 2021 collections mark the low point. Extra attention should be paid to this revenue line-item in 2022 and moving forward.

The County receives federal, state and local grants from various sources for programs and services. For the year 2021, Federal Grants fell short of budget by \$122,002, but both State and Local Grants exceeded budget by a cumulative \$250,803. Federal grants were received by the Courts for victim/witness programs and adult and juvenile probation (\$172,084). State and local grants were received by the Courts (\$203,254), Adult Probation (\$185,270), the Sheriff (\$66,427), Emergency Management (\$61,009) and Economic Development (\$37,579). Overall, grants received exceeded budget by \$128,800. In an interview with Ami Cree, Controller, Ms. Cree shared that there is not a clear picture of the amount and number of grants that are in play in the County at any given time. She spoke of putting into place a system whereby awarded grants and their subsequent drawdown was better managed and recorded. The County receives a number of operating grants on an annual basis, for instance the County receives funding annually

from PEMA/FEMA for the Emergency Management Coordinator's position. Additional grants are received from other agencies, such as the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). A system to keep track of the amount awarded, the amount received, and the amount actually spent from funding sources is a necessary tool for budgeting purposes and should be implemented.

Transfers In for 2021 were \$1,411,556 of a revised budget of \$486,469. During 2021, the Commissioners agreed to move \$942,000 from the Debt Service Fund to the General Fund to offset the \$1,000,000 budgeted deficit between revenues and expenditures. According to Judy Snyder, the Debt Service Fund was overfunded due to the recent refinancing of County bonds. The overfunded status is also what led to the reduction in the dedicated millage rate for debt service in 2021. A total of \$380,301 of the revenue shown in the line item "Transfers In" was received by the departments comprising Health and Human Services (HHS). Both Children and Youth Services (CYS) and Behavioral Health (MHMR) are separate funds and both are on a different fiscal year than the General Fund. While revenue and expense for HHS is accounted for in the General Fund budget, the auditor will separate the funds out from the General Fund. Transfers in reflect transfers between the funds (General, Capital, CYS and Behavioral Health) and also reflect the cost allocation plan prepared by Maximus.

As stated earlier, total unaudited revenue received by the County was \$21,470,693, or 119.8% of the budgeted amount of \$17,956,724. Revenues finished the year \$3,513,969 higher than budget. The year 2021 marks the fourth successive year that actual revenues eclipsed budget. However, 2021 presented the largest positive variance of the last four years.

*Table 32 - Modified excerpt from Table 2 - Variance between budget and actual revenue*

	2015 Variance	2016 Variance	2017 Variance	2018 Variance	2019 Variance	2020 Variance	2021 Variance
Total Revenue	(\$303,711)	(\$3,007,018)	(\$2,378,098)	\$361,709	\$1,477,717	820,334	\$3,513,969

## Expenditures

The revised 2021 budget proposed total expenditures of \$18,956,724. The actual, unaudited expenditures for the year as of February 23, 2022, were \$17,605,258. Total Expenses were \$1,351,466 less than budget. Attachment 10 presents the unaudited Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the year ended 2021 as compared to budget. Overall, expenses were 92.9% of budget. Table 33 provides a summary.

**Table 33 - 2021 Actual Expenditures compared to Budget**

	2021 Budget	2021 Expenditures <sup>42</sup>	Variance
Personnel	12,862,340	12,294,640	(567,700)
Services	3,396,880	3,248,074	(148,806)
Materials & Supplies	723,819	760,138	36,319
Capital Outlay	48,525	35,069	(13,456)
Other Financing Uses	97,589	159,162	61,573
Transfers Out	<u>1,827,571</u>	<u>1,108,175</u>	<u>(719,396)</u>
Total Expenditures	<b>18,956,724</b>	<b>17,605,258</b>	<b>(1,351,466)</b>

The largest categorical savings occurred in Transfers Out, followed by Personnel and (a distant third) Services. Table 34 provides additional detail for "Transfers Out." As stated earlier, CYS and Health & Human Services (HSD) are both separate funds that operate on a July-June fiscal year. Typically, funds that are transferred from CYS are either transferred to HSD or to the General Fund. Funds transferred from HSD are typically transferred to the General Fund. Therefore, while actual expenses were less than budget, this was not necessarily a positive for the overall General Fund.

**Table 34 – Transfers Out Budget V. Actual**

Department/Office	2021 Budget	2021 Expenditures	Variance
Domestic Relations	235,000	149,272	(85,728)
CYS	1,300,000	800,570	(499,430)
Undesignated (HSD)	<u>292,571</u>	<u>158,332</u>	<u>(134,239)</u>
Totals	<b>1,827,571</b>	<b>1,108,175</b>	<b>(719,397)</b>

The second largest variance between actual and budgeted expenditures for 2021 occurred in Personnel. As shown in Table 35, the difference between budgeted and actual personnel expenses was \$567,700, with almost all of that coming from Administration.

**Table 35 – Personnel Costs Budget v Actual**

	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	Variance
Administration	3,787,590	3,232,853	554,737
Judicial	7,356,875	7,308,942	47,933
Planning & Development	657,055	561,648	95,407
Health & Human Services	0	123,656	(123,656)
Recreation	<u>1,060,820</u>	<u>1,067,541</u>	<u>(6,721)</u>
Totals	<b>12,862,340</b>	<b>12,294,640</b>	<b>567,700</b>

<sup>42</sup> Unaudited expenditures based upon "County of Greene Statement of Revenues and Expenditures – Unposted Transactions Included in this Report" by Department for the period 1/1/21 – 12/31/21 as of February 23, 2022.

Table 36 drills down on the Administration piece of the personnel budget. Medical coverage and workers compensation expenses collectively were under budget by \$405,465. Because the information in these tables is yet unaudited and subject to additional editing by the Controller's office, it is anticipated that there will be changes to at least the workers compensation expense, which is currently a negative \$88,694. Wages were under budget by \$80,397, and retirement by \$52,027.

**Table 36 – Administration Personnel Costs - 2021**

<i>Personnel Costs – Administration</i>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>Salaries &amp; Wages</b>	2,078,840	1,998,443	80,397
<b>Medical Coverage</b>	807,838	536,618	271,220
<b>Affordable Care Act</b>	600	125	475
<b>Workers Compensation</b>	45,551	(88,694)	134,245
<b>Unemployment Compensation</b>	15,485	13,809	1,676
<b>Social Security Tax</b>	128,888	117,434	11,454
<b>Medicare Tax</b>	30,143	27,464	2,679
<b>Life Insurance</b>	4,116	3,553	563
<b>Retirement</b>	<u>676,129</u>	<u>624,102</u>	<u>52,027</u>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,787,590</b>	<b>3,232,853</b>	<b>554,737</b>

Salaries and wages were collectively under budget, or comparatively close to budget in all departments. Medical coverage was also under budget in each department. A closer look at the budget category "Judicial" indicates that while overall personnel costs were under budget, individual departments were still struggling to stay within their budgets, as reflected in Table 37.

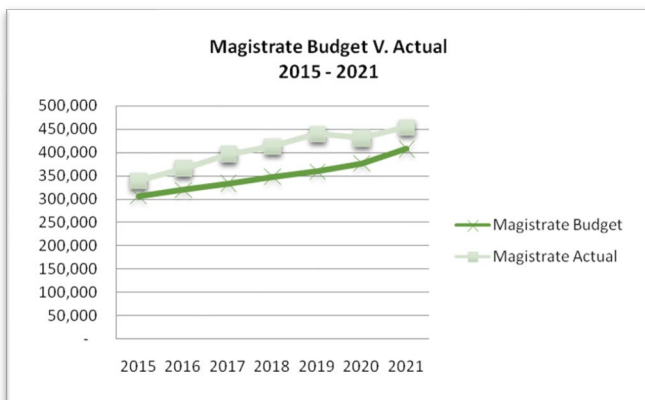
**Table 37 – Judicial Wages vs Budget**

<i>Salaries &amp; Wages – Judicial</i>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>Magistrate 1</b>	133,037	148,629	15,592
<b>Magistrate 2</b>	137,239	158,188	20,949
<b>Magistrate 3</b>	137,322	147,821	10,499
<b>Adult Probation</b>	497,764	520,530	22,766
<b>County Jail</b>	1,512,368	1,606,817	94,449
<b>Prothonotary</b>	<u>153,694</u>	<u>182,708</u>	<u>29,014</u>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,571,424</b>	<b>2,764,693</b>	<b>193,269</b>

Table 7, presented earlier in this report detailed variances in the Magistrates wages compared to budget for the period 2015 – 2020. In every year reviewed, all three of the Magistrates office wages were over budget. Is this a result of under budgeting or overspending? Chart 20 graphically depicts what has occurred over the last seven years. Attempts to speak with the District Magistrates in early 2021 were unsuccessful. Therefore, the true answer to whether the offices are regularly under budgeted or

regularly overspending is left to address by the Commissioners. Over the course of the seven-year period, the overspend in wages has eclipsed half a million dollars.

*Chart 20*



Personnel expenses for the Greene County Jail surpassed the 2021 budget by a total of \$119,431, with wages exceeding budget by \$94,449. For the period January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2021, the total amount spent in excess of budgeted wages was \$326,751.

On a more positive note, the Courts Division returned a positive actual to budget variance in wages for the second year in a row. Total budgeted wages were \$413,701 while actual expenses for wages were \$401,298.

The “Services” portion of the Greene County budget blankets a number of expenses, from Utilities and Rents, to printing, computer and professional services. Overall, “Services” was under budget in 2021 by \$148,806. There were several individual line items that exceeded budget – some significantly, as further discussed below. The saving grace appears to be the line item “Miscellaneous Service Expense,” which was budgeted for \$402,460 while actual expenses were just \$909.

Professional Service expenses for 2021 were cumulatively over budget by \$251,139, with Other Professional Services accounting for a little more than half of that amount, as shown in Table 38. The overage in Other Professional Services was led by a combination of the Coroner (\$44,881), Economic Development (\$37,127) and the Fairgrounds (\$49,856). The majority of the overage in medical services (\$44,810) is tied to the Greene County Jail. Nearly half (\$25,665) of the overage in computer services is attributable to the District Attorney. The budget for Computer Services for the District Attorney was \$0.00.

*Table 38 – Professional Service Expenses 2021*

	Budget	Actual	Variance
<b>Computer Services</b>	355,339	408,593	53,254
<b>Medical Services</b>	131,000	184,647	53,647
<b>Other Professional Services</b>	800,103	944,341	144,238
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,286,442</b>	<b>1,537,581</b>	<b>251,139</b>

Other line items that were over budget in the "Services" account grouping included Advertising (\$16,197), Liability Insurance (\$38,997) and Printing (\$12,655). While the budget to actual variance for Liability Insurance is specific to Commissioners' Finance, the overages for Printing and Advertising spanned multiple departments.

**Table 39 – Budget to Actual Variance - Expenditures**

	2015 Variance	2016 Variance	2017 Variance	2018 Variance	2019 Variance	2020 Variance	2021 Variance
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b><u>59,306</u></b>	<b><u>(699,426)</u></b>	<b><u>(1,004,787)</u></b>	<b><u>(1,192,615)</u></b>	<b><u>(397,288)</u></b>	<b><u>677,024</u></b>	<b><u>1,351,466</u></b>

The 2021 budgeted expenditures were more than adequate to meet the actual expenditures. For the second year in a row, and only the second time in the past seven years, total actual expenditures were less than total budgeted expenditures.

Right Sizing – 2022

**Table 40 – Delinquent Real Estate Tax**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Delinquent - Tax Claim</b>	1,271,459	1,634,484	1,348,148	906,170	1,824,846	871,062	1,026,756
<b>Contra</b>	<b><u>(63,728)</u></b>	<b><u>(127,971)</u></b>	<b><u>(89,858)</u></b>	<b><u>(56,083)</u></b>	<b><u>(110,028)</u></b>	<b><u>(51,388)</u></b>	<b><u>(61,066)</u></b>
<b>Total TCB Revenue</b>	<b>1,207,730</b>	<b>1,506,512</b>	<b>1,258,290</b>	<b>850,087</b>	<b>1,714,818</b>	<b>819,674</b>	<b>965,690</b>

The County Commissioners adopted the 2022 budget on December 16, 2021. The total General Fund Budget is \$19,226,727.65, an increase of \$270,004 (1.42%) from the 2021 General Fund Budget. Attachment 11 is a copy of the 2022 budget compared to the 2021 unaudited actual and the 2020 audited actual. This document was used in the following narrative.

Real Estate Tax millage remained at the 2021 millage levels. Assessed value decreased by \$33,806,763 (\$305,444 at face). As was the case in 2021, the assessed value of land and improvements increased a collective \$6,558,537, while mineral value decreased by \$40,365,300.

The net current year real estate taxes in the 2022 budget are \$300,215 less than the 2021 actual net current year real estate taxes, which is in line with the loss of assessed value discussed in the previous paragraph. However, the 2022 budget continues to call for \$1,336,180 in net delinquent (Tax Claim) receipts. As shown in Table 40, the average collections over the last seven years have been \$1,188,972. As stated earlier, unless there



is definitive knowledge of a lingering large delinquency, or a new step up in the collection of delinquent accounts, it is likely that this line item will be under budget in 2022.

Charges for Services is budgeted at \$2,725,361 in 2022. As in all years reviewed, this line item is once again being used to account for the receipt of Act 13 dollars. Also, as in all years reviewed, the budget is much lower than what is anticipated in Act 13 dollars, plus other Charges for Services normally recorded in this account. Magistrates' fines (\$222,500), Recorder and Register fees (\$473,000) and income from pools and parks (\$473,000) help to make up the balance of Charges for Services. In 2021, the County only received \$3,125,000 in Act 13 dollars, the lowest amount yet received. It is anticipated that the 2022 allocation will be equally low, based upon the economic market and the political climate during 2021.

The revenue line item "State Grants" includes \$1,560,637 in funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. According to Judy Snyder, and as discussed below, these funds were necessary to balance the 2022 budget.

The 2022 budget indicates that salaries and wages will be less costly than in 2021. It appears that there has been attrition over the course of the last year. There was also a wage freeze imposed in 2021, based upon the direness of the then financial picture of the County. Three of four collective bargaining agreements have now been signed, with the fourth is in arbitration. Wage increases for 2022 are between 2.25% and 2.5% for contracts that have been finalized.

According to Judy Snyder, the County will change the way that they fund health care in 2022, which she believes should result in a large savings. The plan will be sponsored by the County. All eligible employees will have a deductible. The County will fund the total amount of the deductible that employees use. In the past, the County placed money into individual Health Reimbursement Accounts for employees. The County will use a Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield High Deductible Qualified PPO plan with a \$5,000 deductible for single and \$10,000 deductible for family. Employee medical bills will be processed by a third party and payments made directly to medical providers, up to the amount of an employees' deductible. The County is hedging on employees not utilizing their entire deductible. In addition, the County was able to negotiate a better premium on workers compensation, which will also help the 2022 budget. The actual cost of health care in 2020 was \$2,335,447. The unaudited health care expense for 2021 was \$2,181,326. The budgeted premium for 2022 is \$2,786,451, or an increase of 20% from 2021.

Generally speaking, it appears that sewer fees, rent expense, liability insurance and medical expenses are cumulatively under budgeted by about \$50,000 in the 2022 budget,



based upon the history of the last several years. The under budgeting of Act 13 funds will resolve the issues with the over budgeting of real estate tax and the under budgeting of some of the smaller line items. The better budgeting approach would be for the Commissioners to agree upon an amount of Act 13 funds to dedicate to the budget and then create a separate line item for that. This creates the transparency that is lacking in the budget. Instead, the revenue line item "Charges for Services," is once again under budgeted and it will of course, be over budget by years' end, once Act 13 funds are received. Other than the structural defects of utilizing Act 13 and ARPA funding to balance the budget, the 2022 budget appears to be sound, and a good jumping off point for development of the future general fund budgets, built on the dual goals of transparency and sustainability.

## **Step 2 – Financial Trend Forecasting**

This component utilizes the information and results from Step 1 of the STMP process and projects future revenues, expenditures, and economic / demographic trends so that Greene County officials can understand the County's future financial position and take action / immediate steps to counteract any negative trends.

As part of this task, relevant plans, reports, and studies completed for Greene County were reviewed and incorporated into the STMP report.

## **THE FUTURE: 2023 – 2026**

*American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and the State and Local Fiscal Relief Fund (ARPA SLFRF).*

Before delving into the future of Greene County, a breath must be taken and recognition granted to the funding that Greene County has and will receive through ARPA SLFRF. Greene County has received an allocation of \$3,518,917.50 and is entitled to receive an additional allocation of the same amount, for a total allocation of \$7,037,835. According to the U.S. Department of Treasury Final Rule, released on April 1, 2022, the County is able to claim a standard allowance of \$10 million to spend on government services through the period of performance, or December 31, 2024. According to Judy Snyder, as of this time, the County has either dedicated or spent the following:

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| • SWPA Legal Aid – 2021                 | \$ 20,000 |
| • Bowlby Public Library – 2021          | \$ 20,000 |
| • CASA – 2021                           | \$ 20,000 |
| • CS1000 Renewal (3 years through 2024) | \$ 12,770 |
| • Jefferson Volunteer Fire Company      | \$ 6,500  |

• IT – Multifactor Authentication	\$ 35,000
• Huckestein - Boiler Fee Tank (Fort Jackson)	\$ 12,131
• J&J Mechanical – replace HVAC unit	\$ 9,200
• AMO Environmental Review (Broadband)	\$ 54,400
• Balance 2022 Budget	\$ 1,560,637*
• ABM Facility Support Services	<u>\$ 2,774,553</u>
	<b>\$4,555,191</b>

The ABM Facility Support Services contract was approved in February. The contract, which is guaranteed to save the County \$2.9 million over a 20-year period, will reduce energy and water use and increase operational efficiency by making needed improvements to building infrastructure. The County does not have a capital project plan and has made repairs to failing infrastructure on a pay-as-you-go methodology. This contract will pinpoint waste and make necessary investments to curb that waste. Prior to approving the contract, ABM spent nearly 10 months in the county reviewing all of the County-owned buildings.<sup>43</sup>

The balance of SLFRF available to spend is \$2,482,644.

#### Future Years Budget

There is no magic financial bullet for curing the structural defects in the County’s budget that are caused by coal depletion. As recommended in the following section, prudent financial planning, strong communication and follow through will be required to keep the County fiscally solvent.

The projected 5-year budget is attached as Attachment 12. This worksheet includes the 2022 budget as a guide. The forecasted budget assumes that the recommendations that are presented in the following section of this narrative are either not implemented or are ineffective. Where no narrative is presented for a specific line-item below, the reader should be aware that the build out of revenues and expenditures for future years was dependent upon the analysis of the trends established by (at least) the 2015 through 2022 audited, actual and budget worksheets, respectively, and any other information that was available.

As more thoroughly detailed in the next section, the forecasted budget requires a tax increase of one-mill in 2025. Even with that one-mill tax increase, the forecasted budget ends 2027 with a \$1,026,773 deficit. In addition, the forecasted budget absorbs the large

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<sup>43</sup> Observer Reporter, February 21, 2021 “Greene Commissioners approve contract for energy savings”

majority of Act 13 revenue to be used for general operating purposes and in further support of CYS.

This forecasted budget is a tool and should be viewed as that. It provides a glimpse of the future and hopefully the incentive to make the changes recommended in the next section of this report.

## Real Estate Tax

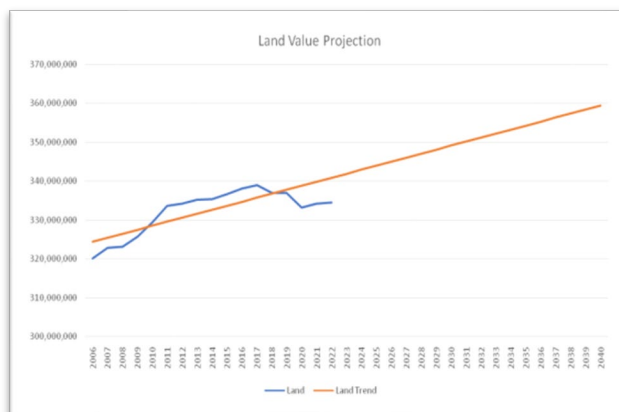
The three Charts labeled Chart 21 were provided by Jeremy Kelly, Greene County Director of Planning. These charts were prepared utilizing trend analysis, taking into consideration the actual experience of the County for the years 2006 – 2022 and then projecting out to 2040.

Between 2021 and 2022, coal depletion caused a sharp drop in assessed value of \$137,543,670 (\$1,242,707 in real estate tax dollars at face). While the blue line in the trend analysis shown in the Coal Value Projections chart anticipates coal values to slowly decline through 2040, the reality of the last two years is shown by the green line. Both improvements and land continue to increase, but the rate of that increase has not been in step with the rate of the decline in coal.

***Chart 21 – Greene County Assessed Values Trend Analysis<sup>44</sup>***



<sup>44</sup> Data and charts provided by Jeremy Kelly, Greene County Director of Planning, “County Millage Rates 2006-2040”



Between 2006 and 2020, the average overall assessed value decreased by 3.5% annually. The projections for 2023 – 2027 assume that continued 3.5% step down in assessed value, with a conservative 92% of current year taxes collected during the current year. Table 41 provides the calculations in more detail. The projected budget includes a 1 mill increase in real estate tax in the year 2025.

***Table 41 Real Estate Tax Assumptions***

	Total Tax	Millage	92%	Discount	Face	Penalty
<b>2023</b>	12,570,122	9.0350	11,564,512	10,176,771	809,516	578,226
<b>2024</b>	12,130,168	9.0350	11,159,754	9,820,584	781,183	557,988
<b>2025</b>	13,001,197	10.0350	11,961,101	10,525,769	837,277	598,055
<b>2026</b>	12,546,155	10.0350	11,542,463	10,157,367	807,972	577,123
<b>2027</b>	12,107,040	10.0350	11,138,477	9,801,859	779,693	556,924

The assumptions shown in the table above do not include Tax Claim Bureau (delinquent) real estate tax. For the purpose of this projected budget, Actual Tax Claim Bureau receipts for the period 2015 – 2021 were averaged and that average (\$1,188,000) is included in each of the years 2023 – 2027 projections.

## Other Income

The most noticeable change to this account grouping is the addition of a new line item, "Act 13 Funds." In the past, these funds were lumped in with "Charges for Services." As discussed in earlier sections of this report, this practice added little transparency to what the County was actually receiving in charges for services from various departments, including the Register and Recorder, District Magistrates and Recreation. By moving Act 13 funds to a separate line-item, readers of the budget have a better sense of how the actual revenue for charges is flowing into the budget. The amount of Act 13 revenue

projected for the 2023-2027 budget is the average of revenues received for the period 2015 – 2021.

The line item “Charges for Services” without Act 13 netted the County an average of \$1.3 million annually, in the non-pandemic period. The budget anticipates that the Register and Recorder, Recreation and District Magistrate service fees will again increase to that pre-pandemic level between 2023 – 2027. There is opportunity to review fees for these departments and ensure that the fees charged are equal to the cost of the service provided. As the cost of the service increases, the charge for the service should also increase.

Licenses and permits revenue is a collection of funds received by the Treasurer for dog, hunting and fishing licenses; by the coroner for death certificates and by the Sheriff for gun permits. All told the revenue in this line-item averages between \$42,000 to \$45,000 annually. There is little opportunity to increase the fees for these permits because the fees are determined by Commonwealth statute. Increases in revenue are therefore dependent upon a combination of increases in demand and additional enforcement efforts.

## Personnel

Cumulative Salaries and Wages were increased by 3% for the years 2023 and 2024. Wages were increased by 2.5% for the years 2025 and 2026 and by 2.0% in 2027. The increases provided in the adopted collective bargaining agreements are less than these cumulative increases. The budget numbers are intentionally higher to account for departments that have historically exceeded budget in this category.

Health insurance increases are averaged at 5% per year. While Workers Compensation increases are projected a 3% per year. A slight increase in pension requirements is projected over the course of the 5-year period. Based upon the 2020 and 2021 actual experience, the 2022 budgeted expense for retirement may be too low.

## Services

With the approval of an Energy Savings Support Performance contract with ABM Facility Support Services, it is anticipated that total utility bills will decrease, over time. For purposes of the projected 5-year budget, however, utility expenses were held at a constant level, in line with the 2022 budget. Cumulatively, Natural Gas, Electricity, Water and Sewage expenses were \$76,939 higher in 2021 than they were in 2020 (see attachment #10). The 2022 adopted budget projected an increase over the 2021 unaudited expense of an additional \$34,829.44, for a 2-year increase of \$111,768.44

(average of 16% per year). While the ABM contract will stave off future increases in utility expenses and eventually decrease existing expenses, this must be counterbalanced with the speed at which the capital projects proceed and the volatility in the energy market. Conservatively, by flat lining these expenditures, an annual decrease of 3 – 16% is implied.

The line items “Refuse Service” and “Building Rent” were slightly increased over the five-year term, in line with previous years’ experience. The line-item Repair and Maintenance Costs (Materials and Supplies) was reduced to account for the work provided by ABM.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

A year ago, in March of 2021, a series of recommendations were presented to each individual Commissioner during separately held meetings. These recommendations were prepared prior to the receipt and review of the 2020 audited financial statements and the close of 2021. Where necessary, information has been edited to add data for 2020 and 2021.

### Stay within the confines of the established budget

Between 2015 and 2019, the total General Fund revenue received by the County was \$3.8 million less than what was budgeted, and total General Fund expenditures were \$3.2 million higher than what was budgeted, leading to an overall \$7 million dollar variance between budget and actual revenues and expenditures for the five-year period. This \$7 million deficit was partially offset by Other Financing Sources, which were \$5 million more than budget over the same five-year period. Overall, the County’s actual fund balance varied from budget by a negative \$2 million for the five-year period.

The 2020 audited financial statements indicate that the Commissioners were in the process of turning the ship around prior to requesting the preparation of a Strategic Management Plan. The audit indicates that Revenues exceeded expenditures and \$255,348 was added to fund balance. The 2021 (unaudited) financial statements are also positive. Total revenue eclipsed expenditures by \$739,971.<sup>45</sup> The Commissioners have taken significant steps to decrease the overall operating costs of the County. Unfortunately, increases in revenue are more elusive because of the continued and rapid loss of the assessed value of minerals (coal).

Timeliness of financial data is the most critical aspect in administering a sound budget. The lack of accurate, timely financial statements leads to errors in decision making that

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<sup>45</sup> This balance is net of Act 13 funds, which were to be moved to the Capital Reserve Account. The analysis of 2021 revenues and expenditures is based upon unaudited financial statements and is subject to change.

have significant consequences to budgets that are tightly programmed. The Controller's office is responsible for preparing and providing financial documents to the Board of Commissioners and to the Director of the Commissioners' Finance Office. The Commissioners must continue to demand that these documents more fairly represent the activity of the County on a *timely* basis.

