

EXISTING LAND USE**INTRODUCTION**

Perry County has many outstanding qualities and assets in terms of its land and its rural atmosphere. Protection of these assets is a major concern. In order to formulate comprehensive planning policy, it is important to have some knowledge and awareness of the present state of Perry County and relevant trends in growth and development. Important information regarding the general development pattern and character that exists in Perry County has been compiled into an existing land use inventory. This information serves as an important component of the County Comprehensive Plan. This Existing Land Use chapter, together with other studies will form the primary basis for the formulation of the Future Land Use Plan.

METHODOLOGY

The existing land use inventory was created from land use data assembled through the Perry County Tax Assessment Office. The County completed a countywide reassessment of property in 2000 and developed a Geographic Information System (GIS) to provide for parcel identification and mapping. For the purpose of this analysis, the following land use categories were established:

- **Agricultural**
- **Commercial**
- **Forested**
- **Industrial**
- **Residential**
- **Public/Semi-Public**
- **Vacant**

These land use categories were developed from subcategories of property types established by the Tax Assessment Office. These land use classifications are described in detail under each categories heading in the following sections.

The data identified in **Tables 6-1, 6-2 and 6-3** and graphics illustrated in **Map 6-1** reflect the end result of the data gathering and mapping effort. The total amount of acreage for each land use category in each municipality in the County was calculated. By totaling the acreage of each land use category in each municipality, the total for the County was calculated. Once the acreage was calculated, the percentage of that land use could also be calculated.

LAND USE CATEGORIES**Agricultural Land Use**

The Agricultural Land Use category consists of lands utilized for the express purpose of agriculture not inclusive of areas on the property that fit into the other land use categories. These lands include, lands utilized for pasturing and crop production. The category also includes land area where farm buildings exist.

The agricultural land use category accounts for approximately twenty-five (25) percent of Perry County's total land area (Table 6-2). The calculated acreage totals of Table 6-1 reveal a significant acreage figure of 88,545.17 acres. This adds credence to the justification to separate this use out for the purpose of this chapter. Substantial agricultural areas are located throughout County. The majority of agricultural activity is located in the valley regions of the County in Toboyne, Jackson, Southwest Madison, Northeast Madison, Saville, Tyrone Spring, Centre, and Tuscarora Townships and in the Northeast section of the County in Liverpool and Greenwood Townships.

Commercial Land Use

The Commercial Land Use category is comprised of the following subcategories; commercial general; commercial bank; commercial combination; commercial service station; commercial parking lot; commercial motel, hotel, inn, and bed and breakfast; commercial office; commercial campground; commercial restaurant; commercial store; other service sector inclusions from the 1992 Perry County Comprehensive Plan's "Service" land use classification; and commercial warehouse.

There are 2,302.94 acres of land are in the commercial land use category. This amounts to approximately 0.7 percent of the total land area of the County. The major centers of commercial activities are located in the boroughs and villages of the County, the Shermans Dale area in Carroll Township, Loysville area in Tyrone Township, Watts and Penn Townships along U.S. Route 11/15, the Giant Plaza in Howe Township along U.S. Route 22/322 and the development of the Perry County Business Campus One site. The existing commercial activity in the County is tailored to the local needs of the county residents. The commercial markets in the Harrisburg area, Lewistown and Selinsgrove, provide shopping opportunities for Perry County residents.

Forested Land Use

The Forested Land Use category consists of areas where forested land exists outside of areas identified as the land use category - Public/Semi-Public. These are exclusively privately held lands. This category was separated out of all parcels identified as agricultural, commercial, residential, or industrial. In other words, where a parcel's data carried the identification as an agricultural, commercial, residential, or industrial property, only the developed and non-forested portions were depicted as such on the County's Existing Land Use Map (Map 6-1). There are 159,681.63 acres of land in the

forested land use category. This amounts to nearly 45.54 percent of the total land area of the County.

The majority of the County's Forested Land Use classification category can be found on the mountainous and steep slope areas of the County. Municipalities with significant amounts of privately held forested land (over 10,000 acres) are Saville Township, Carroll Township, Centre Township, Tuscarora Township, and Tyrone Township.

