

Part II - Background Trends and Issues

Chapter 1 - Socioeconomic Profile

INTRODUCTION

In order to make sound planning decisions and develop appropriate planning policies involving the physical, social, and economic development of the county, and the allocation of municipal resources, it is important to review and analyze the county's population. A quantitative analysis of population trends and a qualitative analysis of population characteristics are needed to make reasonable projections for future population growth and needs. Land area requirements for future residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, and other needs are directly related to the requirements of the population to be served. Projected population demands for service will also determine the number and scope of future schools, transportation facilities and other public infrastructure.

HISTORIC AND EXISTING POPULATION

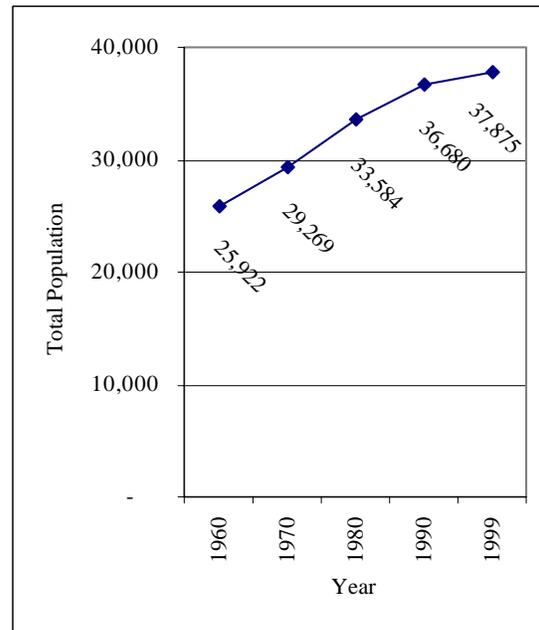
As illustrated in Figure 1-1, Snyder County has experienced steady increases in population from 1960 to 1990. During this period, the population increased by approximately 42 percent, with an average annual percentage increase of 9.1 percent. Furthermore, the county's population has continued to increase throughout the majority of the 1990's, with 1999 estimates reported at 37,875.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Snyder County's population increases from 1990 to 1999 are mostly attributed to natural increases, although in-migration and institutional population also are factors.

A review of population trends from 1980 to 1990, and 1990 to 1999, for Snyder County and its municipalities are provided in Table 1-1. As shown, Snyder County and its municipalities, except Freeburg Borough, experienced increases in population from

Figure 1-1
Snyder County Population Trends
1960-1990 and 1999 Estimates

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



1980 to 1990. In fact, nine municipalities, mostly eastern tier, grew by more than 10 percent. The exception was West Beaver Township, which grew by 16.4 percent.

Although the 1999 population estimates shows a continued growth trend for Snyder County and most of its municipalities, four of Snyder County's six boroughs experienced modest population decreases. These decreases may be attributed to their limited ability, in terms of land area, to accommodate additional growth. In addition, Franklin and Union Townships also experienced decreases in population during the period 1990 to 1999.

Snyder County ranked the 33rd highest in terms of numeric change in population among Pennsylvania's 67 counties for the period 1990 to 1999. In terms of percentage change, the County ranked 34th out of the 67 counties.

**Table 1-1
Snyder County and Municipal Population Growth,
1980, 1990, and 1999 Estimates**

Municipality	Population						
	1980	1990	1999 Estimates	Numeric Change 1980-90	Numeric Change 1990-99	Percent Change 1980-90	Percent Change 1990-99
Snyder County	33,584	36,680	37,875	3,096	1,195	9.2	3.3
Adams Township	773	833	858	60	25	7.8	3.0
Beaver Township	470	516	540	46	24	9.8	4.7
Beavertown Borough	853	877	869	24	(8)	2.8	(0.9)
Centre Township	1,651	1,986	2,123	335	137	20.3	6.9
Chapman Township	1,264	1,442	1,507	178	65	14.1	4.5
Franklin Township	2,105	2,158	2,075	53	(83)	2.5	(3.8)
Freeburg Borough	643	640	612	-3	(28)	(0.5)	(4.4)
Jackson Township	1,028	1,383	1,389	355	6	34.5	0.4
McClure Borough	1,024	1,070	1,026	46	(44)	4.5	(4.1)
Middleburg Borough	1,357	1,422	1,511	65	89	4.8	6.3
Middlecreek Township	1,567	1,791	1,962	224	171	14.3	9.5
Monroe Township	3,502	3,881	4,262	379	381	10.8	9.8
Penn Township	3,042	3,208	3,358	166	150	5.5	4.7
Perry Township	1,721	1,873	1,954	152	81	8.8	4.3
Selinsgrove Borough	5,227	5,384	5,403	157	19	3.0	0.4
Shamokin Dam Borough	1,622	1,690	1,635	68	(55)	4.2	(3.3)
Spring Township	1,435	1,575	1,622	140	47	9.8	3.0
Union Township	1,291	1,466	1,465	175	(1)	13.6	(0.1)
Washington Township	1,218	1,420	1,565	202	145	16.6	10.2
West Beaver Township	942	1,096	1,114	154	18	16.4	1.6
West Perry Township	849	969	1,025	120	56	14.1	5.8

Source: Pennsylvania State Data Center, 1980-1990 Municipal Population and U.S. Census Bureau July 1, 1999 Population Estimates.

A comparison of population trends of Snyder County with those of surrounding counties and Pennsylvania provides some perspective on the growth experienced by the county and region. As shown in Table 1-2, Snyder County was second only to Union County in terms of population change from 1980 to 1990. In fact, during this period both Mifflin and Northumberland Counties experienced modest decreases in population growth. Furthermore, Snyder County experienced the greatest average annual percentage increase in population for the period 1960 to 1990; just edging Union County's average annual growth rate of 9.0 percent.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Future population growth in Snyder County will be dependent upon natural increases and net migration levels. In 1996, the county's birth rate (11.9 percent) exceeded the death rate (7.9 percent), while net migration (people moving in minus people moving out) from 1990 to 1995 was 221 persons. Future migration rates will depend largely on future economic growth in the county and region. It is important to realize that no projection can accurately forecast all of the factors that might

Table 1-2
Comparative Population Growth Trends for Snyder County, Pennsylvania, and Surrounding Counties, 1960-1990

Jurisdiction	Population					Avg. Decinneal Percent Change 1960-1990	Numeric Change 1990-1999	Percent Change 1990-1999
	1960	1970	1980	1990	1999 Estimates			
Snyder County	25,922	29,269	33,584	36,680	37,875	9.1%	1195	3.3
Juniata County	15,874	16,712	19,188	20,625	22,204	6.8%	1579	7.7
Mifflin County	44,348	45,268	46,908	46,197	46,793	1.0%	596	1.3
Northumberland County	104,138	99,190	100,381	96,771	96,193	-1.8%	-578	-0.6
Union County	25,646	28,603	32,870	36,176	40,546	9.0%	4370	12.1
Pennsylvania	11,319,366	11,794,005	11,864,751	11,882,613	11,994,016	1.2%	111403	0.9
Snyder County Percent of Pennsylvania	2.3	2.5	2.8	3.1	3.2	--	--	--

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1960-1990.

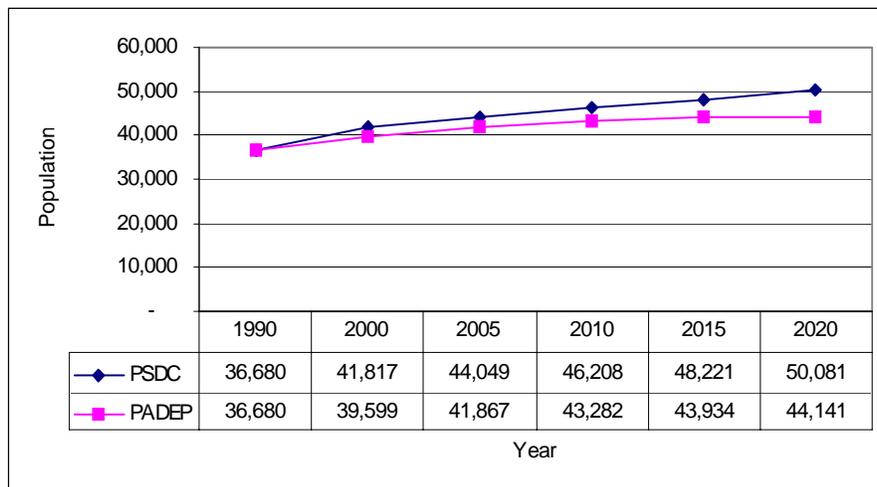
cause a particular rate of growth. However, a projection becomes a building block that can be used to forecast future land use and service needs.

Population projections developed by the Pennsylvania State Data Center (PSDC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) were used to compare the county's predicted growth levels. Projections prepared by the PSDC

are based primarily on demographic trends (i.e., mortality, fertility, and migration rates), which have been incorporated into the Demographic Cohort Model. In contrast, the PADEP integrates historical population data with a multiple distribution model system to calculate population projections for the commonwealth's State Water Plan. Figure 1-2 illustrates Snyder County's projected population growth from 1990 to 2020. As shown, the PSDC's projections are slightly

Figure 1-2
Snyder County Population Projections, 1990-2020

Sources: PA State Data Center and PA Department of Environmental Protection



higher than the PADEP's. However, both projections indicate the county's population will steadily increase through 2020. Specifically, the PSDC and PADEP data reveals an annual average percentage increase over the period 1990 to 2020 of 0.9 percent and 0.6 percent, respectively.

AGE DISTRIBUTION AND PROJECTED GROWTH

A key factor that can affect population growth and determine the type of services required is the distribution of the total population according to the age of the residents. Different age groups have different public service needs that should be specifically considered. The age group ranging from 18 to 44 years of age is the range of persons eligible for marriage and most frequently engaged in new household formation. This is also the prime childbearing age group; any decline or imbalance in the number of residents within this age group will affect the birth rate. The age group ranging from 25 to 44 years is the basic segment of the population that comprises the local labor force and the group most frequently engaged in home buying or building. This group is also highly mobile and active in community functions.

The various age groups over 45 years old also form an important segment of the population. The mature labor force, 45 to 65, tends to be more settled and at the height of their earning power. People 65 years and older are generally characterized by limited purchasing power, an increased demand for health and public transit services, and special recreation requirements.

Age cohort distribution and growth projections shown in Figure 1-3 reveal that the highest population growth for the period 1990 to 2020 will be experienced by people age 50 and over. The greatest increase will be

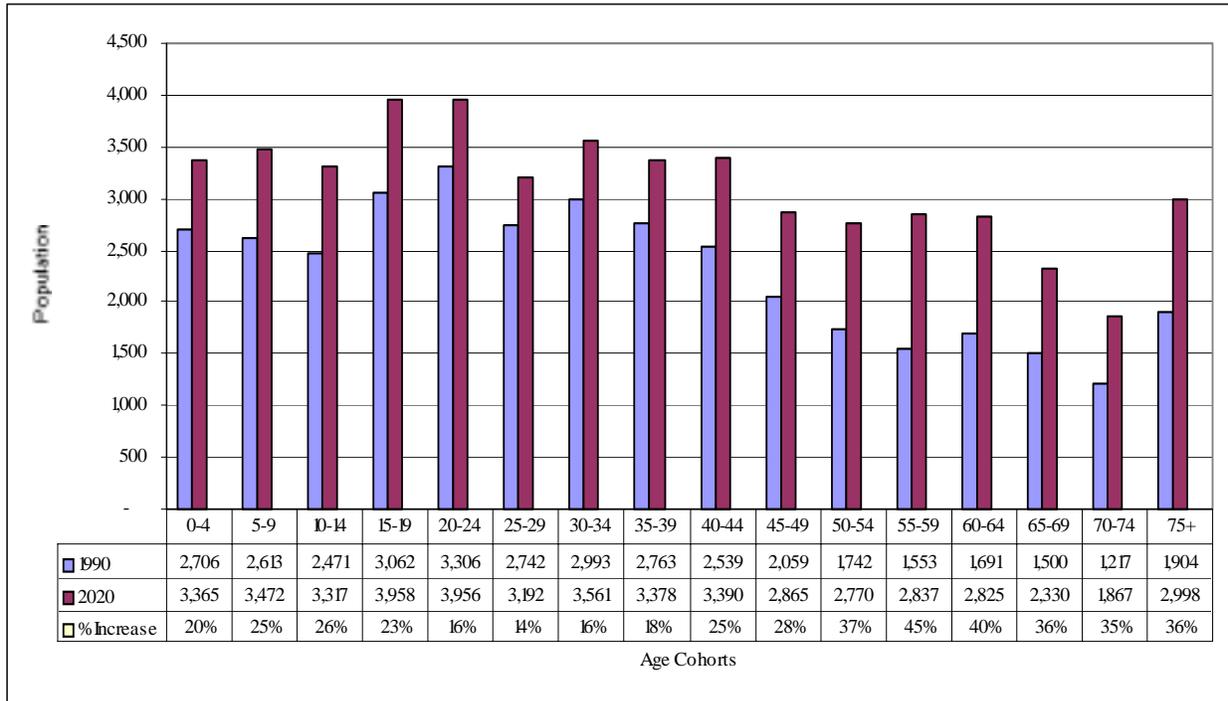
experienced by the 55-59 age cohort. People currently in their 50s represent the "baby boom" generation. Maturation of the baby boom generation means a smaller housing market for the next 20 years. After 2010, the baby boomers will enter into their 60s, which will contribute to the county's increasing elderly population. As a result, the county may experience an increased demand for elderly housing, services, and facilities over the next 20 years.

Projected population growth for people currently in their 20s and 30s will be much smaller than when baby boomers were at this age. Therefore, growth in the labor force and demand for housing will be less than experienced in previous decades.

In comparing 1999-2000 population changes, all counties, except for Union, experienced declines in the age groups ranging from 0-45 years. All surrounding counties experienced similar trends as Snyder County for the age groups over 50 years.

Consistent with national and state trends, Snyder County and its surrounding counties experienced increases in their populations' median ages. The 1990 median age for Snyder County is 32.6, which is an increase of 3.1 years over 1980's median age. Snyder County's 1990 median age was comparable to Union County's median age of 32.5 and is lower than Juniata's (34.6), Mifflin's (35.7), Northumberland's (37.8), and Pennsylvania's (35.0) median ages. Although lower than most surrounding counties', Snyder County's median age is relatively high, which can be attributed to the large percentage of persons in the productive and mature age groups.

Figure 1-3
Snyder County Age Distribution and Growth Projections, 1990 and 2020
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990, and PA State Data Center Projections, 2000-2020



GENDER DISTRIBUTION

According to U.S. Department of Health, Pennsylvania’s life expectancy rate for females (78.66 years) is greater than that of males (71.91 years) (USDOH, 1989-91). Therefore, there tends to be a greater number of females than males in Pennsylvania. The same holds true for Snyder County, where in 1990 the number of females (18,771) outnumbered males (17,909) at a ratio of .95, which is derived by dividing the total number of females into the total number of males. In 1980, the male to female ratio was .98, which indicates that the increase in females was greater than males during this period. Similar male to female ratios were experienced by surrounding counties in 1990, except for Union County.

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Snyder County’s population is predominantly Caucasian with 99.3 percent of the county’s

1990 population being of this racial category. Since 1980, the percentage of the Caucasian population decreased by only 0.5 percent. From 1980 to 1990, the county’s Caucasian population increased by 3,096 persons, or by approximately 9.0 percent.

The county’s African-American population, which comprises 0.4 percent of the total population, increased to 146 persons, or by 17.7 percent, from 1980 to 1990. The Hispanic population also grew during this period. Their population increased by approximately 46 percent from 101 in 1980 to 147 in 1990. The growth of these minority groups and their current concentration emphasize the importance of housing opportunities and fair housing issues.

Snyder County’s racial composition trends are consistent with surrounding counties, where the predominant racial category is Caucasian. With the exception of Union County, the percentage of Caucasians in the surrounding

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counties exceeded 99.0 percent. Union County's Caucasian population in 1990 comprised 96.4 percent of the population.

The African-American population comprises the second largest racial category in the surrounding counties, but only experienced increases in Union and Juniata Counties from 1980 to 1990. According to 1990 Census data, Union County has the highest percentage (2.7 percent) of African-Americans in terms of total population.

Increases in Hispanic populations were experienced by all surrounding counties, except for Juniata. From 1980 to 1990, Union County experienced the greatest percentage increase (160.4 percent) in Hispanics. In addition, Union County has the highest percentage (1.8 percent) of Hispanics in terms of total population.

A special interest ethnic group located in Snyder County is the "Plain Sect." The Plain Sect is a general term used to describe the Anabaptist denominations who are largely of German descent. The Anabaptists are currently comprised of three main denominations, which are the Amish, Mennonites and Church of the Brethren.

The focus of the Anabaptist movement includes adult baptism, plain dress, a strong agrarian work ethic, and resistance to modern technology.

POPULATION DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION BY LAND AREA

Population density is the total population of Snyder County in proportion to the total land area of the county. As shown in Table 1-3, Snyder County contains 331.2 square miles and was inhabited by 36,680 persons in 1990, producing a population density of 110.7 persons per square mile. This represents an 8.5 percent increase in population density over the county's 1980 density level. In comparison with the population densities of the commonwealth and surrounding counties, Snyder County recorded the second lowest density, typifying its predominantly rural character. However, all surrounding counties recorded lower population densities than Pennsylvania, which exemplifies the region's rural character.

The U.S. Census Bureau has classified Snyder County's existing population as being either rural (rural and rural nonfarm) or urban. As shown in Figure 1-4, most of Snyder County's

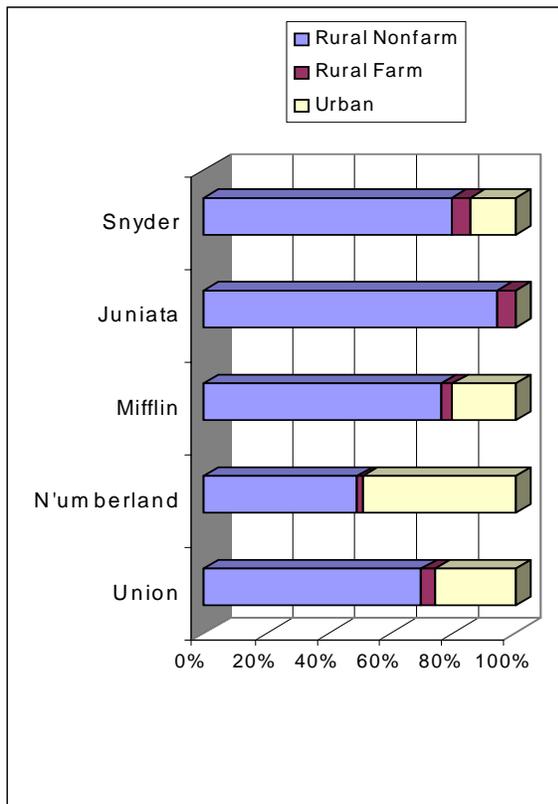
**Table 1-3
Population Density and Land Area Comparisons , 1980-1990**

Jurisdiction	Land Area (Sq. Mi.)	Persons Per Square Mile		% Change 1980-1990
		1980	1990	
Snyder County	331.2	102.0	110.7	8.5%
Juniata County	391.6	49.0	52.7	2.2%
Mifflin County	410.7	113.7	112.5	(1.1%)
Northumberland County	459.9	217.9	210.4	(3.4%)
Union County	316.8	103.7	114.2	10.1%
Pennsylvania	44,819.6	264.3	265.1	.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-1990.

population is classified as rural, with the majority of this population being rural nonfarm. In comparison with surrounding counties, Snyder County is second only to Juniata County in total rural population. Only 14.7 percent of the county's total population is classified as urban. Of the county's 21 municipalities, only Selinsgrove Borough is classified by the U.S. Census Bureau as having a 100 percent urban population. The heaviest concentration of urban areas are located in the eastern portion of the county, specifically, in the Selinsgrove and Shamokin Dam area. Small urban-like areas exist throughout the county in places such as McClure, Middleburg, Beavertown, and Beaver Springs.