Second only to timely and accurate financial data is the employment of personnel with a solid background in financial management and planning who has the time and ability to review, analyze and present the data. While the County has provided funding for a budget director position, this position has historically been split with other roles/departments, most recently with Elections. The Commissioners must consider eliminating other job duties from the Budget Director's position to allow singular focus on the development and implementation of strategies that lead to a balanced budget, while reducing the burden upon taxpayers and providing a fair wage to employees.

The third key element to sound financial management is communication coupled with execution. The Budget Director must continue to schedule and keep monthly meetings with row officers and department heads for the review of budget-to-actual data. Adjustments to the overall departmental budgets must be made where there are negative variances. The Commissioners must continue to include in their monthly schedules a time to meet with the Budget Director to discuss concerns and recommendations. The Budget Director holds the financial keys to the County. Before programs are enacted, projects agreed upon or dollars otherwise programmed, the Budget Director must be apprised.

The Budget Director and the Commissioners should create a five-year financial plan, adjusted annually based upon unforeseen circumstances – not happenstance. The County elected row officers and the County Commissioners must negotiate fairly the total costs of their departments prior to the adoption of the budget for the new fiscal year. Financial management cannot be dictated by elected terms of office.

### Budget Transparency

Some of the line items in the County budget act as buckets to collect revenues and expenses that do not meet the definition of the line-items into which they are placed. For example, "Other Professional Services" is an expense bucket into which is placed: transportation of bodies to and from the medical examiner's office; the cost of an investigator by the public defender; and a myriad of other dissimilar expenses for each and every department. While recognizing that the budget document would be pages long if separate line-items were created for each professional service rendered, even the

separation of this line-item into functions (Judicial, Administration, Planning, etc.) would add more transparency and provide for more thorough analysis.

The County receives a number of federal, state and local grants for a number of initiatives. The creation of a document that outlines the grants that are currently awarded and in various stages of administration can act as a tool to ensure the appropriate budgeting of departmental revenues and expenditures. Grant awards may extend over several years and it is difficult to track whether grant funds have been awarded and received / expended or not. Creating a "Grants Receivable" line-item upon the approval/granting of funds for all departments would provide tighter control/insight into what is "out there." This document may also be utilized for planning future grant applications and awards.

The County has traditionally credited Act 13 revenues to the "Charges for Services" line item. This creates the illusion that the County is receiving three to four times more in revenue for services than what is actually being received. For the sake of transparency, Act 13 revenue should be listed as a separate line-item in the budget. This revenue stream represents about 20% of the total revenue received by the County on an annual basis.

#### Establish a Capital Reserve Fund and Capital Improvement Plan

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a 5-year plan that is reviewed and updated annually. The CIP details planned projects and funding requirements and curtails the "pay as you go" approach to financing projects.

The County Commissioners recent contract with ABM to not only conduct a facility condition assessment but also to correct the existing deficiencies is in-line with this recommendation. This assessment will aid in the formulation of required projects and the determination of the year and need of those projects. While ABM focuses on energy efficiencies, other capital projects, for example infrastructure improvements to aid in economic development initiatives, should also be assessed. Two well-crafted examples of Capital Improvement Plans are Mount Lebanon Borough, Allegheny County, PA <sup>46</sup> and Ferguson Township, Centre County, PA. These documents may be viewed at the links provided in the footnotes, or by visiting the websites of each respective municipality.

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<sup>46</sup>Mount Lebanon Borough: <http://www.mtlebanon.org/DocumentCenter/View/17705/2021-2025-CIP?bidId=>; Ferguson Township: [https://www.twp.ferguson.pa.us/sites/g/files/vyhlf576/f/uploads/2021-2025\\_cip\\_080420.pdf](https://www.twp.ferguson.pa.us/sites/g/files/vyhlf576/f/uploads/2021-2025_cip_080420.pdf)



As a part of the CIP, the Commissioners should establish a Capital Reserve Fund, to serve as the long-term plan (5 – 20 years). The County is in an excellent position to establish both a Capital Improvement Plan and a Capital Reserve Fund. The balance of SLFRF (\$2,482,644) and 2021 Act 13 dollars (\$3,215,463) create a strong foundation for funding. Section 1784.2 of the County Code states:

*“Capital Reserve Fund for Anticipated Capital Expenditures.--(a) The county commissioners shall have the power to create and maintain a separate capital reserve fund for anticipated legal capital expenditures. The money in the fund shall be used from time to time for the construction, purchase or replacement of or addition to county buildings, equipment, machinery, motor vehicles or other capital assets of the county and for no other purpose.(b) The county commissioners may annually appropriate moneys from the general county funds, not to exceed ten per centum of the county operating budget, to be paid into the capital reserve fund or place in the fund any moneys received from the sale, lease or other disposition of any county property or from any other source unless received or acquired for a particular purpose. The fund shall be controlled, invested, reinvested and administered and the moneys therein and income from such moneys expended for any of the purposes for which the fund is created, in such manner as may be determined by the county commissioners. The money in the fund, when invested, shall be invested in a manner consistent with the provisions of section 1706 relating to the investment of county funds generally. This subsection shall not be construed to limit the powers of the county to the use of moneys in the capital reserve fund in making lawful capital expenditures.”*

Pursuant to the County Code, the Commissioners can make an annual allocation from all future year's budgets to continue to fund the Capital Reserve Fund. The added benefit is that funds once placed here cannot be diverted to other interests. They must be spent on capital projects.

### Right-size Personnel Costs

The Commissioners should employ a consultant to perform a study that results in the creation of a Table of Organization / Compensation Plan. This plan will provide clarity and uniformity in determining the appropriate staffing levels in each department; the global costs associated with hiring an employee and the fair compensation of employees.

Department Directors / Row Officers must agree to the creation of one policy that provides standard criteria for staffing levels. While common factors, like employee turnover, often influence staffing decisions, the County lacks consistency in how staffing level decisions are made. Establishing standard criteria for staffing levels can aid in recruiting, retention, budgeting and succession planning. The link to an example of an

employee staffing and pay plan is provided in the footnotes and is also available on the website of the City of Tulsa.<sup>47</sup>

The County has done a nice job of hiring second career employees, who may not need the same level of benefits. Can this be used as a future hiring strategy for certain departments? How well of a fit do previous “life experiences” bring?

The Sheriff’s Department and the Greene County Jail both have high turnover rates due to what has been stated as lower than average pay scales. What is the cost versus benefit of continuing to train new hires versus increasing pay for employees? Is there an opportunity to cross train the employees of these two departments?

#### The Airport as an Economic Driver?

The Commissioners must continue to find a path to utilize the airport as an economic driver, instead of an inefficient, costly recreational avenue for a very small segment of the County population. The Commissioners recognize the airport as an asset and have worked to offer new programming / training to increase the revenue stream associated with the facility. The reality is that expenses have far-outweighed revenues. The fire damage that occurred in late March 2021 resulted in the closure of the airport restaurant for the last year. *The airport proper, runway, taxiways, and hangars were not affected by the fire.* While fire insurance will pay for a majority of the building code updates required to reopen the facility, the Commissioners must develop a plan to increase the revenue stream to at least match the expense and / or an alternative economic plan.

#### ***Greene County Airport Revenues and Expenditures 2015 through 2020***

Year	Revenue	General Fund Expense	Capital Projects Expense <sup>48</sup>	Net Revenue (Expense)
2015	\$89,270	\$51,970	\$717,325	(\$680,025)
2016	\$88,023	\$75,324	\$955,547	(\$942,848)
2017	\$81,142	\$65,437	\$1,303,214	(\$1,287,509)
2018	\$75,512	\$87,764	\$753,843	(\$766,095)
2019	\$84,119	\$97,348	\$0	(\$13,229)
2020	\$53,645	\$49,520	\$335	\$3790 <sup>49</sup>
Totals:	<b>\$471,711</b>	<b>\$427,363</b>	<b>\$3,730,264</b>	<b>(\$3,685,916)</b>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/media/13557/pay-staff-final-report.pdf>.

<sup>48</sup> Capital Projects Expense between 1/1/13 – 12/31/14 were an additional \$2,009,053

<sup>49</sup> 2020 numbers are not yet audited

### Greene County Prison – Better Alternatives?

The County Commissioners should seek funding through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to perform a study of the Greene County Prison to answer the following questions:

- Are the fees that Greene County Jail charges for holding individuals from other County jails / SCI equitable with the fees that other Counties charge?
- Is it feasible to contract with SCI Greene (or other facilities) to increase capacity to maximum levels at Greene?
- Should the County hire a management company to administer the functions of the facility, including personnel?
- Are there other counties that would consider merging facilities with Greene County?
- What is the average population of the facility and how many structures are necessary?
- How sound are the existing structures?
- What is the appropriate staffing level?

The 2020 audited expenses for the Corrections Department comprised roughly 20% of total budgeted expenditures for Greene County. As of March 2021, there were nineteen (19) full time and three (3) part time employees at the jail and the average inmate population was 50 – 65 prisoners. According to Warden Kingston, the facility is in need of capital dollars to replace an existing housing tent that is used as initial quarantine and for recreation.

The Pennsylvania Code, Title 37, Chapter 95, County Correctional Institutions, requires Greene County to provide jail facilities either individually or in cooperation with another county or State Department of Corrections. Because the County's population is rarely at capacity, the Commissioners should consider alternatives to continuing to operate the facility. Additionally, because the provision of incarceration services strains the budget, the County provides minimal rehabilitation services. By expanding to a larger model – like merger with an adjacent County's correctional facility, the jail population could receive an expanded array of programs and services to aid in rehabilitation and reintroduction to society.

### Coroner's Office and Medical Examiner Fees

The County is paying an average of \$140,726 per year to send bodies to Westmoreland County for autopsies. The Commissioners should open discussions with one of the two hospitals in Greene County to establish a local medical examiner's office. In 2015,

Washington County and Washington County hospital, in a jointly funded effort, opened a state-of-the-art forensics facility in a former air handler space at the hospital. Even if the County's total annual investment remained at or near the same level, the investment would be in a medical facility in Greene County.

**Greene County Coroner's Office – Other Professional Services  
2015 through 2020**

Year	Expense
2015	\$128,883
2016	\$135,474
2017	\$143,261
2018	\$124,176
2019	\$164,806
2020	\$123,604
2021	\$164,881
Totals:	<b><u>\$985,085</u></b>

Community Development Initiatives

Consider enacting Act 152 of 2016 to build a demolition fund for municipalities in the county. Act 152 permits the County to add \$15 to the cost of the recording of each deed or mortgage. Municipalities can seek grants funds through the county to accomplish demolition projects.<sup>50</sup> Allegheny County instituted this program in 2020. The first round of funding has been awarded and applications are being accepted for the second round. Coupled with CDBG dollars, Act 152 provides additional financial ammunition to older communities in the fight against slum and blight.

The County Commissioners should support the Greene County Redevelopment Authority in the formation of a land bank. Funding for land bank activities would be provided by municipalities and school districts agreeing to remit a percentage of delinquent real estate tax revenue to the land bank. The land bank would be responsible for acquiring, remediating and selling residential structures in the County. The Redevelopment Authority is already performing these activities; but without the creation of a land bank, the pot of money is finite. The Tri-COG Land Bank (Allegheny County) has been successful in acquiring and remediating several blighted properties in the municipalities that are members. For additional information on the Tri-COG land bank, contact An Lewis, Executive Director.

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<sup>50</sup><https://dced.pa.gov/county-demolition-fund-reporting/>

### Relocate the 911 Facility

Seek grant funds / include costs in the Capital Reserve Fund to relocate the 911 facility, or alternatively purchase the building. [Note: Because of the substantial investment in broadband by the County and the Federal government, is there an opportunity for Windstream to donate the building to the County?] The facility is currently not secure and requires significant upgrades. The lease is \$2,850 per month, including utilities. Between 2015 and 2020, the County paid \$174,272 in rent and utility expenses. Those funds would be better spent on an asset owned by the County. The County does not have long term control over when the lease will terminate and where the facility will locate in the event that this occurs.

### Install a Fuel Card System

According to an interview with Jeff Novak in January 2021, the County stores gasoline in a 2,000-gallon tank. There is no card system in place for the dispensing of gasoline. Employees who need fuel write a slip that shows the beginning meter reading, the ending meter reading and their name, department and account code. A slip is kept by the department and the employee. A report is printed monthly and departments reimburse the county for gasoline. After 3:30 PM and on weekends, employees who need gas, go to the gas station. The Commissioners should consider installing a fuel card system. The system is fully automated and is much more secure than writing a slip. The fuel tanks should also be video monitored to ensure that gasoline is being placed into county-owned vehicles. There are a number of alternatives to the current practice that merit review.

### Comprehensive Plan for Recreation Initiatives

Increased spending on recreational projects, such as extending the Greene River Trail and enclosing a pool have been discussed as a way to attract visitors/new residents to Greene County, but the County does not have a comprehensive recreation plan to aid in making decisions or allocating resources in the future. The Commissioners should seek grant funding to perform a Comprehensive Recreation, Park, Open Space and Greenway plan for the County. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) provides 50% matching funding for these studies. See the following link for an example of a county plan: <https://co.venango.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/611/Parks-and-Open-Space-Plan-PDF>

### Decrease paper – Increase space

Go paperless. Associated costs will include increased computer storage space, increased use / access to OCR scanning devices and interns / summer help to process the backlog.

The Human Resource Director and IT Director should work with a management-labor contingency to create a policy that beginning on “X” date employees are required to move to a paperless system. A paperless system can increase productivity by up to 50%, provide immediate access to data and reduce storage space costs by 80%.<sup>51</sup>

### Concluding thoughts

Greene County holds a promise of a future that must be mined through the careful investment in required infrastructure to glean sustainable economic development. The casualty of the mining industry may cause distress on the financial situation in the short term, but with careful thought and planning, with sound economic incentives, Greene will be prosperous once more.

<i>“Have a well-thought financial plan that is not dependent upon correctly guessing what will happen in the future.” – Barry Ritholtz</i>

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<sup>51</sup> [Totallypaperless.com](http://Totallypaperless.com)

### **Step 3 - Emergency Plan for the Current Fiscal Year (if necessary)**

As part of the STMP process, an evaluation regarding the need for an Emergency Plan for the current fiscal year was completed to determine if a critical cash flow situation existed that may have a negative impact on the health, safety, and welfare of the County's residents. An Emergency Plan would address actions to be taken during a six (6) to twelve (12) month timeframe to avoid a fiscal emergency.

The Emergency Plan, if applicable, would set forth strategies regarding whether:

- the current fiscal year's budget can and should be reopened, amended, or modified
- operational and / or personnel reductions should occur
- short term borrowing including possible unfunded debt borrowing is necessary
- other types of administrative reorganization or short-term actions should be implemented in order for the County to remain solvent in the current fiscal year

### **Emergency Plan for 2021 - 2022**

**Upon the completion of Step 1 and Step 2 it was determined that Greene County does not need an Emergency Plan to continue operations during 2022.**

While the County's financial picture at the end of 2019 was not strong, the Commissioners took steps during 2020 and 2021 toward more disciplined spending.

## **Management Audit**

### **Step 4 – Management Audit of County Departments and Operations**

The tasks completed in Step 4 involved a management and administrative audit of the County's departments and operations. The audit includes narrative summaries of each department including budget and personnel information, as well as other relevant data.

Interviews with members of Greene County Government, County Department Heads, and key staff members were completed to assist in identifying the County's most critical operational needs. "Best Practices" for local government service delivery were used to establish a recommended structure, schedule, staffing levels, etc. for each department reviewed. This "benchmarking" strategy will provide County officials with the recommendations that they can use to address managerial and operational deficiencies.

#### Governance, Administration and Management

A sustainable municipality – County, City, Borough, Township, etc. – typically has a governing body that can capitalize on opportunities, effectively address issues and problems, and identify the trends and warning signs that may impact a municipality's ability to succeed. This requires elected and appointed officials who are committed to good governance as well as good government; leaders who are committed to an environment of professionalism. The following basic definitions provide the context for a municipality's leadership and guidance:

##### *Governance*

"Governance" is the action or manner of governing; having authority to conduct the policy, actions, and affairs of a state, organization, or people. Governance provides leadership by setting goals through plans and ordinances, identifying priorities, directing public investments, and providing public goods and services required by the basic duty to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. A lot of governance deals with the proper and effective utilization of resources available to the municipality.

##### *Administration*

"Administration" is the management or execution of public affairs, duties, and responsibilities as it pertains to government. Administration denotes a process of effectively directing or guiding (administering) the operations of the municipality.



## *Management*

“Management” is the process of directing or supervising a group of people or an organization / municipality to accomplish desired goals and objectives through the deployment of available resources. Management refers to the routine decisions and administrative work related to the daily operations of the organization / municipality.

Greene County’s elected / appointed officials have specific duties and responsibilities to ensure that the County functions in an effective and efficient manner. Some of these duties and responsibilities are contained in laws or policies Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, PA County Code (Act of August 9, 1955, P.L. 323, No. 130, Cl. 16), etc. while others can be established in documents such as bylaws and personnel manuals.

The management audit of Greene County’s departments, operations and facilities was completed as part of Step 1 – Financial Condition Assessment and Step 2 – Financial Trend Forecasting of the STMP process.

## **Issues Specific to Greene County**

The STMP included additional tasks to support the findings and recommendations in Steps 1 and 2 of the report that focused on the integration of community and economic development strategies to encourage growth and development of the County’s tax base over a multi-year period. This will help County officials prioritize and / or combine efforts regarding economic revitalization through the utilization of federal and state resources.

These efforts are important to enhancing Greene County’s sense of place and promoting a sustainable and resilient county for many years to come. The findings and analysis started with a review of previous completed plans / reports / studies for the County. Another important element of this analysis included the identification of Greene County’s issues, assets (cultural / natural / historic), opportunities (for growth and development), and obstacles / challenges (facing the county and its elected / appointed officials).

## Quality of Life Elements

An overview of Greene County’s Quality of Life was completed to determine if there were factors that could be improved upon to help attract new residents and businesses to the region. The overall quality of life is becoming very important to people as they look for locations to live, learn, work, and play that fit their lifestyles.

## Infrastructure Planning

Priority infrastructure issues were identified, and recommendations prepared – along with potential funding sources and potential partners – that can be incorporated into the future growth and development plans for Greene County. The analysis included coordination with the County's local municipalities and service providers to review their existing and future plans for infrastructure improvements.

## Enhance County Development

The economic / community development tasks included an assessment of Greene County's current and proposed development, redevelopment, and revitalization efforts. This included, but was not limited to, the following elements:

- existing residential programs, initiatives, and activities
- opportunities for brownfield redevelopment and reuse
- vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties

Greene County's sustainability will be strengthened through the development of economic development strategies that encourage the diversification and growth of its tax base. Strategies were prioritized according to their chance of success; alignment with the county's vision and growth policies; anticipated timeline for completion; cost and return on investment; importance to the County; and the availability of resources – state and federal programs – needed to implement the recommendation and / or strategy.

## Review of the County's Subdivision and Land Development Process

The current Greene County Subdivision and Land Development (SALD) Ordinance and SALD process was reviewed. The analysis included a comparison of recent amendments to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and Commonwealth land use policies and procedures.

Recommendations for improving the SALD process and proposed amendments to the current SALDO to help implement and streamline the SALD process were included in the report.

## **Quality of Life**

The definition and meaning of "*Quality of Life*" has evolved over the years. It has become more subjective, often referring to an experience or anticipation of the conditions that an individual expects from the place that they live or may consider for relocation. Quality of

life elements are typically personal preferences based on emotional, physical, material, and social experiences.

Greene County's quality of life has been improving over the years and one of the characteristics that makes it easily accessible is its location; over twenty (20) percent of the US population is within an approximate five (5) hour drive of the County. Local activity / business hubs including Morgantown, Pittsburgh, Washington / Southpointe, Uniontown and Greensburg can be accessed within a one-hour drive.

Contributing to the County's accessibility is the current transportation network. This includes:

- Highways
  - Interstate 79 has direct access via four interchanges in Greene County; and provides regional access to I-70 in Washington County to the North and I-68 in Monongalia County, WV to the South
  - Local highways such as SR 0021, SR 0019, SR 0018 and SR 0088 allow people and goods to be moved throughout the County
- Monongahela River – enables resources (such as coal, etc.) and other cargo to be shipped outside of the Pittsburgh region through a connection to the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and the Gulf of Mexico
- Railroads – three high capacity railroad corridors are located in the County and can be used to move products to many points within the US
- Airports
  - The Greene County Airport (located in Franklin Township) is less than thirty (30) minutes from regional airports in Morgantown, WV and Washington County, PA, less than one (1) hour from the Pittsburgh International Airport, and approximately one hour and fifteen minutes from the Arnold Palmer Regional Airport in Latrobe
  - The Pittsburgh Soaring Association will be locating at the Greene County Airport providing glider enthusiasts with a new location from which to operate their aircraft. The PSA will also provide education and flight instruction at the Airport.
- Recreational Trails – pedestrian / bicycle trails and water trails currently exist, or are being developed, in Greene County allowing residents and visitors to the County to access some of its many cultural, natural, and historical amenities

*Some of the above information was stated in "Greene County, PA: A Powerful Place", a marketing initiative that was completed for Greene County.*

To improve the chances of attracting new growth and development through enhancements to the quality of life, it is necessary to understand "*What makes a*

*successful municipality?”* The following are some of the characteristics from various sources that define a “good” / “successful” municipality:

- Accessibility – connections and linkages to other places and attractions
- Identify and capitalize on the municipality’s assets
- Understand the municipality’s current economic market / niche
- Identify and implement locally generated incentives for entrepreneurial and capital investments
- Prepare practical, actionable, and accountable plans that meet resident’s needs
- Strong Leadership – not management
- Effective Communication – from municipal officials
- Clear “Vision” for the municipality’s future
- Sustainable and Resilient
- Promote Cooperation (internally and externally) – all working together to achieve the same goals and results
- Available Funding / Resources to complete priority projects
- Feeling of comfort / safety / security
- Accessibility to goods and services at an appropriate level that residents desire
- Relationships and common values that bring the municipality together
- Diversity and Inclusion – opportunities to volunteer
- Supportive local businesses (and owners)
- Opportunities for growth and fulfillment
- Good image and perception

These qualities can help Greene County officials identify the improvements and changes that may be needed to strengthen the county’s appeal to retain current residents and businesses, create additional job opportunities, and attract visitors and new investments to the region. Achieving these standards can be accomplished through a “Smart Growth” approach to development. According to Smart Growth America, this concept covers a range of development and conservation strategies that help protect the natural environment and make places more attractive, economically stronger, and more socially diverse.

Based on the experience of communities around the nation that have used smart growth approaches to create and maintain great neighborhoods, the Smart Growth Network has developed the following ten basic principles to guide smart growth strategies:

- Mix Land Uses
- Take Advantage of Compact Building Design
- Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices
- Create Walkable Neighborhoods

- Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place
- Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas
- Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities
- Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices
- Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective
- Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Development Decisions

Communities looking for ways to get the most out of new development opportunities and to maximize their return on public investments have incorporated smart growth strategies in their decision making. This has allowed decision makers to foster design that encourages social, civic, and physical activity; protect the environment; and stimulate economic growth.

Development decisions being made by municipal officials will affect residents for generations to come. Improving the quality of life makes municipalities economically competitive, creates business opportunities, and strengthens the local tax base. Successful municipalities are using creative strategies to develop in ways that:

- conserve resources by reinvesting in existing infrastructure and rehabilitating older and historic buildings
- provide a range of different housing types to make it possible for senior citizens to stay in their neighborhoods as they age, young people to afford their first home, and families at all stages in between to find a safe, attractive homes they can afford
- enhance neighborhoods and involve residents in development decisions, creating vibrant places to live, work and play
- support walking, biking, and public transit to help reduce air pollution from vehicles while saving people money

Greene County officials have made efforts to improve the quality of life in the County through the development of housing options and potential redevelopment sites. The County Commissioner's Housing Task Force, in conjunction with the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Greene (RACG), has focused on providing more senior, market rate, affordable, low income and special needs housing. The RACG's mission includes providing assistance to the Greene County community through economic development, community revitalization, affordable housing initiatives, and home ownership opportunities.

### Creating a Sense of Place

What makes a "*sense of place*" and why is it important?

A lot starts with first impressions – which are lasting and often reveal why people will, or will not, come to a place to shop, eat, work, or live. This initial impression leads to an emotional attachment, or a bond, with a location that has been developed through personal experiences and social interactions. It supports the thinking that place is more than just a location on a map.

"A sense of place is a unique collection of qualities and characteristics – visual, cultural, social, and environmental – that provide meaning to a location. Sense of place is what makes one city or town different from another, but sense of place is also what makes our physical surroundings worth caring about." *Ed McMahon, Urban Land Institute*

In Ed McMahon's article on "Why Sense of Place is Worth Caring About", he states that countless surveys have investigated what makes a community appealing to residents, visitors, and businesses. These places are often ranked based on sustainability, innovation, and efficiency, but he argues what is most important to the economic sustainability is community distinctiveness - a community's sense of place.

So, what makes Greene County and its municipalities unique or distinctive? What would make people want to visit or live in the County? Why would they want to stay?

Greene County's industrial and cultural heritage, greater sense of community, slower pace of life, open spaces, natural resources and amenities, people, and historic places are a few of the attributes that contribute to its character. Locations that appreciate and celebrate their assets are more likely to be successful in developing a unique sense of place and enhancing its livability.

As Greene County has changed and evolved over time, it will be important for county and municipal officials to incorporate the history and heritage of the county into future development efforts; creating a memorable place that people will want to be a part of and care about. This effort should focus on the characteristics that differentiate the County from the competition locally and regionally and the assets that promote its livability.

To implement these strategies, County officials will have to address some of the demographic, socio-economic, and financial trends affecting municipalities in Southwestern Pennsylvania. More specifically, factors such as an aging community (population, infrastructure, leadership, etc.), limited growth in the local tax base, the migration of residents and businesses leaving older communities in search of jobs and opportunities, and the burden of maintaining / increasing the current levels of municipal

services in the future without putting additional pressures on the county and local governments, taxpayers, and businesses.

The fourth edition of the Survey of Rural Challenges (2021) – completed in the fourth quarter of 2020 by SaveYour.Town and SmallBizSurvival.com – identified housing, business and population as the highest-ranking challenges being experienced by rural communities. The ongoing lack of workers, stiff competition from online businesses, and marketing ranked as the highest challenges to rural small businesses.