Industrial Land Use

The Industrial Land Use category is comprised of the following subcategories: industrial general and mineral active (quarry operations). There are 653.25 acres of land in the industrial land use category. This amounts to nearly 0.2 percent of the total land area of the County. A majority of the industrial activities are located in the boroughs of Bloomfield, Liverpool, Marysville, Millerstown, and Newport where there is public infrastructure to support such activity. The large acreage of industrial land in Buffalo, Liverpool, and Oliver Townships is related to mineral recovery activity which requires a large amount of land and somewhat inflates the acreage found in this category.

Residential Land Use

The Residential Land Use category is comprised of buildings, single family dwellings, single-family dwellings converted into two or three independent living units, residential buildings with some commercial function, residential out buildings, seasonal homes, mobile homes, apartments, and mobile home parks on less than ten acres.

There are 15,085.57 acres of land categorized in the residential land use category. This amounts to 4.30 percent of the total land area in the County. **Map 6-1** shows that residential development is concentrated in two general patterns. The first pattern, as would be expected, includes the residential development in the County's boroughs and villages. The second pattern of residential development, which has been increasing throughout the rural areas of the County, is the number of dwellings appearing along the road frontage of existing roads. Currently, this is where most of the new development is occurring in the County. The roads that connect Perry County to the Harrisburg area and Cumberland County are quite attractive to this type of development. It is also evident by **Map 6-1** that the southeastern Plan Development Section (PDS) of the County is experiencing the greatest amount of growth. This can be attributed to the existing highway infrastructure and the proximity to employment and commercial centers in Dauphin and Cumberland Counties. This developing area includes; Marysville Borough, Rye Township, Carroll Township, Spring Township, Centre Township, Wheatfield Township, Penn Township and Duncannon Borough. The northeast PDS of the County continues to experience limited growth. However, this particular PDS is expected to experience development pressure with the recently constructed U.S. Route 22/322 bypass around Dauphin Borough in Dauphin County. The western portion of the County is characterized by significant agricultural land holdings with residential lots dispersed throughout.

Public and Semi-Public Land Use

The Public and Semi-Public Land Use category is comprised of the following subcategories: commercial tax exempt; public utility (exempt from real estate taxes); public utility (exempt from all taxes); and vacant land tax exempt. This land use category includes such uses as cemeteries, public schools, public libraries, churches and parks and federal, state, County and municipal lands uses.

There are 69,282.14 acres in the public and semi-public land use category. This amounts to 19.76 percent of the total land area of the County. The majority of the land categorized in the public/semi-public land use category is located in the Tuscarora State Forest located in Toboyne, Jackson, Northeast Madison, and Southwest Madison Townships and in the various State Game Lands in the County.

Vacant Land Use

The Vacant Land Use category is comprised of the following subcategories: vacant less than one acre; vacant one to five acres; vacant six to ten acres; and vacant greater than ten acres. This includes much of the open space, mountain slopes, flood plains, wetlands and other natural environmental features that make development impractical. There are 15,066.09 acres in the vacant land use category. This amounts to 4.30 percent of the total land area of the County.

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Perry County is approximately 553.6 square miles in area or 354,347 acres in size of which only 5.14 percent was developed in 2000. For the purpose of this Plan, developed land is defined as any portion of a parcel of land devoted to residential, commercial, or industrial development. The County's topographic features have greatly influenced past and current land uses. These features have determined the location of transportation corridors, land uses and agricultural practices. Residential development is dispersed throughout the County without any distinct patterns, except for the higher-concentration residential development that exists in some boroughs and small villages. The residential land use is the most prominent land use associated with the developed land of the County and accounts for 88.4 percent of developed land. Commercial and industrial land uses are limited due to the lack of public infrastructure and account for 11.6 percent of developed land. The majority of the commercial and industrial land uses are in and around the villages and boroughs. Agricultural properties, public/semi-public and vacant lands account for 92.5 percent of the total land area.

