

2016 Annual Report

LOOKING AT THE FUTURE OF CAMBRIA COUNTY **TOGETHER**



Cambria County



Planning
Commission

2016 Planning Commission Members

David Belz, Chair
Ron Rovansek, Vice Chair
Lonnie Batdorf, Treasurer
Eric Wolf, Secretary
Toni-Renee Anderson
Russell Kiel
James White
Tim Whited

Planning Commission Staff

Ethan Imhoff, AICP
Executive Director
eimhoff@co.cambria.pa.us

Chris Allison
Transportation Planner
callison@co.cambria.pa.us

Shanna Murphy Sosko
Community Development
Planner
smurphy@co.cambria.pa.us

Colleen Bukowski
Administrative Assistant
cbukowski@co.cambria.pa.us

401 Candlelight Drive
Ebensburg, PA 15931
(814) 472-2106

www.cambriaplanning.org

The Importance of Partnerships

Regionalization is becoming an increasingly important idea not only in Cambria County, but throughout the Commonwealth. Within Pennsylvania's fractured system of municipal government, control of fiscal, regulatory and land use decisions often rests with the local municipality. This is a model that has become increasingly outdated, inefficient and costly. Cambria County has sixty-three municipalities, each with its own set of elected officials, solicitor, engineer, and volunteer boards (which sometimes go unfilled). In an era of decreasing municipal resources we are forced to ask ourselves if this model best serves our residents. Are there ways county organizations such as the planning commission can help municipalities overcome the institutional barriers currently in place?

Taking a leadership role in these efforts, the CCPC decided to embark on a first of its kind effort to develop a regional comprehensive plan with our five partner counties from the Southern Alleghenies region. A regional comprehensive plan comprising of six counties has never been attempted before in Pennsylvania. However, as the planning directors from each county discussed the project over a period of months, it became clear the opportunities and efficiencies of such a project have promise. The PA Department of Community and Economic Development agreed, awarding the six counties the largest ever grant from the Municipal Assistance Program that will fund half of the project. This effort will enhance inter-county collaboration, save money, identify regional priorities and most importantly, establish a path to implement the plan priorities.

The regional comprehensive plan effort is branded Alleghenies Ahead, Shared Strategies for a Stronger Region. The moniker embraces the shared geography that shapes the region while we commit to the development of a plan that will implement quality of life improvements that reach every county resident.

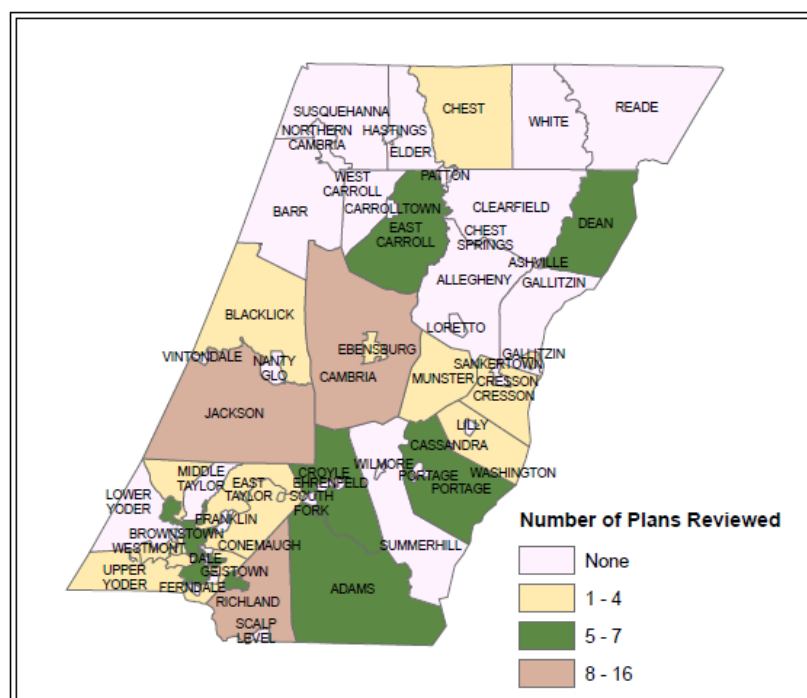
TOGETHER, we accomplish much more,

Ethan Imhoff, AICP
Executive Director

Subdivision and Land Development

In 2016, Cambria County Planning Commission staff reviewed 104 sets of plans and collected a total of \$11,905.00 in review fees.

Some locally significant projects were a preliminary land development plan review for a natural gas power plant located in Jackson Township, land development plans for a new elementary school in Westmont Borough, a Tractor Supply store in Cambria Township and a subdivision review for the East Hills Outpatient Center in Richland Township.



