

WEST MEAD TOWNSHIP



CRAWFORD COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2004

**WEST MEAD TOWNSHIP
Crawford County
Pennsylvania**

Resolution No. 2004 – 4

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

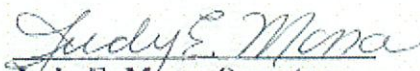
Be it Resolved and it is hereby Resolved by the Board of Supervisors of West Mead Township as follows:

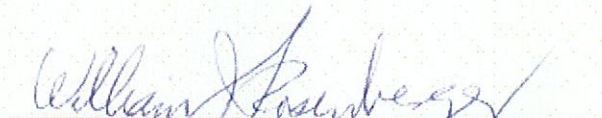
- 1. The West Mead Township Comprehensive Plan dated February 26, 2004 is hereby adopted in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code as and for the Comprehensive Plan for West Mead Township.**
- 2. The 2004 West Mead Township Comprehensive Plan hereby adopted supercedes and replaces the prior Township Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1983.**
- 3. The 2004 West Mead Township Comprehensive Plan hereby adopted shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until amended or repealed by further Resolution of the Township Supervisors in accordance with applicable law.**

***Resolved* this 11th day of May 2004 by the Board of Supervisors of West Mead Township.**

West Mead Township Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:


Judy E. Monna, Secretary


William J. Rosenberger, Chairman

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FOR

WEST MEAD TOWNSHIP CRAWFORD, COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA

May 2004

West Mead Township Planning Commission

John S. Kerr, Chairman

Thomas J. Peterson, Vice Chairman

James A. Bucci, Secretary

Richard M. Curry, Assistant Secretary

Lyle A. Watson, Member

West Mead Township Board of Supervisors

William J. Rosenberger, Chairman

John A. Shartle, Vice Chairman

Walter R. Young, Supervisor

Judy E. Mona, Secretary

Richard A. Deiss, Township Engineer

Alan R. Shaddinger, Solicitor

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Introduction

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, through Act 247 of 1968 (as amended), establishes the legitimacy of municipal planning efforts. Municipalities may plan for the use and development of land within their community. They may plan for how community facilities and services are provided for the residents, and how transportation needs are addressed. Townships can develop a policy guide or Comprehensive Plan, to help local elected officials make informed decisions about the future well-being of their community. The West Mead Township Comprehensive Plan was originally developed in 1971, and subsequently updated and revised in 1983. Work on the current update of the Township's Comprehensive Plan began in 1999 under the direction of the Board of Supervisors.

Comprehensive Plans contain two main sections. The first section establishes a framework from which the second section is developed. The Background portion of this Plan has gathered pertinent data on the past and existing conditions of the Township, and in some cases attempts to forecast trends which must be considered in the development of plans for the future. These strategies, and suggested policies and projects are found in the Plan portion of this document, beginning on page 43.

The 1983 Comprehensive Plan identified many issues to be addressed through specific policies and projects for the betterment of the community, and achievement of the revised Community Development Objectives. Altogether, there were 23 Policies and nearly as many projects, identified in the 1983 Plan. Approximately one-third of these related to land use issues. Transportation related projects and policies represented a significant portion of the Plan, identifying fourteen specific projects to improve the road network of the Township. The balance of the Plan addressed many of the other basic needs of the community, including sewage facilities, water supply, solid waste, recreation, housing, and economic development. A complete assessment of the implementation of the 1983 Plan is not given here. However, the majority of policies pertaining to land use were implemented through the adoption of the Township's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Considering the attention given to transportation issues, the results are mixed at best. Many of the projects, especially those pertaining to a "residential loop road", have never been accomplished. Similarly, the balance of the Plan policies and projects has met with a range of success. For example, the Township has implemented several of the recreation related objectives, but has made no progress towards a public water supply system as suggested. As with any comprehensive and long-range plan, community priorities can change and funding resources can be lost. These are just a few of the factors that determine the extent to which plans are implemented.

Section I

The culmination of this planning process has brought revised objectives for the community to achieve, the strategies to accomplish these objectives, and has identified the means to undertake these strategies. The process to develop this revised Comprehensive Plan was founded in community input, beginning with a community-wide survey and followed by multiple community oriented meetings. Extensive background information was gathered and included as Section II of this plan. Section III contains the revised Community Development Objectives, followed by the Policies and Projects suggested to implement the Objectives. Short and long term strategies for undertaking the Policies and Projects are identified beginning on page 57. It is the intent of this document to act as a policy guide for the Board of Supervisors for the course of the next 5-10 years. However, this does not indicate that every element of this Plan will come to fruition. Any plan that does not allow for changes or adaptation to future circumstances within the community, economy, or otherwise, will only act to hinder the development of the Township. It is important then, for the Township to continually evaluate the implementation of this Plan.

Summary

Section II of the West Mead Township Comprehensive Plan is a compilation of text, data, and maps, all serving to provide a background for the development of a revised Township plan. The data presented in this section was gathered from a variety of sources as noted in the Appendix.

There are actually five components to Section II. These are the main areas studied in the development of any municipal comprehensive plan, and they include the People, the Land, the Community Facilities and Structures, and the township Budget. A thorough study of these elements is essential in producing plans and policy ideas relevant to the community. For example, planning for more township roads would make little sense in a community where transportation infrastructure was underutilized, and the township budget could not support further road maintenance.

The following sub-sections will present the salient data in charts, maps and text. This background section also includes relevant data from the community survey that was conducted in coordination with this comprehensive plan update. The community survey asked numerous questions pertaining to community facilities, land use issues, and the local economy. Results of the survey are included throughout this section in order to highlight the public perception of various topics along with the factual data.

This section of the comprehensive plan, along with the previous community meetings, laid the foundation for the West Mead Township Planning Commission to develop the revised Community Development Objectives and Plans. It should be noted that gathering and reviewing data should be an ongoing process. Major changes and/or circumstances within the community could provide a rationale for modifying the plans and policies as outlined in Section III. The document produced as the result of this data should be revisited frequently, and updates should occur as necessary.

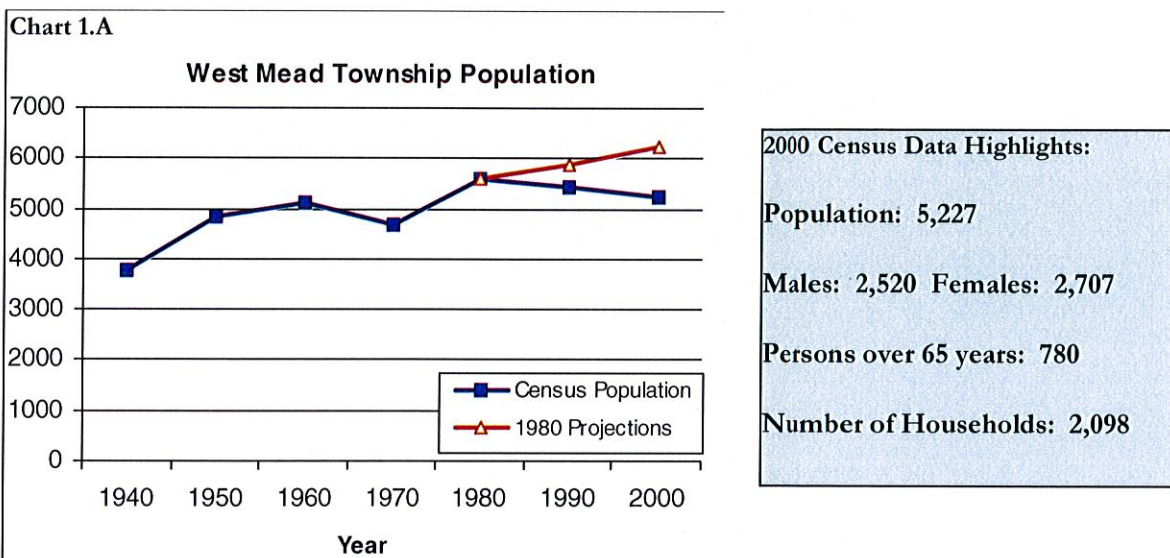
Section II.1

Section II.1 The People

An analysis of the people in West Mead Township is an important component of the comprehensive planning process. Changes in size, make-up, distribution, economic status of residents impact the Township and the region in various ways, including types and amounts of services, tax revenue, and infrastructure needs.

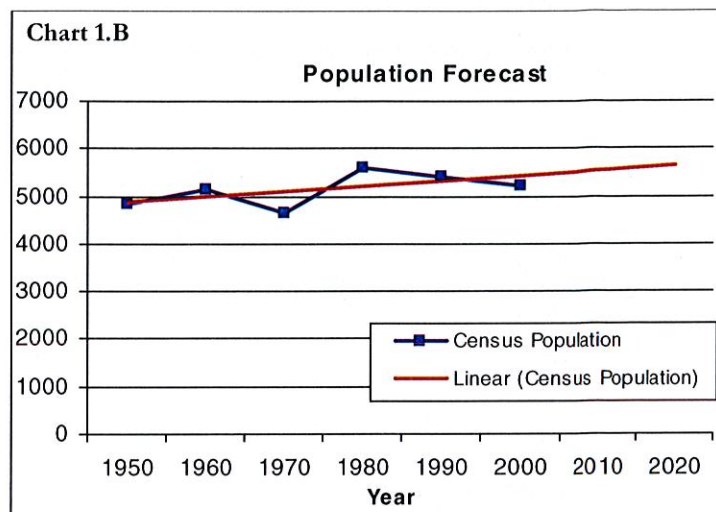
1.1 General Demographic Trends

West Mead Township has not seen predictable population trends over the last several decades. The township has in fact maintained a relatively stable population over the last 50 years. Chart 1.A shows the population remaining around 5,000 persons since 1950, with the greatest change from 1970-1980, an increase of 938 persons.



The 1983 revision to the comprehensive plan anticipated a continued linear increase during the 1980's and 1990's, projecting a 2000 population just over 6,000. However, as Chart 1.A indicates, the population has actually decreased over the last 20 years, yet has remained over 5,000.

Chart 1.B displays a projected linear regression equation to West Mead Township's population values beginning in 1950. The graph indicates that in spite of the Census figures from the last two decades, the Township will likely see a slight increase over the next twenty years if consistent with the trends from the second half of the decade. It is important to remember, these are best guess figures, and major events or changes in the economy of the nation, state, and county are not considered. For example, major industrial development in the Keystone Opportunity Zone could bring significant numbers of people into the County, and subsequently, West Mead Township.



The age characteristics of West Mead Township are displayed in the series of charts labeled 1.C, 1.D, and 1.E. Age groups that experienced increases from 1980 to 1990 include the 35-44 years olds, gaining 192 individuals (28% increase within the group), and the two age groups between 65 and 84, increasing a total of 65 persons. All other age groups actually experienced a decline in this time period. The most significant decrease occurred in the 14-17 and 55-59 age groups, each losing around a hundred persons (28%) in both groups.

While two age groups gained a large percentage of persons, the majority of the groups lost between 5%-30%, reflected in the general thinning of the bars on Chart 1.D. The general aging progression appears to continue as indicated on Chart 1.E. From 1990 to 2000, six age groups gained numbers, while nine lost. Five of the six groups that gained were over 45 years of age, with the largest increase occurring in the 45-54 category, which gained 243 persons. The largest declines were in the under 9, 25-29, and 30-34 age brackets, each losing 145, 112, and 97 persons respectively.

Chart 1.C

West Mead
1980 Census

525 475 425 375 325 275 225 175 125 75 25 25 75 125 175 225 275 325 375 425 475 525

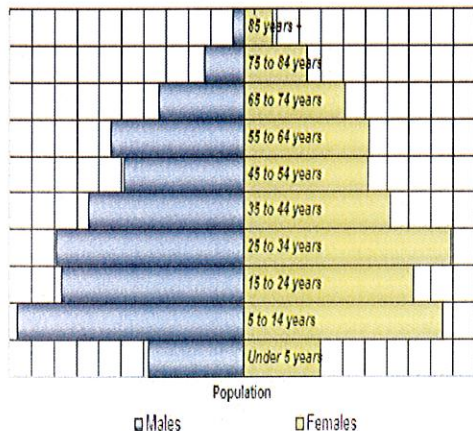


Chart 1.D

West Mead
1990 Census

525 475 425 375 325 275 225 175 125 75 25 25 75 125 175 225 275 325 375 425 475 525

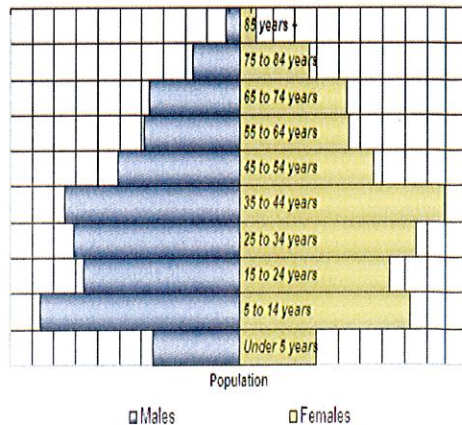
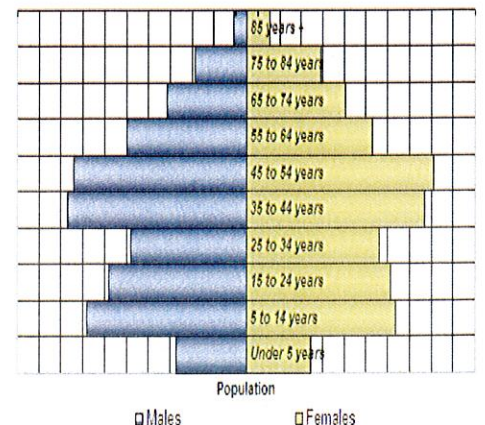


Chart 1.E

West Mead
2000 Census

525 475 425 375 325 275 225 175 125 75 25 25 75 125 175 225 275 325 375 425 475 525



Section II.1

In addition to the general aging pattern and loss of population trend, the group of women considered to be in their child-bearing years (18-44 years) lost numbers from 1990 to 2000. Previously, from 1970 to 1990, this age group had increased steadily. This age group is important for maintaining a stable population, considering the overall trend for migration, which predominates northwestern Pennsylvania. However, this trend would lead to a younger median population, and demand more services than are produced by these individuals. In addition to the recent decline of this portion of the population, the number of senior citizens has steadily increased from 1970 to 2000, from 559 to 780.

Table 1.A represents the portion of the township's population that is considered the working and non-working sectors. The portion of individuals between the ages of 18 and 65 increased from 56% in 1970 to 61% in 2000. This mirrored the County trend for the same time period. The other age group which consistently grew by a single percent every decade was the over 65 population, reaching 15% in 2000. The youth of the Township, those under 18 years, has steadily decreased from 32% in 1970 to 25% in 2000.

Table 1.A Age Distribution Trends

		1970 Percent	1980 Percent	1990 Percent	2000 Percent
W. Mead	<18 years	32%	30%	27%	25%
County	<18 years	33%		26%	25%
W. Mead	18 – 64 yrs	56%	57%	59%	61%
County	18 – 64 yrs	55%		59%	60%
W. Mead	>64 years	12%	13%	14%	15%
County	>64 years	12%		15%	16%

Racial Characteristics:

The diversity of West Mead Township is limited. Most recent figures show the racial make-up of the Township remaining predominantly white. 2000 Census figures show the white population as 96%. However, since 1960 the non-white population has grown from roughly 1% to the current 4% at a steady rate. If the current trends remain, whites will remain over 90% of the Township's population for the duration of the next two decades.

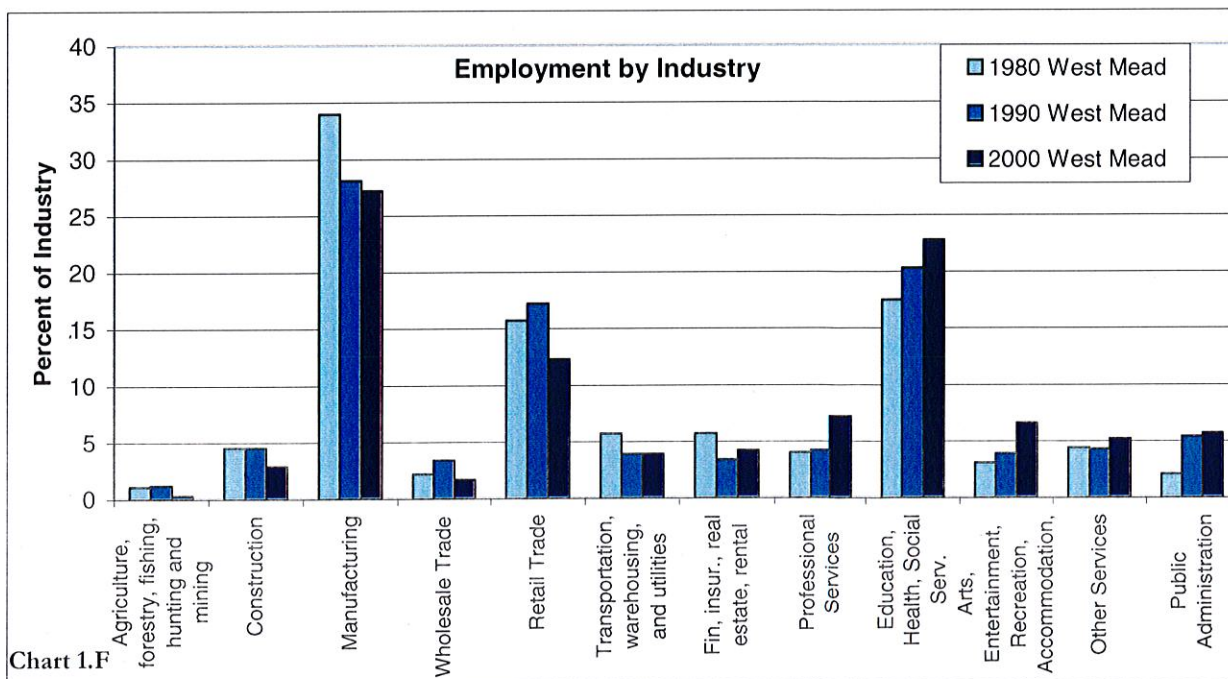
Educational Attainment:

The 1983 Comprehensive Plan indicated that more than 50% of all persons 25 years old and over completed high school. 10% of the Township's population older than 25 years went on to complete college and further. This closely mirrored the County's statistics. In 1990, the educational attainment for those 25 years and older was significantly better. 79.5% had obtained high school diplomas, while 21.5% at least completed undergraduate college. This was higher than the County's 74.1% and 16.4% respectively. The States figures are 74.7% and 24.5%.

