

Mifflin County, Pennsylvania



Economic Development Strategy



2004

Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

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INTRODUCTION

Background

During the development of the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan (1998-2000), improving the economic vitality of Mifflin County became a key consideration. The employment base of Mifflin County has historically been associated with the manufacturing sector. In 1970, manufacturing encompassed 42 percent of the employment base, yet by 2000 it had dropped to around 30 percent. Also, since the late 1980's, the County's annual unemployment rate consistently remained higher than the State average as a whole. As further evidence, economic development was identified as a high priority by the Quality of Life Survey distributed to 10% of the residents of the County in October 1998.

In response to these identified concerns, a decision was made by the County to develop an Economic Development Strategy as the Comprehensive Plan was being completed. To facilitate the creation of this Strategy, a partnership was forged in November 1999 between Mifflin County, Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation (MCIDC) and Penelec (GPU Energy). All three entities came together and agreed to financially contribute toward this effort. As a result of this recommendation, the Mifflin County Commissioners appointed an Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee (EDSC), composed of a variety of organizations representing both the public and private sectors, to develop an Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan. The Steering Committee included representations from the following organizations: a financial institution; the Juniata Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, the Juniata-Mifflin Area Vocational School; a local business; the Mifflin County Commissioners; Penn State Cooperative Extension; MCIDC; Penelec (GPU); Downtown Lewistown, Inc.; and the Mifflin County Planning Commission. Mifflin County subsequently entered into a contract with VanLandingham Consulting to assist in the development of an Economic Development Strategy for the County.

A key finding from the analysis was the importance of improving of Mifflin County's economic development coordination and delivery services. Success in this effort is critical to enable the County to take full advantage of the range of economic opportunities potentially available over the next 5 to 10 years. To ensure that many of Mifflin County's economic development stakeholders remained engaged in a strategy to develop solutions to this challenge, the Committee held an Economic Development Summit in September 2000.

As a direct result of the Economic Summit, the Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee completed an economic development strategy with clearly defined goals, objectives and a mission statement. Further discussion led to the concept of creating and empowering an organization called Team Mifflin County.

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Team Mifflin County (TMC) was created in January 2001 to address this need to coordinate and guide the County's economic development efforts. TMC is a partnership of individuals and organizations from the public and private sectors to ensure that the needs and concerns of all stakeholders are addressed. TMC adopted the recommendations of the Strategy and has since taken a number of actions to address the most critical objectives

Since the final draft of the Mifflin County Economic Development Strategy was completed in January 2001, members of Team Mifflin County have recognized areas where the strategy needed to be improved and updated. As a result of this recommendation for improvements, the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department contacted Thomas J. Shepstone, AICP of Shepstone Management Company. He agreed to assist with this request because of his involvement with the Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan and its relationship to the Economic Development Strategy. In 2003, he developed additional material for the document by working with members of Team Mifflin County, MCIDC, and the Mifflin County Planning Commission.

Overview

This Economic Development Strategy is a plan to coordinate and guide the County's economic development activities. It is designed to ensure that we retain the desirable characteristics and quality of life we enjoy in Mifflin County, while we take the steps needed to improve our economic vitality and ensure jobs and income growth for our people.

The Strategy is based upon analysis of the economic environment, the County's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities, and the kind of community desired by residents. The Strategy contemplates the County's labor force characteristics, the availability of commercial and industrial land and buildings, and infrastructure support. The Strategy identifies industries with high potential for growth in the County and recommends a number of actions that the County should take to help ensure desired economic development. Paramount among these is the need for a comprehensive and coordinated economic development effort.

An organizational matrix (Appendix) was developed during the early stages of strategy formulation. The matrix identified the agencies and organizations providing economic development service within the County; and highlighted important areas that were not being addressed.

The County's Economic Development Strategy was not intended to be a static document, but rather a dynamic process to help guide our progress. Accordingly, the strategy was reviewed and updated in 2003 by TMC, MCIDC, and the Mifflin County Planning Commission, with the help of Tom Shepstone of Shepstone Management Company. Additional supportive data was

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provided by Central PA Workforce Development Corporation and Penn State Cooperative Extension.

This revised document includes updated statistical information and a contemporary look at the County's strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities.

The Mifflin County Economic Development Strategy should be viewed in the context of providing background, data analysis, and benchmarks for success. This update is particularly important considering the December 2003 release of *Back to Prosperity; A Comprehensive Agenda for Renewing Pennsylvania* by the Brookings Institute. That report, like the County Economic Development Strategy, stresses the need for improving infrastructure investment, making investments in education and workforce training, and breaking down barriers and promoting regional collaboration.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mifflin County Economic Development Strategy is designed to offer leaders, residents, educators, businesses and others an overview of recent trends and conditions that affect the County's economic future - and suggests directions and activities that can be undertaken to effectively position the County to take full advantage of future opportunities.

The Strategy includes analyses of 1) the County's strengths weaknesses, opportunities and threats for economic development; 2) the industries with high potential for growth in the County over the next ten years; 3) labor force characteristics; 4) an inventory of commercial and industrial land and buildings available for economic development; and 5) the institutional support structure for economic development in Mifflin County. The study concludes with an Economic Development Action Plan.

Key Findings from Economic Analyses

Mifflin County is part of a growing region. The counties of Central Pennsylvania added 32.5% in total employment between 1990 and 1999, compared to only 18.9% statewide. However, Mifflin County was one of the slowest growth counties in the Commonwealth with only 10.9% employment growth over the period.

Wages have increased more slowly in Mifflin than in the surrounding counties. Average wages increased by 25.7% in the County compared to 40.8% in the Region. Among the 67 counties, Mifflin ranked 63rd in employment growth and 60th in wage change.

Analysis of employment change in the Central Pennsylvania region and Mifflin County show the County has a high potential for growth in a wide array of industries. These include business services, various wholesaling and distribution operations, certain wood products and fabricated metals industries and an array of professional and educational services.

A major limiting factor for future job growth in the County is the occupational distribution of the existing labor force. Manufacturing is still the dominant economic activity in Mifflin County. Approximately 30% of all County workers are employed in this sector. This has created a labor force heavily weighted towards blue-collar employment. Executives, professionals, and administrative support occupations are particularly underrepresented.

Retail and service sector employment are almost equal with each accounting for about 19% of the workforce. Both are growing, while manufacturing employment declined by over 10% during the last decade.

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Three of the smaller sectors of the County's economy were the fastest employment growth areas between 1990 and 1997. Transportation, communication, and public utilities saw an increase of almost 35%; the agriculture and agricultural services sector grew only slightly less; wholesale trade employment increased by over 20%. Government was the only other sector that lost employment over the period. Mifflin County's retail sector is generally competitive with the state while tourism has, until recently, played a relatively small role in the local economy.

Agriculture continues to be an important sector in the economy. The sale of agricultural products generated more than \$63 million in direct sales while related industries and employment generated an additional \$45 million in 2001. Farmers in the County netted about 14% higher profits than the state average.

Mifflin County's most promising economic development opportunities include: food processing and wood products industries; selected plastics industries; health care industries and assisted living; a more extensive tourism industry; machinery manufacturing; off-site technical services support for larger companies; and I-99 spin-off economic activity.

Team Pennsylvania interviews with private firms operating in Mifflin County indicated that workforce issues were the dominant concern of most firms. Data collected from these interviews suggests the County is too reliant upon manufacturing as an economic base. The most discernible problem identified in the course of these interviews was the lack of coordination of economic development efforts in the County. To address the present and future concerns of businesses, TMC was established with a primary goal of coordinating economic development efforts in Mifflin County.

Major Recommendations

- 1) **Sustain and launch future campaigns to market the comparative advantages, identified in this Plan, which the County and Central Pennsylvania region possess over other Northeast and U.S. regions.**
- 2) **Create a “no wrong door” approach to meeting the needs of industries interested in doing business in Mifflin County via a Team Mifflin County web site.**
- 3) **Utilize venture capital and secondary financing funds to assist growing firms attracted to the County or already located within it.**
- 4) **Develop and achieve a complete, safe, and efficient multi-modal transportation system to facilitate the movement of people and goods throughout the County and region.**
- 5) **Develop a Mifflin County Infrastructure Investment Plan, consistent with the**

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Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan, which meets the existing and long-term physical and technological infrastructure and service needs of the County.

- 6) Work with neighboring counties to investigate and implement a community college curriculum, using an umbrella organization such as Team Mifflin County, to jointly promote the workforce training opportunities available locally and regionally.**
- 7) Develop and recruit new businesses that will serve to diversify its economy and establish a broader base less susceptible to the ups and downs of the manufacturing sector.**

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CHAPTER 1

ECONOMIC STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Workshop discussions with local leaders were used to identify basic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to economic development in Mifflin County as a foundation for further analysis and planning. These are summarized below:

Mifflin County Strengths for Economic Development

Among Mifflin County strengths for economic development are the following:

- 1) A capable workforce exhibiting a strong work ethic and high level of productivity, plus the South Hills School of Business and Technology and other job training resources.
- 2) Land with supporting transportation and utility infrastructure in place, including an Industrial Park, an airport, Amtrak and rail freight service.
- 3) An excellent location for serving northeast metropolitan markets, combined with an unspoiled cultural character, good schools, reasonably priced housing, an excellent hospital, a high quality of life, clean environment, outdoor recreation and proximity to popular attractions such as State College and Raystown Lake.
- 4) Low costs of doing business including very reasonable local taxes, Keystone Opportunity Zone benefits, cooperative local government and a strategic alliance for economic development in the form of Team Mifflin County.
- 5) Plentiful natural resources, an excellent water supply and strong agriculture.

Mifflin County Weaknesses for Economic Development

The County's weaknesses for economic development, many of which are being addressed by this Strategy, as well as other public and private initiatives, include the following:

- 1) Somewhat difficult highway access and limited infrastructure outside selected areas.
- 2) A small market labor force primarily oriented toward blue collar skills, with limited education for serving new high growth industries and few technical or higher education facilities that would serve to change this or help retain younger workers.

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- 3) Relatively high costs for most forms of energy.
- 4) An economy of limited breadth and depth with a very small industrial building stock, no critical mass in business services, limited cultural facilities, an older population, weak and declining retail base, no recognized brand image, limited high quality housing choice, poor political clout and inconsistent zoning.

Mifflin County Opportunities for Economic Development

The strengths and weaknesses identified above suggest several specific economic development opportunities exist for Mifflin County. Among these opportunities are the following:

- 1) Team Mifflin County is putting more focus on coordination of economic development, creating opportunities to build political coalitions, accomplish regional leveraging and establish a single point of contact for attracting new industry.
- 2) Central Pennsylvania's large agricultural industry provides an opportunity to attract food processing industries.
- 3) The region's extensive forests also provides an opportunity to attract wood products industries.
- 4) Selected plastics industries could take advantage of the County's rail access, pool of metalworking craftsmen and proximity to metro markets.
- 5) The Juniata Valley offers an opportunity to build a more extensive tourism industry around the region's rural culture and a "Discover Our Good Nature" theme.
- 6) Machinery manufacturing industries would be a natural fit for Mifflin County based on the skills of its existing work force and proximity to metro markets.
- 7) Assisted living and life care industries would fit well with the County's rural environment, aging population, proximity to metro markets and excellent supporting health care facilities.
- 8) Off site technical services support for larger companies could take advantage of the area's inexpensive labor force and proximity to metro markets.
- 9) Speculative building development and marketing of "paper shells" is very feasible given the availability of sites and relative ease of development in the County.
- 10) The completion on the I-99 highway will generate a combination of spin-off economic development opportunities including highway construction activities for years to come.

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Threats to Economic Development in Mifflin County

Threats to economic development in Mifflin County include the following:

- 1) As rural county, Mifflin, lacks in-depth community leadership, often creating conflicting goals, municipal turf battles and competition for limited resources that can stifle economic development.
- 2) There is a risk that I-99 corridor development will largely bypass the area.
- 3) Adverse economic trends over several years has created low self esteem and pervasive pessimism that often undermines economic development initiatives.
- 4) The costs of doing business in Pennsylvania and other negatives such as the lack of right to work legislation can intimidate industries otherwise inclined to locate in Mifflin County.

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CHAPTER 2

MIFFLIN COUNTY LABOR FORCE

The purpose of this Chapter and the next are to identify opportunities for growth. Employment and demographic data from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, County Business Patterns and the U.S. Census have been compiled toward this end.

Mifflin County Compared to Pennsylvania and the U.S.

The following facts, comparing the County to the Commonwealth and U.S. as a whole, are excerpted from Road to 2003: Update on Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania State University, 2002):

- From June, 1990 to June, 2001 total Mifflin County employment **decreased** by 2.0%. It was one of only four Pennsylvania counties to lose jobs over this period (the others being Philadelphia, Schuylkill and Warren). The U.S. increased employment by 20.6% over the same period and Pennsylvania gained 10.3%.
- Despite the decrease in employment, unemployment in the County remained steady at 6.1% of the labor force. Pennsylvania unemployment fell from 5.0% to 4.8% and U.S. unemployment decreased from 5.3% in 1990 to 4.7% in 2001.
- Mifflin County's total population grew 0.5% from 1990 to 2000. The Commonwealth gained 3.2%, ranking 48th among the states (ahead only of West Virginia and North Dakota). Meanwhile, the U.S. grew by 12.8%.
- Mifflin incomes are well below average as the following table indicates:

INCOME COMPARED TO PENNSYLVANIA AND U.S., 1999*				
	Mifflin	% of PA	PA	US
Median household income	\$32,175	80.2%	\$40,106	\$41,994
Mean earnings	\$40,257	74.3%	\$54,209	\$56,604
Mean retirement income	\$13,584	92.6%	\$14,663	\$17,376
Median family income	\$38,486	78.2%	\$49,184	\$50,046
Per capita income	\$15,553	74.5%	\$20,880	\$21,587
Median earnings of male full-time, year-round workers	\$30,732	82.9%	\$37,051	\$37,057
Median earnings of female full-time, year-round workers	\$20,383	76.4%	\$26,687	\$27,194

* Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Clearly, Mifflin County has, economically, lagged well behind both the Commonwealth and the U.S. over the past decade.