A significant change has been made to the existing land use categories this year, with the inclusion of both agricultural and forested land. The utilization of GIS technology has made it easier to effectively display and separate out these uses to provide a more concise rendition of the County's landscape as it relates to land use. As you will see, both of these uses account for such a significant share of the County's total land area, there is no

question they are worthy of inclusion in this Chapter. Their presence herein will help serve the county, bringing about a better understanding of the impact development will have on these two classifications and the trends they will reveal over time with future updates to the Plan.

**Table 6-1
2007 Perry County Land Use Summary
Acreage Totals**

Municipality	Land Use Categories						
	Agricultural	Commercial	Forested	Industrial	Residential	Public/ Semi-Public	Vacant
Blain Borough	115.02	3.08	0.47	0.99	44.07	0.00	13.05
Bloomfield Borough	29.32	28.64	8.85	0.41	114.76	110.04	20.28
Buffalo Township	3,048.06	288.97	6,889.53	360.95	540.32	782.60	787.71
Carroll Township	4,962.25	300.63	12,417.19	35.62	2,027.05	584.42	1,378.65
Centre Township	5,005.91	177.1	10,912.28	2.73	949.97	1,219.18	914.72
Duncannon Borough	5.47	26.50	24.87	0.00	110.02	57.49	4.21
Greenwood Township	6,664.92	43.88	7,797.44	0.00	426.74	112.60	802.61
Howe Township	1,422.93	74.84	2,962.42	2.53	187.31	98.91	201.30
Jackson Township	5,545.00	7.9	7,760.49	0.00	203.73	9,641.32	681.41
Juniata Township	5,867.95	125.65	5,494.76	0.00	670.55	362.83	855.65
Landisburg Borough	0.02	2.73	1.45	0.00	28.96	8.72	3.14
Liverpool Borough	18.99	64.75	50.08	0.89	120.77	53.69	91.91
Liverpool Township	5,108.68	88.16	6,304.94	54.2	445.59	557.46	775.82
Marysville Borough	10.95	27.71	866.28	1.14	241.36	230.39	60.58
Miller Township	1,227.18	66.52	4,368.31	0.00	353.62	1,597.94	261.87
Millerstown Borough	24.64	18.67	218.54	1.36	112.43	57.29	55.6
New Buffalo Borough	0.11	3.61	3.88	0.00	18.04	0.44	3.13
Newport Borough	0.00	21.17	3.43	6.27	68.24	36.25	3.11
Northeast Madison Township	4,580.81	35.14	7,172.77	0.00	379.13	3,911.17	326.19
Oliver Township	1,803.57	40.19	2,016.15	81.6	483.98	409.87	368.83

Municipality (Continued)	Land Use Categories (Continued)						
	Agricultural	Commercial	Forested	Industrial	Residential	Public/ Semi-Public	Vacant
Penn Township	2,722.88	147.19	4,368.18	0.00	904.30	4,553.54	749.16
Rye Township	1,988.69	14.31	5,993.14	0.00	1,004.39	7,021.21	338.79
Saville Township	7,952.50	53.38	16,594.45	18.89	954.69	2,280.63	1,401.85
Southwest Madison Township	5,747.92	165.56	8,720.80	5.25	395.64	1,945.04	555.51
Spring Township	7,423.43	109.59	8,583.84	65.73	986.86	116.14	1,001.45
Toboyne Township	2,293.71	126.19	7,394.90	0.00	271.49	25,646.98	217.89
Tuscarora Township	3,827.81	8.01	11,540.68	10.52	487.29	2,213.44	614.20
Tyrone Township	5,972.11	144.18	10,366.85	4.17	690.43	4,818.88	824.90
Watts Township	1,818.07	61.91	4,214.97	0.00	440.88	165.69	609.38
Wheatfield Township	3,356.27	26.78	6,629.69	0.00	1,422.96	687.98	1,143.19
COUNTY TOTALS	88,545.17	2,302.94	159,681.63	653.25	15,085.57	69,282.14	15,066.09