Figure 1-4
Population Distribution by
Urban/Rural Land Areas, 1990
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, EXPENDITURES AND ENROLLMENTS

Table 1-4 compares the years of school completed by Snyder County residents, 25 and over, with neighboring counties and Pennsylvania. This information reflects upon the skills and abilities of the labor force to compete in the labor market.

Of the jurisdictions surveyed in Table 1-4, Snyder County had the lowest educational attainment rate for the "High School Graduate or Higher" category. In comparison with all counties in the commonwealth, Snyder County's attainment rate for this category was higher only to Philadelphia (64.3 percent) and Fulton (64.0 percent) Counties.

However, Snyder County's educational attainment rate for persons 25 years and older who have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher ranked third of the jurisdictions surveyed. In comparison with the commonwealth's 67 counties, Snyder County's educational rate for this category ranked as the 20th lowest.

A historic comparison reveals that Snyder County's educational attainment levels have improved. From 1980 to 1990, the percentage of persons 25 years and older that have completed high school or a higher education (not including a Bachelor's degree) has increased from 59.2 percent to 64.4 percent. Also during this period, the percentage of persons 25 years and over that have attained a Bachelor's degree or higher has increased from 9.7 percent to 10.6 percent.

Public school dropout rates reported by the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the school year 1997-98, reveal that Snyder, Juniata, and Union Counties had dropout rates between 1.5-2.0 percent. The rates for these counties are lower than Pennsylvania's

Table 1-4
Educational Attainment Comparisons, Percentage of Population 25 Years and Older,
for
Snyder County, Surrounding Counties and Pennsylvania, 1990

Jurisdiction	Number of Persons 25 Years and Over	Percent of Persons 25 Years and Over	
		High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Snyder County	22,638	64.4	10.6
Juniata County	13,418	65.2	7.3
Northumberland County	66,177	68.5	8.6
Mifflin County	30,339	68.2	8.7
Union County	22,019	73.1	17.5
Pennsylvania	7,872,932	74.7	17.9

* Includes Equivalency
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990.

average dropout rate of 2.6 percent. The total number of dropouts per Snyder County's male and female populations are almost equal with 27 and 24 students, respectively. Of all 67 counties in the state, only five had dropout rates higher than the state average, which included both Mifflin (2.7 percent) and Northumberland (2.9 percent) Counties. State trends show that both urban and rural counties appear on the lists of counties with low and high rates. However, the largest number of dropouts are located in the larger, more urban areas.

Expenditures

Snyder County is divided into two school district areas: Selinsgrove Area and Mid-West School Districts. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the unadjusted 1996-97 expenditures per average daily membership (ADM) for both the Selinsgrove Area and Mid-West School Districts were \$6,677 and \$6,161, respectively. In comparison, the expenditures per ADM for the commonwealth were higher at \$7,483.

Enrollments

As shown in Table 1-5, enrollments for both the Mid-West and Selinsgrove School Districts increased by 3.1 percent and 8.8 percent, respectively, from the 1990-91 to the 1998-99 school years.

Historic enrollment trends for the county's two school districts are presented in Figure 1-5. As shown, the two district's enrollments have steadily increased throughout the decade; however, Mid-West experienced a slight decline in its 1998-99 enrollments over its 1997-98 total. The average annual percentage growth rate during the surveyed period for the Selinsgrove Area School District was 1.1 percent, which was higher than Mid-West's growth rate of 0.4 percent.

**INCOME AND
 POVERTY LEVELS**

Snyder County's income levels are closely related to its educational achievement, and educational levels are usually reflected by income levels. Income also reflects the

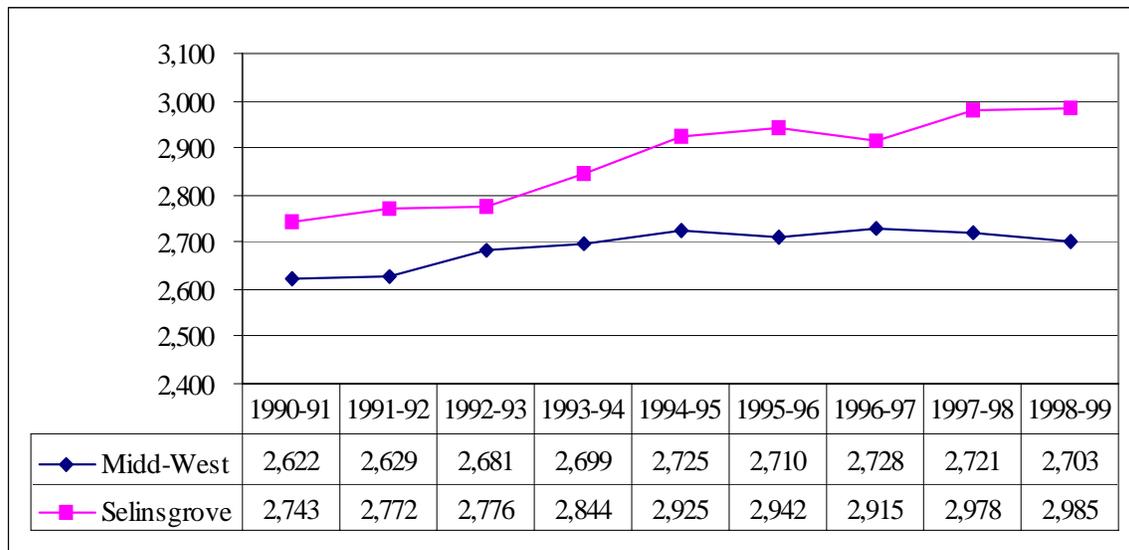
**Table 1-5
Selected Statistics for Snyder County School Districts**

School District	Total Enrollment			Percent Low Income (1997-98)	Expenditures Per Student*		
	1990-91	1998-99	Percent Change		1989-90 Expenditures in 1998 Dollars	1997-98 Expenditures in 1998 Dollars	Percent Change
Mid-West	2,622	2,703	3.1%	31.8%	\$5,664	\$5,704	0.7%
Selinsgrove	2,743	2,985	8.8%	27.9%	\$6,179	\$6,082	-1.6%

* Adjusted by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the 1990 and 1998 calendar years. Inflation Index for this period equals 1.247
 Sources: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, 1997-98.
 Snyder County School District Enrollments, 1998-99.
 National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 Expenditures Per Pupil.

**Figure 1-5
Historic School District Enrollment Trends in Snyder County for School Years
1990-91 through 1998-99**

Source: PA Department of Education, 1999.



relative influence of an area and its ability to support needed public facilities and utilities. Income statistics are presented in Tables 1-6, 1-7, and 1-8. Income statistics are grouped into three (3) main categories by the U.S. Census Bureau and are defined as follows:

1. Per Capita Income - Calculated by dividing the aggregate income for persons 15 years and over by the total number of persons in the group.

2. Family Income - A median income value representing the family household units.
3. Household Income - The median income value representing all households and unrelated individuals.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic's Consumer Price Index (CPI) was used to adjust Snyder County's 1980 income levels for inflation to 1990 dollars. The CPI represents changes in

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prices of all goods and services purchased for consumption by urban households. User fees (such as water and sewer service) and sales and excise taxes paid by the consumer are also included. Income taxes and investment items (like stocks, bonds, and life insurance) are not included.

As shown in Table 1-6, 1980 and 1990 household income comparisons are made for Snyder County, the commonwealth, and surrounding counties. The results show that Snyder County's 1990 median household income exceeded inflation (i.e., experienced real growth). For example, an equivalent amount of the county's unadjusted 1980 median household income dollars (i.e., \$15,542) equals \$24,650 in 1990 dollars. In comparison, the county's 1990 median household income of \$25,864 exceeded the 1980 adjusted median household income by approximately 5 percent; thus, demonstrating real growth in median household income. Furthermore, these results show that Snyder County's 1990 median household income is competitive with those of surrounding counties', however, it still remains below the state's level.

The CPI was also used to adjust 1980 income levels shown in Tables 1-7 and 1-8. As shown, both Snyder County's 1990 per capita and median family incomes experienced real growth by exceeding the adjusted 1980 income levels by 19 percent and 11 percent, respectively. Furthermore, these results show that Snyder County's 1990 per capita and median family incomes are competitive with the income levels of Juniata, Mifflin, and Northumberland Counties, but are below the levels for Union County and the commonwealth.

Personal Income by Major Industry

Information provided in Table 1-9 compares Snyder County's adjusted (CPI) personal income levels by major industry for years 1990 and 1997. As shown, real income decreased for the manufacturing, wholesale trade, and service industries. The greatest increases in real income were experienced by the FIRE (i.e., Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate industries) government, and retail trade industries.

**Table 1-6
Unadjusted and Adjusted Median Household Income Comparisons for
Snyder County, Surrounding Counties and Pennsylvania, 1980 - 1990**

Jurisdiction	1980 Median Household Income (Unadjusted)	1980 Median Household Income in 1990 Dollars	1990 Median Household Income in 1990 Dollars	Percent Change in Median Household Income
Snyder County	\$15,542	\$24,650	\$25,864	4.9%
Juniata County	\$15,659	\$22,018	\$25,359	15.2%
Mifflin County	\$17,012	\$22,137	\$22,778	2.9%
Northumberland County	\$15,862	\$20,509	\$22,124	7.9%
Union County	\$18,083	\$25,167	\$27,622	9.8%
Pennsylvania	\$19,995	\$26,772	\$29,069	8.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-1990.

Table 1-7
Unadjusted and Adjusted Per Capita Income Comparisons for
Snyder County, Surrounding Counties and Pennsylvania, 1980 - 1990

Jurisdiction	1980 Per Capita Income (Unadjusted)	1980 Per Capita Income in 1990 Dollars	1990 Per Capita Income in 1990 Dollars	Percent Change in Per Capita Income
Snyder County	\$5,754	\$9,126	\$10,859	19.0%
Juniata County	\$5,703	\$5,703	\$10,759	88.7%
Mifflin County	\$5,812	\$9,218	\$10,609	15.1%
Northumberland County	\$5,682	\$9,012	\$10,819	20.1%
Union County	\$5,789	\$9,181	\$11,679	27.2%
Pennsylvania	\$7,077	\$11,224	\$14,068	25.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-1990.

Table 1-8
Unadjusted and Adjusted Median Family Income Comparisons for
Snyder County, Surrounding Counties and Pennsylvania, 1980 - 1990

Jurisdiction	1980 Median Family Income (Unadjusted)	1980 Median Family Income in 1990 Dollars	1990 Median Family Income in 1990 Dollars	Percent Change in Median Family Income
Snyder County	\$17,218	\$27,308	\$30,302	11.0%
Juniata County	\$15,659	\$24,835	\$28,781	15.9%
Mifflin County	\$17,012	\$26,981	\$27,502	1.9%
Northumberland County	\$15,862	\$25,157	\$27,669	10.0%
Union County	\$18,083	\$28,680	31,776	10.8%
Pennsylvania	\$19,995	\$31,715	\$34,856	9.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-1990.

Poverty Levels

Table 1-10 includes poverty level data for Snyder County and surrounding counties and Pennsylvania. As shown, all counties, with the exception of Juniata and Mifflin, experienced slight increases in their poverty levels from 1980 to 1990. According to the 1990 census data, poverty status was determined for 34,402 residents. Some 3,789 persons or 11.0 percent of the total population were considered below the poverty level. In addition, of the county's 9,692 families in 1990, 744 or 7.7 percent were below the poverty level.

**HOUSEHOLD AND
 GROUP QUARTER
 CHARACTERISTICS**

Of key interest are the type of households in Snyder County. The Census Bureau defines three basic types of households: a married couple family, a family headed by either a male or female without a spouse,

**Table 1-9
Snyder County Adjusted Personal Income by Major Industry, 1990 and 1997**

Major Industry	1990 Personal Income (Unadjusted)	1990 Personal Income in 1997 Dollars	1997 Personal Income in 1997 Dollars	Percent Change in Personal Income
Manufacturing	\$123,484	\$151,638	\$147,115	-3.0%
Transportation and Public Utilities	\$24,807	\$30,463	\$31,328	0.003%
Wholesale Trade	\$13,739	\$16,871	\$16,634	-1.4%
Retail Trade	\$46,557	\$57,172	\$62,238	8.9%
FIRE	\$6,528	\$8,016	\$12,970	61.8%
Services	\$52,335	\$64,267	\$62,943	-2.1 %
Government	\$60,587	\$74,401	\$83,623	12.0%

Source: Regional Economic Information System: 1969-1997.

**Table 1-10
Percent of Total Persons Below Poverty for
Snyder County, Surrounding Counties and Pennsylvania, 1980 and 1990**

Jurisdiction	1980		1990		Change in Percentage Points 1980-1990	
	Percent of Persons	Percent of Families	Percent of Persons	Percent of Families	Persons	Families
Snyder County	10.7%	7.5%	11.0%	7.7%	0.3	0.2
Juniata County	12.7%	10.4%	9.8%	6.9%	(3.0)	(3.5)
Mifflin County	13.1%	9.7%	13.4%	9.5%	0.3	(0.2)
Northumberland County	11.4%	8.1%	11.6%	8.4%	0.2	0.3
Union County	9.4%	6.4%	10.3%	6.5%	0.9	0.1
Pennsylvania	10.5%	7.8%	11.1%	8.2%	0.6	0.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-1990.

and non-family households, which is an individual living alone or with a non-relative.

Table 1-11 presents 1980 and 1990 household information for Snyder County. Household formation far exceeded the county's overall population increase between 1980 and 1990. During this period, the county experienced a net gain of 2,083 households, or a 19.5 percent increase, while the population growth rate for the same period was only 9.2 percent.

This is similar to national and state trends and is the result of long term decrease in household size.

Snyder County's fastest growing living arrangements are non-family households, while the traditional married-couple family is the slowest. Snyder County's average household size in 1990 was 2.70 according to

**Table 1-11
Snyder County Population by Household and Marital Status, 1980 and 1990**

Household Type	Number of Households				
	1980	% of All Households	1990	% of All Households	% Change 1980-1990*
Total Family Households (Two or More Persons)	8,579	80.3%	9,697	76.0%	13.0%
Married Couple Family	7,696	72.1%	8,471	66.4%	10.1%
Male (No Wife)	197	1.8%	379	3.0%	92.4%
Female (No Husband)	686	6.4%	847	6.6%	23.5%
Total Non-Family Households	2,102	19.7%	3,067	24.0%	45.9%
Householder Living Alone	1,833	17.2%	2,576	20.2%	40.5%
Householder 65 Years or Older	NA	NA	1,311	10.3%	NA
All Households (Total Family + Total Non-Family)	10,681	100.0%	12,764	100.0%	19.5%

* Represents the percent change in actual numbers.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-1990

the Census Bureau. This represents a decrease from 2.90 persons per household reported in the 1980 Census. These trends also are representative of national, state, and local trends, which are in response to the increase in the number of household formations. Group quarter formations are categorized by the U.S. Census Bureau into Institutionalized (i.e., correctional institutions, nursing homes, mental hospitals, juvenile institutions, and other institutions) and Other Persons in Group Quarters, which includes college dormitories, military quarters, emergency shelters, visible street locations, and other non-institutional group quarters. In 1990, college dormitories (i.e., Susquehanna University) accounted for the largest (1,184) group quarter category in Snyder County. Nursing homes (226 persons) and other institutions (698 persons) comprised the next largest category.

**LABOR FORCE
CHARACTERISTICS**

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, Snyder County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for

March 1999, was 5.9 percent. This figure is higher than the state's March 1999 seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 4.4 percent. Since 1995, Snyder County's unemployment rates have fluctuated from 5.5 percent in 1995 to 6.3 percent in 1996 to 4.9 percent in 1997 to 4.5 in 1998. With the exception of Union County (4.2 percent), Snyder County had the second lowest unemployment rate posted for March 1999 among surrounding counties. Mifflin and Juniata Counties had the highest unemployment rates at 8.0 percent and 7.9 percent, respectively, while Northumberland was at 6.7 percent unemployment.

Snyder County's total labor force increased from 15,326 in 1980 to 17,969 in 1990, or by 17.2 percent. From 1990 to 1997, the county's total labor force increased by another 2,243 persons or 12.5 percent.

As shown in Table 1-12, manufacturing has remained Snyder County's largest employer throughout the period 1980 through 1997. However, after experiencing an increase in employment from 1980 to 1990, the manufacturing industry suffered almost an 8.5

**Table 1-12
Snyder County Full-Time and Part-Time Employment
By Major Industry, 1980, 1990, and 1997**

Industry	1980	1990	1997	Change 1980-90		Change 1990-97	
				#	%	#	%
Farm Employment	1,149	978	934	-171	-17.5%	-44	-4.5%
Ag, Service, Farming and Fishing	130	194	--	64	33.0%	--	--
Mining	15	-	--	-15	--	--	--
Construction	548	762	820	214	28.1%	58	7.6%
Manufacturing	3,714	5,504	5,040	1,790	32.5%	-464	-8.4%
Transportation, Utilities, Comm.	661	769	791	108	14.0%	22	2.9%
Wholesale Trade	378	582	649	204	35.1%	67	11.5%
Retail Trade	2,869	3,879	4,470	1,010	26.0%	591	15.2%
FIRE	602	649	821	47	7.2%	172	26.5%
Services	2,086	3,575	3,553	1,89	41.7%	-22	-0.6%
Government	2,609	2,649	2,675	40	1.5%	26	1.0%

Source: Regional Economic Information System, 1980, 1990, 1997.

percent decrease in employment between 1990 and 1997. Snyder County's second leading employer has consistently been the retail trade industry. While its employment growth remains strong, the county's percentage increase in employment growth dropped from 26.0 percent to 15.2 percent for the periods 1980 to 1990 and 1990 to 1997, respectively.

