



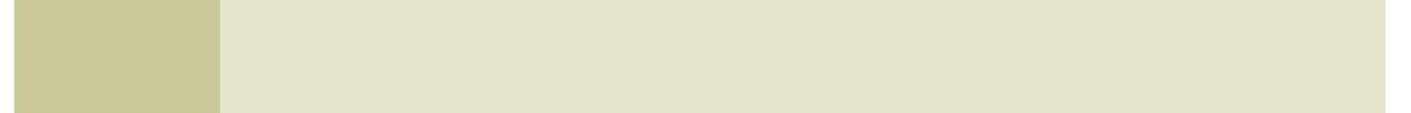
**WESTMORELAND COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

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A 2004-2005  
Report  
of the

# Westmoreland County Comprehensive Plan



## Comprehensive Plan Report Executive Summary May, 2006

The following is a brief summary of the various individual reports on the progress achieved during the years 2004 and 2005 on the goals and objectives of the Westmoreland County Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in December 2004. These goals and objectives reflect the desire of the county to provide balance, quality and choice to the residents of the county in relationship to the elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

### Housing

In Westmoreland County various public and quasi-public agencies have provided valuable housing assets that have been utilized by the residents. These assets include the following: 102 owner-occupied housing units that have been rehabilitated; the development and/or retention of 167 rental housing units; and the provision of homeownership activities that include both housing unit development and counseling.

An estimated 900 single family units were constructed in Westmoreland County in 2005 at an approximate cost of \$164,550,000 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The Census report also listed the construction of 26 units in the form of duplexes at an approximate cost of \$2,250,000.

Municipalities have undertaken or are in the process of undertaking refinement of regulations; downtown revitalization; re-use or removal of structures; revisiting permitting and inspection requirements, etc.

It appears that the units developed were well distributed throughout the county and are accessible to a wide range of income levels.

### Community Facilities/Services

Over the past two years there has been improvements made to the community facilities/services provided in the county. In the area of police and fire protection discussions have taken place between municipalities concerning the consolidation of police and fire services in order to deliver a more efficient product. Most municipalities believe that there would be a benefit realized from the sharing, consolidating or merging of municipal services. There was reported several instances of sharing facilities, especially among school districts, colleges, universities and municipalities. In the area of public parks it appears that there have been fairly constant improvements being undertaken. Some involve expansions, infrastructure development, renovations or other capital or program modifications.

Improvements to the airport facilities have continued. A 1,224 foot extension to the main runway at the Arnold Palmer Regional Airport was completed bringing the total length of the runway to 8,224 feet. Navigational aid improvements and the installation of 16 new T-hangers were also completed during the reporting period.

### Transportation

The comprehensive plan outlines several modes of transportation that impact the residents of the county. Surface transportation, especially vehicular transportation, is the system that can be most influenced by local efforts. Because of this ability to exert some impact the county through the years has attempted to bring a balanced approach to highway improvements. During the last two years several projects or studies that have been planned or implemented reflect the county's adherence to this commitment.

One of the goals outlined in the comprehensive plan was the completion of the remaining sections of the Route 22 corridor. The last two(2) portions of that corridor are nearly complete. The reconstruction of the Route 30 and Route 981 intersection near Latrobe will, according to PennDot, begin in 2006 with a tentative completion expected in 2008. In the northwest quadrant of the county the reconfiguration and upgrades at the Parnassus Triangle are continuing with the phase II section being scheduled for construction in 2007. In the same area the Tarentum Bridge Road construction project is underway with completion anticipated in 2006. In the southwest a Route 51 Land Use Initiative study has been completed and will now be reviewed for implementation consideration. Central Westmoreland has seen activity under the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission's Needs Assessment Study for the Sony Connector project. A report is due sometime in 2006. That study will determine the feasibility of an interchange that would connect Route 119 to the proposed connector and to the Turnpike itself in the vicinity of Carpentertown. An interchange on Route 119 is in final design and bidding is scheduled for late 2006.

These continued efforts to provide quality improvements throughout the county will further efforts to provide the residents of the county a wide range of surface transportation alternatives.

### Land Use

Westmoreland County is blessed with a unique blend of the rural, suburban and urban environments. This provides the residents of the county with a wide variety of choices when it comes to where to live, work and recreate. By developing a comprehensive plan that considers land use as an integral element the leaders of the county intended to preserve the county's blended character for the benefit of future generations.

**SPACE AVAILABLE**

35,250 SF  
CC Inc. Speculative Building  
Westmoreland Technology Park, New Stanton

32,800 SF  
EFR Speculative Building  
Westmoreland County Airpark, Unity Twp.

18,000 - 100,000 SF  
Mount Pleasant Glass Centre,  
Mount Pleasant Twp.

16,500 SF  
RBI Speculative Building / Kacin Companies  
Westmoreland Business & Research Park,  
Upper Burrell Twp.

**Now offering newly constructed and renovated space available for lease or sale!**

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Tom Balya, Thomas C. Ceraso, Philip B. Light.

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... where our boundaries could fit your needs!

economic development organizations along with the Pittsburgh office of the Governor's Action Team.

### Workforce Training and Education

Without a trained and competent labor force no region can be competitive in the global economy. In Westmoreland County there are organizations whose mission is to provide training at the high school and beyond high school levels in addition to continuing education and training programs. Retraining of workforces is a fact of life in today's economy. Those persons and firms that do not recognize this fact are destined to be left behind. Organizations in Westmoreland County such as the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Career Link-Westmoreland and the Westmoreland County Community College and other workforce training and education programs are determined to keep the workforce of the county up to date and competitive: Some of the ac-

complishments of the previous year are listed below:

- Computer Numerical Control (CNC) training was provided to workers through Workforce Investment Board funds.
- Several local plants utilized the services and recommendations of the Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program (PennTAP) to reduce waste and lower energy costs.
- Penn State's Center of Excellence (COE) and Innovation Works (IW) partnered in research and development undertakings in order to provide investments in new product development.
- Lean Manufacturing Services (defined as speed, high quality and cost containment) principles were shared with member companies of the St. Vincent College Center for Operational Excellence.

Recognizing the importance of workforce development to meet the needs of existing and new businesses, Westmoreland County has also partnered with the Economic Growth Connection of Westmoreland in an outreach strategy of site visits. This initiative, the Workforce Training Assessment Program (WTAP), will address the current and future workforce needs of 10 manufacturers through a project to identify and ultimately upgrade skills of their current employees.





of print and electronic media and having “shovel-ready” sites available for marketing, the economic development practitioners effectively present the county to potential prospects. Information is shared directly with the prospects and this same material that promotes the attributes of the county is provided to regional eco-



Pictured left to right—John Skiavo-EGC, Dennis Yablonsky-Secretary of DCED, Robert Levin-Levin Furniture, State Representative Jess M. Stairs, Governor Edward G. Rendell, County Commissioner Chairman Tom Balya, State Representative R. Ted Harhai

of the costs of the project are recognized and understood. By working closely with banking and economic development resources the EGC is involved with business financing activities in the county. The EGC provided assistance, both financial and technical, that resulted in the creation of more than 700 job opportunities in 2005. Examples include assistance to Levin Furniture resulting in 44 jobs and 40 jobs at the Santelli Tempered Glass project.

**Market the County and Work in Collaboration with Regional Agencies**

The utilization of a hands-on, proactive approach by the economic development practitioners has assisted in the growth and maintenance of the economic base of local communities. This is the result of a collaborative effort on the part of the local, regional and state agencies dedicated to the continued prosperity enjoyed throughout Westmoreland County.

During the last two (2) years the newly created Economic Development Council has prepared an annual marketing strategy that is based on the products that are currently available and anticipated output that will come online. By utilizing the various forms

**20+ ACRES**

**Pad Ready!**

**FOR SALE**

**Developed Industrial Site**

Westmoreland Technology Park  
located just off U.S. Route 119  
adjacent to Sony Technology Center  
New Stanton

**CONTACT: WCIDC 724.830.3061**

Board of Directors: Tom Balya, Tom Ceraso, Phil Light  
**PENNSYLVANIA come invent the future**

Projects that further the attainment of those goals include an aerial photography comparison between 1967 and 2003. In 1967 there were 52,104 acres of land considered developed in the county while the amount of developed land in 2003 amounted to 77,066 acres. That means that only 693.39 acres are being developed yearly or slightly more than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1% of the county is being developed yearly. It appears that the generally perceived rural character of the county will remain for the foreseeable future. Another recent study also indicated that the county is developing most rapidly in an area known as the “Growth Triangle”. This encompasses a triangular area from New Kensington to Monessen to Latrobe. Out of 2849 new lots formulated from 2003 to 2005 2188 or 77% of the new lots were located in that triangle.