The top five rural community challenges in 2021 were:

- Not enough good housing
- Downtown in dead
- Losing young people
- Need new residents
- Not enough volunteers

Those just outside of the top five included:

- People don't shop in town
- Not capitalizing on tourism opportunities
- Nothing to do here
- Poor internet service
- Low quality local businesses
- Pandemic and economic crisis
- Crime and drug abuse

The assets identified included – (1) tourism, recreation, natural resources, and bike trails and (2) caring people, volunteerism, and effective local leaders. The survey has been conducted in 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2021. (Source: [www.Surveyofruralchallenges.com](http://www.Surveyofruralchallenges.com))

### The Changing Rural Landscape

As the COVID pandemic has shown us, people have adapted to new working environments, how to become more resilient, and the need to enjoy outdoor recreation opportunities close to their homes. The latter saw large increases in the amount of people who found nature as a way to become mentally, emotionally, and physically healthier.

Technology became an essential part of education, healthcare, work, and communication. A new focus on the importance of broadband / internet for everyone – all ages; urban, suburban and rural; blue collar and white collar – is leading to a more connected society.

IT innovations such as cloud computing, telehealth, remote work / education, streaming services, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality are becoming the new normal and forcing localities to expand their resources to accommodate these changes.

Greene County officials are currently working on ways to improve the broadband services in the county. These efforts should continue to include the county's municipalities and potential partners because finding creative ways to provide cost-effective technology is becoming a priority for a region's sustainability.

A Harris Poll conducted last year during the pandemic found that nearly a third of Americans were considering moving to less populated areas and that walking, running and hiking became national pastimes. Changes in people's behavior due to COVID also included the resurgence of pickleball, which is now the fastest growing sport in the US; a game designed for players of any athletic ability.

In a research brief prepared by Dr. Kathleen Wolf, Ph.D., a research social scientist at the University of Washington, she suggests that we may rethink the design of neighborhood environments to facilitate older people's outdoor activities. This would include the addition of more places to sit, more green spaces, safer routes and paths, and more allotment for community gardens.

The focus on rural America was a priority long before the pandemic and the research has led to the identification of various issues that can be addressed through local and regional planning initiatives. A Planetizen blog "Smarter Planning for Rural Communities" (Todd Litman: March 27, 2022) identified many of the challenges that rural communities are currently facing. They include the following:

- Declining populations
- Old and aging populations
- High chronic disease and disability rates
- More obesity and sedentary living
- Higher tobacco consumption rates
- High per capita traffic fatality rates (due in part to higher rates of impaired driving)
- High suicide rates
- High COVID infection and death rates (due in part to lower vaccination rates)
- Shorter lifespans and higher rates of premature deaths (due in part to higher rates of unhealthy behaviors)
- Higher rates of child abuse, and rejection of gender minority youths
- Lower education attainment levels
- Lower wages and higher poverty and unemployment rates
- Less affordable housing and transportation



- Higher housing and transportation energy cost burdens
- Longer commute duration (reflecting poor accessibility and mobility options)

This is not intended to imply that all rural communities face every one of these challenges, but that these characteristics are more prevalent in rural locations. The physical isolation of some rural areas makes it more costly to provide public services (emergency response, schools, healthcare, etc.) as well as infrastructure (transportation and utilities), thus making it more difficult for developers to invest in projects that have little chance at success.

The analysis identified the advantages of rural and urban geographies when compared to one another. This will be helpful to County officials as they try to attract new residents and businesses in the future. With the socioeconomic changes that the US is experiencing, it will be important to promote the characteristics that appeal to each of the generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z) that make up Greene County. These advantages are listed below:

<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower density = more land per capita</li> <li>• More proximity to nature</li> <li>• More traditional industries</li> <li>• Less congestion</li> <li>• Less exposure to noise and air pollution</li> <li>• Slower demographic change</li> <li>• More traditional values</li> <li>• More culturally homogeneous</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater economic productivity</li> <li>• More economic innovation</li> <li>• More economic opportunities</li> <li>• Greater proximity reduces transportation costs</li> <li>• More dynamic change</li> <li>• More demographic and cultural diversity</li> <li>• More tolerance of diversity</li> </ul>

The blog concluded that rural areas must be willing to find solutions – don't blame and complain. Smart planning can help solve rural problems, but it requires overcoming obstacles.

### Embracing the Demographic Changes

The American Planning Association (APA) and American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) partnered on a study that examined the changing demographics in the U.S., specifically the older population. Findings showed that in the U.S., nearly 20 percent of the population will be in the age 65+ category by 2030, with the fastest growing demographic being those 85 years and over.

The APA and AARP findings were supported by the Partners for Livable Communities Report “Livable Communities for All Ages” completed by the MetLife Foundation. In this report they found that the population of the US is rapidly aging:

- By 2030, older adults will make up twenty (20) percent of our population; one in every five people in the US will be 65 and older
- As the Baby Boom generation – those born between 1946 and 1964 – reaches retirement age, the number of Americans over the age of 65 is expected to double to more than 70 million by 2030 – twice what the number was for this generation in 2000
- By 2035, the number of adults older than 65 will be greater than the number of children under 18
- Contrary to belief, most older Americans do not want to move to warmer climates upon retirement, nor reside in retirement complexes or nursing homes. Instead, 82 percent of Americans want to age in place (in their homes), in the same communities where they have lived; the AARP survey had this number at almost 90%
- As the population ages, we will face new challenges in the delivery of local services, such as healthcare, recreation, housing, transportation, public safety, employment, and education
- An additional challenge is that many older adults are, or will be, low-income or physically vulnerable

Communities will need to consider these demographic changes and the social, economic and health challenges that may occur in the future. Some of the considerations for this age cohort include:

- Two-thirds of those 85+ today have at least one disability
- Three out of five age 80+ households consist of a single person, and the number of people 75+ living alone is expected to double from 2015 – 2035
- People are living, on average, for a decade after they reach “driving retirement.” As they walk instead of drive, they comprise a disproportionate percentage of pedestrian fatalities
- Falls account for 68% of seniors’ hospitalizations

There is another side to this growing demographic; many of these aging baby boomers are staying healthier and living longer. This means that they are more active – traveling and experiencing nature, working longer, and volunteering in their communities. To help these individuals remain a valuable part of society, the AARP established the Aging and Livable Communities Initiative that make communities more livable so older residents remain connected and independent. ([www.AARP.org/Livable](http://www.AARP.org/Livable))

Almost 600 communities nationwide (as of December 2021) are part of AARP's Livable Communities Program. This accounts for nearly 100 million people that live in a town, city, county, territory, or state enrolled in the AARP Network of Age Friendly States and Communities. Officially designated age-friendly places start with a comprehensive planning process resulting in policies and programs that implement actions such as:

- New senior centers
- Park enhancements
- Adding appropriate transit routes
- Working with planners on housing solutions such as affordability, types, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), etc.
- Building community gardens
- Recruiting seniors to serve on boards and committees
- Launching a wellness fair - designed to develop and maintain social connections

To assist municipalities across the U.S., AARP has identified the "8 Domains of Livability" that will help places become more livable for both older residents and people of all ages. This framework includes the following:

1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings – public places to gather; indoors and out
2. Transportation – sidewalks and safe, crossable streets, dedicated bicycle lanes, and public transit options
3. Housing – homes designed or modified for aging in place with options that are suitable for differing incomes, ages and life stages
4. Social Participation – opportunities to socialize and the availability of accessible, affordable and fun social activities
5. Respect and Social Inclusion – intergenerational gatherings and activities
6. Work and Civic Engagement – encourage older people to be actively engaged in community life
7. Communication and Information – share information through a variety of methods realizing not everyone is tech-savvy
8. Community and Health Services – ensure that services, assistance and care is accessible and affordable

Additional information can be found at:

<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>

So, as the baby boomers work longer because they are staying healthier and need more money to support longer retirement years; have their adult children living with them at

higher rates than in the past; and are reluctant to take on new debt once their mortgages have been paid off, Greene County officials should examine ways to leverage the skills and experience of older adults in the County who may be looking to remain active after retirement. These individuals can help influence changes through greater civic involvement and help the County identify the needs of seniors and what assets exist in the community to meet these needs.

At the other end of the workforce are the younger generations who may impact the future growth of communities as much as, if not more than, the baby boomers have done in the past. In an article written by Karen Gilchrist (March 5, 2019) "How millennials and Gen Z are reshaping the future of the workforce" she states that the millennials and Gen Z demographic currently account for slightly over a third of the workforce (38 percent). In the next decade, this figure is set to shoot up to 58 percent, making the younger generations the most dominant in the workplace.

The generations are typically identified as having the following demographic characteristics. Each generation is defined by different social characteristics and differences including historical events, attitudes, and many others.

	<u>Years Born</u>	<u>Ages</u>	
Greatest Generation	1922 – 1927	95 – 100	1.3 million
Silent Generation	1928 – 1945	77 – 94	21.8 million
Baby Boomers	1946 – 1964	58 – 76	70.7 million
Gen X	1965 – 1980	42 – 57	65 million
Millennials (Gen Y)	1981 – 1996	26 – 41	72.3 million
Gen Z	1997 – 2012	10 – 25	67.1 million
Gen A (1)	2012 – 20??	9 – ?	48 million

1. – Starts with children born in 2012 and will continue to at least 2025, maybe later

Source: US Census Bureau; Statista; Pew Research Center; Wikipedia; Kasasa, GenHQ; NetDNA

These younger generations are not the typical workers that our region is used to employing. The traditional "9 to 5" office job does not adequately support the lives millennials and Gen Zs want to live; they are looking for flexible-work options. The article also identified the "Top 12 qualities of a good community" from the perspective of these generations. The following were the highest-ranking responses:

1. Safe area to live
2. Friendly neighbors
3. Good schools

4. Good local businesses
5. Parks and gardens
6. A sense of acceptance and belonging
7. Good roads
8. Churches
9. Community initiatives
10. Diversity
11. Coffee shops
12. Good bars

These qualities are important building blocks to sustainable communities; those that want to become successful and resilient. These places also have the organizational capacity to incorporate best management practices where they will be of benefit to the municipality and its residents as well as municipal officials who encourage open, inclusive, and transparent public engagement opportunities. Overall, it will be important for county officials to enhance Greene County's quality of life to make it a place where current residents and businesses will want to remain, and new residents and businesses will want to locate.

## **Infrastructure Planning**

Infrastructure typically refers to the basic physical systems that a state or its municipalities have in place to help it operate on a daily basis. Examples can include public or private facilities and structures that make up the transportation, utilities (water, sewer, gas, electric, cable, etc.), and communication (broadband / internet) networks.

The review and analysis of the current infrastructure issues facing Greene County included firsthand knowledge, fieldviews and a review of reports, plans, and studies completed for the County that addressed infrastructure. Coordination with the County's local municipalities and service providers was also completed as part of this task.

Older municipalities in Pennsylvania are facing more issues when it comes to managing their current infrastructure systems. Typically, these communities have adequate infrastructure in place, but the increased costs of operating and maintaining aging systems is becoming more than the revenues being collected.

Shrinking tax bases are compounding this situation and the options to address these deficits are becoming harder to find. Municipal officials can raise taxes / rates on the current residents and businesses, reduce / cut costs for personnel, equipment, etc., seek outside resources (grants, etc.), or lease / sell the system to another entity.

## Review and Analysis of the County's Infrastructure

Robust infrastructure networks are the foundation of growth and society. Roads provide for the quick and efficient transport of goods and people alike. Public water systems provide one of the most basic building blocks of life and industry. Public sanitary sewage systems improve public health and help protect a healthy natural environment.

In the past decades, Greene County has made great strides bringing critical infrastructure to the residents who “*Live Greene. Work Greene. Love Greene.*” Interstate 79 is the primary road transportation corridor bisecting the Eastern portion of the county from North to South. From North to South, four (4) interchanges provide access from the interstate to the state road network: Ruff Creek / Jefferson (Exit 19); Masontown / Waynesburg (Exit 14); Kirby / Garards Fort (Exit 7); and Mount Morris (Exit 1). State Routes 21 and 18 provide the main access to the Western portion of the county and State Route 88 runs North to South and connects the towns near the Eastern Border.

### Public Water Service

Five (5) entities provide public water throughout the county: Southwestern Pennsylvania Water Authority (SWPA), East Dunkard Water Authority (EDWA), Carmichaels Water Authority, Mt. Morris Water and Sewage Authority, and Brave Water and Sewer Authority.

#### *Southwestern Pennsylvania Water Authority (SWPA)*

According to their website, SWPA Water serves approximately 50,000 residents (14,500 accounts) via over 550 miles of pipeline. Within Greene County SWPA serves all or portions of Center Township, Clarksville Borough, Cumberland Township, Franklin Township, Gray Township, Greensboro Borough, Jefferson Township, Jefferson Borough, Morgan Township, Morris Township, Perry Township, Greene Township, Rice's Landing Borough, Richhill Township, Washington Township, Wayne Township, Waynesburg Borough, and Whitely Township.

#### *East Dunkard Water Authority (EDWA)*

EDWA serves approximately 5,700 residents (1,650 accounts) via over 250 miles of pipeline. EDWA serves all or parts of Dunkard Township, Monongahela Township, Greene Township, Cumberland Township, Whitely Township, and Perry Township.

#### *Carmichaels Water Authority (CWA)*

CWA serves approximately 1400 customers via over 40 miles of water main within Carmichaels Borough and the surrounding Cumberland Township.

#### *Mount Morris Water and Sewage Authority*

Mt. Morris water authority purchases water from SWPA and purveys it to customers in and around the unincorporated community of Mount Morris.

#### *Brave Water and Sewer Authority*

The Brave WSA provides water to the unincorporated community of Brave located in Southern Wayne Township on the Pennsylvania West Virginia Border.

#### Public Sewer Service

Fourteen (14) entities provide public sanitary throughout the county: Blacksville Sewer System, Cumberland Township, Carmichaels Borough Municipal Authority, Carmichaels Cumberland Joint Sewer Authority, Rices Landing Borough, Dry Tavern Sewer Authority, Franklin Township Sewer Authority, Lower Ten Mile Joint Sewer Authority, Center Township, Waynesburg Borough, Morris Township, Brave Water and Sewer Authority, Mt Morris Water and Sewer Authority, and the Greensboro Monongahela Township Joint Sewer Authority.

#### Targeted Areas for Development

Regional development is fostered by ready access to a strong transportation network and availability of high-quality water and public sewage treatment. Through assessing the existing infrastructure of the County, several areas prime for development are readily identifiable: The Northern Triangle, Carmichaels Borough and Cumberland Township, and Mount Morris.

#### *The Northern Triangle*

Composed of the areas between and along State Route 19 from Ruff Creek to Waynesburg, State Route 188 from Waynesburg to the Greene County Country Club, and State Route 221 from the Country Club to Ruff Creek, the Northern Triangle has rapid access to Interstate 79 from either Ruff Creek or Waynesburg. Existing public sewage is available in Waynesburg and along the portions of State Routes 19 and 188 near Waynesburg. Development potential can be further increased by extending or creating sewage treatment for the Ruff Creek area. Additionally, the Southbound interchange

from I-79 at Ruff Creek should be studied and redesigned to improve access, safety, traffic flow, and marketability of the area.

### *Cumberland Township / Carmichaels Borough*

Cumberland Township is blessed with a resource which is in scarce supply throughout Greene County, an abundance of relatively flat land. Due to this feature larger facilities can be constructed at less expense than other areas where earthwork costs and general topography can become limiting to development potential. State Route 21 provides efficient transportation access and is the major East-West connector between Waynesburg and Uniontown. Public water is available throughout the Township and public sewer is available in and around Carmichaels Borough. Additionally, in 2018 the Federal Government approved Cumberland Township as a Qualified Opportunity Zone which as State Representative Pam Snyder said in a June 15, 2018, press release, "These Qualified Opportunity Zones provide an incentive for investors to put their unrealized capital gains to work in ways that have a direct impact on promoting growth."

According to the US Treasury Department, Opportunity Zones certified by the Treasury will remain in effect until December 31, 2028.

### *Mount Morris*

The Southernmost interchange on I-79 in Greene County, Mount Morris, an unincorporated community of approximately 720 residents, has had success attracting several companies that have developed locations East of Interstate 79. Existing public water and sewage and immediate access to the interstate are key developmental attractors.

### Potential Areas for Development

Two additional areas were also identified as possible areas for development: Rogersville / Center Township, and the Southern Monongahela River Corridor.

### *Rogersville / Center Township*

Once in the running to be the county seat, Rogersville continues as thriving small town community. The town and surrounding area have been continuously improved in recent years under a proactive Board and bolstered by activity fees from an abundance of gas wells. Rogersville is the largest population center on Routes 21 and 18 West of Waynesburg. The community also has existing public water and sewage.



### *Southern Monongahela River Corridor*

The Southern Monongahela River Corridor starts at the Southern Border of Cumberland Township to the West Virginia Border and includes State Route 88 as the primary road access. This area is farther from major population centers and the Interstate Highway system than the previously listed options; however, it remains a potential location for residential development around Greensboro and / or industrial development that requires river access. The Hatfield's Ferry Power Station is one of the more attractive potential development sites in this corridor. The Power Station is located on 33 acres along the Monongahela River and has access to State Route 21.

The Targeted and Potential Areas for Development were identified through parameters such as: do available properties have available infrastructure currently in place or planned in the near future; do the areas follow County and local municipal plans (ie. Comprehensive plans, PA DCED Playbook for the Robena site, etc.); do the current systems have the capacity to handle anticipated future growth and development.

To assist with proposed infrastructure improvements, the Greene County Commissioners have established the Potential Infrastructure Opportunities Needing External Expenditures and Resources (PIONEER) strategic leveraging program. Using Act 13 and other available funds, Townships, Water and Sewage Authorities, and other eligible service providers can apply for Infrastructure Grants up to \$50,000 per applicant and up to \$500,000 per project; including but not limited to: water, sewer, stormwater and / or transportation. (Program Guidelines can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.co.greene.pa.us/resources/27678?d=202223134648>).

Over the past few years, Greene County municipalities have received funding for water and sewer projects from the Commonwealth Financing Authority's PA Small Water and Sewer Program including the Jacob's Ferry Road Water Line Extension (Cumberland Township and Southwestern Pennsylvania Water Authority), Pump Station Upgrades (Greensboro Monongahela Township Joint Sewer Authority), Pump Station Emergency Power Improvements (Lower Ten Mile Joint Sewer Authority), and Mechanical Screen Installation Upgrades (Rices Landing Borough WWTP). Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding has been used to make water system improvements (East Dunkard Water Authority) and various improvements to the water system for the Brave Water and Sewer Authority.

Recommendations for the priority infrastructure issues are included in the implementation section of the report. These potential improvements can be used to assist in creating a coordinated plan for the future growth and development in Greene County.

*The maps (Maps 1 – 6) for overall infrastructure and areas identified as targeted improvement areas are included in the Appendices.*

## Transportation

As identified earlier in the report, one of the assets of Greene County is its accessibility to, and from, locations within and outside of the region via a multi-modal transportation network. The County's ability to ship and receive various goods and products is enhanced through the following transportation infrastructure.

- Highways / Roadways – Interstate 79 (includes four interchanges in Greene County and provides access to I-70 and I-68) along with local roadways such as SR 0021 (Roy E. Furman Highway), SR 0019, SR 0018, SR 0088, SR 0188, SR 0218, SR 0221, and SR 0231
- Monongahela River – allows access to Morgantown and Fairmont, WV to the south and Pittsburgh to the north at its confluence with the Ohio River
- Railroads – Corridors B, C, and D in Greene County are rated at 315K which enables additional load capacity; Corridor E (unknown rail capacity) is identified as the Cumberland Mine Railroad and is not owned or controlled by either NS or CSX
- Airport - The Greene County Airport is close to regional airports in Morgantown, WV and Washington County, PA as well as the Pittsburgh International Airport

The highway / roadway and river corridors will be important to future community and economic development efforts in Greene County. A prioritized list of improvements should focus on the (Monongahela River) riverfront, the interchanges along Interstate 79 and the local roadways within the County that are serving potential growth areas.

The assessment of these corridors should identify potential redevelopment sites, characteristics and assets of each site, and the infrastructure needs for anticipated development. Coordination with PennDOT (District 12-0) and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission should continue to include potential transportation projects on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Twelve-Year Plan.

*The transportation map (Maps 7) is included in the Appendices.*

The upgrade of the rail corridors to 315K provides an advantage for the County if a potential development would require the additional capacity to move freight from their facility. Up until 1994, 286K has been the prevailing standard for rail lines, after which specific rail routes within the US have been constructed to accommodate rail cars of up to 315K. These upgrades typically involve rail corridors that are carrying high volumes of lower ton value commodities such as coal. The ability to transport these heavier loads

reduces the length and overall number of railcars needed to transport a given volume of coal or other material, resulting in a savings in staff and fuel.

Since CSX has trackage rights over all segments of Norfolk Southern (NS) Rail in Greene County, the track should be identified as Norfolk Southern RR – trackage rights: CSXT. (Source: Sara Walfoort - SPC)

The Cumberland Mine Railroad is a private mine railroad serving the Cumberland Coal Resources mine near Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. Operations on the mine and associated railroad began in November 1976. The mine and railroad have changed hands several times over the years and as January 2021, they are owned by Iron Synergy Holding LLC. The tracks extend 17 miles from the preparation plant (located about 2 miles west of Kirby) to the Alicia Dock barge-loading facility on the Monongahela River north of Greensboro.

A few of the plans completed for the region – including Greene County – and potential funding sources that can be used to implement the infrastructure (transportation) priorities are identified below.

### *2035 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania*

The 2035 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania was completed by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) and identified the following Regional Vision – “Transportation and Land Use that supports and enhances the regional economies and the communities within it.”

The development scenario supporting the Regional Vision is characterized by regional policy goals that emphasize mutually supportive regional activities, places, and the connections among them. It includes the following high-level regional strategies:

- Promote high to medium density development in centers and clusters with a value placed on a mix of uses
- Target infrastructure improvements within centers and clusters of development and corridors that connect them
- Emphasize infill development with reinvestment in existing business districts
- Emphasize brownfield rehabilitation throughout the region
- Preserve open space
- Support agriculture in rural areas
- Emphasize a strong multi-modal focus including highways, transit, railways, and waterways

- Emphasize connecting centers and clusters and promoting excellent access to the urban core
- Promote improved transportation operations
- Promote improved transportation safety
- Emphasize upgrading existing water and sewer systems
- Promote limited water and sewer expansion primarily to historically underserved communities

The development scenario that SPC has identified includes many elements that are part of Greene County's transportation network and local economy. These strategies can be incorporated into future funding requests that SPC will be supporting.

### *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*

In November of 2021 the \$1.2 trillion federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was signed into law. Also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework (BIF), this initiative reauthorizes the five-year Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). Listed below are some of the areas where funding has been provided:

- Highway, road, and bridge construction and repair
- BIF fully funds several resiliency and mitigation programs such as:
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program
  - Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) program
- Transportation Safety
  - Local Vision Zero planning (a new complete streets program)
  - Safe Streets and Roads for All safety planning program
  - Codification and expansion of the Safe Routes to School program
- Active Transportation
  - A reform of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
  - A new Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program for grants to better connect walking and biking routes with destinations and other transportation options
- Emerging Technology and Connectivity
  - Addresses the digital connectivity issue (broadband infrastructure and digital equity plans)
- Other programs and provisions
  - Additional support for municipal and regional projects, including grants for rural transportation efforts that increase connectivity, improve safety, and generate economic growth

Some of these programs are available to counties and local municipalities within the US. Additional information can be found at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/>.

### *Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank*

The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank (PIB) is a PennDOT program that provides low-interest loans to help fund transportation projects within the Commonwealth. The goal of the PIB is to leverage state and federal funds, accelerate priority transportation projects, spur economic development and assist local governments with their transportation needs.

Applicants can be cities, townships, boroughs, counties, transportation authorities, economic development agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and private corporations. While capital projects are eligible for funding, construction projects receive the highest priority.

Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited, to:

- Aviation – runway, taxiway, apron, terminal and hangar construction; land acquisition, equipment procurement and obstruction removal; access roads; and airport lighting
- Highway / Bridge – road construction and resurfacing; bridge rehabilitation and replacements; traffic signals and signal upgrades; drainage structures; stormwater management; municipal roadway and bridge maintenance equipment; complete streets; and intermodal facilities
- Rail Freight – rail track improvements; new sidings; rail / street crossings; and rail bridges and infrastructure
- Transit - capital purchases; buildings; and intermodal facilities

### Broadband / Internet

As stated earlier in the *Quality of Life* section of this report, the COVID pandemic has accelerated the need to make good quality broadband service accessible for everyone. More and more people are utilizing the internet for work from home, telehealth and telemedicine services, completing homework assignments, distance learning, shopping, streaming video, and to connect to family and friends.

Southwestern Pennsylvania Connected – an initiative created to develop a plan to bring equitable access and high-speed internet to the area – facilitated a meeting at the Greene

County Fairgrounds in December of 2021 for the Statewide Connectivity Improvement Plan. Led by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Allies for Children and Carnegie Mellon University, SW PA Connected held regional workshops to identify priorities and develop programs for the plan that will be implemented through the identification, and acquisition, of available funding sources.

The attendees at the Greene County workshop identified the following issues for the county: slow or no broadband speed / access; numerous dead spots of service throughout the county; affordability; poor service; low trust in internet service providers; insufficient repairs; and outdated equipment. Many of these issues have been discussed by Greene County officials over the years and efforts to address them were hampered by a lack of resources at the state and federal levels. The implementation of the SW PA Connected initiative should help to improve broadband service in rural areas of the southwestern Pennsylvania region.

A more detailed explanation of Southwestern Pennsylvania Connected – Equitable Broadband Access is found in the Previous Plans / Reports / Studies section of this report.

A study completed by Ericsson, a multi-national communications company, found that the benefits related to having faster, more reliable broadband service fall under three main categories – economic, social, and environmental. The benefits identified included:

#### Economic

- A rise in GDP due to increased economic production
- Construction and infrastructure employment opportunities
- Increased productivity due to time saved and increased mobility and connectivity
- Innovation: increased online services and products, new utility services, and employment opportunities surrounding telecommuting

#### Social

- Improved social relationships through social media and video calling
- Educational improvements – particularly e-learning experiences
- Increased quality of life through additional health care services

#### Environmental

- Video conferencing, telecommuting, etc. all have positive impacts on the environment because less paper, travel, etc. is necessary
- Increased efficiency in homes and offices through smart grids and smart homes

Since 1996, the cable industry in Pennsylvania has made infrastructure investments of more than \$10 billion, leading the development of broadband service throughout the state; currently providing service to approximately 3 million customers. This commitment from Pennsylvania's cable companies also includes contributions that provide critical broadband services to thousands of the Commonwealth's schools, libraries, medical facilities, and community centers. (Source: Broadband Communications Association of Pennsylvania (BCAP) – an association of Pennsylvania cable operators, equipment suppliers, programmers and other allied companies that advocates, communicates and educates about the cable industry)

Innovations in communications technology and efforts by the private sector and organizations such as the BCAP are helping to make working in rural areas more feasible. Typically found in Pennsylvania's rural municipalities, the agriculture industry and many of its farmers are relying on the internet to access information on new / best practices, purchase equipment and materials, and market their products. Doctors are providing healthcare to patients through video-visits; allowing the patient to remain in their home which saves time and money and ultimately can help to save lives.

