



A. Foreword

Located in the southwestern corner of Pennsylvania, the County of Greene is rural with a total population just over 40,000 in the year 2000. Historically, the economy has depended upon the coal industry and agriculture. Recent changes in these industries have resulted in the County directing their economic development efforts to take advantage of the previously untapped potential that exists in Greene County and its residents. New agriculture programs are being explored to provide support to farmers. Advancements in the coal industry have facilitated new growth and a renewed interest in expanding activities in Greene County. New industries oriented towards technology have spawned new economic pursuits, which will allow for a diversification of the economy. Finally, tourism, small business development, and expanded retail services are rounding out the County's economic philosophy as they move into the Twenty-first Century.



EverGreene Technology Park Development

Greene County completed a countywide comprehensive plan in 1979 and is now updating this plan to provide the County with an overview of its present situation and an implementation plan to position the County for what the future may bring. In February of 2005, Greene County retained Mackin Engineering Company to facilitate the completion of the Comprehensive Plan update. The County received a grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP). In recognizing that the County has many unique qualities, County officials procured additional funding through the generosity of the Greene County Community Foundation and the Benedum Foundation. This money was used to expand the scope of work

and address specific issues in detail so as to provide Greene County with a strong framework on which to build the future.

Keystone Principles

On May 31, 2005, the Keystone Principles & Criteria for Growth, Investment & Resource Conservation (Keystone Principles) were adopted by the Pennsylvania Economic Development Cabinet and developed by the Interagency Land Use Team, a working group of the Cabinet. The Keystone Principles are designed to be a coordinated interagency approach to fostering sustainable economic development and conservation of resources through Pennsylvania's investments in diverse communities. The Keystone Principles lay out general goals and objectives for economic development and resource conservation agreed upon among the agencies and programs that participated in their development. The Criteria are designed to help measure the extent to which particular projects accomplish these goals. The Criteria do not replace agency program guidelines or criteria, but rather, at each agency's discretion, they will either be integrated into existing program criteria (preferable) or used as additional, favorable considerations in the scoring or decision making process. The Principles and Criteria are designed to encourage multifaceted project development that will integrate programs and funding sources from a variety of state agencies into a comprehensive strategy to address issues affecting whole communities. There are two categories of criteria:

- 🔑 Core Criteria, where relevant, should be given primary consideration in all investment decisions made by Commonwealth agencies when making grants or loans to public or private projects using agency funds.
- 🔑 Preferential Criteria should be used by Commonwealth agencies in all programs to which they are applicable to evaluate projects and make decisions on grants or loans using agency funds. Projects are to be evaluated with the recognition that rural, suburban, and urban areas have different characteristics and needs, and that what might work in an urban area might not work in a rural area (the "Be Fair" standard).

The Keystone Principles are as follows:

1. Redevelop First
2. Provide Efficient Infrastructure
3. Concentrate Development
4. Increase Job Opportunities
5. Foster Sustainable Businesses
6. Restore and Enhance the Environment
7. Enhance Recreational and Heritage Resources
8. Expand Housing Opportunities
9. Plan Regionally; Implement Locally
10. Be Fair



Legal Basis

As the planning document for Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires that counties update and adopt their comprehensive plans every ten (10) years. 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 of their comprehensive plan and land use regulation.”



As required by the MPC, a comprehensive plan must contain a plan for the following elements:

-  Statement of Community Development Objectives
-  Land Use
-  Housing Plan
-  Movement of People and Goods
-  Community Facilities and Utilities
-  Protection of Natural Resources
-  Statement of the Interrelationships Among the Plan Elements
-  Implementation Strategy
-  Contiguous Municipalities Statement



In addition to these required elements for all comprehensive plans, a county comprehensive plan must also address the following issues:

-  Identify land uses as they relate to important natural resources and appropriate utilization of existing minerals
-  Identify current and proposed land uses which have regional impact and significance
-  Identify a plan for the preservation and enhancement of prime agricultural land
-  Identify a plan for historic preservation

Goal of the Comprehensive Plan

The overall goal of a comprehensive plan is to provide a description of how, and at what pace, a community desires to develop its land in order to direct growth and preserve natural resources and historic or cultural character, while strengthening its commercial and economic base. In addition, the comprehensive plan identifies what social aspects the community believes are important and provides strategies to improve the quality of life for its citizens by providing appropriate public services and improving the quality of the housing stock.