Progress is also being made by the municipalities of the county when it comes to preserving the character of the area. There have been 13 municipalities or combination of municipalities that have undertaken various land use plans in the last two years. Some of the individual undertakings include the Penn Township Comprehensive Plan; the development of a business overlay zoning district by Hempfield Township; a Route 30 (Beatty Road intersection) visioning project by Unity Township in cooperation with the Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County; the development of compliance ordinances for the Environmental Protection Agency’s storm sewer regulations by several Westmoreland County municipalities in cooperation with the Westmoreland Conservation District.

A new study is about to begin with numerous municipalities that have a stake in the Route 30 corridor area in conjunction with the Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County that will investigate possible improvements that could mitigate the results of negative impacts that have occurred on that much traveled transportation artery.

**Open Space/Natural Resources**

Westmoreland County possess’ an abundance of open space along with numerous natural resource assets that contribute to the overall livability and quality of life that the residents of the county enjoy.

Some of the recent projects and programs that relate to the goals enumerated in the comprehensive plan enhance this livability factor in the county. These include an Open Space and Greenways Plan that the county is undertaking; the Five Star Trail Spur that will provide further trail connections; the acquisition of Loyalhanna Gorge properties by the county and other preservation of open space activities lead by the Westmoreland Conservation District; creation of timber harvesting regulations; and, assistance to agricultural undertakings. All these projects and programs are contributing to the positive quality of life factors that make Westmoreland County the place to live, work and play in the region.

**Economic Development**

Stimulating job creation in economic sectors such as manufacturing, information services, healthcare and education is a primary goal cited in the Westmoreland County Comprehen-

sive Plan. Development in those and other areas will lead to economic growth and provide increases in the standard of living for the residents of the county.

The expansion of the industrial park system that exists in the county is one method of continuing the growth pattern. Progress has been made during the last two (2) years through the development of “ready to go” sites at the Westmoreland Technology Park, Westmoreland Distribution Park II and the Westmoreland Business & Research Park.

Promoting and developing brownfield sites as well as greenfield sites is also a goal of the comprehensive plan. The revitalization of brownfield sites in the City of Jeannette, the City of Monessen, the Borough of South Greensburg and the Township of Mt. Pleasant are indicative of the strides made by the economic development practitioners during 2004 and 2005. Jeannette has developed a comprehensive revitalization plan that includes brownfield redevelopment, commercial redevelopment, housing development and rehabilitation near its existing business district. The City of Monessen has been developing the former Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel plant in partnership with the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation (WCIDC). In South Greensburg the WCIDC is revitalizing the former Pittsburgh Plate Glass (PPG) facility. And in the Township of Mt. Pleasant the Economic Growth Connection (EGC) and the WCIDC have collaborated on the reuse of the former Lenox Crystal property.

With more than 100 visits in 2005 the Business & Expansion Program (BREP) has assisted local companies with hiring, training, marketing, financing and other business related needs. This public/private interaction continues to build relationships that help companies achieve lasting economic stability.

The EGC created the Defense Procurement Assistance Center (DPAC) in order to assist companies obtain federal government contracts.

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The utilization of a hands-on, proactive approach by the economic development practitioners has assisted in the growth and maintenance of the economic base of local communities. This is the result of a collaborative effort on the part of the local, regional and state agencies dedicated to the continued prosperity enjoyed throughout Westmoreland County. During the last two (2) years the newly created Economic Development Council has prepared an annual marketing strategy that reflects the above mentioned philosophy.

Without a trained and competent labor force no region can be competitive in the global economy. In Westmoreland County there are organizations whose mission is to provide training at the high school and beyond high school levels in addition to continuing education and training programs. Retraining of workforces is a fact of life in today’s economy. Those persons and firms that do not recognize this fact are destined to be left behind.

**Housing**

The County of Westmoreland and its various partners have moved forward with several activities and programs that have assisted in the development and retention of housing in the county. These include Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation; Rental Housing Assistance; Homeownership Assistance; and Other Housing Related Achievements that impact market rate housing, affordable housing and renter/owner-occupied housing.

**Housing Rehabilitation**

The county assisted a total of 102 households at a cost of over \$1,000,000. The Redevelopment Authority of New Kensington (RANK) assisted 18 households at a cost of over \$360,000 for a total of 120 units assisted.

**Rental Housing**

The following are the rental housing projects undertaken through public/non-profit and private enterprise collaboration:

**Lloyd Avenue Revitalization – City of Latrobe**



Homes Build Hope (HBH), a non-profit provider of affordable housing, completed 18 rental units utilizing approximately \$1,470,000 of public financing, \$1,750,000 of private equity financing and \$67,000 in donations. The effort was an integral part of the overall Lloyd Avenue revitalization project.



**Windsor Heights – Mt. Pleasant Township**

HBH, in cooperation with S&A Homes, Inc. developed 24 new town homes in Mt. Pleasant Township. Approximately \$900,000 of public funding and \$2,640,000 of private equity funding were required to bring the project to a successful conclusion.



Windsor Heights—Mt. Pleasant Township

**Markhaven Apartments – North Huntingdon Township**

ACTION Housing, a non-profit provider of affordable housing, is still in the process of renovating 80 units of affordable rental housing in North Huntingdon Township. Project costs include about \$1,920,000 of public financing and \$1,100,000 of private assistance.



Markhaven Apartments—North Huntingdon

**Weldon Street Senior Housing – City of Latrobe**

National Church Residences, Inc., a non-profit provider of affordable housing, is developing 45 units of senior rental housing in the City of Latrobe. The

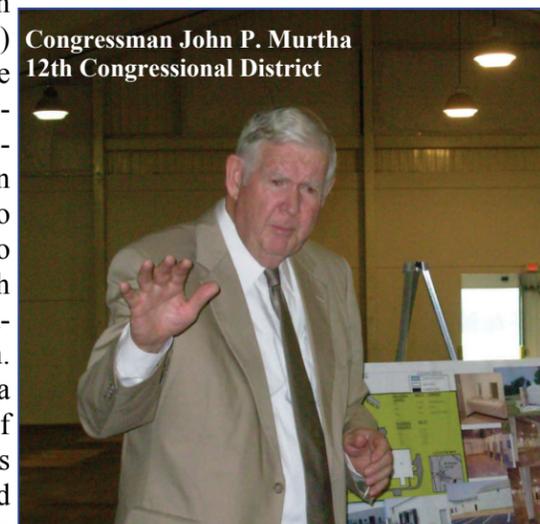
Westmoreland County is supported by a strong network of agencies known as the Westmoreland Affiliates. The coordinated efforts with these agencies provide a streamlined approach to economic development, namely the Business Retention & Expansion Program.

**WESTMORELAND AFFILIATES**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Area Career and Technology Schools                        | Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette                      |
| Area Chambers of Commerce                                 | Saint Vincent College—SBDC & Center for Operational Excellence (COE)  |
| Area Lending Institutions                                 | Seton Hill University—National Education Center for Women in Business |
| California University of Pennsylvania                     | Small Business Administration   |
| Careerlink—Westmoreland; Alle-Kiski; Donora               | Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County                       |
| Catalyst Connection                                       | Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission                                  |
| Governor’s Action Team—Pittsburgh Region                  | University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg                                |
| Innovation Works  | University of Pittsburgh Manufacturing Assistance Center              |
| Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau                          | Westmoreland—Fayette Workforce Investment Board (WIB)                 |
| Local Redevelopment and City Community Development Groups | Westmoreland County Community College                                 |
| Penn State—New Kensington                                 | Westmoreland Conservation District                                    |
| PennTAP   | Westmoreland County Area Labor Management Committee                   |
| Pittsburgh Regional Alliance                              | Westmoreland County Industrial Development Authority                  |

**Continuation of Westmoreland County’s Business Retention & Expansion Program**

Sometimes the biggest challenge for small business is not finding a program that provides financial or technical assistance, but rather knowing where to locate that assistance. Working through the system to get the support without interrupting business operations can be just as difficult. Through the Business & Expansion Program (BREP) operated by the WCIDC, manufacturers have an advocate whose mission is to know how to leverage resources to encourage growth and provide workable information. Partnering with a strong network of agencies known as the Westmoreland Affiliates, this free business assistance program can address hiring, training, marketing, financing and other business needs. Westmoreland County’s program has provided



Congressman John P. Murtha  
12th Congressional District

assistance to over 750 firms since its inception in 1998 with more than 100 contacts made during 2005.

**Provide Technical and Financial Assistance to Expanding Companies**

With funding support provided in 2005 by Congressman John Murtha, the EGC created the Defense Procurement Assistance Center (DPAC). The DPAC assists companies in Westmoreland and Fayette counties seeking access to or increasing opportunities for obtaining federal government contracts. Through a user friendly, web-based collection of business information, companies are able to search targeted opportunities unique to the region. The information highlights a company’s specific qualifications, business profile and related certifications, and provides a link to a company’s website and contact information.