The positive trend in educational attainment continued during the 1990's, bringing the portion of West Mead residents with at least a high school education to 89.9%. Those which completed undergraduate college decreased only slightly, remaining over 20%, compared to the 14.7% of the County as a whole.

Economic/Income Characteristics:

Chart 1.F illustrates how the people of West Mead Township are employed by industry over the last three decades. The three major industries represented in West Mead Township are *Manufacturing*, *Retail Trade*, and *Educational, Health and Social Services*. Of these top three industries, the only sector that saw a decline from 1980 (34%) to 2000 (27.2%) was the Manufacturing sector, following the same trend experienced throughout the county. Retail Trade increased from 1980 to 1990 by nearly 2%, followed by a decline from 1990 to 2000 of 4.9% to its current level of 12.3%. The last major industry, Educational, Health and Human Services has steadily increased each decade to its current level of 22.8%. Most other professional or service related industries have seen small increases in the last two decades.



Section II.1

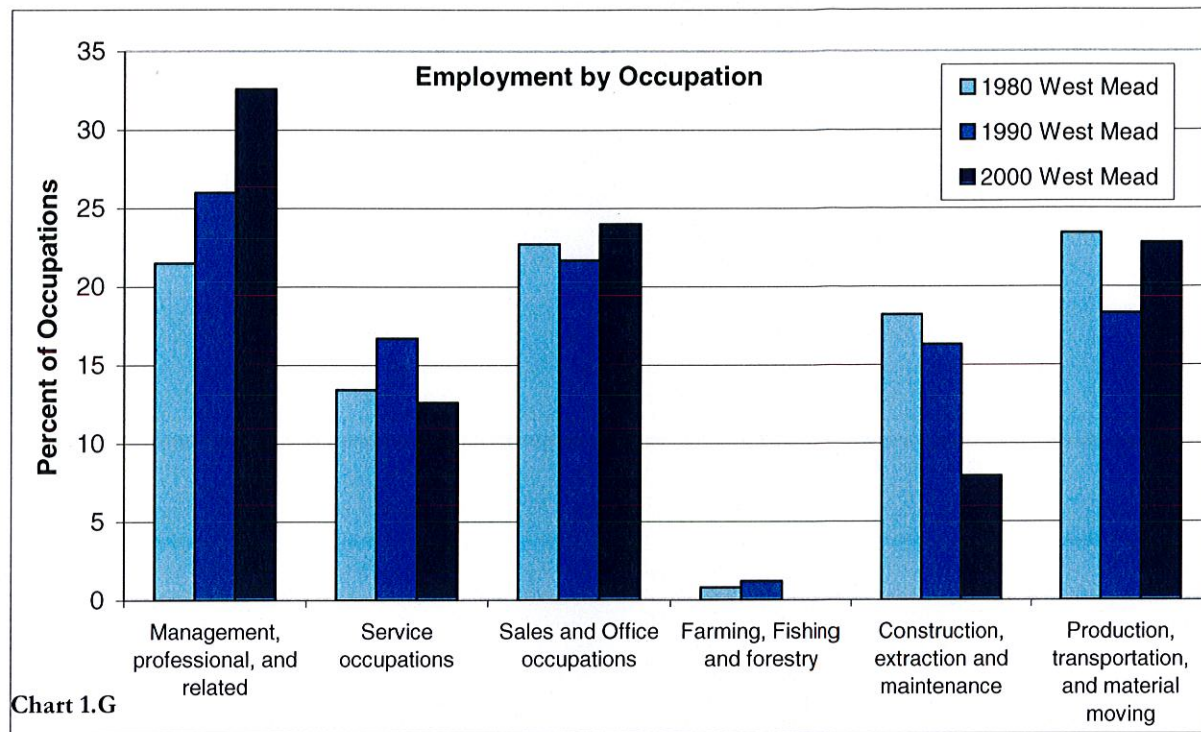


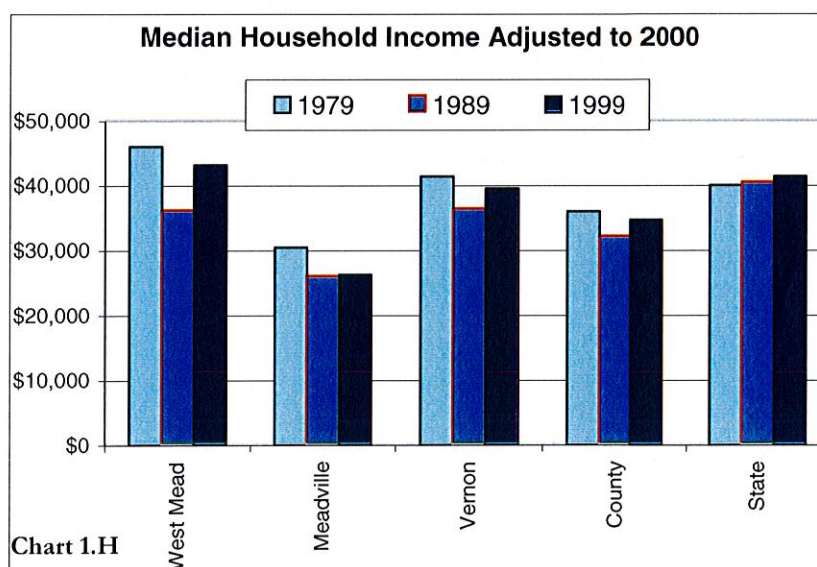
Chart 1.G reflects the distribution of the West Mead population by occupation for 1980, 1990, and 2000. The distribution is fairly diversified across occupations, with the first three categories on the chart making up nearly 70% of all occupations in 2000. Meanwhile construction, production and transportation related occupations have slipped to only 30% of all occupations, compared to around 40% in 1980. Construction related occupations have steadily lost numbers over the last two decades, while production related occupations rebounded during the 1990's, as demonstrated on the chart.

It now appears, according to the 2000 Census data, that a shift has occurred in the distribution of occupations in West Mead Township. Management, professional and related occupations are clearly the largest single category, making up nearly 33% of all occupations. These occupations typically generate higher incomes, and results in higher median incomes than other municipalities with fewer wage earners in the same category.

Income:

The median household income for West Mead residents increased from \$19,427 in 1979 to \$25,933 in 1989, and then to \$41,793 in 2000. However, to view the buying power of these incomes over time, one must adjust these incomes using the Consumer Price Index. Chart 1.H, has adjusted all the Median Household Incomes to the year 2000. As indicated in the chart, the median household income declined in buying power from 1979 to 1989, only to rebound from 1989 to 1999.

According to Census 2000, households in West Mead surpassed the State, County, Vernon Township, and City of Meadville median household incomes. This data is supported by the distribution of occupations discussed in the previous section, where Management and Professional occupations were shown to make up a large portion of the income earners in the Township.



Section II.2 The Land

2.1 Existing Uses of Land:

The Existing Land Use Map for West Mead Township was developed during the spring of 2002. The data used to develop this map was from several sources. The primary data sources include: 1992 USGS Digital Orthophotography; 2002 West Mead Property Line Map; 2002 Crawford County Emergency Management 911 Address GIS coverage; West Mead Township Planning Commission review; and West Mead Township Zoning Officer review. An 11"x17" map of the existing land use is enclosed (Map 2.A). However, a 36"x42" map is available at the West Mead Township Building and the Crawford County Planning office.

Land Use Categories:

The land use patterns in West Mead Township are broken into 10 categories. These categories are similar to the categories used in the 1983 Comprehensive Plan, in order to analyze changes in land use over time. A brief description of the land use categories follows:

Residential: Land in use primarily for single-family dwellings. The area identified as residential use generally follows property lines where the lots are under 2 acres. In areas where the residence is located on a lot larger than 2 acres, only a portion of the lot, consistent with surrounding trends, is identified as residential.

Multi-family Residential: Land in use for multi-family residences; including duplexes, condominiums, or apartment complexes.

Agricultural: Land in use for crop production and/or pasture.

Recreation (Public and Private): Land in use for active recreation purposes, whether public or private).

Public Land: Land in use by a government or semi-public agency.

Conservation: Land owned by the State Fish and Boat Commission.

Mixed Use (Residential/Commercial): Use of land for both residential and commercial/industrial purposes.

Commercial: Wholesale or retail business activities other than manufacturing, including services.

Section II.2

Industrial: Land in use for the manufacture or production of goods and materials, including their storage.

Undeveloped: This land is currently undeveloped for any use. This also includes areas that have been subdivided, but to this point in time remain undeveloped for their intended purpose. A major portion of this land is wooded.

Table 2.A. West Mead Land Use

	2002 Acres	2002 Percent	1983 Percent	% Change
Agricultural	1770.5	15	23	-8
Residential	1979.5	17	13	4
Multi-family Residential	33.6	<1	<1	<1
Commercial	49.3	<1	<1	<1
Industrial	203.9	2	2	<1
Conservation	333.5	3	3	<1
Recreation (Public/Private)	291.4	3	2	1
Mixed Use	53.1	<1	<1	<1
Public/Semi-Public	246.6	2	3	-1
Undeveloped (woodland/brush)	6289.7	54	51	+3
Public Roads	420.0	4	3	+1

Total Acres: 11,670.8 acres. The discrepancy in total acres of the Township from the 1983 Plan (11,743 acres) is due to several factors. The acreages determined for this Plan revision were acquired from digital orthophotography, a source not available during the 1983 Plan work. The difference of 72.2 acres is less than one percent difference between the data.

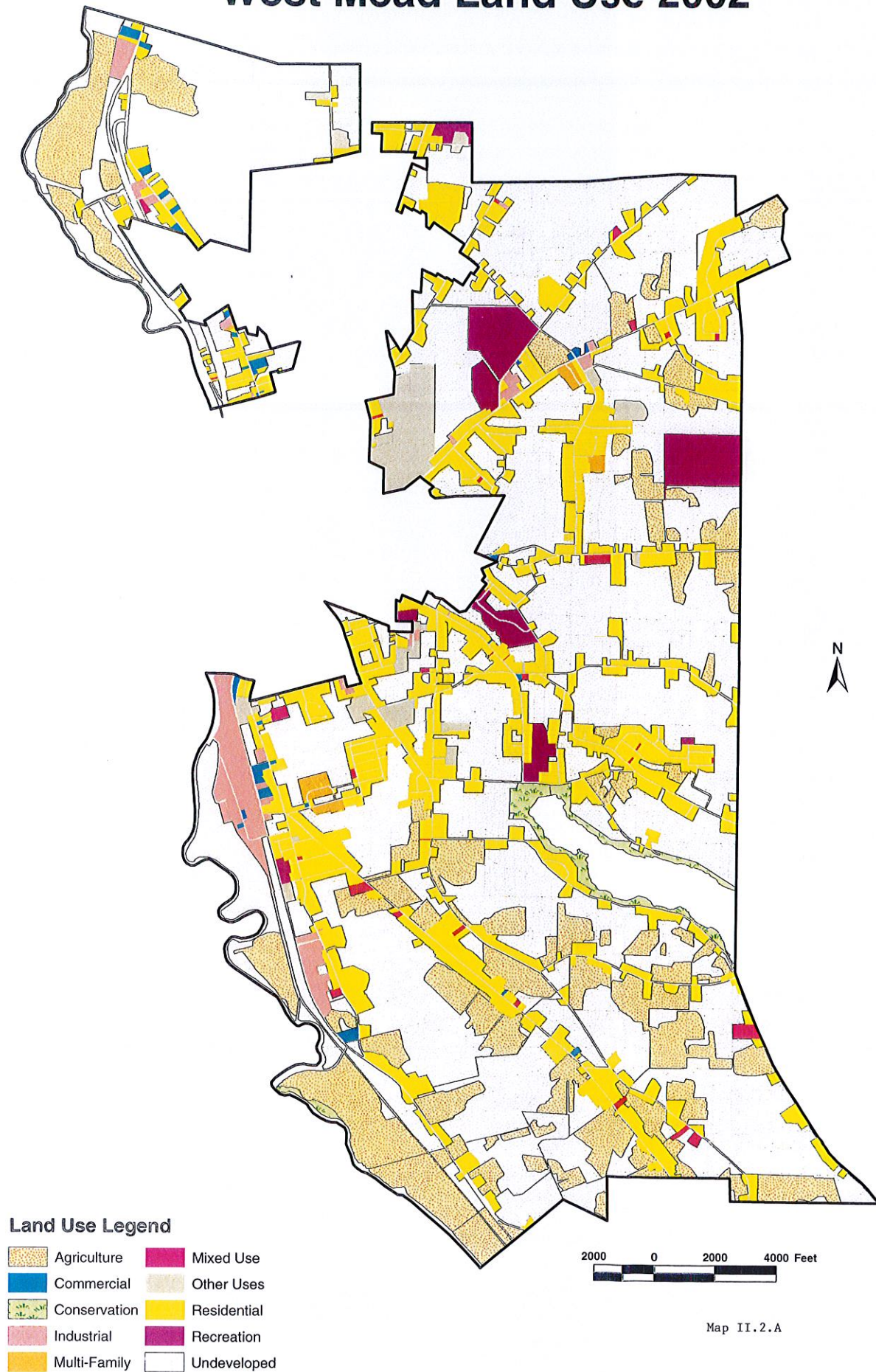
General Observations on Land Use Patterns:

The above chart shows several trends occurring with respect to land use in West Mead Township

In general numbers, 26% of the Township is currently developed for some type of use, including residential, commercial, roadways, etc. At the same time 74% of the Township remains undeveloped, including agricultural land, recreation, and conservation areas, and woodland and brush.

1983 to 2002 Trends: The amount of agricultural land decreased, roughly 8% over the 20-year period. This area is being re-allocated mainly in two ways: 1. through new residential development, and 2. as agricultural land falls out of production and begins to appear as woodland and brush areas.

West Mead Land Use 2002



General Observations on Land Use Cont.

Industrial and commercial land use has remained relatively constant, seeing no major gains or losses over 20 years.

Isolated areas of commercial land use occur in the township north of the City of Meadville adjacent to Baldwin Street, at the corner of Blooming Valley Road and Leslie Road, and south of the City adjacent to Franklin Pike. However, areas targeted for commercial development (through zoning), have not developed solely for this purpose. In nearly every district, land remains available for commercial development, and adjacent uses vary from residential to industrial to agricultural.

Concentrations of industrial land use have followed a similar pattern to commercial development, adjacent to Baldwin Street, Franklin Pike and near the intersection of Blooming Valley Road and Leslie. However, industrial land amounts to a much larger allocation, with 190 acres included in the West Mead Industrial Park. Clearly, land allocated for industrial development through zoning, remains available for development.

Significant land use has remained allocated for active and passive recreational purposes.

Mixed uses remain scattered and not concentrated in any particular area throughout the township.

Agricultural land use appears to have undergone a distinct change from 1983 to 2002. While agriculture and open space was the leading use of land in 1983, at 23%, the most recent survey indicates residential land use has now become the primary use of land in West Mead Township.

Significant portions of the township remain undeveloped, in the form of woodland and brush, (53.9%)

2.2 Existing Zoning Land Allocation:

A summary of the Township's Zoning Districts (the Township's primary land use regulation) is necessary prior to developing concepts for a future land use plan. The Township is currently zoned into eight distinct zoning districts, plus a Floodplain Overlay District. The official Zoning Map of West Mead Township is located at the Township building. However, Map 2.B of the Township's zoning districts is included here as a reference. The following is a summary of each district:

Agricultural Zoning:

Purpose: According to the 1983 Comprehensive Plan, the Agricultural District was intended to "encourage existing agricultural activities to remain functioning and to discourage...uses harmful to the continuation of agriculture". These areas also are subject to periodic flooding.

Key Characteristics:

The Agricultural Zoning District encompasses 6.1% of the Township.

Of this land, 65.2% is actually in use for agriculture, while 23.6% remains undeveloped.

The majority of this district is considered floodplain.

Commercial Zoning:

Purpose: The previous plan intended for commercial district to be of "small scale", neighborhood character, reinforcing the concept of the City of Meadville as the major commercial center.

Key Characteristics:

There are four distinct Commercial Zoning Districts encompassing less than 1% of the Township, (45.6 acres).

Of this land, 21.5% is in commercial use, while 30.7% is residential, and 36.4% remains undeveloped.

General Industrial Zoning:

Purpose: The areas designated for industrial zoning were intended to have good access, away from existing residential development, be served by public sewer and water, and be competitive with other industrial sites according to the 1983 Plan.

Key Characteristics:

The Industrial Zoning District encompasses 5.0% of the Township, (581.8 acres).

Of this land, 27.9% is used for industrial activity, while 10.7% is used agriculturally, and 44.7% remains undeveloped.

The majority of this district is considered floodplain.

Light Industrial Zoning:

Purpose: According to the 1983 Comprehensive Plan, the Light Industrial District was intended for tool and die shops which would have no impacts on noise or the environment, and encompassed on lots of sizes “compatible with surrounding residential uses”, served by public sewer and water, many of which are sited near a nucleus of existing industrial sites.

Key Characteristics:

The Light Industrial Zoning District encompasses 2.4% of the Township, (283.4 acres).

Of this land, 11.6% is in industrial use, while 12.3% is residential, 12.1 is agricultural, and 55.2% remains undeveloped.

Low Density Residential Zoning:

Purpose: This district was intended to serve a “larger than expected” population increase and be served by public sewer. Lot sizes of 12,000 to 25,000 square feet were advised dependent on sewer service.

Key Characteristics:

The Low Density Residential Zoning District encompasses 31.0% of the Township, (3,616.1 acres).

Of this land, 24.5% is residential development, while 60.1% remains undeveloped.

Medium Density Residential Zoning:

Purpose: The 1983 Comprehensive Plan identified areas already served by public sewer and possibly water, that could support apartment or townhouse, or multi-family developments.

Key Characteristics:

The Medium Density Residential Zoning Districts encompass 7.0% of the Township, (821.0 acres).

Of this land, 36.8% is residential, while 53.0% remains undeveloped.

The above figures reflects both Medium Density districts.