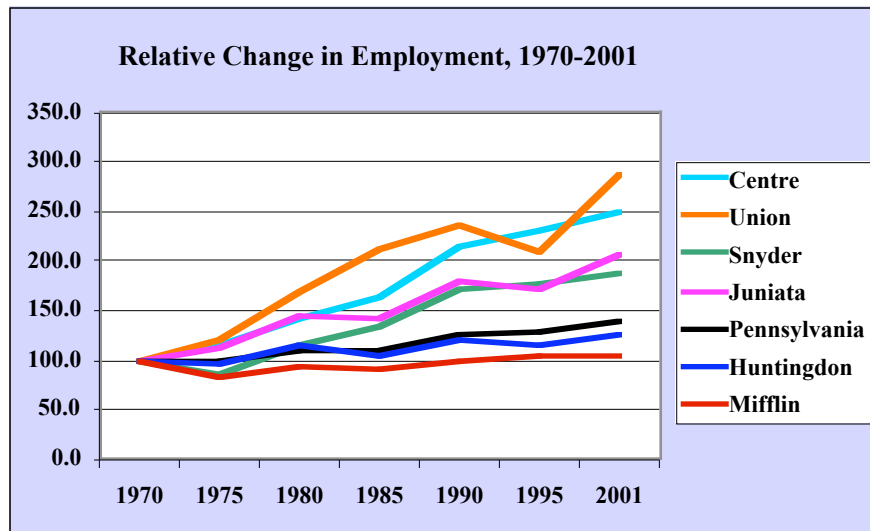
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Long-term Change in Employment, 1970 to 1995

Mifflin County employment has suffered due to many factors. Hurricane Agnes hit the County hard in 1972. The County also had many manufacturing industries that were losing employment nationally. Between 1970 and 1975, employment fell almost 18% due both to the after effects of the floods caused by the hurricane and by general weaknesses in the existing economic base.

LONG TERM CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT, 1970 – 2001							
	Pennsylvania	Mifflin	Centre	Huntingdon	Juniata	Snyder	Union
1970	3,672,344	13,928	18,655	8,007	2,878	7,356	5,907
1975	3,652,478	11,506	21,552	7,591	3,247	6,336	7,091
1980	4,045,060	13,098	26,497	9,207	4,150	8,367	10,031
1985	4,066,349	12,560	30,585	8,352	4,108	9,880	12,523
1990	4,598,441	13,716	40,027	9,534	5,195	12,618	13,932
1995	4,702,892	14,347	42,753	9,191	4,909	12,905	12,333
2001	5,123,111	14,528	46,374	10,132	5,961	13,871	16,910
Index of Change in Employment (1970 = 100)							
	Pennsylvania	Mifflin	Centre	Huntingdon	Juniata	Snyder	Union
1970	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1975	99.5	82.6	115.5	94.8	112.8	86.1	120.0
1980	110.1	94.0	142.0	115.0	144.2	113.7	169.8
1985	110.7	90.2	164.0	104.3	142.7	134.3	212.0
1990	125.2	98.5	214.6	119.1	180.5	171.5	235.9
1995	128.1	103.0	229.2	114.8	170.6	175.4	208.8
2001	139.5	104.3	248.6	126.5	207.1	188.6	286.3

Source: County Business Patterns



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Changes in Employment, Wages, and Establishments, 1987 to 2001

There was a 2.2% decrease in Mifflin County employment between 1987 and 2001. This compared to a 10.2% gain for Pennsylvania, a 10.7% gain for Juniata and a 26.3% increases for Union County. All of this decline took place between 1996 and 2001. Moreover, aggregate real wages, adjusted for inflation, fell 12.2% for 1987 through 2001, as compared to a 17.9% real gain for the Commonwealth and 17.2% and 26.3% increases for Juniata and Union Counties, respectively.

Total establishments increased by 18.9% between 1987 and 2001. This was below the level of the Commonwealth as well as but one of the surrounding Counties. Only Huntingdon had slower growth in the number of establishments.

CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT, WAGES AND ESTABLISHMENTS, 1987-2001							
	Pennsylvania	Mifflin	Centre	Huntingdon	Juniata	Snyder	Union
1987 Employment	4,650,427	14,856	46,667	11,142	5,386	13,896	13,387
1990 Employment	4,906,044	15,898	52,853	11,748	5,334	14,706	14,316
1993 Employment	4,858,713	15,678	54,757	12,088	5,124	14,283	13,945
1996 Employment	5,046,174	16,253	58,258	11,884	5,307	14,396	14,592
2001 Employment	5,123,111	14,528	46,374	10,132	5,961	13,871	16,910
1987-2001 Change	472,684	-328	-293	-1,010	575	-25	3,523
% Change	10.2%	-2.2%	-0.6%	-9.1%	10.7%	-0.2%	26.3%
1987 Wages (000's)	\$92,939,411	\$255,070	\$849,474	\$173,494	\$75,879	\$215,988	\$216,251
1990 Wages (000's)	\$112,558,414	\$302,104	\$1,109,718	\$207,061	\$81,891	\$254,981	\$261,803
1993 Wages (000's)	\$124,661,017	\$322,404	\$1,258,450	\$246,644	\$91,391	\$284,713	\$290,551
1996 Wages (000's)	\$142,752,398	\$371,014	\$1,433,845	\$264,843	\$106,372	\$307,897	\$327,690
2001 Wages (000's)	\$169,850,265	\$347,112	\$1,158,006	\$223,506	\$137,839	\$309,709	\$402,952
1987-2001 Change	\$76,910,854	\$92,042	\$308,532	\$50,012	\$61,960	\$93,721	\$186,701
% Change	82.8%	36.1%	36.3%	28.8%	81.7%	43.4%	86.3%
% Chg. in 2001 \$'s	17.9%	-12.2%	-12.1%	-16.9%	17.2%	-7.5%	20.2%
1987 Establishments	229,965	777	2,097	749	396	665	659
1990 Establishments	250,659	829	2,378	798	423	727	719
1993 Establishments	263,998	858	2,647	827	426	784	763
1996 Establishments	271,451	897	2,781	850	434	784	786
2001 Establishments	295,096	924	3,163	826	501	840	853
1987-2001 Change	65,131	147	1,066	77	105	175	194
% Change	28.3%	18.9%	50.8%	10.3%	26.5%	26.3%	29.4%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, 1987 – 2001

Sectors of Economic Activity, 1997

The following is based on recent data from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry (ES-202, 1997). The employment figures include all persons covered by Unemployment Compensation. Since most persons working in agriculture are self-employed and, therefore, not covered by Unemployment Compensation, the statistics do not do a good job of measuring changes in this particular sector.

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EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR, 1990-1997							
	Pennsylvania	Mifflin	Centre	Huntingdon	Juniata	Snyder	Union
Agriculture, 1990	31,379	99	226	51	36	194	63
Agriculture, 1997	35,421	132	428	123	56	220	90
% Change	12.9%	33.3%	89.4%	141.2%	55.6%	13.4%	42.9%
Mining 1990	26,930	0	378	98	0	0	8
Mining 1997	19,424	0	55	89	0	21	8
% Change	-27.9%	N/A	-85.4%	-9.2%	N/A	N/A	0.0%
Construction, 1990	206,850	374	2,009	565	296	383	724
Construction, 1997	189,232	390	1,813	520	264	307	583
% Change	-8.5%	4.3%	-9.8%	-8.0%	-10.8%	-19.8%	-19.5%
Manufacturing, 1990	1,024,288	6,562	8,238	2,930	2,520	5,172	4,568
Manufacturing, 1997	928,824	5,874	8,435	2,368	2,381	4,612	3,409
% Change	-9.3%	-10.5%	2.4%	-19.2%	-5.5%	-10.8%	-25.4%
Transportation, 1990	239,027	484	1,619	269	274	551	313
Transportation, 1997	263,166	644	2,090	292	203	474	341
% Change	10.1%	33.1%	29.1%	8.6%	-25.9%	-14.0%	8.9%
Wholesale Trade, 1990	276,637	542	965	619	196	511	341
Wholesale Trade, 1997	261,355	669	1,186	526	169	546	374
% Change	-5.5%	23.4%	22.9%	-15.0%	-13.8%	6.8%	9.7%
Retail Trade, 1990	892,471	2,978	10,352	1,836	832	3,084	2,131
Retail Trade, 1997	931,062	3,068	11,351	2,042	881	3,394	2,487
% Change	4.3%	3.0%	9.7%	11.2%	5.9%	10.1%	16.7%
Finance, 1990	297,650	414	1,856	493	205	298	273
Finance, 1997	307,135	423	1,995	551	243	394	385
% Change	3.2%	2.2%	7.5%	11.8%	18.5%	32.2%	41.0%
Services, 1990	1,301,648	2,697	10,194	2,152	464	1,832	3,760
Services, 1997	1,522,401	3,006	12,448	2,355	529	1,700	4,622
% Change	17.0%	11.5%	22.1%	9.4%	14.0%	-7.2%	22.9%
Government, 1990	688,831	1,715	16,327	2,693	681	2,500	2,873
Government, 1997	699,629	1,677	16,996	2,935	707	2,528	3,918
% Change	1.6%	-2.2%	4.1%	9.0%	3.8%	1.1%	36.4%
TOTAL & Misc., 1990	4,985,711	15,865	52,164	11,706	5,504	14,525	15,054
TOTAL & Misc., 1997	5,157,712	15,883	56,797	11,801	5,433	14,196	16,217
% Change	3.4%	0.1%	8.9%	0.8%	-1.3%	-2.3%	7.7%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, 1990 – 1997

The largest sector of economic activity in the County remains manufacturing, which accounted for 37.0% of all employment for the first quarter of 1997 compared to only 18.0% for the Commonwealth. Unfortunately, manufacturing employment continues to decline in both the County and the state. Between 1990 and 1997, the County lost 10.4% of its manufacturing employment. This loss was slightly greater than the state loss of 9.3%.

Proportionally, the fastest growing employment sectors in the Mifflin County economy between 1990 and 1997 were Agriculture and Agricultural Services, which includes both farm and agribusiness employment (33.3%), Transportation, Communications and Public Utilities (33.0%) and Wholesale Trade (23.4%). All of these sectors were quite small with 132, 644 and 669 employees, respectively, in 1997. The Services sector grew by the largest absolute number of workers, from 2,697 to 3,006 jobs, an increase of 309 or 11.5%. Government employment declined slightly. There was a small increase in Retail Trade, Construction, and Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate employment. The Services and Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate sectors are still significantly underrepresented in the County compared to the Commonwealth.

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Major Industries

According to the detailed data from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry (unpublished), Health Services was the largest two-digit Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) or industry group in the County, with 1,969 employees in 1997. This represented an increase of 9.8% over 1990 employment. Pennsylvania growth within this industry group was 16.6% over the same period. The only other industry group with more than 1,000 employees in the County in 1997 was SIC 33: Primary Metals. This industry lost 245 employees or 18.9% between 1990 and 1997.

The fastest growing industry group was SIC 26: Paper and Paper Products, which gained 341 employees, an increase of almost 40 times over its 1990 employment level.

Major percentage losses were experienced in the following industry sectors:

- SIC 20: Food Products
- SIC 23: Apparel
- SIC 28: Chemicals and Allied Products
- SIC 30: Rubber and Plastics Products
- SIC 32: Stone, Clay, and Glass Products
- SIC 52: Building Supply and Hardware Stores

All of the above lost more than 50% of their 1990 level of employment. Since all but one of these were in the manufacturing sector, the impacts of these losses on the economic base were major.

The only industry groups with more than 100 employees in 1990 to subsequently gain more than 50% in employment were:

- SIC 34: Fabricated Metal Products
- SIC 41: Highway Passenger Transportation
- SIC 53: General Merchandise Stores

Economic Base of Industries with High Location Quotients

The economic base of the area includes all industries that produce at least part of their output for consumption outside of the local area. These are important industries because the sales they generate determines the income available for growth and for the consumption of items not produced locally. "Export" sales by local industries are determined by the concentration of that industry in the local area. This concentration is measured, somewhat crudely, by a ratio called the Location Quotient. The Location Quotient (LQ) for each industry is determined by comparing the percentage of local employment in that industry to the percentage of national

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employment in that industry.

When the LQ for an industry is exactly 1.0 (that is to say that the local industry employs the same percentage of total employment as the industry nationally) the industry is said to be locally self-sufficient and the area neither imports nor exports the products of that industry. When the LQ is above 1.0 the part above 1.0 is presumably exported to other parts of the national or global economy. When the LQ for a particular industry is below 1.0 the area must import some of the products of that industry which it consumes locally. Obviously, if the LQ for an industry is 0.0 all of the consumed product must be imported. For example, Pennsylvania does not grow any citrus fruit because of its climate. Therefore it has an LQ of 0.0 for that industry; all citrus consumed in the State must be “imported” from Florida, California, Arizona, or elsewhere.

The economic base for a local area or region can be measured using Location Quotients. Those industries that have LQ’s above 1.0 are part of the economic base. Their employment above the percentage required to generate an LQ of 1.0 is said to be “basic” employment. The assumption here is that the basic employment produces goods or services for sale to other areas and generates income for the area in proportion to the basic employment.

Depending on its mix of industries, an area economy may be healthy, stable or declining. If a local area is highly concentrated in one, or just a few industries, its economy is highly dependent on that narrow base. If several industries compose the economic base, then the area is less dependent upon the fortunes of any one of those industries. When the area is heavily dependent on industries that are declining nationally (even if the local firms in those industries are stable or growing) it is “at risk” because it is likely that decline may strike the local firms at any time.

Although manufacturing industries are commonly perceived as the main components of a local economic base, other sectors are typically just as important. The largest economic sector in Central Pennsylvania is education, for instance. Penn State exports educational services to students from all over the Commonwealth and elsewhere. It generates income for the region by bringing in tuition, research monies, government support and sports related revenues. Other non-manufacturing industries include mining, transportation services, wholesale trade, services to other businesses, tourism and health care. Industries that typically export little product and import few dollars include retail, personal services and other “local serving” industries. These industries exist to serve the needs of the local populace and typically have LQ’s near 1.0.

The economic base of Mifflin County in 2002 (not including agriculture) included 40 specific (five digit NAIC) industries, the most important of which (30+ employees) are listed below. Manufacturing industries, especially those related to metal products, textiles, and apparel are prominent. The national performance of many of these industries has generally been poor in recent years. Some, such as apparel, face severe international price competition. There are, however, others that have done well. Lacking in the economic base of Mifflin County are the producers’ services and urban function activities such as banking and other financial services,

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advertising, computer or database functions, etc.. The economic base is highly concentrated on blue-collar production industries and occupations.

