

# Imagine West Shore

## A.1 Introduction

### Introduction

In 2007, the contiguous “West Shore” Boroughs of Camp Hill, Lemoyne, and Wormleysburg sought the assistance of professional consultants to undertake a regional comprehensive community revitalization and development planning process. A team from RETTEW Associates, Inc. and ARRO Consulting, Inc. led this multi-municipal (or joint planning) effort with significant financial, technical, and administrative assistance from the following county and state agencies:

- Cumberland County Planning Commission
- Cumberland County Housing and Redevelopment Authority
- PA Department of Community and Economic Development
- PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

The following introduction provides a brief overview of this comprehensive planning effort, including a summary of the plan document, active local participants/perspectives, regional context and issues, the general and legal concepts of planning, expected outcomes, and tips for using the plan.

### Plan Overview

This document represents a regional (multi-municipal or joint) comprehensive plan that has been developed by Camp Hill, Lemoyne, and Wormleysburg Boroughs in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. The three boroughs are located in the eastern part of Cumberland County on the west bank of the Susquehanna River. The region’s location is vitally important position because it serves as the gateway to Cumberland County, known locally as the “West Shore”; hence the title, *Imagine West Shore (IWS) Joint Comprehensive Plan*.

The plan is a reflection of the available opportunities upon which the region can capitalize. Through its unique places, culture, and people, great potential exists within the region to enhance the quality of both resident and visitor experiences. This region designed this plan to provide a strategic approach for the three Boroughs to invigorate and enhance their communities. The Boroughs developed the following statement to serve as the mission for the plan.

*Imagine West Shore represents a collaborative planning effort among Camp Hill, Lemoyne, and Wormleysburg to build upon our location, promote our diversity, and encourage opportunities for revitalization to realize our vision of serving as the gateway to the West Shore.*

The plan is presented in five sections each serving a different purpose. All sections, however, are important and rely upon each other to paint a complete picture for the region. The five sections are: **(1) Introduction; (2) Planning Elements / Strategies; (3) Implementation; (4) Recreation, Parks, and Open Space; and (5) Status of Region.** Excluding the Introduction, below is an overview of each section.

### Section Two - Planning Elements / Strategies

Section Two, Planning Elements/Strategies, provides a series of key strategies that the three boroughs can undertake, either as a region or individually, to enhance their communities and provide a mechanism for revitalization. The strategies, grouped into broad topical planning elements, are clear and understandable. Each strategy includes an abstract definition and purpose, a description of its significance, general considerations, key locations of focus if applicable, and identified stakeholders and partners. This section is also unique in that several strategies apply to multiple topical areas, resulting in an integrated plan that seeks to improve the community

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at large. Additionally, each plan element section includes a set of regional themes, planning principles, key strategies, and standards relevant and important to the Imagine West Shore region, all of which are summarized below.

**Regional Themes:** Participants clearly determined during the IWS joint planning process that many of the issues and trends experienced by one community in the IWS region affect or are experienced by the other communities in the IWS region. In addition, many of the issues and trends experienced in the IWS region are not caused by one large isolated event or lone factor occurring at one time; rather, they are generally caused by a series of smaller, incremental events and interrelated factors occurring over a longer period of time.

Subsequently, any one key strategy suggested in this plan, although relevant and important for the IWS region, should not be viewed as a “cure all” or “silver bullet.” Instead, a key strategy should be considered an integral part of a much larger comprehensive set of interrelated key approaches to overcoming and addressing these important local and regional issues and trends.

Many of the regional themes listed in individual planning elements are also identified as important regional themes relating to or affecting other topical planning elements in this plan, thereby further establishing the importance of the plan and the regional interrelationships.