Since 1990, the county's third largest employer has been the service industry, beating the government industry as the county's previous third largest employer. However, during the period 1990 to 1997 the service industry's employment levels decreased by 6 percent after experiencing an approximate 42 percent increase in employment during the period 1980 to 1990.

Although agriculture is one of the county's largest land use, employment levels for the farm industry have steadily decreased during the period 1980 to 1997. However, this decreased slowed from 17.5 percent to 4.5 percent for the periods 1980 to 1990 and 1990 to 1997, respectively.

While the proportion of males in the labor force has decreased from 59.4 percent in 1980 to 56.1 percent, the proportion of females has increased from 40.6 percent in 1980 to 44.0 percent in 1990. These trends reflect the increased number of females entering the workforce, which indicates that the number of two income families is rising steadily in Snyder County as it is elsewhere in the region and state. This shift in the sex composition of the labor force will mean increased needs for child care facilities and services, and recreational and related facilities and services for families during the planning period.

Of the 16,846 Snyder County workers who reported their place of work in 1990, 11, 865, or 70.4 percent, worked in the county. This represents a slight decrease of the 71.3 percent of persons who worked in the county in 1980. A mean travel time to work of only 17.0 minutes means that most residents work in Snyder County or adjacent municipalities. In 1990, approximately 1.0 percent of residents worked outside Pennsylvania. An interesting fact reported by the Pennsylvania State Data Center shows that in 1990, Snyder County was the most common place of work

for a reported 2,679 Northumberland County residents.

In 1990, 11, 865 (41 percent) residents drove to work alone, while 2,831 (10.0 percent) carpooled. From 1980 to 1990, the number of workers driving to work alone increased by 35.0 percent, while the number of workers carpooling decreased by 12.4 percent.

With the increased advancement and use of technology (e.g., Internet, e-mail, etc.) and home based occupations, the number of workers working at home dramatically increased from 615 in 1980 to 1,026 in 1990, or 67.0 percent.

Employment in Snyder County is nearly divided between blue collar (47.7 percent) and white collar (52.3 percent) jobs. This indicates that the employment base is fairly diverse and that there is a wide range of occupational types in the region. The proportion of white collar occupations is projected to increase as trade and professional service industries increase in the region.

A critical issue facing both Snyder County and the commonwealth is the brain drain syndrome. According PSDC, "Brain drain migration is the loss of highly educated and skilled workers, notably young people, through the exchange of migrants with other states." In the mid-1990s Pennsylvania had a net migration loss of 20,000, people ages 20 through 29 with college and graduate or professional degrees, and a net migration gain of nearly 16,500 migrants across all age groups with only high school or less educational attainment. Consequently, Pennsylvania is both losing its young, highly educated population and gaining low educational attainment migrants.

Chapter 2 - Housing Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Attractive housing and well maintained residential neighborhoods are one of the most important assets of any community. Good housing creates a sound tax base that will continue to appreciate in value and will assure that residents are living in an environment conducive to healthful and safe living.

The existing and future quality of housing is extremely important to the prosperity of Snyder County. An analysis of existing housing conditions and projected population levels and characteristics is necessary when identifying housing needs for the future. Another important feature of the local housing market is the variety of housing types and prices. A variety of styles and prices provides housing opportunities for people interested in entering the housing market.

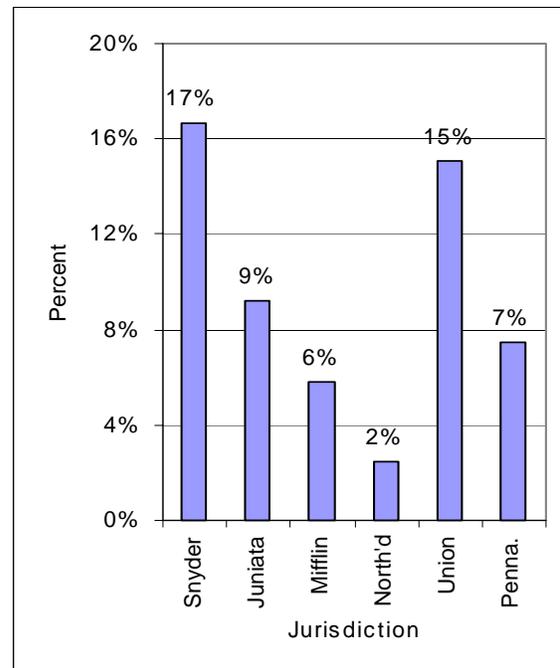
HOUSING INVENTORY

According to U.S. Census Bureau, the total number of housing units in Snyder County increased by 16.7 percent, from 11,683 units in 1980 to 13,629 units in 1990 (Table 2-1). This rate of increase surpassed the population increase of 9.2 percent for the same time period. The percentage increase in dwelling units during the past few decades has been greater than the percentage increase in population, demonstrating the effect of declining household size. It is noted that year round housing units consist of all occupied units plus vacant units available or intended for year round use. From 1970 to 1990, the county's housing supply has increased by 54.5 percent, with an annual average increase of approximately 15.5 percent.

As indicated in Figure 2-1, the total housing supply in the County has increased during the 1980 to 1990 period by a greater percentage than all the surrounding counties. During this

period, all municipalities in the county experienced housing unit gains of five percent or greater (Table 2-1). The greatest percentage increases in total housing units occurred primarily in the eastern tier portion of the County; specifically, in Penn, Jackson, Center, Middlecreek, and Washington Townships. Trends in housing unit gains in these municipalities coincide with their population increases.

Figure 2-1
Percent Change in Total Housing Units, 1980-1990
Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Housing trends for the period 1990 through 1999 were analyzed using information gathered from the Snyder County Assessment Office. As shown in Figure 2-2, from 1990 to 1999, the number of improved single family residential parcels in the county increased from 10,530 to 11,349, or by 7.8 percent. This growth translates into an approximately one percent average annual increase. Table 2-2 presents the total number of improved residential parcels by municipality for assessment years 1990 through 1999.

**Table 2-1
Total Housing Unit Growth by Municipality, 1980-1990**

Municipality	Total Housing Units		
	1980	1990	% Change
Snyder County	11,683	13,629	16.7%
Adams Township	288	331	14.9%
Beaver Township	171	188	9.9%
Beavertown Borough	326	379	16.3%
Center Township	567	682	20.3%
Chapman Township	373	429	15.0%
Franklin Township	756	847	12.0%
Freeburg Borough	240	252	5.0%
Jackson Township	396	504	27.3%
McClure Borough	395	426	7.8%
Middleburg Borough	526	602	14.4%
Middlecreek Township	534	650	21.7%
Monroe Township	1,387	1,605	15.7%
Penn Township	661	962	45.5%
Perry Township	571	664	16.3%
Selinsgrove Borough	1,677	1,839	9.7%
Shamokin Dam Borough	654	754	15.3%
Spring Township	574	675	17.6%
Union Township	487	519	6.6%
Washington Township	383	484	26.4%
West Beaver Township	382	436	14.1%
West Perry Township	335	401	19.7%

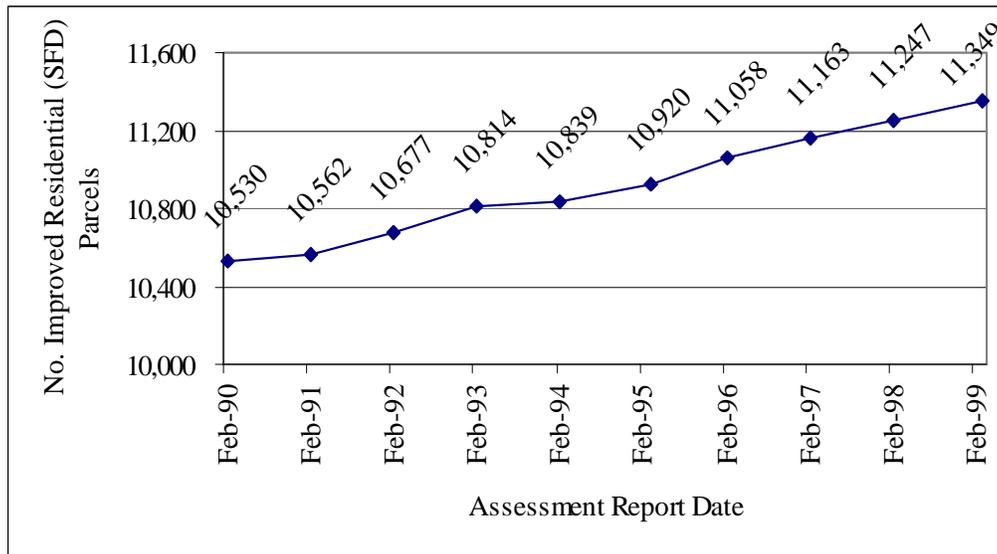
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-1990.

**Table 2-2
Number of Improved Residential Parcels, Snyder County 1990 to 1999**

Tax	Municipality	2/15/1990	2/13/1991	2/14/1992	2/19/1993	2/14/1994	3/1/1995	2/19/1996	2/21/1997	2/17/1998	3/10/1999	Municipal
1	Adams Township	253	256	256	258	263	266	269	272	277	281	2,651
2	Beaver Township	155	157	159	162	163	164	164	164	164	166	1,618
3	Beavertown Borough	312	318	324	328	328	327	333	334	337	339	3,280
4	Center Township	490	504	512	523	538	540	550	562	572	579	5,370
5	Chapman Township	306	303	312	316	318	322	324	323	326	327	3,177
6	Franklin Township	713	712	720	727	676	693	710	721	721	727	7,120
7	Freeburg Borough	227	227	227	227	227	227	229	227	228	229	2,275
8	Jackson Township	365	370	371	376	373	375	373	376	377	381	3,737
9	McClure Borough	356	354	355	358	358	362	365	366	365	366	3,605
10	Middleburg Borough	441	439	440	444	444	442	444	444	443	444	4,425
11	Middlecreek	559	549	555	564	571	590	598	612	620	630	5,848
12	Monroe Township	1,442	1,452	1,482	1,507	1,518	1,525	1,543	1,559	1,564	1,581	15,173
13	Penn Township	781	812	830	855	894	916	940	968	999	1,021	9,016
14	Perry Township	447	460	468	473	472	481	493	495	505	512	4,806
15	Selinsgrove Borough	1,209	1,203	1,205	1,206	1,206	1,206	1,202	1,202	1,198	1,201	12,038
16	Shamokin Dam	610	605	605	607	608	607	607	608	609	610	6,076
17	Spring Township	486	474	478	486	486	482	488	488	490	495	4,853
18	Union Township	388	380	388	387	387	388	398	399	403	406	3,924
19	Washington Township	338	348	349	358	358	360	374	376	377	380	3,618
20	West Beaver	329	313	314	321	320	319	320	323	327	327	3,213
21	West Perry Township	323	326	327	331	331	328	334	344	345	347	3,336
County Total		10,530	10,562	10,677	10,814	10,839	10,920	11,058	11,163	11,247	11,349	109,159

Source: Snyder County Assessment Office, 1999

Figure 2-2
Snyder County Residential Assessed Parcels, 1990-99
 Source: Snyder County Assessment Office, 1999



As shown, Monroe Township and Selinsgrove Borough experienced the highest percentage of total improvements during the period, comprising 13.9 percent and 11 percent of the county's total for the entire surveyed period. Furthermore, the total number of improvements for the county steadily increased throughout the period.

OCCUPANCY AND TENURE STATUS

The tenure and occupancy characteristics for occupied dwellings in 1990, as compared to that which existed in 1980, are summarized in Table 2-3. The total number of occupied dwellings increased by 1,946, or 16.7 percent, with owner occupied units increasing by 2,083 (19.5 percent) and renter occupied units increasing by 673 (30.0 percent).

The vacancy rate serves as a measure of the housing market. According to *The Practice of Local Government Planning* (So, 1988), "Vacancy is an important housing indicator because it indicates the degree of choice

available. Too high a vacancy rate can be disastrous for owners trying to sell or rent. Too low a vacancy rate can force up prices. Vacancies between four and five percent are usually considered healthy." In Snyder County, the number of vacant units increased by 244 (39.3 percent), thus increasing the gross vacancy rate from 5.3 percent in 1980 to 6.3 percent in 1990.

HOUSING TYPES

The predominant residential unit design in Snyder County is the single family detached dwelling, which comprises 71.0 percent (9,677 units) of all housing units in 1990. From 1980 to 1990, the number of single family residential units increased from 8,823 units to 9,677 units or by approximately 10.0 percent. As previously stated, the county's total housing growth during this period was 16.7 percent, which indicates that the majority of the growth is predominantly rural based rather than urban.

**Table 2-3
Occupancy and Tenure of Housing Units in Snyder County
1980-1990**

Characteristic	1980	1990	Change	
			#	%
Total Housing Units	11,683	13,629	1,946	16.7%
Occupied Dwelling Units	10,681	12,764	2,083	19.5%
Owner Occupied	8,438	9,848	1,410	16.7%
Renter Occupied	2,243	2,916	673	30.0%
Vacant Units	621	865	244	39.3%
Gross Vacancy Rate	5.3%	6.3%	---	---

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-1990.

Multi-family units comprised 11.3 percent of all housing units. Since 1970, the total number of multi-family units has increased only by approximately 4.0 percent, which indicates a slow rate of urban growth.

HOUSING CONDITIONS

The age of a structure can be useful in the evaluation of structural conditions. Although the age of a structure does not necessarily imply its condition, it does point to areas where repairs, heating costs, and inadequate plumbing and electrical systems could be a problem. The age ranges of dwelling units in Snyder County are illustrated in Figure 2-3. As shown, the majority of the County's housing units were constructed since 1950, with approximately 35.6 percent having been constructed between 1960 and 1979. The median housing unit construction year is 1964. This surge in housing construction is in response, in part, to the post World War II housing boom. An equally large percentage (30.0 percent) of the County's housing stock was built prior to 1940, which is an indication of the number of structures that may require rehabilitation. Furthermore, these structures may require additional maintenance to insure their structural stability.

**Figure 2-3
Age of Housing Structures
in Snyder County**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

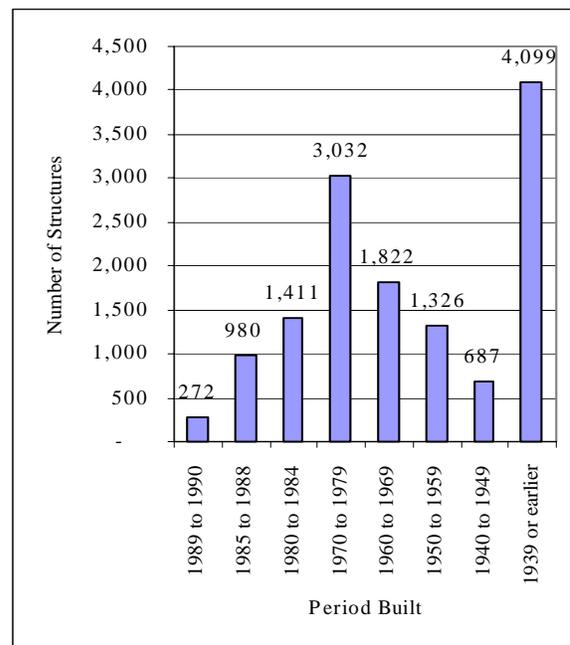


Table 2-4 contains a summary of housing condition characteristics in Snyder County and for Pennsylvania. As shown, most of Snyder County's municipalities had the

**Table 2-4
Housing Condition Characteristics for Snyder County and Pennsylvania**

Jurisdiction	Year Housing Unit Built									Source of Water (1990)			Sewerage Disposal (1990)		
	Total Units	Percent of Total Housing Units								Public System / Private Co.	Dug or Drilled Well	Other	Public System	On-lot	Other
		1939 or Earlier	1940-49	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-84	1985-90	Median Year Built						
Pennsylvania	4,938,140	35.1	9.7	14.6	12.4	15.8	5.4	7.0	1954	78.1	19.8	2.1	74.3	24.5	1.2
Snyder County	13,629	30.1	5.0	9.7	13.4	22.2	10.4	9.2	1964	44.6	50.7	4.7	46.2	50.1	3.7
Adams Township	324	31.2	4.0	4.6	17.6	22.5	11.1	9.0	1966	20.7	64.2	15.1	-	90.7	9.3
Beaver Township	195	34.4	1.5	3.6	16.4	22.1	7.7	14.4	1966	16.4	76.9	6.7	2.1	94.4	3.6
Beavertown Borough	379	46.2	9.0	7.1	14.8	13.5	3.4	6.1	1944	99.5	0.5	-	99.2	0.8	-
Center Township	682	26.0	2.5	5.4	13.2	31.7	7.9	13.3	1971	27.6	67.4	5.0	26.8	69.6	3.5
Chapman Township	429	32.9	5.4	6.3	14.5	21.7	10.5	8.9	1964	3.3	87.6	9.1	3.3	79.3	17.5
Franklin Township	847	25.5	5.7	13.7	15.6	25.0	5.7	8.9	1963	13.6	80.9	5.5	9.0	86.3	4.7
Freeburg Borough	254	49.2	5.5	4.7	15.7	11.0	8.3	5.5	1941	100.0	-	-	100.0	-	-
Jackson Township	504	28.0	2.0	9.3	11.9	25.8	11.5	11.5	1969	28.4	69.0	2.6	3.2	93.7	3.2
McClure Borough	426	47.2	11.3	9.2	13.4	9.6	6.3	3.1	1943	83.6	14.8	1.6	84.5	14.8	0.7
Middleburg Borough	602	46.7	8.3	8.6	9.0	11.5	14.6	1.3	1944	99.0	0.7	0.3	96.7	3.3	-
Middlecreek Township	650	22.0	2.9	4.5	17.1	30.6	10.6	12.3	1971	33.5	62.3	4.2	36.5	60.9	2.6
Monroe Township	1,622	15.0	5.0	10.1	8.5	38.2	10.5	12.6	1973	28.2	71.3	0.6	55.5	43.9	0.6
Penn Township	945	24.0	2.5	13.4	11.4	19.6	13.1	15.9	1969	27.4	67.9	4.7	43.9	52.9	3.2
Perry Township	664	27.0	3.8	9.0	14.3	27.7	10.8	7.4	1967	13.4	79.2	7.4	11.3	82.2	6.5
Selinsgrove Borough	1,839	37.9	7.2	14.5	12.6	9.6	14.9	3.3	1953	98.9	1.1	-	98.6	1.4	-
Shamokin Dam Borough	754	15.9	3.7	17.1	22.7	17.6	15.8	7.2	1966	96.0	3.2	0.8	93.2	6.5	0.3
Spring Township	675	40.9	4.0	5.2	14.4	18.8	6.5	10.2	1960	44.0	48.4	7.6	39.6	53.6	6.8
Union Township	519	41.4	4.4	8.5	11.4	21.2	5.4	7.7	1955	1.9	87.5	10.6	1.2	91.3	7.5
Washington Township	482	27.4	5.6	4.6	9.8	30.9	8.5	13.3	1971	1.9	83.2	14.9	1.5	91.3	7.3
West Beaver Township	436	29.1	4.6	5.7	12.6	25.9	5.5	16.5	1968	0.2	83.5	16.3	-	84.6	15.4
West Perry Township	401	28.7	5.0	11.5	17.5	19.7	10.0	7.7	1963	14.0	74.3	11.7	0.5	94.0	5.5

Source: PA State Data Center. "1999 Pennsylvania County Data Book: Snyder County."

greatest percentage of their total housing units constructed prior to 1940. The exceptions are Middlecreek, Monroe, Washington Townships, and Shamokin Dam Borough. These municipalities had the greatest percentage of their total housing units constructed between 1960 and 1979.