High Location Quotient Industries, 2002 Top 40 Industries with 30 or More Employees by NAICS Code (NAICS = North American Industry Classification System)			
NAICS Code	Industry Title	Mifflin County LQ	U.S. Employment
33311	Agricultural implement manufacturing	75.58	77,793
31411	Carpet and rug mills	55.90	54,426
32611	Plastics packaging materials, film and sheet	32.04	90,391
42452	Livestock merchant wholesalers	27.35	22,427
33221	Cutlery and handtool manufacturing	17.51	64,448
33111	Iron and steel mills and ferroalloy mfg.	16.16	106,899
11331	Logging	15.81	68,801
44521	Meat markets	14.11	51,433
32121	Plywood and engineered wood product mfg.	13.63	115,434
33451	Electronic instrument manufacturing	13.06	447,091
33232	Ornamental and architectural metal products	12.75	223,164
32199	All other wood product manufacturing	12.67	105,607
44121	Recreational vehicle dealers	9.97	33,590
42491	Farm supplies merchant wholesalers	8.36	110,072
23816	Roofing contractors	6.73	175,431
45291	Warehouse clubs and supercenters	6.11	812,801
32111	Sawmills and wood preservation	5.90	120,382
33151	Ferrous metal foundries	5.77	99,452
32192	Wood container and pallet manufacturing	5.66	60,371
42393	Recyclable material merchant wholesalers	5.05	94,994
42413	Industrial paper merchant wholesalers	4.99	67,360
62431	Vocational rehabilitation services	4.78	332,976
31133	Confectionery mfg. from purchased chocolate	4.67	40,642
31521	Cut and sew apparel contractors	4.48	112,416
23833	Flooring contractors	4.08	78,488
42472	Other petroleum merchant wholesalers	3.83	72,463
31151	Dairy product, except frozen, manufacturing	3.60	113,056
48422	Other specialized trucking, local	3.58	185,767
62149	Other outpatient care centers	3.28	274,004
44112	Used car dealers	3.16	111,662
62331	Community care facilities for the elderly	2.83	539,966
33711	Wood kitchen cabinet and countertop mfg.	2.76	149,754
81221	Funeral homes and funeral services	2.71	103,405
32721	Glass and glass product manufacturing	2.70	124,839
45299	All other general merchandise stores	2.59	313,643
32619	Other plastics product manufacturing	2.55	393,344
48541	School and employee bus transportation	2.46	191,455
32621	Tire manufacturing	2.43	75,145
92312	Administration of public health programs	2.25	244,054
45431	Fuel dealers	2.24	102,041

Data provided by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, and compiled by CPWDC Feb. 2004

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Agriculture

Agricultural industries have to be addressed separately due to the limitations of the national database (*County Business Patterns*), which does not report agricultural employment. Agriculture has been, and continues to be, a very important part of the Mifflin County economy.

There were 619 active farms in Mifflin County in 1997. This was 1.4% of all farms in the State. Total land area in farms was 79,400 acres, or 1.1% of all Pennsylvania farmland. Some 52,716 acres were in cropland. Total cropland was 1.0% of Pennsylvania cropland. County farms averaged 128 acres each, with average sales per farm of \$83,751.

Total value of agricultural sales for the County in 1997 was \$51,842,000 or \$83,751 per farm. The average per farm in Pennsylvania was \$87,942. Livestock sales, including dairy, were the vast majority of all agricultural sales at \$47,042,000 or almost 91% of the total. This was 1.7% of all Pennsylvania sales in livestock. The average net cash return per farm was \$18,787, fully 14% higher than the Commonwealth average.

There were 431 farm operators who described farming as their main occupation. There were 13,871 milk cows on farms, about 1.57 times as many cows per farm as the Pennsylvania average. This is a healthy situation from the perspective of economic viability. Likewise, hogs and pigs were well above the state average per farm. There were 29,580 hogs and pigs on Mifflin County farms in 1997, or almost 2.7% of all hogs and pigs in the State. This was almost twice as many hogs and pigs per farm as the Pennsylvania average.

Overall, Mifflin County farmers are highly specialized in livestock, especially dairy and pork. Even though farms are slightly smaller than the state average in acres, productivity is above average, with each farm netting about 14% higher “profits” than the state average.

Only Juniata among the surrounding Counties had higher total sales. Mifflin ranked 15th in dairy sales, 23rd in meat sales, and 24th overall in agricultural sales among Pennsylvania’s 67 Counties. Dairy production accounted for more than \$35 million or almost 65% of agricultural sales in the County.

According to the 2000 Census, the County employed 888 persons in agriculture, which was 1.2% of the Pennsylvania employment in this field. Compared to the Commonwealth, Mifflin had an effective Location Quotient of about 3.3 for its agricultural sector. This is a very high ratio, indicating the relative importance of agriculture to the local economy.

Travel and Tourism

Juniata and Mifflin Counties promote tourism jointly under the auspices of the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau. The two counties recently prepared the *Juniata River Valley Regional*

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Tourism Plan to guide this work. The following information is excerpted from that Plan.

Juniata and Mifflin Counties already attract large numbers of visitors who play an important contributing role in economic development of the Juniata River Valley. The region offers a number of resources, mostly of an agricultural, cultural, historic or natural basis, that appeal to certain types of tourists. They find their way to the region as a result of individual business advertising, existing JRVVB local promotional efforts, those of larger promotion entities such as the Valleys of the Susquehanna program and the simple happenstance of random visitation. Even at the presently low level of regional branding and coordination in tourism promotion, the contributions are major.

Travel expenditures for the Juniata River Valley were an estimated \$60,501,000 in 1999. The trend has been up slightly upward since 1980 but, when examined in constant dollars, the travel industry appears to have suffered some in recent years as tourists have found it easier to travel further and further away from home. The events of September 11, 2001, have shifted the dynamics, however, as traveling by air has become somewhat less appealing. The continued aging of the general population has, at the same time, made the generally passive types of tourism that the Juniata River Valley offers more appealing. Importantly, both Mifflin and Juniata Counties have, since 1980, done better than the Commonwealth as a whole in maintaining their levels of travel expenditures.

The impacts of these travel expenditures are far-reaching as the table on the following page reveals. The data, gathered by D. K. Shifflet for the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, indicates that Juniata River Valley travel expenditures are mostly derived from passive types of tourism such as scenic drives, outdoor recreation (e.g. hiking, hunting, fishing) and agricultural tourism. These are growing rapidly in popularity statewide.

The Juniata River Valley region possesses much of what the Hershey/Dutch Country has to offer, including working farm landscapes, Amish culture, camping, Bed and Breakfasts, historic architecture, unique shops and special attractions such as the Belleville Livestock Auction and Farmers Market. It also possesses some advantages not always shared by the remainder of the Valleys of the Susquehanna region. These include nearby Raystown Lake, the Juniata River itself (one of Pennsylvania's most scenic rivers), prominent ridge and valley features and industrial heritage.

First among the advantages, however, is that Juniata River Valley is closer to several urban markets than most of the Valleys of the Susquehanna and is, in some respects, a logical extension of the Hershey/Dutch Country region or alternative to it. There are 27 metropolitan areas within 200 miles of the Juniata River Valley. These urban areas are home to over 46,000,000 persons or 16% of the U.S. population. They include most of Pennsylvania and much of New York, New Jersey and Maryland.

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Economic Impacts of Domestic Travel Expenditures (1997)			
	Juniata County	Mifflin County	Total
Travel Expenditures			
Transportation	\$5,054,746	\$8,974,433	\$14,029,179
Lodging	\$3,487,155	\$6,191,258	\$9,678,413
Food & Beverage	\$5,744,998	\$10,199,938	\$15,944,936
Entertainment & Recreation	\$2,822,853	\$5,011,826	\$7,834,679
Retail	\$3,802,796	\$6,751,663	\$10,554,459
Other	\$1,100,436	\$1,953,766	\$3,054,202
Total Travel Expenditures	\$22,012,984	\$39,082,884	\$61,095,868
Earnings			
Accommodations, Amusement and Recreation Services	\$1,506,205	\$2,674,187	\$4,180,392
Eating and Drinking Places	\$1,281,758	\$2,275,693	\$3,557,451
Other Businesses	\$1,256,038	\$2,232,039	\$3,488,077
Total Earnings	\$4,044,001	\$7,181,919	\$11,225,920
Employment			
Accommodations, Amusement and Recreation Services	92	174	266
Eating and Drinking Places	109	207	316
Other Businesses	61	117	178
Total Employment	262	498	760
Taxes Generated			
Federal (Including Gas Tax)	\$1,138,563	\$2,021,947	\$3,160,510
State (Including Sales Tax)	\$817,663	\$1,461,354	\$2,279,017
Municipal/Other	\$366,831	\$651,372	\$1,018,203
Total Earnings	\$2,323,057	\$4,134,673	\$6,457,730

There is, therefore, no lack of visitors with an interest in what the Juniata River Valley has to offer. The challenge is to match those customers to a theme that will bring them to Juniata and Mifflin Counties to spend money without destroying the very character that attracts them. It is more a supply side challenge than a demand side one.

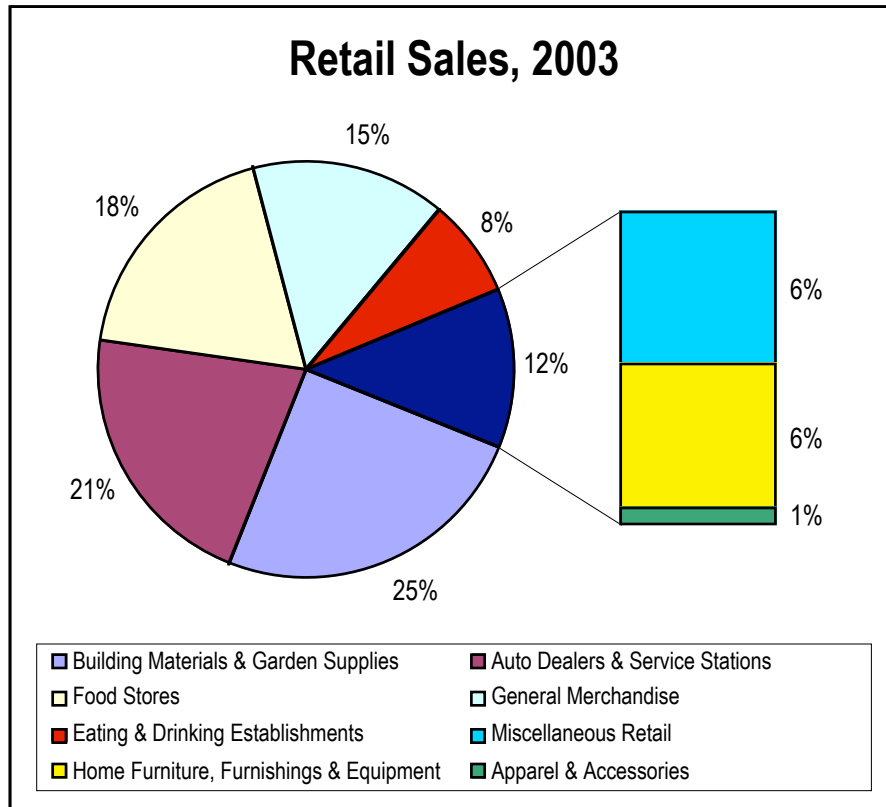
Despite these clear opportunities, the travel industry as a whole does not yet enjoy a high Location Quotient for Mifflin County. It generated an estimated 498 direct jobs in 1997, or approximately 0.011 jobs per capita, compared to approximately 0.024 for the Commonwealth, suggesting a current LQ of only 0.46. This illustrates the problems in relying too heavily on the LQ as a measure of economic opportunity. Low LQ's often represent no more than a failure to capitalize on natural advantages. Comparisons of averages are also distorted by the presence of some very busy tourism areas elsewhere in the State (e.g. Philadelphia, Lancaster, the Poconos). Therefore, the low LQ only measures the relative success of Mifflin County in attracting tourists to date rather than the ability to grow that business in the future.

Retail Trade

Retail sales data for both Lewistown Borough and Mifflin County were recently assembled in a June, 2003, *Lewistown Market Assessment* by the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, working with Claritas (a data services company) and Downtown Lewistown, Inc., Lewistown's downtown revitalization organization. The data indicates that, as of January, 2003, Mifflin

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County had 452 retail establishments with estimated annual sales of \$674,900,000. Approximately one-fifth of those establishments and sales are associated with the Lewistown central business district. A breakdown of sales by category is provided by the following chart (dark blue indicates summary of three smallest categories - totals don't agree due to rounding):



The importance of Downtown Lewistown to the economic base of the County is well documented in the *Lewistown Market Assessment*. It also presents the image of the County to many visitors. Revitalizing the downtown is, therefore, a vital and continuing economic development challenge.

Successful downtowns elsewhere, like all businesses, are constantly reinventing themselves. Lewistown has many resources from which to draw, including its relationship to the Juniata River, but many of these are undeveloped or need attention. The highway system, with its one way streets, facilitates traffic movement that may now actually need calming to create a pedestrian environment that will support the right mix of commercial and residential development. This is why a traffic study for Lewistown was recommended in the County Comprehensive Plan. Gateways into town also require attention to building conditions, landscaping and sign controls. Yet, the Historic Courthouse and numerous other buildings offer charming examples of Central Pennsylvania architecture and town planning that could become valuable tourism attractions that will stimulate retail spending.

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Changes in the State and Region, 1990 – 1997

The Pennsylvania economy has changed in recent years from a manufacturing orientation to a more balanced structure that closely mirrors the U.S., at least in sectoral composition. This change has occurred through a rapid, and sometimes traumatic, restructuring of employment. Employment in many of the Commonwealth's traditional goods producing activities has fallen; employment in most non-goods producing activities, including but not limited to those economic activities normally considered in the Services sector, has increased. As the structure of economic activity has changed, so has the occupational structure.

Much of the restructuring of employment is due to the globalization of the world economy. The manufacturing belt of the United States, including Pennsylvania, has lost production jobs to lower wage areas in Asia and elsewhere. At the same time, changes in technology have led to higher production levels per worker in many manufacturing activities. Even goods producing industries that have maintained high levels of output are typically requiring fewer workers. Furthermore, even without considering the effects of globalization and changes in production technology, many of the traditional manufacturing industries of Pennsylvania are mature to declining because demand has shifted to new and different products. These three different factors account for steadily declining employment in manufacturing since the 1970's. Projections are for slower, but continuing, decline in most of Pennsylvania's traditional manufacturing industries.

Manufacturing employment has also fallen relative to service activities due to a change in the internal structure of almost all manufacturing enterprises. Manufacturing firms historically provided services such as accounting, marketing, distribution, and consumer relations internally. Employees of the firm engaged in such ancillary activities were counted as part of the manufacturing sector. Manufacturing firms have shed many of these internally provided services to reduce costs by contracting for such services as needed. Because most of the firms that provide the ancillary services are not in the manufacturing sector, this "downsizing" and "outsourcing" has led to great apparent gains in the producers services industries and to an overstatement of losses in the manufacturing employment. The jobs in these firms are counted in the services, wholesale or distribution/transportation sectors.

This change in the structure of firms is of interest at the national and state levels, but not great concern. The jobs still exist. It is merely a question of how they are counted. This may be less true at the local level. When local plants downsize away their ancillary departments some of the jobs actually leave the area. The manufacturing production activities that form the core of the business may still be strong in rural or small-town locations but often the producer services firms that take on the out sourced functions are concentrated in urban areas outside Mifflin County.

Pennsylvania Economic Growth

An analysis of changes in the Pennsylvania economy between 1990 and 1997 at the industry

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group level (two-digit Standard Industrial Classification) indicates that those industries gaining the most jobs were:

- SIC 80: Health Services
- SIC 73: Business Services
- SIC 83: Social Services
- SIC 45: Transportation by Air
- SIC 58: Eating & Drinking Places
- SIC 82: Educational Services
- SIC 54: Food Stores
- SIC 90: Governments
- SIC 87: Engineering & Professional Services
- SIC 41: Passenger Transport, Highway

Most of the industries with large employment gains were service activities. Industry groups losing the most employment were dominated by the goods producing sectors. The fastest growth industry groups were almost all service industries of various kinds. Most were also fairly small industries which means that their rapid growth had little impact on the overall employment structure in the State. At the other end of the growth spectrum, out of the fifteen industry groups showing the greatest percentage loss of employment, eleven were goods producing industries.