Utilizing a combination of state, federal and private funding programs, EGC has assisted companies throughout Westmoreland County with business expansion or relocation financing. EGC assesses each project individually to insure that all

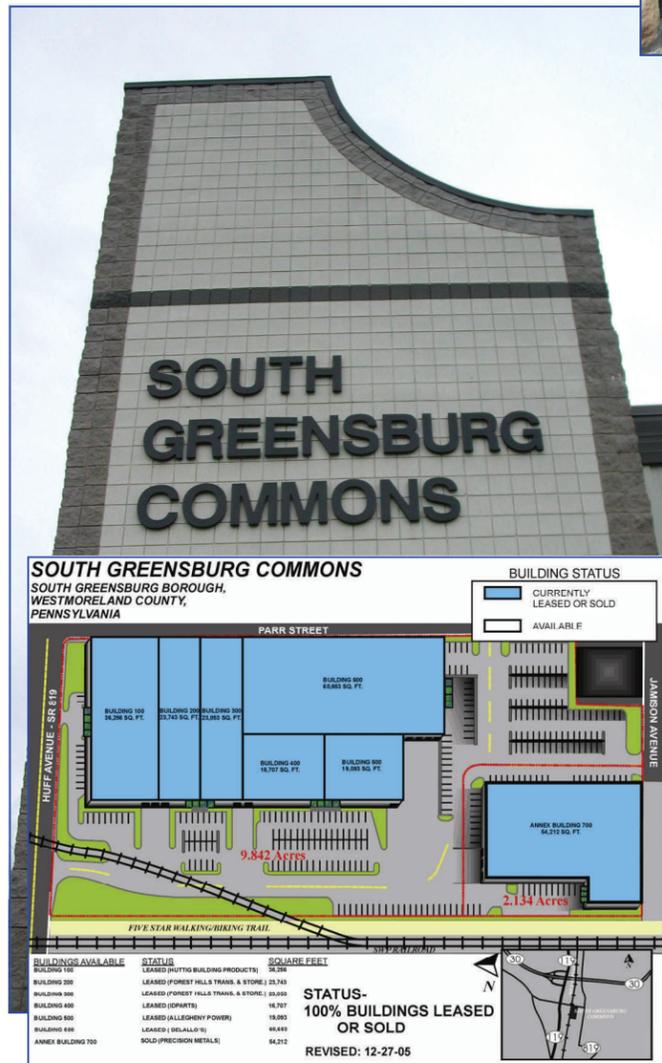
full operations commence. At the entrance to Phase II is a 7,800-square foot multi-purpose building housing the Monessen area food distribution program, servicing over 600 families. That building also serves as a community center.

Also located on the site is the Herman Mihalich Memorial River Launch that was developed in cooperation with the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Westmoreland and the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission for the purpose of providing recreational access to the Monongahela River.



but steady. A local company bought the 54,000-square foot building in order to expand their business and the main building has been marketed as a multi-tenant facility. As of the end of 2005 six (6) companies employing 85 workers occupy both of the above mentioned structures.

The public/private partnership of the Economic Growth Connection (EGC) and the WCIDC purchased the former Lenox facility in Mt. Pleasant Township in 2002. Since that time the 153,000-square foot building has been renovated in phases with the latest renovation of 53,000-square feet available for occupancy since the end of 2005. Four companies occupy the previously renovated space. Forty employees work on the premises with the expectation that additional jobs will be forthcoming in the near future.



Another of the WCIDC's brownfield sites is the former Pittsburgh Plate Glass (PPG) facility in the Borough of South Greensburg. Progress at that site has been slow,



project will utilize approximately \$4,850,000 of various forms of public financing.

**Homeownership Activities**

Westmoreland County has continued providing funds for homeownership assistance programs. These activities include the acquisition, rehabilitation/new construction and resale of properties to income eligible homebuyers, as well as various counseling and financing assistance. Two(2) non-profits have participated in the program as developers and/or providers of homebuyer services.

The following activities were undertaken to further opportunities for the extension of homeownership of residential housing in the county (it should be noted that these activities continue to be provided):

A down payment and closing cost program funded under HUD's American Dream Downpayment Initiative and administered by WHO assisted eight(8) families at a cost of approximately \$61,000. WHO also operated a homeownership program that renovated or reconstructed homes in the cities of Greensburg and Jeannette, the boroughs of Mt. Pleasant and Export and the village of Claridge. Four(4) homes currently are for sale and the cost of these projects was approximately \$580,000. WHO also operates a Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) Comprehensive Homeownership Counseling Initiative. During the report period WHO provided 110 individuals (81 families) pre-purchase counseling, 13 participants purchased houses, 13 homebuyers were provided homebuyer education classes and 12 participants completed credit enhancement workshops.

RANK and WHO collaborated on the renovation of two(2) homes at a cost of approximately \$161,000 that are currently for sale.

The Westmoreland County Housing Authority (WCHA) has pursued and developed programs that assist individuals and families reach a goal of home-

ownership. Families have been assisted in the cities of New Kensington, Monessen, Greensburg and Latrobe. WCHA offers assistance with mortgage payments through the Housing Choice Voucher Program. WCHA works in collaboration with Westmoreland County and WHO, Inc.

WHO also provided transitional housing for the homeless and also operated a mortgage assistance program with the goal of preventing homelessness.

**Other Achievements**

At the time of this writing 42 municipalities have responded to a comprehensive plan achievement survey with 11 municipalities listing progress on various action steps. Three(3) municipalities are taking measures to improve their land use plans or regulations. Four(4) municipalities are involved in downtown revitalization efforts that include housing components. Two(2) municipalities have worked on new land subdivisions that will positively impact housing development. Two(2) municipalities have undertaken programs that involve the reuse and/or removal of older less desirable buildings so that housing development can occur. One(1) municipality has worked to develop the necessary infrastructure to enhance the creation of housing opportunities.

The Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County (SGPWC) has assisted residential development in the county's more urban areas by providing municipalities with urban design products that help eliminate blight and improve vital infrastructure. The Boroughs of Irwin, Scottdale and Vandergrift have received technical assistance along with the cities of Greensburg and Latrobe.

SGPWC has promoted better developer/municipality communication and has assisted in the simplification of permitting and inspection activities. The partnership has sponsored two(2) Uniform Construction Code (UCC), Act 43, workshops. One workshop



focused on attorneys and municipal officials and the other on code enforcement staff and builders.

**General Information**

Residential Costs

According to the National Association of Realtors the average sale price of a single family detached unit in western Pennsylvania in 2004 was \$143,930 and in 2005 the average sale price was \$147,064. This compares to the national average sale price in 2004 of \$219,700 and \$245,000 in 2005.

Construction Information

An estimated 900 single family units were constructed in Westmoreland County in 2005 with a total estimated construction cost of \$164,550,906. Duplexes totaled 26 units with an approximate cost of \$2,250,881. There were no three and four family units constructed and there were 11 buildings constructed that contained 66 units. This information was provided by the U.S. Census Bureau.