Project Reviews

The CCPC reviews a myriad of applications for the Department of Environmental Protection, including mining related permits and stormwater related permits. The Planning Commission also reviews applications for funding for various public works projects from several state and federal funding sources. The table below represents the projects the CCPC reviewed in 2016.

Department of Environmental Protection	48
Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST)	9
PA Small Water and Sewer Program	10
Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds	2
USDA Rural Funding	3
PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund	3
Other	10

Some notable applications that were reviewed include DEP applications for a new Sheetz store in Patton Borough and outpatient care center in Cambria Township. Also reviewed were various funding requests for several sewer and water rehabilitation and replacement projects throughout the county.

LTAP

Throughout the year, the Planning Commission partners with PennDOT to conduct the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) in Cambria County. LTAP provides free training courses and technical assistance to local elected officials, municipal employees and other parties involved in the maintenance of local roads. Cambria County had a very successful year, hosting four LTAP at Penn Highlands Community College in Ebensburg. These four LTAP classes had 77 registrants total.



Spring 2016

Safe Driver

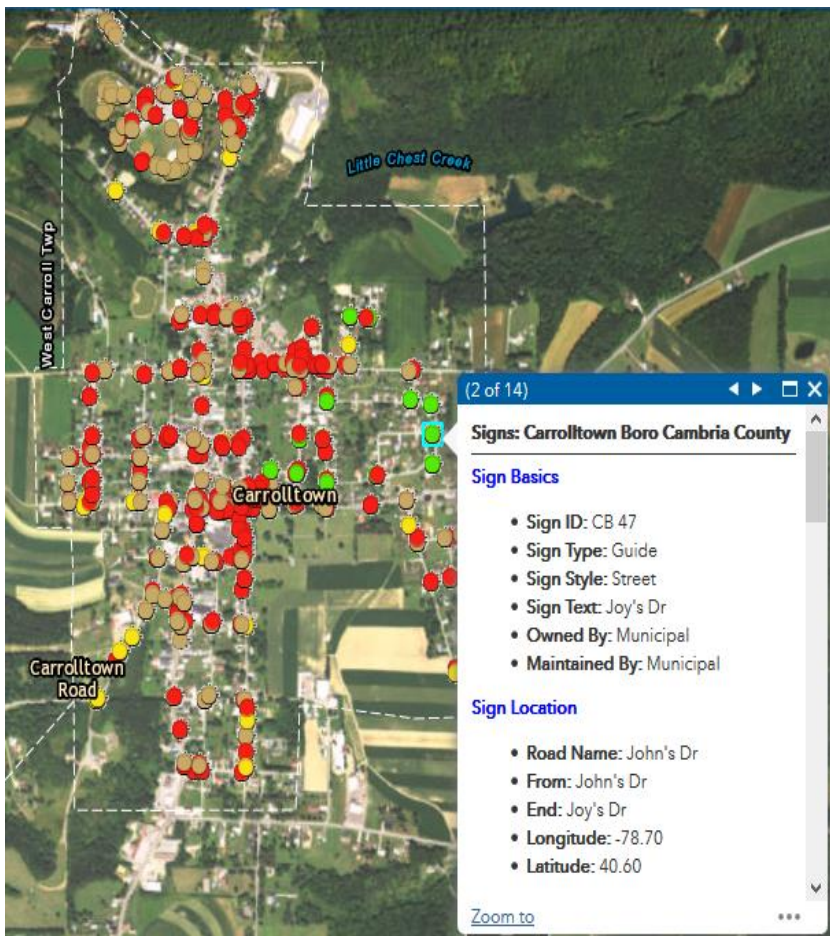
Summer 2016

Traffic Signs

Fall 2016

Engineering and Traffic Studies

Salt and Snow Management



Sign Inventory/GIS

In 2016, Planning Commission staff continued working on a sign inventory using the tool that was created the previous year. CCPC staff completed an inventory of the signs in Carrolltown Borough. Staff inventoried and mapped 592 signs and 353 poles in the borough. The final product of this inventory includes photos of each sign, a PDF form completed with various attributes for each sign and pole, and GIS mapping to show the location of each sign and the attributes associated with it. This tool will assist municipalities with future planning efforts to address retroreflectivity compliance and budgeting for new materials.

Long Range Transportation Plan Update

In 2016, Planning Commission staff completed a comprehensive update to the Cambria County Long Range Transportation Plan. The plan is a clean-sheet redesign of long-term strategies, goals and objectives for the County's transportation system, incorporating all transportation modes. It was designed with an emphasis on realistic implementation, and included a robust public involvement and outreach effort. It was formally adopted by the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization on August 11, 2016, and can be downloaded in its entirety at the Planning Commission website: www.cambriaplanning.org. Major initiatives and recommendations in the plan include: Enhancement of public transportation services, planning for freight movement, completing an update to the Cambria County Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan, and expanding passenger rail service. Many of these initiatives are now underway, or will be started in 2017.