Central PA Region and Mifflin County Economic Growth

The Central PA Region is, for purposes of this analysis, defined as all of the Counties that border Mifflin County (Centre, Huntingdon, Juniata, Snyder, and Union) as well as Perry, Cumberland, and Dauphin. The latter three are included due to the strong cross commuting pattern which indicates that they share a common labor pool.

The Central PA Region had 411,140 employees in 1997, about 8% of total employment for Pennsylvania. It had 6.6% of the population. More importantly, between 1990 and 1997, the Region gained 34,914 workers compared to 172,001 in the State. Therefore, over 20% of Pennsylvania's employment gain during the period occurred in the Central PA Region. The latter grew by 9.3% compared to 3.4% for the State. The three largest counties in the Central PA Region account for just over 70% of the area's population.

Most of the available information about the occupational structure of the Mifflin County labor force is from the 1997 Economic Census or 2000 Census of Population and Housing. This data is already somewhat old but it provides a baseline against which to judge changes in the composition of the labor force which have occurred and are continuing to occur based on change in economic structure.

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The County population was 46,486 in 2000. Some 36,280 persons were over the age of 16; this was 78% of the population. Some 59% of persons over 16 were in the labor force. Just under 50% of females over 16 were in the labor force. Statewide, the percentage of persons 16 years and older in the labor force was 62%, and the proportion of women in the labor force was, at 55%, significantly higher than Mifflin County. Employment by industry and occupation (from U.S. Census, 2000) is detailed below:

Mifflin County Employment by Industry and Occupation, 2000				
	Mifflin Jobs	Mifflin %	PA %	Ratio
EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION				
Management, professional and related	4,468	21.8%	32.6%	0.7
Service occupations	2,847	13.9%	14.8%	0.9
Sales and office	4,422	21.6%	27.0%	0.8
Farming, fishing and forestry	338	1.7%	0.5%	3.4
Construction, extraction and maintenance	1,999	9.8%	8.9%	1.1
Production, transportation and material moving	6,392	31.2%	16.3%	1.9
TOTALS	20,466	100.0%	100.0%	1.0
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY				
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and mining	888	4.3%	1.3%	3.3
Construction	1,162	5.7%	6.0%	1.0
Manufacturing	6,178	30.2%	16.0%	1.9
Wholesale trade	632	3.1%	3.6%	0.9
Retail trade	2,760	13.5%	12.1%	1.1
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	923	4.5%	5.4%	0.8
Information	362	1.8%	2.6%	0.7
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental	624	3.0%	6.6%	0.5
Professional, scientific, management and administrative	749	3.7%	8.5%	0.4
Educational, health and social services	3,601	17.6%	21.9%	0.8
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food serv	1,067	5.2%	7.0%	0.7
Other services (except public administration)	771	3.8%	4.8%	0.8
Public administration	749	3.7%	4.2%	0.9
TOTALS	20,466	100.0%	100.0%	1.0

Mifflin County had, in 2000, over three times as many agricultural and almost twice as many manufacturing jobs as the Commonwealth on a relative basis. Persons employed in finance, insurance, real estate, professional, management and other white collar occupations, however, accounted for about one-half the Pennsylvania average.

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CHAPTER 3

GROWTH POTENTIAL BY INDUSTRY

A study of industrial growth by sector within the region and Mifflin County compared to the Commonwealth was conducted to gain a better understanding of growth potential. Following an analysis of each industry group experiencing growth, specific growth industries within those groups were identified, focusing on sectors for which employment growth is not attributable primarily to non-economic factors. The tables offered below provide, for each of these industries, regional employment in 2002 along with the changes in employment between 1995 and 2002 for Mifflin County compared to its neighbors and the Commonwealth.

Growth Industries

The following table summarizes employment trends for key industries within Centre, Cumberland, Dauphin and Mifflin Counties. Industries are ranked by total job growth.

Industry	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Health	45,214	7,968	21.4%	12.0%	\$34,691	0.83	8.4%	1.02
Education Services	37,390	4,866	15.0%	9.9%	\$37,851	1.16	-0.9%	1.14
Transportation Services	23,868	4,557	23.6%	6.3%	\$36,382	1.42	10.9%	1.58
Banks	23,159	3,921	20.4%	6.1%	\$44,756	1.26	13.4%	1.38
Professional Services	15,300	3,036	24.8%	4.1%	\$50,703	0.79	-2.1%	0.77
Information	9,078	1,228	15.6%	2.4%	\$44,277	1.02	1.8%	0.88
Wholesale (Durable)	7,270	833	12.9%	1.9%	\$40,680	0.89	0.3%	0.83
Amusement	5,938	663	12.6%	1.6%	\$15,740	1.12	-11.0%	0.94
Lumber and Wood Products	1,730	426	32.7%	0.5%	\$26,886	0.49	21.9%	0.53
Agriculture	1,372	186	15.7%	0.4%	\$22,043	0.85	-1.4%	0.40
Transport. Equip. Manufacturing	350	-239	-40.6%	0.1%	\$36,072	0.11	-15.8%	0.06
Stone, Glass, & Clay	2,685	-256	-8.7%	0.7%	\$42,625	1.16	0.1%	1.76
Machinery Manufacturing	2,874	-326	-10.2%	0.8%	\$41,384	0.69	14.8%	0.80
Wholesale (Non Durable)	6,313	-422	-6.3%	1.7%	\$40,610	0.86	-20.7%	0.81
Rubber & Plastic	2,969	-584	-16.4%	0.8%	\$35,828	0.38	-16.5%	0.53
Primary and Fabricated Metals	6,058	-697	-10.3%	1.6%	\$37,674	0.62	2.3%	1.00
Paper	3,606	-804	-18.2%	1.0%	\$35,038	0.73	-5.4%	0.98
Textiles	2,554	-1,201	-32.0%	0.7%	\$27,458	1.01	37.0%	1.03
Electrical Equip. Manufacturing	7,329	-4,695	-39.0%	1.9%	\$50,428	1.10	-28.5%	1.08
Totals	205,057	18,460	9.9%	54.4%	701,127			

The largest generators of jobs on an absolute basis in these four counties were health care, education and transportation services. The largest job losses took place in electrical equipment, textile and paper manufacturing. This shift from manufacturing to services is consistent with nationwide patterns, although Location Quotients (LQ's) suggest Pennsylvania has high numbers of manufacturers compared to population (the Location Quotient being a measure of the relationships between ratios of jobs to population in different areas).

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Health Care

Health care is the top job generator of jobs within the four counties. Nevertheless, it provided virtually no job growth for Mifflin County over the period 1995-2002. It also paid lower wages in Mifflin County compared to the others.

Health Care Employment for 4-County Area	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Mifflin	2,287	1	0.0%	15.0%	\$27,522	1.04	5.9%	1.27
Dauphin	23,898	4,678	24.3%	13.7%	\$36,422	0.95	10.3%	1.16
Cumberland	13,113	2,523	23.8%	10.6%	\$34,893	0.74	11.3%	0.90
Centre	5,916	766	14.9%	9.2%	\$30,021	0.64	-1.2%	0.78
Totals	45,214	7,968	21.4%	12.0%	\$34,691	0.83	8.4%	1.02

Notwithstanding the lack of overall growth in health care employment in Mifflin County, there were some individual sectors that produced new jobs. These are detailed below but none stand out as promising future employment prospects. The aging population, however, will probably lead to some continued growth of individual physician practices and further development of elderly care facilities and other related services. Mifflin County also offers an attractive living environment that could be appealing for life care community development focused on the State College, Harrisburg and York markets. There may also be some opportunities for specialty health care services in niche fields of practice that relate to the elderly or other particular health care challenges found locally and regionally.

Growth Industries - Health Care and Health Care Services, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
62142	Outpatient mental health centers	60	114.3%	--	333.3%	42.1%
62331	Community care facilities for the elderly	566	89.3%	--	95.8%	40.3%
62431	Vocational rehabilitation services	397	4.5%	--	48.0%	-3.4%
62422	Community housing services	109	45.3%	--	40.0%	50.6%
62121	Offices of dentists	733	26.6%	64	33.3%	14.6%
62412	Services for the elderly and disabled	123	23.0%	43	16.2%	24.7%
62419	Other individual and family services	427	52.0%	42	10.5%	20.7%
62132	Offices of optometrists	128	-3.8%	23	9.5%	11.7%
62111	Offices of physicians	1,666	32.4%	208	5.6%	21.1%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison. Blanks in the Employment column mean employment data is being suppressed. Employment Data is suppressed when a sector has 2 or fewer reporting units. "0" means that the selected region has no employment in this sector.

*Regional jobs and growth percentages in this case include Centre, Juniata, Huntingdon, Mifflin, Snyder and Union Counties.

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Education Services

Education services exhibited the second highest rate of new job creation in the four county area of Centre, Cumberland, Dauphin and Mifflin. Mifflin enjoyed a 9.1% expansion in education related employment between 1995 and 2002. It also paid wages generally on par with Dauphin and Cumberland Counties. Centre County paid somewhat higher and represented the bulk of the increase in educational job generation among the four counties. This was due, no doubt, to the presence of Pennsylvania State University as a major employer in Centre County.

Education Employment for 4-County Area	2002	95-02	95-02	% of	2002	2002	95-02	2002
Area	Jobs	Growth	% Growth	Area Labor Force	Wages	State LQ	LQ Change	U.S. LQ
Mifflin	1,074	90	9.1%	7.0%	\$35,228	0.82	11.6%	0.81
Dauphin	10,498	382	3.8%	6.0%	\$35,470	0.70	-11.2%	0.69
Cumberland	7,928	1,184	17.6%	6.4%	\$35,839	0.75	2.0%	0.74
Centre	17,890	3,210	21.9%	27.9%	\$40,298	3.27	1.2%	3.21
Totals	37,390	4,866	15.0%	9.9%	\$37,851	1.16	-0.9%	1.14

Nearly all of Mifflin County's educational job gains, however, were at elementary and secondary schools. This growth was not matched by population growth and, therefore, is based more on extension of services than increase in demand. Given the lack of significant population growth in the County, this cannot continue to any appreciable degree without imposing on the tax base. Major expansions of employment in this sector are, consequently, unlikely.

Growth Industries - Educational Services, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
61169	All other schools and instruction	51	183.3%	--	40.0%	128.6%
61111	Elementary and secondary schools	7,525	16.7%	1,064	9.0%	15.6%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison. Blanks in the Employment column mean employment data is being suppressed. Employment Data is suppressed when a sector has 2 or fewer reporting units. "0" means that the selected region has no employment in this sector.

*Regional jobs and growth percentages in this case include Centre, Juniata, Huntingdon, Mifflin, Snyder and Union Counties.

There may, nonetheless, be some opportunities, once again, in niche fields of education, particularly in the vocational realm. The County has been fortunate to have some specialty service educational employers (e.g. South Hills Business School) who are in position to develop training programs geared around the special skills required of certain employers. The proximity and prominence of Pennsylvania State University also suggest the possibility of partnering with that institution to create new programs that could be of interest outside the region and bring new jobs to Mifflin County.

Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

Transportation and Warehousing Services

The third greatest generator of jobs in the four counties was transportation and warehousing. The distribution opportunities in the Northeast are considerable, given the population density that prevails throughout most of it. The counties involved in this instance have access to major arterial and interstate highways (e.g. I-81, I-83, I-99, Route 22, Route 322, Pennsylvania Turnpike). They have, as a result, attracted many transportation and warehousing jobs. Growth within Mifflin County has been limited, with only 50 new jobs created, but this positive trend is, nonetheless, significant given the lack of a major Interstate Highway system link through the County. Route 322 has served to provide access between Harrisburg and State College (and I-80 to I-81) but it has serious limitations that have yet to be corrected. Still, Mifflin was able to grow some jobs in this sector. They do not pay particularly well but there is, at least, a positive trend that suggests much more could happen with the completion of several proposed highway upgrades.

Transportation Employment for 4-County Area								
Area	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Mifflin	583	50	9.4%	3.8%	\$28,019	0.86	16.4%	0.96
Dauphin	8,939	1,021	12.9%	5.1%	\$38,041	1.15	0.6%	1.28
Cumberland	12,368	3,096	33.4%	10.0%	\$36,804	2.25	20.4%	2.50
Centre	1,978	390	24.6%	3.1%	\$28,716	0.69	7.6%	0.77
Totals	23,868	4,557	23.6%	6.3%	\$36,382	1.42	10.9%	1.58

There has been growth in the specific sectors of general freight trucking and other specialized trucking. There has also been growth in school related transportation, a corollary to the growth in other education employment. Future opportunities could be significant if and when a Route 322 connection to I-99 is completed to improve Mifflin County's access to the Interstate highway system and the Northeast distribution network.

Growth Industries - Transportation and Warehousing, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
48412	General freight trucking, long-distance	1,256	77.9%	150	85.2%	16.8%
49311	General warehousing and storage	75	257.1%	23	43.8%	48.5%
48541	School and employee bus transportation	657	39.5%	136	29.5%	29.5%
48422	Other specialized trucking, local	372	34.3%	76	10.1%	11.0%
48411	General freight trucking, local	160	16.8%	40	8.1%	37.4%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison. Blanks in the Employment column mean employment data is being suppressed. Employment Data is suppressed when a sector has 2 or fewer reporting units. "0" means that the selected region has no employment in this sector.

*Regional jobs and growth percentages in this case include Centre, Juniata, Huntingdon, Mifflin, Snyder and Union Counties.

Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

Financial Services (Banks)

Jobs in the bank and related financial services industries grew by 20.4% between 1995 and 2002 within the four counties. Most of this growth took place in Dauphin County, however, where the regional headquarters of several financial services companies have located for the benefits of access to the State Capitol offices and the interstate highway system. Mifflin County's financial services sector is relatively small (437 jobs in 2002) and grew a modest 8.7% from its 1995 level. The 35 job gain is, though limited in scope, still positive in an economy with high unemployment.

Financial Employment for 4-County Area	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Mifflin	437	35	8.7%	2.9%	\$31,731	0.59	21.4%	0.64
Dauphin	11,357	3,389	42.5%	6.5%	\$44,895	1.34	33.3%	1.46
Cumberland	9,877	207	2.1%	8.0%	\$46,004	1.65	-3.2%	1.80
Centre	1,488	290	24.2%	2.3%	\$39,231	0.48	12.7%	0.52
Totals	23,159	3,921	20.4%	6.1%	\$44,756	1.26	13.4%	1.38

The job gains within Mifflin County took place principally within nondepository credit intermediary companies (e.g. mortgage brokers), the insurance industry and commercial banking institutions. The new jobs appear to largely result from the ordinary expansion of existing enterprises rather than new development. Mifflin County's unemployed labor force could be a marketable competitive advantage in attempting to recruit the back office operations of financial services companies but the local skill sets match the needs of other industries much better. Moreover, the small size of the local labor force is unlikely to be appealing to other than very small operations. Therefore, while this industry may present an attractive job source for the region as a whole, it is unlikely to do much for Mifflin County.