The Greene County Comprehensive Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 170 of 1988) and subsequent amendments. Although the plan is not a legally binding document, once adopted it will be the official statement for future development in the county. The plan's policy statements, developed by the County and adopted by its officials, should be used by County departments and local municipalities to support community decisions and prepare for future conditions.



The Greene County Comprehensive Plan is:

-  A set of general guidelines for future development of all land in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of all residents and business persons;
-  A tool to promote the public interests of all residents and business persons and nonresidents rather than the interests of individuals or special interests groups;
-  A public policy guide to decision making regarding the physical development of the county;
-  A strategy to guide leaders when making decisions about future land use, housing, economic development, natural, cultural and historic features, transportation, community facilities and services, parks, recreation and open space;
-  A statement of the past and present conditions of the communities;
-  A description of how and at what pace the communities desire to develop physically, economically and socially;
-  An expression of the communities' "vision" of the optimally desirable pattern of development for the future.



How to Use the Comprehensive Plan

The Greene County Comprehensive Plan, *Strategy for a Greene Tomorrow*, should be used in the following manner by the elected and appointed officials in order to help the County achieve its desired vision for future growth and development.

1. Support of Future Plans / Studies / Ordinances

Strategy for a Greene Tomorrow recommends many plan updates, ordinance updates, and studies to be developed either at the County or local level. The County will encourage and provide technical assistance for plan updates or studies that implement the County Comprehensive Plan.

2. Plan Review

The County will rely on *Strategy for a Greene Tomorrow* to review development plans, municipal comprehensive plans, or ordinances to ensure compatibility with the County's vision.

3. DRI Review

The County will rely on *Strategy for a Greene Tomorrow* to review any plans that are a "development of regional impact" (DRI). The County Comprehensive Plan outlines the overall development goals and policies, which will be the barometer by which other developments are judged.

4. Economic Incentives

Incentives will be reserved for areas designated as either "growth areas" or "future growth areas", which will encourage infill development and the integration of new development in a manner that complements existing growth trends and public investments.

5. Evaluating the Plan

Strategy for a Greene Tomorrow will be a living document that is regularly monitored and evaluated and updated as conditions warrant and in compliance with MPC requirements.

Compliance with Municipal Plans



As provided for in the MPC, once a county adopts a county comprehensive plan, any proposed action of the governing body of a municipality, its departments, agencies and appointed authorities within the county shall be submitted to the county planning agency for its recommendations if the proposed action relates to the following:

- 🔑 The location, opening, vacation, extension, widening, narrowing or enlargement of any street, public ground, pierhead or watercourse
- 🔑 The location, erection, demolition, removal or sale of any public structures located within the municipality
- 🔑 The adoption, amendment or repeal of any comprehensive plan, official map, subdivision or land ordinance, zoning ordinance or provisions for planned residential development
- 🔑 The construction, extension or abandonment of any water line, sewer line or sewage treatment facility