SOURCE: Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, 2006

**Table 6-2
2007 Perry County Land Use Summary
Percentages**

Municipality	Land Use Categories						
	Agricultural	Commercial	Forested	Industrial	Residential	Public/ Semi-Public	Vacant
Blain Borough	65.10%	1.74%	0.27%	0.56%	24.94%	0.00%	7.39%
Bloomfield Borough	9.39%	9.17%	2.83%	0.13%	36.75%	35.24%	6.49%
Buffalo Township	24.00%	2.28%	54.26%	2.84%	4.26%	6.16%	6.20%
Carroll Township	22.86%	1.39%	57.21%	0.16%	9.34%	2.69%	6.35%
Centre Township	26.10%	0.92%	56.89%	0.01%	4.95%	6.36%	4.77%
Duncannon Borough	2.39%	11.60%	10.88%	0.00%	48.14%	25.15%	1.84%
Greenwood Township	42.06%	0.28%	49.20%	0.00%	2.69%	0.71%	5.06%
Howe Township	28.75%	1.51%	59.84%	0.05%	3.78%	2.00%	4.07%
Jackson Township	23.26%	0.03%	32.55%	0.00%	0.86%	40.44%	2.86%

Municipality (Continued)	Land Use Categories (Continued)						
	Agricultural	Commercial	Forested	Industrial	Residential	Public/ Semi-Public	Vacant
Juniata Township	43.86%	0.94%	41.08%	0.00%	5.01%	2.71%	6.40%
Landisburg Borough	0.04%	6.06%	3.22%	0.00%	64.33%	19.37%	6.98%
Liverpool Borough	4.73%	16.14%	12.49%	0.22%	30.11%	13.39%	22.92%
Liverpool Township	38.31%	0.66%	47.28%	0.41%	3.34%	4.18%	5.82%
Marysville Borough	0.76%	1.93%	60.22%	0.08%	16.78%	16.02%	4.21%
Miller Township	15.58%	0.84%	55.47%	0.00%	4.49%	20.29%	3.33%
Millerstown Borough	5.04%	3.82%	44.74%	0.28%	23.01%	11.73%	11.38%
New Buffalo Borough	0.37%	12.36%	13.28%	0.00%	61.76%	1.51%	10.72%
Newport Borough	0.00%	15.29%	2.48%	4.53%	49.28%	26.18%	2.24%
Northeast Madison Township	27.92%	0.22%	43.72%	0.00%	2.31%	23.84%	1.99%
Oliver Township	34.65%	0.77%	38.74%	1.57%	9.30%	7.88%	7.09%
Penn Township	20.25%	1.09%	32.49%	0.00%	6.73%	33.87%	5.57%
Rye Township	12.16%	0.09%	36.63%	0.00%	6.14%	42.91%	2.07%
Saville Township	27.18%	0.18%	56.72%	0.07%	3.26%	7.80%	4.79%
Southwest Madison Township	32.79%	0.94%	49.73%	0.03%	2.25%	11.09%	3.17%
Spring Township	40.59%	0.60%	46.94%	0.36%	5.40%	0.63%	5.48%
Toboyne Township	6.38%	0.35%	20.57%	0.00%	0.75%	71.34%	0.61%
Tuscarora Township	20.46%	0.04%	61.71%	0.06%	2.61%	11.84%	3.28%
Tyrone Township	26.17%	0.63%	45.43%	0.02%	3.02%	21.12%	3.61%
Watts Township	24.87%	0.85%	57.65%	0.00%	6.03%	2.27%	8.33%
Wheatfield Township	25.30%	0.20%	49.97%	0.00%	10.73%	5.18%	8.62%
COUNTY TOTALS	25.25%	0.66%	45.54%	0.19%	4.30%	19.76%	4.30%

SOURCE: Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, 2006

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Two (2) of the four 1992 Existing Land Use Plan tables have been inserted into this chapter for reference. The 1992 Perry County Comprehensive Plan provided information for the following six (6) land use classifications: Residential; Commercial; Service; Industrial; Public/Semi-Public; and Vacant. The former vacant now comprises both agricultural and forested. As was previously mentioned, the forested land use category has been portioned out of the agricultural, commercial, residential, and industrial categories. As a result, only some very basic conclusions can be drawn when comparing the present and past land use patterns, as the classifications no longer share the same identical characteristics.