Growth Industries - Finance and Real Estate, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
52229	Other nondepository credit intermediation	203	61.1%	33	135.7%	44.8%
52213	Credit unions	104	62.5%	--	23.1%	31.7%
52421	Insurance agencies and brokerages	416	5.3%	66	15.8%	22.3%
52211	Commercial banking	1,759	-3.0%	248	8.3%	-13.7%
52212	Savings institutions	163	340.5%	--	7.1%	26.3%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison. Blanks in the Employment column mean employment data is being suppressed. Employment Data is suppressed when a sector has 2 or fewer reporting units. "0" means that the selected region has no employment in this sector.

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Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

Professional Services

Professional services enjoyed major growth within Dauphin and Cumberland Counties, undoubtedly due to the influence of the State Capitol. There was also a limited amount of growth in professional services in Centre County that was probably related to the Pennsylvania State University's influence on other job markets in that area. Mifflin added a small number of professional jobs between 1995 and 2002, but these were insignificant compared to regional gains.

Professional Employment for 4-County Area	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Mifflin	152	21	16.0%	1.0%	\$28,926	0.19	7.9%	0.19
Dauphin	6,225	1,308	26.6%	3.6%	\$52,890	0.69	-1.3%	0.68
Cumberland	6,311	1,474	30.5%	5.1%	\$51,157	0.99	3.0%	0.97
Centre	2,612	233	9.8%	4.1%	\$45,660	0.79	-17.0%	0.77
Totals	15,300	3,036	24.8%	4.1%	\$50,703	0.79	-2.1%	0.77

Mifflin County's professional employment increases came in two basic categories. These were computer systems design and related services and veterinary services. The rate of regional job growth, which at 24.8% for 1995-202 was second highest among all industries, suggests there is additional potential for development of professional services in Mifflin County. The County provides a quality of place that can be attractive to professionals who are able, with modern technology to do much of their work from home or remote locations. Regional sectors that did well and might also find a home in Mifflin County on this basis include management consulting services, technical consulting services, landscape architectural services, environmental consulting services, physical, engineering and biological research, accounting and bookkeeping services and marketing research. There is also potential to do more in the area of computer systems design and related services. These are all businesses that can locate in rural areas, particularly when they can take advantage of the equally convenient access to both the State Capitol and Pennsylvania State University that Mifflin County offers.

Growth Industries - Professional Services, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
54151	Computer systems design and related services	656	-1.1%	41	95.2%	61.9%
54194	Veterinary services	266	39.3%	26	62.5%	45.3%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison. Blanks in the Employment column mean employment data is being suppressed. Employment Data is suppressed when a sector has 2 or fewer reporting units. "0" means that the selected region has no employment in this sector.

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Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

Information Services

While the information services industry produced significant job growth during the 1995-2002 period for three of the four counties studied, it did not do so within Mifflin County. It actually lost a modest number of information services jobs. Moreover, those jobs it did possess in 2002 were very low paying by comparison with the Centre, Cumberland and Dauphin Counties. Those three counties had relatively high Location Quotients compared to both the Commonwealth and United States as a whole, while Mifflin County operated at about half its theoretical potential.

Information Employment for 4-County Area	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Mifflin	193	-27	-12.3%	1.3%	\$25,065	0.54	-8.4%	0.46
Dauphin	3,974	431	12.2%	2.3%	\$42,427	0.96	-2.0%	0.83
Cumberland	3,618	449	14.2%	2.9%	\$48,471	1.24	1.1%	1.07
Centre	1,293	375	40.8%	2.0%	\$41,092	0.85	19.4%	0.74
Totals	9,078	1,228	15.6%	2.4%	\$44,277	1.02	1.8%	0.88

Mifflin County did gain very small numbers of new jobs in the data processing and related services, cable and other program distribution and library sectors between 1995 and 2002. Its potential to do better, however, has been limited by its general lack of access to high speed internet service, a condition that is changing everywhere as DSL, cable modem and satellite service become routinely available. Nonetheless, the small size of Mifflin County's labor force is probably not especially attractive for large information services operations. Additionally, these types of enterprises often locate close to one another to benefit by the synergies of a shared labor pool and the potential for strategic alliances. Therefore, the potential is likely limited to niche enterprises that can start small and operate from a rural base. Internet publishing, software publishing, book publishing and some data processing services may be opportunities.

Growth Industries - Information Services, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
51821	Data processing and related services	28	47%	--	200.0%	21.0%
51751	Cable and other program distribution	308	84%	--	100.0%	75.9%
51912	Libraries and archives	178	37%	--	20.0%	27.3%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison.

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Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

Wholesale (Durable Goods)

There was limited job growth in the wholesale distribution of durable goods industry between 1995 and 2002. All of this growth took place in Dauphin County. Mifflin County lost 18 jobs and those 172 jobs it still possessed in 2002 paid wages little more than half the average of Dauphin County and the four counties as a whole.

Wholesale Employment for 4-County Area	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Mifflin	172	-18	-9.5%	1.1%	\$21,801	0.52	-4.7%	0.49
Dauphin	4,195	1,081	34.7%	2.4%	\$42,239	1.11	18.8%	1.03
Cumberland	2,401	-191	-7.4%	1.9%	\$41,456	0.90	-17.2%	0.84
Centre	502	-39	-7.2%	0.8%	\$30,408	0.36	-20.6%	0.34
Totals	7,270	833	12.9%	1.9%	\$40,680	0.89	0.3%	0.83

Mifflin County experienced minimal growth in certain wholesale sectors, including the farm and garden equipment merchant category where it had a total of 24 jobs in 2002. Regionally, the best job producing sectors included merchant wholesalers of motor vehicles, industrial machinery, office equipment, lumber and wood, medical equipment, electronic parts, service establishment equipment, electric equipment, wiring HVAC equipment, recyclable materials, home furnishings and metals. Some of these could be candidates for Mifflin County but most are, nonetheless, unlikely to generate large job numbers. Mifflin County lacks the urban base of business that most wholesalers (unless they sell mainly by mail order) want as a foundation for establishing a distribution network. Moreover, the County lacks the easy access to multiple elements of the Interstate highway system that Harrisburg offers. Location in Mifflin County, by contrast, requires traveling 30-60 minutes to reach a point where trucks can be dispatched in different directions.

Growth Industries - Wholesale: Durable Goods, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
42332	Masonry material merchant wholesalers	13	333.3%	--	100.0%	72.8%
42372	Plumbing equip. merchant wholesalers	121	19.8%	--	75.0%	6.3%
42382	Farm and garden equip. merchant wholesalers	104	-14.8%	24	14.3%	0.7%
42393	Recyclable material merchant wholesalers	67	0.0%	--	13.2%	-13.2%
42383	Industrial machinery merchant wholesalers	176	58.6%	--	9.1%	4.6%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison. Blanks in the Employment column mean employment data is being suppressed. Employment Data is suppressed when a sector has 2 or fewer reporting units. "0" means that the selected region has no employment in this sector.

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Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

Amusement Services

There has been significant growth in employment in the amusement services industry among all counties studied. Although Mifflin County's numbers are low and the wage levels are poor across the board, it is worth noting that other data sources suggest much higher employment in tourism-related industries and many of these jobs are part-time and/or supplemental in nature. Therefore, their contributions should not be underestimated. Many tourism jobs are found, also, in other industry categories, including retail, transportation and lodging.

Amusement Employment for 4-County Area	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Mifflin	30	11	57.9%	0.2%	\$13,636	0.14	47.9%	0.12
Dauphin	4,371	470	12.0%	2.5%	\$16,844	1.79	-12.1%	1.49
Cumberland	985	88	9.8%	0.8%	\$13,518	0.57	-12.7%	0.48
Centre	552	94	20.5%	0.9%	\$11,079	0.62	-8.3%	0.51
Totals	5,938	663	12.6%	1.6%	\$15,740	1.12	-11.0%	0.94

The one sector of the amusement industry to exhibit job growth between 1995 and 2002 was golf courses and country clubs, which added a limited number of jobs. Regionally, the growth sectors included amusement and theme parks, fitness and recreational sports centers, museums, bowling centers, independent artists, writers, and performers, amusement arcades, theater companies and dinner theaters, nature parks and other similar institutions, other performing arts companies, other promoters, dance companies and skiing facilities.

Several of these amusement industries have potential in Mifflin County. The Juniata Valley Regional Tourism Plan details the County's assets in this regard together with a comprehensive strategy for taking advantage of those assets. Much of the Plan is focused on natural resource based and agricultural tourism, ranging from trail development to wineries. There is also a marketing plan that stresses selling the Juniata Valley to visitors from nearby regional centers such as Harrisburg, York and Lancaster, based on a "Discover Our Good Nature" theme.

Growth Industries - Amusement, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
71391	Golf courses and country clubs	82	64.0%	--	69.2%	28.8%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison. Blanks in the Employment column mean employment data is being suppressed. Employment Data is suppressed when a sector has 2 or fewer reporting units. "0" means that the selected region has no employment in this sector.

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Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

Lumber and Wood Products

Lumber and wood products represents the single fastest expanding industry in the four county region, based on the relative rate of employment growth. The industry added 426 jobs between 1995 and 2002, for a 32.7% gain. Mifflin County's growth was, in this instance, quite comparable to the region, with a 30.5% expansion (171 jobs) and an average wage level of \$26,801. Mifflin also enjoyed a Location Quotient of 5.09 compared to the Commonwealth and 5.58 relative to the U.S. as a whole, extremely high ratios indicating the County had over five times the employment in this industry as its size would otherwise suggest. Obviously, some of this is simply due to lumber processors locating near the resource, but the strength of the industry and its rate of growth suggest it has excellent potential.

Lumber/Wood Employment for 4-County Area								
Area	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Mifflin	732	171	30.5%	4.8%	\$26,801	5.09	42.2%	5.58
Dauphin	386	128	49.6%	0.2%	\$30,945	0.23	36.5%	0.26
Cumberland	139	3	2.2%	0.1%	\$25,090	0.12	-5.5%	0.13
Centre	473	124	35.5%	0.7%	\$24,235	0.78	20.0%	0.86
Totals	1,730	426	32.7%	0.5%	\$26,886	0.49	21.9%	0.53

A detailed review of the lumber and wood products industry by sector, indicates that most of Mifflin County's job growth within this industry was related to secondary processing and wood products manufacturing. This is a very healthy situation that suggests much additional potential for job growth. Regionally, other growing sectors of the industry include household and institutional furniture manufacturing, office furniture and fixtures manufacturing and millwork. It is also worth noting that sawmills are expanding within Mifflin County, although they suffered job losses at the regional and State levels.

Growth Industries - Lumber and Wood Products, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
32111	Sawmills and wood preservation	308	-16.3%	98	58.1%	-2.4%
33711	Wood kitchen cabinet and countertop mfg.	3,143	56.3%	77	35.1%	19.9%
32199	All other wood product manufacturing	2,148	48.9%	340	33.9%	28.1%
32121	Plywood and engineered wood product mfg.	197	40.7%	--	20.7%	15.5%
32192	Wood container and pallet manufacturing	386	10.9%	48	0.0%	5.1%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison. Blanks in the Employment column mean employment data is being suppressed. Employment Data is suppressed when a sector has 2 or fewer reporting units. "0" means that the selected region has no employment in this sector.

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Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

Agriculture

Agriculture is a difficult industry to monitor from the standpoint of job creation. This is because most small farmers are self-employed nonemployers. Quite often, additional labor used on the farm is also from the farm family. Therefore, very view of the jobs show up in payroll surveys unless the farm is large enough to be incorporated. Mifflin County's smaller farmers, particularly the members the Plain community, are unlikely to be in this category. This is one reason why Mifflin County's agriculture industry job numbers are so small compared to other counties. Agricultural Census data on farm owners, operators and laborers is much more relevant to understanding the overall impact of agriculture on the labor market.

Agriculture Employment for 4-County Area								
Area	2002 Jobs	95-02 Growth	95-02 % Growth	% of Area Labor Force	2002 Wages	2002 State LQ	95-02 LQ Change	2002 U.S. LQ
Mifflin	74	-16	-17.8%	0.5%	\$22,748	1.13	-16.9%	0.54
Dauphin	691	149	27.5%	0.4%	\$24,515	0.92	8.0%	0.44
Cumberland	416	103	32.9%	0.3%	\$18,100	0.78	14.0%	0.37
Centre	191	-50	-20.7%	0.3%	\$21,420	0.69	-34.9%	0.33
Totals	1,730	426	32.7%	0.5%	\$26,886	0.49	21.9%	0.53

Regionally, agricultural industry job growth took place in Cumberland and Dauphin Counties where there are many support activities related to crop production, some larger dairies and other types of agri-businesses that are not generally found in Mifflin County. The County experienced job growth in production agriculture sectors, according to payroll data available but this is only a small fraction of the total agricultural activity. There was also growth in the logging sector, supporting the conclusions reached in the previous section regarding growth potential within the lumber and wood products industry.

Growth Industries - Agriculture, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
11212	Dairy cattle and milk production	195	140.7%	--	--	140.8%
11299	All other animal production	40	400.0%	--	--	38.0%
11199	All other crop farming	13	225.0%	--	--	84.4%
11331	Logging	62	-11.4%	36	5.9%	-8.5%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. County statistics for some employment sectors are often not available because the volume of activity is so low so as to require suppression of the data to avoid the disclosure of private or confidential information. Also self-employment data is not always obtainable. Whereas when such information is available it provides a useful comparison.

*Regional jobs and growth percentages include Centre, Juniata, Huntingdon, Mifflin, Snyder and Union Counties.

Note: ES-202 Employment data does not count individuals working for themselves, family members working for a family owned business. This would understate the number of workers in Ag sector.

Mifflin County, Pennsylvania Economic Development Strategy

Based on the analysis above, the following are the “best-bet” potential growth industries for Mifflin County in the near future. All were growth industries within both the region and Mifflin County between 1995 and 2002.