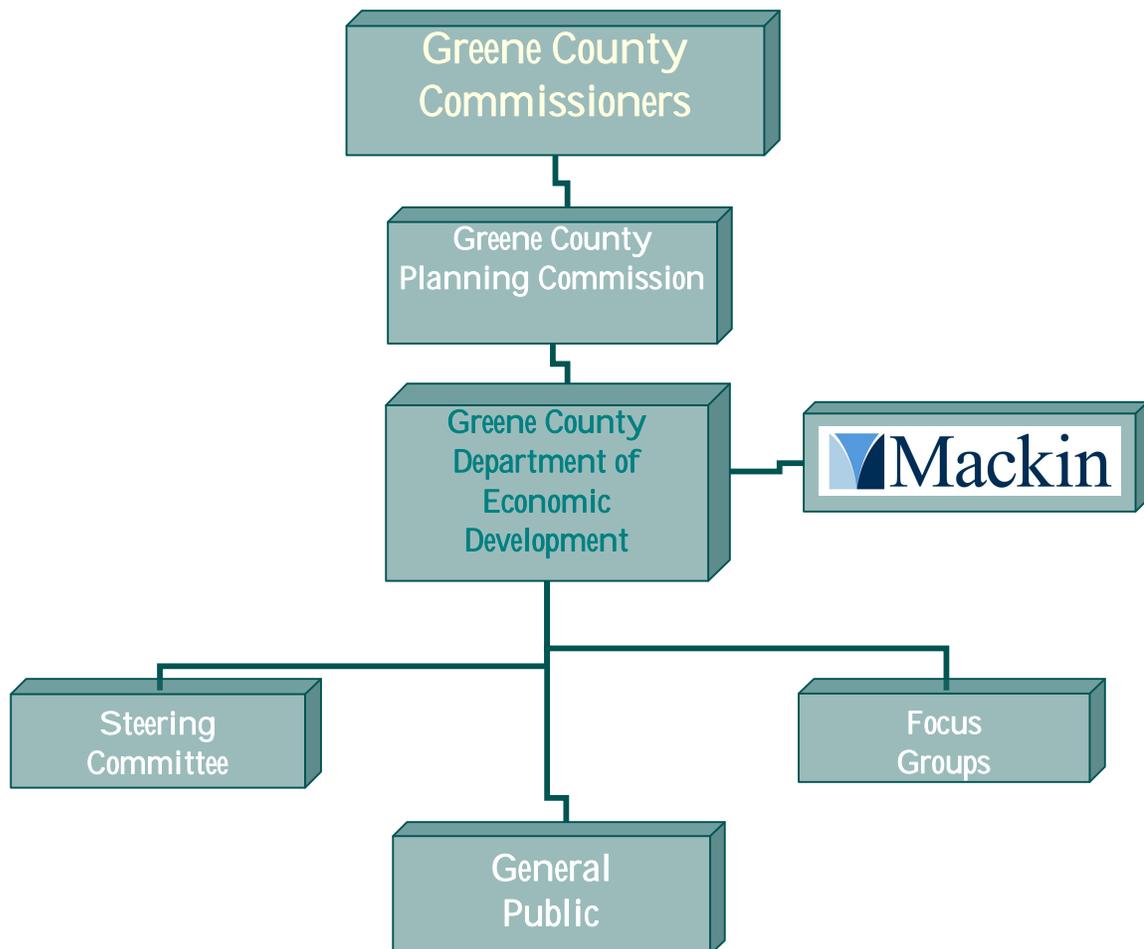
The recommendation of the County planning agency must be made to the municipality within 45 days and the proposed action cannot be taken until such a recommendation is made. If the county does not act within the 45 days, the municipality may proceed without the recommendation.

The MPC also contains a provision that states "when a municipality having a comprehensive plan is located in a county which has adopted a comprehensive plan, both the county and the municipality shall each give the plan of the other consideration in order that the objectives of each plan can be protected to the greatest extent possible."



Project Organization

A project of this magnitude requires participants who all work together to develop a realistic and viable plan. To ensure that the plan would reflect a cross-section of Greene County residents and business owners, the County planning process was structured to provide various types of forums to gather information and ideas. The project organizational chart is as follows:



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B. The Vision

The Comprehensive Plan is entitled "Strategy for a Greene Tomorrow" to reflect the desire to maintain the County's green and rural landscape, while planning for development that is mindful of the impact on the natural resources that are plentiful throughout the County. The Vision Statement and County Development Objectives that have been developed for the County mirror this concept.

In order to build the kind of community and region that people and their children want to live in, the "right" investments have to be made in the "right" places. While the Greene County Comprehensive Plan will contain recommendations for these investments, the recommendations should be a reflection of the current residents' wishes and desires. As a result, the County has developed the following vision statement based upon input received from the residents through a variety of mediums.

Greene County Vision Statement - 2030

"Greene County has expanded its economy through the development of the energy and extractive industries; diversified workforce; targeted expansion of infrastructure; and the provision of basic community services. Residents can choose from numerous housing options including, family homesteads, quaint village developments, or urban-style living. Working in collaboration across municipal and county lines, Greene County's leaders have increased its technological capabilities and tourism that celebrates its mining and agriculture heritage and rural landscape.

With the interstate and highway system as its foundation, Greene County has a multi-modal approach that encompasses connections to the regional trail and transit network, providing mobility and accessibility to outlying urban centers. The Monongahela River enhances the county's transportation system and serves as a conduit for recreational and economic activities.

As the cornerstone of Pennsylvania, Greene County provides a wonderful place to live by offering first-class healthcare, a high quality education system, family-supporting jobs, and an abundance of shopping, recreation, and entertainment. Hills are scattered with grazing livestock and valleys are traversed by pristine waterways, preserving the rural nature that residents and visitors cherish."

