

# ANNUAL REPORT

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Wyoming County Office of Community Planning, on an annual basis, submits to the Wyoming County Commissioners a report of the activities of the office for the last year. This is a requirement, as outlined, in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) under Article II Planning Agencies Conduct of Business.

The Planning Office had a new member join the planning team in 2005, who is Laurie Pedley. She is not a newcomer to county government, having previously worked for Wyoming County. While we share her services, she has assisted us tremendously since starting.

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## SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

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The Planning Office received and reviewed a total of 88 subdivisions and land developments located in Wyoming County. This is compared to 70 submissions in 2004, which is a moderate increase. Of the total 88 submissions 16 of them were for plan reviews for municipalities, due to the subdivision activity being located in municipalities which have a local ordinance.

Last year was the second complete year for building permits through Guardian Inspection Services and the C.O.G. Building Permit process.(two municipalities, Overfield and Noxen, not part of this joint enforcement effort) There was a substantial increase in building permits in 2005 with the implementation of the building code enforcement within Wyoming County. This increase is to account for both new home starts and some home improvement projects, which would require a building permit.

2002	2003	2004	2005
260	358	187	464

Table 1: Building permits for the last four years.

The Planning Commission started a review of the County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance for needed revisions of various sections that were found since the last revision. It is planned that they will be submitted to the County Commissioners in 2006 once they are all compiled. Many of these are typo's and sections which need revisions due to problems discovered through the review process.

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**LOCAL PLANNING AND PLANNING ASSISTANCE**

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Last year was again a very productive year for local planning with Wyoming County, and our local officials have looked to planning as an aide in the development and preservation of natural resources of their municipalities. I wish to congratulate all those local municipalities that have started or are continuing to development local land use controls for their municipalities. Falls Township passed their Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance last year to complete their local ordinance package. Nicholson Borough, Nicholson Township, and Clinton Township (Northeastern Joint Planning Commission) passed their joint Comprehensive Plan, and continued to develop a joint zoning ordinance. Lemon and Tunkhannock Townships (Northeastern Joint Planning Commission) passed their joint Comprehensive Plan and continued to work on a local Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance. The Southeastern Joint Planning Commission, which is Eaton, Northmoreland, and Monroe Townships continued with their joint effort on development of a Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Office continued to assist local municipalities and citizens on local flood zone issues and on various items and make available forms for elevation certificates and flood plain mapping of the local municipalities for residents, banks, realtors, and municipalities. The Planner served on a start-up committee to develop recommendations for the enhancement of the Commonwealth's role in the FEMA's Map Modernization Program. A workshop will be held in 2006 of state and local agencies to develop a work program to aid in this map modernization effort.

The Planning Office continued to assist two municipalities on the creation of a joint proposal for a Act 537 sewage plan revision, this proposal will address the sewage needs of Lemon and Tunkhannock Townships.

The Planning Director has participated in a new statewide committee developed with the assistance of the County Commissioners Associates of Pennsylvania to address statewide county planning issues. This forum allows for the planners to bring statewide issues to the County Commissioners and their association that need to be addressed.

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**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

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The Planning Office continues to serve on the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission, Regional Transportation Advisory Committee. The NTRPDC Regional Transportation Advisory Committee is the local planning partner for PennDOT. It is a method to develop a local voice in transportation issues, both in

the county and of regional importance. The Planning office continued to assist with the Wyoming / Susquehanna County Equipment Show to assist local municipalities on road maintenance issues.

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## **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM**

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The Planning Office continued to work with other county offices on the deployment of the county GIS. The Planning Office continued to work with the County E911 Center on the development of a proposal for street addressing of the county of E911 use and requirements under the county wireless plan, and will include new parcel data for one half of the county. The Planning Office is serving on PAMAGIC's statewide committee on the development of statewide standards for municipality boundaries as a subject matter expert. These standards are part of the Pennsylvania Geospatial Data Sharing Standards (PGDSS), which will aid in the development and sharing of data across county and municipal lines. The office attended statewide GIS conference and training sessions to better serve County's needs. The office has also served on the regional GIS user's committee that discusses issues of regional importance.

The County Planner served on the PAMAP Advisory Committee, as the Region 1 representative. This region was made up of the counties of Wyoming , Luzerne, Columbia, Montour, Northumberland, Schuylkill and Berks. This is an advisory committee made up of nine county representatives, eight state agencies (DCNR, DEP, PennDOT, DCED, Health, Ag, OA/IT, and PEMA) and four others including one Federal agency (USGS). One of year's major steps was the development of PAMAP Goals and Strategies to guide the program for the next three to five years and the development of the final plans for the aerial flights which will be done on a three year cycle. One of the other PAMAP projects will be a proposal for lidar mapping, which will producing two (2) foot contours for the complete state. These new advancements will aid flood plain management statewide and many other planning projects.

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## **COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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The Planning Commission reviewed the implementation schedule as contained within the County Comprehensive Plan. The Commission presented this to the County Commissioners at the end of 2005, and will hold a public hearing for it to be adopted as an amendment to the County Plan in the early part of 2006. This planning document list projects of countywide importance, for the next five years and should be used as a guide in the development and implementation of projects by departments and agencies within the County.

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**FARMLAND    PRESERVATION**

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The Planning Office continued to assist the Wyoming County Agricultural Land Preservation Board on the administration of the Farmland Preservation Program. The Office processes applications and ranks applicants based on the county program, which outlines procedures for determining easement purchase priorities. The Office has also assisted local municipalities on the seven-year review of Agricultural Areas. This program encourages landowners to make a long-term commitment to agriculture and to protect farming operations in Agriculture Areas, as developed, under the Agriculture Area Security Law. At the end of 2005, this program management was transferred to the Wyoming County Conservation District. Charles Mead who work in the Planning Office and managed this program was transferred to the E-911 center to assist with the Countywide Re-addressing Project. It is anticipated that the Planning Office will continue to assist the Farmland Preservation Program in 2006, under their new management team.

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**ECONOMIC    DEVELOPMENT**

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The Office continued to assist the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission and the Commissioners' Office to coordinate the activities on the KOZ Program, sub-zones known as the Clinton Township site and the Lemon Township site. These sites were sold during 2005 and are no longer under county ownership.