Rural Residential Zoning:

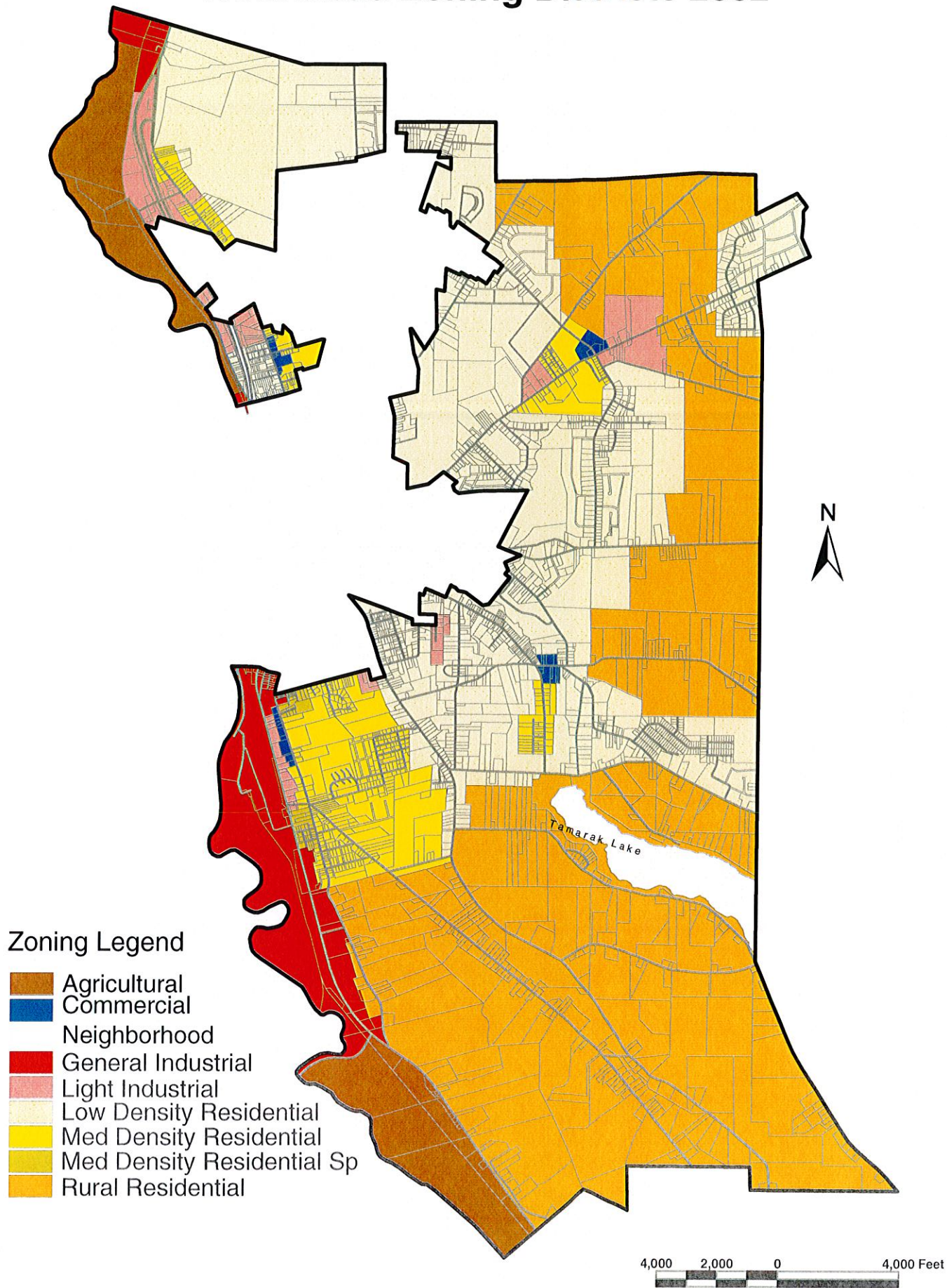
Purpose: The intent of the Rural Residential Zoning District identified areas in the Township where “hobby farms” and rural residential living, and other uses needing large lots could locate. There was no expectation that public sewer or water systems would be extended here. Large lot sizes are considered appropriate here.

Key Characteristics:

The Rural Residential Zoning District encompasses 43.5% of the Township, (5,079 acres).

Of this land, 14.2% is residential, while 20.6% is agricultural and 23.6% remains undeveloped.

West Mead Zoning Districts 2002



Map II.2.B

Section II.2

Summary on Zoning:

As noted above, the Township is zoned primarily for various densities of residential use. This provides ample opportunities for residential development throughout the Township. Residential development provides new real estate tax revenue, construction jobs, income and occupational tax revenue, and liquid fuels allocations. Unfortunately, this potential for development in all areas of the Township also has other impacts. New development may require expanded infrastructure, additional community services, more governmental administration, and possible increases to school district spending. In addition, uncoordinated development can have adverse environmental impacts, including fragmenting large open spaces and reducing the overall rural character of a municipality. West Mead Township has experienced all of the above positive and negative impacts to some degree. The Township should attempt to minimize these negative impacts while continuing to promote new development.

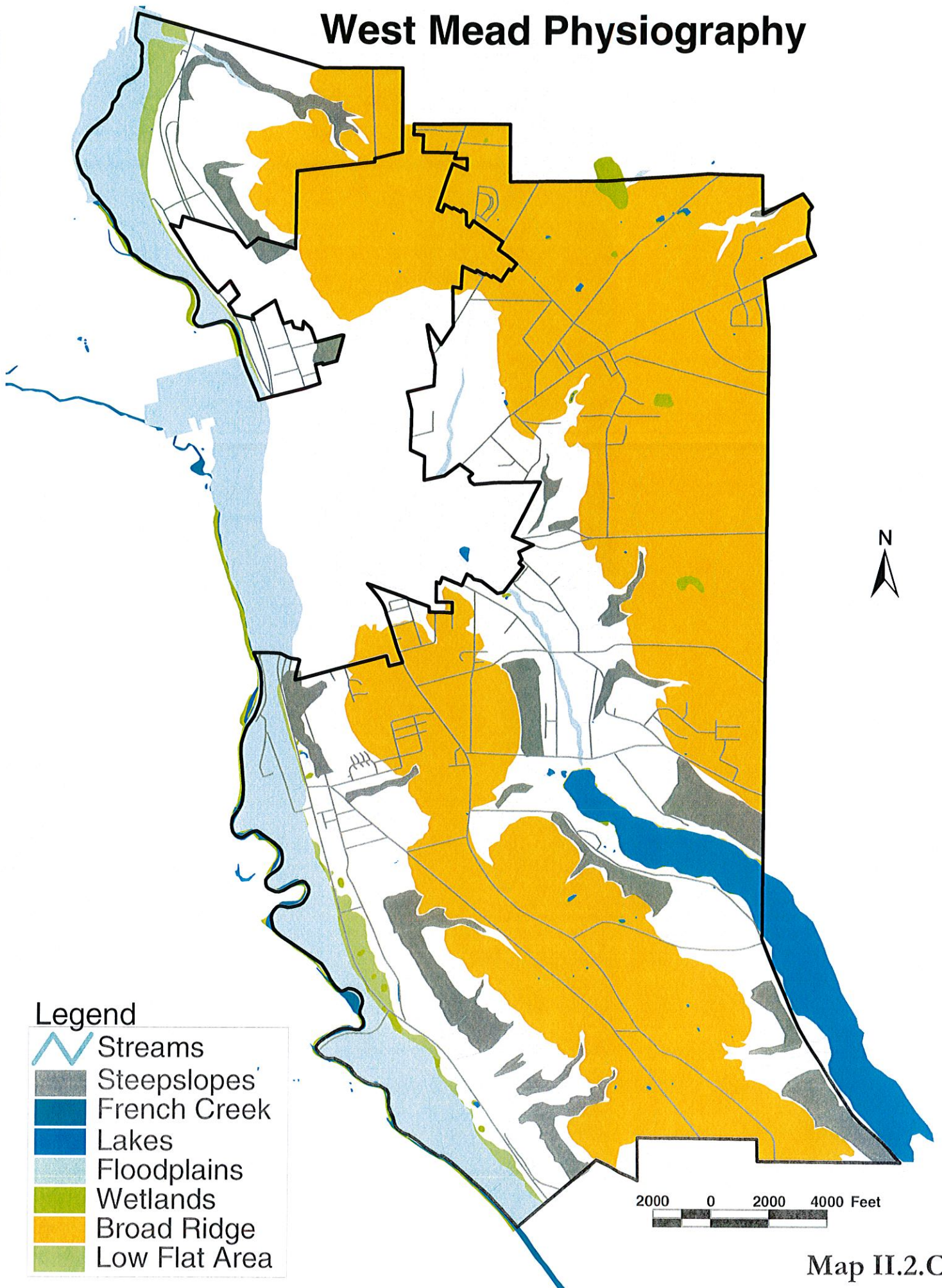
2.3 Existing Physiography:

Physiographic Description:

West Mead Township is located in central Crawford County. It is positioned on the east bank of French Creek and surrounds the City of Meadville on the north, east, and south. Vernon Township is located along the western bank of French Creek and as such is positioned along a portion of the western boundary of West Mead Township and the City of Meadville. West Mead Township's geometric shape can be described as irregular being approximately 7.5 miles long from north to south and approximately 3.5 miles wide from west to east.

The topography of West Mead Township is dominated by several broad relatively flat ridges which run basically north and south and are shown on Map 2.C. One of these ridges is located between Tamarack Lake and French Creek and the other lies to the north of Tamarack Lake curving slightly to the northwest as a circumferential ridge just east and north of the City of Meadville. The slopes of these ridges form part of the French Creek Valley and the Mill Run/Tamarack Lake Valley. The City of Meadville is located at the intersection of these two valleys and on the surrounding slopes. There is a considerable amount of bottom land along the east bank of French Creek in West Mead Township. The slopes in the Township are for the most part gentle but they are characterized by some quite steep areas with greater than 25% slope. These steeper sloped areas are generally related to streams tributary to French Creek and Mill Run. While the majority of these streams are unnamed, some flowing only intermittently, two named streams are Bennyhoof Creek and Cemetery Run.

West Mead Physiography



Map II.2.C

Entering the Township from French Creek on the west, the elevation of the flat bottom land along the creek is 1060 feet above sea level. The terrain then ascends to the broad ridges described above which vary in elevation from 1,350 feet to 1,500 feet above sea level. These broad ridges are interrupted by the Mill Run/Tamarack Lake Valley, in the southern portion of the township, where the terrain descends to an elevation of 1,200 feet above sea level. The broad ridges ascend gently to their highest elevation, 1,550 feet above sea level, along the eastern boundary of the Township. The Township is basically a suburban Township. Much of this residential development has occurred on the broad ridges above the City of Meadville.

Suitability of Ground for On-Lot Septic and On-Lot Wells:

The 1983 Comprehensive Plan indicated that the Department of Environmental Resources (now Department of Environmental Protection, DEP), studied the soils in West Mead Township and concluded that 71.1% of the soils had severe limitations for on-lot sewage treatment. Additionally, 28.6% of the Township's soils have "moderate limitations" for on-lot sewage systems, and .3% would have little difficulty handling on-lot sewage treatment.

Almost twenty years later, a discussion of the suitability of soils for on-lot sewage handling in West Mead Township bares less relevance to development potential, and a subsequent rationale for large lot zoning. The reality, for West Mead Township, is that much of the township is within a reasonable distance to existing sewer lines, negating the poor soil suitability in many areas. Additionally, the efforts of the DEP and Rural Electric Cooperative have developed on-lot sewage systems which will function in areas where previous soil suitability would have limited development. Subsequently, with some exceptions, the limit of development within the Township due to poor soil conditions, is no longer a major factor. In fact, the supply or availability of potable water may have more of an impact on future development within the Township than sewage capabilities.

Only a small fraction of the Township is currently served by the Meadville Area Water Authority (MAWA), the only public water service available to Township Residents. A few developments, such as Northgate Apartments, have their own private system for water supply. However, the main source of water for residents and businesses in West Mead Township is on-lot well systems. With the general opposition to any type of municipal water system, restated by the results of a 1999 survey, no future public water supply seems plausible. Any future development, residential or otherwise, will have to rely on a private well system. With no readily available data on the supply or status of aquifers and ground water supply in West Mead Township, there is no data to indicate the capacity for future development relying solely on private well systems.

Section II.2

Suitability of Land for Agriculture:

The 1983 Comprehensive Plan analyzed the soils in West Mead Township for suitability for agricultural use. The Plan indicated that data showed 70% of the soils in the Township suitable for productive agriculture. Based on the survey technique used at the time, it was estimated that 20% of the Township was being actively farmed. It should be noted that this figure includes all land holdings of farmers which were recorded as actively farming.

In short, significant portions of the Township are conducive to productive agriculture, and in 1983 nearly one-fifth of the Township was being actively farmed. The majority of this active agricultural land is located south and east of the City of Meadville. However, as development spreads, the large tracts of active agricultural land begin to become spotted and surrounded by other types of development, in many cases converting once active farmland to other uses. Areas of viable agricultural soil in West Mead Township face factors outside of soil "class" which determine the sustainability of agricultural activities in the Township.

Lands Subject to Flooding:

West Mead Township has been in compliance with the State's Floodplain Management Act since 1982, by regulating development within floodplain areas of the Township. Floodplain areas are identified on Map 2.C. The location of the most extensive flood hazard area is along French Creek. Areas of lesser extent are delineated along Bennyhoof Creek, Cemetery Run and Mill Run. From an examination of the flood hazard areas map, it appears that the greatest constraints to natural development trends deriving from the possibility of flooding are in the French Creek Valley. Development in these areas requires the purchase of special flood insurance.

Wetlands:

Wetland areas provide several benefits to the residents and environment of West Mead Township. Wetlands absorb water during major rainfall events, protecting property from flooding. Wetlands also provide valuable habitat for plant and wildlife. There are many areas identified as wetlands in West Mead Township by the U.S. Department of Interior. These areas are generally less than an acre in size and would likely have little impact on the development potential of the majority of land in West Mead Township. These wetland areas are identified on Map 2.C.

Steep Slopes:

The topography of West Mead Township includes several steep slope areas (slopes greater than 25%), as identified on Map 2.C. These areas limit the development potential of approximately 5-7% of the Township.

Section II.3 Community Facilities and Structures

The residents of West Mead Township rely on many community facilities, such as roads and sewer lines. The availability and quality of these facilities is often a key factor in the location of privately owned housing and rental structures. The following sections will examine the existing community facilities and housing.

3.1 Road Network

The most basic community facility is the network of roads. Roads provide access to, from, and through West Mead Township. Roads are impacted by the type of traffic they serve, the amount of traffic, weather conditions, maintenance, and surrounding land uses. Planning for future improvements, resources needed for maintenance, and future development of the Township requires an understanding of the existing road network and how it is functioning.

Ownership/Identification:

There are 65.98 miles of roads in West Mead Township. Of those, 41.33 miles are Township roads, while 24.65 miles are State Routes. The roads maintained by the Township are identified on Map 3.A. Township roads are named and given a “T” number. For example, Leslie Road is also identified as T-589. State maintained roadways are given a numerical identifier, such as SR0077 (PA Route 77), known locally as Blooming Valley Road.

Private Roads are also shown on the map using a different color. Private roads are maintained by a private developer or abutting landowners until the roadway is developed to the Township standards and accepted by the Board of Supervisors. Some private roads exist as only “paper streets”. These are streets proposed through a subdivision plan, but never really constructed. The Township’s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance provides the opportunity for the Township Supervisors to ensure new roads are built to uniform standards prior to the Township taking them over.

Classification:

Individual sections of roads within the network are typically classified by the function they serve within the context of the network. Map 3.B indicates the classification of each road in West Mead Township. The following is a description of road classifications.

Interstate. A road designated as a route of the Interstate System. I-79 is the only Interstate System road in Crawford County.

Minor Arterial. A road, which serves interstate and inter-county travel and where trips are normally of long duration. In West Mead Township, U.S. Route 322, U.S. Route 19, and PA Route 77 are examples of this category of road.

Section II.3

Major Collector. A road serving inter-county travel and which connects development centers within a county. PA Route 86 is an example of this category.

Minor Collector. A road, which collects traffic from the local road system and funnels it to the major collector and minor arterial systems. In the township Franklin Pike (SR 20029) is an example of this category.

Local (Collector). This category of road is named local in the Federal System and it includes all Township maintained roads. However, from the perspective of local people most township roads have continuity throughout the municipality and serve many acres of land. Other roads can, and in fact have been, built "out from" the Township roads which will serve or are now serving newly formed subdivisions, hence they are also collectors.

Road Description:

The roads in West Mead Township are either asphalt or tar and chip, with the exception of a portion of Old Ellis Road, which is brick and gravel. Subsequently, the road network is generally in very good condition. According to the community survey, 62% of the respondents are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the conditions of the roads while only 13% are Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied. 77% responded they would not like to see an increased mill levy for roads.