County Development Objectives

In accordance with the MPC, Article III Section 301 (a) (1), the following have been developed as "statements of objectives of the municipality concerning its future development, including, but not limited to, the location, character and timing of future development, that may also serve as statements of community development objectives." The County Development Objectives have been developed based upon public input received throughout the planning process and reflect the wishes and desires of the Greene County residents.

- 🔑 Utilize the comprehensive plan as the blueprint to move the county forward in a positive direction
- 🔑 Direct investment to strategic locations that will strengthen the economy with an emphasis on the expansion of infrastructure
- 🔑 Continue to prioritize workforce development, such as job training, through collaboration between employers and educational providers
- 🔑 Ensure that all residents have access to basic community services
- 🔑 Ensure consistency by considering and integrating local municipal comprehensive plans and ordinances when planning future development
- 🔑 Seek county wide input into future development decisions
- 🔑 Ensure that development decisions provide a net benefit to the county, its municipalities and residents
- 🔑 Sustain services integral to the quality of life of residents by implementing sound land use practices when determining the best locations for future development
- 🔑 Open communication so that collaboration can take place within the county between its departments, agencies, key industries and businesses and the educational sectors



C. Public Involvement

It is essential to involve the public during all phases of the development of a comprehensive plan, particularly one for an entire county. Developing a plan for such a large geographic area inherently dictates that different parts of the county will have unique needs, issues and priorities for the future. This is particularly true for Greene County, where natural and topographic features direct development patterns. Therefore, Greene County implemented a countywide public participation process that would allow for all residents to provide their input during this important planning process. The public participation process consisted of a variety of methods designed to gather input from all segments of the population.

Steering Committee

The Greene County comprehensive planning effort was overseen by a Steering Committee, comprised of a cross-section of citizens representing businesses and industry, civic and social organizations, human service agencies, government bodies, and residents. The mission of the Steering Committee was to help identify both local and regional concerns, as well as set the foundation for developing consensus for plan recommendations. Steering Committee Members are listed on the Acknowledgements page at the beginning of this plan.

Public Surveys

The public participation process for the Greene County Comprehensive Plan was two-fold. The first round included the distribution of a public survey over a four-month period from July 2005 to October 2005. The survey methodology was by random distribution at public events and was not based upon a statistically valid sampling of County residents. County personnel attended 13 public events to distribute the survey to County Residents. Events included the Coal Show, Rainday, Greene County Fair, White Covered Bridge Festival, Ryerson Arts in the Parks Festival, Senior Fair at Greene County Fairgrounds, Greene County Harvest Day, and the Harvest Festival. The public surveys were also distributed at the five public meetings held in September of 2005 (one in each school district), the Water and Sewer Focus Group meeting and the SPC Transportation Public Participation Panel (PPP) meeting. A total of 779 surveys were completed and returned for analysis. All 26 municipalities were represented, though Franklin and Cumberland Townships residents accounted for over 33 percent of the total responses. The remaining 24 municipalities were spread out, ranging from a low of 0.28 percent in Carmichaels Borough to 7.63 percent in Jefferson Township. The average response rate for the municipalities was 3.78 percent. It should be noted that 1.8 percent of the respondents did not indicate which municipality.

- 🔑 Over 55 percent of respondents have lived in the County all of their life with 25 percent noting residency of 11 to 20 years.
- 🔑 The average age was between 36 and 60 years (55.51%) with persons over age 60 representing 24 percent of the respondents.
- 🔑 Females were most likely to complete the survey (60%)

- The average respondent had a high school diploma (27.98%) and those with a college degree were the next likely to have completed the survey (18.88%)

The most important issue in Greene County regarding-answers generating 20 percent or more of the responses:

Jobs and Economic Development

- Encourage development where it is most likely to create new, family supporting jobs (45.78%)

Open Space and the Environment

- Prevent new and clean up old damage to the environment from mining and related activities (42.72%)
- Clean up litter and roadside dumping (21.44%)

The top three issues in the County were as follows:

1. Jobs/economic opportunities (40.56%)
2. Housing (15.14%)
3. Transportation (10.77%)

Infrastructure

- Maintain and improve existing water/sewer services in established communities (28.16%)
- Expand water/sewer to undeveloped areas (24.51%)
- Expand water/sewer to developed areas (23.14%)

