

TRI-COUNTY

TCRPC



REGIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION



STRATEGIC PLAN 2018

Lark Rise Farm, Loysville

Introduction

The mission of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) is to foster the long-term livability and vitality of our communities, counties and region.

Since 1966, we've been a forum for information sharing, consensus building and coordination to tackle regional issues facing the diverse communities of Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry counties.

While Cumberland County periodically has removed itself from participating in the county and regional planning programs of TCRPC over the years (see appended timeline), and currently participates only in the transportation planning program, we continue to believe the region is stronger when we work together.

TCRPC is established under the Act of August 9, 1955, P.L. 323, Sections 2009-2011, as amended by the PA County Code and PA Intergovernmental Cooperation Law (Act 177 of 1996). As such, the enabling legislation allows:

“For the purpose of promoting health, safety, morals and the general welfare of the regions in this Commonwealth through effective development, the powers set forth in this subchapter for the establishment of regional planning commissions are granted.”

The enabling legislation establishes two mandatory activities for a regional planning commission:

- The commission shall prepare a master plan, and the surveys and studies essential thereto, for the guidance of the physical development of the region.
- The commission shall encourage the cooperation of the municipalities within the region in matters which concern the integrity of the master plan or maps prepared by the commission.

In addition, the enabling legislation identifies a number of permissive activities:

- The commission may, with the consent of all the governing bodies, also receive grants from the Federal or State governments or from individuals or foundations.
- The commission may appoint such employees and staff as it deems necessary for its work and contract with planners and other consultants for the services it may require.
- The commission may also perform planning services for any municipality which is not a member thereof and may charge fees for the work.
- The commission may also prepare and sell maps, reports, bulletins, or other material and establish reasonable charges therefore.
- The commission may provide planning assistance and conduct planning work,



including surveys, land use studies, urban renewal plans, technical services and other elements of comprehensive planning programs, for any municipalities within the region.

- The commission may, with the consent of all the governing bodies, accept any funds, personnel, or other assistance made available by the Federal or State government or from individuals or foundations and the commission may enter into contracts regarding the acceptance or use of the funds or assistance.

The activities above are reflected in the TCRPC Articles of Agreement.

TCRPC has been providing coordinated planning assistance to Cumberland, Perry, and Dauphin Counties for over 50 years. This combined county and regional effort has evolved from a basic studies-focused initiative to a more comprehensive approach providing a contemporary planning foundation for the entire Tri-County region. The foundation of this effort is formed by the Regional Growth Management Plan and Regional Transportation Plan along with the Comprehensive Plans for Dauphin and Perry Counties.

It is through these basic plans and associated studies that TCRPC is able to fulfill its mission as established through the following core values:

- Promoting policies, programs, and activities, which recognize the diverse and desirable qualities of individual communities, and the benefits each of these communities brings to the entire region.
- Fostering cooperation among local governments to address regional issues through public education, information sharing, and intergovernmental coordination.
- Assuring, preserving, and optimizing our quality of life by recognizing and adjusting to both external and internal factors that influence our region's land development and conservation.

It is with an understanding of the enabling legislation, Articles of Agreement and mission that the TCRPC decided to update the 2006 Strategic Plan. Staff members were engaged in a process to evaluate existing practices and identify areas where these practices could be enhanced or new services provided.

This process led to the identification of three major focus areas:

- Moving Transportation Forward
- Enhancing Our Communities; and
- Extending Our Outreach, Communication and Partnering.



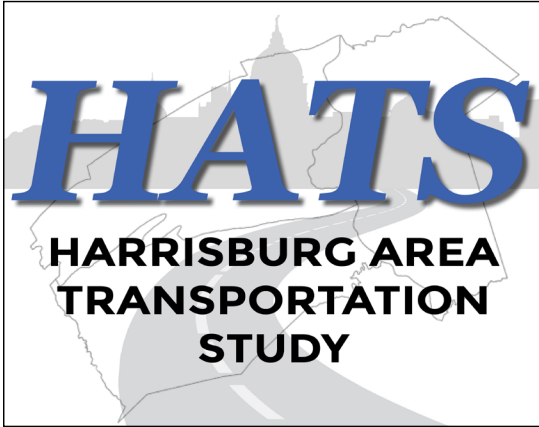
Fort Hunter, Harrisburg

The directions identified under each of these focus areas are summarized in the following pages.