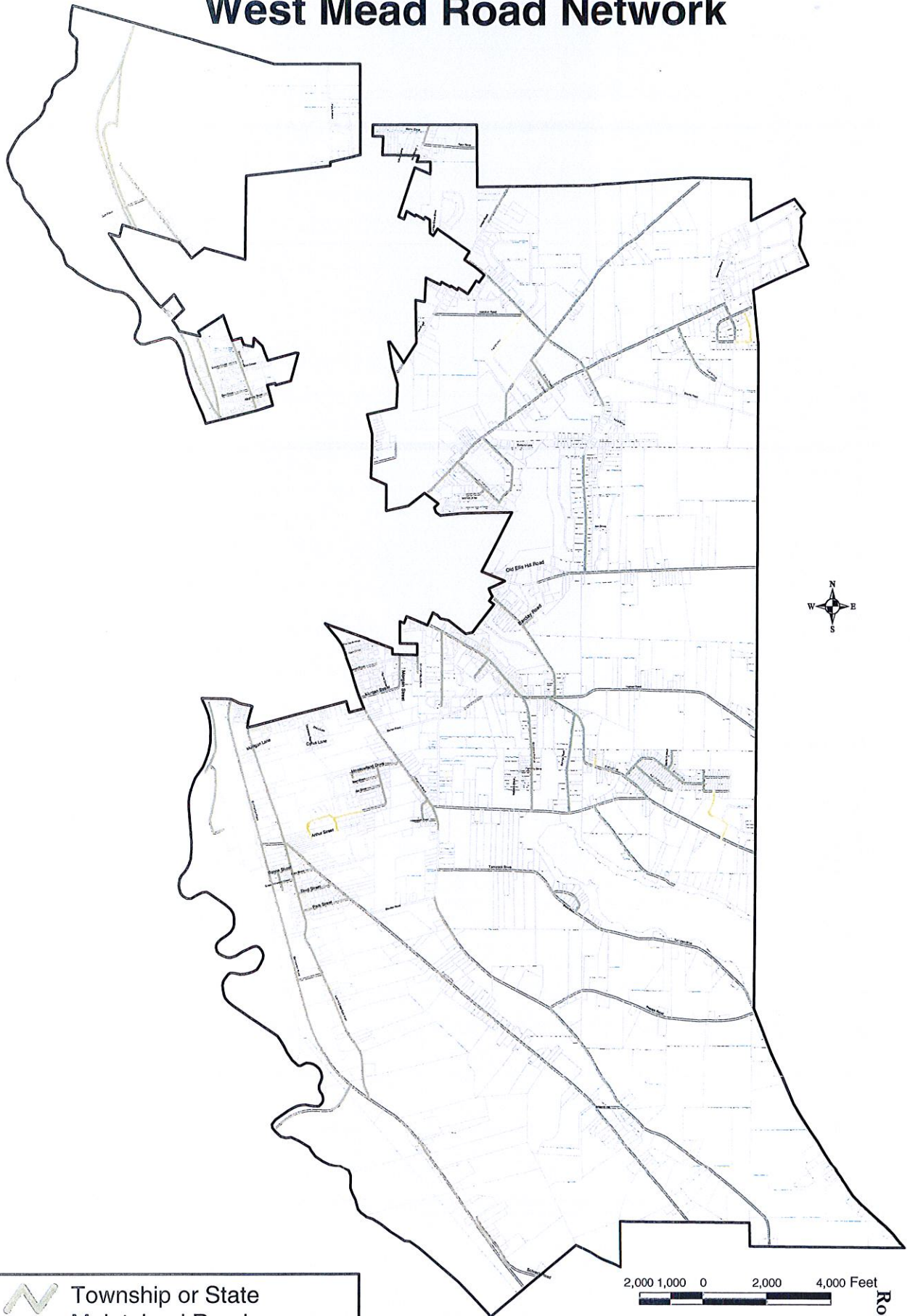
The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts are generated for State routes throughout Pennsylvania. Map 3.B indicates the AADT for State Routes within West Mead Township. Both PA Route 86 (North Main Street) and PA Route 322 see average daily traffic counts over 3000.



The Township has no bridges in the Federal Bridge Program. There are two small box culverts on Liberty Street Extension, along with a 10-foot diameter culvert pipe located on Old Ellis Hill Road.

The Meadville Bypass:

Discussed in the 1983 Comprehensive Plan for West Mead Township, the concept of a bypass route around the City of Meadville for traffic heading to and from eastern Crawford County has been largely that, a concept. However, a study has been commissioned by the PA DOT for alternatives to the existing transportation dilemma that has resulted in large truck traffic being banned from entering the City of Meadville by way of PA Route 77. This study is the very initial stages of developing a safer, possibly more efficient means for traffic to transverse the City. The bypass route shown on Map 3.C is only one possible alternative. The early planning and study process being conducted by PA DOT will include public meetings to determine the support and insights of the community, specifically residents of West Mead Township.

West Mead Road Network

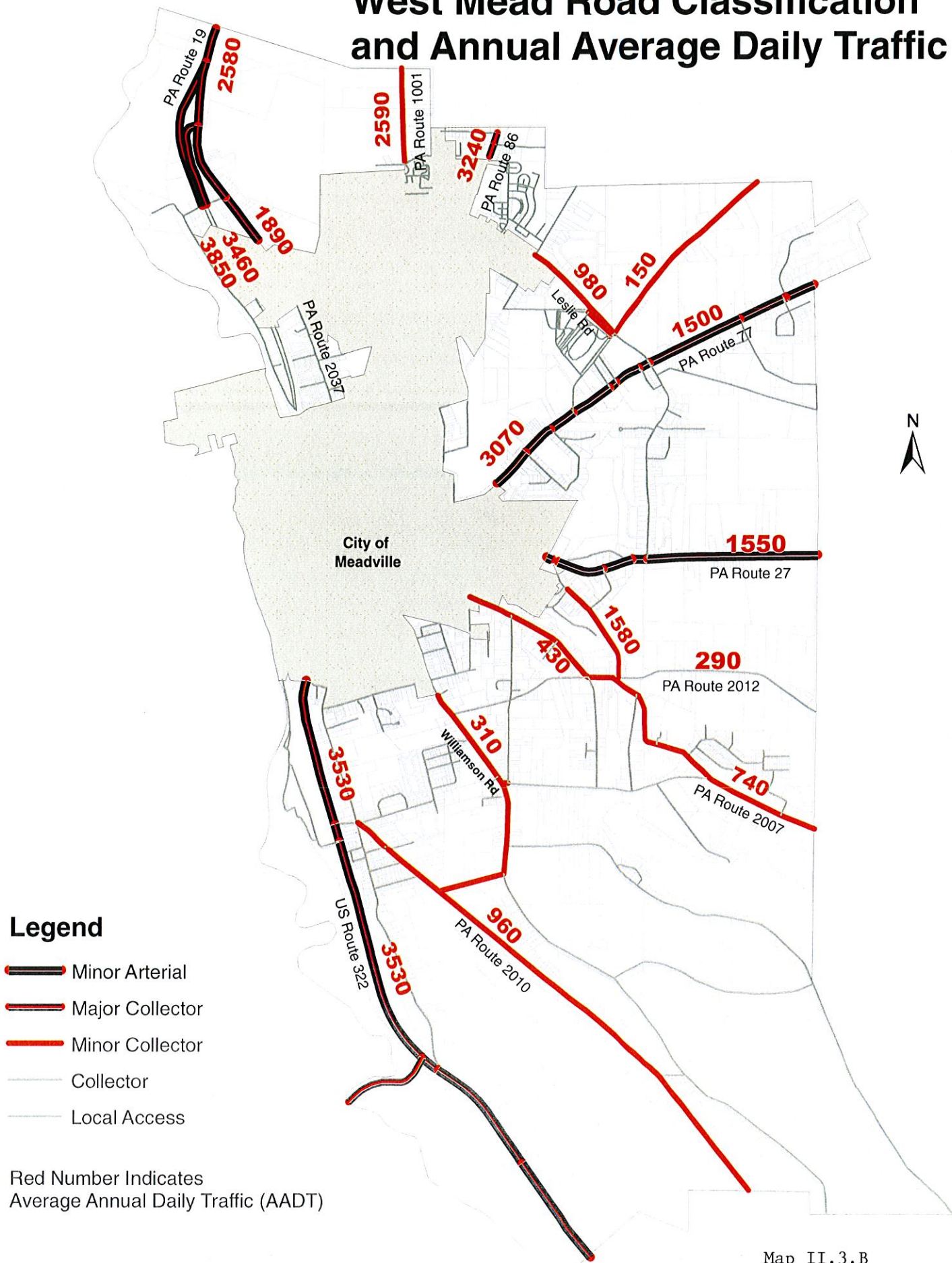


-  Township or State Maintained Road
-  Private or Other Ownership

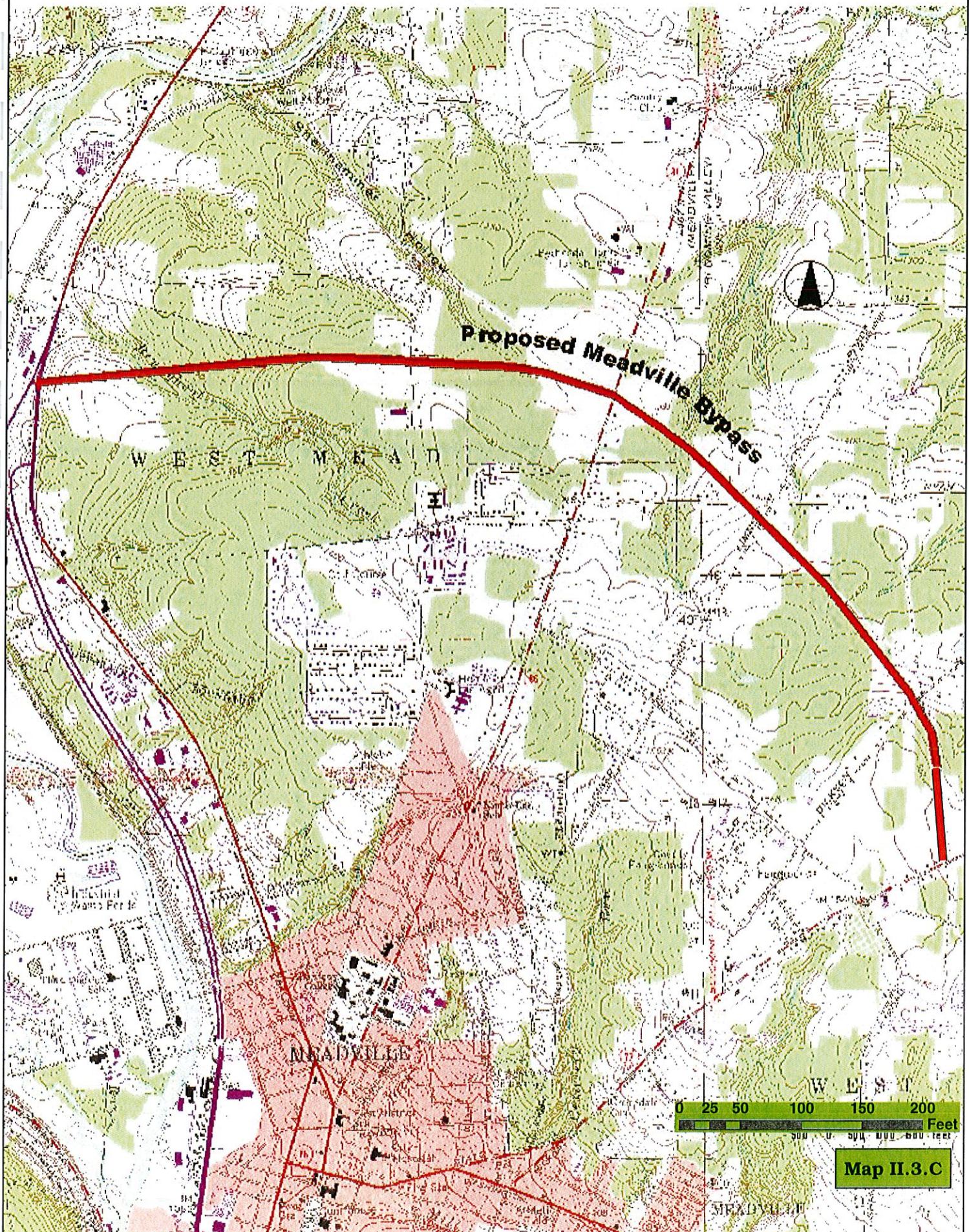
2,000 1,000 0 2,000 4,000 Feet

Road Network
Map II.3.A

West Mead Road Classification and Annual Average Daily Traffic



Meadville Bypass Alternative



3.2 Sewer and Water

Sewer:

Since decommissioning the West Mead Township Sewer Treatment Plant in 1999-2000, the Meadville Area Sewer Authority has provided sewer service to residents of West Mead Township. Not all residents have accessibility to the municipal sewer system. However, continued extensions have added to the amount of the Township served.

Map 3.D shows areas of the Township on the municipal sewer system. Approximately 66.1% of housing units were connected according to 1990 Census figures, while 32.5% had on-lot systems. As 2000 Census data is released, the number of housing units on public sewer will show an increase, due to several sewer line extension projects during the 1990's.

Survey Responses: According to the community survey, 67% of the respondents are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the sewer quality and service whereas 14% indicated they are Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied.

Water:

The majority of residents in West Mead Township obtain water through an on-lot well. Specifically, 1990 Census figures indicated that 71.1% of the 2,132 housing units in West Mead had individual wells. However, the Meadville Area Water Authority (MAWA) does provide public water to some West Mead Township residents adjacent to the City. The areas served by MAWA are identified on Map 3.D. Connection to the MAWA system is voluntary. In addition, there are several small private water systems within West Mead Township that serve residential developments, identified on Map 3.D. 1990 Census figures indicated that only about 584 housing units (27.4%) were on a public or private water system.

A water system study was completed during the development of the 1983 Comprehensive Plan to determine the community desires, a governmental framework for a water system, and costs associated with existing water systems that would be similar to a system West Mead Township would require. In 1983, just over half of the residents of West Mead Township were in favor of municipal water service, if it could be provided at a reasonable rate. The water system study provided several recommendations, including the possible development of a municipal groundwater system.

Section II.3

The Township again surveyed the residents regarding water supply in 1999. Of the 1,048 residences surveyed, 86% indicated they were satisfied with their current water and were not interested in any municipal water service. At present, no municipal water system is in place, nor are there plans to develop a municipal or regional water system in West Mead Township.

Survey Responses: Due to the limited number of residents actually on the Authority's water system, the results of the community survey are difficult to interpret.. Data indicated both high and low levels of satisfaction, however, these results are not correlated with those on public water or private wells.

3.3 Utilities

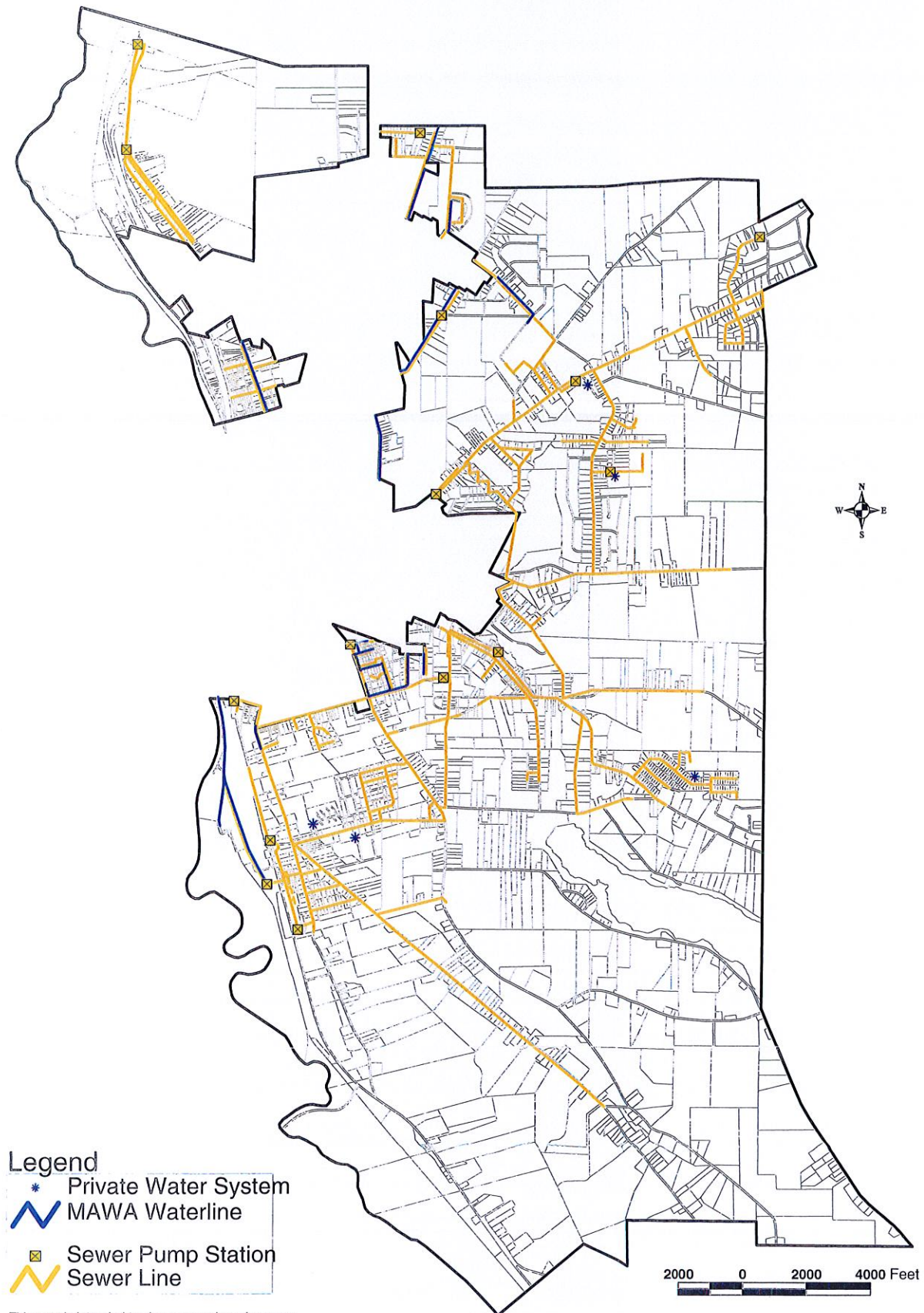
Electric: Electric Service is provided to Township residents by two different companies. Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NWREC), serves one portion of the Township, while Penelec Inc., (formally GPU Energy), serves the other residents. Map 3.E illustrates the two service areas. These service areas are established by Federal legislation and will not likely change in the near future.

Geographically, NWREC serves the less densely populated outer portions of the Township, while Penelec, Inc. serves the more densely populated portion of the Township adjacent to the City of Meadville.

Gas: National Fuel Gas (NFG), services a portion of West Mead Township, providing a source of heating and cooking fuel. There are approximately 1,800 NFG customers in West Mead Township. General areas not served by NFG are shown on Map 3.F.

Survey Responses: According to the community survey, 72% of the respondents are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with their gas and electric service, whereas only 11% are Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied.