**A Glimpse Ahead**

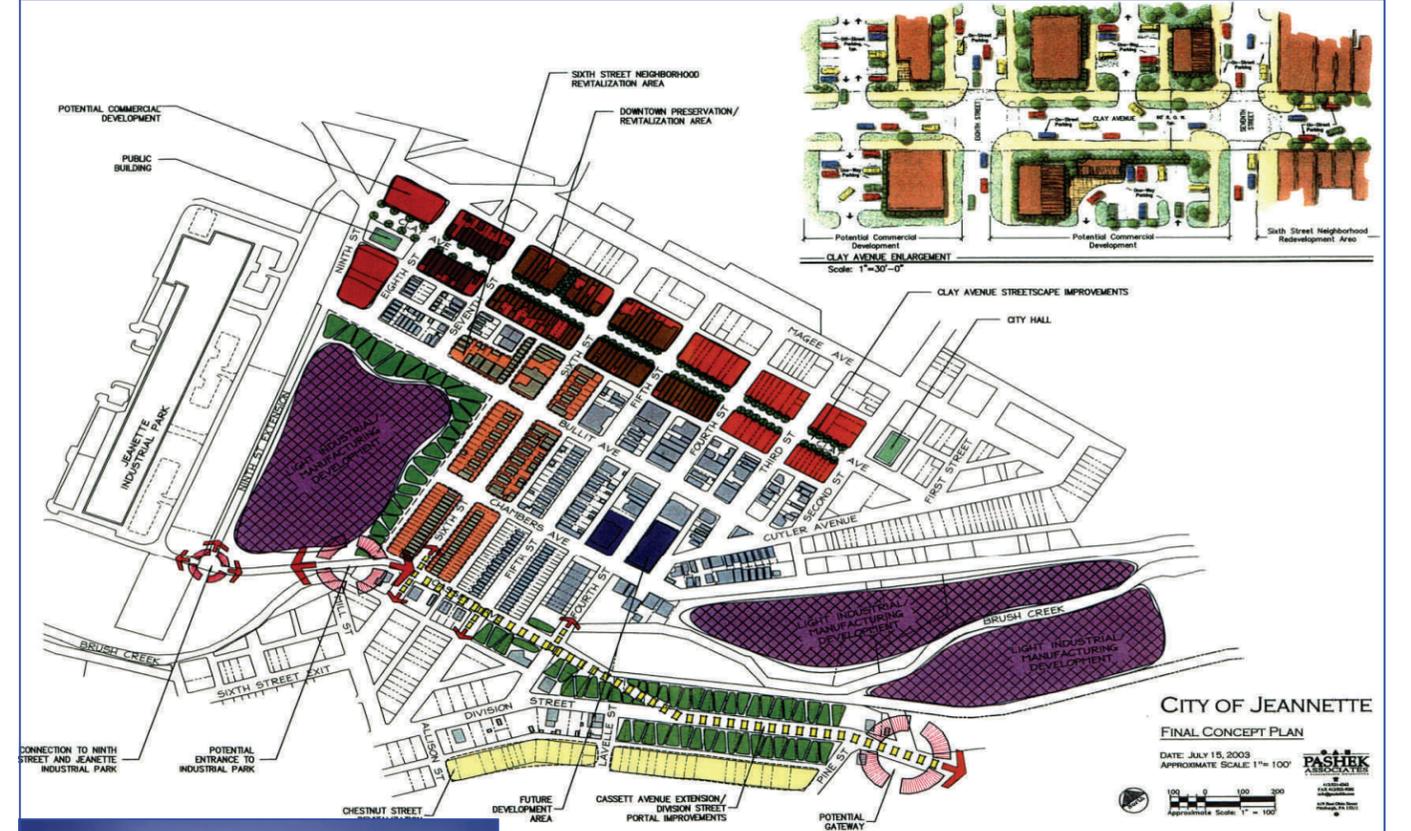
Westmoreland County intends to move forward with its non-profit partners and other public agencies with additional housing programs and projects that will add to the availability of affordable housing choices. Some of the future programs and projects include:

WHO is partnering with the City of Jeannette to package a large scale, major impact project in the center area of the community. Up to 25 homes will be completed that will be for sale to qualified families.

RANK has partnered with a private for-profit in a new development that will construct 40 senior citizen apartments that will be located on the site of the former Ridge Avenue School. Already 23 persons have made inquiries about being placed on the list for consideration to rent these, as yet to be built, units.

The City of Monessen, in conjunction with a non-profit, is in the process of developing a homeownership project within the city that could provide a mixed-income approach to housing. It is hoped that the project will move forward in the near future.

The WCHA is working on a project in the north central portion of the county that will consist of 35 to 40 units of senior housing.



of a new highway access connecting Route 30 and downtown Jeannette. This ambitious revitalization effort is expected to be completed in approximately seven (7) years.

housing the bar mill, blooming mill and blast furnaces. Internal roads and utilities were installed to complete the development of the site.

A private developer, Farnham & Pfile, invested over \$5 million during the last year for the construction of a 240,000-square foot manufacturing facility. This investment by the private sector attracted Maronda Homes. Maronda Homes is one of the largest privately owned home developers in the United States and expects to employ several hundred people when

The City of Monessen has been developing the former Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel plant in partnership with the WCIDC. The WCIDC acquired the site in 1994 with the intent of preserving buildings that could be renovated. In order to proceed with the revitalization plan an extensive program of demolition and environmental remediation was undertaken.

Phase I involved the complete renovation of 250,000-square feet of building space. This is marketed as a multi-tenant facility. Phase II involved a massive demolition project and environmental site remediation on property formerly





Westmoreland Technology Park  
—Phase II 20 Acre Pad Site

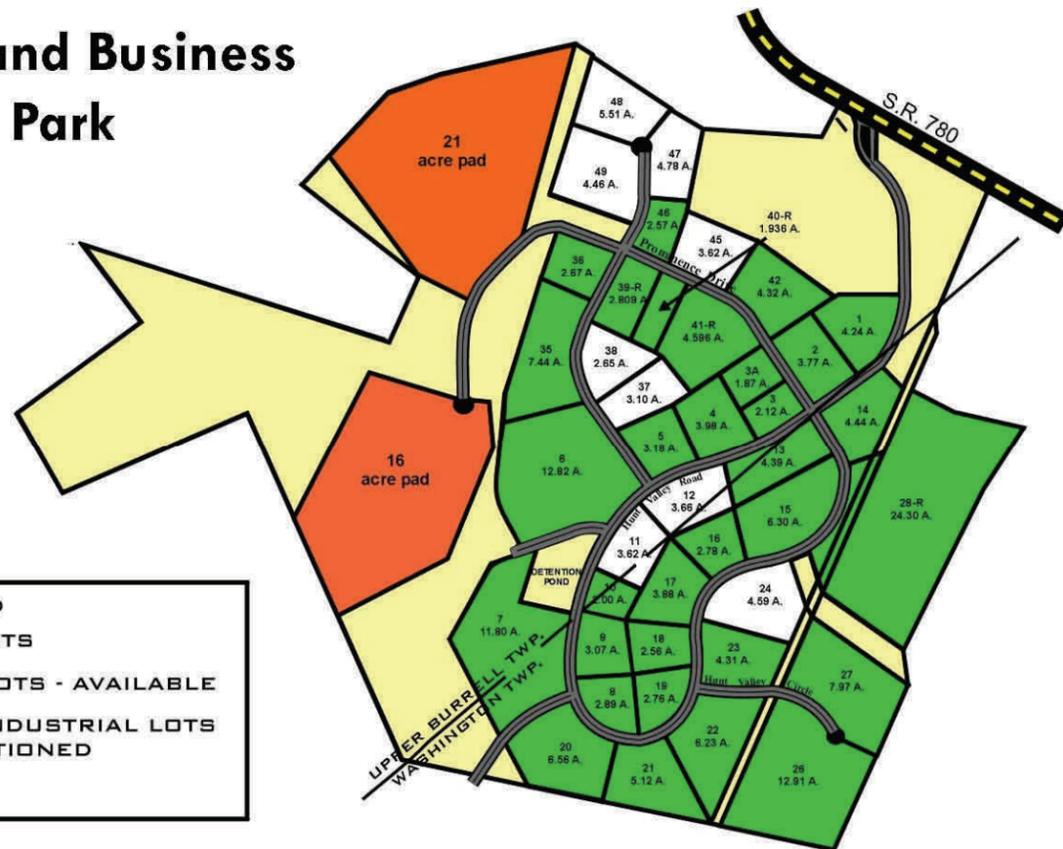
ing two (2) sites are part of the fourth phase of development in the Westmoreland Business & Research Park in New Kensington. With a finished grade of 3% or less these pads will range from 5—31 acres and will be marketed at a price range of \$50,000—\$60,000 per acre. These sites will be available in the spring/summer of 2007.

**Promoting and Developing Brownfield Sites for Reuse**

The City of Jeannette, in conjunction with other partners, has developed a comprehensive revitalization plan. The components of the plan include brown-field redevelopment, commercial redevelopment, housing rehabilitation and new construction adjacent to the business district. The redevelopment of the former General Glass facility into the Jeannette Industrial Park by the WCIDC was the first major investment in this process. Additional funding has been secured for both the commercial redevelopment and a portion of the housing component. \$500,000 has been earmarked for engineering

plans for development of eight (8) additional pads. Six (6) of these sites will be located near the county's major transportation hub in New Stanton in the Westmoreland Distribution Park II. The remain-

**Westmoreland Business & Research Park**



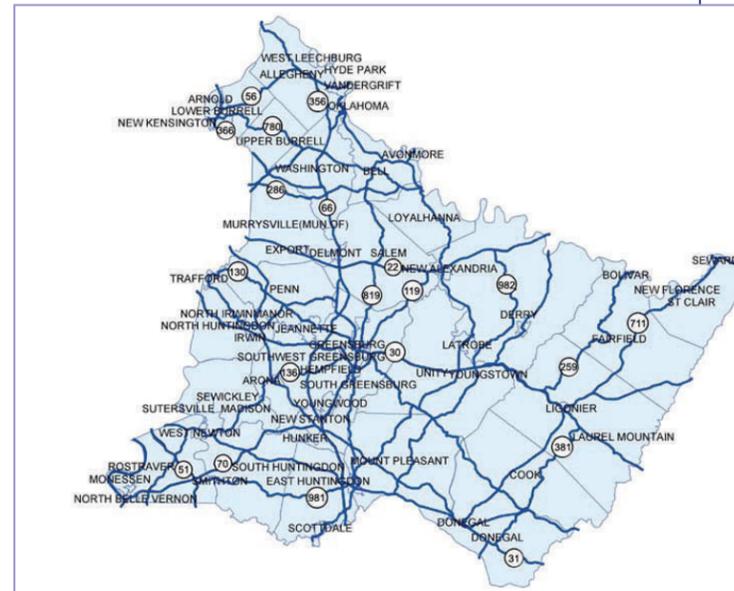
LEGEND	
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:orange; border:1px solid black;"></span>	PAD-READY LOTS
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:white; border:1px solid black;"></span>	INDUSTRIAL LOTS - AVAILABLE
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:green; border:1px solid black;"></span>	DEVELOPED INDUSTRIAL LOTS - SOLD OR OPTIONED
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellow; border:1px solid black;"></span>	BUFFER

Progress in housing has been made and it appears that that spirit of achievement will be continuing. The future looks bright for the residents of the county.