Housing

- Provide affordable housing (24.02%)
- Rehabilitate existing housing (23.07%)
- Offer a range of housing types (21.04%)

Government Services

- More cooperation among municipalities to plan for future development and growth (37.83%)
- More county provided services (Planning, grant writing, technical assistance, etc) (22.45%)

Cultural/Historical Assets

- Offer more youth oriented cultural programs (32.09%)
- Preserve/promote historical sites (27.88%)



Transportation

- Improve the safety of municipal roads (38.16%)
- Provide Public Transportation (29.75%)

Agriculture

- Help farmers keep their farms active (48.97%)
- Support and advertise the sale of local goods/farmer's markets (26.71%)

The public survey results were also tabulated and analyzed along the five school district boundaries to determine if certain issues were more important to a region than others. Table 1:1 Public Survey Results by School District lists the municipalities within each school district, percentage of the County's population that resides in that school district, and the percentage of responses to the survey within each district. While the surveys were not systematically distributed to provide a statistically valid sample, the results show that each district was fairly accurately represented by the survey responses. Central Greene and Carmichaels were represented slightly lower in the survey, while Western Greene and Jefferson Morgan were represented higher.

Table 1-1: Public Survey Results by School District			
Planning District	Municipalities	District % of County Population (40,672)	District % of Total Responses (721)
West Greene School District	<i>Aleppo, Center, Freeport, Gilmore, Gray, Jackson, Morris, Richhill and Springhill Townships</i>	14.55%	17.61%
Central Greene School District	<i>Franklin, Perry, Washington, Wayne and Whiteley Townships and Waynesburg Borough</i>	41.01%	35.09%
Southeastern Greene School District	<i>Dunkard, Greene and Monongahela Townships and Greensboro Borough</i>	11.83%	11.51%
Carmichaels Area School District	<i>Carmichaels Borough and Cumberland Township</i>	17.51%	15.26%
Jefferson Morgan School District	<i>Jefferson Borough, Jefferson Township, Morgan Township, Clarksville Borough, and Rices Landing Borough</i>	15.10%	18.72%

The demographic composition of the respondents for each of the planning districts was very similar as were many of the answers to survey questions. However, there were some differences that should be noted.

- 🔑 Litter and roadside dumping were emphasized as important issues in Carmichaels Area, Central Greene and Jefferson Morgan school districts.
- 🔑 Offering a range of housing types was important to those in Carmichaels Area, Central Greene and Jefferson Morgan
- 🔑 Jefferson Morgan and Southeastern Greene placed a special emphasis on the preservation of agricultural lands throughout the county, but helping to keep farms active and supporting the sale of local goods / farmers markets were important for all of the districts.
- 🔑 The rehabilitation of existing housing in established communities was more important in Southeastern Greene and West Greene.
- 🔑 While the preservation and promotion of cultural and historical sites was important to all districts, those sites along the Monongahela River were especially important to Southeastern Greene.
- 🔑 Expansion of public water / sewerage was the top priority in terms of infrastructure in Central Greene; while the maintenance of existing water / sewerage services was more important in the other districts.
- 🔑 The safety of municipal roads and the provision of public transportation were key items in all the districts, with Central Greene also stating they would like more opportunities to walk or bike places.

The second round of public surveys were conducted during the summer and fall months of 2007 by staff from the Greene County Department of Economic Development. This second survey was an effort to ensure that the information gathered between 2005 and 2007 was still accurate and to verify the priority issues and areas of concern. Residents were asked to identify their top issues for each planning element (Energy & Extraction, Housing, Economic Development, Agriculture, Historic, Land Use, Natural Resources, Public Facilities, Transportation and Utilities). The survey methodology was similar to the first round, by random distribution at public events and not based upon a statistically valid sampling of County residents. County personnel attended six (6) public events to distribute the survey to County Residents. Events included Rain Day, the Greene County Fair, the Coal Show, the Frontier Festival, Arts in the Park (Ryerson), and the Harvest Festival. The results of the survey revealed that the top priority issues for Greene County remained the same as those from the first survey.