Major Growth Industries, 1995-2002						
NAICS No.	Title	Regional*		Mifflin County		State Growth %
		Regional Jobs	Regional Growth %	County Jobs	County Growth %	
61111	Elementary and secondary schools	7,525	16.7%	1,064	9.0%	15.6%
33711	Wood kitchen cabinet and countertop mfg.	3,143	56.3%	77	35.1%	19.9%
32199	All other wood product manufacturing	2,148	48.9%	340	33.9%	28.1%
62111	Offices of physicians	1,666	32.4%	208	5.6%	21.1%
48412	General freight trucking, long-distance	1,256	77.9%	150	85.2%	16.8%
62121	Offices of dentists	733	26.6%	64	33.3%	14.6%
48541	School and employee bus transportation	657	39.5%	136	29.5%	29.5%
62331	Community care facilities for the elderly	566	89.3%	--	95.8%	40.3%
32619	Other plastics product manufacturing	566	23.6%	176	417.6%	2.8%
62419	Other individual and family services	427	52.0%	42	10.5%	20.7%
52421	Insurance agencies and brokerages	416	5.3%	66	15.8%	22.3%
62431	Vocational rehabilitation services	397	4.5%	--	48.0%	-3.4%
48422	Other specialized trucking, local	372	34.3%	76	10.1%	11.0%
51751	Cable and other program distribution	308	84%	--	100.0%	75.9%
54194	Veterinary services	266	39.3%	26	62.5%	45.3%
52229	Other nondepository credit intermediation	203	61.1%	33	135.7%	44.8%
32121	Plywood and engineered wood product mfg.	197	40.7%	--	20.7%	15.5%
51912	Libraries and archives	178	37%	--	20.0%	27.3%
42383	Industrial machinery merchant wholesalers	176	58.6%	--	9.1%	4.6%
52212	Savings institutions	163	340.5%	--	7.1%	26.3%
48411	General freight trucking, local	160	16.8%	40	8.1%	37.4%
62412	Services for the elderly and disabled	123	23.0%	43	16.2%	24.7%
42372	Plumbing equip. merchant wholesalers	121	19.8%	--	75.0%	6.3%
62422	Community housing services	109	45.3%	--	40.0%	50.6%
52213	Credit unions	104	62.5%	--	23.1%	31.7%
42472	Other petroleum merchant wholesalers	93	78.8%	33	3.1%	-9.0%
71391	Golf courses and country clubs	82	64.0%	--	69.2%	28.8%
49311	General warehousing and storage	75	257.1%	23	43.8%	48.5%
42393	Recyclable material merchant wholesalers	67	0.0%	--	13.2%	-13.2%
62142	Outpatient mental health centers	60	114.3%	--	333.3%	42.1%
61169	All other schools and instruction	51	183.3%	--	40.0%	128.6%
42413	Industrial paper merchant wholesalers	34	61.9%	--	57.1%	-8.2%
42469	Other chemicals merchant wholesalers	33	73.7%	--	650.0%	19.3%
51821	Data processing and related services	28	47%	--	200.0%	21.0%
31213	Wineries	17	142.9%	--	14.3%	57.5%
42332	Masonry material merchant wholesalers	13	333.3%	--	100.0%	72.8%

Although each of the above represents a distinct possibility for future development in the County, it is unlikely that most of them should be considered as marketing targets. It is better to understand them as typical of the kinds of growth industries that would find a logical home in Mifflin County.

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Projections of Future Occupational Change

The Office of Employment Security for the Commonwealth has generated detailed tables showing the 1994 distribution of employment by occupation and projecting those levels to the year 2005. The projections show that total employment in the State is expected to grow by almost eight% over the period. Among those occupations with more than 10,000 employees statewide in 1994, the fastest growing in percentage terms will be:

Projected Pennsylvania Employment Changes by Occupation, 1994 - 2005			
	1994	Projected	Projected
Occupation	Employment	2005	%
		Employment	Change
GROWING OCCUPATIONS			
Systems Analysts	22,200	40,600	7.5%
Home Health Aides	14,800	26,700	7.3%
Residential Counselors	13,700	22,100	5.6%
Teacher Aides	15,100	24,300	5.5%
Special Education Teachers	13,500	18,650	4.5%
Corrections Officers	11,600	17,200	4.4%
Child care workers	30,000	41,600	3.5%
Adjustment Clerks	17,550	23,500	3.1%
Social Workers	14,100	18,950	3.1%
DECLINING OCCUPATIONS			
Stock Clerks	33,950	32,000	-0.5%
Hand Packers	43,300	40,650	-0.6%
Counter Attendants	16,400	15,400	-0.6%
Production Managers	11,300	10,550	-0.6%
Data Entry Clerks	19,400	17,900	-0.7%
Drafters	16,400	15,050	-0.8%
Production Inspectors	17,700	15,950	-0.9%
Machine Feeders	17,500	15,750	-0.9%
Electronic Assemblers	13,600	12,300	-0.9%
Machine Operators	10,700	9,600	-0.9%
Production Supervisors	33,300	29,500	-1.0%
Bookkeeping Clerks	96,150	84,600	-1.1%
Material Handlers	35,150	31,000	-1.1%
File Clerks	12,700	10,050	-1.9%
Tellers	31,300	24,350	-2.0%
Word Processors	39,050	24,950	-3.3%
Sewing Machine Operators	29,900	14,150	-4.8%

Most of these occupations (10 of 17) are blue collar jobs related to manufacturing. None of these positions require substantial post-secondary education.

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The obvious conclusion is that the occupational structure of the region and the County is changing and will continue to change in the near future. Many of the occupations which are prevalent in the existing labor force are in decline. Most of the new jobs in the future will require more education than is required by the current mix of employment. Matching the list of growing occupations to the types of growth industries likely to be attracted to Mifflin County suggests that some manufacturing growth is possible but that, more than likely, most growth will be in the service and distribution sectors.

Commuting Patterns

According to the 2000 Census, Mifflin County is a net exporter of labor. The total resident labor force of the County was 20,193 persons in 2000. Some 15,827 persons or 78.4% of this population was employed within the County, down slightly from 1990 when 15,919 persons or 83.2% of the working population had jobs in the County. This is, nonetheless, still a reasonably high level of local employment for a rural area. Only Centre County, among its neighbors that use Mifflin County employees, had a higher percentage of in-county employment. The table below illustrates:

Employment in County of Residence			
	Total	Worked in county of residence	%
Centre	63,097	57,815	91.6%
Cumberland	105,860	73,081	69.0%
Dauphin	121,202	93,958	77.5%
Juniata	10,432	5,754	55.2%
Mifflin	20,193	15,827	78.4%
Perry	21,391	6,738	31.5%
Snyder	17,573	12,071	68.7%
Union	16,002	10,512	65.7%
Pennsylvania	5,556,311	4,023,014	72.4%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Notwithstanding these favorable comparisons, it is the trend that is important. Even more critical is the unemployment trend discussed later in this report (see Chapter 6). Clearly, the trends are currently in a negative direction, leaving many Mifflin County residents out of work and forcing others to seek work further away. While the latter is not terribly detrimental if the employment opportunities are better elsewhere (excepting for impacts on the tax base), there is no indication that workers now leaving the County for work are benefitting financially or from a quality of life perspective.

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Some 4,366 persons were employed elsewhere with 2,564 workers commuting into Mifflin County from other areas. Hence the net export of workers from the County was 1,802 or 8.9% of the resident labor force. The counties that provided the largest net levels of employment for Mifflin County residents included (in order); Centre, Snyder, Dauphin, Huntingdon, and Cumberland. Mifflin County was a net importer of labor from Juniata County, however.

Commuting Patterns, 2000			
County	In	Out	Net
Mifflin	15,827	15,827	0
Blair	29	52	-23
Centre	451	1,120	-669
Cumberland	30	152	-122
Dauphin	26	266	-240
Franklin	13	6	7
Huntingdon	740	937	-197
Juniata	738	701	37
Perry	30	51	-21
Snyder	261	508	-247
Union	21	27	-6
York	6	34	-28
Others	219	512	-293
Total	18,391	20,193	-1,802

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

If local jobs are available, some of these workers may be induced to work in the County rather than commute. This is a potential marketable competitive advantage for attracting new business to Mifflin County, particularly as the economy revives and the labor market continues to tighten nationally due to advancing retirement of the Baby Boom generation.

Team Pennsylvania Interviews

The Department of Community and Economic Development began a program in 1997 to proactively determine the needs and concerns of Pennsylvania firms. This program includes the sponsorship of local entities to interview local employers using a standardized form. The results of these interviews are entered into a computer database that is used by both local and state entities to provide assistance and to determine critical needs of the state's business enterprises. The agency selected as the local Team Pennsylvania representative in Mifflin County is the Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation. It has interviewed some 78 firms beginning in 1997. The following is an analysis of the findings to date from these interviews.

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- 1) Firms surveyed have fallen into the following sales categories:

<u>Gross Annual Sales</u>	<u>Firms</u>
\$50 million or more	6
\$20 million to \$50 million	7
\$2 million to \$20 million	18
\$1 million to \$2 million	18
\$500,000 to \$1 million	11
Less than \$500,000	18

Four firms have not agreed to share data regarding their sales.

- 2) Total employment of all the interviewed firms was 5,319. Significantly, 2,902 employees or 55% of the jobs represented were with the six largest firms, indicating a very heavy dependence on a relatively small number of employers.
- 3) Fully 39 of the firms were in the manufacturing sector. Although these were spread across all size categories, the lack of diversification in the local economy is troublesome. Productivity gains and foreign competition are consistently reducing the manufacturing sector's share of employment nationwide. If Mifflin County continues to rely too heavily on this sector it can expect little in the way of job growth. The recent loss of Guardian (a glass manufacturer), the announced closing of the Lear plant (auto parts manufacturer) and the downsizing of Standard's steel operations also support this conclusion. Approximately 600 jobs have been lost to the manufacturing sector's constant pressure to improve productivity through better inventory management, distribution and production processes. This will continue.
- 4) Notwithstanding the recent history and national trends, 22 firms predicted employment growth above 5% in the three years following their interview. Some 17 said employment growth would be below 3%. These are not, however, very impressive numbers, once again suggesting that manufacturing alone will not restore economic vitality to Mifflin County.
- 5) Only 6 firms indicated being heavily committed to exports (over 25% of sales) and only 18 exported at all. Some, of course, do not produce a product or service that can be exported.
- 6) Only four firms had government sales in excess of 10% of gross (includes co-payment).
- 7) Some 46 firms said over 50% of their workforce was skilled, but this number is suspect due to the lack of a standard definition. Significantly, 44 firms reported that more than 40% of their workforce required skills training after employment. This, too, may be attributable to a heavy reliance on manufacturing where skills developed in one setting are not necessarily transferable to others.

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- 8) Most firms (55) evaluated their sites and facilities as “good” or “excellent” but 36 said they would need additional space within 5 years. Some 31 of those requiring more space indicated they would seek to expand on site or in the local area.
- 9) Most firms said their equipment was in good or excellent shape but 48 expected to need more or new equipment within 3 years.
- 10) Truck transport is by far the most important transportation mode for almost all firms (64 firms used trucks for delivery of their product and 66 firms used trucks for receiving raw materials). This illustrates the importance of the local and regional highway infrastructure.
- 11) Importantly, most elements of the County’s infrastructure are fairly highly rated by the firms interviewed. Fully 63 firms gave sewer and water good or excellent grades. Zoning and land use got good or higher scores from 56 firms and utilities and telecommunications were highly regarded by 54 and 58 firms respectively. The infrastructure elements that received mostly poor or fair ratings included roads (see #10 above) and the airport.
- 12) Most of the interviewed firms indicated at least some immediate needs. Heading the list was training for existing employees. This was followed by the need for new sites, new employee training, assistance with on-site expansion, financing for machinery and equipment and assistance with building construction. Overall, over 230 assistance needs were voiced by the 71 firms. Most dealt with training or expansion issues.

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CHAPTER 4

LAND AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Mifflin County Commissioners made a major commitment to the development of a Geographic Information System (GIS) in the latter part of the 1990's. This system is largely in place and includes an inventory of information about land use, zoning, assessment, infrastructure, and environmental concerns.

Industrial Land Inventory Analysis

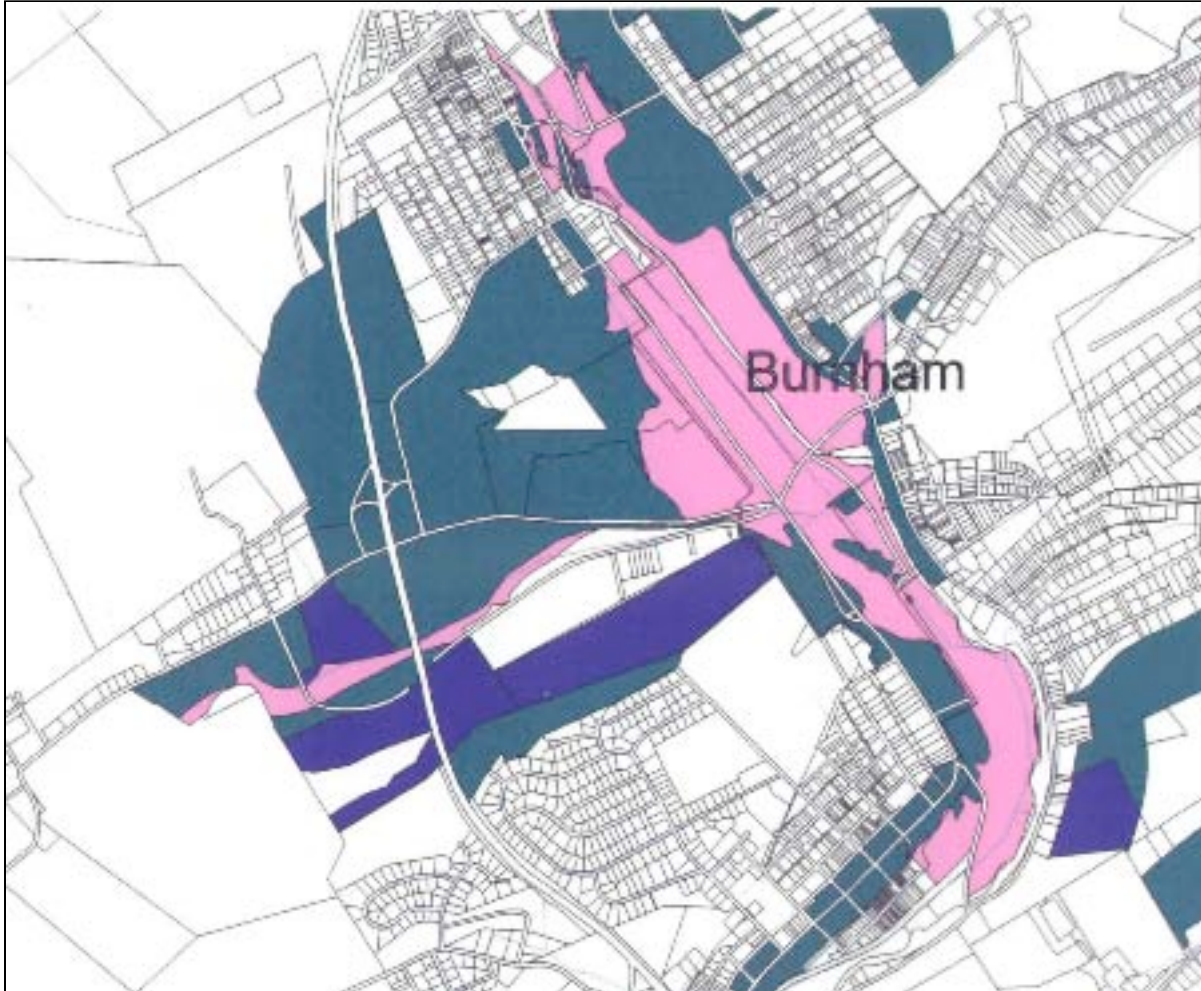
The Mifflin County GIS system allows identification of potential industrial/commercial sites using data on existing land use, zoning (where it exists), existence of sewer and water service areas, location of major roads and tax parcel information. Such a process was employed during this planning process to identify potential industrial development sites in and around the Burnham area. This is, generally, the most accessible and compatible area of the County for such development, given the current patterns of development and transportation links.