Almost an equal percentage of Snyder County's total housing units obtain their water from either a public system/private company or dug/drilled well system. At the local level, however, the township households obtain the majority of their water supplies from dug or drilled well systems, while the boroughs obtain all or the majority of their water from public/private company systems.

Of the county's total housing units, approximately 54.0 percent lacked public sewer service. Most rural township households utilize on-lot septic systems, while the boroughs and a few urban-like townships (i.e., Monroe and Penn Townships) are serviced by public sewer systems.

However, from 1980 to 1990, the number of housing units lacking complete plumbing facilities declined from 4.4 percent to 3.7 percent. This indicates that a larger percentage of the rural housing units have gained access to public utility services over the decade.

Another indicator of deficient housing is the number of dwellings having more than one person per room. This is an indication of overcrowding. Based on this standard, in 1990 the County contained 231 (1.7 percent) dwelling units with an occupancy ratio of more than one person per room. This represents a decline from the 1980 percentage where 2.6 percent of dwelling units had more than one person per room. This indicates that overcrowding is less common.

HOUSING VALUE AND RENTAL COSTS

Housing price data over time can be used to measure the socioeconomic level of a local area, provided that it is properly adjusted for inflation. The median value of housing for owners and the median contract rent are the most simple and concise presentation of pricing trends. Table 2-5 shows the range of values for owner-occupied housing units in Snyder County. As shown, approximately 92 percent of the county's owner-occupied housing units are valued between \$50,000 to \$99,999. The 1990 median value of owner occupied housing units in Snyder County is \$56,700 versus Pennsylvania's median value of \$69,700. The county's 1990 real median value increased by 7.0 percent over the adjusted 1980 median value of \$52,972.

Table 2-6 shows the county's range of contract rent values. As shown, the majority (97.9 percent) of the contract rent values were between \$250 and \$499. The median contract rent value in 1990 is \$234, as compared to the 1980 value of \$207. When adjusted to 1990 values, the 1980 median contract rent equals \$328; thus, demonstrating that rent values are actually decreasing.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The availability of affordable housing is important for several reasons. Entry level employees in certain job sectors cannot afford to live near where they work, forcing them to commute longer distances. This adds to both traffic congestion and air pollution. Quality of life is affected through the loss of leisure time and time spent with family. Employers have a harder time filling positions in retail and service sector jobs as housing in the area becomes less affordable to those who might fill these positions. A wider range of housing

Table 2-5
Value Intervals for Specified Owner-Occupied
Housing Units, 1990

Value of Owner-Occupied Units	Number of Units	Percent of Total
<\$50,000	2,691	40.2%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	3,443	51.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,000	390	5.8%
\$150,000 to \$199,000	84	1.3%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	67	1.0%
≥\$300,000	19	0.3%
Total	6,694	100.0%

Median Value: \$56,700

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990.

Table 2-6
Contract Rent Intervals for Specified
Renter-Occupied Units Paying Cash Rent,
1990

Rent Interval of Renter-Occupied Units	Number of Units	Percent of Total
<\$250	1,380	57.6%
\$250 to \$499	965	40.3%
\$500 to \$749	46	1.9%
\$750 to \$999	2	0.1%
≥\$1000	3	0.1%
Total	2,396	100.0%

Median Rent: \$234

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990.

types, densities, and rental options can help to alleviate some of these affordable housing problems.

Coupled with housing price information, affordability is used to measure the burden of monthly housing expenditures relative to the residents' income. Housing affordability is based upon two factors housing values and household incomes. A comparison of these two factors can derive a proportional index of housing affordability. This process helps to

determine if the typical family can afford to purchase a house.

Snyder County's 1990 median owner-occupied housing value of \$56,700 divided by the county's 1990 median household income of \$25,864 equals a purchasing ratio of 2.19 (Table 2-7). This means that the average household in Snyder County will spend over two times their yearly income for the purchase of a home. Snyder County's purchasing value is less than Pennsylvania's purchasing ratio of

Table 2-7
Housing Affordability Indexes for Snyder County, Surrounding Counties and Pennsylvania, 1990

Jurisdiction	1990 Median Household Income in 1990 Dollars	Median Housing Values	Purchasing Index
Pennsylvania	\$29,069	\$69,700	2.40
Snyder County	\$25,864	\$56,700	2.19
Juniata County	\$25,359	\$51,700	2.03
Mifflin County	\$22,778	\$41,900	1.84
Northumberland County	\$22,124	\$39,500	1.79
Union County	\$27,622	\$66,800	2.42

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990.

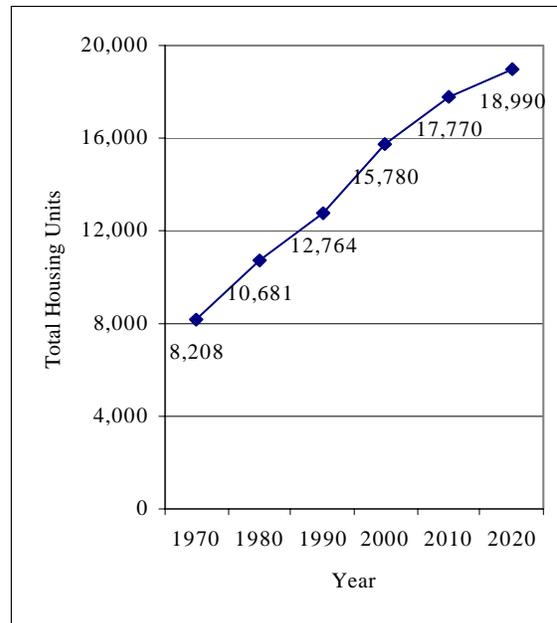
2.4 [$\$69,700$ (1990 median housing value) / $\$29,069$ (1990 median household income)]. As a result, Snyder County’s housing market is more affordable than the commonwealth’s. However, in comparison with surrounding counties, Snyder County’s housing market is less affordable than those of surrounding municipalities, except for Union County.

PROJECTED HOUSING GROWTH

The increase in the number of housing units in a municipality can be projected through the use of several factors. These factors include historic trends, vacancy rate, population projections, and the number of persons per household. Projections of the number of households can be used to estimate future utility, facility, and service needs, and the amount of area that will be taken by residential development in the next 20 years. Figure 2-4 shows that Snyder County is expected to have approximately 19,000 occupied housing units in 2020. This represents an average annual increase of 10.1 percent for the period 1990 to 2020, which is less than the increase of 15.4 percent experienced for the period 1970 to 1990. A review of historic housing unit

Figure 2-4
Total Occupied Housing Units 1970-1990, and Projected Housing Units 2000-2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



increases by municipality can be used to determine the likelihood of where new housing construction will take place. As shown in Table 2-1, the greatest percentage increases in total housing units occurred primarily in the eastern tier of the county; specifically, in Penn, Jackson, Center, Middlecreek and Washington Townships. These outlying municipalities will continue

to experience increased growth pressures from the county's main growth areas of Selinsgrove and Shamokin Dam Boroughs. Furthermore, the future implementation of the Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation project will likely increase development pressures in Monroe Township and surrounding municipalities. As a result, the number of projected housing units may be altered depending upon the project's total economic impact.

PUBLIC/ASSISTED HOUSING AND OTHER ELDERLY HOUSING

The Snyder County Housing Authority, located in Middleburg, provides affordable, decent, safe, and sanitary housing for low income families, the elderly, and disabled persons in Snyder County. The authority currently provides two types of housing programs. The first program is Public Housing Program, which provides housing units in the Shade View Apartment complex in Middleburg. This 40-unit complex contains spacious and modern one to four bedroom apartments that provide water, sewer, and trash removal services. Households are required to pay 30 percent of their adjusted monthly income toward contract rent. Allowances for tenant-paid utility costs are used as deductions from the tenant's share of the rent. The second program is the Section 8 Housing Choices Voucher Program. This program is a federally subsidized program designed to provide rental assistance to low income households, which can include elderly, handicapped, disabled, and other qualified single individuals. As in the Public Housing Program, households are required to pay 30 percent of their adjusted monthly income toward contract rent. Allowances for tenant-paid utility costs are used as deductions from the tenant's share of the rent. The difference between the household's share

and the unit rent is the subsidy provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the local Housing Authority. All housing units must meet fair market rents and pass a HUD Housing Quality Standard (HQS) Inspection.

In addition to its public housing units, the Authority also manages 25 units of elderly housing known as "High Street Manor" in Selinsgrove.

Currently, the authority's waiting lists are low. However, the authority is anticipating a future need for additional elderly housing or assisted care units. Other needs or deficiencies identified by the authority include additional office space, shortage of transit services for clients, and expanded work hours to better service clients.

The authority is currently implementing a Family Self Sufficiency Program as a joint effort with the Union County Housing Authority. This program is available to Section 8 Rental Assistance families and provides housing assistance as part of a coordinated program of housing, child care, transportation, personal and career counseling, adult education, and job training and placement to low-income persons. Families agree to sign a Contract of Participation with a limit of five years to become self sufficient. If the family's rental payment increases due to increased employment income, the authority's payment does not decrease. However, the portion of the authority's payment that would essentially decrease is escrowed for the family. If the family successfully fulfills their Contract of Participation, the escrow account funds are given to the family with the intention of it being used for education related activities or towards the purchase of a home.

Finally, the authority wishes to begin a computer learning center. Although computers and space are readily available, trainers are needed to instruct the program.

In addition to the housing administered through the authority, Snyder County's population is served by two nursing homes located in SelinsgroveBPenn Lutheran Village and Loving Care Nursing Center, Incorporated. The Penn Lutheran Village is a 197 licensed bed nonprofit nursing home. Loving Care Nursing Center is a profit nursing home and offers 44 licensed beds.

Homeowners over the age of 65 comprise a significant portion of the county's households. In 1990, this group totaled 3,225 households or approximately 23 percent of the county's total households, which is below the state's percentage of 26.2 percent.

From 1980 to 1990, the number of households with persons age 65 and over increased by 784 or by 32.1 percent, which is greater than the state's percentage increase of 16.8 percent. This trend demonstrates the growth in the county's elderly population.

Chapter 3 - Environmental Resources Analysis

INTRODUCTION

To assist in providing orderly, intelligent, and efficient growth for Snyder County, it is essential that appropriate features of the natural environment be described and that this information be integrated with other applicable planning tools and procedures. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a practical compilation of available environmental data as an aid to county planning efforts.

The presence of high quality environments and environmental amenities has a strong positive impact on property values and the local tax base. As growth continues, quality environments will be in greater demand. The benefits of protecting the county's natural resources not only go directly to the affected, but also spill over to adjoining undeveloped and developed parcels and neighborhoods. Therefore, it is important that government decision makers and the public be aware of the constraints that the natural environment may impose upon future development in the county.

STEEP SLOPES AND EROSION HAZARD AREAS

Steep slopes and erosion hazard areas represent both environmental and economic threats. Snyder County is located in the tightly folded and faulted Ridge and Valley Province of the Appalachian Physiographic Region. As a result, much of the County contains sizeable areas of steep slopes in areas located along Jacks Mountain and Shade Mountain.

Slopes between 5 and 15 percent cover approximately 57.8 percent of the County, which constitute the majority of the County's total land area. Slopes between 15 and 20 percent account for only 6.4 percent of the

total land area, while slopes greater than 20 percent comprise 21.2 percent.

Slopes between 15 and 25 percent are suitable only for low density residential development, while very steep slopes in excess of 25 percent are rarely suitable for development. The Future Land Use Map identifies those portions of Snyder County having slopes greater than 25 percent. Mitigation techniques must be incorporated into the development of areas with slopes in excess of 15 percent to ensure that adverse long-term impacts do not occur. According to the Soil Survey of Snyder County (1985), "A large percentage—about 53 percent—of the soils in Snyder County is well drained. Most of the well-drained soils are sloping or steep, and many are shallow or moderately deep to bedrock".

Steep slopes are extremely vulnerable to erosion, particularly when natural vegetation has been disturbed. The four factors influencing soil erosion are vegetation, soil type, slope size and inclination, and the frequency and intensity of rainfall. On most surfaces, vegetation is the single most important erosion control factor. The higher the cover density, the lower the soil loss to runoff. Rapid soil erosion is often very difficult and expensive to control once it has started. As the erosion of steep slopes spreads both upstream and along slope sides, large areas and different land uses may be impacted by these processes.

FLOODPLAINS

The Natural Features Map shows the locations of Snyder County's 100-year floodplains. Regulations of floodplains helps to reduce the threat to human life and property caused by periodic flooding. For regulatory purposes, a floodplain is defined by the 100-year or base flood, which has a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in a given year. A floodway is the channel of a stream, river, or

other body of water, plus any adjacent floodplain areas, that must be kept free of encroachment so the 100-year flood can be carried without increasing flood heights by more than one foot at any point, and without creating hazardous velocities.

The Pennsylvania Floodplain Management Act (Act 166 of 1978) requires municipalities identified as being flood-prone to enact floodplain regulations which, at a minimum, meet the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP is a federal program that allows property owners in participating communities to purchase insurance protection against losses from flooding.

The NFIP Community Rating System (CRS) was implemented in 1990 as a program for recognizing and encouraging community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP standards. The National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 codified the CRS in the NFIP. Under the CRS, flood insurance premium rates are adjusted to reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from community activities that meet the three goals of the CRS: (1) reduce flood losses; (2) facilitate accurate insurance rating; and (3) promote the awareness of flood insurance. There are ten CRS classes—Class 1 requires the most credit points and gives the largest premium reduction while Class 10 receives no premium reduction. The CRS recognizes 18 creditable activities, organized under four categories numbered 300 through 600—Public Information, Mapping and Regulations, Flood Damage Reduction, and Flood Preparedness.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA), NFIP Community Status Book, all municipalities in Snyder County are participating in the NFIP program, and have adopted floodplain ordinances. However, no municipalities in

the county are participating in the CRS program.

SCENIC VISTAS

One of the highly-praised natural features of Snyder County is its scenery. Its wooded slopes, well-maintained farms, views from numerous high points, creek valleys, and the Susquehanna River are all valuable county assets. Unique and scenic attributes of Snyder County, worthy of preservation, extend beyond the natural environment to include the man-made environment as well. The county's historical pattern of development, consisting of well defined and functioning villages surrounded by fertile farmland and open space uses, provide not only visual uniqueness and beauty, but also a clear sense of community. The current trends toward sprawl development patterns result in the loss of both human interaction in traditional community settings and distinctive rural landscapes. The Natural Features Map illustrates the county's numerous overlook locations and positional directions for viewing the county's scenic vistas.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are complex ecosystems, which serve as an integral component in the environment's composition. By definition, all wetlands have three basic characteristics, which include the presence of: (1) water on the surface during all or part of the year; (2) hydrophytic vegetation; and (3) hydric soils.

The importance of wetlands in providing wildlife habitat, floodplain protection, surface and ground water quality improvement, and a variety of other important functions are often overlooked in land use planning practices. Laws such as the federal Clean Water Act, and similar state and local laws have led to the enforcement of wetland protection. In Pennsylvania, development in wetland areas is

strictly regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Therefore, any development of these areas is subject to both federal and state permitting processes. The location of Snyder County's wetland features are shown on the Natural Features Map. The majority of the county's wetlands may be found along the Susquehanna River, and throughout such stream corridors as Middle Creek, Mahantango Creek, and Penns Creek.

WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY

Surface Waters and Drainage

Surface waters include rivers, streams and ponds, which provide aquatic habitat, carry or hold runoff from storms, and provide recreation and scenic opportunities. Surface water resources are a dynamic and important component of the natural environment, but ever-present threats such as pollution, construction, clear-cutting, and overuse have required the protection of these valuable resources.

Snyder County is located in the Lower Central Susquehanna Watershed (Subbasin 6), which has a total drainage area of 1,449 square miles. This watershed includes the Susquehanna River from the West Branch Susquehanna River to the Juniata River and encompasses most of Snyder County, and portions of Northumberland, Dauphin, Union, Centre, Mifflin, Juniata, Perry, Schuylkill, Columbia, Huntingdon, and Montour Counties. The western most portion of Snyder County, however, is located within the Lower Juniata River Watershed.

The Pennsylvania Stormwater Management Act, Act 167 of 1978, requires counties to prepare stormwater management plans on a watershed-by-watershed basis. These plans must be prepared in consultation with the affected municipalities. Standards for control

of runoff from new development are a required component of each plan, and are based on a detailed hydrologic assessment. A key objective of a stormwater management plan is to coordinate decisions of the watershed municipalities. A plan is implemented through mandatory municipal adoption of ordinance provisions consistent with the plan. According to records maintained by the PA Department of Environmental Protection, no Act 167 Phase I plans have been prepared for the county's watersheds.

Groundwater Quality and Supply

The county's underlying geologic formations shape the topography of the landscape and determine the water-bearing characteristics of aquifers. Geologic formations can also restrict the nature and extent of surface development. In addition, the underlying rock is subject to forces that erode its original shape and form soils. The resultant soils possess distinct characteristics that often impact land use decisions.

Geology is also a primary determinant of groundwater quality and quantity. Certain rock types and structures convey water better and serve as more abundant well sources. Rock type and structure can affect the degree of groundwater filtration that takes place. Chemical composition of the rock can also contribute to the chemical properties of its groundwater.