Greene County officials are currently completing studies and working on plans to provide high speed / quality broadband (internet) service to as much of the county that is feasible. The overall goal is for all county residents to have adequate broadband capabilities so that they can digitally access essential information and services.

Some of the initiatives that will assist with enhancements to the County's broadband infrastructure and quality of life include the:

- Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) POWER (Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalizations) Grants
  - Rural Broadband Coverage and Feasibility Study - \$50,000 grant awarded to Greene County in October of 2019
  - Greene County Broadband Implementation Initiative - \$2.5 million grant awarded to Greene County in September of 2021
  - Greene County invested \$1.2 million of CARES Act Funding coupled with a Windstream match of \$1.6 million to deploy more than 220 miles of fiber and provided broadband service to more than 8,300 homes and businesses with gig speed capability. The project was completed by years end in 2020.
- Construction of new fiber optic lines by ClearFiber (from Morgantown, WV) in Greene County.

- Windstream’s successful bid to expand broadband in the county through the Federal Communications Commission’s Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) Phase I auction. The RDOF investment will be \$13,961,044.
- Kinetic (by Windstream) – contributing an additional \$2.7 million in capital investments. This investment will be used to match the \$2.5 million Greene County Broadband Implementation Initiative grant stated under the ARC grants that are listed above.
- CNX Resources Corporation provided \$1 million for broadband access that was received by Greene County in May of 2022.

Recently, Pennsylvania’s legislature and the Governor established the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (signed into law on December 22, 2021) that will be charged with creating a statewide broadband plan and distributing Federal and State monies for broadband expansion projects in unserved and underserved areas of the Commonwealth. The PBDA is an independent agency of the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).

### Natural Infrastructure

Infrastructure, as it relates to a place, can be categorized as “hard” or “soft”. As discussed above, hard infrastructure includes the physical systems that are needed to run a county, city, borough, township, etc. Soft infrastructure are the things, such as human capital, that are essential to its quality of life as well as government, social, health, financial, educational, etc. institutions. Specific types of infrastructure – public, digital, critical, etc. – often overlap with the characteristics of hard and soft infrastructure networks.

Another element of Greene County’s potential for growth and development is the natural infrastructure that exists in the county along with the ability to utilize it in a responsible manner to enhance the local and regional economy. Natural infrastructure includes traditional green infrastructure uses such as trails, agriculture, forestry, hunting, camping, and fishing, but also encompasses natural resources such as coal mining, aggregate extraction, landfills, abundant water resources, affordable energy, sources of construction materials, and other public services (Source: Natural Infrastructure of Southwestern Pennsylvania).

The coalition partners, made up of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Pennsylvania DCNR, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Heinz Endowments, and RK Mellon Foundation, employed a technical team to complete the “Natural Infrastructure of Southwestern Pennsylvania” consisting of the following components:

- Regional Case Studies: Linking Economic Vitality and Natural Resources



- NI Atlas: A Resource Guide Identifying Natural Infrastructure
- NI Framework: A Process for Optimizing Natural Resources

In the Natural Infrastructure of Southwestern Pennsylvania Report (2005) infrastructure was defined as a basic system of support. Grey infrastructure included engineered and built systems such as schools, transportation, utilities, sewage treatment and water facilities. Natural infrastructure supports human, economic and emotional needs – from water supply, to coal production, to recreation, to our aesthetic sense of place.

As stated in the NI Framework, natural infrastructure uses can be generally categorized into the following four broad categories:

1. Public Services – uses providing potable water supply, septic soils, municipal waste, or other natural resource-related services
2. Products – uses related to minerals, materials, goods or commodities for consumption
3. Habitat – a use that supplies or enhances the habitat for aquatic, terrestrial or avian species
4. Human Enjoyment – land-related or water-related uses that support recreation activities and cultural assets

The full list of natural infrastructure uses is included in the Previous Plans / Reports / Studies section of this report. Many of these uses can assist Greene County officials with identifying potential activities and ventures that align with the County’s vision for growth in its undeveloped areas where major (hard / grey) infrastructure investments will not be needed.

The NI Atlas documents the natural resource characteristics and natural infrastructure uses of the southwestern Pennsylvania region, establishing a region-wide baseline for the location and quality of natural infrastructure uses. The maps completed for this component were supported by a methodology that identified the areas suitable for each natural infrastructure use.

## **Enhance County Development**

For many years, Greene County’s economy has been highly dependent on the exportation of its mineral resources. A depletion of these resources along with a current political climate that wants to decrease the country’s dependence on fossil fuels has created an uncertain future for the coal, gas and oil industries. The focus on renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, etc. is providing a challenge for County officials.....how to diversify the local economy while maintaining the rural quality of life that residents enjoy.

As was stated earlier in this report, rural areas have been dealing with many obstacles that have had an impact on their ability to maintain a sustainable economy. It is becoming harder to compete locally, regionally, and globally as demographics are changing, funding for projects is becoming tougher to access, and industries are having to adapt to advances in technology and the ways that consumers are accessing goods and services. Greene County is facing some challenges locally as well. School district taxes that are higher than the regional average, a limited workforce that will see a lot of its participants retiring in the next ten years, and a population that has been declining over the past few decades will need to be addressed to provide stability to the local economy.

A Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program Research Brief, “Strengthening Rural Pennsylvania: An Integrated Approach to a Prosperous Commonwealth (March 2007)” stated that the future of Pennsylvania is tied to the health of our small towns and rural areas. The best hope for rural Pennsylvania lies in place-based strategies that leverage local assets and build strong communities.

A result of this effort identified the following key strategies in the fundamental rethinking of economic development for rural areas:

- Think and act regionally
- Identify local assets
- Match assets with an existing or emerging niche in the global market
- Make investments and reinvestments that allow communities and regions to capitalize on assets
- Foster local entrepreneurship

These fundamental changes are being realized across the country and a 2017 *Rural America at a Glance* report (US Department of Agriculture) stated that rural areas may be making a comeback. The report went on to say that rural areas are more economically diverse than in the past. Employment is not as dependent on agriculture and mining and now includes manufacturing, services, and trades jobs as part of the employment base. Another trend found in the report showed that rural counties with economies based on tourism and recreation maintained higher than average population growth rates (between 2010 – 2016).

### *Current Economy of Greene County*

The Greene County Profile (March 2022) prepared by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis identified the following industries as having the highest percentage of employment in the County:

1. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas	17.1%
2. Health Care and Social Assistance	12.1%
3. Public Administration	11.9%
4. Retail Trade	11.1%
5. Construction	8.5%

Accounting for the majority of employees in mining industry, the two largest active mines in Greene County are the:

1. Bailey Mine – part of the Pennsylvania Mining Complex located in Greene and Washington counties; it is the largest underground coal mine complex in North America. Owned by CONSOL Energy Inc., the Mining Complex consists of the Bailey, Enlow Fork and Harvey mines
2. Cumberland Mine – an underground mine, operated by Cumberland Coal Resources, a subsidiary of Contura Energy

Regarding the Cumberland Mine, in early 2021, Synergy Holding LLC (Iron Synergy) finalized the transaction to assume ownership of the Cumberland Mine and its assets that include coal reserves, mining permits and operations, infrastructure, equipment and transloading facilities. Plans are to continue mining operations for the Cumberland Mine which will provide employment and business opportunities and support for the local and county economy.

The industries in the County that ranked just outside of the top five that had five percent or higher figures were Accommodation and Food Services (6.1%) and Transportation and Warehousing (5.0%). Figures for Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting were not available and represented as non-disclosable information.

Pennsylvania's figures for percentage of total employment in Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas (0.4%), Public Administration (4.3%), and Construction (4.5%) were all a lot lower in comparison to Greene County's numbers. The Health Care and Social Assistance industries accounted for 19.1% of the employment total and ranked as the highest percentage that made up the state's total.

The same report listed the Top 10 Employers by Employment in the third quarter of 2021 that included: State Government; Consol Pennsylvania Coal Company; Cumberland Contura LLC; County of Greene; GMS Mine Repair & Maintenance Inc; Waynesburg University; Wal-Mart Associates Inc.; Central Greene School District; Monongalia County Coal Mine; Carmichaels Area School District (Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages).

The importance of mineral related industries to Greene County's economy is still evident according to the information stated above. The amount of coal reserves remaining in the County and the uncertainty of the oil and gas industry need to be monitored because of their potential impact on Greene County's future – employment and wages, County budget, businesses supported by coal, oil and gas activities, etc.

Service and retail related industries – which account for approximately thirty-five percent of the employment total in Greene County – can be affected by the government budgets and programs as well as the amount of disposable income that a person or family has to purchase goods and services. These industries also have a lower multiplier effect on the economy than producing industries such as manufacturing.

These are just a few of the reasons why it is important to have a diversified economy. Eliminating the reliance on one or two sectors of the economy helps to minimize the effects on the local tax base when a particular industry experiences a decline or catastrophic events impact larger economies (state, national, global).

### *Industrial / Business Parks*

Greene County has three industrial / business parks that are home to many different types and sizes of employers. They include:

- Evergreene Technology Park – approximately 250-acres, it is located adjacent to the Greene County Airport in Franklin Township; less than a mile from Interstate 79. The property owner / developer is the Greene County Industrial Developments, Inc. (GCID)
- Paisley Business Park – 72-acre site, located in Cumberland Township off State Route 0088 approximately one mile north of the SR 0088 / SR 0021 intersection; it is owned by GCID
- Meadow Ridge Business Park – 108-acre site, it is located off of the Mt. Morris interchange of Interstate 79 in Perry Township; private ownership

There have been discussions by GCID about developing a new business park to help attract new businesses to the County. This effort is still in the discovery and planning phases, and nothing has been finalized.

### *Future Economy of Greene County*

The future growth and development opportunities in Greene County should start with open and honest discussions about the County's positive attributes as well as its challenges. Building on the assets can be the basis of marketing efforts for the County's elected and appointed officials, organizations promoting the County, and business leaders. It will be just as important to identify the obstacles – real and perceived – that are preventing Greene County from attracting new businesses and residents from locating here.

So, what does Greene County have to offer? As identified in past studies, reports, and plans and through discussions with stakeholders during the STMP process, some of the most often mentioned assets of Greene County include:

- Location
- Availability of land
- Natural and Cultural Amenities
- Transportation Network (Interstates, Monongahela River)
- Blue Collar Work Ethic
- County Government / Departments
- Waynesburg University
- Quality of Life (Rural, Safe, Low cost of living)
- Opportunities

These assets are supported in more detail later in this report in the Stakeholder Input section. Each of the assets listed are not unique to Greene County so identifying the businesses / industries that are a "best fit" to pursue will result in more efficient economic development strategies.

To create strategies that will be effective, it is important to understand the barriers that the County is facing. The following challenges / obstacles were identified in the same manner as the assets discussed above.

- The County's (financial) ability to help spur growth
- Need to diversify the current economy
- Taxes (Pennsylvania, local school districts)
- Infrastructure – needs to be upgraded and expanded

- Limitations of the available workforce
- Quality of Life (do not have things that the younger generation is looking for, lack of housing options, school district perceptions)
- Cooperation / Coordination within the County

Additional challenges were identified – although not listed as highest priorities – and should be monitored because of their potential impacts on economic development efforts in Greene County. Freight movement on the Monongahela River is a concern because the amount of investment needed by the US ACOE to maintain the locks and dams and the limited funding and resources available to address the situation. This could affect the thousands of acres of industrial sites, with frontage and direct access to the Monongahela River in the County.

Upgrades to existing rail lines may be required and this could limit the types of business / industry that may want to locate in the County. Transportation improvements also include the roadways in the County. The widening project for State Route 21 needs to be completed to accommodate potential growth in the corridor.

Not only has the recent COVID pandemic caused business and industry to re-examine how they operate on a daily basis, but factors such as advancements in technology, new markets and consumer bases, and environmental initiatives are leading to more creativity and inventiveness. The future of education is being reevaluated by parents and students as the cost to attend colleges / universities is outweighing the benefits after graduation. This has put a new emphasis on the value of the trades and educating more people to fill these positions. It may be an area where Greene County can benefit from its “blue collar” ideals and work ethic.

### *Agriculture*

The local agriculture industry, which has been an important part of Greene County’s economy and social fabric, is facing similar trends to those being experienced nationally as the number of individual farms and those directly employed in agriculture continue to decline due to increased automation. But as activities related to traditional farming / agriculture are trending downward, ingenuity is leading to new opportunities that farmers and others in the agricultural industry may be able to take advantage of.

In the Third Way Report “Promoting Rural Entrepreneurship and Rural Economic Development” (January 7, 2020), author Neil Belson states that rural areas have inherent advantages in some emerging industries because they offer lower costs or access to relevant raw materials. One component of a rural development strategy could be

focusing on expanding industries where rural America has unique competitive advantages. The following are examples of a few such industries:

- AgTech – includes a range of technologies such as precision agriculture, seed technologies, crop protection, farm equipment, sensors, and ag related marketing and financial services
- “Farmshoring” – “rural outsourcing”, sometimes referred to as “farmshoring”, is similar to overseas outsourcing except that IT functions are outsourced to lower-cost rural areas in the US rather than to foreign countries; a company trains employees in IT skills, many of which do not have a college education
- Niche Food Products – value added foods and ingredients, higher value specialty and preprocessed products
- Bioeconomy – biobased economy; agriculturally derived materials would be a primary source of energy, industrial chemicals, and other industrial raw materials

### *Manufacturing*

One industry that can be targeted for more of a role in Greene County’s economy is manufacturing and related businesses in advanced manufacturing. Currently, manufacturing accounts for 3.2% of the County’s total employment but is much lower than the Pennsylvania average of 9.8%. The benefits of establishing a solid manufacturing base are vital to future growth in the local and regional economy through its impact on other industries.

The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), in a recently released report, states that the manufacturing sector contributed \$2.71 trillion annually to the U.S. economy, based on Q4 2021 data. The report goes on to say that manufacturing has the highest multiplier effect of any sector of the U.S. economy; for every \$1.00 spent in manufacturing, there is a total impact of \$2.68 to the overall economy. In addition, for every worker in manufacturing, another five employees are hired elsewhere. (Source: NAM calculations using 2018 IMPLAN data.)

The report estimates that manufacturing could account for one-third of GDP and employment. The same research also estimates the total multiplier effect for manufacturing at \$3.60 for every \$1.00 of value-added output, with one manufacturing employee generating another 3.4 workers elsewhere. (Source: MAPI)

Lastly, manufacturing facilities do not have to be very large to be sustainable. The NAM data identified that the majority of manufacturing firms in the United States are quite small and that manufacturing workers in the U.S. earned \$92,832 on average (including

pay and benefits). By 2030, it is anticipated that approximately four (4) million manufacturing jobs will likely be needed.

Due to Greene County's location – geographically and access to institutions of higher education and medical facilities – attracting advanced manufacturing facilities to the region should be considered. According to [manufacturing.gov](http://manufacturing.gov), *Advanced Manufacturing* is the use of innovative technologies to create existing products and the creation of new products. Advanced manufacturing can include production activities that depend on information, automation, computation, software, sensing, and networking.

Advanced manufacturing is useful to companies with technology at the forefront like medical, pharmaceutical, aerospace, and data collection. Some of the advanced technologies in manufacturing industries include:

- Additive manufacturing
- Advanced materials, composites, and alloys
- Robotics and automation
- Welding and machining with lasers
- Nanotechnology
- Reliance on IT networks and connectivity

### *Tourism*

Identifying and capitalizing on the key cultural, natural, and historic resources in the County has many benefits. Not only will it conserve / preserve the character and heritage of Greene County, but it can be a significant part of its economic base and future success through the implementation of tourism initiatives.

Heritage preservation connects a municipality to its past through the protection and enhancement of buildings / structures, sites, districts, and significant natural features. Preservation can also provide economic benefits through the adaptive reuse of these buildings and sites. There are many good examples that have been repurposed into restaurants, community centers, retail / commercial establishments, and residential developments. Reusing older buildings and structures saves them from the expense of demolition and preserves the integrity of the community's heritage.

The significance of a community's heritage in promoting tourism to increase its economic base has been realized nationally and throughout the world. Locally, Travel and Tourism is the second largest industry in Pennsylvania bringing in over \$40 billion a year to the Commonwealth's budget. As more people are seeking unique travel experiences that



combine history, education, entertainment and authenticity, the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) developed the following definition:

Heritage Tourism – “Traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present”

Visit Greene – the Greene County Tourist Promotion Agency is the lead organization for research and planning for Heritage Tourism in the County. This includes identifying local or regional points of interest, developing or organizing those points of interest for visitation, and developing promotional and informational materials and guides for distribution to travelers and tourists through various marketing methods.

Other types of tourism initiatives are helping to attract visitors to places / regions that are built around specific industries and environments. They include:

### *Agritourism*

Agritourism is becoming more important to the agricultural industry as traditional farming / farms continue to decline. Increased costs associated with the cultivation of crops and raising of animals along with improvements in technology and automation are making it more difficult for agricultural operations to remain profitable. Therefore, farmers and agricultural producers are looking for alternative sources of income while still operating the farm.

Combining agriculture and tourism is providing one of those options. Agritourism enables producers to generate additional income, provide educational opportunities to the public, and preserve agricultural lands.

The Pennsylvania Agritourism Activity Protection Act defines "*agritourism activity*" as:

"A farm-related tourism or farm-related entertainment activity that takes place on agricultural land and allows members of the general public, whether or not for a fee, to tour, explore, observe, learn about, participate in or be entertained by an aspect of agricultural production, harvesting, husbandry or rural lifestyle that occurs on the farm."

Agritourism operations and activities range from small operations that function on a seasonal basis to large operations that operate throughout the year. Examples of agritourism include, but are not limited to:

- Farmers markets
- Roadside markets and / or stands
- Farm visits and farm stays
- U-Pick operations
- Agricultural (Farm) museums
- Corn mazes
- Cider mills
- Pumpkin patches
- Petting and feeding farms
- On-farm retail (dairies, creameries)
- Hayrides
- Maple syrup farms
- Christmas tree farms
- Wineries (tours and wine tasting)
- Bed and breakfasts
- On-farm bakeries
- On-farm restaurants / cafes

### *Ecotourism*

Not as prevalent in southwestern Pennsylvania as other tourism initiatives, Ecotourism is defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education” (TIES, 2015).

Ecotourism unites conservation, communities, and sustainable travel and its potential exists in many of Pennsylvania's rural regions and communities. Several locations across the Commonwealth have embraced this concept and are successful ecotourism destinations. But overall, there are limited sites in rural parts of the state that possess the infrastructure needed for ecotourism development.

Greene County has some potential ecotourism destinations that could attract new visitors to the region and in turn, provide additional revenue into the local economy.

Working towards eco-tourism, Greene County has been working on the design, development and funding for a recreational area called Wisecarver. The centerpiece of the 415-acre property is an 18-acre reservoir. The county leased the property for 99 years and designed thirteen (13) major projects to increase recreational opportunities and draw visitors from the estimated 5.5 million people that live within 100 miles (approximately a 90-minute drive) from the Wisecarver Reservoir. It is estimated that Wisecarver could attract an additional 185,283 visitors per year spending over \$18.2 million in direct tourism spending. The proposed Wisecarver Recreation Area has many features unique to the region that will complement the County's rural landscape and greenspace while drawing new visitors interested in an outdoor recreation area with water access.

### *County Events and Activities*

There are many tourism and recreation related activities held in Greene County that provide an influx of visitors as well as a boost to the local and regional economies. Some of the bigger events include:

- High Point National: Pro Motocross Championship – upwards of 25,000 people attend this annual event held at High Point Raceway in Mt. Morris. High Point also holds six to eight smaller events throughout the year.
- Greene County Fair
- Washington / Greene County Bridge Festival (various locations)
- Riverfest (Rices Landing)
- Jacktown Fair (Wind Ridge) “You can't die happy 'til you've been to the Jacktown Fair!”
- Rain Day (Waynesburg)
- Sheep and Fiber Festival (Greene County Fairgrounds)
- Coal Show (Carmichaels)

Not only do these events have a financial impact, but they are also a part of the social fabric of the county and the municipalities in which they take place. Continued support of the events should be a priority for the County.

During the STMP process two county facilities were mentioned as being important to future economic initiatives for Greene County – the County Airport and the Fairgrounds. Most of the discussions focused on improving both facilities and holding additional events at the Airport and Fairgrounds to bring in additional visitors and money from outside of the region.

Aside from these events, Greene County has many natural, cultural, and environmental assets, as well as abundant wildlife and scenic beauty, that make this region a perfect destination for people seeking outdoor recreation opportunities. Future marketing efforts should also appeal to those who enjoy hunting, fishing, camping, boating / canoeing / kayaking, bird / wildlife watching and photography, walking / running / hiking, and geocaching.

It was mentioned earlier in the report that Travel and Tourism is a \$40 billion a year industry in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Game Commission estimates that \$1.7 billion / year is added to the Commonwealth's economy by hunters (in direct costs) and over \$3 billion / year with other expenditures. Identifying opportunities to capture more of the money being spent by hunters using the State Game Lands or those fishing, kayaking, or

taking part in any other outdoor recreation activity in Greene County should be an economic development strategy moving forward.

### *Potential Employment Drivers*

The following list includes some of the emerging industries that could be targeted to help diversify Greene County's present economy. Additional investigation should be completed to determine if potential sites have the infrastructure in place to support these facilities, what types of skills and training are needed from the workforce, etc.

- Distribution / Warehousing (E-commerce, fulfillment centers)
- Data Centers (cloud storage)
- Renewable Energy (wind, solar)
- Energy (co-generation and biomass facilities)
- Transportation Logistics
- Health Care
- Entrepreneurs

In addition to purchasing the Cumberland (Contura) Mine, Iron Synergy officials stated that their plans include working with utility providers through the development and integration of renewable energy sources in the region. This could help to attract or create spin off businesses related to the energy industry.

To help local entrepreneurs and improve the local economy, the Greene County Commissioners purchased the Silveus Building (30 West High Street in Waynesburg Borough) to be used as a business incubator. A federal grant made the acquisition of the building possible and this business incubator initiative is partnership between the County and Waynesburg University.

### *Emerging Industries*

One of the emerging industries in Pennsylvania is Aquaculture – breeding, raising, and harvesting fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants; farming in water. It is an environmentally responsible source of food and commercial products, helps to create healthier habitats, and is used to rebuild stocks of threatened or endangered species.

In Pennsylvania, trout farms make up approximately two-thirds of the total value of aquaculture production, with "all other farms" making up the remaining third. There is much diversification in Pennsylvania's aquaculture industry, with more than 30 species and varieties of aquatic animals raised. (Source: Penn State Extension - Introduction to Aquaculture)

## Other Factors Impacting Growth and Development

### *Proposed CONSOL Energy Advanced Pressurized Fluidized Bed Coal Combustion with Carbon Capture Project*

This pilot project will create a zero carbon emission power plant using coal waste. CONSOL Energy received one of four US Department of Energy grants to further the development of this facility, which is located at its Pennsylvania Mining Complex in Greene and Washington Counties.

### *Waynesburg University Keystone Innovation Zone*

The Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ) program was designed to address the lack of entrepreneurial activity and knowledge economy growth around Pennsylvania's research and development clusters. KIZs were established around institutions of higher education located in both rural and urban regions and focus on utilizing Pennsylvania's institutions of higher education as economic drivers.

### *Qualified Opportunity Zone Program*

The Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 included a significant tax incentive to encourage private investment in certain targeted census tracts in the country. "Opportunity Zones" ("OZones") are qualified census tracts – areas of high poverty and low income – designated by the Governor of each state.

The motivation for individuals or corporate taxpayers comes from the sale of appreciated property (stock or business assets) in which they can defer an unlimited amount of the gain from that sale by reinvesting an amount equal to the gain in a qualified Opportunity Zone Fund within 180 days. This investment postpones federal tax on those gains until the OZone fund is sold or 2026 (whichever is earlier).

On June 14, 2018, 300 tracts were designated as OZones in Pennsylvania by the Governor. These areas contained significant activity or investment opportunities for both Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects and New Market Tax Credit projects.

Included in these Qualified Opportunity Zones in Pennsylvania was census tract 9701 located in Cumberland Township, Greene County. This 38 square mile census tract has a population of approximately 6,800 and is the only Opportunity Zone in Greene County. As stated earlier in the report, Opportunity Zone designations will remain in effect until December 31, 2028.

## Brownfields

The US EPA has defined *Brownfields* as “real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.” Brownfields can be former industrial sites, lands that have been scarred from previous mineral extraction operations, and former service stations / dry cleaners.

The benefits of redeveloping brownfield sites can:

- Increase the local tax base
- Increase property values
- Facilitate job growth
- Utilize existing infrastructure
- Improve blighted property – good environmental stewardship
- Reduce crime and enhance public safety
- Lessen the pressure of developing green / open spaces, prime farmlands, and natural areas

The EPA has established a Brownfields Program to enable states and municipalities to complete assessments, clean up, and reuse brownfields. Under the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of 2002, as amended by the Brownfields Utilization, Investment, and Local Development Act of 2018, the EPA can provide financial assistance to applicants through the following grant programs: assessment, revolving loan fund, cleanup, and job training.

Pennsylvania enacted legislation in 1995 to assist municipalities and developers turn lands that were once liabilities into community assets. Acts 2, 3 and 4 of 1995 serve as the basis for what is more familiarly known as the Land Recycling Program or simply “Act 2.” This Program encourages the voluntary cleanup and reuse of contaminated – vacant and underutilized – commercial and industrial sites and is built on the foundation of eliminating the following obstacles to redevelopment:

- Uniform cleanup standards
- Cleanup liability protection / relief
- Standardized reviews and time limits
- Financial Assistance

There are many brownfield sites throughout Greene County that are identified as potential redevelopment opportunities. These sites contained mostly former industrial uses related

to the coal, manufacturing, and energy industries. Brownfield redevelopment – especially those along riverfronts – provide opportunities for developers to incorporate green / open space and creative design features into future plans for the site.