**Overall Planning Principles:** Each plan element details a series of planning principles, which include important statements from the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code (MPC) relating to the specific planning topical area. In the simplest terms, the regional planning principles found in each plan element of the IWS joint comprehensive plan is a set of broad yet important regional policy statements of desired future outcomes within the IWS region. These planning principles reflect a belief of preserving and enhancing positives attributes and assets while overcoming and reversing negative issues and concerns. Although these planning principles

are not legally binding, they provide a broad albeit firm foundation upon which residents, local officials, and business owners within the IWS region can base their future community policies and related actions.

**Key Strategies:** Each plan component details a series of general and/or specific key strategies for the IWS region, proposing a variety of policies, partnerships, processes, projects, and programs. Strategies can be pursued cooperatively at the regional level or implemented at the individual municipal level as appropriate.

Each key strategy sheet includes an abstract definition and purpose, a description of its significance, general considerations, key locations of focus if applicable, and identified stakeholders and partners. The key strategy sheets are designed so that each strategy can be used individually (although many are related to several other strategies) as an informative project sheet to delegate tasks or to inform potential partners of a desired project. The sheets are meant to be handled and distributed rather than simply referenced in the collective document that is the comprehensive plan in its entirety.

## Section Three - Implementation

The Implementation section is also known as the “So what?” section. Now that the three Boroughs have articulated key strategies, they are faced with the reality that simply having strategies is just a first step. What are the Boroughs going to do to turn those strategies into action? How are they going to achieve sustainable implementation?

- **West Shore Collaborative.** As the Imagine West Shore Steering Committee worked to develop the Joint Comprehensive Plan, a second group of individuals representing the three boroughs worked to think through the creation of a regional organization that the communities could use to implement the actions outlined in the document. The concept of the West Shore Collaborative (WSC), an organization that will implement

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priority regional initiatives, is described and further defined in the first component of this section.

- **Communication Plan.** Achieving a regional vision will require ongoing dialogue and a strong framework to guide the cooperation of many different people and organizations. To that end, the organization responsible for implementation of the plan will require a solid strategic communication plan as one of the fundamental building blocks for effective and accountable plan delivery. The model communication plan, presented in the second component of this section, outlines a proactive approach for effective two-way communication, regional problem solving, and delivering strong and consistent information to reinforce the idea of a region with one common purpose: the citizens.

## **Section Four - Recreation, Parks, and Open Space**

The Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan is designed to meet the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (DCNR) requirements for recreation, park, and open space planning. The purpose of this Plan is to analyze existing recreation, park, and open space conditions against current and forecasted demands and identify appropriate recommendations for the expansion or improvement of each Borough's recreation, park, and open space facilities and programs. The Plan specifically documents the Boroughs' park and recreation administration, staffing levels, budgets, existing facilities and programs supply and condition, and prioritized recommendations to be implemented over the next 10 years.

## **Section Five - Status of Region**

The final section of the plan both provides background information and looks at historical and recent trends that have influenced and continue to impact the region. The report on the status of the region

is organized into key topical areas such as housing, community facilities, and demographics.

## **Participants and Local / Regional Perspectives**

The following entities and individuals played an essential role in the success of this planning effort by offering professional expertise, financial support, technical input, leadership, and/or guidance.

- **Imagine West Shore Joint Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee** – An independent advisory group representing each of three respective boroughs in the development of the region's joint comprehensive plan for future community development and revitalization. This committee reviewed, developed, and recommended the joint comprehensive plan to each of the borough's planning commissions for recommendation and to borough councils for adoption.

The steering committee, along with county staff, met monthly to review, discuss, develop, and reach consensus on various local and regional issues and themes. They also recommended principles, key strategies, and standards relating to land use and development; housing and neighborhoods; downtown; economic development; transportation; community facilities and services; parks, recreation and open space; and natural and cultural and historic resources. Among the members' various responsibilities, the committee's most important role was that of sharing information between the committees and their borough and community groups, which included borough councils, planning commissions, local revitalization and economic development groups, etc.