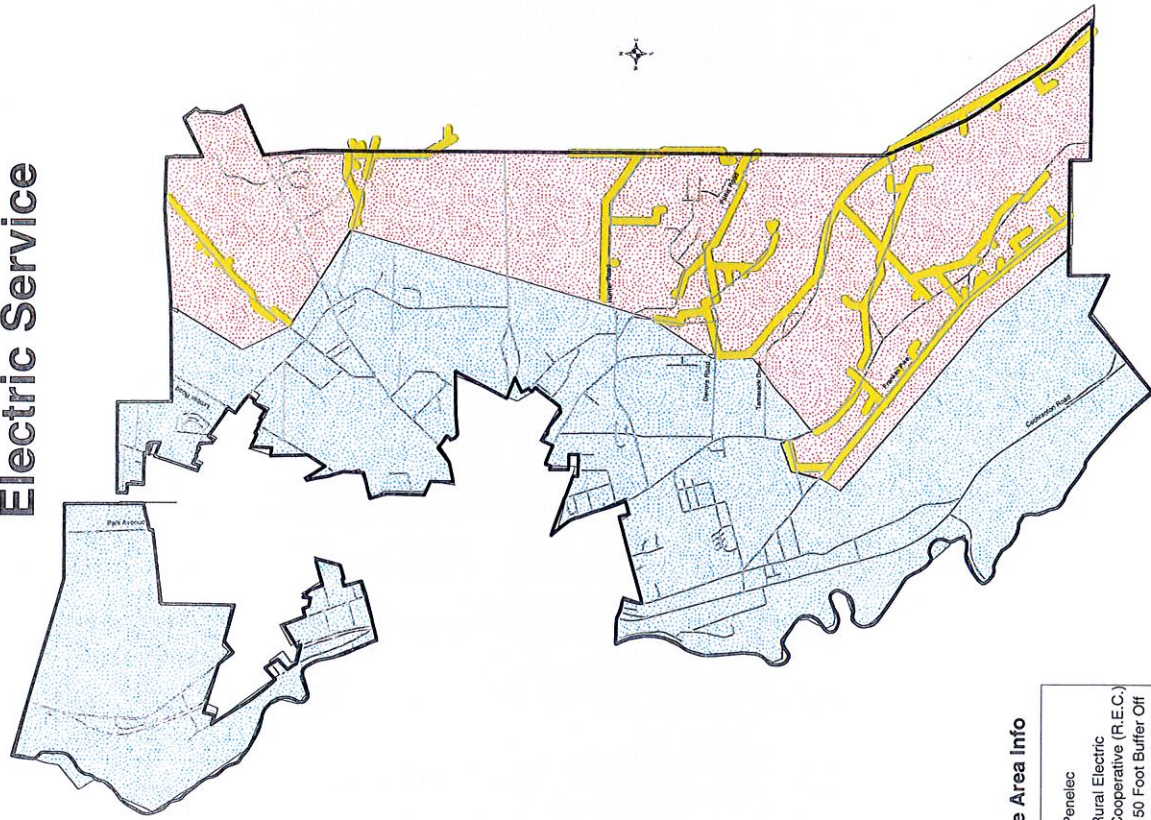
West Mead Sewer and Water Facilities



This map is intended to show general service areas for water and sewer within West Mead Township. Size and exact location of lines are not to scale, and the proper authorities should be consulted for any digging or development purposes.

Sewer and Water
Map II.3.D

Electric Service



MAP II.3.E.

Gas Service



MAP II.3.F.

Television: Armstrong Cable provides cable television service to the majority of West Mead Township. Compared to the 1983 Comprehensive Plan, this is an expanded service area. Armstrong Cable is going through a “re-build” process, to expand the quality and types of service available through the cable service. After the re-build, an additional 16 channels will be available with the basic package, along with a digital cable option, and Internet cable and phone service. The re-build is likely a response to the competition and desire to remain competitive with the two major satellite television services, Dish Network and Direct TV.

Telephone/Internet: Local telephone service is provided by Alltel, Inc. for all of West Mead Township. Internet service can be purchased from a variety of local Internet Service Providers (ISP), ranging from dial-up connectivity to high speed cable and DSL connections. The cost of this service is generally dependent upon the speed of the connection.

Section II.3

3.4 Municipal Government

West Mead Township is a Second Class Township under PA Law. As such, all governmental powers, except those in the area of education, lie with the Board of Supervisors who are elected “at large” by township residents for staggered six-year terms. Currently, the supervisors employ 18 individuals in some capacity, (including the police force).

Employees:

2 Full-time Secretaries	2 Full-time Police Officers
1 Full-time Secretary/Treasurer/Zoning Officer	3 Part-time Officers
5 Full-time Maintenance	1 Part-time Police Chief
1 Seasonal Maintenance	

There are 3 other positions that are appointed on an annual basis at the Organizational Meeting of the Township Supervisors in January. The Township Engineer and the Municipal Solicitor are appointed and serve the Supervisors as needed. In addition, the Township appoints the Sewage Enforcement Officer who is paid on a per Permit basis. The Sewage Enforcement Officer is certified by the PA Department of Environmental Protection.

Property:

West Mead Township constructed a new municipal building in 1999-2000. The facility includes offices for the Township secretaries and supervisors, a small meeting room, a community meeting room, a break room, the Police Department, Equipment/Maintenance Garage, and a paved parking area for approximately 40 vehicles.

Land: The Township owns approximately 56.6 acres of land in West Mead, including the property where the Township building is located, recreation areas, and other land.

Equipment: The Township owns an extensive list of equipment integral to the administration of general business. The following is information on the vehicles owned and operated by the Township:

1. 1985 Mack Dump Truck with plows and spreader box
2. 1998 Chevy 1-ton Dump with plow and spreader box
3. 1998 Mack Dump Truck with plows and spreader box
4. 2000 Mack Dump Truck with plows and spreader box
5. 2001 Chevy 2500 with 8' plow and toolbox

[Three other vehicles are owned by the Township, listed under the Police Dept. equipment.]

3.5 Recreation Facilities

See Map 3.G for the location and description of the Recreational Facilities that serve the residents of West Mead Twp.

West Mead Township Owned and Operated:

Green Mountain Park: 21 acres, playground

Oakgrove Park: 25 acres, baseball field, playground, and 2 picnic shelters

Autumn Hills: 2 acres, basketball and playground

Multi-Municipal Recreation Facilities:

Meadville Area Recreation Complex: The Recreation Complex offers several amenities, as listed on Map 3.G. The West Mead Township Supervisors signed a five-year agreement with the City of Meadville and Vernon Township in 1999. The agreement stipulated the funding contribution each municipality would pay to the Recreation Complex each year, on a monthly basis. The percentages were set for the duration of the five years, with West Mead Township contributing 24% of the total, while Vernon Township contributes 22.4% and the City of Meadville 53.5%. The actual annual dollar amounts West Mead will pay are as follows:

1999	\$44,400
2000	\$45,700
2001	\$47,100
2002	\$48,500
2003	\$49,900

The Township is in the process of negotiating a new agreement and subsequent contribution to the MARC in coordination with Vernon Township and the City of Meadville.

Other Publicly Owned and Operated:

Fish and Boat Commission at Tamarack Lake (Location Map)

<i>Acreage:</i>	Approximately 362 acres
<i>Ownership:</i>	Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (managed by PA Fish and Boat Commission)
<i>Facilities:</i>	Lake; Boat Launch
<i>Use Agreement:</i>	For public use.

County Fairgrounds (Location Map)

<i>Acreage:</i>	Approximately 77 acres
<i>Ownership:</i>	Crawford County Commissioners
<i>Facilities:</i>	Grandstand; Stage; Race Track; multiple barns; multiple out-buildings
<i>Use Agreement:</i>	Primary usage one week in August for County Fair, managed by County Fair Board; other uses by arrangement with County Commissioners

Section II.3

Private or Non-Profit Recreation Facilities:

Meadville Area Youth Baseball Fields off Route 77

Acreage: Approximately 21 acres

Ownership: Meadville Area Youth Baseball and Softball, Inc.

Facilities: 2 Baseball Diamonds; Stand and Storage shed

Use Agreement: Utilized by baseball and softball leagues of the Meadville Area Youth Baseball and Softball, Inc.

Crawford County Youth Soccer Association Soccer Fields:

Acreage: Approximately 98 acres

Ownership: Crawford County Youth Soccer Association

Facilities: Multiple soccer fields of varying sizes; 2 storage buildings

Use Agreement: Utilized by CCYSA soccer leagues.

V.F.W. Park:

Acreage: Approximately 5 acres

Ownership: Veterans of Foreign Wars

Facilities: Field; Playground

Use Agreement: Open to public

Sportsman's Club

Acreage: Approximately 18 acres

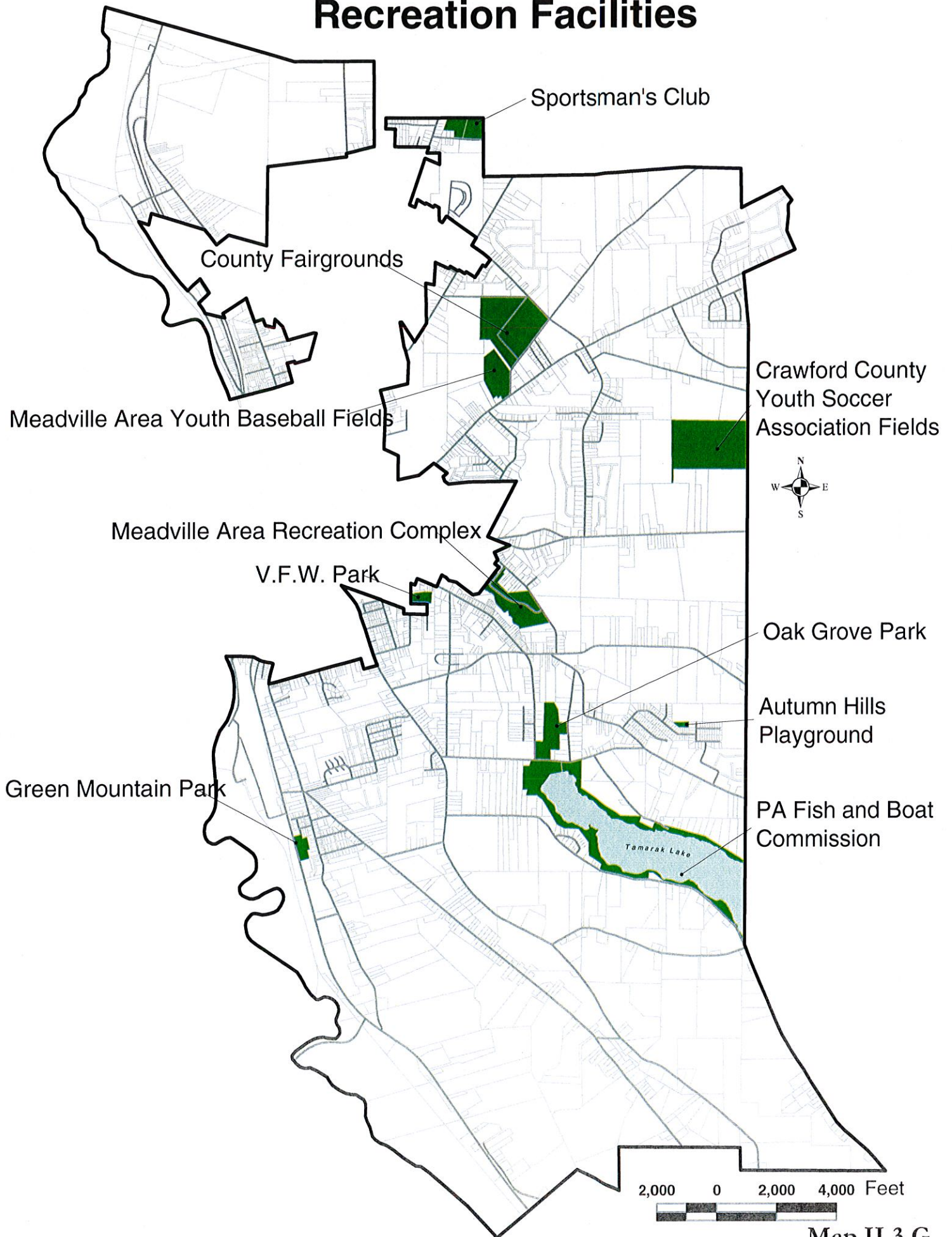
Ownership: Meadville Sportsman's Club

Facilities: Archery and gun range

Use Agreement: Utilized by the club members

Survey Responses: According to the community survey, less than half the residents are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the quality of parks, however, more than half are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with park accessibility. In general, the survey showed that 63% of the Township is Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the "quality of the recreation programs " although only 50% are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the "quantity" of these programs.

Recreation Facilities

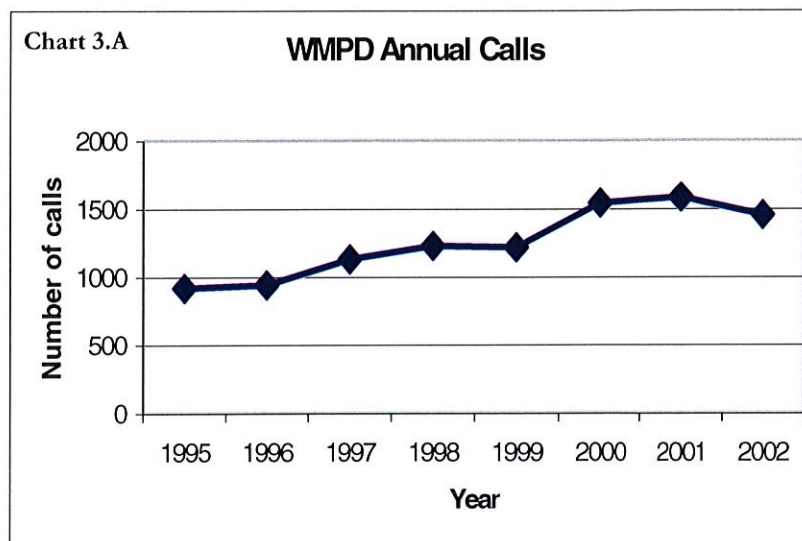


3.6 Emergency Services

Police:

The West Mead Police Department has 2 full-time officers and 4 part-time officers including the Police Chief. This is roughly 1 officer for every 872 persons, or 1 officer for every 3.1 square miles of the Township. The Department has three vehicles in service; a 1998 and 2003 Ford Crown Victoria, and a 1997 Ford Taurus.

The number of calls taken by the West Mead Police Department has risen steadily over the last six years, as shown in Chart 3.A below. The number of calls have risen nearly sixty percent from 1995 to 2002.



Survey Responses: According to the community survey, 85% of the respondents are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the police department's service and only 12% are Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied. The northern portion of the Township was the only area that responded with near majority support (49%) for an increased mill levy for police departments.

Section II.3

Ambulance:

West Mead Township residents are served by two Ambulance services, Meadville Area Ambulance Service (MAAS) and Meadville EMS (MEMS). Due to the overlapping service areas, the ambulance services alternate days for which they are on call with the County 911 Emergency Service dispatcher. However, if an ambulance service is specifically requested, that service will respond.

Meadville Area Ambulance Service is a private, non-profit provider, which has both individual and family memberships. The membership insures the coverage of the majority of costs associated with an emergency response by the ambulance, where general medical insurance does not cover this service. MAAS has a total of 30 full and part-time staff, 5 ambulances, and 2 wheelchair vans.

Meadville EMS is also a private, non-profit provider, which has a similar annual fee structure for individuals and families. Again, this fee insures the coverage of the majority of costs associated with an emergency response by the ambulance, where general medical insurance does not cover this service. MEMS has a total of 30-35 full and part-time staff, 5 emergency response vehicles, and 2 wheelchair ambulances.

Survey Responses: According to the community survey, 74% of the respondents are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the ambulance service whereas only 15% are Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied.

Fire: West Mead Township has two Fire Departments located in the Township, identified on Map 3.H. Both are volunteer departments receiving only a portion of their yearly budget from the Township Supervisors. A summary of each department follows.

West Mead Fire Department #1 currently has 43 active volunteer members. The members are dispatched to one of two fire stations that West Mead No. 1 operates. One station is located along Liberty Street Ext. and the other is on Alden Street Ext. A new station is proposed for construction along Alden Street Ext.

Revenue into West Mead No.1 comes from a variety of sources including a yearly allocation from the Township, fund drives held in the community, and membership dues. Most of this money is spent on maintenance and loan payments for newly purchased equipment. West Mead No.1 would like to be able to replace some of their aging equipment in the near future and also add new types of firefighting and life saving tools to their cache, including a thermal imaging camera. The following pieces of equipment are currently at No. 1's disposal:

- 2001 Custom Pumper capable of carrying 1000 gallons of water and pumping 1500 gallons per minute. This truck has a 6 man cab and is stationed at the Alden Street station.
- 1994 Custom Pumper capable of carrying 1000 gallons of water and pumping 1500 gallons per minute. This truck has a 6-man cab and is stationed at the Liberty Street station.
- 1985 Custom Pumper capable of carrying 1000 gallons of water and pumping 1500 gallons per minute. This truck has a 5 man cab and is stationed at the Liberty Street station.
- Gas detector and Vehicle Rescue Equipment

Fire Department #2 has 25 active members at present, much less than the 35 active members accounted for in the 1983 Comprehensive Plan. Outside of the Township's contribution, the rest of the Department's operating budget is generated through a tax-deductible fund drive, and the membership dues for the Social Club.

Fire Department #2 has the following major pieces of equipment at present:

- 2 Pumper Tankers, capable of carrying 1,500 gallons of water and pumping 2,500 gallons per minute.
- 1 Pumper Tanker, capable of carrying 1,000 gallons of water and pumping 1,500 gallons per minute.
- 1 Four-wheel Drive Brush Fire Truck, capable of carrying 250 gallons of water and pumping 250 gallons per minute.
- 1 Medium Duty Emergency Response Rescue Truck
- 1 Thermal Imaging Camera

The Township also purchased roughly \$25,000 worth of radio equipment in 2000 for each department. Each Fire Department also received approximately \$18,000 in funds from West Mead Township for the purchase of expendable goods such as fuel, utilities, etc. that year, bringing the Township's contribution to about \$43,000. In 2001 and 2002, each department received \$44,000 annually.

Survey Responses: 76% of the survey respondents are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the service of the fire departments whereas only 10% are Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied. It is interesting to point out that the fire departments were the only service of which residents from portions of the Township would support an increased mill levy, this despite high approval ratings.

3.7 Other Services/Facilities

Library: West Mead Township does not have its own library. The residents instead utilize the public library located in the City of Meadville, and subsequently contribute through their county real estate tax. The tax of 6 tenths of one mill is applied to the assessed valuation to determine the residents contribution to the annual library budget. The 1983 Comprehensive Plan indicated there were 2,600 residents of West Mead Township that were card-holders. However, the data is no longer kept to determine card-holders by individual township. The library has continued to upgrade and increase its holdings, increasing total holdings from 80,993 in 1983 to around 85,000 in 2001. Holdings include books, newspapers, periodicals, books on cassette, videos, and audiovisual aids, along with a significant compliment of children's holdings. There are also 12 computers available for Internet research, and 2 computers for word processing. The library is open Monday through Saturday, 63 hours per week.