A development partner of the Greene County Department of Planning and Community Development, the Greene County Industrial Development Authority (GCIDA) leads many efforts to create, attract, and retain business and industry for the County. Along with providing financial and technical assistance to current and new businesses, the GCIDA has also focused on the assessment and redevelopment of brownfield sites throughout Greene County. To help guide future plans for the redevelopment of brownfield sites, the GCIDA created the Greene County Brownfield Redevelopment Advisory Committee (GC-BRAC) to get public input into the process.

A review and analysis of brownfield sites in Greene County have been, or are being, completed and are a big part of the County's economic strategy. Some of these efforts include:

- The GCIDA has been overseeing the efforts of AMO Environmental Decisions as they complete environmental assessments and reclamation strategies for brownfield sites throughout Greene County
- The former 139-acre Mather coal refuse site in Morgan Township is being reclaimed and plans to determine a future use are being completed.
- Robena Coal Refuse Disposal Area – a 1000+ acre property located along the Monongahela River in Monongahela Township presents a great opportunity for redevelopment because of the size of the site and its available amenities. The Robena Coal Refuse Disposal Area Playbook was completed by the PA DCED and contains site attributes along with possible redevelopment strategies for the site.

The EPA has awarded Brownfield Assessment Grants to Greene County Industrial Development Authority (GCIDA) for the following projects:

- The identification of potential brownfield sites in Greene County and completion of assessments for a number of these sites
- \$200,000 for hazardous substances – (Monongahela and Cumberland Townships and Waynesburg Borough: 2018) to conduct eight Phase I and four Phase II environmental site assessments, and develop two cleanup plans; update and maintain the current brownfields inventory and conduct community outreach activities
- \$100,000 for petroleum – (Monongahela and Cumberland Townships and Waynesburg Borough: 2018) to conduct four Phase I and two Phase II

environmental site assessments, and develop one cleanup plan; update and maintain the current brownfields inventory and conduct community outreach activities

- Community-wide Assessment of Brownfield Sites – \$500,000. This grant will allow the county to continue assessing sites in Greene. We have an inventory of sites which will be reviewed / updated. Phase I and Phase II assessments can be completed for sites that show promise for development.
- Cleanup Grant – \$500K / \$100K County Match – total \$600,000. Morgan Township – Mather Railroad Tie Site. This grant will remove and dispose of as many ties as funds will allow.

### Vacant, Abandoned, and Blighted Properties

Municipalities throughout southwestern Pennsylvania are looking for ways to strengthen their economies, provide a better quality of life, and build on local assets. But many of the communities are facing challenges that include declining populations, an increase in crime, and abandoned or blighted structures that need to be addressed. Blighted properties left unchecked eventually become eyesores and fall into disrepair creating unsafe situations for the neighborhood and the municipality.

### *American Planning Association Policy on Blight*

The American Planning Association (APA) in its “2004 Policy Guide on Public Redevelopment”, has recognized that there are many events, conditions, and causes that lead to blight. One or more of the following provisions commonly, but not uniformly, appear within state enabling legislation as the definition or the determination of blight and its causes:

- Buildings in which it is unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work due to dilapidation; deterioration; defective design or physical construction; inadequate utilities; lack of ventilation, light, or sanitary facilities; contamination by hazardous substances; or below minimum code
- The predominance of defective or inadequate street layout
- Improper subdivision or obsolete platting
- Inadequate public improvements, parking facilities, or utilities
- Antiquated buildings or inadequate parcels which hinder the economically viable use or capacity of property
- Multiple ownership of properties which inhibits the assembly of economically viable properties that meet current development standards
- Environmental hazards
- Unsanitary or unsafe conditions



- Deterioration of site improvements
- Excessive land coverage and overcrowding of structures or community facilities
- The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes
- Conditions that retard the provision of housing accommodations
- Constitutes an economic or social liability or a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare
- The incompatibility or deleterious use of adjacent land or buildings
- Excessive vacancy, abandoned buildings, or excessive vacant lots within an area developed for urban use and served by utilities
- Extraordinary local crime rate that constitutes a serious threat to the public safety and welfare
- Extraordinary local decline in property values or tax delinquencies that diminish the equitable delivery of public services and improvements
- Abandoned quarries, mines, railroads, or similarly extensive facilities that pose a threat to public health, safety, morals, or welfare
- Persistent unemployment or lack of reasonable proximity or viable accessibility to employment

Some, or many, of these conditions are found in Pennsylvania municipalities that are experiencing blight and should be addressed in their blight remediation plans and policies.

### *Blight Assessment*

Blighted properties and structures are those that qualify as blight under the Pennsylvania Guidelines for Abandoned and Blighted Structures and the definition of Blighted Property in Urban Redevelopment Law (35 P.S. § 1712.1 (c)). The determination as to how the buildings classified as blighted property shall include:

1. Any premises which because of physical condition or use is regarded as a public nuisance at common law or has been declared a public nuisance in accordance with the local housing, building, plumbing, fire, and related codes.
2. Any premises which because of physical condition, use or occupancy is considered an attractive nuisance to children, including but not limited to abandoned wells, shafts, basements, excavations, and unsafe fences or structures.
3. Any dwelling which because it is dilapidated, unsanitary, unsafe, vermin-infested or lacking in the facilities and equipment required by the housing code of the municipality, has been designated by the department responsible for enforcement of the code as unfit for human habitation.
4. Any structure which is a fire hazard or is otherwise dangerous to the safety of persons or property.

5. Any structure from which the utilities, plumbing, heating, sewerage, or other facilities have been disconnected, destroyed, removed, or rendered ineffective so that the property is unfit for its intended use.
6. Any vacant or unimproved lot or parcel of ground in a predominantly built-up neighborhood, which by reason of neglect or lack of maintenance has become a place for accumulation of trash and debris, or a haven for rodents or other vermin.
7. Any unoccupied property which has been tax delinquent for a period of two years prior to the effective date of this act, and those in the future having a two-year tax delinquency.
8. Any property which is vacant but not tax delinquent, which has not been rehabilitated within one year of the receipt of notice to rehabilitate from the appropriate code enforcement agency.
9. Any abandoned property. A property shall be considered abandoned if: (i) it is a vacant or unimproved lot or parcel of ground on which a municipal lien for the cost of demolition of any structure located on the property remains unpaid for a period of six months; (ii) it is a vacant property or vacant or unimproved lot or parcel of ground on which the total of municipal liens on the property for tax or any other type of claim of the municipality are in excess of 150% of the fair market value of the property as established by the Board of Revisions of Taxes or other body with legal authority to determine the taxable value of the property; or (iii) the property has been declared abandoned by the owner, including an estate that is in possession of the property.

Addressing blighted properties helps to reduce significant costs for local municipalities due to impacts on community safety such as an increase in criminal activity and additional responses to arson and accidental fires at abandoned / blighted buildings. Blight also affects the community's budget through a decrease in property values and tax revenues and deterring investment in areas that are run down.

In the Comprehensive Blight Action Plan, "We Can Do This: A Five-Step, Fast Track Blight Plan" (Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania: 2016) municipalities should develop and implement an action plan based on the following ideals:

1. Prevention: Preventing additional properties from becoming blighted is cost-effective. It is important to "stop the bleeding" so future efforts can be focused on cleaning up and repurposing blighted properties.
2. Remediation: Increase efforts to deal with properties that are already blighted.
3. Redevelopment: Repurpose blighted structures or vacant lots for productive uses consistent with community needs by implementing policies to incentivize private investment.

The action plan should focus on how these strategies should be implemented and monitored to evaluate progress and success. It will be crucial to the success of the program that all stakeholders understand demolition is not the only solution to eradicating blight. There are three key pieces needed to make this happen:

- Focus the strategies to address blight in areas where they are most appropriate and provide the most return on investment
- Effectively use existing and future financial resources
- Augment efforts to repurpose blighted properties to expand the tax base

A municipality's ability to reduce the number of blighted and vacant properties through code enforcement activities will help to sustain property values and encourage existing businesses and prospective businesses to invest in the community. The plan will also help municipal officials develop a broader strategy to stabilize residential neighborhoods through targeted demolitions.

Greene County's Blight Remediation Initiative, "Blight to Bright: New Houses Where Blight Once Existed", which is administered by the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Greene (RACG), has been doing a very good job of identifying and acquiring funding for the demolition of blighted structures in the County. This effort is compounded due to the many older coal patch towns in Greene County which have resulted in a lot of blighted structures. Some of the projects completed or underway include:

- \$700,000 grant to the RACG for the purchase and clearing of six blighted homes in Waynesburg Borough, Morgan and Cumberland Townships (Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Fund – Pennsylvania Housing Financing Agency)
- \$100,000 grant to Greene County for the demolition of six blighted homes in the villages of Nemacolin and Crucible and Carmichaels Borough (Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development)
- \$720,000 grant to the RACG for the demolition of homes in Rogersville (PHARE Fund)
- \$100,000 for the demolition of six units and the renovation of five homes in Jefferson and Cumberland Townships (Commonwealth Financing Agency – Blight Remediation Program)
- \$100,000 for the demolition of the old bank building in Rices Landing Borough (CFA Blight Remediation Program)
- \$500,000 to rehabilitate eleven owner-occupied homes in the County (HOME Investment Partnerships Program)

One of the roles that RACG serves for Greene County is to increase affordable housing and home ownership opportunities, redevelop blighted areas and, in conjunction with other County, State and Federal entities, provide for community revitalization in the County.

### *Support for Pennsylvania Municipalities*

The Commonwealth's legislature has enacted laws expanding the powers of municipalities to reduce blighted properties. Some of the laws available to Greene County municipalities include:

- *Municipal Code and Ordinance Compliance Act (MCOCA): Issuance of Use and Occupancy Certificate, Applicability and Compliance Requirement* (Act 133 of 2016, amended the MCOCA originally enacted as Act 99 of 2000) – requires purchasers of real estate with buildings thereon to bring the buildings into compliance with municipal codes and prohibits municipalities from denying use and occupancy certificates based on the results of a point-of-sale inspection.
- *Neighborhood Blight Reclamation and Revitalization Act* (Act 90 of 2010) – provides municipalities with the ability to file actions against property owners for failure to repair deteriorating property and to deny municipal permits due to deteriorating property and failure to pay property taxes or municipal claims.
- *Abandoned and Blighted and Property Conservatorship Act: - Initiation of Action, Appointment of Conservator, Powers and Duties of Conservator, Incurring Indebtedness and Sale of Property* (Act 157 of 2014, amended the original Act 135 of 2008) – enables court-appointed conservators to bring residential, commercial, and industrial buildings into municipal code compliance when owners fail to comply; while not relieving the property owner of liability or financial obligation with respect to a property in conservatorship.
- *Eminent Domain Code – Title 26 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes* (Act 34 of 2006) – enables municipal governments to acquire property for public use for just compensation paid to the property owner. Recognized public uses include highways, roads, schools, public buildings, and the elimination of blight.
- *Municipal Claim and Tax Lien Law – Municipal and Tax Claims and Liens* (Act 93 of 2013, amended the original Act 153 of 1923) – provides for when, how, upon what property, and to what extent, liens shall be allowed for taxes and for municipal improvements, for the removal of nuisances, and for water rents or rates, sewer rates, and lighting rates; for the procedure upon claims filed therefor; the methods for preserving such liens and enforcing payment of such claims; the effect of judicial sales of the properties liened; the distribution of the proceeds of such sales, and the redemption of the property therefrom; for the lien and collection of certain taxes heretofore assessed, and of claims for municipal

improvements made and nuisances removed (allows for the donation of tax lien encumbered properties to a municipality in lieu of tax payments).

- *Creation of Land Banks* – Title 68 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes (Act 153 of 2012) – provides for the creation of land banks for the conversion of vacant or tax-delinquent properties into productive use.

Greene County should adhere to and / or adopt the Pennsylvania Keystone Principles and Criteria for Growth, Investment and Resource Conservation. In 2005, the Commonwealth's Economic Development Cabinet adopted the following principles and criteria to target the state's investments through a coordinated interagency approach to fostering sustainable economic development and conservation of resources in Pennsylvania's communities. The principles lay out general goals and objectives for economic development and resource conservation while the criteria help measure the extent to which projects accomplish these goals.

The principles and criteria are designed to encourage sound planning and project development that will integrate programs and funding sources from a variety of state agencies into a comprehensive strategy that improves whole communities. Projects are evaluated with the recognition that rural, suburban, and urban areas in Pennsylvania have different characteristics and needs, and that what might work in an urban area might not work for rural communities. The Keystone Principles and Criteria are:

- *Redevelop First* – Give funding preference to reuse and redevelopment of "brownfield" and previously developed sites in urban, suburban, and rural communities for economic activity that creates jobs, housing, mixed use development, and recreational assets. Conserve Pennsylvania's exceptional heritage resources. Support rehabilitation of historic buildings and neighborhoods for compatible contemporary uses.
- *Provide Efficient Infrastructure* – Fix it first: use and improve existing infrastructure. Make highway and public transportation investments that use context sensitive design to improve existing developed areas and attract residents and visitors to these places. Provide transportation choice and intermodal connections for air travel, driving, public transit, bicycling and walking. Increase rail freight. Provide public water and sewer service for dense development in designated growth areas. Use on-lot and community systems in rural areas. Require private and public expansions of service to be consistent with approved comprehensive plans and consistent implementing ordinances.
- *Concentrate Development* – Support infill and "green field" development that is compact, conserves land, and is integrated with existing or planned transportation,

water and sewer services, and schools. Foster creation of well-designed developments and walkable, bikeable neighborhoods that offer healthy lifestyle opportunities for Pennsylvania residents. Recognize the importance of projects that can document measurable impacts and are deemed “most-ready” to move to successful completion.

- Increase Job Opportunities – Retain and attract a diverse, educated workforce through the quality of economic opportunity and quality of life offered in Pennsylvania's varied communities. Integrate educational and job training opportunities for workers of all ages with the workforce needs of businesses. Invest in businesses that offer good paying, high quality jobs, and that are located near existing or planned water and sewer infrastructure, housing, existing workforce, and transportation access (highway or transit).
- Foster Sustainable Businesses – Strengthen natural resource-based businesses that use sustainable practices in energy production and use, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, recreation and tourism. Increase our supply of renewable energy. Reduce consumption of water, energy and materials to reduce foreign energy dependence and address climate change. Lead by example: support conservation strategies, clean power and innovative industries. Construct and promote green buildings and infrastructure that use land, energy, water and materials efficiently. Support economic development that increases or replenishes knowledge-based employment or builds on existing industry clusters.
- Restore and Enhance the Environment – Maintain and expand our land, air and water protection and conservation programs. Conserve and restore environmentally sensitive lands and natural areas for ecological health, biodiversity and wildlife habitat. Promote development that respects and enhances the state's natural lands and resources.
- Enhance Recreational and Heritage Resources – Maintain and improve recreational and heritage assets and infrastructure throughout the Commonwealth, including parks and forests, greenways and trails, heritage parks, historic sites and resources, fishing and boating areas and game lands offering recreational and cultural opportunities to Pennsylvanians and visitors.
- Expand Housing Opportunities – Support the construction and rehabilitation of housing of all types to meet the needs of people of all incomes and abilities. Support local projects that are based on a comprehensive vision or plan, have significant potential impact (e.g., increased tax base, private investment), and demonstrate local capacity, technical ability and leadership to implement the

project. Coordinate the provision of housing with the location of jobs, public transit, services, schools and other existing infrastructure. Foster the development of housing, home partnerships, and rental housing opportunities that are compatible with county and local plans and community character.

- Plan Regionally; Implement Locally – Support multi-municipal, county and local government planning and implementation that has broad public input and support and is consistent with these principles. Provide education, training, technical assistance, and funding for such planning and for transportation, infrastructure, economic development, housing, mixed use and conservation projects that implement such plans.
- Be Fair – Support equitable sharing of the benefits and burdens of development. Provide technical and strategic support for inclusive community planning to ensure social, economic, and environmental goals are met. Ensure that in applying the principles and criteria, fair consideration is given to rural projects that may have less existing infrastructure, workforce, and jobs than urban and suburban areas, but that offer sustainable development benefits to a defined rural community.

## Land Use Practices

As part of this task, the current Greene County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (and SALD process) was reviewed to identify recommendations for improving the SALD process and proposed amendments to the current SALDO to help implement and streamline the SALD process.

The review included a comparison of recent amendments to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and Commonwealth land use policies and procedures.

Based on discussions with staff from the Planning and Development Department, the Greene County SALDO was last updated in 1995 but internal efforts have been taking place over the past few years to review sections and elements of the ordinance.

Some of the issues identified with the current SALDO is that it is cumbersome, confusing, and cross referencing is not clear; it is out of date and not MPC compliant; definitions need to be updated; the process of reviews for subdivisions and land developments needs to be updated; and the county SALDO should provide guidance to the municipalities.

The administration and enforcement of the SALDO is part of the roles and responsibilities of the Greene County Planning Commission which include:

- Greene County SALDO – Review Subdivisions and Land Developments
- Act 67
- Tax Abatement
- Recycling Program
- Airport (Testing / Reports)
- GIS

A review of the current Greene County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance resulted in the following suggested revisions:

### Article I – Purpose and Authority

- Section 101 – change reference to Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247 as reenacted and amended. State that any future references within this ordinance will be “PA MPC”.
- Section 103 – effective immediately upon enactment
- Section 104 – could add additional items under Purpose:
  - To provide consistency with the Vision Statement, Goals and Strategies, and Future Development / Infrastructure Investment Areas identified in the



2020 Greene County Comprehensive Plan: Live Greene, Work Greene, Love Greene.

- To ensure that streets in and bordering a subdivision or land development shall be coordinated, and be of such widths and grades, and in such locations as deemed necessary to accommodate prospective traffic and facilitate fire protection.
- Land which is subject to potentially hazardous conditions – flooding, subsidence, landslides, etc. – shall be made safe for the intended use or set aside for uses that will not endanger life or property.
- Section 105 – in opening paragraph, include the reference to PA MPC, Section 502, which will be basis of Sections 105 A and 105 B and do not have to be referenced in these subsections.
- Section 106 – in subsection A, should include “manufactured homes” after mobile home. Both are regulated by HUD and only real difference is the date they were built / constructed.

## Article II – Definitions

- Agricultural Use – should be changed to Agricultural Operation and the definition in the PA MPC
- Application for Development – should be changed to match the definition in the PA MPC
- Best Management Practice(s) (BMP) – add term and a definition such as “Activities, facilities, measures or procedures used to manage stormwater impacts from land development, to protect and maintain water quality and groundwater recharge and to otherwise meet the purposes of this Ordinance, to including but not limited to infiltration, filter strips, low impact design, bioretention, wet ponds, permeable paving, grassed swales, forested buffers, sand filters and detention basins.”
- Common Open Space – add term and definition stated in the PA MPC
- Conservation District – add term and definition “The Greene County Conservation District”
- Covenant – add “and on subdivision or land development plans” at the end of the definition after *usually stated in the deed....*
- Cut – add term and definition
- ground surface to the planned grade line at a given point.
- Development Plan – add term and definition stated in the PA MPC
- Easement – (a suggested new definition) “a right of limited use granted on private property by the owner for public use or private use by another party or parties.”
- Electronic Notice – add term and definition stated in the PA MPC
- Engineer – change to “Municipal Engineer” and use the definition in the PA MPC

- Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) – add FEMA definition “Official map of a community on which FEMA has delineated the Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs), the Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) and the risk premium zones applicable to the community.”
- Floodplain – add FEMA definition “Any land area susceptible to being inundated by floodwaters from any source.”
- Grade – add term and definition regarding slope, finished grade
- Grading – add term and definition (example) “Excavation of fill or any combination thereof including conditions resulting from such activities.”
- Impervious Surface – add term and definition
- Land Use Ordinance – add term and definition stated in the PA MPC
- Lot – should be changed to match the definition in the PA MPC
- Mailed Notice – add term and definition stated in the PA MPC
- Manufactured Home – include definition; also, add could add manufactured home lot and manufactured home park (PA Law and PA DCED have definitions)
- NFIP – add term and definition “The National Flood Insurance Program administered by FEMA.”
- NPDES Permit – add term and definition “National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit, or equivalent document or requirements issued by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, or their designees, pursuant to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended, 33 U.S.C. §1251 et seq, also known as the Clean Water Act, and / or the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law, as amended, 35 P.S. §691.1 et seq.”
- On-site Improvements – add term and definition
- Plan, Sketch – add term and definition
- Planning Agency – add term and definition stated in the PA MPC
- Professional Consultants – add term and definition stated in the PA MPC
- Retention Basin or Facility – add term and definition (an example) “A reservoir designed to retain storm water runoff with its primary release of water being through the infiltration of said water into the ground.”
- Slope – add term and definition (such as) “The face of an embankment or cut section or any ground whose surface forms an angle with the plane of the horizon. Slopes are usually expressed as a percentage or fractional expression based upon vertical difference in feet per 100 feet of horizontal distance.”
- Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) – add term and definition from FEMA “The land area covered by the flood water of the base flood on FEMA NFIP maps. The SFHA is the area where the National Flood Insurance (NFIP) flood plain management regulations must be enforced and the area where the mandatory purchase of flood insurance applies. SFHAs include the Zones on FEMA maps designated as A, AO, AH, A1-30, AE, A99, AR, AR/A1-30, AR/AE, AR/AO, AR/AH, AR/A, VO, V1-30, VE and V.

- Street – add term and definition stated in the PA MPC
  - Cul-de-sac Street – add term and definition (example) “A street with one (1) end intersecting a through street for public vehicular and pedestrian access and the other end terminating in a vehicular turnaround. A cul-de-sac street shall be designed as a minor or local street.”
- Stormwater Management Act – include the term defined as an “Act 167 of October 4, 1978, P.L.864, as amended”
- Substantially Completed – add term and definition stated in the PA MPC, Section 107 (a)
- Wetland – add term and definition (PA DEP or US ACOE definition)

### Article III – Procedure for Approval of Lot Splits

- Section 302 (Page 19)
  - Third paragraph – (formatting) remove the two capital letter A’s
  - Fourth and Fifth paragraphs – suggested rewrite “For all minor subdivisions, major subdivisions, and land developments, the developer will contact the municipality to determine if they have enacted a zoning ordinance. If the municipality has enacted a zoning ordinance, the developer will be required to provide evidence that any zoning approvals have been obtained.”
- Sections 303, 304, 305, and 306 (Pages 20 – 25) – suggested revisions were included in a document “Ordinance No. \_\_\_ of 2014, Proposed Amendments to Sections of the 1995 SALDO” and provided for review. These proposed revisions should be included as part of the Greene County SALDO update.
- Provide language that states one copy of the application and preliminary / final plan be submitted electronically (pdf) in addition to the hard copies. This will enable the application and plan to be forwarded to Planning Commission members via email if requested.

### Article IV – Procedure for Approval of Minor Subdivisions

- Sections 404, 404, and 405 (Pages 26 – 34) – suggested revisions were included in a document “Ordinance No. \_\_\_ of 2014, Proposed Amendments to Sections of the 1995 SALDO” and provided for review. These proposed revisions should be included as part of the Greene County SALDO update.
- Provide language that states one copy of the application and preliminary / final plan be submitted electronically (pdf) in addition to the hard copies. This will enable the application and plan to be forwarded to Planning Commission members via email if requested.

### Article V – Procedure for Approval of Major Subdivisions

- Sections 502, 503, 505, 506, and 508 (Pages 36 – 48) – suggested revisions were included in a document “Ordinance No. \_\_\_ of 2014, Proposed Amendments to Sections of the 1995 SALDO” and provided for review. These proposed revisions should be included as part of the Greene County SALDO update.
- Provide language that states one copy of the application and preliminary / final plan be submitted electronically (pdf) in addition to the hard copies. This will enable the application and plan to be forwarded to Planning Commission members via email if requested.

#### Article VI – Procedure for Approval of a Land Development

- Sections 601 through 608 (Pages 53 – 68) – suggested revisions were included in a document “Ordinance No. \_\_\_ of 2014, Proposed Amendments to Sections of the 1995 SALDO” and provided for review. These proposed revisions should be included as part of the Greene County SALDO update.
- Provide language that states one copy of the application and preliminary / final plan be submitted electronically (pdf) in addition to the hard copies. This will enable the application and plan to be forwarded to Planning Commission members via email if requested.

#### Article VII – Inspection and Acceptance of Improvements by the Municipality

- A review of the requirements found in Section 509 of the PA MPC should be completed during the update to the Greene County SALDO for consistency

#### Article VIII – Required Improvements and Design Standards

- Sections 801 through 817 (Pages 75 – 102) – suggested revisions were included in a document “Ordinance No. \_\_\_ of 2014, Proposed Amendments to Sections of the 1995 SALDO” and provided for review. These proposed revisions should be included as part of the Greene County SALDO update.
- Section 810 – *Optional approach to improving stormwater management* – Develop green infrastructure requirements to improve infiltration that include the use of swales, rain gardens, or pervious paving to construct / reconstruct streets and parking lots. Provide incentives for utilizing these techniques.
- The publication “Pennsylvania Standards for Residential Site Development” which was completed by the Pennsylvania Housing Research / Resource Center should be reviewed for potential revisions to design standards in the Greene County SALDO

- The requirements in Section 814 should be compared to the most current Parking Standards / Trip Generation Manual prepared by the Institute of Transportation Engineers. The Standards and Manual may be available from the County's engineer.

#### Article IX – Mobile Home Park Development

- To be consistent with current Federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards – which went into effect on June 15, 1976 – that are administered by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), new Mobile Home Park Developments should now be identified as "Manufactured Home Park Developments." Existing Mobile Home Park Developments can continue to be referenced as such.
- A manufactured home is defined in section 603(6) of the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-383, 42 U.S.C. § 5402(6)). The term includes a mobile home.
- A "Manufactured Home Community" is defined as a site, lot, field or tract of land, privately or publicly owned or operated, upon which three or more manufactured homes, occupied for dwelling or sleeping purposes, are or are intended to be located, regardless of whether or not a charge is made for such accommodation. (*Pennsylvania Statutes Title 68 P.S. Real and Personal Property § 398.2 - Definitions*)

Could consider adding an additional Article addressing Recreational / Campground Developments

#### Article X – Waivers and Modifications

- Sections 1001 through 1005 (Pages 112 – 114) – suggested revisions were included in a document "Ordinance No. \_\_\_ of 2014, Proposed Amendments to Sections of the 1995 SALDO" and provided for review. These proposed revisions should be included as part of the Greene County SALDO update.
- The current requirements regarding Waivers and Modifications appear to be consistent with the Article V of the PA MPC

#### Article XI – Administration and Enforcement

- The current requirements regarding Administration and Enforcement appear to be consistent with the Article V of the PA MPC

- Reference can be made to Section 503 (1) of the PA MPC that enables municipalities to be reimbursed for review fees charged by professional consultants who are responsible for the review of subdivisions and land developments.

## Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Plat Specifications

Appendix B – Sample Certification Clauses for Final Plats

Appendix C – Affidavit Certifying Conformance

Appendix D – Sample Development Agreement

Appendix E – Alternate Paving Standards

Appendix F – Sample Application for Waiver of Modification

Examples of similar clauses, specifications, and requirements for each of the Appendices can be found in enacted SALDOs throughout the Commonwealth and other publications. These resources can be used to make revisions to current language if needed.

Optional requirements and best management practices that can be incorporated into the update of the Greene County SALDO:

## Conservation Subdivision Design

- Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Ordinances (Randall G. Arendt)
- Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A Practical Guide to Creating Open Space Networks (Randall G. Arendt)
- Better Models for Development in Pennsylvania: Ideas for Creating More Livable and Prosperous Communities (Edward T. McMahon and Shelley S. Mastran)
- Conservation by Design Guide ([www.conservationtools.org](http://www.conservationtools.org))
- Growing Greener: Conservation by Design Program, Booklet and Design Studios Portfolio (Natural Lands Trust and Pennsylvania DCNR)

## Traditional Neighborhood Development

- Requirements are set forth in Article VII-A – Traditional Neighborhood Development of the PA MPC
- Act 111 of 2010 amended the PA MPC
  - Section 702-A – Changed and clarified the nature of TND zoning authorized by the MPC. TND now must be either 1) designated district or districts reserved exclusively for TND, or 2) a type of development permitted in any part of the municipality or in one or more specified zoning districts.

- Section 708-A – Clarified that a manual of written and graphic design guidelines accompanying TND provisions may be incorporated into the zoning ordinance or SALDO or both.

#### Planned Residential Development

- Requirements are set forth in Article VII – Planned Residential Development of the PA MPC

#### Sustainable Residential Development

- Pennsylvania Standards for Residential Site Development (2007, Pennsylvania Housing Research / Resource Center)
  - Chapters include: Site Design Considerations; Street Standards; Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation; Parking; Stormwater Facilities; Wastewater Facilities; Potable Water Supply Standards; and Other Utilities

Changes to the PA MPC that affect the administration and enforcement of enacted Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances include:

#### Act 97 of 2012

- Section 508.1 – Requires a municipality to submit monthly to the school district superintendent written notice of plans for “residential development” receiving final approval. Notice must include location of development, number and types of units, and construction schedule.

#### Act 154 of 2012

- Section 503 – Increased from 45 to 100 days the time an applicant can dispute S&LD review fees.
- Section 510 – Increased from 30 to 100 days the time an applicant can dispute S&LD inspection fees and changed provisions for arbitration of disputed inspection fees.

#### Act 135 of 2014

- Section 503 – Changed provisions for recreation fees-in-lieu to allow fee proceeds to be used for acquisition, operation, and maintenance of recreation facilities, to clarify that such facilities must be “reasonably” accessible to the developments

that dedicated the land or paid the fees, and to remove the three-year timeline to use fees or repay them.

#### Act 42 of 2015

- Sections 203 and 207 – Provided authorization for the appointment of 1 to 3 alternate members to a planning commission, and provided for their seating, participation, and voting.

#### Act 97 of 2021

- Section 509 – Clarifies the amount of financial security which municipalities should retain to cover the cost of remaining improvements on a subdivision or land development.



## **Intergovernmental Initiatives / Cost-Sharing Strategies**

This element of the STMP reviewed current and future opportunities for Greene County to work with surrounding counties and its local municipalities to help reduce costs for services that are not presently being provided on a regional or multi-municipal basis.

Pennsylvania's county and local governments continue to face increasing costs to deliver the same level of municipal services and administer programs that serve the public's needs without raising taxes on an annual basis. This issue is compounded by limited state and federal resources and increased competition for the programs and assistance being offered.

The identification of new approaches to provide municipal services and programs in a more cost effective and efficient manner will be key to the future sustainability of Greene County and its municipalities. One option is to explore intergovernmental opportunities with neighboring counties / local municipalities, service providers, authorities, and organizations through the sharing, merging, or consolidation of essential services, resources, and equipment. These types of arrangements can help to improve the delivery of services and lessen the impact on the county's / municipality's budget.

The Commonwealth encourages municipalities to work together to address public service issues and included the following language in Article IX – Local Government, § 5. Intergovernmental Cooperation of the Pennsylvania Constitution:

*"A municipality by act of its governing body may, or upon being required by initiative and referendum in the area affected shall, cooperate or agree in the exercise of any function, power or responsibility with, or delegate or transfer any function, power or responsibility to, one or more other governmental units including other municipalities or districts, the Federal government, any other state or its governmental units, or any newly created governmental unit."*

In 1972, the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act was amended (Act 180) and used the same language as the Pennsylvania Constitution: "if a municipality has a function, power or responsibility under its respective municipal code or a law of general application – then it has the power to cooperate with its neighbors on any function, power, or responsibility."

In 1996, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth approved Act 177 that moved the Intergovernmental Cooperation legislation from a standalone act into the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes (Title 53, Municipalities Generally, Part III – Government and Administration, Subpart D – Area Government and Intergovernmental Cooperation,

Chapter 23 – General Provisions). The Act was expanded to include such topics as joint purchases and joint cooperation agreements.

Cooperation among municipalities is to be authorized by ordinance, which must specify the conditions, duration, purpose, manner and extent of any financing, organizational structure, manner in which property will be acquired, managed, and disposed of, and that the entity created will be empowered to enter into certain employee-related contracts. Also, intergovernmental cooperation may be mandated by voters by initiative and referendum.

### *Current County and Multi-Municipal Initiatives*

Greene County is presently involved in regional cooperation and cost-sharing strategies with its local governments / municipalities / organizations / service providers in various forms. Some of these efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Greene County Planning Commission – through the Planning and Community Development Department, administers and enforces the Greene County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) for municipalities that have not enacted their own ordinance; Solid Waste and Recycling Program; and the County's Tax Abatement Program
- Greene County Tourist Promotion Agency – the official tourism promotion organization for Greene County is responsible for marketing and attracting visitors to the County and its municipalities; enhancing the regional economy; and working with county and municipal officials to identify the natural and cultural amenities that should be preserved and protected
- Potential Infrastructure Opportunities Needing External Expenditures and Resources (PIONEER) Program – a program created by the Greene County Commissioners that provides (cash) funding, labor and / or equipment to townships, water and sewer authorities, and other service providers that have made commitments to provide and / or improve infrastructure (water, sewer, stormwater and / or transportation)

Some of the municipalities in Greene County are working cooperatively to provide essential services as well as exchange ideas and information. These efforts include:

- Informal shared services and equipment – includes snow removal, grass cutting, road repairs and other tasks
- Regional police services – also includes contracted police services with a neighboring municipality that has an established police department

- Greene County Association of Township Officials – a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, the GCATO is open to all Township Supervisors, Secretaries, Auditors, Assessors, and Tax Collectors in Greene County. The organization provides opportunities for its members to learn about best practices, funding programs, and resources to implement projects.

### *Opportunities for Shared Services / Multi-Municipal Initiatives*

In some instances, it is essential for municipal governments to cooperate and coordinate with one another for the provision of services to achieve maximum efficiencies, economies of scale, better quality, and improved governmental practices. The following are some opportunities to improve municipal services through formal and informal initiatives:

- Administration (Manager / Administrator)
- Purchasing of materials, equipment, or services
- Building Code / Inspections (Enforcement and Administration)
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure (maintenance and construction)
- Land Use Planning
  - Comprehensive Planning
  - Land Use Ordinances (Zoning / SALDO)
  - Floodplain Management
  - Emergency Preparedness / Disaster Mitigation
  - Zoning Officer
- Public Works
- Water Treatment and Distribution
- Sewage Collection and Treatment
- Stormwater Management / MS4
- Solid Waste (Refuse) Collection and Disposal (Sanitation)
- Parks and Recreation
- Technology / IT
  - Hardware and software
  - Website
  - Database creation and management

Greene County can provide guidance and resources to assist its municipalities and local officials in the discussion of sharing services and / or equipment. Prior to investing a lot of time and resources into studies to determine if the sharing of services or a more formal multi-municipal initiative will be beneficial to the municipalities involved, initial discussions should take place that answer the following:

- What issue(s) / problem(s) got us to this point?
- What solutions are realistic?
- What do the (participating) municipalities really want to accomplish – the end goals?
- Will all (participating) municipalities benefit from the arrangement?
- Is there a cost savings to each municipality for the service being provided; as compared to what they are paying now?
- Will the results of this effort eliminate the duplication of services?
- Is this a short-term or long-term initiative?

County and local officials should review the municipal services presently being provided, as well as services that are not being provided, to determine if it would be mutually beneficial to partner with surrounding municipalities / organizations in order to realize a cost savings and / or more effective delivery. This approach can also be used by Greene County officials to determine if working with a neighboring county, or counties, is advantageous to all of the parties involved. It will be important to identify the services and programs that would most likely result in a “win-win” for each of the participating municipalities as well as identifying potential partners that have similar goals and ideals.

If any county / municipal services could be improved through a cooperative arrangement, there are state and federal resources (technical, funding, etc.) available to local municipalities to assist with these initiatives.

The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP), a statewide, nonpartisan Association that represents Pennsylvania’s 67 counties provides many services to its members including innovative and cost-effective technology services. At the national level, the National Association of Counties (NACo) represents county governments in the US through the promotion of sound public policies, intergovernmental and public-private collaboration, and value-added services. These opportunities for collaboration can assist Greene County and its neighboring counties as they seek more effective and efficient ways to provide services individually or regionally.

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED) provides funding to assist local governments to plan for, and efficiently implement, a variety of services and improvements, and soundly manage development with an emphasis on intergovernmental approaches through its Municipal Assistance Program (MAP). Funding is available for shared services and community planning activities.

The shared service activities include consolidating or regionalizing services among multiple counties and municipalities, boundary change studies, shared personnel, and new or expanded intergovernmental initiatives that promote local government efficiencies

and effectiveness. Counties and local municipalities are eligible to apply for funding through this program. (Source: <https://dced.pa.gov/programs/municipal-assistance-program-map/>)

Since the townships in Greene County are meeting on a regular basis and sharing information through the Greene County Association of Township Officials organization, the need for another entity, such as a Council of Governments (COG), is not a suggestion at this time. COGs are more formal organizations and require enacted agreements to become members and participate in activities.

A COG can benefit a group of municipalities if they have a need for services such as joint purchasing, zoning enforcement (zoning officer), uniform construction / building code enforcement, equipment rental, and administration / management. COGs promote intergovernmental cooperation and provide a forum for their members to identify the needs of the organization and to develop regional solutions.

Outside of the role of a COG, counties in Pennsylvania are working together in formal capacities to solve issues that are affecting their residents and service providers. Public health and safety is being addressed by Erie, Crawford and Warren Counties in an effort to speed up response times due to a decline in first responders working for emergency medical organizations. The three counties are currently finalizing the process to enter into an intergovernmental cooperation agreement to adopt a regional collaborative EMS response plan.

Examples of other similar initiatives exist throughout the Commonwealth; most of them are the result of counties / municipalities realizing that a regional approach will provide the best outcomes to solving the identified problem(s) or issue(s). A survey of the municipalities in Greene County identifying the top three issues they are presently facing would be a good starting point to finding possible solutions.

## **Previous Plans / Reports / Studies**

To gain an understanding of the issues that have been studied in Greene County, the Planning Team reviewed the plans, reports and studies that have been completed for the County. Greene County officials and staff should identify the recommendations, goals and objectives from the plans / reports / studies completed for the County that have not been implemented and remain priorities for the County and identify the funding (grants / foundations) initiatives and programs that can be used to implement them. The findings of these previous efforts are summarized below.

### An Assessment of the Dynamics of the Greene County Housing Market – Delta Development Group (September 2014)

In late 2013, Delta Development Group, Inc. (Delta) completed an assessment of the dynamics of the County's housing market. The overall goal was to provide county officials with a better understanding of the changes in the housing market and the factors that influenced these changes, enabling decisions to be made that best serve the residents of Greene County.

The objectives of the study were to provide the following information:

- Identify, quantify, and measure the changes that are being experienced in Greene County's housing market, and identify the primary drivers of these impacts
- Determine whether the impacts are a result of growth in the Marcellus Shale gas industry, general economic trends, social trends, or other local economic factors
- Provide County officials with the quantitative research necessary to accurately identify and prioritize the County's most critical needs related to housing
- Conduct interviews with local industry experts, employers, and residents to secure local knowledge and data to support the quantitative research
- Outline a plan for addressing the County's most critical needs related to housing

### The Greene County Housing Market – Overview of Key Findings

- Greene County's population declined by just over 2,000 people between 2000 and 2012, which led to a significant increase in the number of vacant housing units in the County
- The County's economic base has changed, which has led to a net increase in jobs in the County, and an increase in temporary workers who are looking for housing
- Despite an increase in the number of jobs in Greene County, the County's population is aging, and young families are not moving into the County

- The age, condition, and size of the County's current housing stock are likely contributing factors to population decline
- The lack of public infrastructure, specifically water and sewer infrastructure is one of the greatest challenges to housing development in Greene County
- One of the greatest needs for housing in Greene County is quality market-rate housing stock at price points that are aligned with the household incomes in the County and configured to attract young adults and families, as well as older adults who are looking to downsize
- There is a need for additional housing in Greene County that is subsidized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as well as housing for individuals and families who are transitioning from HUD subsidized housing.

### *Planning Implications and Recommendations*

#### *Housing Conditions and Options*

Even though the economy in Greene County is growing and a significant number of new jobs have been created in the County over the past few years, the County's population has declined and a significant number of people who work in the County live outside the County and commute in to work. A portion of the population decline is due to natural causes as the population ages; however, statistics indicate that the younger population is leaving the County.

Information obtained from interviews suggests that one of the key reasons that people choose to live outside the County and commute in to work is because of the lack of options for housing that can compete in the market with housing outside the County. As in rural areas throughout the country, Greene County's younger population is likely leaving the area in pursuit of careers in more urban settings where they can find a variety of job opportunities and enjoy the urban amenities.

In addition, there is a shortage of housing for individuals and families in the County with low incomes and / or disabilities, as well as options for individuals who are transitioning from public housing to market rate housing.

All of these issues point to the need to improve housing conditions and options in the County. The following is a recommended plan of action to achieve this objective.

1. *Provide infrastructure in targeted areas for new market rate housing development.*

Needed infrastructure to support market rate housing development could include water and sewer, roadways, and communications. The following strategies can

be implemented by the County to provide needed infrastructure that can lead to new housing development.

- a. Identify and designate specific areas within the County for future economic growth
  - b. Prioritize areas in the County for future development
  - c. Determine optimal potential development configuration and mix of uses, and identify the infrastructure necessary to support new development
  - d. Develop strategies to for funding / financing infrastructure costs
  - e. Consider implementing traffic impact fees in likely growth areas to help offset infrastructure costs
  - f. Develop a marketing / branding strategy to promote Greene County as a great place to live, work, and play
  - g. Develop a marketing campaign aimed at attracting former residents to come back and see the “new” Greene County, explore its new opportunities, and encourage them to move back “home”
  - h. Assist in soliciting interest from developers to develop new housing in Greene County
    - i. Senior housing
    - ii. Workforce housing
    - iii. Single family housing
    - iv. Condos / townhomes
2. *Encourage housing development / redevelopment in existing residential neighborhoods in the County’s more densely populated boroughs and townships.*

One of the greatest barriers to the development of new housing in the County is the lack of public water and sewer. Many of the County’s more densely populated boroughs and townships have water and sewer infrastructure in place, and also likely have areas of their residential neighborhoods that are blighted, with housing conditions that lend themselves to redevelopment. The following strategies can be implemented by the County to encourage development / redevelopment in these areas.

- a. Assist in developing funding strategies to extend the reach of water and sewer infrastructure in the County, and to make needed repairs to existing water and sewer infrastructure.
- b. Work with municipal officials who are interested in new development to identify specific neighborhoods and / or infill sites that are candidates for development / redevelopment.



- c. Explore opportunities for development of a variety of housing types, including both conventional construction and manufactured housing
  - d. Consider opportunities for replacing aging mobile homes with new manufactured housing
  - e. Assist with identifying funding strategies to offset the cost of development / redevelopment
  - f. Consider options for providing local incentives to encourage housing development / redevelopment
  - g. Provide support as needed for public funding applications
  - h. Assist and / or advise municipal officials in assembling parcels, if needed, for development/redevelopment projects – consider land banking if appropriate and needed
  - i. Assist in soliciting interest from developers / investors in priority development / redevelopment projects
  - j. Provide regulatory assistance as appropriate to expedite the development / redevelopment process (e.g., zoning, permitting, etc.)
3. *Encourage more home ownership and home improvement / repairs by homeowners.*

In many cases, especially with the recent increases in rental rates, a household or family could be making a mortgage payment just as easily as paying rent. In addition, a homeowner who occupies a house is more likely to invest in improving the home than would a landlord. A single homeowner making home improvements can influence surrounding homeowners to improve their homes as well, sometimes having far-reaching effects on an entire neighborhood. The following strategies can be implemented by the County to encourage more home ownership and home improvement / repairs by homeowners.

- a. Work with local banks and financial institutions to provide financial incentives for home ownership and home improvements
  - b. Consider partnering with municipalities to establish revolving loan funds to provide capital for home improvements at low interest rates to homeowners
  - c. Work with local municipalities to sponsor “how to” seminars in home improvements and repairs
  - d. Encourage local municipalities to sponsor municipal-wide “clean-up” days to encourage maintenance of both owner occupied and rental housing units
4. *Support the Greene County housing team in providing additional subsidized housing units to meet the needs of the County residents with low incomes and / or disabilities.*

The following strategies can be implemented by the County to support the Housing Authority in this effort.

- a. Provide assistance and support as needed in preparing and submitting applications for funding for proposed subsidized housing development projects
- b. Identify underutilized buildings in the County that could be repurposed for subsidized housing, and assist in soliciting investors / developers as partners in implementation
- c. Assist in exploring additional opportunities to attract a senior housing provider to the County to develop affordable units specifically for seniors and help to coordinate / provide local incentives for development. A development such as this could free existing subsidized units for younger individuals and / or families and could also free existing market rate housing units for rent or sale

### *Economic Diversity*

Historically, the County's coal mining industry has been its key economic driver, and much of its recent economic growth in the County has been related to the Marcellus Shale industry, and the new economic growth has brought lower-than-average unemployment to the County during some of the worst economic times in recent in our nation's recent history. While these economic pillars provide stability in today's economy, both are based on natural resources that will eventually be depleted. At the same time, the County's manufacturing industry is declining, along with its younger population, which represents the County's future workforce.

Although the depletion of the County's natural resources may be far beyond the lifetime of today's residents in the County, now is the time to plan for the economy of future generations. It will be much easier to be proactive today to create a stable, thriving economy, than to be reactive to potential economic crises that could arise if no action is taken. The following strategies can be implemented by the County to achieve this objective.

1. Develop a county-wide economic development strategy that includes specific goals and implementation strategies that address the following:
  - a. Priority locations for economic development, including greenfield and brownfield sites
  - b. Target industry sectors for recruitment/expansion, such as:

- i. Niche manufacturing
  - ii. “Reshoring” opportunities (bringing well-paying manufacturing jobs that were moved abroad back to the United States)
  - iii. Expansion of existing business and industry clusters
  - iv. Entrepreneurship
  - v. Attractive consumer amenities
- 2. Develop a workforce strategy that focuses on providing training to local residents in skills that align with current and targeted industry needs, as well as training in soft skills that can increase the attractiveness of the County’s workforce to businesses considering location or expansion in the County
- 3. Develop a business recruitment and retention strategy around focused on the County’s target industries
- 4. Develop a marketing / branding strategy to promote Greene County as a great place to live, work, and play
- 5. Develop a marketing campaign aimed at attracting former residents to come back and see the “new” Greene County, explore its new opportunities, and encourage them to move back “home”
- 6. Provide infrastructure to targeted areas for business / industrial development
- 7. Explore options for local distribution of natural gas to targeted locations in the County that would provide low-cost energy as an incentive for businesses to locate or expand in the County.

#### Live Greene, Work Greene, Love Greene, the 2020 Greene County Comprehensive Plan

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, the (2020) updated comprehensive plan for Greene County was prepared by an Advisory Committee and other contributors representing a wide variety of organizations and stakeholders from within the County. The Plan was facilitated by Mackin Engineering Company, with assistance from 4Ward Planning and Next Generation Partners.

As stated in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, a county comprehensive plan is defined as “a land use and growth management plan prepared by the county planning commission and adopted by the county commissioners which establishes broad goals and criteria for municipalities to use in preparation for their comprehensive plan and land use regulation.” It is the County’s official statement of its vision containing goals and objectives that will guide future development and serve as a reference point for budget decisions and capital improvements priorities.

The planning process started with the development of “A Greene Vision 2030”; the County’s vision statement. It states:

*"Greene County will enhance its competitive economic position in the region by building upon its strengths, unparalleled natural resources, a rich industrial and agricultural heritage and small-town charm and family values."*

Along with the Vision, the foundation for the Plan was built on six pillars that were most important to the County's future: representing the recurring and dominant themes in Greene County. The Six Pillars include: Mobility, Infrastructure, and Transportation; Workforce and Education; Business and Industry; Quality of Life; Grow and Protect Assets; and Local Government. Each of the Pillars is identified in more detail below.

### *Mobility, Transportation & Infrastructure*

This Pillar focuses on mobility, transportation improvements, and infrastructure such as water, sewer, and broadband. Maintaining and expanding infrastructure is crucial to not only serving and attracting business and industry, but it is vital to cultivating a well-educated and prepared workforce.

Issues considered:

- Expanding access to broadband and cellular coverage
- Expanding public water and sanitary sewage infrastructure
- Updating and maintaining an adequate transportation network
- Developing a financially capable method for public transit

### *Workforce & Education*

This Pillar focuses on enabling individuals to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes for gainful employment or improved work performance; and providing employers with an effective means to communicate and meet their demand for skills. Education is the key component in a healthy workforce. A well-educated workforce attracts companies because skilled workers make businesses more competitive and productive.

Issues considered:

- Assisting school districts with methods to enhance public education and reduce costs
- Preparing students to pursue careers available in the local and regional workforce
- Improving safety in public schools
- Addressing declining enrollment and resource scarcity
- Supporting the Greene County Career and Technical Center (GCCTC)

- Nurturing an entrepreneurial culture

### *Business & Industry*

This Pillar focuses on the businesses and organizations involved in setting the policies and practices of economic activities that provide employment and generate wealth in traditional manufacturing, construction, natural resource extraction, farming, tourism, retail, and service provider industries.

Issues considered:

- Attracting new business and industry
- Focusing on areas served by existing infrastructure
- Capitalizing on energy production
- Expanding economic opportunities
- Implementing a successful marketing campaign
- Examining new financing strategies

### *Quality of Life*

This Pillar focuses on the overall health and well-being of our residents. In order to sustain and grow our County resources it is vital that we address the overall health and well-being of our current residents as well as those we hope to attract in the future.

Issues considered:

- Improving overall County Health rankings
- Promoting good stewardship
- Expanding housing opportunities
- Addressing the opioid crisis and other addictions impacting Greene County residents

### *Grow & Protect Assets*

This Pillar focuses on Greene County's assets and how the County can best protect and utilize our unique assets. Growing and protecting our assets is the core of a reasonable, rational future growth plan that addresses tax base changes. By preserving what the County has and leveraging it for growth, Greene County can build on our unique character while attracting visitors and businesses to the County.

Issues considered:

- Capitalizing on the “Rural-ability” of the County
- Attracting and maintaining a younger population base
- Targeting growth and development to key investment corridors
- Addressing the devaluation of coal
- Continuing to expand the County recreation system

### *Local Government*

This Pillar focuses on improving the front line of government, closest to the constituents and most familiar with the needs of the communities in the County. The importance of this Pillar to the overall sustainability and future success in Greene County speaks for itself as it is most often the first point of contact relating to development, infrastructure, community stumbling blocks and social issues.