**Community Facilities/Services**

**Police / Fire Protection**

As mentioned in the comprehensive plan, Westmoreland County is comprised of 65 municipalities that provide varying levels of police and fire protection. Fire protection is provided by each municipality through resources generated by the individual fire companies and the municipalities. In those municipalities that do not provide municipal police services the Pennsylvania State Police is responsible for police protection.



Although there have been discussions between municipalities to consolidate their police and fire services to perhaps make it more affordable, no consolidations have occurred in the last two years. There has also been proposed state legislation to require those municipalities that do not have a police force to be assessed a fee to be paid to the state po-



lice for this service to continue. Again, this is only a proposal and no legislative action has occurred.

The county has 140 operational fire companies. A vast majority of these are volunteer organizations and rely on local funding and contributions. The larger municipalities have more than one company to provide service, the smaller municipalities only one.



Modernization of communication systems and shared communication doubles the coverage, increases reliability, and decreases response time. Currently, there are 30 emergency medical service providers in the county. In

terms of public safety, each municipality appears to be well served by police, fire and other emergency services. Perhaps some county municipalities would benefit by investigating the feasibility of sharing, consolidating, or merging municipal services.

Community facilities can include public buildings, community centers, public and private clubs, schools, health facilities, libraries, profit and non-profit institutions and organizations used for social, educational, and recreational purposes. The recent survey has indicated that there is a considerable amount of sharing of facilities that is occurring in the county. School districts are sharing their facilities with municipalities. Colleges/universities are sharing library and

other facilities with the community at large and providing educational services through adult education and early learning experiences for the young.

**Other activities**

Some evidence of downtown revitalization and reinvestment is occurring. Greensburg along with the

county and Seton Hill University has embarked on an aggressive plan to extend the campus in the cultural district of the city. A new office building housing economic development and county planning and

community development professionals will be constructed and is scheduled for opening in early 2007.



**Airports**

There are four (4) airports in the county. Arnold Palmer Regional Airport located in Unity Township near the City of Latrobe and Rostraver Airport located in Rostraver Township are the largest airports serving the county. At the Arnold Palmer Regional Airport, Northwest Airlines currently provides daily flights to Detroit Metropolitan Airport through its airlink partner, Mesaba Airlines. Two fixed base operators – L. J. Aviation and Vee Neal Aviation offer fueling, training, charter and aircraft management services at the airport.



The authority completed a 1,224 ft. extension on Runway 5/23 at the Arnold Palmer Re-



gional Airport, providing a runway length of 8,224 feet. Also, completed were navigational aids and the installation of 16 new T-hangers. Presently, there are 138 based aircraft: 59 single engine, 55 multi-engine, 18 jet, and 6 helicopters. Aircraft operations totaled 45,550 in 2005.



At the Rostraver Airport no commercial service is offered. The authority currently leases 46 T-hangers, with more being built. 127 aircraft are based here.



**State, County and Municipal**

**Economic Development**

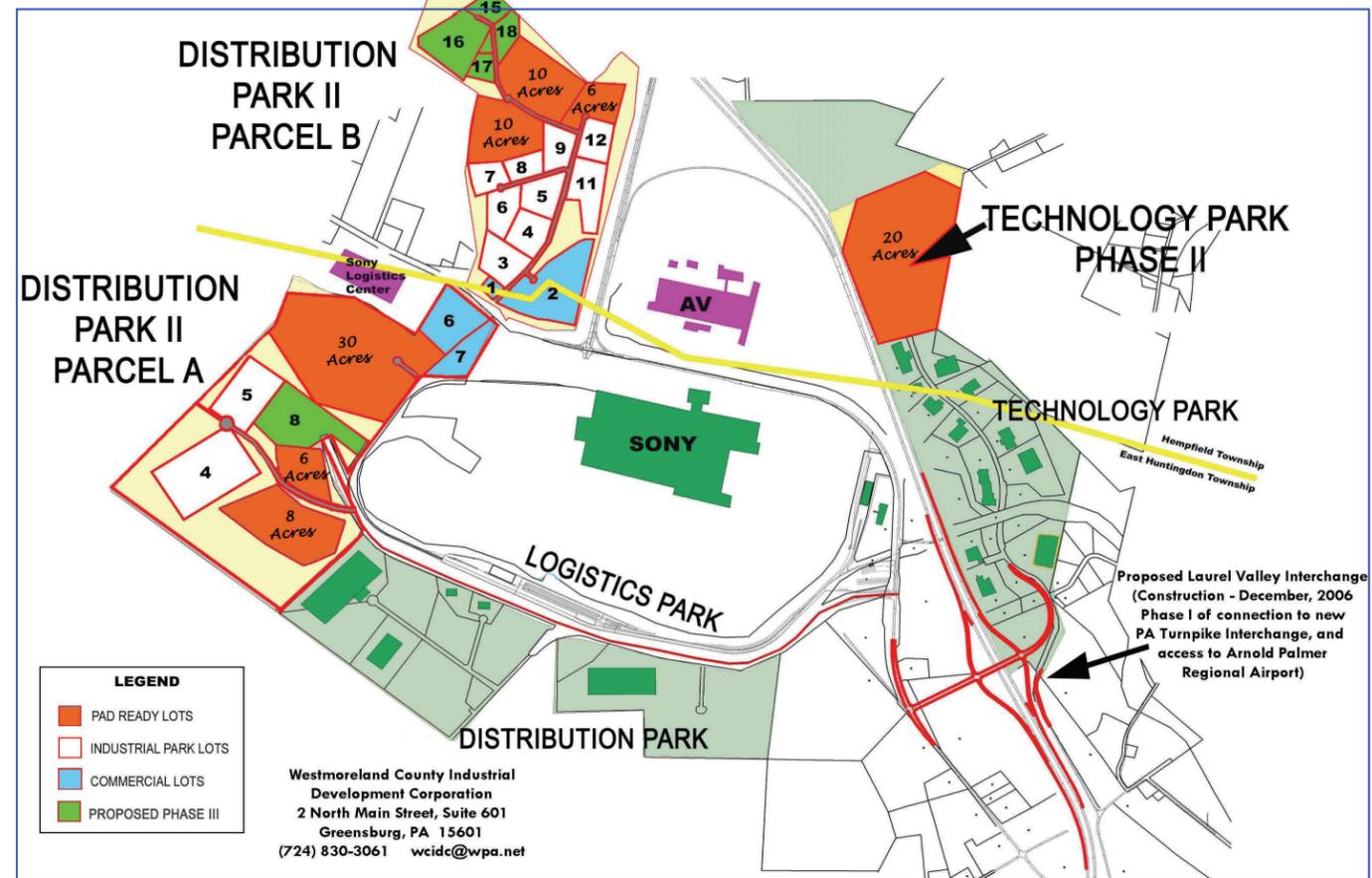
The business of attracting high wage employers and nurturing the growth of existing high wage employers is extremely competitive. This attraction and nurturing technique is an industry unto itself. Over the last decade, Westmoreland County has worked diligently to utilize its assets and attributes in order to remain competitive in the global economy. The county's existing industrial park system offers a wide selection of resources for business development. In order to maintain its competitiveness the county will need to expand its inventory of planned business sites and real estate resources. Based on build out projections of existing development sites and the lag time required to bring additional sites on line, there is an immediate need to expand the county's inventory. As a result of this immediate need, coupled with an effort to fill a regional gap for larger sites, the county offers viable products to manufacturing and distribution companies seeking pad-ready industrial sites. In order to meet the present demands and be prepared for the forecastable future Westmoreland County has been working to maintain a balance of economic development activities on not only green-field, but brown-field sites as well. Activity has been concentrated in areas already served by existing infrastructure. All of the economic development agencies operating in the county strive to be providers of competitive financial and technical assistance resources and not just be pass-through shells that do not reflect the commitment to progress that is indicative of the residents of the county.