Public Schools:

Neason Hill Elementary School, Meadville Area Middle School and Meadville Area High School provide public education for the children of West Mead Township. The elementary school is located in West Mead on Williamson Road. The middle and high schools are located adjacent to each other in the City of Meadville. The schools serve residents in the Crawford County School District which spans Vernon Township, the City of Meadville, and West Mead Township.

Survey Responses: 69% of Township residents are Very Satisfied or Satisfied with the elementary school. 63% responded the same way to the quality of the junior and senior high schools. Of those responding only 25% have children at home.

Health Care/Human Services:

Residents of West Mead Township rely mainly on healthcare and human services provided by private or not-for-profit institutions, including Crawford County government. Fortunately, many of these, including Meadville Medical Center, are located adjacent to the Township in the City of Meadville. The Township provides no healthcare or human services directly.

Emergency, Health and Other Community Facilities

Legend

- 1 - West Mead Fire Dept 2
- 2 - Careerlink Employment Ctr.
- 3 - First District Elementary
- 4 - Meadville Medical Center
- 5 - Meadville Central Fire House
- 6 - Meadville Public Library
- 7 - County Courthouse
- 8 - Meadville Post Office
- 9 - Grove Street Medical Facility
- 10 - Meadville Ambulance Service
- 11 - Meadville Area Senior High
- 12 - Meadville Area Middle School
- 13 - Vocational Technical School
- 14 - West Mead Township Bldg
- 15 - Meadville Area Sewer Authority
- 16 - Neason Hill Elementary
- 17 - West Mead Fire Dept 1
- 18 - West Mead Fire Dept 1



2000 0 2000 4000 Feet

Map II.3.H

Public Transportation:

The Crawford Area Transportation Authority, also known as CATA, provides public transportation in the form of bus service to the residents of West Mead Township. CATA operates two transportation systems in the Township, a fixed route system and the shared ride program.

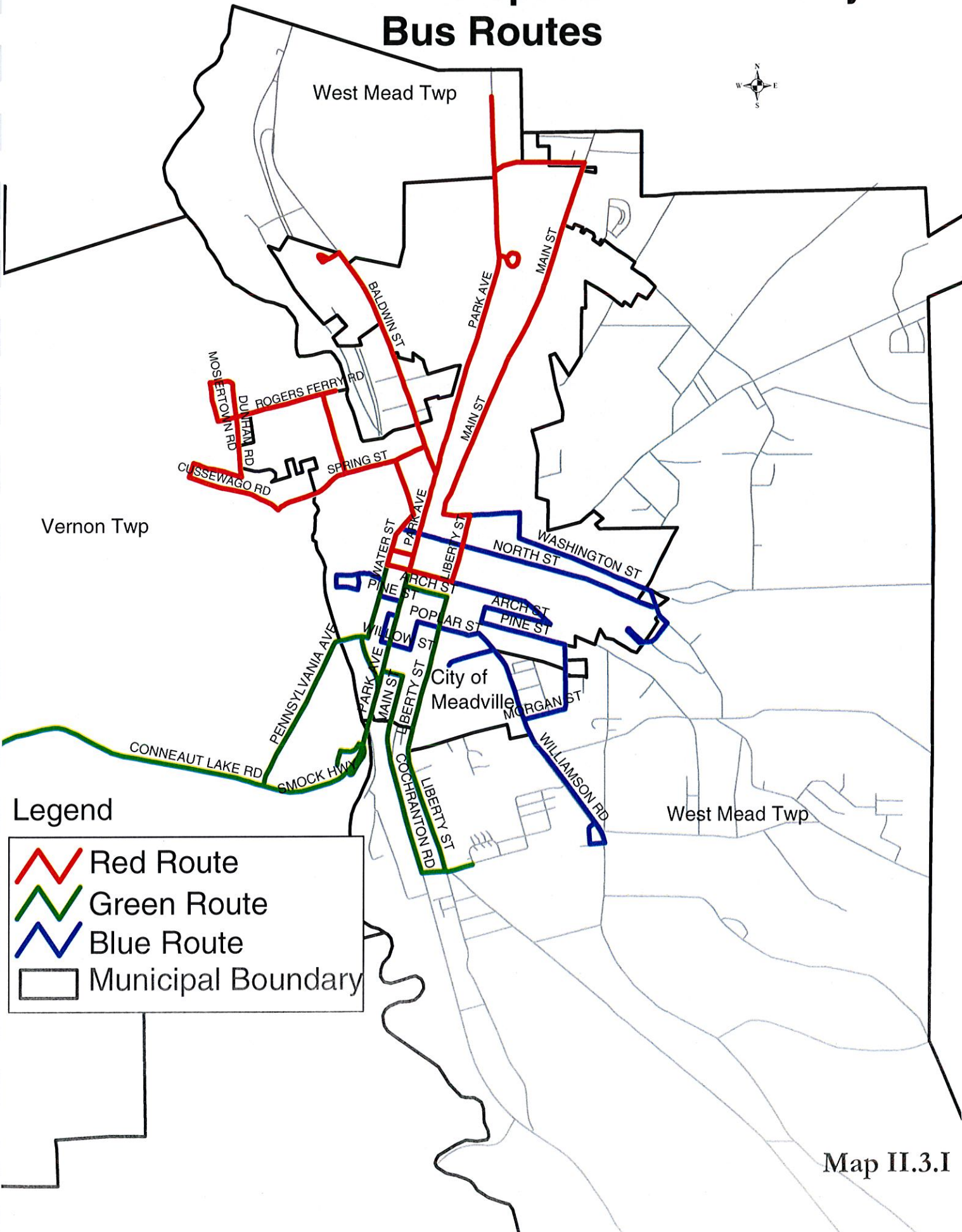
The fixed route system entails three separate routes, the Red, Blue, & Green Routes; all of which run through at least a portion of the Township. The service areas are identified on Map 3.I. From these West Mead Township locations, riders can transfer as needed to have access to every stop CATA makes, including the MARC, the Downtown Mall, and Allegheny College. The fixed route system operates from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

The shared ride program is another program offered by CATA. This service offers door-to-door service to the public with an advanced reservation. Other benefits offered by CATA include driver's assistance for the elderly or disabled riders and the use of a personal care attendant and/ or guide dog on the bus at no charge. CATA also offers a reduced fare shared ride service to all eligible senior citizens wishing to obtain a Senior Citizen I.D. card. CATA does not operate on Sundays and any weather cancellations correspond with area school districts.

For more information regarding fares or for additional information on the services offered by the Crawford Area Transportation Authority contact CATA at (814) 336-5600.

Crawford Area Transportation Authority

Bus Routes



Section II.3

Refuse Collection:

West Mead Township residents can be served by their choice of three refuse collection companies: Waste Management of Northwest Pennsylvania, Tri-County Industries, and Northland Refuse. Commercial and industrial operations in the Township can select from four agencies to serve their refuse collection needs: (1) Waste Management of Northwest Pennsylvania, (2) Tri-County Industries, (3) County Environmental of Clarion, and (4) Keystone Waste Services.

Waste Management of Northwest Pennsylvania has two branch locations that serve the Township, Erie and Greenville. This organization is able to serve customers on an individual basis or by means of a contract with the Township, if the Township were interested. The cost to serve residents on an individual basis would be more expensive than if they were to service the entire Township under contract. The cost would include 3-5 bags of refuse picked up weekly and recyclables picked up bi-monthly. Once picked up from the residence, the refuse is taken to Lakeview Landfill in Erie, PA.

Tri-County Industries of Grove City, PA is also able to serve all residents of West Mead Township. Their services includes weekly pick-up of up to 3 bags for a monthly fee. Recycling service is also provided to residents on a bi-monthly basis. Tri-County Industries can provide service to residents on an individual basis or by means of a contract with the Township, which would be less expensive. Commercial and Industrial refuse services are also offered to businesses in the Township on an as needed basis. Tri-County Industries takes the collected refuse to landfills in Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Northland Refuse will also provide residential garbage collection in West Mead Township, for a monthly fee. This allows customers to dispose of six thirty-gallon bags of garbage per week.

Two other companies able to service the refuse collection needs of industrial and commercial operations in West Mead Township are County Environmental of Clarion and Keystone Waste Services. Currently, these organizations do not serve or intend to serve the refuse collection of the residents in the Township.

Additional means for residents to dispose of their refuse includes: (1) Township sponsored clean up days in which residents can take restricted items to a pre-determined collection site at a designated time of the year (usually in May), (2) by means of a number of independent collection services that can be found in the yellow pages, and (3) by way of incineration under the Township Burn Ordinance which permits certain items to be disposed of by the property owner.

Recycling:

The West Mead Township recycling program began as a volunteer effort in 1989 at the West Mead #1 Fire Hall on Liberty Street Extension. The program expanded significantly during the 1990's, and the Township acquired over \$800,000 in grant funds from the Department of Environmental Protection. In 1999, the West Mead Recycling Corporation (WMRC), a non-profit corporation was formed to function independently of the Township.

The Crawford County Solid Waste Plan, which was approved in 2002, designated the WMRC as the agency to operate the County recycling program, under the direction of the County Solid Waste Authority. West Mead Township has since obtained a two million dollar grant to construct a new recycling facility in the West Mead Industrial Park located off of US Route 322 (Cochran Road). The eight full and part-time staff of the WMRC, are now employees of the Solid Waste Authority, and are supplemented by six work release laborers.

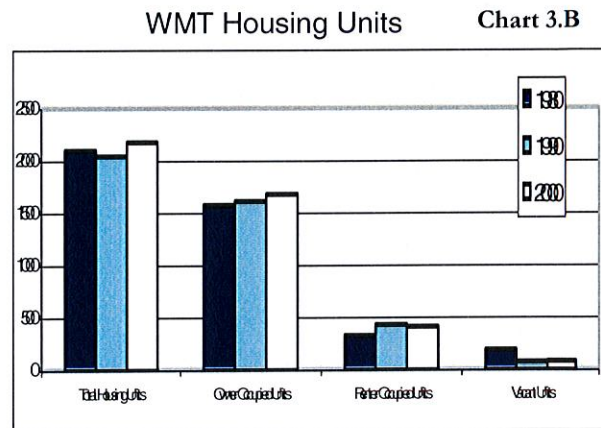
The recycling program has a contract to accept recycling materials from Mercer County.

Section II.3

3.8 Housing

The 2000 Census Reported a total 2,184 housing units in West Mead Township. Of this total 416 housing units are renter occupied, up 27% from 1980. Chart 3.B indicates the trends of housing units over the last 30 years. For the most part, all housing units have gained slightly, while the number of vacant units has dropped to 4% in 2000.

An overview of housing must also observe the value of housing units. 1980 census figures indicated the median value of owner occupied housing to be \$38,100, while the 1990 Census figures show a median value of \$47,200. The median value of owner occupied housing increased to \$81,700 according to 2000 Census data. After adjusting for inflation, the figures indicate a decline from 1980 to 1990, while 2000 values exceeded 1980 values. In addition, median monthly contract rent declined over the same period, from \$403 in 1980 (adjusted), to \$355 in 2000.



The condition of the housing stock in West Mead is important to review in determining policies for the future. 1990 Census figures indicate that the median date a home was built in West Mead Township is 1963. This is seven years better than the County average, and nine years better than the State average. 2000 Census figures indicated the median year increased by one year to 1964.

1990 Census figures indicated that of the 2,132 housing units in West Mead, only 27.4% were on a public or private water system, while 71.1% obtained water through an on-lot well. Public sewer served 66.1% of housing units, while 32.5% had an on-lot septic system. It is interesting to note, that West Mead is above the County average of 48.2% for homes on public sewer, yet below the State average of 74.3%. Several sewer extensions during the 1990's, assisted by County CDBG funds should impact this 1990 figure. 1990 and 2000 Census data also indicated that 76% of occupied housing units were heated with natural gas, while 24% used either electric, fuel oil, or wood as their primary heating fuel.

Survey Responses:

Review of the survey responses indicates that 91% of those that responded felt that the overall appearance of housing in West Mead was either Average or Very Good. Only 2% felt that housing appearance was Poor. Additionally, the survey asked about the perception of purchase price for housing in West Mead and 72% of respondents indicated they thought the purchase prices were About Average or Very Reasonable, while only 8% thought purchase price was Too High.

Other survey questions pertained to availability and quality of specific types of housing in West Mead Township. The only category receiving more than 30% Inadequate or Very Inadequate responses was the availability of elderly housing within the Township. A separate survey question asked "What type of housing is most needed in the Township?" The majority of people that responded to this survey felt that affordable housing is most needed in West Mead.

Historical Sites:

A partial historical sites survey was completed for Crawford County. To date, the Robert Fitz Randolph house, located along PA Route 322 has been identified and included in the County Register. The PA Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau of Historic Preservation listed the Bridge over the French Creek on L.R. 20027 on the National Register on June 22, 1988. This bridge was replaced in the early 1990's.

Other Historic Sites:

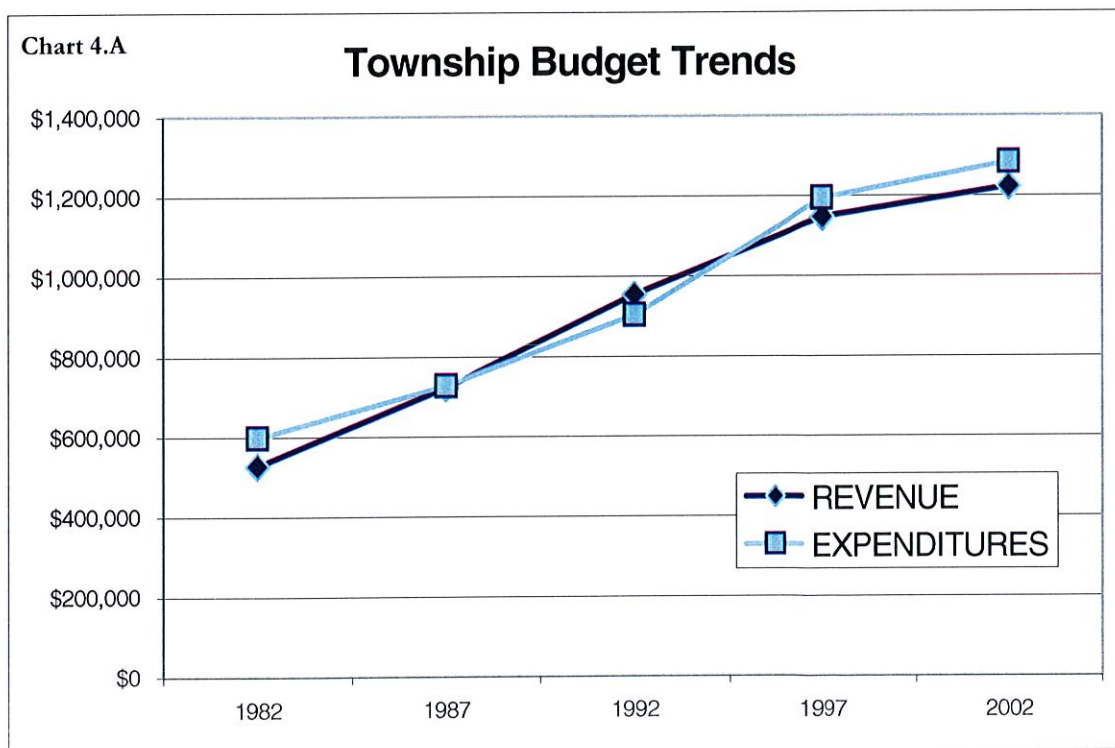
Ponce de Leon Springs – This mineral spring was a very popular place in the early 1900's. Surrounding the spring was Oakwood Park, featuring boating, movies, concerts and the legendary spring water. The springhouse still stands and is owned by the Crawford County Historical Society. A portion of the former park is now the Township owned and operated Oakgrove Park.

Section II.4 Township Fiscal Analysis

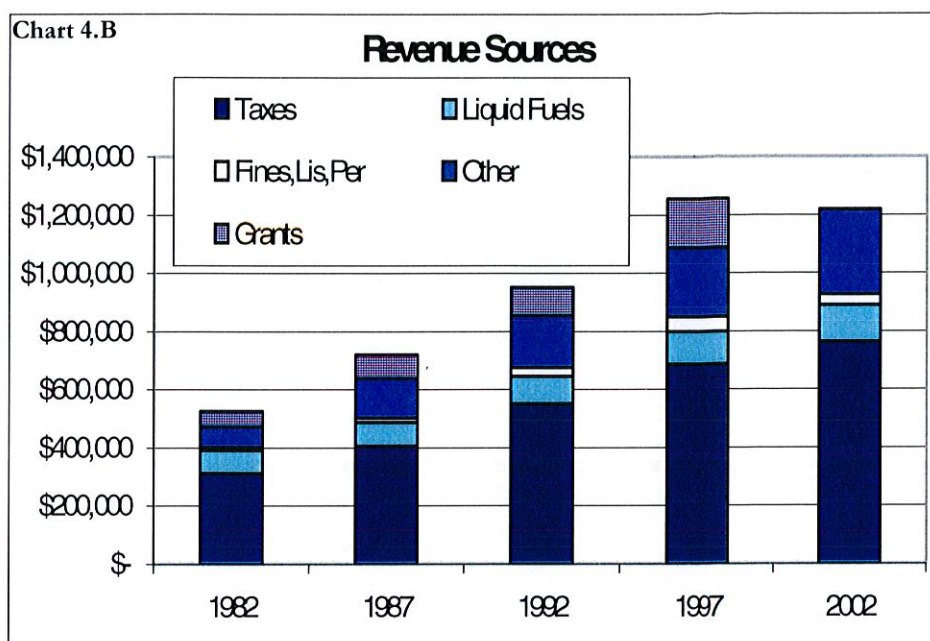
Since the 1982 revision to the West Mead Township Comprehensive Plan, there have been significant changes in the Township's overall budget. As development occurs, more services are often required, while new revenue is likewise generated. Managing the municipal finances in turn means managing other aspects of the community.

Overall Budget Trends

The general trend in Township revenues and expenditures is reflected below in Chart 4.A. Since 1982, the Township budget has increased almost \$700,000. This is a 115% increase (5.7% per year), over the twenty year period. However, when inflation is considered, the actual increase in the Township's budget amounts to only \$170,000 in new spending, or a 15.3% increase since 1982.