Transportation Program Technical Assistance

The CCPC provides technical assistance and, through the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO), advises on numerous transportation programs. A few examples of these efforts in 2016 are as follows:

- CCPC staff provided technical assistance to the Cambria County Transit Authority as they completed an update to their Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services plan.
- Staff advised the Johnstown Area Heritage Association (JAHA) in their preparation of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a feasibility study on the rehabilitation and potential uses of the Johnstown Passenger Rail Station.
- Staff also participated in a hearing of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives Transportation Committee, concerning passenger rail service between Pittsburgh and Harrisburg. Several Cambria County officials, including Johnstown Mayor Frank Janakovic, and Cambria County Commissioner Tom Chernisky testified in favor of enhancing the rail service.
- Additionally, staff reviewed one application for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Adams Township submitted an application for sidewalk



The Johnstown Train Station under repairs during the summer of 2016.

improvements in Creslo. CCPC reviewed the application and provided comments to PennDOT. The Township was successful in their funding application.

Admiral Peary Highway Corridor Plan

In 2016 the CCPC, along with consultant The EADS Group, began a study of the Admiral Peary Highway corridor, from Mount Aloysius College, through Cresson, to the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site. The overall goal of the project is to identify ways for the community to improve safety, appearance, and marketability in the corridor. The plan is heavily-focused on stakeholder input, as well as implementation, with the intention of developing a list of five-to-ten projects with which to target grant funding. A stakeholder group of local officials, business owners, and concerned citizens was formed, and several rounds of public outreach were conducted. A planning charrette held in July, 2016, in which focus groups intently studied all aspects of the corridor. A final list of seven implementable projects has been developed, including the following top three priorities:



- Developing a trail connection between Cresson Veterans' Park and the Allegheny Portage Railroad Historic Site
- Pedestrian improvements, including sidewalks, between Mount Aloysius College and the PA Route 53 Intersection.
- Intersection improvements at the Mount Aloysius College entrance, as well as the PA Route 53 intersection, and Saint Joseph Street.

A few of these projects have already begun implementation, even as a final draft of the plan is being written. The plan is expected to be completed in spring, 2017.

Conceptual sidewalk design at the intersection of the Admiral Peary Highway and PA 53.

County Bridges

During 2016 the CCPC continued to provide technical assistance to the Cambria County Commissioners regarding prioritizing maintenance and repair of the County's bridges. As a result of this collaboration, projects to rehabilitate or replace seven (7) of the County's eleven (11) structurally deficient bridges will be initiated in 2017, as follows:

- Wildwood Bridge: Replacement using State funds; Cost: \$620,000; Completion: Fall, 2017
- Carney's Crossing Bridge: Replacement using Act 13 funds; Cost: \$485,565; Completion: Fall, 2017

- Vetera Dam Bridge, Bradley Junction Bridge, Little Paint Creek Bridge: Rehabilitation/Deck Replacement using County \$5 local use fee funds; Cost: \$407,246; Completion: 2017
- Creslo/St. Michael Bridge, Van Ormer Bridge: Rehabilitation/Deck Replacement using State funds; Cost: \$675,000; Completion: 2020

Twelve Year Transportation Program Update

The Twelve Year Program (TYP) functions as the formal guide for budgeting, design, and construction of transportation improvements; and as federal and state funds become available, projects are implemented. It is updated biannually. In 2016, CCPC staff, in coordination with PennDOT and the Cambria County Transit Authority, completed drafts of the 2017 TYP for highways and bridges, as well as public transit projects. The drafts were presented for public review, and an air quality conformity analysis was completed. The 2017 TYP update, as well as the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Public Transit Improvement Program, air quality conformity findings, and associated documents, were approved at a combined meeting of the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) Technical and Coordinating Committees on June 22, 2016, and went into effect on October 1, 2016.

Highway Performance Monitoring Program (HPMS)

Staff reviewed sample sections for the 2016 HPMS data verification, and a total of fifty sample sections were selected for field verification. Eighteen of the sections were found to need changes or corrections, and staff subsequently submitted those corrections to the PennDOT Central Office. Also in 2016, CCPC staff participated in a quality assurance review of HPMS data in Cambria County. Staff from PennDOT Central office field-verified numerous HPMS sample sections in the County, to determine data collection quality and consistency to federal standards. The accuracy rate of CCPC's data collection was found to be 99.28%; slightly above the statewide average of 98.58%.