Issues considered:

- Establishing uniformity in municipal regulations
- Fighting neighborhood blight
- Building a deeper volunteer base for emergency services
- Encouraging more municipal cooperation and partnerships

The Greene County Comprehensive Plan identified a series of priority goals and strategies that should be the focus of the implementation efforts. They included:

#### Priority Goal 1 – Expand Broadband Access to Underserved Areas

Strategy 1: Continue to lobby for financial assistance to expand access

- Create a Communications and Technology Advisory Committee to meet regularly with educators, businesses, emergency service providers and elected officials
- Partner with educational lobbyist organizations to influence legislation at the state level
- Designate a liaison entity that has direct contact with all the state agencies governing infrastructure practices to assist local municipalities and developers

Strategy 2: Map and categorize the existing communication networks that exist in the County

- Apply for USDA and or Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) funding to contract with a network expert, to undertake a Broadband Coverage and Feasibility Study
- Once the Coverage and Feasibility Study is complete, work with project partners to implement recommendations

#### *Early Implementation Project (Priority Goal 1)*

- The Appalachian Regional Commission's POWER (Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization) initiative is a congressionally funded initiative that targets federal resources to help communities and regions that have been affected by job losses in coal mining, coal power plant operations, and coal related supply chain industries due to the changing economics of America's energy production
- In April of 2019, Greene County applied for a \$50,000 grant from the POWER initiative to complete a broadband feasibility study of the County. This study will provide a better understanding of the best technological solution(s), implementation schedule and cost(s) needed to serve the broadband needs in Greene County

#### Priority Goal 2 – Assist Educational Providers to Enhance Opportunities and Reduce Costs

##### Strategy 1: Explore options to partner district-wide

- Expand existing shared services / programs
- Develop county-wide policies for pressing issues such as truancy and cyber school
- Develop on-line program offerings that are accessible to all students in the county-wide cyber school
- Develop incentives to keep the kids in the brick and mortar schools (i.e. limit cyber student's participation in graduation ceremonies, proms, sports and clubs)
- Explore options for school district consolidation

##### Strategy 2: Encourage School Districts to educate the public and parents on the financing and operations of public education

- Develop an annual county-wide education newsletter to build pride in education
- Build upon the existing social media platforms for all districts

##### Strategy 3: Work with educational providers to assist individuals gain the skills and knowledge necessary for local, available jobs

- Develop a Workforce Consortium that meets regularly with local business and industry representatives to help align school curriculum with required job skills
- Expand the Career and Technology Fair
- Expand the Workplace Learning Program to increase job shadowing opportunities
- Align local industry employment opportunities as student portfolios are developed through the PA Department of Education Career Clusters Program
- Identify any barriers to entry in training and education (high school and post-secondary) programs and seek funding that addresses and removes those barriers

#### *Early Implementation Project (Priority Goal 2)*

- The Greene County Career and Technology Center (GCCTC) has started a pre-apprenticeship program to place students from the GCCTC into internships with local businesses and industry. The GCCTC is meeting with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry in the summer of 2019 to discuss registering the program so that it would be eligible for funding from the state
- Currently the GCCTC is in discussions with Heartland Restaurant Group, who own a number of restaurants in Southwestern Pennsylvania and West Virginia including Dunkin Donuts, to place students in the Culinary Arts program in entry level management jobs
- There are plans to add internship opportunities with local businesses and industries in the precision machining program and others

#### Priority Goal 3 – Capitalize on Greene County’s Assets to Expand Economic Opportunities

##### Strategy 1: Develop a one-stop shop for economic development within Greene County

- Streamline the process for companies looking to locate in the County, local entrepreneurial start-ups and companies looking to expand their footprint or operational capabilities
- Connect public utilities, infrastructure dependent companies, workforce and education practitioners, and funding agencies with the applicable needs of the business community
- Create a countywide map to promote available sites

##### Strategy 2: Create a marketing strategy focused on retaining existing and attracting new businesses and industry into the County



- Develop thematic branding, messaging and collateral materials to aggressively prepare for and pursue opportunities to attract energy consuming to the County that align with our existing industry sectors
- Work with existing businesses to identify any issues and help them to grow and expand
- Create an Energy Park providing low-cost energy resources both naturally occurring (natural gas and coal) and man-made (electricity) that are abundant in the County

Strategy 3: Take advantage of abundant and inexpensive energy sources for future growth and development

- Package development-ready greenfield sites and brownfield sites as opportunity corridors with strategic advantages to attract manufacturing companies and commercial business enterprises within the natural gas supply chain
- Prepare individual target market strategies for each site and market to applicable businesses and developers regionally, nationally and internationally

#### *Early Implementation Project (Priority Goal 3)*

- A marketing campaign is currently underway that will enable the County to attract new business and industrial investment in multiple markets. The campaign will not only address current trends but forecast what the next ten years will hold locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Key action items include:
  - Communication strategy and outreach to developers and prospective business enterprises
  - Brochures and other collateral materials focused on economic development to assist the Commissioners and others with the pursuit of new prospects
  - Regional, national, and international prospect outreach
  - Prepare for and attend national / international Business and Trade Conferences
  - Rebrand Greene County (Logo Design)
  - Global marketing campaign (business & industry / tourism & recreation / quality of life)
  - County marketing video
  - Upgrade and enhance the County's social media presence
  - New County website

Priority Goal 4 – Continue to Improve Overall County Health, Safety & Wellness

Strategy 1: Encourage healthier lifestyles by offering more recreational opportunities and programs

- Extend the Greene River Trail
- Conduct a feasibility study for a multimodal trail along Ten Mile Creek from Waynesburg to the Greene River Trail
- Apply for funding to update the Wisecarver Recreation Area Master Plan
- Develop and promote public access and recreational areas along the waterways
- Continue to support the County Wellness Program through the Parks and Recreation Department

Strategy 2: Increase the ability of first responders to provide high quality and efficient services

- Explore incentives that can be provided to volunteers involved in local fire departments & EMS
- Assist municipalities and first responder agencies in seeking funding to purchase specialized equipment to be shared by neighboring departments under a shared services arrangement

Strategy 3: Support efforts to fight the opioid crisis

- Help to build sustainability for the Greene County Opioid Overdose Task Force through collaboration, communication, and funding when possible
- Assist the Greene County Opioid Overdose Task Force to launch a public awareness campaign to increase awareness of substance use disorder and treatments available
- Assist the Greene County Opioid Overdose Task Force to identify legislation and resources to support local law enforcement in their efforts to arrest drug dealers and traffickers in the community, and increase consequences for the use and sale of opioid-related substances

#### *Early Implementation Project (Priority Goal 4)*

- Greene County has prioritized the redevelopment of Wisecarver Reservoir and Recreation Area, a 368-acre property located northwest of Waynesburg in Franklin Township along SR 4035, Water Dam Road. In 2018, the County hired a consultant to design three girls softball fields, including parking, team bench seating and spectator seating areas. Currently a Highway Occupancy Permit has been secured for the site and a Wetland Permit Package is being prepared for submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- In addition, the County has received a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) to include walking trails

throughout the site and a grant application was submitted to DCNR to complete a master plan for the entire parcel. In 2019, Greene County hired a consultant to complete a Master Site Development Plan (MSDP) for the entire site.

#### Priority Goal 5 - Increase Housing Opportunities That Meet the Demonstrated Needs

Strategy 1: Encourage infrastructure expansion to target areas that can support new housing development

- Meet with municipalities to review their comprehensive plans and identify priority growth and investment areas
- Assist municipalities with developing financing packages to fund infrastructure expansion

Strategy 2: Encourage and assist municipalities with updating land use ordinances to accommodate a variety of housing

- Review municipal zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances to determine if they pose barriers to providing a variety of housing choices (i.e. multifamily, senior housing, persons with disabilities, etc.)
- Develop model ordinance language to address pressing housing issues

#### *Early Implementation Project (Priority Goal 5)*

- Beginning with municipalities where new housing would be well served by nearby jobs, schools, water/sewer infrastructure and amenities, County staff should review zoning ordinances to identify and recommend eliminating overt and de facto barriers to the creation of a variety of housing types. This goes beyond ensuring that a variety of structure types (duplexes, triplexes, quads, townhouses, multi-family buildings) are permitted by right in one or more districts. The review should also ensure that:
  - Land is available to develop in districts where non-single-family housing types are permitted
  - Dimensional and parking minimum requirements are not so high as to create financial barriers to housing development
  - Dimensional requirements do not prohibit the creation of patio or courtyard homes, which are increasingly popular configurations for the growing number of households that prefer low maintenance, accessible single-family living
  - Accessory dwelling units are considered. Allowing owners to build “granny flats” or rent out garage apartments expands housing options without changing a neighborhood’s existing character

- The ordinance allows for adaptive reuse under certain circumstances, such as converting large single-family homes for other residential or mixed uses or adapting vacant schools or commercial buildings for rental units

## Southwestern Pennsylvania Connected – Equitable Broadband Access

### *Overview*

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), in collaboration with Allies for Children and Carnegie Mellon University (Metro21 and Traffic21) and a broad, regional coalition of stakeholders proposes to develop a regional Connectivity Improvement Plan. High-speed connectivity programs and projects will be deployed, enabling areas of the SWPA region lacking adequate high-speed internet access and equipment to better connect to jobs, education, health care and to attract new business. Most importantly, this proposed Plan will help people connect to opportunity.

The Plan will examine the current, true state of the region's broadband connectivity in relation to the region's demographic and socioeconomic composition. This ensures its recommendations will help equitably serve our most vulnerable populations who are unserved or underserved by current connectivity.

High-speed connectivity is essential in the 21st Century. The emergence of the COVID-19 virus has demonstrated to the world the important role that high-speed connectivity currently plays and will continue to play in nearly every aspect of our lives. For the SWPA region to be globally competitive, the unserved and underserved areas of the region must be addressed equitably and systematically.

### *Mapping Tools*

SPC examined the current state of broadband related coverage, speed, resources, gaps, and needs in relation to the region's demographic and socioeconomic conditions. Connectivity was also examined in relation to the region's businesses, educational, and medical facilities. Using existing local and national open-source datasets, SPC analyzed, collected, and compared all broadband and socioeconomic data and identified gaps in regional access, adoption, and affordability.

Once gaps in the broadband service were identified, two Connectivity Indices were developed. The first Index focuses on broadband accessibility in the region, while the second Index focuses on adoption and equity. Environmental Justice and Title VI data was analyzed and incorporated to create the Connectivity Indices.

These two Indices helped to further the analysis by identifying, evaluating, and prioritizing areas where the greatest disparity between coverage, speed, and affordability of high-speed broadband connectivity access in relation to the demographic and socioeconomic conditions in rural and urban populations of the region. (Source: <https://www.spcregion.org/connected/>)

### *Update*

In April (2022), the Southwestern Pennsylvania (SWPA) Connected initiative announced the launch of the Connectivity Roadmap. This guidance tool will support SPC, county leadership, and regional stakeholders in the 10-county region to develop and prioritize connectivity projects and associated programs to secure federal and state broadband funding.

The Connectivity Roadmap provides several tools to guide the selection of projects as priorities shift, including a Project Identification Decision Tree and Measures of Effectiveness. In addition, the roadmap includes 12 regional goals and over 70 strategies as well as recommendations and next steps to improve broadband infrastructure, tools, and skills across southwestern Pennsylvania.

Natural Infrastructure of Southwestern Pennsylvania: Regional Case Studies (Linking Economic Vitality and Natural Resources); NI Atlas (A Resource Guide Identifying Natural Infrastructure); and, NI Framework (A Process for Optimizing Natural Resources)

### *Regional Case Studies (Linking Economic Vitality and Natural Resources)*

In the Natural Infrastructure of Southwestern Pennsylvania Report (2005) infrastructure was defined as a basic system of support. Grey infrastructure included engineered and built systems such as schools, transportation, utilities, sewage treatment and water facilities. Natural infrastructure supports human, economic and emotional needs – from water supply, to coal production, to recreation, to our aesthetic sense of place.

Key observations from the Regional Case Studies:

1. Natural Infrastructure has played a significant role in creating Southwestern Pennsylvania's economic wealth for more than 100 years.
2. Natural resource related planning in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region has typically focused on the conservation of parks, open space and agricultural areas.
3. Southwestern Pennsylvania offers a diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities; while many remain underutilized, the region is striving to improve access to some of its natural resource areas.

4. Southwestern Pennsylvania land development patterns may be impacting the integrity of its natural infrastructure uses.
5. The hierarchy and autonomy of the region's governmental entities present challenges to the development of a unified, large-scale natural resource planning effort.

*The Link Between Natural Infrastructure and Economic Growth: A case for enhancing open spaces in Southwestern Pennsylvania – RAND (Stephen Rattien, Sally Sleeper, Leigh Stallings, Henry Willis); January 2003*

- Well guided investment in a region's amenities contributes to community well-being and, ultimately, helps to promote economic development.
- A (2002) survey of new home buyers confirmed that adequate, appealing, affordable housing, as well as health care, access to parks and open space, and public safety, make communities more desirable.
- Among all of a region's assets, a well-protected and burnished natural infrastructure, including access to natural amenities, is often seen as an important part of the portfolio and thus, key to a health regional economy.
- There is clear evidence that economically successful regions protect and enhance their natural resources.

*NI Framework (A Process for Optimizing Natural Resources)*

Natural Infrastructure Uses can be generally categorized into the following four broad categories:

1. Public Services – uses providing potable water supply, septic soils, municipal waste, or other natural resource-related services.
2. Products – these uses are related to minerals, materials, goods or commodities for consumption.
3. Habitat – a use that supplies or enhances the habitat for aquatic, terrestrial or avian species.
4. Human Enjoyment – land-related or water-related uses that support recreation activities and cultural assets.

Examples of Natural Infrastructure Uses

*Public Services*

- Groundwater Recharge Areas
- Stormwater Filtration Areas
- Surface Water Production Areas

- Small-scale Wastewater Treatment (Septic System)
- Landfill Areas
- Large-scale Wastewater Treatment (Constructed Wetland Systems)
- Commercial Transportation System

### *Products*

- Large-scale Agriculture
- Forest Reserves
- Oil and Natural Gas Reserves / Production Areas
- Coal Reserves / Production Areas
- Aggregate Extraction Areas
- Large-scale Solar Energy Collection Areas
- Large-scale Hydro-Electric Power Generation Facilities
- Large-scale Wind Energy Collection Areas

### Habitat

- Integrated Biological Diversity Areas
- Brook Trout Habitat
- Warm Water Game Fish Habitat
- Significant Bird Watching Areas

### Human Use

- Deer Hunting Areas
- Ski Slope Areas
- Primitive Camping Areas
- Non-Primitive Camping Areas
- Land Suitable for Aerial Sports
- Land Suitable for Trails
- Cultural Resource Sites
- ATV Areas
- White-water Rafting / Kayaking / Canoeing
- Flatwater Kayaking / Canoeing
- Power and Sail Boating

### *NI Atlas (A Resource Guide Identifying Natural Infrastructure)*

The NI Atlas documents the Natural Resource Characteristics and Natural Infrastructure Uses of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Region, establishing a region-wide baseline for the location and quality of Natural Infrastructure Uses.

The mapping methodology consisted of:

1. An inventory of Natural Resource Characteristics
2. Defining the range of Natural Infrastructure Uses
3. Establishing criteria for each Natural Infrastructure Use
4. The identification of areas suitable for each Natural Infrastructure Use

The maps identified a number of Natural Infrastructure Uses that Greene County officials and staff can reference when reviewing future development proposals.



## **Organizations and Initiatives (that include Greene County)**

The following organizations and initiatives serve in a regional capacity and address a variety of activities and programs in southwestern Pennsylvania. Greene County can access the resources (funding, technical, etc.) that they provide to implement plans and recommendations that fall within each organizations scope.

### Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC)

SPC serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the ten-county region of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland, as well as the City of Pittsburgh. The Commission is responsible for planning and prioritizing the use of all state and federal transportation funds allocated to the region. SPC develops plans / programs for public investments and fulfills federal and state requirements for transportation, economic development, and local government assistance programs.

As the Local Development District (LDD) and Economic Development District (EDD) for southwestern Pennsylvania – as designated by the Appalachian Regional Commission and the U. S. Department of Commerce – SPC establishes regional economic development priorities and provides community / financial / export / government procurement assistance along with the delivery of state and federal programs for the region.

### Mon River Town Program / Mon River Valley Coalition

In 2010, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) established the River Towns Program (RTP) to serve as a regionally based resource to help communities recognize the river as an asset around which potential community and economic development can occur. McCollom Development Strategies administered the Program and focused on connecting municipalities to the growing outdoor recreational market and has capitalized on the Monongahela River's recognition as a recreational and tourism asset.

The success of the RTP has grown into a regional collaborative now known as the Mon River Valley Coalition (MRVC). The Coalition strategies include:

- Economic growth based on outdoor recreational services and businesses
- Community engagement that connects residents with healthy leisure activities through outdoor recreation
- Well-maintained business districts that offer needed goods, services and jobs and demonstrate continuous community reinvestment

- Safe, clean, “green” and well-maintained communities that demonstrate continuous community re-investment
- Effective, well-maintained and well-managed community infrastructure and resources
- Economically and socially desirable land uses that support strong, vital, and healthy business growth, stability, expansion, and turnover
- Strong healthy communities based on a sound institutional foundation that supports strategic decision-making, informed action, and continuous and lasting reinvestment

The RTP / MRVC has provided opportunities to its member municipalities by pooling resources, creating economies of scale, and building a broad range of professional and technical assistance that can help to address these issues. The MRVC is being administered through the efforts of the National Road Heritage Corridor.

Greene County should continue attend MRVC meetings and support membership and involvement in the MRVC for any of its municipalities located along the Monongahela River to assist with the completion of priority projects that are supported by their goals and strategies. (Source - <https://monrivertowns.com/> and <http://monrivercoalition.org/>)

### Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area

Established in 1996, the Rivers of Steel Heritage Area is an eight-county region that includes Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. One of fifty-five National Heritage Areas, it encompasses the Allegheny, Monongahela, Ohio, and Youghiogheny River valleys focusing on the industrial heritage of Pittsburgh and Southwestern Pennsylvania that includes the iron, steel, coal, coke, and glass industries.

Managed by the Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation, Rivers of Steel supports heritage tourism, creative placemaking, outdoor recreation, and community partnerships in the region to foster economic redevelopment and enhance cultural engagement.

Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation can be a valuable resource to assist with the identification and reuse of buildings, sites and features that have a significance in the region’s manufacturing history. Through its grant program, Rivers of Steel has funded many projects in partnership with local communities including the redevelopment of Brownfields, revitalization of main streets, improvements to river landings, creation of recreational trails, etc.

As heritage tourism continues to be a bigger part of the local economy in the region, Rivers of Steel has identified, and saved, many industrial sites that became heritage attractions that Rivers of Steel manages today. Three of these sites would be designated National Historic Landmarks, one of which, the W.A. Young & Sons Foundry and Machine Shop in Rices Landing is located in Greene County.

Additional information on the Rivers of Steel can be found their website - <https://riversofsteel.com>.

### PortPitt (Port of Pittsburgh)

The Pittsburgh Port District encompasses a 12-county area including Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Blair, Butler, Clarion, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties.

All 200 miles of commercially navigable waterways in southwestern Pennsylvania are in the Port District, which includes the three major rivers in southwestern PA: the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio. These waterways are made navigable by a system of seventeen locks and dams. The Port of Pittsburgh supports over 200 river terminals and barge industry service suppliers, including privately owned public river terminals.

PortPitt connects businesses and enterprises with local, state and federal funding to expand and develop commercial use of the region's waterways, while the Port of Pittsburgh Commission connects businesses with funding opportunities so goals can be more easily achieved.

The Monongahela River originates in Marion County, WV and flows north into Pennsylvania's Greene, Fayette, Washington, Westmoreland, and Allegheny counties passing through six locks and dams along the way. Navigation on the river was once used by only canoes and flatboats, but is now heavily used as a barge route carrying coal, coke, iron, and steel.

### Appalachian Regional Commission

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a federal economic development agency consisting of all, or part of, thirteen (13) states and four hundred twenty-three (423) counties across the Appalachian Region. ARC invests in Appalachia's economic future by providing grants, publishing research, and sponsoring learning experiences – all to help the Region's communities seize their opportunities, address economic disparity and advance prosperity.

Of the thirteen states, West Virginia is the only one completely within the Appalachian Region. Parts of the other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia make up the remainder of the Appalachian Region.

Greene County is one of the fifty-two Pennsylvania 52 counties that are included in ARC's footprint.

Recently, ARC completed their 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan, *Appalachia Envisioned: A New Era of Opportunity*, that will provide the guidance for future investments in the Appalachian Region. The Strategic Investment Goals and Objectives from the Plan included:

- Goal #1 – Building Appalachian Businesses: Strengthen and diversify the Region's economy through inclusive economic development strategies and investments in entrepreneurship and business development.
- Goal #2 – Building Appalachia's Workforce Ecosystem: Expand and strengthen community systems (education, healthcare, housing, childcare, and others) that help Appalachians obtain a job, stay on the job, and advance along a financially sustaining career pathway.
- Goal #3 – Building Appalachia's Infrastructure: Ensure that the residents and businesses of Appalachia have access to reliable, affordable, resilient, and energy efficient utilities and infrastructure in order to successfully live and work in the Region.
- Goal #4 – Building Regional Culture and Tourism: Strengthen Appalachia's community and economic development potential by preserving and investing in the Region's local, cultural heritage, and natural assets.
- Goal #5 – Building Community Leaders and Capacity: Invest in the capacity of local leaders, organizations, and communities to address local challenges by providing technical assistance and support to access resources, engage partners, identify strategies and tactics, and conduct effective planning and project execution.

Additional information on ARC's mission, funding opportunities, available resources, etc. can be found on their website - <https://www.arc.gov/>.

#### Center for Research and Economic Development (Waynesburg University)

The Center for Research and Economic Development (CRED) at Waynesburg University provides research, expertise, and resources, and partnership opportunities that enhance economic development initiatives in southwestern Pennsylvania. CRED partners with

local businesses, nonprofits, regional educational institutions, local government, and economic development agencies.

The strategic partnerships are focused on creating sustainable economic growth opportunities in the region. CRED offers its partners access to (Waynesburg University's) facilities and equipment that include: "smart" classrooms; conference facilities; video conferencing; IP conferencing; and streaming video.

### Fayette LaunchBox

Penn State Fayette, in partnership with the Fay-Penn Economic Development Council, created the LaunchBox – a no-cost business accelerator to help entrepreneurs with early-stage startups access the resources and support needed to be successful.

Services are available to Penn State faculty, staff, students, and alumni – as well as unaffiliated residents of Fayette, Greene, Washington, Westmoreland, and Somerset counties. The goal is to help entrepreneurs and University affiliates develop their ideas into commercially viable products and services.

The LaunchBox can connect entrepreneurs to a state-of-the-art event center, educational programming and mentorship, legal and business services, dynamic and collaborative workspaces, and micro-grant resources. Also available are state-of-the-science prototyping tools that include a light manufacturing lab, 3-D printers, and flexible makerspaces. (Source: <https://fayette.psu.edu/launchbox>)

## Stakeholder Engagement

### Stakeholder / Key Person Interviews

Throughout the first half of the STMP process, interviews were conducted with several stakeholders in Greene County. This included individuals in the business community, organizational leaders, appointed officials, and developers.

The interviews provided an understanding of the issues impacting the County, its assets, challenges, and opportunities, and input into how Greene County should grow and develop in the future. This information was helpful in developing the recommendations and strategies included in the STMP.

A summary of the results of the stakeholder interviews are listed below:

### *Greene County's Assets*

1. Geographic location
  - a. Within ten (10) hours of two-thirds of the US population
  - b. Close to two metro areas – Pittsburgh and Morgantown
  - c. Good colleges / universities (Waynesburg, W & J, WVU, Pitt, CMU, Robert Morris, California University of PA, Penn State Fayette, etc.) in the region
  - d. (Direct and close) Access to the interstate system (I-79, I-68, I-70)
1. Natural and Cultural Amenities
  - a. Monongahela River
    - i. Recreation
    - ii. Transport of goods / products
  - b. Other waterways (Ten Mile Creek, Dunkard Creek, etc.)
2. EQT Center
3. High Point Racetrack
4. FAST Center (Gray Township) – training for police, etc.
5. Wisecarver Recreation Area
6. Outdoor Recreation – Trails, pools, hunting, golf, camping, hiking, fall foliage (viewing)
7. Generational Workers
  - a. Hard working; blue collar work ethic from coal, steel, etc. backgrounds
  - b. Willing to work in industries that some locations see as “less desirable”
8. Developable areas
  - a. Through targeted infrastructure improvements and extensions
  - b. Western part of the county – lower taxes (due to Consol)
  - c. Available properties for residential housing

- d. Brownfield sites – that have infrastructure in place
- e. Railroads – built for heavier loads (from coal industry); underutilized presently
- f. Electricity – 500k and 138K lines were put in to serve the coal industry
- 9. County Government
  - a. Willing to partner with companies; will be there for them
  - b. (Financial) Commitments by the County – for match money, projects, etc.
  - c. Connections with local legislators and others in influential positions
  - d. Bipartisan group efforts
  - e. Working with surrounding counties (and their elected / appointed officials)
  - f. Economic Development / Planning Department
    - i. Continuing education for the staff
    - ii. Identifying new grants and funding opportunities
- 10. Waynesburg University – has been working with the County on projects / improvements
- 11. Quality of Life
  - a. “Ruralness”
    - i. Safe
    - ii. Pursuit of rural areas by people living in the city / urban areas – due to telework opportunities
    - iii. Small town America feel
  - b. Low cost of living
  - c. History – unique (museum, Mail Pouch barns, Warrior Trail: connection to Ohio Earth Works, covered bridges, WA Young Foundry in Rices Landing, Greensboro pottery)
  - d. Paranormal

### *Challenges / Obstacles*

- 1. The County’s (financial) ability to help spur growth
  - a. County budget is mostly spoken for
  - b. May be forced to drop to a lower class county due to census figures – presently a sixth class county which allows a Controller
  - c. Not a destination – marketing is very tough; a lot of convincing needed
  - d. Perceptions – people and businesses researching Greene County see low achievement and graduation rates for school districts, limited housing options, high taxes, etc.
  - e. Finding new revenues for projects
  - f. Act 13 Funds – Gas industry has been volatile
  - g. Abatements – Abatement Program is up this year
    - i. What is a good length of time and what percentage of taxes?