The geology of Snyder County consists primarily of sedimentary rock layers, which cross the county in an east to west fashion. The county's geologic formations are shown on the Geology Map. Table 3-1 shows the engineering characteristics of these

**Table 3-1
Engineering Characteristics of Snyder County's Geologic Formations**

Formation	Description	Porosity	Permeability	Ease of Excavation	Foundation Stability	Quality of Groundwater	Quantity of Groundwater (Median Yield)
Bald Eagle Formation	Fine to coarse grained, crossbedded sandstone	Low to moderate	Moderate	Difficult	Good	N/A	Median = 10 gpm
Bloomsburg Formation	Predominantly reed shale and siltstone	Low to moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Good	Hydrogen sulfide has been noted in some wells.	Median = 45 gpm
Buddy's Run Member*	Grayish-red to brownish-red shale, siltstone, and fine-grained sandstone.	Low to moderate	Low to moderate	Moderate	Excellent	Generally good; some areas show high hardness and dissolved solids.	10 to 12 gpm
Duncannon Member*	Interbedded red and gray sandstone, red siltstone, and red mudstone.	Low to moderate	Low	Moderate	Excellent	Generally good; except for occasional high sulfur content.	7 to 40 gpm
Irish Valley Member*	Alternating beds of olive-gray sandstone, siltstone, and shale with red siltstone, mudstone, and shale.	Low	Low	Moderate	Good	Salty water and hydrogen sulfide	2 to 380 gpm
Sherman Creek Member*	Interbedded grayish-red silty mudstone, sandy siltstone, and reddish-gray to light-olive-gray, very medium-grained, silty sandstone.	Moderate	Moderate	Difficult	Good	Generally good, but water may be high in iron.	(Unknown)
Clinton Group	Fossiliferous sandstone; hematitic sandstone and shale	Low	Low	Moderate	Good	N/A	12 gpm
Hamilton Group	Fossiliferous siltstone and shale; oolitic hematite; conglomerate	Low to moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Good	Water may have high iron and sulfur content; hydrogen sulfide gas is common.	1 to 300 gpm
Juniata Formation	Brownish-red, fine-grained to conglomerate, quartzitic sandstone	Low	Low	Difficult	Good	Usually good.	Median = 17 gpm
Keyser Formation	Dark gray, highly fossiliferous limestone	Moderate	Moderate to low	Difficult	Good	Water is frequently hard; some iron problems	Median = 30 gpm
Mifflintown Formation	Greenish-gray shale interbedded with medium-gray fossiliferous limestone	Low	Low to moderate	Moderate to Difficult	Good	Hydrogen sulfide has been noted in some wells; water quality decreases with increased depth.	Median = 20 gpm
Old Port Formation	Includes sandstone, chert, shale, and limestone	Moderate to high	Moderate to high	Difficult	Good	Water quality is good.	1 to 100 gpm
Onondaga Formation	Medium-gray limestone and calcareous shale	Moderate	Moderate to low	Difficult	Good	Water from shale frequently contains iron and hydrogen sulfide.	Median = 30 gpm
Reedsville Formation	Dark-gray shale	Low	Low	Moderate	Good	Presence of some iron and hydrogen sulfide.	Median = 15 gpm
Trimmers Rock Formation	Fine-grained sandstone and siltstone	Moderate	Moderate to low	Moderate	Good	Very soft water; may contain hydrogen sulfide	Median = 30 gpm
Tuscarora Formation	Sandstone and quartzite	Low to moderate	Low	Difficult	Good	Water quality is usually good; soft water.	Median = 23 gpm
Wills Creek Formation	Greenish-gray shale containing local limestone and sandstone	Low	Low	Moderate	Good	Hydrogen sulfide has been noted in some wells; iron may be a problem.	Median = 32 gpm

Note: Formations containing limestone should be investigated thoroughly for solution openings.

Sources: Alan R. Geyer and J. Peter Wilshusen, Engineering Characteristics of the Rocks of Pennsylvania. 1992. (Pennsylvania Geological Survey, Harrisburg, PA).

formations, which are important to consider when allocating and planning land use activities. This information is only intended as an overall reference and should be used to determine general characteristics of the formation type.

Portions of Snyder County's landscape is underlain by limestone based geologic formations (Geology Map). Limestone, which is a carbonate rich material, is highly soluble and susceptible to the formation of solution caverns and sinkholes (i.e., karst topography). Karst refers to any terrain where the topography has been formed chiefly by the dissolving of rock. Landforms associated with karst include sinkholes, caves, sinking streams, springs, and solution valleys. Because of the unique geologic and hydrologic features associated with highly developed subterranean networks, the scope of problems related to the karst environment is large. A karstic landscape is particularly sensitive to environmental degradation, with the depletion and contamination of groundwater supplies being among the most severe.

Furthermore, karst landforms are valuable for various reasons including serving as areas for endangered species of flora and fauna, may contain cultural resources (i.e., historic and prehistoric), contain rare minerals or unique landforms, and provide scenic and challenging recreational opportunities.

The Pennsylvania Topographic & Geologic Survey maintains records on geologic hazards in the commonwealth; specifically, the Sinkhole Inventory Database. According to this database, no sinkhole activity has been recorded in Snyder County. However, due to the existence of limestone formations in the county, the opportunity exists for karstic activity.

FOREST LAND

Forest land is valued for many reasons. It provides recreational opportunities for nature study, hunting, hiking, horseback riding and scenic views. In addition to recreational activities, the county's forests are used for firewood harvesting, commercial timbering, and as land use buffers and boundaries. Many plant and animal species depend on large, unbroken wooded tracts for survival. The forests also mitigate environmental stress by reducing stormwater runoff, increasing groundwater recharge filtration, improving erosion and sedimentation control, regulating local climates, and purifying air.

Snyder County contains approximately 101,435 acres of forest land. The most prominent, contiguous areas of woodlands in the county are the Jacks Mountain and Shade Mountain regions. According to the USDA Forest Service, hardwoods by volume are the most prevalent species group in the county. The most common hardwood species are white oak, red oak, ashes, hickory, maple, black walnut, and basswood. Softwood species, particularly pine and hemlock, also exist in the county.

SOILS

The 1985 Snyder County soil survey combines soils into soil associations, which emphasize how soil depth, slope, and drainage affect potential land use. The associations are helpful in attaining a general idea of soil quality, comparing different sections of the county, and locating large areas suited certain uses.

On-lot Septic Suitability

The soil survey provides insight on the suitability of the county's soils for use in septic tank absorption fields. According to this soil survey, approximately 73 percent of

the County's soils have a *severe* degree of soil suitability for septic tank absorption fields. Soils having a severe degree of limitation have one or more properties that seriously limit their use. Using soils with a severe limitation increases the probability of failure and adds to the cost of installation and maintenance. It is important to note that analysis at this scale, based upon available data, is no substitute for site testing. This analysis should be used only as a general indication of those areas that may not be suitable for on-lot systems.

According to 1990 Census data, approximately 54 percent of the county's total housing units are served by on-lot sewage disposal systems. Therefore, it is appropriate to examine the areas that lack public sewer service and to evaluate their potential for on-lot systems.

The Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act of 1966 as amended, commonly referred to as "Act 537", is the primary law controlling individual and community sewage disposal systems. Act 537 requires that every municipality in the state prepare and maintain an up-to-date sewage facilities plan. Act 537 requires municipalities to review their official plans at five-year intervals and perform updates, as necessary. Municipalities can apply to the PADEP for up to 50 percent reimbursement of the cost of preparing an Act 537 plan.

As part of a municipal sewage plan update, developing a sewage management program should be considered by the municipality. It may be required when sewage malfunctions are widespread in an area and endanger public health by discharging onto a public area or private property, or threaten to contaminate drinking water supplies. The management program ensures that sewage systems are properly operated and maintained. Properly designed and installed systems function better

and longer with maintenance. Without proper operation and maintenance, systems may either fail completely or function well below their capabilities, quickly jeopardizing the efforts and resources devoted by a municipality to assure proper design and installation of these systems.

Important Farmland Soils

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is the land that is best suited to producing food, feed, forage, and fiber and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and water supply needed to economically produce a sustained high yield of crops when it is treated and managed using acceptable farming methods. According to the Department of Agriculture, prime farmland soils are usually classified as capability Class I or II.

Farmland soils of statewide importance are soils that are predominantly used for agricultural purposes within a given state, but have some limitations that reduce their productivity or increase the amount of energy and economic resources necessary to obtain productivity levels similar to prime farmland soils. These soils are usually classified as capability Class II or III.

Snyder County's prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance are listed in Table 3-2 and their general locations area illustrated on the Future Land Use Map.

**Table 3-2
Important Farmland Soils in Snyder County**

Prime Farmland Soils	Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance
Albrights silt loam, 3-8% slopes, AbB	Allenwood and Washington soils, 8-15% slopes, AoC
Allenwood gravelly silt loam, 0-3% slopes, AnA	Alvira silt loam, 0-3% slopes, ArA
Allenwood and Washington soils, 3-8% slopes, AoB	Alvira silt loam, 3-8% slopes, ArB
Basher Soils, Bc	Alvira silt loam, 8-15% slopes, ArC
Bedington silt loam, 3-8% slopes, BeB	Basher soils, frequently flooded, Bd
Buchanan gravelly loam, 3-8% slopes, BuB	Bedington silt loam, 8-15% slopes, BeC
Edom complex, 3-8% slopes	Berks shaly silt loam, 3-8% slopes, BkB
Elliber cherry silt loam, 3-8% slopes, EsB	Berks shaly silt loam, 8-15% slopes, BkC
Elliber very cherty silt loam, 3-8% slopes, EtB	Buchanan gravelly loam, 8-15% slopes, BuC
Hagerstown silt loam, 3-8% slopes, HaB	Calvin-Klinesville shaly silt loams, 3-8% slopes, CaB
Hartleton channery silt loam, 3-8% slopes, HtB	Calvin-Klinesville shaly silt loams, 8-15% slopes, CaC
Kreamer cherry silt loam, 3-8% slopes, KmB	Edom complex, 8-15% slopes, EdC
Laidig gravelly loam, 3-8% slopes, LaB	Elliber cherty silt loam, 8-15% slopes, EsC
Leck Kill shaly silt loam, 3-8% slopes, LnB	Elliber very cherty silt loam, 8-15% slopes, EtC
Linden silt loam, Lw	Evendale cherty silt loam, 3-8% slopes, EvB
Meckesville silt loam, 3-8% slopes, MkB	Hagerstown silt loam, 8-15% slopes, HaC
Monongahela silt loam, 0-3% slopes	Hartleton channery silt loam, 3-8% slopes, HtC
Washington silt loam, wet substratum, 3-8% slopes, WaB	Hartleton channery silt loam, 8-15% slopes, HtC
Watson silt loam, 0-3% slopes, WbA	Holly silt loam, Hv
Watson silt loam, 3-8% slopes, WbB ¹	Holly silt loam, rarely flooded, Hz
Wheeling soils, 0-3 percent slopes, WsA	Kreamer cherty silt loam, 8-15% slopes, KmC
Wheeling soils, 3-8% slopes, WsB ¹	Laidig gravelly loam, 8-15% slopes, LaC
	Lakin loamy fine sand, 3-8% slopes, LkB
	Leck Kill shaly silt loam, 8-15% slopes, LnC
	Meckesville silt loam, 8-15% slopes, MkC
	Monongahela silt loam, 3-8% slopes, MoB
	Opequon silty clay loam, 3-8% slopes, OpB
	Rushtown very shaly silt loam, 3-8% slopes, RwB
	Unadilla silt loam, 3-8% slopes, UnB
	Unadilla silt loam, 8-15% slopes, UnC
	Watson silt loam, 8-15% slopes, WbC
	Weikert shaly silt loam, 3-8% slopes, WeB
	Wheeling soils, 8-15% slopes, WsC
	Wyoming gravelly sandy loam, 0-3% slopes, WyA
	Wyoming gravelly sandy loam, 3-8% slopes, WyB

¹ Some non-prime farmland areas are included in this mapping unit. However, it is the USDA, NRCS's best judgment that in Snyder County, over 50 percent of this unit have slopes of less than 5.4 percent and this soil qualifies for prime farmland.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, 1981.

Chapter 4 - Land Use Analysis

INTRODUCTION

An important component of any comprehensive plan is an analysis of existing land use. This type of analysis takes a look at the county at a static point in time allowing for the examination of past and present development trends and giving light to the positive and negative factors which have shaped the county into its present form. This process will help the county avoid duplicating past land use problems while capitalizing on those factors which have proven to be successful. The existing land use survey should be consulted in conjunction with other background studies dealing with environmental features, population, economics, as well as the county's goals, objectives, and policies in formulating a future land use plan for Snyder County.

OVERVIEW

Snyder County is located in the Valley and Ridge physiographic province and predominantly occupies the valley area between Jacks and Shade Mountains. The county's topographic features have greatly influenced past and current land uses. For example, forested hillsides and fertile valleys provided adequate opportunities for profitable lumbering and agricultural activities. Today, Snyder County's land area is still primarily used for these activities. Despite the decreasing number of farms, land in agricultural uses has continued to play a predominant role in Snyder County, occupying approximately 50 percent of the total land area. Most woodland is situated on steep mountain slopes and is part of the large state forest holdings.

In response to transportation improvements throughout past decades, which has lead to greater mobility, Snyder County has experienced significant increases in residential, commercial, and industrial land

uses. Greater mobility provides access to employment centers located in the county and throughout the central Pennsylvania region. Furthermore, transportation improvements have caused many commercial areas to extend into corridors of highway commercial strips and have produced areas of high density industrial development.

A study of Snyder County's land use was previously conducted in 1971. This study represented the county's first effort to establish a land use record.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section serves as a general guide designed to estimate the current uses of land in Snyder County. Information presented in this section is based upon data collected from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 1986 Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics (MLRC) satellite imagery. This data was then subsequently updated using information and local input gathered from the Snyder County Planning Department.

The land use classifications presented in Table 4-1 were derived by categorizing the USGS Level II classifications contained in the MLRC database. The Land Use/Cover Map illustrates the spatial distribution of the county's existing land use.

Residential

Residential land uses range from high density (typically, >2dwelling units/acre) multiple-unit structures of urban cores, to low density (typically, <2 du/acre) single family housing, which include areas of sparse residential land use, such as farmsteads. Furthermore, rural residential and recreational subdivisions are

**Table 4-1
Existing Land Use, 2000**

Land Use Category	Acres	% of Total
Agriculture	105,783.3	49.87%
Forest	101,435.2	47.82%
Residential	2,052.0	0.97%
Water Features	1,205.1	0.57%
Commercial	733.0	0.35%
Public/Semi-public Areas	547.0	0.26%
Industrial	191.6	0.09%
Transportation, Communication, and Utilities	119.3	0.06%
Open Space	46.9	0.02%
Total	212,113.5	100.00%

Sources: U.S. EPA 1986 MRLC Satellite Imagery

also included in this category since the majority of the land is committed to residential use, even though it may contain areas of forest cover. Small institutional units, such as Susquehanna University is also included in this category.

As shown in Table 4-1, residential land use is the third largest category comprising 2,052 acres, or approximately one percent of the county's total land area. The highest concentrations of residential uses are located in the county's various boroughs, towns, and villages, such as Selinsgrove, Shamokin Dam, Middleburg, Freeburg, Beavertown Beaver Springs, McClure, Kreamer, Troxelville, Benfer, Paxtonville, and Penns Creek. These and other residential areas are shown on the Land Use/Cover Map.

Agriculture

Comprising approximately 105,783 acres, agriculture is the county's largest land use classification covering almost half of the county's total land area. This category includes lands presently or recently used for various farming activities, such as cropland,

pasture, confined feeding operations, nurseries and horticultural areas. As shown on Land Use/Cover Map, agricultural areas are located throughout the limestone-based valleys. Many of the county's active agricultural communities are inhabited by the Plain Sect population, thus making these areas unique in both their cultural and architectural settings.

Forest

The county's forested areas represent the second largest category and comprise 101,435.2 acres, or approximately 48 percent of the total land area. According to the USGS, "forest lands have a tree-crown areal density (i.e., crown closure percentage) of 10 percent or more, are stocked with trees capable of producing timber or other wood products and exert an influence on the climate or water regime" (1976). Forest areas include land which is covered by deciduous and/or evergreen vegetation and timberland. The heaviest concentration of this land use is found along steeply sloped hillsides, particularly throughout Jacks and Shade Mountains. Approximately 46,282 acres or 46 percent of this category is owned by the

commonwealth, such as Bald Eagle State Forest and the various state game lands.

Commercial

Comprising only 733 acres, commercial areas are those used primarily for the sale of products and services. Components of this category include urban central business districts, shopping centers, and commercial strip developments along major highways. The main buildings, secondary structures, and areas supporting the specific components include office buildings, warehouses, parking lots, and landscaped areas.

Although various forms of commercial uses are found throughout the county, the heaviest concentrations are located in proximity to the high density residential areas. As illustrated on the Land Use/Cover Map, the areas of Selinsgrove and Shamokin Dam contain the majority of these uses and are supported by their higher population densities.

Industrial

This category includes a wide variety of land uses from light to heavy manufacturing to quarrying and mining operations. This category comprises approximately 192 acres of the county's total land area and is predominantly located in the central to eastern portion of the county along the U.S. Route 11/15 and 522 corridors and the Norfolk Southern Rail line. This category is highly dependent upon both truck and rail transportation services, both of which are highly developed in the county's eastern tier.

Transportation

Land uses included in this category include various transportation networks and support systems, as well as communication and utility rights of way. Many of these land uses are characterized by areas of activity

interconnected by linear patterns. The county's transportation network greatly influences other land uses. For example, many land use boundaries are essentially defined by transportation systems. Furthermore, the extent of a transportation system in an area defines the level of access, which when coupled with other public infrastructure services (e.g., water and sewer) impacts the present and future use of the land. This land use category comprises approximately 120 acres.

Public and Semi-public Areas

Land uses within this category typically sustain establishments or properties that provide educational, cultural, or social services for the community, and include uses such as municipal buildings, churches, schools, fire companies, cemeteries, parks and recreational facilities, and other similar civic uses. These uses are located near the county's higher population centers such as Shamokin Dam, Selinsgrove, and Middleburg. This category comprises only 547 acres of the county's total land area.

Open Space

This category defines those areas which are in transition from one land use activity to another. For example, a transitional area occurs when forest lands are cleared for agriculture or when any type of land use ceases and becomes temporarily bare prior to the development of such future uses as commercial and industrial centers, and residential subdivision. This category occupies very few areas in the county and comprises less than 50 acres.

Water

Water as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau includes all areas within the land mass of the United States that are persistently covered by water, provided that, if linear they are at least 1/8 of a mile (656 ft./200 m) wide and if extended, cover at least 40 acres (16 hectares). Specific uses included in this category include streams, lakes, and reservoirs. According to the MRLC data, this category covers approximately 1,205 acres, which is less than one percent of the total land area.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

A comparison of existing land use with the county's 1971 study proved difficult, primarily due to differences in land use classifications and quantifying techniques. However, data collected from the Snyder County Assessment Office, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides the opportunity to analyze the county's development trends.

The USDA reported that from 1982 to 1992, Snyder County experienced a three percent average annual percentage decrease in farm land acreage. However, the USDA reported that from 1992 to 1997, the amount of land in farms in Snyder County increased by six percent from 87,253 acres to 92,751 acres. This upward trend is attributed to a change in the inventorying methods implemented by the Department of Agriculture. Specifically, the USDA now includes other types of farming practices, such as horse husbandry and Christmas tree silvaculture.