Public Meetings

Public meetings were held in September of 2005, one in each of the five high schools throughout the County, in order to gain input on perceived assets, weaknesses, opportunities for preservation and/or growth and development. Meetings were open to the public and advertised via newspaper articles, radio announcements, and the distribution of flyers and posters. The meetings were attended as follows:

- 🗝 Monday, September 12, 2005 at West Greene: 10 people
- 🗝 Tuesday, September 13, 2005 at Jefferson-Morgan: 26 people
- 🗝 Wednesday, September 14, 2005 at Mapletown: 22 people
- 🗝 Tuesday, September 20, 2005 at Carmichaels: 8 people
- 🗝 Monday, September 26, 2005 at Waynesburg: 27 people

<u>Assets / Strengths</u>	
<i>Meeting 1: West Greene High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural – quiet, low crime, natural beauty • I-79 – proximity to major roads (I-70, I-68, etc.) within region • Potential for development if I-68 comes into the county • Space/room to grow/develop
<i>Meeting 2: Jefferson-Morgan High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-79 • Geographic location – close to activity • Higher learning institutions • Not overcrowded • Safe environment • Jefferson-Morgan School District and technology assets • Beautiful environment
<i>Meeting 3: Mapletown High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History • Mon River • The creeks • Wildlife
<i>Meeting 4: Carmichaels High School</i>	I-79
<i>Meeting 5: Waynesburg Central High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected state legislators • Lots of money in coal and natural gas • Good place to raise family • Low-population density • Rural/natural beauty • Location between Pittsburgh and Morgantown

<u>Weaknesses / Deficiencies</u>	
<i>Meeting 1: West Greene High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of public water and sewerage • Lack of individual property owners – too many corporate/absentee owners • Lack of diverse economic base • Need to consolidate school districts – tax base can't support them
<i>Meeting 2: Jefferson-Morgan High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High taxes (local, school district) • Mine subsidence • Need to upgrade public school systems • Lack of zoning • Morrisville bottleneck
<i>Meeting 3: Mapletown High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High property tax rates • Illegal trash, littering along roads • Lack of identity in Southeastern Greene – no political power
<i>Meeting 4: Carmichaels High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inefficient/inadequate infrastructure (water, sewer, electricity) • Lack of jobs – family supporting
<i>Meeting 5: Waynesburg Central High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of good paying jobs • Lack of public water and sewerage • Lack of property maintenance • Too many municipalities (townships and boroughs) • Lack of job opportunities for young adults • No adequate job training for new companies wanting to come and those that are here
<u>Areas for Preservation</u>	
<i>Meeting 1: West Greene High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ryerson Station State Park • Need public water access in rural areas for agriculture lands – wells ruined by mining • Watershed protection • Mason Dixon markers (Perry & Wayne Townships)
<i>Meeting 2: Jefferson-Morgan High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swinging bridge in Pit Gas across Ten-mile Creek • Farmlands and agricultural lands • Look into historic preservation ordinances • Covered bridges • Dry Tavern single-family homes/senior housing • Keep Greene County green – include trees in development with open space
<i>Meeting 3: Mapletown High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Mon River clean • Waterways, creeks • Reclaim Shannopin Mine lands



<i>Meeting 4: Carmichaels High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watersheds and creeks • Historic sites, buildings
<i>Meeting 5: Waynesburg Central High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve green and open space around Waynesburg – do not develop all of Waynesburg • Community history and heritage • Waterways • Public Libraries • Western half of county • Open spaces • Small communities • Small “mom & pop” businesses
Growth / Development	
<i>Meeting 1: West Greene High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move airport to Carmichaels to utilize site for development because of access to I-79 • Corner of state – develop and market • Monongahela River – recreation development (boat launches, trail)
<i>Meeting 2: Jefferson-Morgan High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monongahela River (recreation, tourism) • Need to benefit entire county, not just central Greene • Housing around Ruff Creek exit on I-79 • I-79 interchanges • Area around Giant Eagle development • SR 21/ SR 88/ SR 188 major arteries
<i>Meeting 3: Mapletown High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-79 corridor • Mon River • SR 88 at Cabbage flats (needs public sewerage, decrease taxes)
<i>Meeting 4: Carmichaels High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-79 corridor • Mon River waterfront – commercial and recreation development
<i>Meeting 5: Waynesburg Central High School</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-79 Mount Morris Exit (industrial, recreation) • Re-investment in empty buildings in Carmichaels and Waynesburg • Expansion of airport • Sustainable economy • Build on existing infrastructure • Living wage jobs