Moving Transportation Forward

Current Services & Activities

TCRPC provides staff support for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Harrisburg region (Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry Counties), known as Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS).



As such, TCRPC is responsible for the development and maintenance of the annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

These activities involve an ongoing process of planning, data collection and analysis, as well as

project development activities for projects under design or construction. The RTP is the compilation of the background data and includes the key recommendations and performance measures to inform investment decisions.

Strategies for Moving Forward

The staff of TCRPC are proposing the following changes and enhancements to the services and activities currently provided as a means of improving the condition and operation of the transportation system:

- Identify & secure additional revenue sources (for internal use and municipal planning and project implementation). Evaluate the establishment of a low interest revolving loan program to facilitate construction funding.
- Improve the problem/project tracking evaluation system for transportation projects to be more objective and tied directly to the Regional Transportation Plan.
- Enhance the Bike/Ped Task Force by incorporating transit and disabled/elderly interest groups to expand the issues that can be addressed.
- Expand traffic counting program to include more local facilities.
- Provide planning services to the regional transit provider(s).
- Develop a performance monitoring and reporting system for the Regional Transportation Plan.
- Serve as the leader for municipal/regional issues on PennDOT's Autonomous Vehicle Task Force.
- Establish one or more Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Teams to improve safety and reduce non-recurring (incident related) congestion.

Enhancing Our Communities

Current Services & Activities

The staff of the TCRPC provides a wide range of services to Dauphin and Perry Counties and their constituent municipalities. These services and activities are intended to provide technical support in a wide range of planning topics and financial support through direct funding and written support for grant applications to other agencies/organizations.

An overview of the services and activities that help enhance our regional municipalities follows:

- Providing staff for the Regional, Dauphin and Perry County Planning Commissions.
- Updating the Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP), which provides guidance for municipal comprehensive plans and is directly integrated into the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- Preparing updates and implementation services for the Dauphin and Perry County Comprehensive Plans.
- Providing subdivision and land development plan review and other direct planning services to municipalities through the Local Planning Assistance (LPA) program.
- Providing intergovernmental and land use consistency reviews for funding applications as well as permitting reviews for various programs including Act 14, 67/68, and sewer modules.
- Preparation of various components of municipal comprehensive plans and ordinances on a fee basis.
- Providing consultant expertise on a range of regionally significant planning areas through open-end agreements on an as-needed basis as funding allows.
- Providing targeted technical planning assistance in such areas as Geographic Information Service (GIS) database development analysis and regional scenario development.
- Providing funding on a competitive basis through the Regional Connections Program to enable Dauphin and Perry County municipalities to complete local planning efforts.
- Recognizing the outstanding efforts of Dauphin County municipalities and community groups through the annual Premier Project Award Program.
- Maintaining a regional geographic database for and analyzing long-term trends for land use and environmental resources .
- Acting as a regional data repository for flood insurance maps and demographic and



I-83 split from Lowther St. overpass, Lemoyne

socioeconomic data provided through the State Data Center.

- Assisting with the handling of US Census Bureau requests (BAS, LUCA, etc.).
- Maintenance of Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Strategies for Moving Forward

TCRPC staff is proposing the following changes and enhancements to the services and activities currently provided as a means of improving the quality of life in our communities and municipalities:

