

Shenango Valley Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plans Project—

Progress To Date (12/01/2006)

Four potential consultants for the project were asked to make presentations to a six member Proposal Review Committee (one member per municipality) in early September, 2005. Upon completion of the presentations, the firm of Spotts, Stevens and McCoy, Inc. (SSM) of Reading, PA was selected as the consultant. Two multi-municipal comprehensive plans are being developed: one will cover West Middlesex Borough and Shenango Township, while the other will cover the Cities of Farrell, Hermitage and Sharon and the Borough of Wheatland. SSM was placed under contract with the Mercer County Regional Planning Commission in mid-November, 2005. The grant period is set to expire in July of 2007. The consultant will be paid a total of \$75,000 for the project through a Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) grant from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development. A \$25,000 in-kind match is being provided by the MCRPC.

In December of 2005 the MCRPC staff began to carry out all necessary land use field reviews, housing condition reviews and the basic demographic analyses in order to satisfy part of the \$25,000 match. This work was completed in early summer 2006. SSM staff began their review of multiple local documents, ordinances, maps and studies in December in order to coordinate and link the developing plans with existing data.

Municipal officials from the six municipalities within the project area appointed local residents to serve on two steering committees in order to provide input during the development of these plans. The first meeting of the steering committees was held on January 30, 2006 in order to review the project work plan and to agree to a tentative meeting schedule. An extended visioning workshop was held with the steering committees in late March, and a public visioning session was held in late April (See Public Meeting Exercise Results). Since that session, four more meetings have been held with the steering committees, resulting in the development of draft vision statements, community goals and objectives and broad implementation strategies. In addition, SSM has developed drafts of the Future Land Use Maps for the two plans. These maps are under review and will be further refined over the next several months. Additional public input will be sought on a regular basis as these plans are developed. The next public meeting will be scheduled for the last week of January. The date has not yet been selected. Citizen input is encouraged throughout the plan development process, and further public meetings will be held in the spring.