The GIS system was used to first identify those parcels meeting road, sewer and water availability tests, provided they were properly zoned for industrial development. These sites are colored teal on the Potential Sites for Development Maps that follow. Next, those areas meeting these tests but lying in the floodplain were identified. These areas, which can be used for certain types of industrial enterprises, are colored magenta on the map. Finally, areas that meet the tests and are vacant, representing good development potential, were identified. These are colored dark blue on the map.

Although further analysis of soils and land availability at reasonable prices will be required, the Potential Sites for Development Maps suggest there are reasonably large areas of land available in the vicinity of the Route 322 interchange with Freedom Avenue. These areas are prospects for future development and should be further evaluated as potential industrial park sites. Such projects might be pursued by either private or public initiative. The County will, in either instance, need the site inventory to remain competitive in attracting prime businesses and industries.

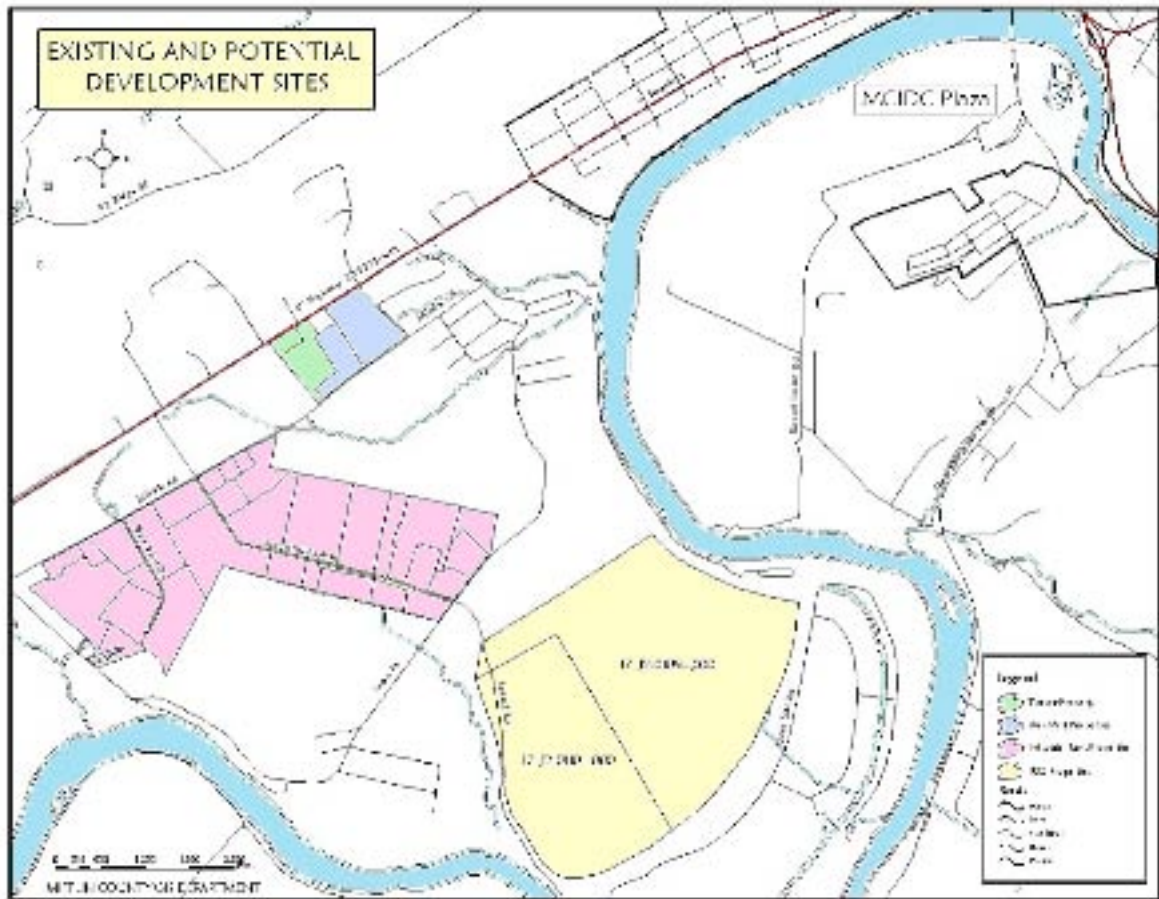
The site inventory also, of course, includes the County's existing Mifflin County Industrial Park in Granville Township and an additional 300 acres of land recently placed under the Commonwealth's Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) program. KOZ benefits include several years of tax abatements that cover not only taxes on real estate improvements, but also income and sales taxes. This designation will put the County in a competitive position with other areas offering similar benefits. However, highway location is often more important than tax incentives. Therefore, the develop of additional non-KOZ inventory with such advantages is important.

Potential Sites for Development



-  Sites Meeting Tests for Roads, Sewer, Water and Zoning
-  Sites Meeting Tests for Roads, Sewer, Water and Zoning with Floodplain Limitations
-  Sites Meeting Tests for Roads, Sewer, Water and Zoning and Vacant

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CHAPTER 5

INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

A major concern of the Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee was the perception by many agencies and officials that the overall organization of economic development efforts in the County could be improved. A series of interviews was conducted with the management and, where possible, the board chairs of all identified agencies and organizations during the Winter of 2000 to review missions, major activities and concerns for economic development in the County. Some critical observations were drawn from these interviews:

- 1) There are multiple agencies, businesses and organizations involved in economic development. These include community and downtown groups, the Chamber of Commerce, the Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation (which owns and maintains the Mifflin County Industrial park), the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau, the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department and several other private and public entities. Each has a distinct mission and Team Mifflin County, as an umbrella organization, has served to internally coordinate activities at a board level. Nonetheless, there is much more that can be done to link programs, coordinate staff activities and convey a united image to the public, using Team Mifflin County as the focus.
- 2) Economic development efforts tend to be diffused with each entity responsible for a small piece of the program but having no clear understanding of the Countywide priorities. This supports the need for an economic development strategy that sets an overall pattern into which the other efforts can be folded.
- 3) Organizations on the periphery of traditional economic development programs, including workforce training and educational institutions have an especially important role to play in Mifflin County if true progress is to be made in restoring long term employment to the County's displaced manufacturing sector workers. Mifflin County has unusually high levels of manufacturing sector employment that are beneficial in so many respects, yet make it vulnerable to plant closings and labor force downsizings as competition forces improved productivity and some jobs go to Mexico or elsewhere as a result of NAFTA. Education and training initiatives are an essential ingredient in maintaining job opportunities for displaced workers and attracting interest by new businesses in the County's labor force.
- 4) Mifflin County lacks a strong identity as a result of being a very small part of a very large SEDA-COG region. The County, in many ways, has stronger links to the Southern Alleghenies and South Central (Capitol) Regions. It is linked to Juniata, Huntingdon and Perry Counties by the Juniata River and to Centre and Dauphin Counties by Route 322. It is influenced by both Harrisburg and State College, but the ridge and valley topography has limited the quality of highway connections to the outside world. While SEDA-COG is the

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logical partner for most regional planning and development affecting Mifflin County, the County must also maintain institutional relationships with its other neighbors. This is another of the particular challenges facing the County.

From these interviews an organizational matrix was also developed to indicate how those Mifflin County institutions with responsibilities for economic development should work together. This matrix follows:

INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE												
ORGANIZATIONS/FUNCTIONS MATRIX OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MIFFLIN COUNTY												
ORGANIZATION/ FUNCTION	Mifflin County Industrial Dev. Corp.	Mifflin County Commis- sioners	Mifflin County Planning Dept.	Mifflin County 2000	Juniata Valley Chamber of Commerce	Down- town Lewistown	Tourist Promotion Agency	Career- Link (Job Center)	Adult Education/ Job Training	Penn State Outreach	Mifflin- Juniata Career Technology	Mifflin County School District
Coordinate Activity												
General Promotion												
General Marketing												
Grantsmanship/Grant Mgmt.												
State Government Liaison												
Munic. Government Liaison												
Provide Information												
Services to Members												
Site Specific Marketing												
Operate Ind. Park/Plaza												
Acquire/Dev. Sites												
Seminars/Mgmt. Training												
School to Work												
Industry/Educ. Interface												
Formal Education												
Adult Education/Training												
Job Placement/Matching												
Downtown Revitalization												

	LEAD AGENCY
	DIRECT INVOLVEMENT
	INVOLVEMENT LIMITED TO OWN MISSION

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CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDED ACTION PLAN

This Strategy is the culmination of the work of the Mifflin County Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee. It incorporates the suggestions and concepts developed at the Mifflin County Economic Summit in September, 2000. It also responds to the findings of the background analysis undertaken by the Committee as part of its charge to create this Strategy. The Strategy is intended to provide a guide for the permanent organization which replaces this Steering Committee - namely *Team Mifflin County*, which has assembled much additional information of its in a continually updated compendium of economic data on Mifflin County. The goal is to create and maintain a Countywide economic development organizational infrastructure comprised of a public-private partnership that will advance the Goals of this strategy in an effective and harmonious manner. To achieve that goal the following have been adopted by the Steering Committee.

MISSION STATEMENT: *Team Mifflin County* will be the force that unifies the economic development activities of the County's agencies, corporations, organizations and municipalities and propels Mifflin County to sustained growth and economic vitality.

VISION STATEMENT: Mifflin County will be ranked among the best places to live in the Commonwealth within 10 years, based on a growing economy, improved standard of living and high quality of place.

Objective 1: Further the development of Team Mifflin County.

Action 1: Prepare and continually update a business plan for the further development of *Team Mifflin County* as the umbrella organization for economic development in Mifflin County. This is being done.

Action 2: Draft and maintain a set of Bylaws for *Team Mifflin County* that emphasizes its coordinative role and function as the designated point of entry for the County's economic development programs. This has already been accomplished.

Action 3: Solicit continuing resolutions of support and participation in *Team Mifflin County* from all agencies, businesses and organizations concerned with the economic development of Mifflin County. This has already been accomplished.

Objective 2: Set a foundation for continuing economic development.

Action 1: Implement a County marketing strategy that capitalizes on those specific strengths

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identified in this Plan (e.g. low costs off doing business, proximity to metro markets, natural environment).

Action 2: Establish cooperation agreements with Juniata, Huntingdon and other surrounding counties with whom Mifflin County shares direct interests to also share resources and coordinate marketing.

Action 3: Increase communication between the public and private sectors and increase recognition of *Team Mifflin County* as the County's economic development program leader through a widely distributed newsletter and an expanded internet presence.

Action 4: Improve communications with state government through ongoing contacts with both legislators and state departments and offices.

Action 5: Commit significant resources to grantsmanship to assure that all appropriate funding mechanisms are being utilized.

Action 6: Support the efforts of Downtown Lewistown, Inc. and others working to make Lewistown into a vibrant urban center for the County and the region.

Action 7: Work with the County Commissioners, the various municipalities, the Council of Governments, and others, as appropriate, to regionalize services and purchasing to minimize taxes and costs while providing a better than adequate level of service.

Action 8: Encourage proactive planning at all levels of government, especially as such planning relates to quality of life, environmental protection and economic development within the County.

Action 9: Develop a local public relations/media campaign to reduce apathy and promote positive images of the County.

Objective 3: Create a business friendly development climate.

Action 1: Create a Single-Point-of-Contact (SPOC) that will allow businesses, developers, prospective locators, and others with economic development concerns to rapidly and efficiently get the assistance and/or information they need.

Action 2: Provide a tracking mechanism to assure that initial contacts are responded to promptly and efficiently, and that all available assistance is rendered in a courteous and expeditious fashion throughout the development process.

Action 3: Consider the possibility of locating many economic development

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agencies/organizations in a single facility to provide more face-to-face contact among service providers and reduce travel and time concerns of those seeking assistance.

Objective 4: Promote the expansion and retention of local firms.

Action 1: Take a proactive approach to business outreach by increasing frequency of Team Pennsylvania interviews and maintaining a schedule of at least annual contact with all major firms.

Action 2: Provide immediate and thorough follow-up to all requests for assistance generated by the outreach program.

Action 3: Create, with the assistance of local financial institutions, a Venture Capital Fund to help Stage One firms in the County.

Action 4: Utilize the County's GIS system to maintain an inventory of available sites and buildings to assist local firms seeking expansion possibilities.

Action 5: Create a comprehensive information packet for existing local firms to advise them of all economic development assistance possibilities in the County.

Objective 5: Diversify Mifflin County's economy.

Action 1: Develop a marketing package, targeted to growth industries, that stresses marketable competitive advantages such as the County's location with respect to the improving highway system and major economic growth generators such as Penn State.

Action 2: Continuously market the County using the internet, business-to-business contacts and a targeted repeat mailing program.

Action 3: Implement the recommendations of the Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan to further the development of this industry.

Action 4: While attending to the needs of Mifflin County's manufacturing industries, one of its strengths, also pursue the development of other sectors, such as health care and tourism, that will reduce the County's dependence on manufacturing susceptible to foreign competition and productivity pressures.

Objective 6: Direct youth to rewarding careers with local employers.

Action 1: Work with employers and the school district to assure that all programs promoting

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employment within the County, including school to work, career fair and apprenticeship programs, are properly publicized and that all students are encouraged to participate.

Action 2: Develop a mentoring program where local firms each sponsor post-secondary education for local youth who will then be offered employment.

Action 3: Revitalize and expand existing apprenticeship programs and begin new ones as necessary.

Action 4: Encourage development of a Mifflin County only vocational/technical program.

Action 5: Strengthen Mifflin County 2000 to improve two-way communication between the School District and local businesses and assure all vocational/technical programs are relevant and timely.

Action 6: Develop a funding mechanism for employers who have specific occupational needs to contribute to the educational costs associated with such training.

Action 7: Work with school officials to improve the image of Mifflin County schools to both residents and outsiders.

Action 8: Support the School Board in all attempts to improve funding for both facilities and educational programs.

Action 9: Work with employers and the school district to assure that all programs promoting employment within the County are properly publicized and that all students are encouraged to participate.

Objective 7: Provide for other employee training needs.

Action 1: Work with area employers to determine specific courses of training needed and the approximate number of trainees for each.

Action 2: Attempt to locate a technical college in the County.