- ii. Have the current abatements helped to spur development, or have they not made a difference?
- 2. Current Economy
  - a. Coal Industry – a big part of the tax base; if it goes away, it will severely impact the County
  - b. Gas Industry – not as much impact as originally anticipated
  - c. Diversification
    - i. Is it too late in the game to attract growing industries?
    - ii. What industries make the most sense to pursue?
  - d. Need for a sit-down restaurant (that serves alcohol)
    - i. Determine the actual ADT counts on roads that can be a potential location
  - e. Airport
    - i. Not easy to expand – due to length of the runway
    - ii. FAA – hesitant to invest in smaller airports
  - f. Undeveloped Interstate Interchanges
    - i. Need to be upgraded (from a transportation perspective)
    - ii. Identify the reasons why they are not being developed
  - g. Lack of places of stay that reflect the County's atmosphere – cabins w/ amenities that will attract city people; glamping; don't take away from the cabins in Greene County that support hunters, etc.
- 3. Taxes
  - a. Pennsylvania – are they causing businesses to leave?
  - b. Local School Districts – higher than average; may need state intervention to help address this issue
- 4. Infrastructure – needs to be upgraded and expanded
  - a. Roads
  - b. Public Water and Sewer
    - i. Capacity of the current systems
    - ii. Ability (financial) and need to extend water lines
  - c. Broadband / Internet
  - d. Need to get a better understanding of the utilities in the County
- 5. Limitations of the available workforce
  - a. Willingness to work – start low and work their way up; prevalent for service industries (restaurants, hotels, etc.)
  - b. Generational poverty (people seeking public assistance) – need to change this way of thinking
  - c. Higher levels of education needed for certain industries
  - d. Abilities
- 6. Quality of Life
  - a. Millennials – what are they looking for when locating / relocating



- b. What is needed to remake towns – creating a sense of place
- c. Local School Districts – graduation figures are getting smaller each year
- d. Lack of housing
- e. Rural – need to sell the positive aspects
- 7. Cooperation / Coordination within the County
  - a. Need to improve the current relationship with state agencies
  - b. Better coordination with local municipalities
    - i. More outreach / education to municipalities on programs / goals
    - ii. Help to improve administration at the local municipal level
  - c. The “good old boy mentality” still exists in some parts of the County
    - i. Not willing to work together
    - ii. Need an honest approach and be true to your word
  - d. True collaboration is needed between the County, local governments, organizations, etc. – keep meeting and moving projects forward

### *Opportunities*

- 1. Growth and Development within the County
  - a. Monongahela River Corridor (eastern side of the County)
    - i. Outdoor recreation
    - ii. Housing – for the elderly and empty nesters
    - iii. Development of a diverse housing community
    - iv. Former industrial sites – now brownfield sites
  - b. Robena Site (Monongahela Township)
    - i. 1500 +/- acres
    - ii. Small cracker plant or downstream industrial site
    - iii. Plastics industry
    - iv. Housing improvements to the neighborhood near the site
  - c. Ryerson Area - outside of the State Park
    - i. Alternative recreation site – lodge for people looking to get away for a while
    - ii. A lot of the surface property is owned by coal companies – availability of property?
  - d. Western Part of the County
    - i. Tourism
    - ii. Recreation
    - iii. Camping / Hunting / Fishing
    - iv. ATV Park(s)
  - e. I-79 Corridor (Interchanges)
    - i. Ruff Creek – need public water and sewer; Washington Township has zoning

- ii. Waynesburg – infrastructure is in place; Franklin Township has zoning
  - iii. Kirby – need public water and sewer; Whiteley Township has zoning
  - iv. Mount Morris – some infrastructure is available; Perry Township does not have zoning
- f. Willingness to sell / develop the Airport Property and / or the Fairgrounds if the right owner / developer came along
- g. Areas available to attract distribution companies
- h. Brownfields – some have excess electric capacity at the site from past industrial uses
- i. Hatfield Site – determine what is the site best suited for in the future
- j. Hilltop power plant
- k. Consol – zero emissions energy plant; could help the coal industry in the County / Region
- l. Storage hub – new (federal) political climate may impact further development
- m. Specific locations in the County – Mt. Morris; Crucible; Gray Township (New Freeport); Franklin Township; Carmichaels / Cumberland Township; SE Greene – Bobtown / Dunkard Township (due to their proximity to Morgantown / WVU); Perry Township (industry and residential); Monongahela Township (river access / industry, rail line crosses the Monongahela River); Washington Township (Waynesburg Lakes residential development)
- n. Greene County Fairgrounds – improve it, do not eliminate it
  - i. RV Shows
  - ii. Food Truck events
  - iii. Enhance the entertainment venue – larger arena will provide an opportunity to bring in concerts, etc.
  - iv. Utilize the resources in new ways
- o. Airport – Improvements for future growth
  - i. Educational facilities on site
  - ii. Offices
  - iii. Advanced Manufacturing
  - iv. Host new events
- p. Abatements – new or extend for commercial and / or residential properties
- q. Room for growth – the County has a lot of property with potential
- 2. Tourism related activities
- 3. Recreation
  - a. Monongahela River – underutilized

- b. Expand the County's trail network
      - i. Greene River Trail
      - ii. Ancillary businesses – bike rentals, canoe / kayak launches, restaurants, etc.
    - c. Pools – three in the County; make one a year-round facility
    - d. ATV Park – closest one is 3 to 4 hours away (Hatfield McCoy recreation site)
    - e. A family resort similar to Kalahari in Ohio
    - f. Hunting related facilities
    - g. Golf course(s)
  - 4. Industries and Businesses – need to diversify
    - a. Agriculture
      - i. Products – increase current and develop new
      - ii. Agritourism
    - b. Landfill
    - c. Trash / Transfer Station
    - d. Attract a new sit down restaurant
    - e. Health Care
    - f. Air BNB
    - g. Technology
    - h. Advanced Manufacturing
  - 5. Coordination and Cooperation
    - a. Working with Monongalia County, WV presently – they would like to look northward to expand development; not working on a lot with Washington County or Fayette County
    - b. More coordination with county departments / common goals
    - c. Work more closely with organizations such as the GCIDC
    - d. Round table - (Periodic meetings between the County, Townships / Boroughs / School Districts, State reps / senators, Economic Development Agencies, etc.
      - i. Discuss issues on how to grow and develop
      - ii. What can the County do better?
    - e. Open to working with surrounding counties if there is a mutual benefit
  - 6. Marketing / Branding of the County
    - a. Enhance and expand current efforts; combination of previous approach and new thoughts and ideas
    - b. Cost of living and doing business – abatement program; lower property and housing costs; a lot to offer. Address high school taxes and lack of infrastructure.
    - c. Develop relationships with the school districts
    - d. Do more with what the county has; its assets

- e. Educate local residents / business owners on how tourism assets can be used better to increase income and lead to additional opportunities
  - f. Overflow from Morgantown and Washington County
  - g. Promote “fresh air / fresh water” approach
  - h. Getting people into rural areas – work, live, play
  - i. An “outdoor” office – easier with the proposed improvements to Broadband / Internet service
  - j. Location
- 7. Seek more grant / funding opportunities
  - 8. Housing – to keep current, and attract new, residents
    - a. Types, amenities, etc.
    - b. Affordable
  - 9. Broadband – develop the infrastructure across the County to make it easier to access (residents, businesses, institutions, EMS, public service providers)
  - 10. School districts
    - a. Work with them to assist in meeting Greene County’s goals regarding growth and development
    - b. What can be done to keep high school / college students in the County

## **Implementation Plan**

The STMP process was focused on the premise that the growth and sustainability of the tax base and revenue enhancements for Greene County will be the goal of this effort. This will be supported by the implementation of best practices requiring the further development of policies, procedures, standards and / or training requirements relative to administrative and managerial improvements.

This effort will be made more effective by incorporating the following actions into the implementation strategy:

- Prioritize – focus resources and investments
- Communication – be clear and concise; ensure everyone is on the same page
- Make a Difference – be a “change agent” / “champion”
- Unified Effort – use personal networks to recruit residents, stakeholders, businesses, organizations, etc. into the process
- Momentum – start with some low hanging fruit, keep the interest of those involved
- Accountability – the administration and oversight needed to keep the recommendations / projects on schedule and accomplish the desired results effectively and efficiently
- Stay Positive – there will be setbacks along the way; be patient, persistent and show perseverance
- Identify partnerships and resources – use local resources to help fund and complete projects / improvements; grants are not available for everything
- Measure success – identify the parameters for determining success

The implementation plan includes realistic and actionable recommendations and strategies identified during the STMP process. They are included in Steps 5 and 6 of the STMP.

### **Step 5 – Multi-Year Plan Adoption**

To ensure that the STMP is implemented, accountability for moving the priority goals forward should be established. This will provide the administration and oversight needed to keep the recommendations / projects on schedule and ensure the desired results are accomplished effectively and efficiently. Also, progress can be communicated to County Officials and other stakeholders as the goals and strategies are completed.

The Plan includes Greene County’s top three financial management priorities as well as departmental and interdepartmental objectives that are county-wide in nature. The objectives include the policy objectives to be achieved, the budgetary impact and the

timing and deadlines for each action step, and the employee and / or department that has the primary responsibility for implementation.

## **Priority Goals / Recommendations**

The following are the priority financial, administrative, and management goals, recommendations, and strategies that have been identified for Greene County and should be addressed during Year 1 (2022) and Year 2 (2023) of the implementation process.

### Governance, Management and Administration

#### **Goal 1 – Right size Personnel Costs**

*Action Step 1* – hire a consultant to complete a study that results in the creation of a Table of Organization / Compensation Plan; provides clarity and uniformity in determining the appropriate staffing levels in each department; and identifies fair compensation of employees

*Action Step 2* – have the Department Directors and Row Officers agree on the creation of one policy that provides standard criteria for staffing levels

*Action Step 3* – work with the Sheriff's Department and the Greene County Jail to determine the cost – benefit of training new hires versus increasing pay for employees and if there is an opportunity to cross train employees in each of these two departments

#### **Goal 2 – Identify ways to Enhance Operations, Services, and Facilities at the Greene County Prison or Consider Alternatives to provide them**

*Action Step 1* – seek funding through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to perform a study of the Greene County Prison to answer the following questions:

- Are the fees that Greene County Jail charges for holding individuals from other County jails / SCI equitable with the fees that other Counties charge?
- Is it feasible to contract with SCI Greene (or other facilities) to increase capacity to maximum levels at Greene?
- Should the County hire a management company to administer the functions of the facility, including personnel?
- Are there other counties that would consider merging facilities with Greene County?

- What is the average population of the facility and how many structures are necessary?
- How sound are the existing structures?
- What is the appropriate staffing level?

## Financial Management

### **Goal 3 – Stay within the confines of the established budget**

*Action Step 1* – establish protocols for financial documents that the Controller’s office is responsible for preparing and providing to the Board of Commissioners and to the Director of the Commissioners’ Finance Office that more fairly represent the activity of the County on a timely basis

*Action Step 2* – eliminate job duties from the Budget Director’s position that are outside of its purview to allow singular focus on the development and implementation of strategies that lead to a balanced budget

*Action Step 3* – (Budget Director) continue to schedule and keep monthly meetings with row officers and department heads for the review of budget-to-actual data and adjust overall departmental budgets where there are negative variances

*Action Step 4* – (Budget Director and Commissioners) create a five-year financial plan, adjusted annually, based upon unforeseen circumstances

### **Goal 4 – Establish a Capital Reserve Fund and Capital Improvement Plan**

*Action Step 1* – adopt a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that is reviewed and updated annually; details planned projects; and identifies funding requirements for financing each project

*Action Step 2* – establish a Capital Reserve Fund as a part of the CIP to serve as the long-term plan

### **Goal 5 – Clarify Budget Line-items to provide more Transparency**

*Action Step 1* – separate revenue and expense line-items in the County budget into appropriate functions (Judicial, Administration, Planning, etc.) that currently do not meet the definition of the line-items into which they are placed

*Action Step 2* – create “Grants Receivable” line-item in the County budget upon the approval / granting of funds for all departments enabling more control and insight into each of the federal, state and local grants received and act as a tool to ensure the appropriate budgeting of departmental revenues and expenditures

*Action Step 3* – list Act 13 revenue as a separate line-item in the County; removing it from the “Charges for Services” line item which will allow more clarity and transparency

#### Economic and Community Development

### **Goal 6 – Utilize the Greene County Airport as an Economic Driver**

*Action Step 1* – develop a plan to increase the revenue stream to at least match the current and anticipated expenses and / or an alternative economic plan for the County Airport

#### Land Use Practices

### **Goal 7 – Update the Greene County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance**

*Action Step 1* – seek funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED) to update the current SALDO

*Action Step 2* – hire a consultant to assist the County with the update of the SALDO



## **Step 6 – Multi-Year Plan Implementation**

The remaining goals and strategies that were developed during the STMP process are included in this step.

As the STMP is an ongoing process, the Implementation Plan should be evaluated, adjusted, and adopted anew each year. The implementation schedule will serve as a report card for determining whether objectives are being met and providing how Greene County officials can measure the overall progress of the Plan.

### *Measuring Success*

One of the tasks that Greene County officials will have to address is how to best measure the success or effectiveness of the implementation plan. Determining success can be subjective so a consensus of potentially differing thoughts and ideas will need to be reached through a rational and logical process; one that establishes guidelines and parameters to decide whether a goal, action or strategy has been accomplished.

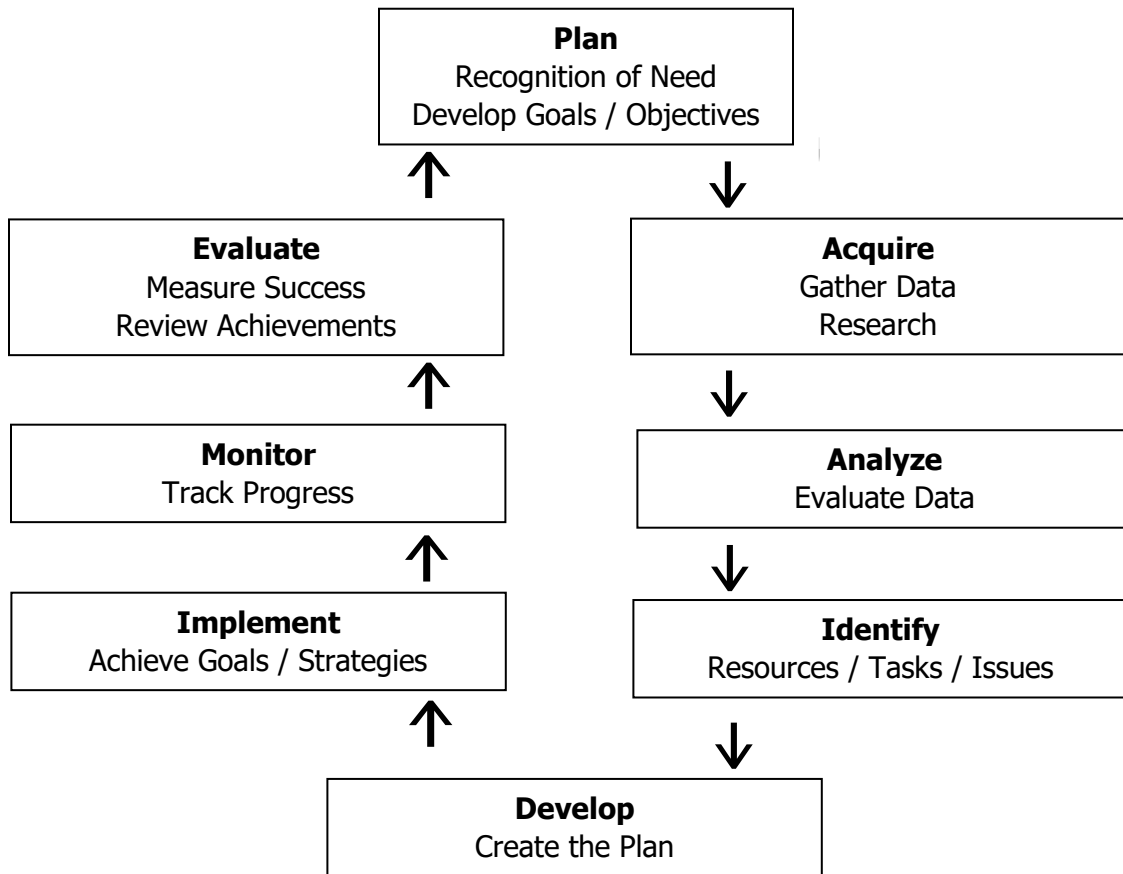
Relying on tools such as a return on investment (ROI) of the County's capital improvements may not be a clear-cut method to measure success. The ROI of these enhancements may be longer term and their success may be assessed by an increase in population or socio-economic attributes, business / industry growth and development, a comparison to other similar counties, and / or an improvement in the overall quality of life in the County.

Keeping the measurement objectives (key performance indicators) clear and using benchmarks will provide County officials with a basic strategy to help in determining the overall success of the Plan.

### *The Planning Continuum*

Change happens – positive and negative – and will continue even after the STMP is adopted. Therefore, it will be important for Greene County officials to utilize a planning process (cycle) to address shifts in local, regional, and national trends and patterns due to economic, residential, social, and demographic factors.

This process, which is detailed below, will provide the foundation to deal with change in the County in a continual manner.



The review and assessment of the Plan should be done on a periodic basis to replace goals as they are completed and to reprioritize other goals as resources become available.

## Goals and Recommendations

The following goals / recommendations and strategies are based on the findings, needs analysis, discussions with County officials and staff, input from stakeholders, research, and best management practices. The implementation of these recommendations and strategies are part of the mid to longer term efforts of the STMP process that start in Year 2 (2023) and continue through Year 5 (2026). Details associated with each of the recommendations can be found in the report.

### Governance, Management and Administration

*Goal 8* – seek grant funds and / or include costs in the Capital Reserve Fund to relocate the 911 facility or alternatively purchase the building

## Financial Management

*Goal 9*– install a Fuel Card System, and cameras at the fuel tanks, to monitor the gasoline that is being put into vehicles

*Goal 10*– open discussions with one of the two hospitals in Greene County to establish a local medical examiner’s office to help reduce fees being paid by the Coroner’s Office and Medical Examiner for autopsies

*Goal 11* – implement policies that will decrease the use of paper for County departments and activities

## Quality of Life

*Goal 12*– seek grant funding to complete a Comprehensive Recreation, Park, Open Space and Greenways Plan for Greene County

*Action Step* – expand the current parks and trails system in the County to serve the current residents and help to attract new people / families to the region

*Action Step* – identify locations for greenways that provide connections between population centers / people, recreational facilities, cultural / natural facilities, and other points of interest

*Goal 13* – maintain and enhance Greene County’s rural character and “Quality of Life”

*Action Step* – review the 2020 Decennial Census (detailed) demographic and socioeconomic statistics for Greene County and its municipalities as they are released by the US Census Bureau and identify the trends that will have the most impact on the County’s resources moving forward

*Goal 14*– continue to work with the local municipalities in the County to address blighted properties and structures

*Action Step*– develop an outreach program to educate residents, business owners, key stakeholders, elected / appointed officials, and staff on the County’s plans to address blight

*Action Step*– complete an inventory and develop a database / map for the vacant, underutilized, and blighted properties in the County

*Action Step* – create a reference guide that identifies the options / programs available to address blighted and abandoned properties and put them back into productive use

*Goal 15* – utilize the Monongahela River more effectively for recreation and leisure activities

*Action Step* – protect the viewshed of the river while making it discoverable and enjoyable

*Action Step* – facilitate public access to riverfront in locations that can be safely developed

*Goal 16* – identify areas within the County that can be marketed as potential housing and / or mixed-use developments

*Action Step* – work with local municipal officials, developers, realtors, and others in housing related fields to provide new housing options (affordable housing, senior housing, planned communities, etc.) that can be strategically located throughout the County

*Action Step* – target infill housing areas to help revitalize declining communities

### Infrastructure

*Goal 17* – direct resources, investments, and incentives to areas that have existing infrastructure in place and are in accordance with preferred development scenarios in the County

*Action Step* – give priority status to the use of public / private funds (grants, loans, etc.) and support the use of economic development incentives (tax credits, real estate tax abatements, etc.) to implement infrastructure and utility expansions / projects that are consistent with the targeted areas for development identified in the STMP and Greene County Comprehensive Plan

*Action Step* – adopt policies that promote “fix it first”, infill development, etc. and provide incentives for the implementation of these projects

*Action Step* – ensure that new / proposed development that is outside of the targeted areas for development supports the County’s vision for future growth and facilitates sustainable development patterns throughout the County

*Action Step* – identify and develop industrial sites to meet site selection needs, with a focus on brownfield sites

*Goal 18* – support the prioritization of transportation projects that increase mobility and connectivity, improve the existing roadway system, and promote job and housing growth

## Economic and Community Development

*Goal 19* – consider enacting Act 152 of 2016 to build a demolition fund for municipalities in the county which will add \$15 to the cost of recording each deed or mortgage

*Action Step* – establish the process where the County's municipalities can seek grants funds to implement demolition projects

*Goal 20* – support the Greene County Redevelopment Authority in the formation of a land bank for the County in which the land bank would be responsible for acquiring, remediating, and selling residential structures that are part of this program

*Goal 21* – create economic development policies and strategies that are suited to rural regions and take advantage of the advantages provided by these areas

*Action Step* – support initiatives that promote the development of heritage tourism, agritourism and ecotourism

*Action Step* – support the efforts of Visit Greene (Greene County Tourist Promotion Agency in their efforts to attract more visitors to Greene County

*Action Step* – support “buy local” campaigns and the purchase of locally produced products by Greene County / local municipalities

*Action Step* – identify areas that should be preserved (open spaces, natural / cultural resources, prime agricultural lands, environmental resources, etc.) to maintain the County's rural character

*Action Step* – update County land use ordinances and policies to support economic development efforts

*Action Step* – assist the County's local municipalities who are looking to update their comprehensive plans and land use ordinances / policies that support economic development efforts

*Goal 22* – support efforts to help create a diversified economy

*Action Step* - create a Business / Entrepreneur Group, led by the Department of Planning and Economic Development, that is made up of county representatives, municipal officials, active / retired business owners / entrepreneurs, financial / real estate professionals, etc.

*Action Step* – identify potential incubation spaces that have the necessary infrastructure in place and support to have a chance at success

*Action Step* – promote businesses / activities in the western portion of the County that will not require a lot of infrastructure such as tourism, recreation, camping / hunting / fishing, ATV park(s), etc.

*Action Step* – determine if there are any locations in the western side of the County that can support a resort (major attraction) type, year-round, facility that caters to families

*Goal 23* – work more closely with the local municipal officials, State / County Officials, local organizations (such as GCIDC) regarding future plans / projects so that everyone is on the same page and supporting efforts (such as grant applications) in a cooperative manner

*Goal 24* – support alternative / renewable energy business proposals and assist in acquiring federal and state funding to help with their development

*Action Step* – identify lands that are most suitable for wind / solar energy, biomass crops, etc.

*Goal 25* – promote Greene County’s natural beauty and resources to improve the local economy

*Action Step* – work with the local movie / film industry (Pittsburgh Film Office) to more actively market the making of movies / tv shows more actively filmed in Greene County

*Action Step* – identify the reasons why the County is, or is not, being shortlisted as a location for filming

*Goal 26* – complete an Assets Identification and Mapping project for Greene County and its municipalities

*Action Step* – develop policies and promote future development that capitalize on the County’s assets

*Action Step* – prioritize and invest in assets that are supported by existing infrastructure

*Goal 27* – assist local municipal officials with focusing on retaining / expanding current businesses in their municipalities and attracting new businesses that will enhance the current business mix

*Action Step* – focus on business and industry that can utilize smaller facilities and vacant buildings in established areas of the County such as small-scale manufacturing (locally produced goods that can be sold in storefronts and online), entrepreneurs, co-working space(s), etc.

*Goal 28* – utilize “best management” practices, tools, and methods that have been successful in revitalizing similar counties and / or municipalities in the Commonwealth

*Goal 29* – promote the Monongahela River and major streams in the County as economic resources through water-based tourism and recreation initiatives and activities

Action Step – support river entrepreneurs that have an interest in creating water-related enterprises

Action Step – identify potential properties / sites that may be for sale and can support new developments such as waterfront homes, businesses, etc.

Action Step – improve corridor connections to the riverfront / streambanks from communities, public facilities, institutions, parks, trails, and other points of interest

*Goal 30* – adopt the Pennsylvania Keystone Principles and Criteria for Growth, Investment and Resource Conservation to help guide and prioritize future projects

*Goal 31* – work with the local school districts and colleges / universities to identify the skills and experience needed along with the training and retraining opportunities to develop a workforce that can meet the demands of emerging business / industry professions

*Goal 32* – develop a multi-faceted marketing effort for Greene County

*Action Step* – build on the current marketing efforts that promote elements such as economic development, quality of life and tourism (Greene County: A Powerful Place; Visit Greene and others)

*Action Step* – develop a marketing campaign that is geared towards attracting the younger generations – Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Zs – to Greene County

### Land Use Practices

*Goal 33* – encourage rural land preservation strategies that create neighborhoods that have a sense of place such as cluster developments and conservation subdivisions

*Goal 34* – promote consistency between the Greene County Comprehensive Plan and municipal comprehensive plans and land use ordinances

### Intergovernmental Initiatives / Cost-Sharing Strategies

*Goal 35* – explore opportunities to improve the provision and delivery of public services and facilities that will result in cost savings and / or more effective delivery

*Action Step* – reach out to neighboring counties and Greene County municipalities via a survey, phone call, meeting, etc. to determine the interest in working cooperatively to share services, equipment, personnel, etc.

*Action Step* – identify the municipal services that would most likely result in a “win-win” for each of the participating municipalities (county and local) – such as: grant applications, code enforcement, land use planning, public works, public safety (emergency response), refuse collection, IT, etc.

*Action Step* – determine if the sharing, merging, or consolidation of services and / or equipment will result in a cost savings to each participating municipality

*Action Step* – support the regionalization and shared use of utility assets where it will increase operational efficiencies and financial viability along with improving the quality of service.



## **Potential Partners / Funding and Technical Resources Programs**

An inclusive approach to economic development encompasses many issues. Therefore, it is important for municipal governments to identify partners and programs from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to help achieve their desired vision and goals.

Many resources exist to help implement the recommendations and strategies of not only this report, but also the other plans and reports that have been completed for Greene County. It will be important for the County to identify priority recommendations / projects that best match specific program goals, timing, and funding availability to increase the chance of success of receiving funding or technical support. Some of these resources are identified on the list below:

- Act 13 Marcellus Legacy Fund – Programs include:
  - Abandoned Mine Drainage Abatement & Treatment Program (AMDATP)
  - Baseline Water Quality Data Program (BWQDP)
  - Flood Mitigation Program (FMP)
  - Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP)
  - Orphan or Abandoned Well Plugging Program (OAWP)
  - Sewage Facilities Program (SFP)
  - Watershed Restoration Protection Program (WRPP)
- Allegheny Conference on Community Development
- American Farmland Trust
- AmeriCorps – Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps
- Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)
- Benedum Foundation
- Blueprint Communities
- Bridgeway Capital
- Center for Rural Pennsylvania
- CNX Resources Corporation (CNX Foundation)
- Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA)
  - Flood Mitigation Program
  - Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program
  - Orphan and Abandoned Well Plugging
  - Sewage Facilities Program
  - Watershed Restoration and Protection Program
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Community Foundation of Greene County (CFGCC)
- FirstEnergy Foundation
- Greene County Redevelopment Authority
- Greene County Regional Chamber of Commerce

- H & R Block (and Nextdoor) Building Connections through Community Gardens
- Heinz Foundation
- Highmark Foundation
- Hometown Grant program: Revitalizing Small Towns (Smart Growth America / T Mobile)
- Local Banks / Financial Institutions
- Local Colleges and Universities
- Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA)
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) – Rural LISC
- Local Share Account Statewide Program – can be used for: acquisition; construction; demolition; infrastructure; purchase of vehicles, machinery and / or equipment; planning, consulting, and design costs related to planning projects
- Mon River Towns / Mon River Valley Coalition
- Mon Valley Initiative
- National Trust Preservation Funds (Grants)
- NeighborWorks – Western Pennsylvania
- Our Town (Creative Placemaking Grants Program) – National Endowment for the Arts
- Pennsylvania Business One-Stop Shop
- Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
  - Farm Vitality Planning Grants
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)
  - Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program
  - Keystone Communities Program
  - Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)
  - Neighborhood Partnership Program (NPP)
  - Municipal Assistance Program
  - Small Water and Sewer Grant
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
  - Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) – can be used for: planning, acquisition, and development of public parks; recreation areas; motorized and non-motorized trails; river conservation and access; conservation of open space
- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
  - FAST Act Corridor Infrastructure Grant
  - Growing Greener Grant Program
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)
  - Agility Program
  - Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank
  - Safe Routes to School
- Pennsylvania Downtown Center

- Elm Street Program
  - Main Street Program
- Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (FBC)
  - Boating Facilities Grant Program
- Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
  - Keystone Historic Preservation Planning Grant
  - Keystone Historic Preservation Construction Grants
- Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Fund – Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA)
- Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST)
- Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs (PSAB)
- Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
- Pittsburgh Regional Alliance
- The Power of 32 Site Development Fund
- Richard King Mellon Foundation
- Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area (mini grants)
- Small Business Administration
- Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
- USDA Rural Business Development Program – Rural Development Grants
- US Department of the Interior – Abandoned Mine Reclamation Funds