- Identify & secure additional revenue sources (for internal use and municipal planning and project implementation). Evaluate the establishment of a low interest revolving loan program to facilitate construction funding.
- Enhance the LPA services by offering regionalized scenario planning at a municipal, school district, or watershed level as an outgrowth of the Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP).
- Revamp the RGMP toolbox to provide more effective tools to municipalities.
- Take a leading role in coordinating, facilitating, or performing corridor or watershed-based planning on focused issues (access management, water quality, stormwater, etc.) as funding sources are identified.
- Compile and provide best practice information on complete streets, green infrastructure, and other topical issues including design standards for project implementation.
- Seek additional opportunities to facilitate project funding (i.e. Susquehanna Regional Transportation Partnership funding, Rt 39 Study, Historic Resource Inventory, etc.).
- Seek leadership roles on committees and task forces established to address regional issues (i.e. aging in place, walkable communities, etc.).
- Pursue use of a drone for data collection and analysis to address key regional and municipal issues.
- Create or have staff support an authority for the implementation of physical improvements (Paxton Creek, Stormwater management, etc.).
- Participate in a housing/structural inventory as a database for county land banks or other redevelopment entities.
- Lead an evaluation of potential limiting factors to improved housing affordability.
- Maximize participation in the Local Planning Assistance (LPA program), focusing on Perry County municipalities.
- Establish a closer connection between economic development and municipal/regional planning by enhancing the relationships with county and regional chambers of commerce.



Paxton Creek, Harrisburg

Extending Our Outreach & Communication

Current Services & Activities

Given the large number of planning issues and challenges, it is critical that the TCRPC effectively communicates with municipalities and applicable stakeholder organizations in an effort to establish partnerships by addressing key issues. There are a wide range of ongoing activities geared to accomplishing this important goal:

- Providing educational opportunities through the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI) and Lunch & Learn programs.
- Using social media to increase awareness of planning-related issues and activities.
- Preparing an annual Building Activity Tracking Report (including subdivision/land development tracking).
- Presenting key planning and environmental issues online through GIS and other data development applications.
- Participating on committees and task forces to represent TCRPC interests.
- Hosting an Annual Luncheon where speakers provide insight into important current issues.
- Providing planning presentations on subject matter pertinent to the targeted audiences.



Strategies for Moving Forward

- Seek to sponsor/facilitate periodic summits on leading planning issues of regional significance.
- Expand TCRPC's familiarity with the general public through various activities such as a photo contest, sponsorship of key activities, etc.
- Expand Lunch & Learn program to get broader involvement from municipal officials, stakeholders, etc. by seeking their input on how to improve and tailor this program.
- Through outreach to existing and non-participating LPA municipalities, seek to enhance and expand services provided through the program.
- Promote/Facilitate awareness of training in areas of interest to municipal government (LTAP, BOCA, Safety, etc.).
- Enhance TCRPC website as more of a clearinghouse/resource base for information & services.
- Develop newly elected/appointed outreach opportunity relating to the importance of planning tools.
- Seek to widen TCRPC's delivery of education/training, by developing partnerships with others seeking to inform and educate the public (i.e. Whitaker Center, Pinnacle Health, schools, etc.).
- Seek to provide grant writing services through existing staff or the addition of new staff.
- Offer municipal Planning Capability Assessments or Audits.

Implementing the Plan

The Strategic Plan can only be effective if it is integrated into normal staff activities and regularly monitored by the TCRPC members. As such, we propose to modify the current progress reporting procedures to mimic the activities and key action items contained in this plan. The direct linkage between the activity reporting procedures by the staff and the bimonthly TCRPC meetings will help ensure that the plan is implemented effectively. A template for the proposed progress reporting format is appended to this plan.

TCRPC staff has been challenged with incorporating the recommendations for enhancing existing services identified in this strategic plan into their Annual Work Programs. This process, whereby staff members apply hourly estimates to specific tasks, will enable leadership to identify gaps in staffing availability and seek options to providing the desired services. This process will serve the basis of an annual Strategic Plan evaluation and reporting system.

Full implementation of the services proposed in this plan will clearly require additional funding. Ideally, increases in funding should be repetitive in nature as opposed to grants or other one-time opportunities. TCRPC should conduct a reevaluation of its current funding stream including plan review fees, LPA charges, sponsorships, and our transportation funding allocation. Once the Annual Work Program evaluation is complete, recommendations are to be made for any changes to the existing funding streams, which will then be reviewed with the Commission.

Lastly, the Strategic Plan and its implementation should be publicly available to increase awareness of the services being provided through TCRPC. As such, it should be incorporated into the TCRPC website and accomplishments advertised through social media. A section of the website should focus on an annual report that is organized around the elements of the Strategic Plan.