- **West Shore Collaborative Task Force** – A group of representatives from each of the three (3) communities formed to learn about other successful regional

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implementation systems, discuss viable organizational options for structure, operations, oversight, etc. This Task Force was asked to think through the development of a viable and sustainable organizational and implementation system (tentatively called the *West Shore Collaborative*).

The Task Force, along with county staff, met monthly to review and discuss organizational structure, operations, leadership, and oversight. Important among the members' various responsibilities was sharing information between the Task Force and their respective borough and community groups (including borough councils, planning commissions, local revitalization / economic development groups, etc).

- **Local Revitalization / Economic Development Groups** – These three local volunteer groups (see below), comprising business and property owners, residents, and local officials, were organized to develop strategies to improve their individual community's downtown and their community at large. Many of the groups' efforts are based on the framework of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Four Point Main Street Approach: design; organization; promotions; and economic restructuring. The groups include:
  - **Camp Hill Economic Development Group**
  - **Lemoyne Downtown Revitalization Committee**
  - **Wormleysburg Revitalization Committee**

In addition to reviewing, analyzing, and identifying common themes and strategies previously developed through individual visioning and action plans for each of the three borough's respective revitalization and economic development groups, these local groups, along with county staff, were each engaged on two occasions to review and reach consensus on various local and regional issues and recommendations relating to downtown and economic development.

- **Stakeholder Interviews** – Approximately twelve people, which includes residents, business owners or municipal officials, were interviewed to provide input on local and regional needs, issues, and opportunities relating to regional cooperation; land use and development; transportation; community services and facilities; downtown revitalization, etc. These individuals may be affected by the IWS planning project or can influence the planning process but are not directly involved with doing the project work.
- **Cumberland County** – These two county entities (see below) provided guidance, oversight, technical, and/or financial assistance and acted as an advocate for and liaison between the revitalization / economic development groups, IWS Steering Committee, and WSC Task Force during this important planning process.
  - **Cumberland County Planning Commission**
  - **Cumberland County Housing and Redevelopment Authority**

## Regional Location

The IWS region is located in the eastern portion of Cumberland County. The region is bound by the Susquehanna River to the east, East Pennsboro Township to the north, Hampden Township and Lower Allen Township to the west, and New Cumberland Borough to the south. The Harvey Taylor Bridge and Market Street Bridge provide direct access to midtown and downtown Harrisburg. Interstate 83 provides access to the "east shore", defined as land on the east shore of the Susquehanna River in Dauphin County, and points north, and south to York County. U.S. Routes 11 and 15 enter the region to the north and travel through the region via the Camp Hill Bypass. Route 11 then splits and heads west, and Route 15 travels south to Gettysburg and Maryland. State Route 581 travels through the region and connects Interstate 81 to Interstate 83. Interstate 81 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-76), and U.S. Route

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22/322 are also located in proximity to the region and provide access to other areas of interest in the state and on the eastern seaboard.

The region's location near the state capital and urban center of Harrisburg allows residents to take advantage of events and activities happening in the city and the Capital Region. The Capital Region is also thought to be a major transportation center. Roadways, rail, and air travel facilities are available and provide residents with easy access to the major urban centers and cities on the East Coast. Harrisburg and other nearby tourist destinations, including Hershey and Gettysburg, provide an opportunity for the IWS region to attract tourists. These centers of activity also provide diverse employment opportunities for residents in the IWS region. The Susquehanna River serves as a tremendous natural and recreational asset to the region.

The IWS Region is graphically shown on Map A.1.1.