Data collected from the Snyder County Planning Department also provides insight on the county's development trends. Table 4-2 shows the total number of lots created from subdivisions within each municipality during the period 1989 to 1999. As illustrated in Figure 4-1, the majority of the county's

subdivision activity has occurred within the northeastern tier municipalities of Penn and Monroe Townships. During this period, Penn Township experienced, by far, the greatest number of lots created from subdivisions with 975.5 lots while Monroe Township experienced the second greatest number of lots created with 394 lots. Combined, these two municipalities comprised 37.5 percent (1,369.5 lots) of the total lots created in Snyder County during this period.

Other municipalities within Snyder County, such as Perry, Center, and Middlecreek Townships also experienced significant levels of subdivision activity during the period 1989 to 1999. Combined, these municipalities had a total of 893 lots created, which constitutes 24.4 percent of the county's total.

Data collected from the Snyder County Assessment Office supplements the county's subdivision activity trends. Tables 4-3, 4-4, and 4-5, respectively show the number of improved residential, industrial, and commercial parcels for each municipality for the period 1990 to 1999. During this period, Monroe Township experienced the highest number of improved¹ residential parcels with 15,173, or 13.9 percent of the total. However, Selinsgrove Borough experienced the second highest number of improved residential parcels with 12,038, or 11.0 percent of the total. Overall, residential land development activity during this period was experienced by all municipalities, however, the level of activity increased from the western to eastern tier municipalities. Furthermore, the county's

¹ According to the Assessment Office, "improved" encompasses all phases of land development from new construction to building/facility enhancements.

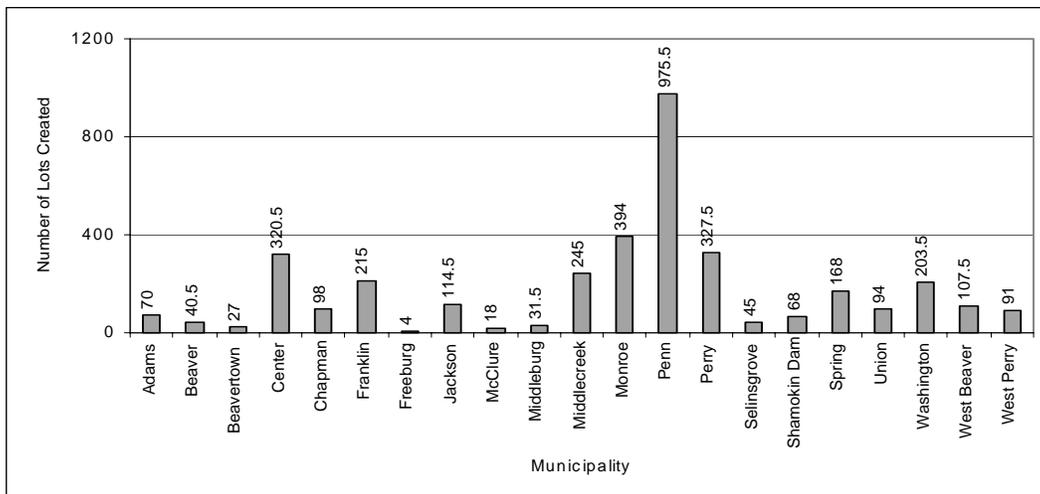
Table 4-2
Subdivision Statistics, Number of Lots Created from Subdivisions
1989 - 1999

Municipality	Reporting Year											Total
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	
Adams	7	2	4	6.5	6	6.5	13	13	8	3	1	70
Beaver	2	3	5	5	4	-	6	1	2	7	5.5	40.5
Beavertown	2	7	1	6	4	6	-	-	-	-	1	27
Center	27	22	24	23	51	14.5	21	25.5	67	18	27.5	320.5
Chapman	12	17	15	2	6	7	4	2	6	19	8	98
Franklin	15	16	12	5	14	33	13	10.5	30	14	52.5	215
Freeburg	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	4
Jackson	15	6	1	11.5	9	9	10	9	13	22	9	114.5
McClure	1	4	-	-	-	3	3	-	4	-	3	18
Middleburg	5	1	6	9	3	1	-	1	-	1	4.5	31.5
Middlecreek	14	26	18	27.5	8.5	7	24	56	18	10	36	245
Monroe	68	31	19	71	42	50	39	24	15	25	10	394
Penn	106	260	18	94	151.5	45	140	20	52	43	46	975.5
Perry	20	32	12	9	9.5	53	22	27	113.5	14	15.5	327.5
Selinsgrove	1	2	2	2	4	7	6	4	2	6	9	45
Shamokin Dam	1	5	-	3	-	-	5	-	48	4	2	68
Spring	16	12	8	19.5	9.5	15	18	20	18	20	12	168
Union	16	4	18	10	7	8	4	3	10.5	9.5	4	94
Washington	9	15	26	15	19.5	12	22	18	23	11.5	32.5	203.5
West Beaver	12	8	14	7	4.5	-	5	5	12	20	20	107.5
West Perry	9	7	13	10	7	21	7	7	3	2	5	91
Total	358	482	216	336	360	299	363	246	445	249	304	3,658

Source: Snyder County Planning Department, March 2000.

Figure 4-1
Snyder County Subdivision Activity,
Total Lots Created by Municipality, 1989 - 1999

Source: Snyder County Planning Department, March 2000



**Table 4-3
Number of Improved Residential Parcels, Snyder County, 1990-1999**

Tax District	Municipality	2/15/1990	2/13/1991	2/14/1992	2/19/1993	2/14/1994	3/1/1995	2/19/1996	2/21/1997	2/17/1998	3/10/1999
1	Adams Township	253	256	256	258	263	266	269	272	277	281
2	Beaver Township	155	157	159	162	163	164	164	164	164	166
3	Beavertown Borough	312	318	324	328	328	327	333	334	337	339
4	Center Township	490	504	512	523	538	540	550	562	572	579
5	Chapman Township	306	303	312	316	318	322	324	323	326	327
6	Franklin Township	713	712	720	727	676	693	710	721	721	727
7	Freeburg Borough	227	227	227	227	227	227	229	227	228	229
8	Jackson Township	365	370	371	376	373	375	373	376	377	381
9	McClure Borough	356	354	355	358	358	362	365	366	365	366
10	Middleburg Borough	441	439	440	444	444	442	444	444	443	444
11	Middlecreek	559	549	555	564	571	590	598	612	620	630
12	Monroe Township	1,442	1,452	1,482	1,507	1,518	1,525	1,543	1,559	1,564	1,581
13	Penn Township	781	812	830	855	894	916	940	968	999	1,021
14	Perry Township	447	460	468	473	472	481	493	495	505	512
15	Selinsgrove Borough	1,209	1,203	1,205	1,206	1,206	1,206	1,202	1,202	1,198	1,201
16	Shamokin Dam	610	605	605	607	608	607	607	608	609	610
17	Spring Township	486	474	478	486	486	482	488	488	490	495
18	Union Township	388	380	388	387	387	388	398	399	403	406
19	Washington	338	348	349	358	358	360	374	376	377	380
20	West Beaver	329	313	314	321	320	319	320	323	327	327
21	West Perry Township	323	326	327	331	331	328	334	344	345	347
County Totals		10,530	10,562	10,677	10,814	10,839	10,920	11,058	11,163	11,247	11,349

Source: Snyder County Assessment Office, 1999

**Table 4-4
Number of Improved Industrial Parcels, Snyder County, 1990-1999**

Tax	Municipality	2/15/1990	2/13/1991	2/14/1992	2/19/1993	2/14/1994	3/1/1995	2/19/1996	2/21/1997	2/17/1998	3/10/1999
1	Adams Township	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Beaver Township	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Beavertown Borough	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2
4	Center Township	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
5	Chapman Township	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Franklin Township	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
7	Freeburg Borough	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
8	Jackson Township	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	McClure Borough	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
10	Middleburg Borough	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7
11	Middlecreek	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
12	Monroe Township	5	5	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
13	Penn Township	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	6
14	Perry Township	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
15	Selinsgrove Borough	17	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	15	15
16	Shamokin Dam	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
17	Spring Township	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
18	Union Township	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
19	Washington	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
20	West Beaver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	West Perry Township	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
County Totals		80	79	78	75	74	72	73	75	74	76

Source: Snyder County Assessment Office, 1999

**Table 4-5
Number of Improved Commercial Parcels, Snyder County, 1990-1999**

Tax District	Municipality	2/15/1990	2/13/1991	2/14/1992	2/19/1993	2/14/1994	3/1/1995	2/19/1996	2/21/1997	2/17/1998	3/10/1999
1	Adams Township	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	7	7	8
2	Beaver Township	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
3	Beavertown	31	30	31	31	31	31	31	32	32	32
4	Center Township	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	18	18	18
5	Chapman Township	14	14	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	17
6	Franklin Township	27	27	27	27	27	26	26	26	28	29
7	Freeburg Borough	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	14
8	Jackson Township	19	15	15	15	15	14	14	14	14	14
9	McClure Borough	21	21	21	20	20	19	19	19	20	20
10	Middleburg	67	71	71	72	73	73	73	72	72	72
11	Middlecreek	25	26	25	24	24	24	25	27	27	28
12	Monroe Township	125	125	127	130	131	131	134	136	137	151
13	Penn Township	53	53	53	54	54	55	53	54	54	57
14	Perry Township	39	38	40	41	41	41	41	43	47	48
15	Selingsgrove	126	128	128	128	127	126	129	128	124	125
16	Shamokin Dam	61	62	62	60	60	60	63	63	63	66
17	Spring Township	37	40	41	39	38	38	41	40	40	39
18	Union Township	25	24	23	22	22	21	22	22	22	22
19	Washington	4	4	5	5	6	6	5	5	6	7
20	West Beaver	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
21	West Perry	13	13	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
County Totals		736	741	750	749	750	746	757	764	769	794

Source: Snyder County Assessment Office, 1999

total residential development activity has steadily increased from 10,530 improved parcels in 1990 to 11,349 in 1999. This equals an eight percent increase overall or an average annual percentage increase of approximately one percent.

In terms of industrial development activity, Selinsgrove Borough experienced the greatest number of improved industrial parcels during the period 1990 to 1999. During this period, the borough had 156 improved industrial parcels which comprises 21.0 percent of the county's total activity. Other municipalities that experienced a significant level of industrial improvement activity were Franklin Township (70), Middleburg Borough (64), Freeburg Borough (60), Spring Township (60), and Union Township (60). In contrast to the residential development trends, the county's greatest level of industrial development activity—except for Selinsgrove Borough—was concentrated in the central and western portions of the county. From 1990 to 1995, the total number of improved industrial parcels decreased by 10 percent. However, since 1995 the number of improved parcels has increased by 5.6 percent.

During the period 1990 to 1999, Snyder County experienced 7,556 improved commercial parcels, with the greatest number of improvements occurring in Monroe Township (1,327) and Selinsgrove Borough (1,269). Combined, these municipalities comprised 34.3 percent of the county's total improved commercial parcels. Overall, the greatest level of commercial development activity occurred in the central and eastern tier municipalities. From 1990 to 1999, the level of improved commercial parcels has increased steadily from 736 to 794, which equals an overall increase of approximately eight percent or an average annual percentage increase of one percent.

Overall, these analyses indicate that the majority of Snyder County's development activity is occurring in the rural-based, eastern tier municipalities that are in proximity to existing public infrastructure (i.e, sewer and water) and major transportation corridors, such as U.S. Routes 11/15 and 522. Growth in general provides benefits to a community, such as an expanded tax base and increased employment opportunities and services. However, if unregulated or poorly regulated, suburban growth often produces negative impacts on a community and the environment.

In recent years, such suburban growth has been defined as sprawl, which is essentially the inefficient and unsustainable use of land. The rate at which land is developed in Pennsylvania far outpaces the growth of its population. There are various problems associated with sprawl, such as loss of a sense of place, consumption of farmland, increased costs to local governments, increased dependence on the automobile, public health impacts, and loss of wildlife habitat and wetlands.

The future growth and development of many of Snyder County's municipalities is largely dependent upon the existing market demands for rural land holdings. For example, Chapman Township officials are not anticipating a substantial increase in growth unless farmland is sold for development purposes. In Union Township, the majority (60 percent) of the existing large tract land holdings are owned by members of the Plain Sect population. Therefore, the stability and continued presence of this population is not only vital in preserving productive agricultural land, but also their unique way of life.

Infrastructure improvements will also impact future growth and development in Snyder County, particularly in the eastern portion of the county. For example, one of the biggest impacts on future growth in Monroe

Township and its adjoining municipalities is the Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation (CVST) project. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PADOT) has recommended to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) the Design Alternative Modified (DAMA) (Section 1) and River Crossing #5 (RC5) (Section 2) be designated as the Preferred Alternatives in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). These Preferred Alternatives were recommended because they had the least impacts on the surrounding social, cultural, and environmental features. A few of these reasons are as follows:

- ▶ **DAMA:**
 - Lowest number of residential displacements (30).
 - Least impact to existing travel patterns.
 - Lowest total project cost.
 - No floodplain impacts.
 - Least impact on high probability archaeology areas.

- ▶ **RC5:**
 - Least impact to residences (25) and businesses (0).
 - Best avoids areas of high probability archaeology.
 - Does not require placing a river bridge pier on a geological formation prone to sink holes.
 - Best interchange design for the east side of the river.

LAND USE REGULATIONS

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) provides the legal framework for local governments to enact, administer and enforce both zoning, and subdivision and land development regulations. Zoning is a method

a community may use to regulate the use of land and structures and is designed to protect public health, safety, and welfare, and to guide growth. In contrast, subdivision and land development regulations do not control which uses are established within the municipality nor where a use or activity can or cannot locate; rather, it controls how a use or activity relates to the land upon which it is located.

As shown in Table 4-6, five municipalities in Snyder County have enacted a zoning ordinance while 13 have adopted (or are in the process of adopting) a subdivision and land development ordinance. In addition, only four municipalities have adopted a comprehensive plan and only six have an active planning commission board. Although the majority of municipal land use regulation implementation and planning activity is occurring mostly in the county's more actively developing municipalities, other municipalities experiencing growth in population and development are lacking these important measures.

AGRICULTURAL AND OPEN SPACE LAND PRESERVATION

Agricultural Area Security Law

To combat the losses of agricultural land throughout the commonwealth, the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program was developed in 1988 under an amendment to the Agricultural Area Security Law, Act 43 of 1981. This amendment—Act 149—allows local governments to purchase easements, (i.e., development rights) from owners of prime farmland. Prior to being purchased, the selected parcels must be included within an Agricultural Security Area (ASA). The ASA program was first created under Act No. 43 and it allows farmers, who collectively own 500 or more acres of viable farmland, to protect their land from nonagricultural uses

**Table 4-6
Inventory of Land Use Regulations and Planning Activity
for Snyder County and Municipalities**

Municipality	Comprehensive Plan	Zoning Ordinance	Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance	Planning Commission
Snyder County	X	--	X	X
Adams Township	--	--	--	--
Beaver Township	--	--	--	--
Beavertown Borough	--	--	X	X
Center Township	--	--	--	--
Chapman Township	--	--	X*	--
Franklin Township	--	--	X	--
Freeburg Borough	--	--	X	--
Jackson Township	--	--	--	--
McClure Borough	--	--	X	--
Middleburg Borough	--	X	X*	--
Middlecreek Township	--	--	X	X
Monroe Township	X (1)	X	X	X
Penn Township	X	X	X (2)	X
Perry Township	--	--	--	--
Selinsgrove Borough	X	X	X	X
Shamokin Dam Borough	X	X	X	X
Spring Township	--	--	X	X
Union Township	--	--	X*	--
Washington Township	--	--	--	--
West Beaver Township	--	--	--	--
West Perry Township	--	--	X*	--

* Regulated by the Snyder County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

Note: Municipalities which have no subdivision and land development ordinance are subject to the provisions contained within Snyder County's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (See PA Municipalities Planning Code, as amended, Section 502).

- (1) Current comprehensive plan will be updated once the Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation (CVST) preferred alignment is announced.
- (2) Currently updating their Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

Source: Snyder County Planning Department, 1999

and obtain special considerations under local ordinances and state regulations. Unlike the conservation easement program, parcels included in an ASA are reevaluated every seven years and new parcels may be incorporated at any time.

During the late 1980's, the Snyder County Commissioners appointed the Snyder County Agricultural Land Preservation Board in accordance with Act 149. This seven member board is responsible for preserving the county's productive farmland, and providing leadership and support to agricultural land preservation efforts.

The state agricultural easement program is currently funded by a two-cent tax per pack of cigarettes sold in the state, which annually generates approximately \$20 million. County matching funds are also used to supplement state and possible local funds available for the county's preservation program. However, both the state and county contributions are inadequate, which hinders the boards purchase of development rights. This issue is reflected in Table 4-7 where since 1992, only 783 acres have been purchased.

Growing Greener

On December 15, 1999, Governor Tom Ridge signed the "Growing Greener" program into law. This program will invest nearly \$650 million for farmland preservation and open space protection initiatives, as well as eliminate the maintenance backlog in state parks, cleaning up abandoned mines and restoring watersheds, providing funds for recreational trails, helping communities address land use, and providing communities with the opportunity to implement new and upgraded water and sewer systems.

Growing Greener will spend \$645.9 million over five years, \$105.9 million the first year, and \$135 million a year for the next four. It

will come from about \$473.4 million in new money from the General Fund and \$172.5 million in funds redirected from the Recycling and Hazardous Sites Cleanup funds, and the Landfill Closure Accounts.

Through "Growing Greener," a total of \$100 million will be made available for farmland preservation, starting with the first \$20 million being made available on February 17, 2000.

Local Protection Measures

Snyder County enjoys a rich history of agriculture and citizens cherish the county's scenic and beautiful countryside. In accordance with the MPC, those municipalities in Snyder County that have enacted zoning ordinances have provided for agricultural use districts. However, these regulations lack the ability to "effectively" preserve agricultural land. The goal of effective agricultural zoning is to prevent fragmentation of agricultural land and to ensure the long term viability of farming in an area.

Effective agricultural zoning designates those areas where farming is the desired land use, generally on the basis of soil quality, as well as on a variety of social, cultural, and economic factors. Zoning regulations designed to effectively preserve agricultural lands vary in the types of uses permitted in agricultural zones. The most restrictive regulations prohibit any uses that might be incompatible with commercial farming and the density of residential development is limited. Typically, maximum densities range from one dwelling per 20 acres in the eastern United States to one residence per 640 acres in the West.

Table 4-7
Snyder County Agricultural Land Easement Purchases,
1992-98

Year	Acres Purchased	Price	Township(s)	Price Per Acre
1992	100.5	\$ 90,450.00	Middlecreek	\$ 900.00
1993	55.055	\$ 34,412.50	West Beaver	\$ 625.00
1996	171.541	\$ 111,501.65	Middlecreek	\$ 650.00
1997	168.4	\$ 158,650.00	Monroe	\$ 942.00
1997	81.5	\$ 46,449.30	Adams & Spring	\$ 570.00
1998	133.699	\$ 106,959.20	Jackson	\$ 800.00
1998	72.364	\$ 65,127.60	Jackson	\$ 900.00
Total	783.059	\$ 613,550.25		

Source: Snyder County Agricultural Land Preservation Board, 1999

Chapter 5 - Transportation Analysis

INTRODUCTION

The transportation network of a community is the backbone for its development and prosperity. It serves to help attract business development opportunities and new citizens and is the overall foundation for community growth. The advancement and success of a community is often influenced by its transportation network, and if poorly planned or maintained, it can constrain development and overshadow a community's amenities.