Action 3: Explore possible NAFTA related funding opportunities for retraining local workers.

Action 5: Support expansion of Penn State Outreach and Continuing Education programs in the County.

Objective 8: Improve and expand municipal utility systems.

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Action 1: Develop a conditions and capacities analysis for all existing systems and identify critical development bottlenecks.

Action 2: Support municipalities and authorities in their requests for funding to upgrade and expand utility systems.

Objective 9: Assure state-of-the-art telecommunications capacity.

Action 1: Continue to monitor the existing state of telecommunications infrastructure by establishing working relationships with local providers of services.

Action 2: Determine the telecommunications needs of all companies and agencies in the County and work with service providers to assure those needs are met in a timely manner.

Objective 10: Improve the quality of the highway network.

Action 1: Actively lobby for the completion of US 322 as a four-lane limited access highway connecting with the State College Bypass and I-99.

Action 2: Work with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to plan and implement improvements to US 22 from Lewistown to Mount Union.

Objective 11: Identify land suitable for business development.

Action 1: Utilize the County's GIS system to maintain an inventory of available sites and buildings to assist local firms seeking expansion possibilities.

Action 2: Consider the possibility of developing a land bank through the acquisition of selected properties as they become available in order to qualify for SelectSites status.

Objective 12: Promote land use planning for balanced growth.

Action 1: Encourage municipalities to cooperatively enforce building codes by providing technical assistance where needed to organize such efforts.

Action 2: Encourage municipalities to employ common elements in zoning and subdivision ordinances by using County Planning and Development Department models as starting points.

Action 3: Support projects to restore and make accessible the Mainline Canal and other historic

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resources, by taking an active role on the committees responsible.

Objective 13: Identify and protect natural and historic resources.

Action 1: Encourage the appropriate organizations to undertake and publicize inventories of natural areas and historic resources.

Action 2: Partner with conservation and preservation organizations to protect historic and natural resources and use grantsmanship capabilities to acquire state and federal funding for these purposes.

Action 3: Encourage municipalities with important farmlands to consider increasing the real estate transfer tax by referendum to purchase the development rights of farmers willing to commit their land to agricultural purposes.

Objective 14: Further develop cultural and recreational assets.

Action 1: Improve access to the Juniata River and make facilities more amenable for recreation and sport.

Action 2: Continuously inventory all recreational facilities and tourism attractions in the County and use this information as a tool to increase tourism and implement the Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan.

Action 3: Solicit public input on possible cultural/social amenities that should be created or enhanced (e.g. a community orchestra, dance company).

Objective 15: Develop housing to accommodate new industry.

Action 1: Work with the County Planning and Development Department to develop model planned unit development ordinance provisions that will encourage mixed use and mixed income residential developments.

Action 2: Utilize the County's GIS system to select potential sites for moderate to upscale housing based on existing demographic trends and develop a marketing concept to sell these to potential developers.

Action 3: Encourage public/private partnerships to develop more rental housing at rates that are affordable for working persons.

Action 4: Work with the Housing Authority and financial institutions to encourage the

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development of a First Time Homebuyer program for young families and moderate income households.

Major Recommendations

Certain major recommendations have also been developed, including the following:

- 1) **Launch a sustained campaign to market the comparative advantages, identified in this Plan, that the County and Central Pennsylvania region possess over other Northeast and U.S. regions.** Such marketing should be built upon a foundation of regional promotion strategies so as to take advantage of the additional resources available at that level. Regional partnerships focused on particular needs or opportunities will ensure the capacity to document additional comparative advantages through industry specific studies demonstrating, for instance, why Central Pennsylvania is the place to be for machinery manufacturers.

The marketing should incorporate an Internet presence, but also utilize traditional techniques of multiple exposure contacts to create "top of mind awareness" and target corporate officers with personal interests in the County or region. The County should be marketed, both internally and externally, using consistent themes that join together the efforts of the multiple entities with responsibility for the economic development of the County and region. The "Discover Our Good Nature" tourism theme will help to promote general business development but needs to be linked to a regional brand image to be truly effective.

- 2) **Establish a single electronic point of contact under the Team Mifflin County banner for prospective new businesses seeking economic development assistance.** The goal should be to create a "no wrong door" approach to meeting the needs of industries interested in doing business in Mifflin County - that is to say any customer who approaches any economic development partner will be assured of being directed to the agency that can best serve that customer. Reducing duplication of effort by existing agencies and eliminating public confusion regarding their respective roles can be accomplished by dividing responsibility by function (e.g. development, financing and business retention and expansion) and using Team Mifflin County as the County's "economic cabinet" to coordinate efforts.

Creating additional levels of bureaucracy and decision making should, however, be avoided in favor of more coordination among existing providers. A Team Mifflin County website should be used to create an electronic network among economic development partners and offer a single place where interested businesses can go as a first step to avail themselves of information and assistance. It should; a) convey a highly professional image that demonstrates Mifflin County is ready to do business, b) include all the principal partners,

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and c) direct customers, by means of user-friendly interactive website features, to the specific services they require and the economic development partners who can best deliver them.

- 3) **Utilize venture capital and secondary financing funds to assist growing firms attracted to the County or already located within it.** There are a number of revolving loan funds available to the County and region through SEDA-COG, the Pennsylvania Venture Capital Fund (a Ben Franklin Partnership spin-off), the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and other sources. These need to be harnessed for Mifflin County by incorporation into a single descriptive brochure/website and extensive promotion as sources of “patient” and venture capital on a subordinate basis.

There is also a need for some additional such capital for agricultural, tourism and other small service businesses. The County should apply for CDBG or similar funds to establish some such subordinate financing in the form of a revolving loan fund for these particular categories of businesses. The Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (www.lehighvalley.org/financing.html) offers an excellent model known as the “Small Business First.” It provides low-interest loans to small businesses of 100 employees or less for land and building acquisition, construction, and machinery and equipment purchases. Certain small businesses such as restaurants, hotels and motels are targeted for some of this money. The maximum loan amount is \$200,000, the interest rate is 5 percent and companies must agree to create or preserve jobs as a condition of financing. Sullivan County, New York offers an agribusiness revolving loan fund of similar description.

- 4) **Complete a link to Route I-99 to connect Mifflin County to the interstate highway system.** Mifflin County needs outlets to both the north (I-80) and south (I-81 and I-83) to connect to the Interstate highway system. Absent such links, Mifflin County cannot hope to attract transportation dependent industry to the region. Better links to the east (U.S. Routes 11 and 15) and west (I-76) via Routes 22 and 522 are also needed. The most critical link, however, is to the new I-99 highway. Alternative routings of a Route 322 connection to I-99 are being studied. There are advantages to both approaches. Routing via the State College direction, for instance, would serve Mifflin County’s interests by increasing the ties to the State College area and enhancing the quality of life for business owners wishing to locate in the County.

Additional study may be required to determine the best routing for Mifflin County but, as soon as possible, the County should take a definitive position on the routing and engage in a sustained effort to advance that choice. Completing the connection is essential to economic development. The County should document its position on the routing with as much supporting data as can be accumulated and assemble it into an effective package with which to lobby agencies and legislators to move this project ahead as rapidly as possible.

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- 5) **Develop and adopt a Mifflin County Infrastructure Improvements Plan.** Mifflin County needs to supplement its 2000 Comprehensive plan (“Paths and Bridges”) with a detailed analysis and fund-raising plan for meeting the specific infrastructure needs of the County. Chapters 6, 13 and 16 of the County Comprehensive Plan properly address Community Facilities, Services and Transportation, documenting most of the needs and the general plans for addressing them. Chapter 19 lays out a good overview of funding sources. However, the Comprehensive Plan does not identify specific funding sources in most instances or lay out a capital budgeting program for ensuring those infrastructure needs are met in a timely manner. This is beyond the scope of a typical comprehensive plan.

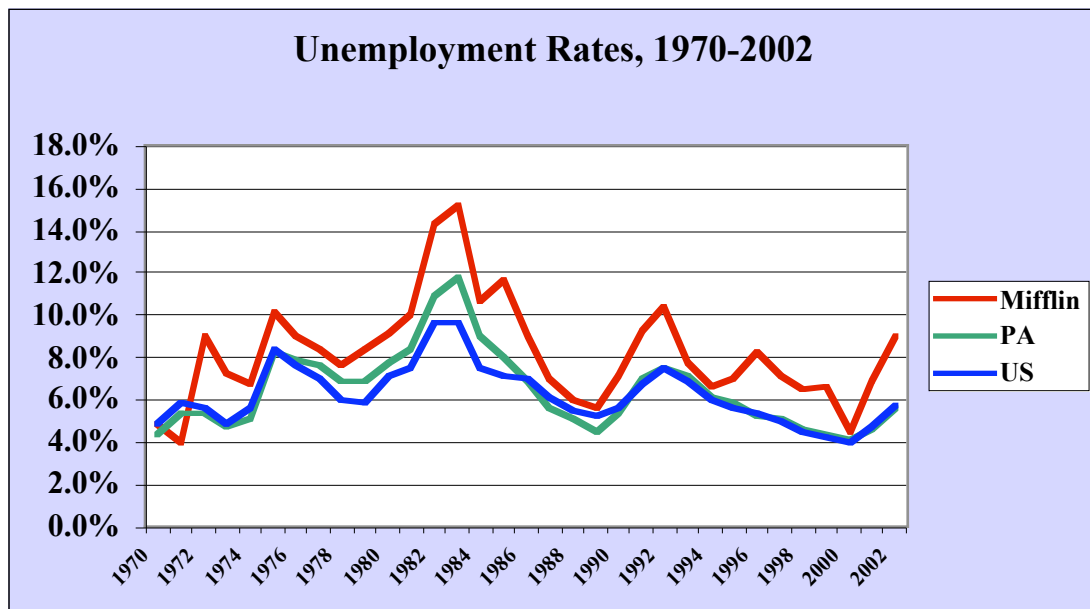
Municipal capital improvements financing plans are provided for in a separate article of the Municipalities Planning Code (Article V-A). Counties are prevented from directly using this authority to impose impact fees as methods of financing improvements but municipalities can rely upon the County Comprehensive Plan as a foundation for their own capital improvements planning. Counties do have authority under the County Code (Section 512) to do such budgeting, however, and, of course, municipal authorities are able to finance projects with revenue bonds and mortgages. A Countywide capital improvements plan, therefore, should anticipate that entities other than the County itself may be most appropriate vehicles for implementation. It should prioritize the infrastructure and service needs earlier identified, specify funding sources and methods, lay out a timeline for implementation and assign responsibility for project management on a coordinated basis. The County should take the lead in organizing the effort but responsibility for implementation of the budgeting plans must necessarily rest with the individual entities possessing the authority to raise and utilize the funding required. This may involve a combination of the County, individual municipalities, municipal authorities and others.

- 6) **Mifflin County should work with Juniata County to develop an informal local “college without walls” relying upon the resources of existing educational institutions but using an umbrella organization such as Team Mifflin County to jointly promote the workforce training opportunities available locally and regionally.** Addressing workforce issues is a key to Mifflin County’s economic development. There are resources available through the Pennsylvania State University, South Hills Business School, job training programs and other institutions that should be coordinated and linked for purposes of promotion to the business community. High schools also need to be involved and new programs, particularly of a vocational and technical, must be added. The first step, however, should be to establish an educational task force under Team Mifflin County to pull providers together for purposes of promotion, following this with coordinated attempts to fill the educational gaps that exist. Another of those gaps is business entrepreneurship training.
- 7) **Mifflin County should specifically attempt to develop or recruit new businesses that**

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will serve to diversify its economy and establish a broader base less susceptible to the ups and downs of the manufacturing sector. The County is fortunate to have as much manufacturing as it has. These jobs have delivered reasonably good salaries and benefits over many years. The County also has a labor force well suited to manufacturing employment. It should receive continuing attention as a mainstay of the local economy. The importance of diversification is, nonetheless, self-evident. Too much dependence on any one sector does not allow the County to weather recessions well, as a review of unemployment statistics reveals.

The chart following vividly illustrates how Mifflin County, which has always had below average income levels, also has suffered from wider swings in unemployment levels during economic slowdowns. Since 1971, the last time the County had an unemployment rate less than the Commonwealth or nation, it has experienced dramatic increases in joblessness at the beginning of each recession, followed by slow recoveries that have failed in every instance to completely catch up with state and national trends before repeating.



While rural counties typically recover from recessions more slowly than urban centers, they do not necessarily exhibit the steep increases in unemployment at the outset of these periods that Mifflin County has faced. The heavy dependence on manufacturing, typically the first sector to feel the effects of recession, is very likely the explanation for this pattern. It confirms the importance of diversification. The County needs to pursue additional opportunities that will, without detracting from manufacturing, provide a broader based economy.

There are opportunities in tourism, for example, that are highlighted in the Juniata River

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Valley Tourism Plan. Attracting and developing tourism businesses, therefore, needs to be a priority in targeted marketing pursued by the County. Smaller manufacturing enterprises that demand craftsman positions (e.g. tool and die, small metal fabrication) and whose owners are likely to find Mifflin County an attractive place to live are also good candidates. Finally, data assembled by the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corp. indicates employment in the healthcare cluster (other than health care related manufacturing) made up almost 13.44% of total employment of Mifflin County in 2000. More importantly, between 1995 and 2000 health care cluster employment grew 3.48% while total employment in Mifflin County dropped by 1.8%. Working with health care providers to pursue additional opportunities, therefore, needs to also be a priority for the County.

There are numerous other examples, of course, but the central need is taking a diversified approach to economic development that tackles opportunities beyond attracting larger manufacturing enterprises. Focused four-step contact programs directed at smaller tool and die companies found throughout the greater metropolitan area who would benefit by Mifflin's labor force, quality of place, proximity to Penn State University and easy access to East Coast cities, should be pursued. Incentives for tourism business development should be created, ranging from easier access to financing to technical assistance support. Partnerships with health care institutions should be established to pursue individual projects with promise to make Mifflin County a niche services provider in the sector. Again, quality of place and access to Penn State can serve as marketable competitive advantages. Cultivation of these niche opportunities may also support further development of small health care related manufacturing enterprises as the following table illustrates.

MIFFLIN COUNTY HEALTHCARE CLUSTER STATISTICS		
	Without Medical Manufacturing	With Medical Manufacturing
Employment (2000)	2201	2,782
Employment Growth (1995-2000)	3.48%	4.59%
Average Annual Wage (2000)	\$26,949	\$29,639
Location Quotient (LQ)	1.5	1.88
Location Quotient Change (1995 –2000)	9.49%	10.59%
Total Cluster Growth (1995-2000)	74	122
Percent of Area Employment	13.44%	16.98%

Source: Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corp.

These major recommendations should serve as the operating agenda for Team Mifflin County going forward. Evolving circumstances will, naturally, require that they be continually evaluated

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and updated. Some opportunities will fade and new ones will appear. The key is to move forward with a positive but realistic vision of Mifflin County, communicating that vision both internally and externally in images, words and actions.