## **Local Interrelationships and Locally Influential Factors**

Because of their location, it is logical that the three Boroughs work together to plan for the region. In addition to sharing municipal boundaries, there are several local interrelationships that unite the three boroughs to form the IWS region. These local interrelationships include:

- Transportation
- Housing
- Shopping/downtown
- Community infrastructure
- Emergency services and safety
- Recreation
- Employment centers
- Education
- Susquehanna River

There are also locally influential development, transportation, or economic factors within the region that have an influence on one or more of the three boroughs. These factors include:

- Market Street – Camp Hill and Lemoyne, including Market Street improvements, Lemoyne
- Wormleysburg Waterfront Area
- Housing choices and values
- Aging housing
- Established neighborhoods and retention of character
- Rental occupancy
- Multi-family residential conversions
- Camp Hill Shopping Center, West Shore Plaza, and West Shore Farmers Market
- Specialty stores (e.g. Pennsylvania Bakery – Camp Hill, Lemoyne music stores)
- Downtown Improvement Plans/Committees
- Intergovernmental cooperation

## **Regionally Influential Factors**

The IWS region is not only influenced by factors and changes that occur within the region, but also by other places, developments of regional significance, and natural resources that are located in proximity to the region. These factors may influence transportation, economic development, or natural resources, among other things, in the three boroughs and in South-Central Pennsylvania as a whole. Factors within the region and surrounding areas that may influence change in the IWS region and on a broader scale are listed below and grouped by area of interest. As this plan is implemented, the three boroughs should be cognizant of these factors and their potential influences to strategically capitalize upon opportunities, and to mitigate any potential threats.

- Route 15 and Route 581 Interchange improvements
- Interstate 83 and Lowther Street improvements

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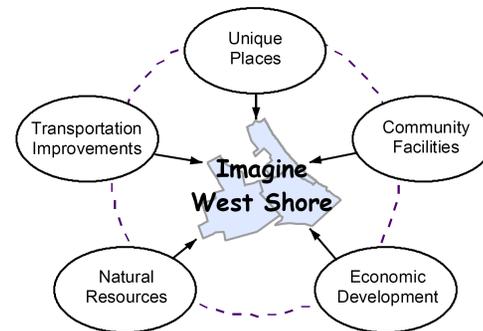
- PA Turnpike
- Interstate highway network
- CAT routes and transfer station
- Market Street Bridge improvements
- Walnut Street Walking Bridge
- Market Street & related improvements – Camp Hill and Lemoyne
- Harrisburg International Airport and Capital City Airport
- Other river bridges
- Rail road and train station/Corridor One
- Sidewalks on Market Street Bridge
- Lemoyne Bottleneck
- City Island
- City of Harrisburg
- State Capital
- Naval Support Facility and Defense Distribution Center
- Harrisburg International Airport and Capital City Airport
- Camp Hill State Correctional Institution
- Access to employment, commercial, and cultural centers
- Camp Hill Shopping Center
- West Shore Plaza,
- West Shore Farmers Market
- Wormleysburg Waterfront Area
- Downtown Improvement Plans
- Specialty stores (e.g. Pennsylvania Bakery, Lemoyne music stores)
- Susquehanna River
- Conodoguinet Creek
- Yellow Breeches Creek
- Educational facilities
- Local and regional recreational opportunities
- Local government services and county government
- Lemoyne Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Intergovernmental cooperation
- Taxes and Cost of services
- Holy Spirit Hospital and regional healthcare facilities
- Historical assets and historic preservation

- Regional events (e.g. Kipona/Music Fest/Arts Fest; car shows in Carlisle; Hershey)
- Aging infrastructure

## Regionally Influential Factors beyond Local Control

In addition to the factors listed above, there are several development forces outside the control of the region that could shape the region's future. These factors should be recognized, especially since the three boroughs cannot directly control them or decide their fate. These influential development forces beyond local control include:

- Proposed improvement to Route 15 and Route 581 interchange
- Proposed I-83 improvements
- Development regulations in surrounding municipalities
- HATS/PennDOT
- Rising home prices
- Traffic from adjoining municipalities
- Internal flooding and stormwater issues
- Changing demographics
- Regional commercial developments
- Major employment centers
- Susquehanna River planning and marketing
- Improvements in surrounding municipalities or on City Island



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## **Planning as a Concept**

The comprehensive plan is a policy guide that is designed to assist in making decisions for the orderly development and redevelopment of the region. Its primary objective is to promote and improve the quality of life, health, safety, and conveniences for residents of the IWS region. It is intended to organize and coordinate the interrelated collection of people, ideas, land, facilities, services, infrastructure, land uses, and recreational and environmental elements that comprise the region as a whole. Thus, the term “comprehensive” is used to describe the scope of plan content.