In 1987 a land use assessment was undertaken in preparation for the 1992 Perry County Comprehensive Plan. The two (2) tables from the 1992 plan were recorded as follows:

**Table 6-3
1987 Perry County Land Use Summary
Acreage Totals**

Municipality	Land Use Categories						
	Residential	Commercial	Service	Industrial	Public/Semi-Public	Vacant Land	Total
Blain Borough	37.57	1.29	0.82	3.16	14.50	140.96	198.30
Bloomfield Borough	109.72	3.57	10.03	4.49	51.63	223.33	402.77
Buffalo Township	547.57	5.00	1.00	0.00	4.80	11623.94	12182.31
Carroll Township	1766.56	32.31	2.31	18.66	53.72	20833.76	22707.32
Centre Township	868.91	5.99	0.00	75.01	6.00	18621.08	19576.99
Duncannon Borough	116.40	14.44	6.55	1.17	5.14	66.27	209.97
Greenwood Township	501.90	40.00	4.60	0.00	31.06	14680.26	15257.82
Howe Township	220.00	5.00	86.00	2.00	506.00	4813.00	5632.00
Jackson Township	209.90	21.35	0.50	0.00	35.27	23989.06	24256.08
Juniata Township	586.24	5.50	1.00	0.00	837.17	12926.05	14355.96
Landisburg Borough	23.11	1.23	0.24	0.00	0.00	4.95	29.53
Liverpool Borough	113.37	19.57	1.00	3.97	17.33	353.74	508.98
Liverpool Township	415.21	1.12	5.94	0.00	0.00	14366.81	14789.08
Marysville Borough	472.72	19.05	4.74	0.12	42.35	1125.54	1664.52
Miller Township	249.01	309.00	0.00	0.00	90.45	7738.48	8386.94
Millerstown Borough	76.19	4.13	8.98	0.24	20.66	233.73	343.93
New Buffalo Borough	16.99	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.30	16.76	34.22
Newport Borough	67.77	10.84	5.00	3.11	14.69	13095.53	119.67

Municipality (Continued)	Land Use Categories (Continued)						
	Residential	Commercial	Service	Industrial	Public/Semi-Public	Vacant Land	Total
Northeast Madison Township	561.56	57.82	1.33	0.00	19.86	5362.04	13736.1
Oliver Township	430.41	25.31	5.12	4.23	118.27	11547.72	5945.38
Penn Township	996.12	68.69	19.49	7.50	859.50	16321.26	13499.02
Rye Township	1594.43	31.35	0.00	3.00	872.67	27242.11	18822.71
Saville Township	1237.78	296.46	13.48	0.73	9.44	14743.96	28800.00
Southwest Madison Township	769.86	7.31	5.37	0.00	4.26	18854.70	15530.76
Spring Township	873.4	4.14	3.50	0.00	61.90	35195.19	19797.64
Toboyne Township	820.60	36.96	0.00	0.00	18.52	17262.49	36071.27
Tuscarora Township	622.58	2.14	0.00	0.00	2.25	18046.97	17889.46
Tyrone Township	812.21	76.16	34.23	11.38	776.97	6958.18	19757.92
Watts Township	766.52	20.23	3.90	0.00	25.97	11546.78	7774.80
Wheatfield Township	1307.78	917.68	4.02	0.00	17.80	140.96	13794.06
COUNTY TOTALS	17,192.39	2,043.64	229.32	138.77	4,518.48	327,952.91	352,075.51

SOURCE: Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, 1987

**Table 6-4
1987 Perry County Land Use Summary
Percentages**

Municipality	Land Use Categories						
	Residential	Commercial	Service	Industrial	Public/Semi-Public	Vacant Land	Total %
Blain Borough	18.95%	0.65%	0.41%	1.59%	7.31%	71.08%	100.00%
Bloomfield Borough	27.24%	0.89%	2.49%	1.11%	12.82%	55.45%	100.00%
Buffalo Township	4.49%	0.04%	0.01%	0.00%	0.04%	95.42%	100.00%
Carroll Township	7.78%	0.14%	0.01%	0.08%	0.24%	91.75%	100.00%
Centre Township	4.44%	0.03%	0.00%	0.38%	0.03%	95.12%	100.00%
Duncannon Borough	55.44%	6.88%	3.12%	0.56%	2.45%	31.56%	100.00%
Greenwood Township	3.29%	0.26%	0.03%	0.00%	0.20%	96.21%	100.00%
Howe Township	3.91%	0.09%	1.53%	0.04%	8.98%	85.46%	100.00%
Jackson Township	0.87%	0.09%	0.00%	0.00%	0.15%	98.9%	100.00%
Juniata Township	4.08%	0.04%	0.01%	0.00%	5.83%	90.04%	100.00%