EXISTING ROADWAY NETWORK

Functional Classification

Streets and roadways are classified according to their function. The functional classification of a roadway depends upon the particular role the roadway section has in providing mobility or access. Roadway functional classifications are established in the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PADOT) Highway Design Manual. The classification system is divided into two parts--Urban Area Systems and Rural Area Systems. Each of these systems is further divided into the following roadway classes:

Freeways: These are fully controlled access highways, with no at-grade intersections or driveway connections. Freeways are arterials that do not have standard intersections requiring traffic control devices such as stop signs and traffic signals.

Arterials: This system carries long-distance major traffic flows between major activity centers such as towns and large shopping/employment centers. Arterials allow travel between regions and therefore, form the backbone of a roadway network. This class of road is designed to carry large volumes of traffic as efficiently as possible.

Collectors: This system links local streets with the arterial street system. Collectors do what their name implies; they collect traffic from local roads and streets.

Local Roads: This system serves shorter local trips. Local roads primarily function to provide access to abutting land uses. These roads generally have low speed limits and low traffic volumes.

Snyder County's roadway functional classification system is shown on Road Classification and Deficiency Areas Map. According to the PADOT's County Mileage by Functional Classification database, Snyder County has 852.69 total roadway miles. Of this total, 632.49 miles, or 74.2 percent, are classified as local roadways. The second largest classification, collector roads, comprises 130.83 miles or 15.3 percent of the total. Arterials roads comprise 86.91 miles and freeway systems total only 2.46 miles. Based upon this analysis, Snyder County can be considered a Rural Area System.

Traffic Volumes

Roadway traffic volumes are defined by a general unit of measure called annual average daily traffic (AADT). AADT volume is the total annual traffic volume divided by the number of days in the year. AADT volumes are useful for planning because they are an average for the year and are not affected by daily changes, and can be used to make comparisons between roadway segments.

The AADT for Snyder County's roadway system are illustrated on Average Annual Daily Traffic Volumes Map. As shown, the highest traffic volumes occur along U.S. Route 11/15 between Selinsgrove and Shamokin Dam. Other high traffic volume areas are concentrated along various segments of U.S. Routes 11 and 15, and the portion of

U.S. Route 522 east of Kreamer. Roadway segment areas that experience substantial traffic volumes are U.S. Route 522 west of Kreamer and State Route 104 north of Mount Pleasant Mills.

Problem Areas

A field survey of Snyder County's transportation network was performed in conjunction with the PADOT Engineering District 3-5. The purpose of this survey was to assess roadway conditions and assess significant problems areas. The Road Classifications Map identifies the areas having deficiencies. In addition, the following summarizes the information collected during the field survey.

- ▶ U.S. Routes 11/15 and 522 are the county's major transportation corridors.
- ▶ Cable guide rail is prevalent along most roadways in Snyder County.
- ▶ The county's transportation network is significantly impacted by local terrain, resulting in numerous steep grades on roadways.
- ▶ Many local road alignments are defined by sharp curves; 90 degrees or greater. However, none appeared to have accident problems, which may result from their low traffic volumes.
- ▶ Improvements to U.S. Routes 11/15 have been essential in reducing travel times to points south and north.
- ▶ Drainage problem areas have occurred along State Route 1023 just east of U.S. Route 11/15.
- ▶ Flooding along major roadways has not been a major problem. Improvements made to U.S. Route 11/15 have alleviated flooding problems that used to occur from Port Trevorton south to the Snyder/Juniata County line.

- ▶ Many of the county's minor state roads have very narrow to no shoulders.

Crash Analysis

The *1998 Pennsylvania Crash Facts and Statistics* booklet is a report published by the PADOT, Bureau of Highway Safety and Traffic Engineering. This publication is a statistical review of reportable motor vehicle crashes in the commonwealth for the calendar year 1998. The figures are compiled from the traffic crash reports that are submitted to the PADOT by state, county, municipal, and other law enforcement agencies, as specified in the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code (75 Pa. C.S., Chapter 37, Subchapter C). When accident patterns exist at a particular location, improvements can sometimes be implemented to minimize their occurrence based on an assessment of the probable cause.

Crash statistics collected from PADOT's publication entitled *Pennsylvania Crash Facts and Statistics*, reveal that in 1998, a total of 421 crashes occurred in Snyder County. This total represents only 0.3 percent of Pennsylvania's total recorded crashes of 140,972. Of Snyder County's total crashes, six were classified as fatal, 242 were injury, and 173 were property damage only (PDO). Table 5-1 compares Snyder County's crash statistics with those of Pennsylvania and surrounding counties. As shown, Snyder County recorded the second highest fatal crashes, which are well below the number recorded in Northumberland. Overall, Snyder County's crash statistics are more similar to those recorded for Mifflin County. This correlates to their relative similarities in population levels, traffic volumes, and highway miles.

Figure 5-1 illustrates Snyder County's five-year crash trends. Overall, crash rates for the

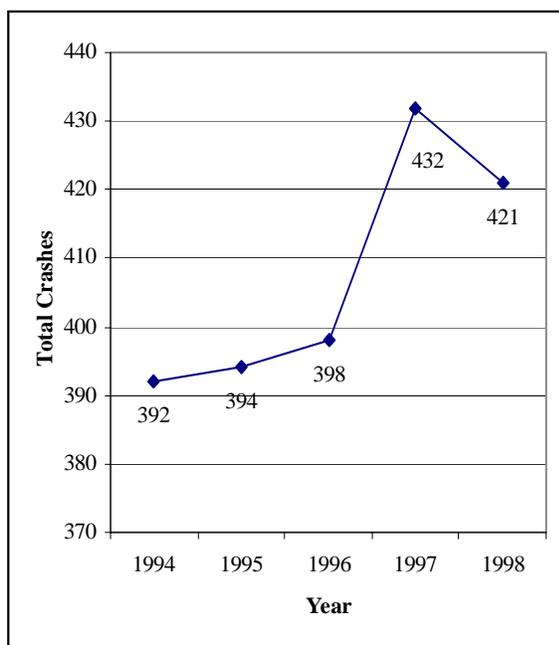
Table 5-1
Reported Crash Statistics for Snyder County, Surrounding Counties and Pennsylvania, 1998

Location	Population	Fatal Crashes	Injury Crashes	PDO Crashes ¹	Total Crashes
Pennsylvania	12,001,451	1,358	88,291	51,323	140,972
Northumberland	94,017	20	499	276	795
Snyder	38,226	6	242	173	421
Mifflin	46,961	3	254	177	434
Union	40,897	3	199	158	360
Juniata	22,101	2	163	81	246

¹ Property Damage Only: A reportable crash where no one was killed or injured, but damage to the vehicle required towing.
 Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, 1999.

Figure 5-1
Snyder County Five-Year Crash Trends, 1994-1998

Source: PADOT 1998 Pennsylvania Crash Facts and Statistics



1994-1998 period experienced an overall increase. Similar to other counties in Pennsylvania, Snyder County continues to experience a steady increase in the number of crashes, which is attributed to increased traffic volumes. This is particularly true along U.S. Routes 11 and 15, and 522.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Snyder County Planning Department, under the advisement of the County Board of Commissioners, participates in the SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) transportation project prioritization program. This program identifies potential transportation projects for inclusion in PADOT's 12-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is a requirement of the planning process as described in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), P.L. 105-178, Title I, Subtitle B, Section 1204. The Federal Department of Transportation defines the TIP as "a staged, multiyear, intermodal program of transportation projects, which is consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan." Table 5-2 shows projects which are listed on PADOT's 2000 TIP for Snyder County. The Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation (CSVT) project¹ represents Snyder County's single major transportation

¹ For current information regarding the CSVT project, click on <http://www.csvt.com/index.html>.

**TABLE 5-2
NON-BINDING 2001 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR SNYDER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

Project	Route	Title/Sponsor	Improvement	Period	Costs (\$000)						
					PE	FD	UTL	ROW	CON	PRA	Total
MODE: HIGHWAY											
58689		Selinsgrove Streetscape	Transportation Enhancement	1					30		30
50528	11	SR 11 SB Overlay	Highway Restoration	1					2,316		2,316
7588	15	Central Susq. Valley Study	New Alignment	1		21,504		23,638	50		45,192
				2					125,000		125,000
				3					125,000		125,000
50224	522	Intersection Improvement at SR 3008	Safety Improvement	1					690		690
47300	522	Selinsgrove 522&204	Highway Restoration	1				130	600		730
MODE: BRIDGE											
58484		Aline Covered Bridge	Bridge Restoration	1	70						70
61788	T-600	T-600 Covered Bridge	Bridge Restoration	1	70						70
6878	522	PA 522/Middle Creek Br.	Bridge Replacement	1				44	841		885
6881	1003	SR 1003/Penns Creek	Bridge Replacement	1					591		591
6889	3005	SR 3005/Mahantango Cr.	Bridge Replacement	1					350		350
6860	9900	T-481 Tuscarora Creek	Bridge Replacement	1					320		320
MODE: AIRPORT											

Note: The 2001 TIP did not provide airport improvements. All current improvements should be obtained from the PennDOT Bureau of Aviation.

MODE: RAIL

No Rail project improvements provided by the 2001 TIP.

- Notes:
- FD = The cost of the Final Design of the project development in thousands of dollars
 - UTL = The cost of the utility changes (electric, telecommunications, mechanical) in thousands of dollars
 - ROW = The cost of the right-of-way phase of the project in thousands of dollars.
 - CON = The cost of the construction phase of the project in thousands of dollars.
 - PRA = The costs of planning and research or administrative projects in thousands of dollars.
 - TOTAL = The total project cost in thousands of dollars.

Adopted by the State Transportation Commission: August 10, 2000.

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, "Transportation Improvement Program, 2001."

improvement project. The goal of this project is to address the current and future transportation needs of the Central Susquehanna Valley in a corridor that is roughly five miles wide and twelve miles long, stretching from the end of the Selinsgrove Bypass north to PA Route 147. Improvements will address congestion and safety problems on existing Routes 11/15 and 147. The Future Land Use Map delineates the preferred alignment of U.S. Route 11/15.

The upgrade of PA Route 147 from a two-lane to a four-lane limited access facility is being advanced as a separate project. The construction of the additional lanes on this section of roadway should begin in 2000 and be completed in 2001. Currently, the PADOT is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for this project.

OTHER MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Rail Freight Transportation

Rail transportation played a critical role in the development of Snyder County by connecting logging camps, mills, and industries with their respective markets. In addition, rail passenger transportation also proved to be a significant mode of travel for local residents.

Today, rail systems still play a significant role in the county's transportation system, but are limited to freight service, which is provided by Norfolk Southern. Norfolk Southern's Bridge Route Line provides service to business and industry in Creamer, Selinsgrove, and Shamokin Dam. The Bridge Route Line serves as a principle connection between Harrisburg and Sunbury, and points north in upstate New York, Canada, and New England. Norfolk Southern plans to invest more than \$11 million in the Sunbury line to enable it to handle domestic doublestacks and

heavy freight. Grain, lumber and coal traffic will be the principal commodities handled.

Rail Passenger Transportation

No commuter service or inner-city passenger service is available within the county. However, the closest Amtrak facilities are available at stops in Lewistown and Harrisburg.

Air Transportation

The Penn Valley Airport, which is located near Selinsgrove, is Snyder County's main aviation facility. The airport is operated by the Penn Valley Airport Authority and is classified as a general aviation facility by the PADOT Bureau of Aviation. The airport is situated approximately 30 miles south of Williamsport and is accessible by U.S. Route 11/15 and U.S. 522.

The Penn Valley Airport has approximately 40 based aircraft and experiences over 26,000 annual operations. The airport's sole runway—Runway 17/35—is 3,800 feet by 75 feet with a gross weight rating of 12,500 pounds. The runway is outfitted with medium intensity runway lighting and is equipped with a nonprecision circling approach. Major services include major/minor repair, hanger rental, air taxi, charter, instructional services, and rental services. Accommodations include an administration building, restrooms, a restaurant, taxi service, car rental, and public phone; it is also in close proximity to nearby hotels.

The Penn Valley Airport serves as an integral component in both the county and region's economic system. For example, many local businesses rely on the airport to transport their employees, products, and supplies in a timely and efficient manner. The airport is also used by various law enforcement agencies, such as prisoner transport. Other constituents,

services, and uses provided through the airport include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ✓ Civil Air Patrol
- ✓ Local TV and radio organizations
- ✓ Funeral directors
- ✓ Aerial photography/surveying
- ✓ Environmental patrol
- ✓ Aerial advertising
- ✓ Real estate tours
- ✓ Community events

The importance of the Penn Valley Airport is recognized by the local communities. For example, through local efforts, the airport will soon experience expansion upgrades worth approximately one million dollars. Furthermore, the Penn Valley Airport Authority is currently in the process of updating their master plan, which was scheduled for completion in November 1999.

According to the Bureau of Aviation in their 1994 study entitled, "The Economic Impact of Aviation in Pennsylvania", the total economic impact of the Penn Valley Airport, which includes both on-airport tenants and general aviation visitors, was approximately \$2 million in 1994. The airport's economic impact in terms of employment is approximately 39 persons, with a total annual payroll of roughly \$563,300.

In addition to the Penn Valley Airport facility, there are several privately owned airfields in Snyder County.

Bus Transportation

Daily passenger bus services are provided by Greyhound, Susquehanna Trailways, and Rohrer Bus Service through stops at Shamokin Dam and Selinsgrove.

Public Transit

The Union/Snyder Transportation Alliance (USTA) is responsible for providing public transit services to the citizens of both Snyder and Union Counties. Established in 1979, USTA is designated by the Union and Snyder County Commissioners as the area's shared-ride transportation provider. Based in Lewisburg, USTA operates within 63 air miles from Penns Creek, which is the geographic center for Snyder and Union Counties.

USTA provides coordinated, door-to-door transportation to many local agencies including the Union/Snyder Area Agency on Aging, Union/Snyder Foster Grandparent Program, Columbia/Montour/Snyder/Union Mental Health/Mental Retardation Agency, Suncom Industries, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Mentor, Penn Lutheran Village, and Riverwoods Nursing Homes. In addition to providing service in Union and Snyder Counties, USTA also provides services to medical facilities out of the county, such as Geisinger Medical Center in Danville (Montour County).

The Lottery and Medical Assistance Transportation Program funds the program for both Snyder and Union Counties. These programs serve to assist residents with fare fees. For example, the Shared-Ride Program Lottery funds allow citizens ages 65 and over to utilize USTA's services at an 85 percent discount. In addition, citizens with an Access card may ride USTA at no charge for medical appointment related trips.

As shown in Table 5-3, USTA's ridership levels for all categories during fiscal years 1990/91 through 1998/99 have varied for several reasons. For example, in 1990/91, the 65 and over trips were relatively high in comparison to levels reported for the remaining surveyed period. This reflects a

**Table 5-3
USTA Ridership Trends,
FY 1990/91 - 1999/00**

Year	Total Trips	65 and Over Trips	General Public Trips
1990/91	100,353	71,074	1,400
1991/92	98,604	63,446	1,793
1992/93	99,424	63,372	1,577
1993/94	98,211	58,723	1,797
1994/95	106,050	62,668	2,323
1995/96*	103,351	57,912	1,649
1996/97	106,714	57,990	1,735
1997/98	103,338	55,741	2,387
1998/99*	101,322	56,771	1,602
1999/00 (projected)	106,210	61,000	1,600

* Implemented fare increases.
Source: Union/Snyder Transportation Alliance, 1999.

statewide trend in decreasing senior trips to senior centers. In addition, the inclement weather conditions experienced during the 1993/94 and 1995/96 periods also contributed to the decline in ridership levels. However, as ridership levels to senior centers dropped, demand for medical related trips increased.

Overall, ridership levels for the 1999/2000 year are overall projected to be above the levels for 1998/99. This projected increase is attributed to increased trips to the newly opened facility in Penns Creek, Snyder County, that provides adult respite care. Currently, 1999/2000 ridership is averaging 430 trips per day.

Other factors impacting USTA's ridership levels involve implementing fare increases. According to USTA, "When implementing fare increases, we are advised to expect up to a four percent drop in ridership." This phenomenon was experienced during the 1995/96 and 1998/99 reporting years when USTA experienced a respective 2.5 percent and 2.0 percent decrease from previous year levels.

Currently, USTA maintains a fleet of 27 vehicles. With the exception of three vehicles (two station wagons and one four-wheel drive vehicle), USTA's fleet is wheelchair accessible.

In June 1999, USTA implemented a Y2K (Year 2000) compliant computer system. This new system called "Rides Unlimited" is a Microsoft Windows computer software package that allows staff to schedule riders by service zones. In addition to the office component, this system allows USTA to provide scheduling services within the transit vehicles. USTA was selected by the PADOT to be included in a four county system user group of the new software. The project is being funded through a PADOT Research and Development grant to develop a software system that will be affordable and practical for small to medium-sized rural transportation systems.

Non-motorized Transportation

Many of the elements that make the human scale of movement possible, such as

pedestrian and bike pathways, are becoming a popular and useful means of transportation and recreation. These links can provide non-motorized movement between residential areas, employment centers, commercial areas, recreation areas, and transit services. As a result, they reduce congestion and air pollution, conserve energy and provide a sense of community. Furthermore, these corridors or potential links can cross a variety of development settings, including urban, suburban and rural settings.

Various types of recreational trail programs exist throughout the commonwealth including the Rails-to-Trails program. This program was implemented by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PADCNR) in response to the Pennsylvania Rails-to-Trails Act, (P.L. 748, No. 188 of 1990). This act was established to facilitate the conversion of abandoned railroads into public recreational trails. According to PA Rails-to-Trails database, no formally developed rail-trails exist in Snyder County. However, there exists five abandoned rail line segments in the county stretching from McClure Borough to Kreamer and from the Steam Electric Station at Shamokin Dam to the Snyder-Union County line. In total, these abandoned segments constitute over 15 miles of potential rail-trail projects.

Other trail systems, such as the numerous hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing trail located within Bald Eagle State Forest and the State Game Lands, provide area residents with adequate opportunities for outdoor recreation.

The Susquehanna River provides many recreational opportunities for area citizens. Further south of Snyder County, a portion of the river has been designated as the Susquehanna River Trail, which is Pennsylvania's first formal water trail. This water trail extends from Sunbury to

Harrisburg. Water trails emphasize low-impact use and promote stewardship of the resource. The mission of the Susquehanna River Trail project is to promote environmentally responsible recreation on the Susquehanna River and its islands. The trail will encourage resource awareness, stewardship and conservation. Spearheaded by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, the Susquehanna River Trail will be the first modern water trail in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and one of a growing number of water trail projects in North America.