**Expansion of Industrial Park System and Preparing Ready to Go Sites**

The first 20 acre pad was completed in June 2006 at Westmoreland Technology Park in New Stanton.

This site is located adjacent to the Sony Technology Center and has access to US Route 119, I-70, PA Turnpike (I-76) and Toll Road 66.

In addition to this site, the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation (WCIDC) has



palities have a desire to preserve key land parcels of open space through a county land trust. The assistance of the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PALTA) has been requested and various local stakeholders have been encouraged to attend PALTA courses and seminars. The utilization of the talents of several additional volunteers has been undertaken in order to assist in the formation of the county land trust. Use of county allocated Growing Greener funds for the initial land acquisitions is also a possibility.



Westmoreland Conservation District's Loyalhanna Gorge



Surveys of farmers and "Farmer Let's Talk" listening sessions gathered useful information relative to needs that confront farmers in general and it also acted as a forum for the discussion of different opportunities that farmers could pursue. Based on the listening sessions and the responses to the surveys the Future of Westmoreland Agriculture plans to implement projects that will support local agricultural interests. Some of these projects include: farmer education, public/consumer education and the marketing and promotion of Westmoreland County farms and agricultural products.

**A Look Ahead**

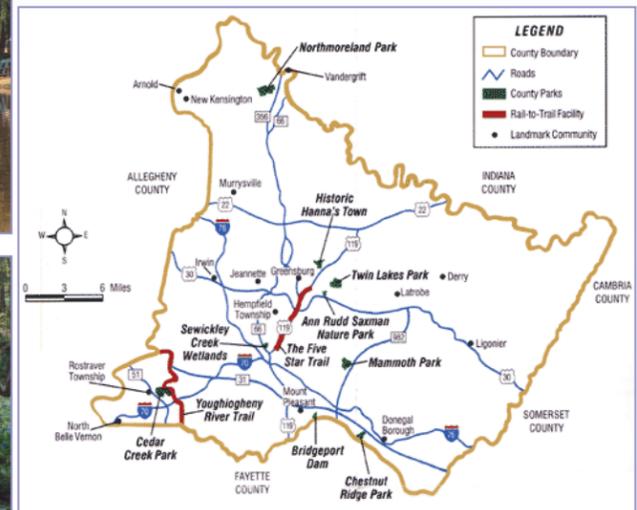
Based on the activity of the last couple of years the positive future of open space and natural resources in the county appears to be a subject that the residents of the county intend to support and pursue. With the assistance of the WCD, the WCDPD, the SGPWC and the Future of Westmoreland Agriculture new and innovative ideas, programs and projects will, undoubtedly, continue to be developed. The county residents will, in the future, have a plethora of quality choices when it comes to the resources available.

Hempfield Township, with the assistance of the WCD, has developed a timber harvesting ordinance. This ordinance regulates timber harvesting and provides conservation control requirements. At the end of the day there will be less resource loss and a more acceptable end land result for the residents of the township.

Since January 2004 the Future of Westmoreland Agriculture has been assisting agricultural enterprises in a number of different ways. The Future of Westmoreland Agriculture is a task force of community volunteers that represent both farm and non-farm interests. The group is led by a community development educator whose position is funded jointly by the Penn State Cooperative Extension and the Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County.

**Parks**

These community facilities are constantly undergoing some phase of improvement. Some involve expansion, infrastructure improvement, renovations, or other capital or program modifications. There continues to be an abundance of community parks in the county. These facilities are seeing more use and sharing of facilities and programs between the communities and school districts.



**Transportation**

As mentioned in the comprehensive plan, an efficient transportation network moves people, goods and services safely and expeditiously through a variety of modes. Most of the transportation issues the county reviews and can influence involves roadways. The transportation system is a vital element in the comprehensive plan since it determines economic development and land use.

The roadway system in the county is a critical element in the overall transportation network. Vehicular traffic is the main existing mode of transportation in this region and the road system will continually be scrutinized in order to improve its efficiency.

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) is the 10 county region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and as such guides the region's transportation planning process. The result of that process is the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Here, projects can be identified and prioritized. Westmoreland County has input into this process by submitting funding requests to SPC's Transportation Technical Committee (TTC). This committee is charged with developing, along with PennDOT, the TIP. The TIP is then reviewed and formally adopted by the commission, which is made up of county commissioners from the 10 county region.

Without going into detail concerning the entire process, it can be said that the Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development (WCDPD)

monitors, advises, seeks input, supports and lobby's for projects on the TIP.

Last summer Westmoreland County and SPC hosted a public participation panel, where citizens, business leaders, municipal officials, and other community leaders provided testimony to the panel on their concerns. These comments were further refined and presented to the State Transportation Commission hearings in Pittsburgh along with the WCDPD's testimony. Appeals to the State Transportation Commission were made by both entities on transportation issues facing the county.

## 2005 TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR COMPLETED

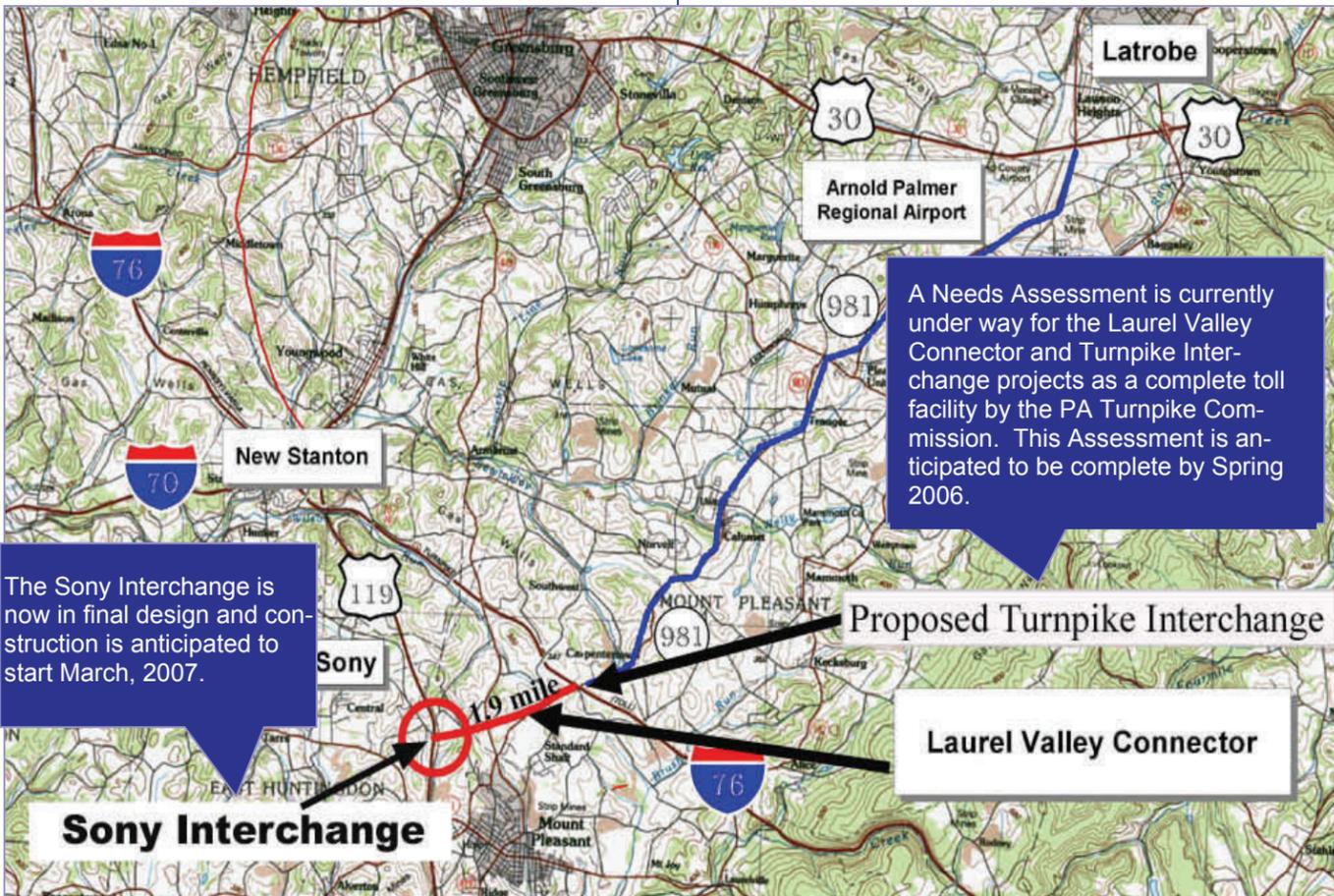
- SR 22 Section BO2, Export to Delmont
- SR 366 Parnassus Triangle, Phase I
- SR 3093 Completion of Sony Loop Road
- SR 366 Tarentum Bridge Road

The transportation element in the comprehensive plan has 79 policies, goals and action steps. A cursory review reveals success in several areas. One of the goals was to complete the remaining sections of the Rt. 22 corridor. The last (2) portions of the corridor are nearly complete.