The comprehensive plan should not be viewed as a solution to all of the problems and concerns of the community, nor does it represent a finished product only to be reviewed and updated every decade or so. Rather, it is an ongoing process and schedule which municipal governments may use as a roadmap to guide them through future decisions. It should be noted that when changes and conditions evolve within the region, the comprehensive plan should be evaluated and modified to address changes and recognize demands.

In part, the comprehensive plan is a factual report that examines how the past has led to the present. It is not only a report that can be used to chart the region’s future, but also a tool that describes the plans and actions necessary to achieve its objectives for the future. Often, much of the value in a community’s comprehensive plan is found in the decisions that are made in the process of preparing the plan and the actions that are taken to implement the plan. For example, strategies that are described in detail in this plan represent the items that currently demand the greatest level of attention in the IWS region. Other strategies have been listed that may be used by the region in the future; these strategies should be reviewed and updated to determine their relevancy in the region.

## **Legislative Authority**

Pennsylvania local governments receive legislative authority from the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act 247 as reenacted and amended, to manage and plan for development within their municipal boundaries. This legislation sets forth general guidelines, as well as specific administrative and procedural requirements, that municipalities must adhere to in developing and implementing municipal or multi-municipal comprehensive plans. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code states that the multi-municipal comprehensive plan shall include the following:

- A statement of objectives of the municipality concerning its future development
- A plan for land use
- A plan to meet the housing needs of present residents and of those individuals and families anticipated to reside in the municipality
- A plan for the movement of people and goods
- A plan for community facilities and utilities
- A statement of the interrelationships among the various plan components
- A discussion of short- and long-range plan implementation strategies
- Either a statement indicating that the existing and proposed development of the municipality is compatible with the existing and proposed development and plans in contiguous portions of neighboring municipalities, or a statement indicating measures which have been taken to provide buffers or other transitional devices between disparate land uses, and a statement indicating that the existing and proposed development of the municipalities is generally consistent with the objectives and plans of the county comprehensive plan;
- A plan for the protection of natural and historic resources to the extent not preempted by federal or state law; and
- A plan for the reliable supply of water.

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## **Legal Base for the Plan**

The right of a municipality to exercise its authority in legislating regulations governing the use of the land has been upheld by the state and federal courts. The courts grant that a municipality has the right to manage its own development and growth activities within certain legal constraints. The primary method, upheld by the United States, to protect and provide for the best interests of citizens of a municipality is through the adoption of a zoning ordinance. However, this method of safeguarding the public welfare is not sufficient by itself. It must be supplemented by the adoption of certain other mutually supportive codes and ordinances, in particular, a subdivision and land development ordinance, building and housing codes, etc.

In order to provide for the management of land uses as prescribed in the zoning ordinance, the courts acknowledge the need for a municipality to properly evaluate the use of all land within its political jurisdiction and to give consideration to land uses in areas adjacent

to its borders. To ensure that zoning districts are not arbitrarily determined, the courts require evidence that the various land use districts established in the community are related to an overall land use plan for the entire municipality.

Through the adoption of the MPC, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has granted local governments the authority to enact a zoning ordinance to implement the comprehensive plan. Therefore, a properly adopted “comprehensive plan” for land use and development is clearly needed to provide the proper foundation for its implementation through zoning and other related land management ordinances.

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Acknowledgements

Final Draft - January 9, 2009



# *Imagine West Shore Joint Comprehensive Plan*

The Boroughs of Camp Hill, Lemoyne & Wormleysburg, Cumberland County, PA



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Final Draft - January 9, 2009

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