Chapter 6 - County Facilities and Finances Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan is the responsibility of the administrative body of Snyder County. The purpose of this section is to review the responsibilities delegated to Snyder County under the Pennsylvania County Code. The county's financial structure, which is an important element for the implementation of a Capital Improvement Program (CIP), will also be summarized. Finally, a review of the county's existing facilities will be identified and inventoried. The information reviewed in this section will establish baseline data to facilitate both plan design and implementation.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Based on its 1990 population of 36,680, Snyder County is classified as a Seventh Class County. Section 210, Act of August 9, 1955 (P.L. 323), as amended, known as "The County Code," divides counties into nine classes based on decennial population counts. Seventh Class Counties are those having a population of 20,000 and more, but less than 45,000 inhabitants. It also includes those counties have a population of 35,000 and more, but less than 45,000 inhabitants, which have not elected to be a county of the sixth class.

There are 12 elected office positions in Snyder County government, which include positions in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Of these three branches, the executive and legislative are pertinent to the planning process. Figure 6-1 illustrates the organizational structure of Snyder County government. The following section introduces the various county elected and appointed positions directly responsible for implementing this comprehensive plan.

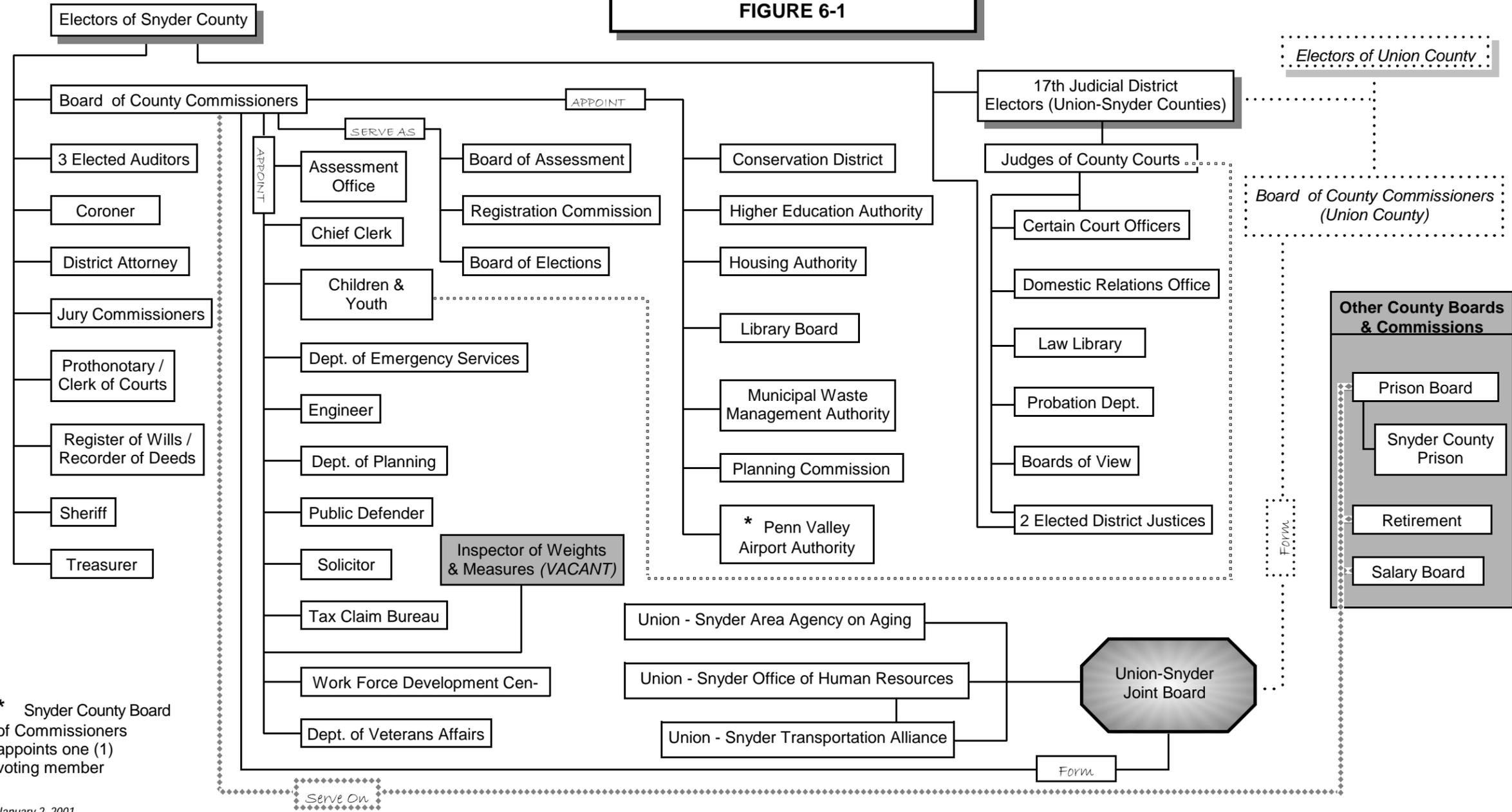
Board of Commissioners

The Snyder County Board of Commissioners serve as the County's chief elected officials. The board is comprised of three members, each elected to a four-year term. Their responsibilities are numerous and include the preparation of an annual budget, establishment of millage rates, appointment of planning commission members, and hiring of county employees. They also oversee the construction and maintenance of county facilities, and administration of welfare, elections, and county health services. The administration of the county can be delegated to committees, but the responsibility for finances, decisions, and legal action is the ultimate and sole responsibility of the commissioners. The exception to this is subdivision regulations, which according to the County Code, is the sole responsibility of the nine member planning commission. The board of commissioners meets regularly each week in the Snyder County Courthouse to conduct official business.

Chief Clerk

The highest appointed office in Snyder County government is the position of chief clerk. The chief clerk is responsible for the daily operation of county business. Responsibilities may include the keeping of accurate records of commissioners' meetings and accounts, acting as a liaison between the commissioners and various county departments and other governments, preparing budgets, supervising county election procedures, and implementing commissioners' decisions. Furthermore, the chief clerk's office plays a vital coordinative role in the implementation of the comprehensive plan.

**SNYDER COUNTY GOVERNMENT
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
FIGURE 6-1**



* Snyder County Board of Commissioners appoints one (1) voting member

January 2, 2001
Source: Snyder County Planning Dept.

Chapter 6 - County Facilities and Finances Analysis

Planning Functions

Planning activities for the county are provided by the Snyder County Planning Commission and the SEDA Council of Governments. Their primary function is to advise the commissioners on planning policies and encourage coordinated land use and transportation planning through recommendations to the municipalities. These recommendations are based on the county's goals and objectives established by the comprehensive plan.

Snyder County Planning Commission

The Snyder County Planning Commission was established on August 16, 1965. The commission's authorities and responsibilities are set forth in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), as amended, and reenacted by Act 170 of 1988. The commission consists of nine members who are appointed by the board of commissioners to a four year term. All members must meet county resident requirements.

The Snyder County Planning Commission created and has maintained its own planning department since 1965. The planning department is currently staffed by a full-time planner and an administrative position. Staff responsibilities include reviewing subdivision and land development plat applications, and newly proposed local zoning and subdivision ordinances, and amendments thereto, for advisory action by the planning commission.

SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG)

SEDA-COG is a regional multi-county development agency which, under the guidance of a public policy board, provides leadership, expertise and services to communities, businesses, institutions, and

residents. Counties included in the SEDA-COG Local Development District (LDD) include Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, and Union. SEDA-COG's goal is to enhance growth opportunities in an environmentally sensitive manner while retaining the region's predominantly rural character. The organization is both a direct service provider and a link to other resources that can be applied to a wide range of community and economic needs, including the implementation of the comprehensive plan.

COUNTY FACILITIES

An inventory of Snyder County's facilities regarding type of facility, type of construction, year built and improved, and general overall condition is presented in Table 6-1. The county currently has no plans to construct any new facilities. However, this comprehensive planning process has commenced an initial effort to perform a preliminary evaluation of its existing courthouse facility space and technology needs. Many of the county's office facilities are inadequate in terms of space and technology.

COUNTY FINANCES

The success of any county planning program is to a great extent dependent upon the financial resources allocated by the county. Article XVII of the County Code authorizes counties to finance their operations. The commissioners must prepare and adopt a fiscal year [i.e., an accounting period of 365 days (366 in leap years), starting on January 1] budget. This budget anticipates revenues from all sources and expenditures for the coming year. The budget is one of the most important documents a county government prepares because it identifies the services to be

Chapter 6 - County Facilities and Finances Analysis

**Table 6-1
Snyder County Facilities, 1999**

Facility	Location	Status		Type of Construction	Year Built	Year Improved
		Owned	Leased			
Courthouse	9-11 West Market St. Middleburg, PA	X	-	Masonry and wood frame	1855	1976-1978
Old Snyder County Jail	Main Street Middleburg, PA	X	-	Masonry (stone and brick)	1886	1979-1980
District Magistrate Office	U.S. Route 522 Penn Township	X	-	Wood frame with masonry façade	1985	-
Selinsgrove Senior Citizens Center	8 N. Water Street Selinsgrove, PA	X	-	Masonry	Unknown	-
Penns Creek Senior Citizen	100 Richard Road, Penns Creek	X	-	Wood frame with masonry (brick)	1998	-
Snyder County Prison	600 Colony Road Penn Township	X	-	Masonry (brick)	1940	1992
Courthouse Annex and Storage	27-29 W. Market St., Middleburg,	X	-	Wood frame	1800s	1990
Block Communications	Shade Mountain	X	-	Masonry (cement block)	1978	-
Civil War Monument	East Market St., Middleburg	X	-	Masonry (cement)	1902	-
Faylor Lake	Spring Township, PA Route 636	X	-	N/A	1985	-
Senior Citizens Center*	Middleburg, PA	X	-	Masonry	Unknown	-
JTPA and OHR Offices	315 N. Walter St. Selinsgrove, PA	-	X	Masonry and wood frame	Unknown	-
Beaver Springs Senior Citizen Center	U.S. Route 522, Spring Township	-	X	Masonry and wood frame	Unknown	-
County Bridge No. 6	Village of Middlecreek,	X	-	Prestressed concrete spread	1989	-
County Bridge No. 3	Beaver Township, T-600	X	-	Prestressed concrete spread	1979	-
Aline Covered Bridge	Perry Township, formerly carried T-	X	-	Wood	Unknown	-
Dreese's Covered Bridge	Beaver Township, formerly carried T-	X	-	Wood	Unknown	-

* To be sold

Source: Snyder County Planning Department, 1999.

Chapter 6 - County Facilities and Finances Analysis

provided and how they are to be financed (Culotta, 1999). The purpose of this section is to examine the county's revenues and expenditures.

County Budget

Snyder County's budget rose from \$14.4 million in 1997 to \$15.8 million in 1998. Both years the county's tax rate was 12.0 mills. As a result, a person who owned a house assessed for \$100,000 paid \$1,200 in taxes [assessed value x millage rate = tax].

County Revenues

Snyder County's estimated general fund revenues for fiscal year 1999 are approximately \$8.1 million. Revenues are derived from the various sources shown in Table 6-2. As shown, the majority of the county's revenues are derived from taxes, and departmental fees and commissions. Federal and state grant programs also contribute a significant amount of revenue.

From 1997 to 1999, Snyder County's general fund revenues increased by over 5 percent from \$7.7 million to \$8.1 million, respectively. As shown in Table 6-2, the county's major sources of revenue remained consistent in terms of the percentage of total general fund revenues. Furthermore, all categories of revenues increased, except for departmental reimbursements and per capita taxes. The most dramatic change occurred in the beginning balance transfer.

Tax Revenues

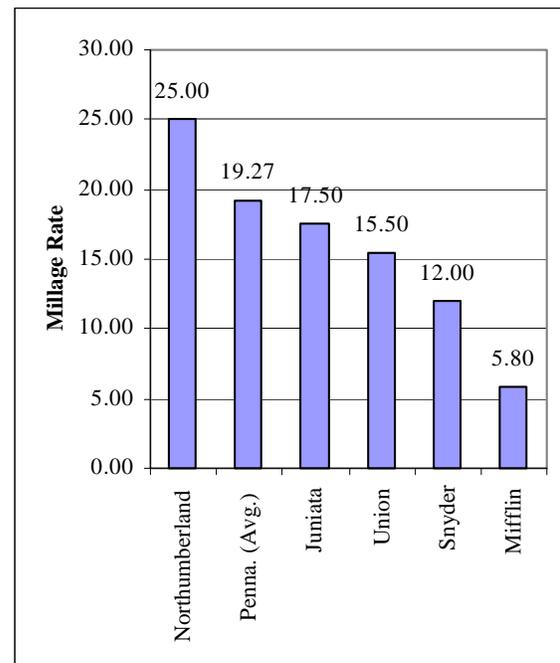
The levy of local taxes applied by Snyder County must be accomplished within the limits set forth by the Pennsylvania Constitution, Pennsylvania Legislature, and the County Code. According to the Pennsylvania County Commissioners

Association's 1999 Taxation Survey, Snyder County's tax rate is 12.0 mills on each dollar of assessed valuation. Of this total, 10.615 mills was the tax rate for general county purposes, 0.175 mills for special library purposes, and 1.210 mills for county debt purposes. Snyder County's last full reassessment was conducted in 1973.

In comparison with surrounding counties, and the average for Pennsylvania, Snyder County's millage rate was the second lowest (Figure 6-2). This adds to the county's various amenities as an attractive place to live or start a business in the central Pennsylvania region.

Figure 6-2
1999 Taxation Survey for Snyder County, Surrounding Counties, and Pennsylvania

Source: Pennsylvania County Commissioners' Association, February 1999



County Expenditures

Snyder County's expenditures are funded by either the general fund (i.e., money coming from conventional revenue sources) or special funds (i.e., money coming from other sources plus a county contribution). The county's

Table 6-2
Snyder County General Fund Revenues, FY1997 and 1999

Receipts	1999 General Fund Receipts	Percent of Total	1997 General Fund Receipts	Percent of Total	Percent Change 1997-1999
Real Estate Taxes	\$ 3,105,000	38.4%	\$ 2,983,000	38.9%	4%
Departmental Reimbursements	\$ 2,730,900	33.7%	\$ 2,782,700	36.2%	-2%
Federal & State Grants	\$ 1,630,005	20.1%	\$ 1,479,646	19.3%	10%
Miscellaneous Receipts	\$ 207,900	2.6%	\$ 203,765	2.7%	2%
Beginning Balance	\$ 200,000	2.5%	\$ 8,650	0.1%	2212%
Per Capita Taxes	\$ 118,000	1.5%	\$ 121,100	1.6%	-3%
Payment in Lieu of Taxes	\$ 52,789	0.7%	\$ 52,203	0.7%	1%
Library Tax	\$ 45,000	0.6%	\$ 42,000	0.5%	7%
Licenses and Permits (Bingo)	\$ 4,500	0.1%	\$ 4,200	0.1%	7%
Total	\$ 8,094,094	100.0%	\$ 7,677,264	100%	5%

Source: Snyder County Commissioners' Office, 1999.

general fund expenditures are classified under various categories to simplify the budgeting and accounting process. For the Snyder County 1999 Fiscal Year budget, the allocated expenditures are divided into 10 categories as shown in Table 6-3.

Assessed Valuation

Table 6-4 shows increases in real estate assessments for the period 1995 through 1999. However, the increase between 1996 and 1997 was significantly higher than all years surveyed, which is attributed to a ratio change (i.e., ratio of assessed value to market value) from 25 percent to 75 percent between 1995 and 1996. To accommodate for this change, the commissioners lowered the county's millage rate to 12.0 mills.

Liquid Fuels Tax

Chapter 449 of the Pennsylvania Code establishes a permanent allocation of a portion of the liquid fuels and oil company franchise tax proceeds to cities, boroughs, incorporated towns and townships for their maintenance and new construction of locally owned roads,

streets and bridges. The allocation amount is based upon a specific formula that accounts for the total number of local highway miles in each municipality.

A problem faced by many rural municipalities is the fact that transportation maintenance and construction expenditures consistently exceed liquid fuel tax revenues. For example, Snyder County's 1998 Liquid Fuels Tax Fund received a \$66,200 state grant, but had a total expenditure of \$138,475. In 1999, the state grant increased to \$71,000, but expenditures still exceeded revenues at \$109,325. As a result of this statewide trend, the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania recently adopted a resolution that supports a revision of the county liquid fuels tax distribution formula (CCAP, 1999). Snyder County has 505.27 local highway miles. Since these funds are used for a specific purpose, municipalities are required to place them in a separately established fund.

Chapter 6 - County Facilities and Finances Analysis

**Table 6-3
Snyder County General Fund Expenditures, FY1997 and 1999**

Expenditure Category	1999 General Fund Expenditures	Percent of Total	1997 General Fund Expenditures	Percent of Total	Percent Change 1997-1999
Public Safety	\$ 2,394,307	29.6%	\$ 2,155,709	28.1%	11%
Human Services	\$ 1,561,624	19.3%	\$ 1,535,271	20.0%	2%
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,326,250	16.4%	\$ 1,333,275	17.4%	-1%
General Government - All Other	\$ 1,159,488	14.3%	\$ 1,077,432	14.0%	8%
General Government - Judicial	\$ 1,012,172	12.5%	\$ 967,151	12.6%	5%
Transfer to Sinking Fund	\$ 316,303	3.9%	\$ 323,810	4.2%	-2%
Conservation and Development	\$ 184,925	2.3%	\$ 165,116	2.2%	12%
Culture and Recreation	\$ 63,575	0.8%	\$ 45,250	0.6%	40%
Ending Balance	\$ 50,000	0.6%	\$ 50,000	0.7%	0%
Public Works	\$ 25,450	0.3%	\$ 24,250	0.3%	5%
Total	\$ 8,094,094	100.0%	\$ 7,677,264	100.0%	5%

Source: Snyder County Commissioners' Office, 1999.

**Table 6-4
Assessed Valuation Trends for Snyder County
1995-1999**

Year	Real Estate Assessment	Increase Per Year	Percent Increase	County Millage	Total Parcels	Ratio of Assessed Value to Market Value
1995	\$ 77,802,200	--	--	32.25	17,565	25%
1996	\$ 80,234,160	\$ 2,431,960	3%	34.25	16,644	25%
1997	\$ 246,467,910	\$ 166,233,750	207%	12.00	16,604	75%
1998	\$ 251,116,380	\$ 4,648,470	2%	12.00	16,642	75%
1999	\$ 261,318,520	\$ 10,202,140	4%	12.00	16,799	75%

Source: Snyder County Assessment Office, 1999.