Section II.4

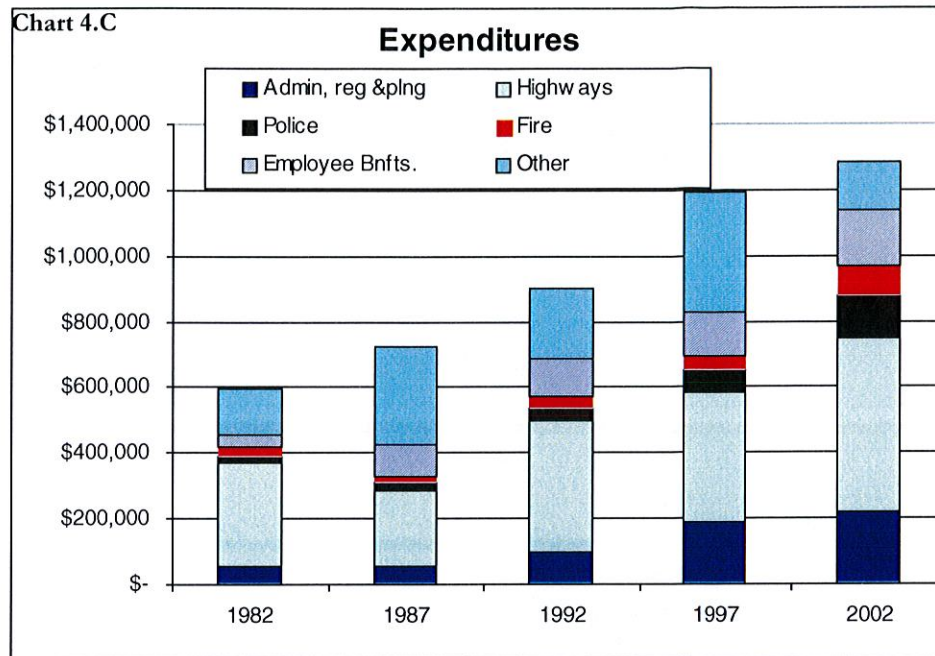


Revenue:

Chart 4.B illustrates Township revenues over the last twenty years at five year intervals. Two trends are clear, that overall revenues increased from 1982 to 1997, and that Real Estate and Income Taxes have made up around 60% of all revenues each year. The lack of grant revenue for the year 2002 prevented the overall increasing trend from continuing. However, in the previous twenty years the Township has acquired at least some grant revenue, indicating this specific budget year was somewhat unique.

The chart also indicates that miscellaneous revenue ("Other"), accounts for the next largest allocation of Township funds for each year. These revenues include refunds and transfers, the Recycling Program during the 1990's, interest on Township funds, and small borrowing. 2002 was the only year, from 1980 to 2002, where no grant funds were obtained for West Mead Township.

Liquid Fuel revenues, which are allocated from the State, have increased slightly, but have actually decreased in percent of total revenues. In 1980, Liquid fuels accounted for 14.7% of all revenues, compared with the 10.4% in 2002.



Expenditures:

Chart 4.C illustrates the general trends of Township expenditures from 1982 to 2002. Again the overall trend has been an increase in overall expenses, with the largest change occurring from 1992 to 1997 where the difference is almost \$200,000. The single largest expense each budget year indicated is Highways. This category averages 41% of the overall expenditure for each year on the chart.

On average, Fire and Police protection have accounted for 4.4% and 5.1% of total expenses, respectively. However, the year 2002 saw these two categories experience their largest percentages of the budget, with Fire at 7.3% and Police at 10%.

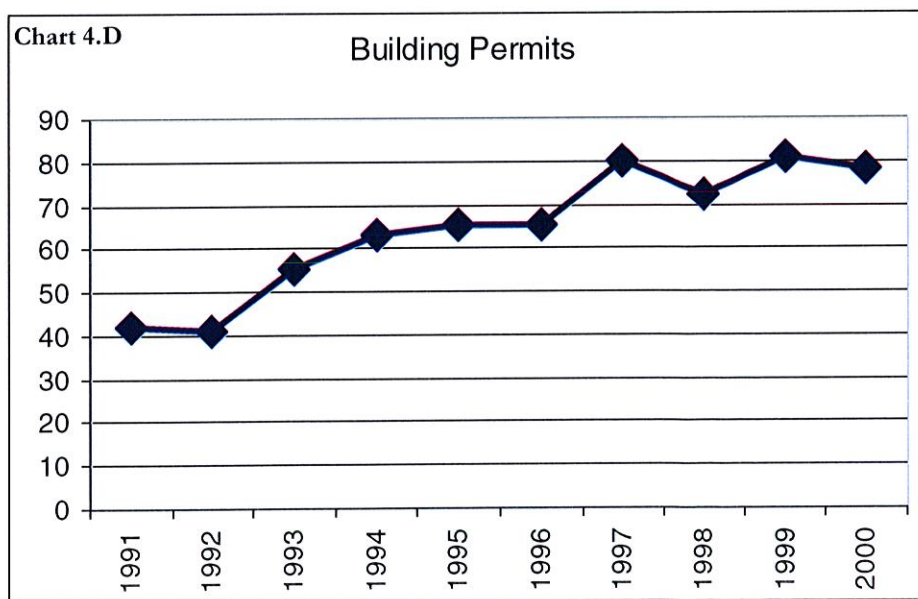
The greatest Fluctuation of Township expenditures results from the "Other" category. This includes items such as recreation, the recycling program during the 1990's, waste management and miscellaneous spending. This category saw its largest allocation in 1987, where it accounted for 41% of the overall expenditures. Employee Benefits on the other hand, have been relatively consistent, averaging close to 12% of the Township's expenses in the years indicated on the chart.

Section II.4

Taxes:

A discussion of the taxes in West Mead must consider the significant change that occurred in 1985. At that time, municipal, county and school taxes began being applied to 75% of the value of real estate, as opposed to 25% of the value. Taxing bodies then reduced the millage to account for this new assessment rate. West Mead for example, reduced the millage from over 10 mills, to less than 3 mills. This did not result in major increases or decreases of real estate tax revenue.

Over the long run, based on the Township's fiscal budget, Real Estate Tax revenue has increased from \$105,438 in 1981 to \$304,949 in 2000, an increase of almost \$200,000 over 20 years. Adjusting the 1981 figure to the buying power of 2000 dollars, the increase is still about \$105,000. The actual budget numbers differ slightly than the projections based on the Assessment Valuations due to payment of penalties, interest, and delinquent taxes paid.

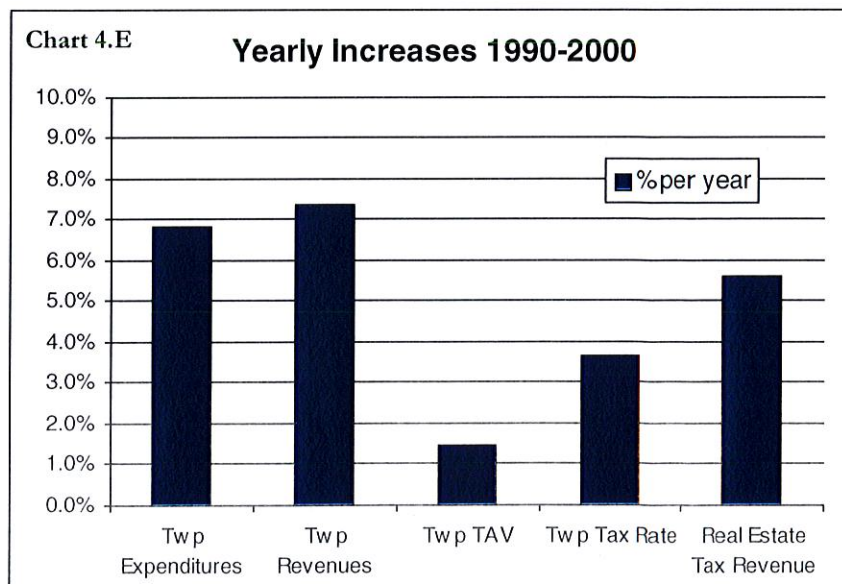


The key to generating new real estate tax revenue is new development within the Township. Chart 4.D indicates the number of building permits issued by the Township from 1999 through 2000. The data reflects steady growth in the number of permits issued over this time period, although the last four years of the data indicate the trend has stabilized at around 80 permits being issued on a yearly basis.

Real Estate taxes have consistently been a significant portion of West Mead's revenue, averaging about 20% of the Township's annual revenue. Changes in Real Estate tax revenues are an indicator of development within a municipality. As property is divided and improved, for residential or other use, real estate taxes will rise. Development however, should not be viewed in a vacuum however, as residential and other uses require new or improved services, subsequently increasing township expenditures.

A detailed analysis of real estate indicates that over twenty years, 260 new parcels have been created, a 10.4% increase. The annual increase in parcels only averages out to 13 new parcels per year, a 0.5% increase per year. In addition to the new lots, new building has seen a continued increase over the last ten years. The total new buildings and additions from 1991-2000 has been 642, about 64.2 building permits requested on average per year. The impact of these two components, land development and building construction, on township revenue can be tracked through the Total Assessed Valuation. See Chart 4.E.

The Township's Total Assessed Valuation from 1990 through 2001 has increased from \$65,479,450 to \$75,951,200, a 58.2% increase in the assessment of real estate in West Mead over 11 years, which is a 1.5% average yearly increase. Over this same period of time, the Township's Real Estate Tax has increased from 2.75 mills in 1990 to 3.75 mills in 2001, an average annual increase of 3.3%. The results? Projected Real Estate Tax revenue has increased from \$180,068 to \$284,817, or a 58.2% increase over 11 years. Adjusted for inflation, the actual increase in tax revenue has amounted to an increase of 1.5% per year from 1990 to 2001.



Section III.1 Community Development Objectives

1.1 To maintain West Mead Township as an exceptional place for its residents, business, and industry through policies outlined within this plan and through subsequent necessary means available to the governing body, while insuring fiscal responsibility of township government and efficient use of township resources.

1.2 To utilize this plan as a guide, founded in public participation, while encouraging flexibility necessary for the Township to adapt and deal with unforeseen changes to socio-economic, environmental, and other conditions, with necessary public input.

1.3 To maintain a balance of land uses within West Mead Township, while preserving the characteristics and environmental conditions that make West Mead Township a favorable place to live, work, and play.

1.4 To encourage development of West Mead Township which provides open spaces and buffers between dissimilar uses, while acknowledging mixed use can coexist, and even positively shape development of the Township.

1.5 To encourage preservation of open spaces where feasible (including wetland areas, farms, tracts of woodland, etc.) where lack of development has more benefits to residents than development.

1.6 To review land use regulations in order to insure compliance with State and Federal statutes, specifically the PA Municipalities Planning Code; taking advantage of new provisions recently incorporated into the PA MPC.

1.7 To provide for a comprehensive approach to unique areas in the Township, such as the County Fairgrounds and the land surrounding it, taking into consideration utilization of the facility, impacts to surrounding property, infrastructure, and the residents of the Township.

1.8 To provide active and passive recreational opportunities for residents of West Mead Township

1.9 To evaluate existing transportation infrastructure and problem areas, and prioritize and target necessary improvements, with key input from Township residents, including, but not limited to a proposed Meadville Bypass.

Section III.1

1.10 To promote a variety of housing opportunities for residents of varying incomes and interests.

1.11 To update the Township's Act 537 Plan while considering the objectives and policies advised within this document. Specifically, avoiding publicly financed development of new sewer infrastructure in areas identified for rural development patterns.

1.12 To support emergency service providers in the Township.

1.13 To formally document the historic and natural resources of West Mead Township in order to preserve them for future generations of Township residents.

1.14 To cooperate with adjacent municipalities, participating in regional activities where appropriate.

1.15 To actively work to implement this planning document.

1.16 To recognize that the health and vitality of West Mead Township is inextricably linked to the local economy and Township government should actively work to positively impact the businesses and industries within the Township.

Section III.2 Land Use Plan

West Mead Township has guided land use through its existing plan and ordinances in order to achieve several objectives. One of these objectives is the attempt to protect the investments businesses and residents have already made within the Township. Planning for land use also serves to promote more efficient development patterns, such as locating higher density settlements near public services. Land use planning provides opportunities for diverse land uses. Protection of natural and cultural characteristics, which unregulated development typically overlooks, can be achieved through planning. In short, planning for land use can serve to fulfill a municipality's authority to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of its residents and community.

Summary Statement of Objectives:

The previous Land Use Plan for West Mead Township was developed in 1983 along with the 1983 Comprehensive Plan. The elements of that plan have guided the Township's land use decisions for the past twenty years.

The development of this revised Comprehensive Plan has provided the opportunity to revisit the land use plan for the Township, and address new issues, add new insights, reinforce basic tenets of the previous plan, and attempt to provide a solid path for the next 5-10 years. This growth rate has been estimated at slow to moderate, based on economic and social trends evaluated in the Background of this plan.

As work progressed on this plan, it was clear that drastic changes to land use policies were not desired, or even necessary. However, there were improvements and updates made to reinforce the vision of "West Mead Township as a favorable place to live, work, and play". Specifically, this plan focuses on enhancing future growth of the Township, while attempting to limit the possible negative impacts of uncontrolled development. A Future Land Use Map is attached. This map is not a future zoning map. However, it serves to guide the revision of the Zoning Ordinance and Map.

Section III.2

2.1 Policy: Maintain agricultural land use standards where floodplains, lack of existing or planned sewer/water infrastructure exist. Do not extend services or infrastructure into these areas. Existing agricultural activities should be encouraged to continue.

2.2 Policy: Rural areas of the Township are characterized by low density, larger residential lotting patterns, small scale farm activities, and large tracts of open spaces or woodlands. These areas may include steep slopes where development of a portion of a lot is not possible. Sewer infrastructure should not be extended into these areas as larger lot sizes should provide for on lot sewage disposal or treatment. The Township should encourage conservation design elements in new developments, and continue to encourage agricultural activity. *Developments of 5 lots or more should be required to submit traditional and non-traditional (i.e. open-space/performance/conservation subdivisions) sketch plans to the Planning Commission and Township Supervisors.*

2.3 Policy: Low density residential areas may or may not include areas currently served by public water or sewer; however, the eventual development of these areas should require developers to connect to the existing systems. Future low density residential developments should accommodate one and two family structures, and maintain certain characteristics of low density development where possible, such as preservation of wooded areas, fronting lots on local access roads as opposed to arterials. *Developments of 5 lots or more should be required to submit a traditional and non-traditional (i.e. open-space/performance/conservation subdivisions) sketch plans to the Planning Commission and Township Supervisors.*

2.4 Policy: High density residential areas are areas already served by public sewer and/or water, and provide an opportunity for multi-family housing types. As existing high density residential areas become fully developed, they should be expanded in certain areas. Appropriate buffer mechanisms may be considered where high density developments are proposed adjacent to established lower density residential developments.

2.5 Policy: Commercial areas should be maintained where commercial establishments exist, providing an opportunity for agglomeration markets, which serve neighborhood scale demands. High traffic/low density areas should provide some opportunities for highway commercial establishments needing larger lots and catering to consumers utilizing automobiles.

2.6 Policy: Industrial areas should be evaluated and possibly expanded where infrastructure could handle this type of development and where predominant residential patterns do not exist. Light industrial areas are intended for industrial uses which do not pollute in terms of noise, fumes, or odors, and which may be accommodated on smaller lot sizes. Light industrial uses typically fit within the scale of the surrounding uses.

2.7 Policy: Ordinances should require new development to limit adverse impacts on existing development through the use of buffering techniques.

2.8 Policy: The Township should investigate the possibility of a Fairgrounds Overlay District, along with an evaluation of permitting procedures for activities at the Fairgrounds to protect the residents of West Mead Township. This should be concurrent with discussions with County officials.

2.9 Policy: Standards and incentives (such as higher density or reduced bulk lot standards) should be developed (cluster, conservation, performance, open-space, etc.) to encourage more economically and environmentally efficient development of the Township.

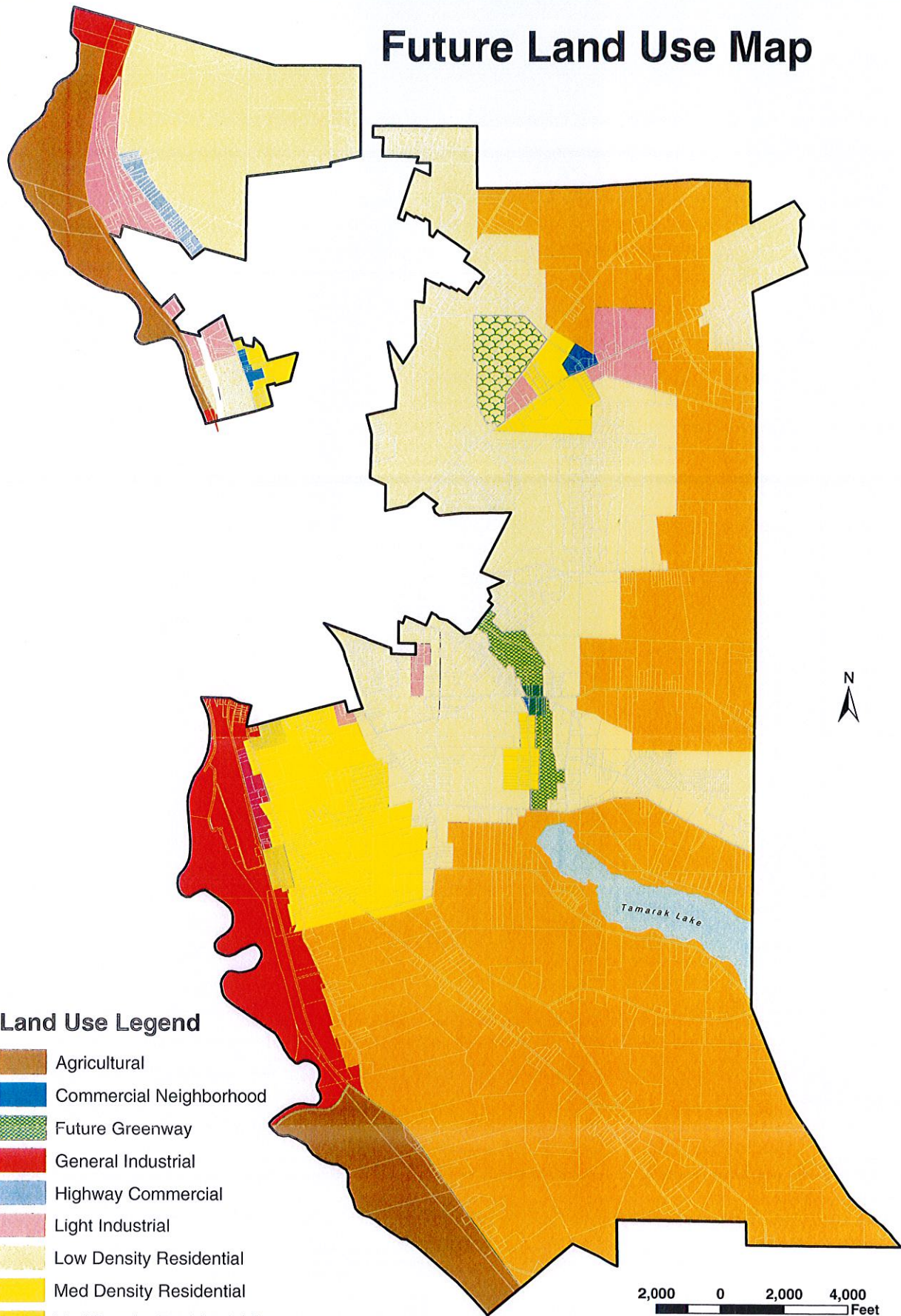
2.10 Policy: Develop a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) for the study of land use patterns, zoning/infrastructure issues and future needs. This development should be coordinated with adjacent municipal and County GIS development efforts.