The Export to Delmont section was contracted at a cost of \$84 million and the New Alexandria to Rt.

982 section was contracted for \$35 million. Both sections are currently under construction and scheduled for completion in 2007.

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) Needs Assessment Study for the Sony Connector is progressing with a report due in 2006. The study will determine the feasibility of an interchange that will connect Rt. 119 to the proposed connector and



tion to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PADCNR) in order to procure funding for an Open Space and Greenways Plan. This application was successful and the county hired a consulting firm, Environmental Planning and Design (EPD), to undertake the development of the plan. Once this plan is completed it will become an integral part of the Westmoreland County Comprehensive Plan. It will provide guidance as well provide vital information concerning open space and greenways areas within the county. It is anticipated that the plan will be completed by the end of 2006.

During the last year efforts have been underway that will lead to the creation of a county land trust. The Westmoreland Conservation District (WCD) as the lead agency with the assistance of the WCDPD has received confirmation that the Schwarz Family Trust, a local foundation dedicated to the conservation of land and open space, desires to donate a \$1,000,000 endowment and 100 acres of farmland north of the City of



Five Star Trail Extension

Greensburg in an effort to begin the local land trust. A memorandum of understanding is being created that would provide the funding for conservation projects on the land to be donated. This would be the beginning of the land trust. The project

### Projects

In 2004 the Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development (WCDPD), acting in concert with the Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County (SGPWC), submitted an applica-

would be the model for other properties that could be obtained by the as yet to be created local land trust. The municipalities of Unity Township, North Huntingdon Township and Hempfield Township have indicated that they would be interested in the development of the county land trust. Those municipi-

municipal land use planning undertakings, but that does not really matter because the fact is there are 13 municipalities or combination of municipalities that have undertaken or completed various land use plans. These are—>

**Individual Undertakings**

Penn Township

Penn Township recently completed a comprehensive plan and that plan includes models that are intended to create a sense of place when implemented. These models include such designations as village, hamlet, large lot rural, etc. Providing such designations will enhance the municipality’s ability to provide land use options that the residents of the township desire.

Hempfield Township

The township planning commission has been evaluating the use of a business overlay zoning district along a portion of Route 136. This area currently supports mixed uses. The potential result of the implementation of such an overlay could allow future business development while at the same time controlling access to the highway and creating landscaped buffer areas.

Unity Township

The Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County (SGPWC) along with Unity Township undertook a visioning project. That project developed build-out scenarios utilizing the current land use

regulations and build-outs utilizing land use regulations that followed various smart growth principles. The area under study was the Route 30 corridor from the township boundary to Ligonier with particular emphasis on the Beatty Crossroads area. The results of this study are available through the SGPWC.

Westmoreland Conservation District

The Westmoreland Conservation District (WCD) staff has assisted North Huntingdon Township, East Huntingdon Township, Hempfield Township, Mt. Pleasant Township and Penn Township in the development of ordinances that meet the requirements of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System(MS4) regulations.

**A Look Ahead**

There are a few more municipalities that are contemplating undertaking land use plans in the future and some of these include municipalities that believe multi-jurisdictional plans are the answer to some of their mutual problems.

The SGPWC, along with numerous municipalities, has obtained funding from a variety of sources in order to study the Route 30 corridor in order to alleviate the results of negative impacts that have occurred on that much traveled transportation artery. The study will include transportation based points of interest and land use alternatives that could be implemented by the municipalities that are directly served by Route 30.

**Open Space/Natural Resources**

As stated in the Land Use portion of this report, Westmoreland County possess’ an abundance of open space areas along with numerous natural resource assets that contribute to the overall livability and quality of life that the residents of the county enjoy. According to the Comprehensive Plan these factors drive market prices in real estate and make a community more attractive to both developers and potential homebuyers or renters.

Some of the recent projects and programs enhance this livability factor in the county. These include an Open Space and Greenways Plan that the county is undertaking; the Five Star Trail Spur that will provide further trail connections; preservation of open space activities led by the Westmoreland Conservation District; creation of timber harvesting regulations; and, assistance to agricultural undertakings. All these projects and programs are contributing to the positive quality of life factors that make Westmoreland County the place to live, work and play in the region.

**2006  
TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS  
LET OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

- SR 22 Section BO8, New Alexandria to SR 982 – Let 12/05
- Depot Street Bridge – Let 12/05
- SR 119/Westmoreland Manor – Let 12/05
- SR 56 at SR 4048 Hyde Park, Allegheny Township – Let 1/06
- SR 31 Three Mile Hill at Laurelville – Let 01/06
- SR 3111 Center Avenue in New Stanton – Let 01/06
- SR 30/981 Intersection near Latrobe – Let 03/06
- SR 30 Barnes Lake Road Improvements, Irwin – Let 05/06
- SR 119 Youngwood – Let 05/06
- Finley Road in Rostraver Township – Let 12/06
- SR 22 Section BO9, SR 982 to Westinghouse – Let 12/06
- SR 119 Sony Interchange – Let 12/06
- St. Vincent Relocation and Connector – Let 12/06



eventually to the PA Turnpike in the vicinity of Carpentertown. An interchange on Rt 119 is in final design and bidding is scheduled for December 2006.

Dot, will begin in 2006 with a tentative completion in 2008.

Enhancements, Hometown Streets/Safe Routes to School Program

2005

Greensburg Hometown Streets	\$ 529,000
Crest Avenue Sidewalks (Rostraver)	161,000
West Newton Hometown Streets	<u>200,100</u>
TOTAL	\$ 890,100

APPROVED FOR 2006

Westmoreland Heritage Trail (Slickville)	\$ 552,000
Five Star Trail (Youngwood-Scottdale)	776,250
Train Station Visitors Center (West Newton)	138,000
Latrobe Safe Routes to School	390,540
Lincoln Highway Welcome Center (Ligonier)	272,500
Murrysville Streetscape Project	618,667
Greensburg Hometown Streets	1,207,000
Irwin Borough Streetscape	<u>1,963,750</u>
TOTAL	\$5,918,707

A Rt. 51 Land Use Initiative study in Rostraver Township has been completed and will be reviewed for implementation. A study committee will be formed that will recommend improvements to the highway infrastructure and land use regulatory upgrades.

The reconfiguration and upgrades at the Parnassus Triangle in Lower Burrell are continuing with the phase II section being scheduled for construction in 2007. The Tarentum Bridge Road construction project is underway with completion anticipated in summer 2006.

The reconstruction of the Rt.30/981 intersection near Latrobe, according to Penn-

**Enhancements, Hometown Streets/Safe Routes to School Program**

This program was open to any federal, state, county or municipal government, school district or non-profit organization. Projects fell within any one of 12 different categories. Information defining these categories can be obtained by contacting the WCDPD. Some examples might involve bicycle/pedestrian facilities, safety features, scenic easements, historic and/or beautification proposals, rehabilitation/preservation activities, etc. The program was very competitive. In 2005 Westmoreland County communities received \$890,100 and in 2006 projects have been approved for \$5.9 million (see listing).

**Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)**

This program provides funding for those projects and programs that will reduce emissions in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas. Eligibility for this category is determined through an assessment that quantifies a project's potential to reduce

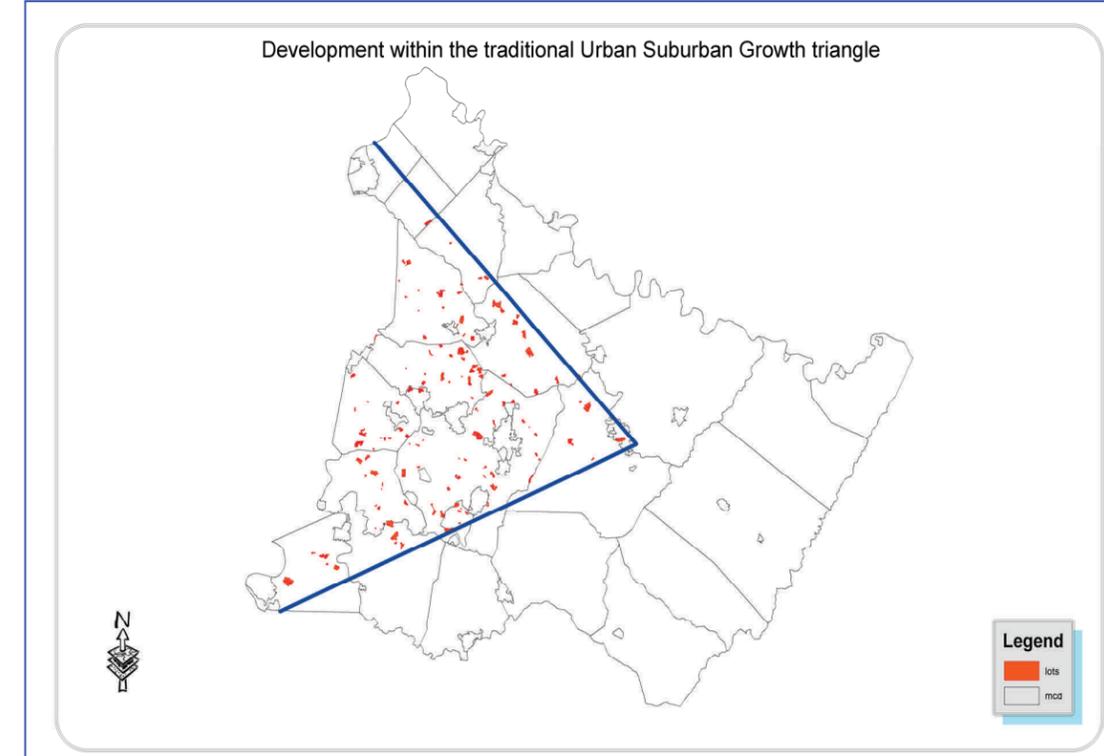
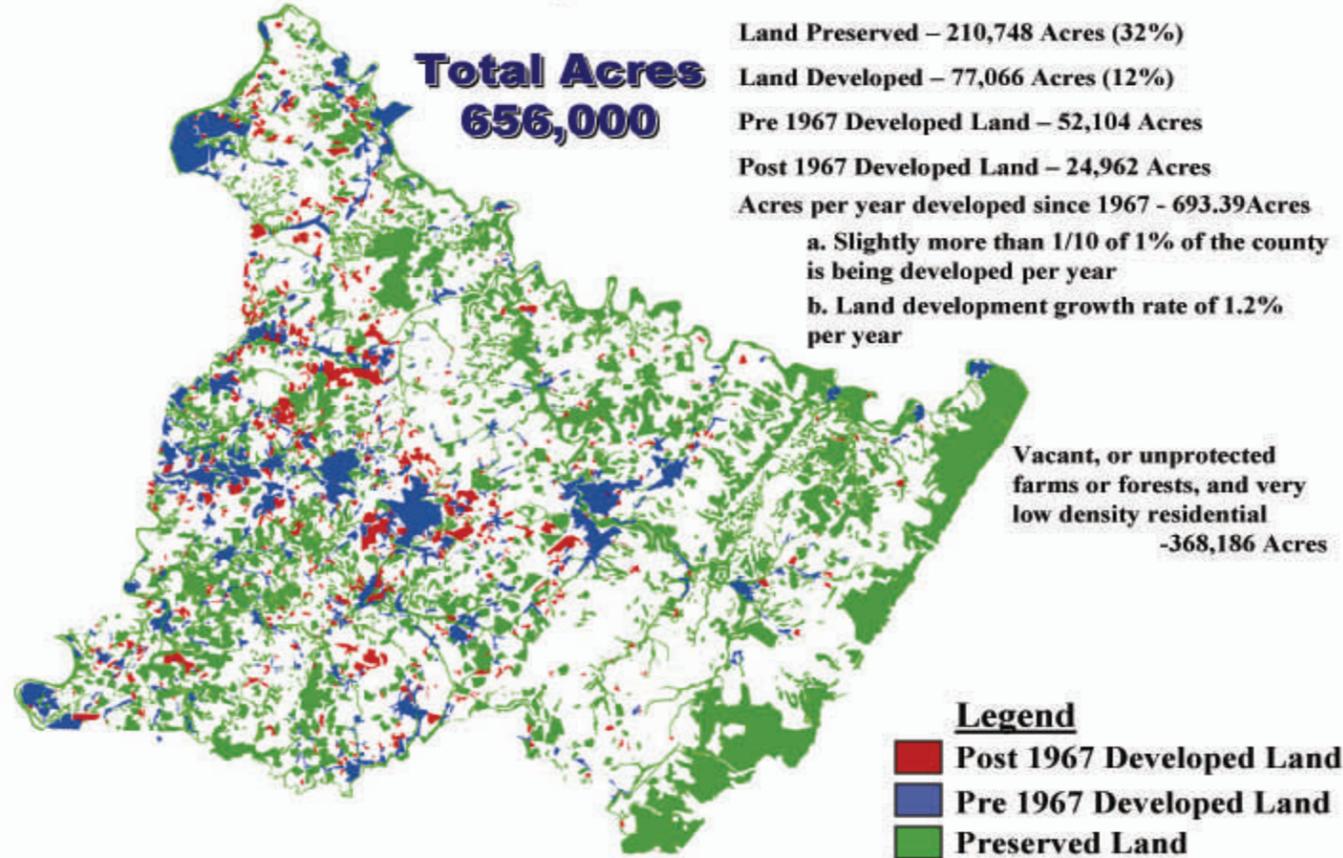
emissions. Projects are selected for the 10 county region and recommended to the TTC and forwarded to the full SPC Commission for placement on the TIP. The intersections scheduled for signal improvements in Westmoreland County have been forwarded to the TTC for ratification, this year. Some 20 intersections in the county have been proposed.

**Land Use**

Westmoreland County is blessed with a diversity of land utilization options. There is a seemingly unique blend between the rural, suburban and urban environments. Naturally, this provides the residents of the county with a wide variety of choices when it comes to where to live, work and recreate. By developing a comprehensive plan the leaders of the county intended to preserve that blended character for the benefit of future generations.

Several studies done in conjunction with the comprehensive plan provided insights into the composition of the land use characteristics of the county and how those characteristics affect most of the decision-making of individuals, groups, companies, governments, etc. Listed below are some the activities that have occurred in the county in the last two(2) years that further that commitment to continued livability.

**Westmoreland County Selected Land Use Statistics**



county is 3.8 acres. The urban/suburban lot size is approximately 1.8 acres while the rural size average is 8.78 acres. This is another indication of the rural character of the county.

The studies conducted also indicated that the county is developing an area known as the "Growth Triangle". This encompasses a triangular area from New Kensington to Monessen to Latrobe. Out of

**County Activities**

Part of the comprehensive plan undertaking involved the use of aerial photography. A comparison was done between the 1967 aerial study and a study completed in 2003. The comparison yielded some interesting information. For example, in 1967 there were 52,104 acres of land considered developed in the county while the amount of developed land in 2003 amounted to 77,066 acres. That is a 3.8% increase in the amount of developed land in the last 36 years. That means that only 693.39 acres are being developed yearly or slightly more than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1% of the county is being developed yearly. It appears that the generally perceived rural character of the county will remain for the foreseeable future.

2849 new lots formulated from 2003 to 2005 2188 or 77% of the new lots were located in that triangle. New land development followed the path of existing public infrastructure improvements. This reflects one of the primary goals of the comprehensive plan; infill development maximizes public investment in infrastructure and furthers the effort to limit what is known as sprawl.

**Municipal Activities**

The institution of the county comprehensive plan may or may not have been instrumental in many mu-

A Global Information System (GIS) study was conducted that provided more revealing information relating to the character of the county. This study involved land parcel identification in the years 2003 and 2005. The overall lot size in the

<b>MUNICIPALITIES THAT HAVE UNDERTAKEN A LAND USE PLAN</b>		
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Status</b>
Allegheny Twp.	Comprehensive Plan	Under development
Penn Twp.	Comprehensive Plan	Adopted
Irwin Borough	Comprehensive Plan	Under development
Greensburg-Hempfield	Joint Comp. Plan	Adopted
SW Greensburg-S. Greensburg		
Ligonier Twp.-Ligonier Boro.	Joint Sewage Facilities Plan	Under development
Rostraver Twp.	Sewage Facilities Plan	Under development
Rostraver Twp.	Route 51 Corridor Study	Under development
Unity-Hempfield	Joint Sewage Facilities Plan	Adopted
S. Huntingdon Twp.	Community Facilities Plan	Under development
N. Huntingdon-Irwin	Abandoned Mine Discharge Study	Completed