Municipality	Land Use Categories						
	Residential	Commercial	Service	Industrial	Public/Semi-Public	Vacant Land	Total %
Landisburg Borough	78.26%	4.17%	0.81%	0.00%	0.00%	16.76%	100.00%
Liverpool Borough	22.27%	3.84%	0.20%	0.78%	3.40%	69.50%	100.00%
Liverpool Township	2.81%	0.01%	0.04%	0.00%	0.00%	97.14%	100.00%
Marysville Borough	28.4%	1.14%	0.28%	0.01%	2.54%	67.62%	100.00%
Miller Township	2.97%	3.68%	0.00%	0.00%	1.08%	92.27%	100.00%
Millerstown Borough	22.15%	1.20%	2.61%	0.07%	6.01%	67.96%	100.00%
New Buffalo Borough	49.65%	0.00%	0.50%	0.00%	0.88%	48.98%	100.00%
Newport Borough	56.63%	9.06%	4.18%	2.60%	12.28%	15.26%	100.00%
Northeast Madison Township	4.09%	0.42%	0.01%	0.00%	0.14%	95.34%	100.00%
Oliver Township	7.24%	0.43%	0.09%	0.07%	1.99%	90.19%	100.00%
Penn Township	7.38%	0.51%	0.14%	0.06%	6.37%	85.54%	100.00%
Rye Township	8.47%	0.17%	0.00%	0.02%	4.64%	86.71%	100.00%
Saville Township	4.30%	1.03%	0.05%	0.00%	0.03%	94.59%	100.00%
Southwest Madison Township	4.96%	0.05%	0.03%	0.00%	0.03%	94.93%	100.00%
Spring Township	4.41%	0.02%	0.02%	0.00%	0.31%	95.24%	100.00%
Toboyne Township	2.27%	0.10%	0.00%	0.00%	0.05%	97.57%	100.00%
Tuscarora Township	3.48%	0.01%	0.00%	0.00%	0.01%	96.50%	100.00%
Tyrone Township	4.11%	0.39%	0.17%	0.06%	3.93%	91.34%	100.00%
Watts Township	9.86	0.26	0.05	0	0.33	89.5	100.00%
Wheatfield Township	9.48	6.65	0.03	0	0.13	83.71	100.00%
COUNTY TOTALS	4.88	0.58	0.07	0.04	1.28	93.15	100.00%

SOURCE: Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, 1987

LAND USE DECISIONS

It is evident that at the present time, Perry County still maintains a rather rural atmosphere. Development is dispersed throughout the County in small villages such as Loysville, Ickesburg, and Elliotsburg, and in the nine (9) boroughs. As the pressures from

the growing Harrisburg area gradually creeps into Perry County, important decisions will need to be made as to land use goals and the direction development in the County should take. The next decade will help to determine which of the many directions Perry County can follow in terms of development or land use. Controlled residential, small businesses and localized industry as opposed to the rural atmosphere and character are two (2) of the most predominant options for Perry County. Should Perry County strictly maintain its rural atmosphere and character or should more controlled residential development, small businesses and industries be encouraged that might be compatible with and actually enhance - Perry County's rural communities?

CONCLUSION

It is clearly evident in **Tables 6-1 and 6-2** Perry County's most valuable resource is the amount of agricultural and forested land. As such, the County Planning Commission must provide an effective plan for the continued growth of the County, while limiting the future impacts to these two land use categories. However, the County Planning Commission must recognize that the flat growth of the County's tax base (commercial and industrial uses), coupled with an increasing residential base contributes to the tax burden placed upon the residential property owner.