2.11 Policy: Home occupation and home lot occupation standards should be reviewed and possibly revised to provide a reasonable opportunity for use of property for small-scale business growth, while protecting surrounding residential properties.

2.12 Policy: Investigate greenspaces/conservation opportunities which focus on incentive based strategies or purchase of development rights. Green corridors are highlighted on the Future Land Use Map.

2.13 Policy: The Township Subdivision and Land Development and Zoning Ordinances should be revised in conjunction with the recommendations of this Plan, its Community Development Objectives, and policy recommendations.

Future Land Use Map



Land Use Legend

- Agricultural
- Commercial Neighborhood
- Future Greenway
- General Industrial
- Highway Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Low Density Residential
- Med Density Residential
- Med Density Residential Sp
- Mixed Use
- Recreational Overlay
- Rural Residential

Map III.2.A

Section III.3 Transportation Plan

Since 1983, the number of miles of new roadway in West Mead Township has increased very little, (less than 3 miles). The majority of this new roadway has been the result of private developers creating necessary access to residential development, which are then dedicated to the public and maintained by the Township.

The portion of the Township budget allocated for transportation purposes is utilized mainly for the maintenance of Township roads. As a result, the majority of the projects outlined in the 1983 Plan have not been undertaken, specifically those related to a proposed residential loop road, intended to ease the flow of traffic through the Township. Simply put, the cost for any such improvements has not been justified by the need. This sentiment has been echoed again during this most recent planning process, whereby more than 75% of survey respondents indicated they were not in favor of tax increases for transportation related projects. Instead, the Township has, and will likely continue to operate on an “as need” basis, replacing equipment and undertaking transportation related projects only as necessary.

Acknowledging the above, the following policies and projects are recommended in order to achieve the Community Development Objectives of this Plan:

3.1 Policy: To continue to support and follow the progress of the implementation of the East-West Corridor improvements related to West Mead Township as identified in the 1993 study.

This can be implemented through regular contact with the Crawford County Planning Commission, specifically the Transportation Committee.

3.2 Policy: To actively participate in the Alternate Route Study planning process being conducted by PennDOT; also keeping the residents of the Township informed with regard to this process.

a. It is in the utmost interest for Township officials to become involved in the planning process, sitting on the various Committees and attending the community meetings. The information gathered at these meetings should be disseminated at Township Meetings, Planning Commission Meetings, and through any other forms of contact (including email or website) the Township has with its residents.

b. Additionally, the Township Supervisors and Planning Commission should formulate position statements at relevant points during the planning process, reflecting the best interests of the Township and its residents. These statements should be distributed to the officials involved in the planning process, including but not limited to PennDOT, the Crawford County Planning Commission Transportation Committee, State and County Officials, and TriLine Associates.

3.3 Policy: To maintain involvement and stay informed of the projects related to West Mead Township in PennDOT's Twelve Year Plan.

The Township should monitor the status of projects proposed on the Twelve Year Plan, specifically the first four years, coordinating Township projects with PennDOT projects to minimize adverse traffic impacts and coordinate efforts where appropriate. The Township should also be continually evaluating potential projects for suggested inclusion on the Twelve Year Plan, and submitting these proposal to the appropriate officials.

3.4 Policy: To efficiently expend Township funds for transportation improvements and projects.

a. Prioritize and schedule road improvements based on certain criteria determined by the Township. Such criteria could include; number of residences per 1000 feet, previous maintenance, existing surface conditions, etc. While a priority based schedule can be an effective tool for Township officials, unscheduled projects may take priority any given year due to factors beyond the control of the Township.

b. Continue to cooperate and coordinate with Council of Governments in purchasing of materials and equipment, where purchases of higher quantity may reduce costs incurred by the Township. Explore the possibility of road maintenance contracts bid in coordination with one or more municipalities to obtain a cost savings.

c. Maintain the existing digital database of the Township road network and its important characteristics (i.e. width, surface, date of last maintenance, etc.), and integrate this database with the available GIS coverage for the Township.

d. Encumber yearly funds for future unforeseen projects when possible.

e. Formalize the Township's 5-Year Plan for transportation improvements.

3.5 Policy: To encourage non-motorized transportation in select areas.

Encouraging pedestrian friendly modes of transportation can reduce the burden of motorized traffic on the road network, enhance the perception of West Mead Township as a more livable community, and even benefit the environment. Projects such as shoulder widening, better signage, and trail initiatives that target higher density residential areas and link with specific target areas in relatively close proximity (such as the Recreation Complex or Tamarack Lake) will be most likely to encourage non-motorized modes of transportation.

3.6 Policy: Evaluate the need for additional public transportation availability in the Township.

As the Township's population continues to see larger number of seniors, the Township should consider the transportation needs of this portion of the population which often rely on public transportation. The Township should coordinate with the Crawford Area Transportation Authority (CATA), to determine existing ridership trends and patterns, and insure the needs of the residents are met by the available public transportation resources. [*Map II.3.I* displays existing CATA routes into West Mead Township]

3.7 Policy: Identify and resolve "problem areas" within the Township's road network.

There are several intersections or sections of roadway within the Township which are considered "hazardous" by residents and Township officials. However, the Township is limited in its ability to modify these areas at its own discretion due to PennDOT policies or regulations. The Township should identify these areas of perceived hazard and work with the County Planning Commission or other resources to build a case for possible improvements to be approved by PennDOT.

3.8 Policy: To continue the dialogue with East Mead Township, the Crawford County Youth Soccer Association, and other relevant entities regarding the possible improvement of Townline Road.

The soccer fields adjacent to Townline Road provide an excellent recreational opportunity for residents of Crawford County. Unfortunately, the road surface remains dirt, creating sometimes unsafe conditions and excessive dust during summer months. All parties should be involved in resolving this issue, focusing on creative solutions to improving the roadway. Speed control, road surface, maintenance, signage, and financing the subsequent improvements are key factors to be addressed, as paving this portion of Townline Road will result in increased traffic volume.

III.4 Community Facilities Plan

Residents of every community rely on and utilize services and facilities provided by local government, non-profit organizations, and businesses. Identifying these needs can assist local government in prioritizing, allocating resources, and coordinating with other municipalities and/or organizations to most efficiently and responsibly meet those needs, within their jurisdiction.

Summary Statement of Objectives:

Several revised Community Development Objectives included in this Comprehensive Plan pertain directly to various community facilities. The following policies were identified as priorities during the community planning process:

4.1 Policy: To update the West Mead Township Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan, maintaining general consistency with this revised Comprehensive Plan.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, under the provisions of Act 537, requires municipalities to prepare a plan for the sanitary disposal of sewage waste, and to periodically revise the Plan. West Mead Township originally prepared this plan in 1982, and most recently updated the plan in 1994. Since the last update, the majority of plan elements have been implemented to some extent. The Township should begin the process of updating their Act 537 Plan, maintaining general consistency with this Comprehensive Plan, specifically the 2002 Future Land Use Map.

The Township is eligible to be reimbursed up to 85% from the State, for funds allocated to the revision of their Act 537 Plan.

4.2 Policy: To periodically survey the residents of the Township regarding the development of a public water supply system.

The residents of West Mead Township were surveyed in 1999, to determine the public support for development of a municipal water supply system. At that time, an overwhelming majority of residents were not interested in a public water supply system, due to the potential costs and general satisfaction of on-lot water wells. However, concerns have been expressed regarding the impacts of future development on the large number of existing on-lot well systems throughout the Township. Future surveys may indicate the need to investigate the cost and feasibility of public water service to a portion of the Township.

Section III.4

4.3 Policy: To develop an accurate database of existing utility infrastructure, utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

The development of a geographic database of utility infrastructure within West Mead Township would have many benefits to municipal government, the residents, and businesses of West Mead Township. Planning for future growth or business expansion, reviewing development proposals, and targeting future needs are examples of the utility of this spatial information.

4.4 Policy: To continue support for the Meadville Area Recreation Authority.

As survey data indicated during this planning process, the residents of West Mead Township are generally satisfied with the recreational opportunities available. This is clearly the result of past and current support for the Meadville Area Recreation Authority and the opportunities available at the facility. In order to maintain this level of satisfaction for the residents, continued support is imperative.

4.5 Policy: To support efforts to connect the existing recreational trail structure within Crawford County through West Mead Township.

The French Creek, Tamarack Lake, County Fairgrounds, and the Recreation Complex are several significant recreational sites located in West Mead Township. These amenities could be connected to existing or future recreational trails in Crawford County. While it is not necessary for West Mead Township to develop its own trail effort, the Township should encourage existing trail groups to consider developing linkages to the above locations. Representatives from West Mead Township government should continue to actively participate in the ongoing efforts of these trail groups.

4.6 Policy: To support, with financial resources, volunteer fire departments and the West Mead Township Police Department.

Survey data indicated that the public was overwhelmingly satisfied with the services provided by the local police department and fire departments. Even as the number of responses increased significantly over the past several years, these departments maintained an excellent level of service. While the Police Department is funded directly and in whole by the Township, the Volunteer Fire Departments are autonomous and receive only a portion of their funding from the Township. In the future, the Township should maintain at least its current levels of funding, and investigate other opportunities for support of these service providers. For example, the Township can apply for grants for new equipment on behalf of either department.

4.7 Policy: To continue to improve housing conditions throughout the Township, particularly in areas identified as predominantly low and moderate income based on the most recent Census information.

There are several options available to West Mead Township and its residents to achieve this policy. Individuals may apply to the Crawford County Planning office for housing rehabilitation assistance if they qualify under Federal income guidelines. In addition, the West Mead Township Supervisors can apply directly for housing rehabilitation funds on behalf of the portion of the residents that qualify for these funds, through the HOME and CDBG programs.

4.8 Policy: To encourage municipal cooperation through the French Creek Council of Governments, in initiatives which are mutually beneficial to the municipalities and their residents.

The French Creek COG has the opportunity to formally introduce initiatives or programs designed to strengthen the relationships between the three adjacent municipalities, more efficiently deliver services, and/or enhance the overall quality of life for the residents of these communities. The Supervisors should continue to support this initiative and its underlying premise of cooperation, taking joint action where the Board of Supervisors deems responsible and beneficial to the residents of the community.

4.9 Policy: To develop and maintain a municipal website for the dissemination of municipal information to residents of West Mead Township.

The Internet provides an excellent opportunity for a municipality to post information for residents to access at their convenience. In addition, the nature of the Internet provides the residents the ability to respond to municipal activities. Depending on the extent of Internet website development, applications for various permits could be available, and submitted electronically to the Township. Additionally, individuals and businesses from outside the community can learn about the Township, assisting them in re-locating and permitting procedures. The cost of this initiative is based on the extent of information and functionality the municipality wishes to incorporate into the website. [Perhaps the French Creek COG could investigate the costs associated with this development]

Section III.5 Other Plans

Natural and Historic Resources

Residents of West Mead Township are very much aware of the many environmental assets of their community. Most residents have enjoyed first-hand the sight of deer, reeling in a fish, hiking a trail in the woods, identifying a rare bird, or paddling down French Creek. Fortunately, many of the features of the natural environment also provide us with other benefits which are often overlooked. Large areas of open space or woodland provide the necessary area for rainwater to collect and filter, filling aquifers and reducing the rate stormwater reaches streams and creeks. Property developed in an environmentally sensitive manner, or with a scenic view, typically has a higher value than careless development with no consideration taken for the surrounding environment. Shade trees can save cooling costs in the summer, while evergreens can shelter homes and businesses from wind during the winter months, reducing energy costs. These are just some of the secondary benefits we experience as the result of the natural environment. In a similar way, the history of the Township can benefit existing and future residents by establishing a unique identity for the community, revealing past mistakes, in some cases drawing tourists, and helping to link the community to the larger history of the country.

Preserving the environment, and historically significant sites for future residents of West Mead Township is an effort that must go hand-in-hand with growth and development. The following policies and projects are proposed to implement the Community Development Objectives as they relate to the natural environment and historic resources:

5.1 Policy: To promote environmentally sensitive growth and development within the Township through its existing land use regulations.

- a. The Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance should be revised to strengthen the landscaping requirements for new development, outlining in detail items such as new shade trees and/ or minimal percentages for preserving existing tree stands.
- b. Land use regulations should allow for alternative means of handling stormwater through the use of environmentally sensitive techniques such as bioretention areas and maintenance of open space areas.

5.2 Policy: To promote the preservation of large contiguous tracts of open space (undeveloped areas), without negatively impacting new growth and development.

a. Ordinances should provide incentives for maintaining contiguous open spaces in new developments, especially in areas with unique natural features (i.e. streams or rock outcroppings). Ordinances should allow for flexibility in circumstances where environmental benefits of alternative designs are considered against ordinance standards.

b. The Township should investigate funding opportunities and cooperative efforts with other groups, for preservation or conservation of valuable environmental areas (i.e. greenways, riparian corridors, and habitat corridors) especially tributaries of the French Creek.

5.3 Policy: To develop a greater understanding and knowledge of the environmental assets located within West Mead Township.

The Township should seek the assistance of volunteers, Allegheny College, and Crawford County Planning staff in developing a Natural Resource Inventory for the Township and incorporating the data into the existing GIS database for West Mead. This information could be used for grant application purposes along with future land use decisions.

5.4 Policy: The historically significant sites within West Mead Township should be recognized and documented, and where appropriate preserved as part the region's unique and valuable heritage.

The Township should seek the assistance from the Crawford County Planning Commission, Crawford County Historical Society, and volunteer efforts to fully document the historically significant sites within the Township. Once the historic sites survey has been completed, the Township should consider the inclusion of appropriate sites on the State and or Federal Register.

Economic Development

5.5 Policy: To strategically impact the economy of West Mead Township utilizing existing resources.

- a. The Township should work actively (attending economic development conferences, establishing relationships with both local and state officials, and meeting with West Mead business owners) to determine the needs and resources to help existing businesses and attract new businesses to the region.
- b. Collaborative efforts to market the region (Greater Meadville Area) through entities such as the Council of Governments should be evaluated.
- c. An inventory and analysis of available industrial property (including acreage, utilities, etc) should be formulated, using the local economic development agencies. This information should be readily available from the Township for distribution to existing and potential businesses.
- d. Where appropriate the Township should apply for grants which may be available for economic development related projects or initiatives.

6.2 Zoning Ordinance Action

The Township Zoning Ordinance has the capability of implementing a large portion of this Plan as it pertains to land use and development. The current Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1985, eighteen years ago. This revised Comprehensive Plan proposes changes based on the development which has occurred over that time span, and also to enhance future development potential, while maintaining the character of the Township for which residents so strongly feel.

Work on revisions to the Zoning Ordinance should begin as soon as the Plan is adopted, as preparation of a revised ordinance will take at least 12 months. Following the development of a revised ordinance, the Township must follow the procedures outlined in the PA Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247). The Supervisors should direct the Township Planning Commission to investigate the resources available to assist the Commission in this task, which may include the Crawford County Planning Commission or private planning consultants.

6.3 Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Action

The Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance provides a review process and standards for new development within the Township. The Township's current ordinance should be revised to come into compliance with amendments to the PA Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247) and implement policies outlined in the revised Comprehensive Plan.

This process for adoption of this ordinance must be in compliance with the PA Municipalities Planning Code. This process should be initiated following, or concurrently with the adoption of a revised Zoning Ordinance by the Township. The Supervisors should direct the Township Planning Commission to investigate the resources available to assist the Commission in this task, which may include the Crawford County Planning Commission or private planning consultants.

Section III.7

7.1 Statement of Interrelationships:

The various element of the revised West Mead Township Comprehensive Plan have been invariably linked together through the planning process and the general desire for the Township to remain a viable residential community with opportunities for responsible growth and development. The Community Facilities portion of this plan has addressed many of the Township's resources which are needed to maintain a high quality of life for the residents. The Land Use portion of this plan maintains the predominantly residential character of the Township, while taking into consideration the transportation network, the existing development patterns, and unique environmental assets that make the Township a desirable place to live. The plan also acknowledges the importance of the local economy on the community, the need to provide new opportunities for business, to strengthen and maintain existing businesses, and to provide residents the opportunity to generate healthy incomes. Without a thriving local economy, the initiatives outlined in other portions of this plan will not be sustainable.

7.2 Statement indicating existing and proposed development of the municipality is compatible with adjacent municipalities:

West Mead Township is bordered on the west by Hayfield and Vernon Townships, to the south by Union and East Fairfield Townships, to the east by East Mead Township, and in the north by Woodcock Township. In addition, West Mead Township surrounds over 75% of the City of Meadville. The existing and proposed development of West Mead Township is compatible to the City of Meadville since contiguous areas have similar high density residential development. The outer portions of the Township, which border Hayfield, Woodcock, East Mead, East Fairfield, and Union Townships, are compatible since all are targeted for lower density residential and rural residential development. The western boundary of the Township in the northern and southern portions is formed by the French Creek, which provides a natural buffer between West Mead and Vernon and Hayfield Townships. The largest industrial sector of West Mead Township borders an existing industrial portion of the City of Meadville along S. Main Street (US Route 322).

In conclusion, the existing and proposed development of West Mead Township is generally compatible with that of the adjacent municipalities.

7.3 Consistency with County Comprehensive Plan:

The West Mead Township Comprehensive Plan, and all subsequent components relating to land use, community facilities, historic and natural resources, and transportation are generally consistent with the Crawford County Comprehensive Plan of 2001.