Elizabethville Square

Draft Progress Report Format

Moving Transportation Forward:

MPO Administration and Funding Initiatives (meetings, minutes, monthly progress reports, UPWP)

- Contract & Project Administration
- Public Involvement/Outreach

Modal & Operational Planning Efforts

- Congestion Management Initiatives
- Intermodal Management Initiatives (including mobility & accessibility)
- Safety Initiatives
- Asset Management Initiatives
- Data Development & Support

Project Development & Performance Monitoring

- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP/STIP)
- Municipal and Stakeholder Outreach & Coordination

Regional Growth Management Plan Implementation

- RGMP Development and Implementation

Environmental Enhancement Efforts

Enhancing Our Communities:

County & Local Planning Assistance

- Dauphin County
- Perry County

Regional Growth Management Plan Development

- RGMP Development and Implementation

Community-Based Environmental Initiatives

Technical, Financial, & Educational Support (GIS, Training, etc.)

Extending Our Outreach & Communication:

Social, Online, & Traditional Media:

Partnerships

Additional Efforts:

TCRPC Timeline

- 9/5/1963** Creation of the Cumberland-Dauphin Regional Planning Commission
- *Commission - 18 members, comprised of all members from each county planning commission*
 - *Operating Committee – 10 members, comprised of 4 members from each county planning commission and the chairman from each County Board of Commissioners*
- 2/11/1965** Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS) officially formed (including Cumberland, Dauphin, Harrisburg, PennDOT) [See HATS timeline below]
- 6/2/1966** Perry County signs Articles of Agreement, officially establishing Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
- *Commission - 25 members, comprised of 4 members from each county planning commission and 13 “section” members (quorum = 9)*
 - *Operating Committee – removed from Articles*
- 12/15/1967** Executive Committee created in bylaws and Board of County Commissioners included in its voting membership
- *Executive Committee – 7 members, comprised of 4 officers from the regional commission and a County Commissioner from each county*
- 11/23/1971** Increased local government/minority representation
- *Commission - 31 members, comprised of 4 members from each county planning commission, 13 “section” members, the Chairman from each County Board of Commissioners; 3 members (1 member from each county) representing the “broad spectrum of society” (quorum = 9)*
- 1/1/1981** Cumberland County withdraws all county planning services from TCRPC; remains in the regional and transportation planning programs
- 1/1/1991** Cumberland County returns all county planning services to TCRPC; full participant in TCRPC programs
- 1/21/1998** Changes included in articles of agreement: staggered terms removed; financing splits updated; committees allowed
- 7/1/2004** MOU between Cumberland County Planning Commission and TCRPC for Cumberland County Planning Department to take over portion of TCRPC-provided county planning services
- 1/1/2011** Cumberland County Planning Department withdraws all county planning support, subdivision and local planning assistance provided by TCRPC
- 12/7/2015** Cumberland withdraws from regional program; only participates in transportation program
- *Commission - 19 members, comprised of 4 members from each county planning commission, 7 “section” members, 1 Commissioner from each County Board of Commissioners; 2 “at-large” members (quorum = 10; amended to 7)*

- *Executive Committee – removed*
- *Meetings – every other month*
- *Financing – restructured*
- *Program – Cumberland County included in transportation program only*

HATS Timeline

2/11/1965	Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS) officially formed (including Cumberland, Dauphin, Harrisburg, PennDOT)
1974	CAT and PennDOT Bureau of Aviation added to Technical Committee
1977	Perry County added to HATS Technical and Coordinating Committees
1982	Lower Dauphin and West Shore COGs added to Coordinating Committee
1985	York County added to Technical Committee
1987	Technical Committee Chairman elected by voting members (formerly PennDOT appt)
1992	CAT added to Coordinating Committee
1996	MOA including portions of Palmyra Borough and North Londonderry Township (Lebanon County) in MPO study area
2001	Removed amendment that added COGs to Coordinating Committee
2003	MOU with York MPO regarding coordinating planning responsibilities and ex-officio status
2009	MOU with Lebanon MPO regarding coordinating planning responsibilities and ex-officio status
2013	MOU with Lancaster MPO regarding coordinating planning responsibilities; York MOU agreement updated



Rockville Bridge