Consistency, Interrelationships, and Regional Impact

As mandated by Section 301(a)(5) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), comprehensive plans must discuss the relationship of the existing and proposed development of the county to the existing and proposed plans in contiguous municipalities. The intent of this requirement is to support planning consistency and coordination along municipal boundaries. Sound comprehensive planning fully recognizes that municipal boundaries are not physical, social, economic or environmental constraints to the impacts of development and conservation.

The MPC also requires that a county comprehensive plan "identify current and proposed land uses that have a regional impact and significance, such as large shopping centers, major industrial parks, mines and related activities, office parks, storage facilities, large residential developments, regional entertainment and recreational complexes, hospitals, airports and port facilities." (Section 301(a)(7)(ii)).

This chapter addresses the consistency of the Mercer County Comprehensive Plan with the comprehensive plans of the surrounding counties, as well as with the regional planning areas within the county. The interrelationships among the various functional elements of the plan are also discussed. Finally, projects that meet or have the potential to meet the criteria for Developments of Regional Impact or DRIs are identified.

Consistency with Surrounding Counties

Mercer County is bordered by Lawrence and Butler Counties to the south, Venango County to the east, Crawford County to the north and Trumbull and Mahoning Counties in Ohio to the west. Each of the Pennsylvania counties has a comprehensive plan, although Venango County's plan is somewhat outdated. Comprehensive plans for the Ohio counties were not available at the time of this writing; however, a review of their websites and those of the Chambers of Commerce provided some insight to current and potential future developments.

Crawford County Comprehensive Plan, 1990

Crawford County completed their comprehensive plan in 1990 and during 2005 will begin preparing an update. The land use goals and objectives outlined in the 1990 plan included achieving consistency between local and county level land use decisions, preserving natural and cultural resources, along with the county's rural character. The future land use map indicates that uses along the border with Mercer County – predominantly agriculture/rural – are consistent with Mercer County's plan. In addition, no major transportation improvements or sewer and water expansions are planned in the vicinity, thus helping to limit potential development.

Butler County Comprehensive Plan, 1997

Phase I of the County of Butler's Comprehensive Plan was completed in 1997. This phase provided the necessary background information to begin developing an overall plan. Phase II outlines the proposed action plans for the county. Butler County has traditionally abstained from intervening in local affairs, but has completed this phase in order to meet its MPC obligations. The Concept Plan is the equivalent of a future land use plan and is generally consistent with Mercer County, with the adjacent land designated as "rural with high growth potential".

Slippery Rock Township in Butler County borders Mercer County. Their future land use map indicates that the vast majority of the border area will fall into the public/semi-public, Agriculture, Conservation and Low Density Residential uses. The only exception is along the PA 258 corridor out of Slippery Rock Borough, which is designated as industrial, which may have a negative impact in the form of development pressure on the agricultural areas in Mercer County along the border. The township has also adopted a zoning ordinance and a subdivision and land development ordinance to further guide new development.

Venango County Land Use Plan, 1988

The Future Land Use Map for Venango County is also consistent with that of Mercer County. Land uses along this border are either agricultural or rural, with recommendations for residential areas in the boroughs.

Lawrence County Comprehensive Plan, 2004

Lawrence County updated their comprehensive plan in 2004. However, as of this writing, the land use information was unavailable.

Consistency with Regional Planning Efforts

A number of regional plans have been completed or are in progress throughout Mercer County. Consistency with these plans has been achieved through a variety of methods, including review of the final plans, the direct involvement of the Regional Planning Commission, and the inclusion of each plan's future land use map within the County's Plan.

Plan Review

Five multi-municipal planning efforts have been undertaken in Mercer County, encompassing 22 municipalities. They are:

- The Greenville Borough/Hempfield Township Joint Comprehensive Plan, 2004
- The Lakeview Region Comprehensive Plan, 2002
- The Mercer Region Multi-municipal Plan, 2005
- Wolf Creek/Slippery Rock Creek Council of Governments Comprehensive Plan, 2005
- Sharpsville Region Multi-municipal Comprehensive Plan, 2005

In addition, the municipalities of the Shenango Valley area have organized to begin work on another set of joint comprehensive plans.

Although the specifics were slightly different for each region, there are several common themes that emerged. These included protection of community character, revitalization of core downtown areas, and guiding growth to areas with adequate infrastructure. Thus, many of the recommendations found within each planning area reflect similar approaches to community improvement. Each plan is generally consistent with the County Plan, yet provides more specific, local level recommendations, particularly with regard to the Future Land Use recommendations.

Consistency Guidelines

Based on the provisions of Section 301.4(b) of the PA Municipalities Planning Code, county planning commissions are required to: "publish advisory guidelines to promote general consistency with the adopted county comprehensive plan". According to the Municipalities Planning Code, these guidelines shall promote uniformity with respect to local planning and zoning terminology and common types of municipal land use regulations." With this provision in the MPC it is important that the county establish guidance that will promote general consistency among the municipalities in Mercer County with the County Comprehensive plan.

There are several methods to accomplish this as provided for in the MPC, including

- Model Ordinances
- Common Zoning Classifications and Guidelines
- Design Guidelines
- Zoning/Land Use Checklist
- A glossary of common terms

Model Ordinances

The Mercer County Regional Planning Commission has developed "Greener Visions" Making Smart Growth Options Work in Mercer County: A Technical Guide for Municipal Officials with Model Ordinance Text. These model ordinances were developed to promote smart growth zoning and subdivision/land development options and guidance to local municipalities in Mercer County. They are intended to support Growing Greener planning in Pennsylvania, as well as provide for consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan's key goal of achieving a county wide smart growth and development policy as outlined in Chapter 3 of the plan.

Model ordinances include:

- **Conservation Design Overlay District** Use of a zoning district that will achieve consistency with conservation design principles.
- Conservation Subdivision Option Provides subdivision/land development guidance that is consistent with the conservation design overlay district.
- **Planned Residential District** Provides general guidance for development of a Planned Residential District.
- Traditional Neighborhood Development This model is intended for municipalities to use to implement Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) as provided in the 2000 amendments to the PA Municipalities Planning Code.

Use and implementation of these model ordinances by local municipalities will assist in promoting the consistency envisioned in the Municipalities Planning Code and in the Mercer County Comprehensive Plan.

Common Zoning Classifications

Local municipalities retain the control and jurisdiction over the development, enactment and enforcement of zoning regulations. However, local governments are increasingly aware that any planning and zoning decisions made by the municipality will have regional impacts. The development of clear and consistent land use regulations based on regional goals and objectives will allow local projects to achieve consistency with the regional and county wide planning vision. This is currently difficult to achieve in a regulatory environment where zoning ordinances are inconsistent with one another and where other municipalities do not have any zoning regulations. Consistent regulations and terminologies will link land use regulations to county-wide and regional comprehensive plans to assist in achieving planning goals and objectives.

The Mercer County Regional Planning Commission should develop a system of common zoning categories that can be utilized by municipalities county-wide when amending their current ordinances or developing new zoning ordinances. These common zoning categories would include guidance information such as zoning districts, minimum lot sizes, and set backs that could be used for areas with or without public utilities. The zoning guidance should be based upon common elements found in current zoning ordinances and then expanded for common application in municipalities county wide.

The benefits of common zoning classifications include:

- Supports the implementation of regional and county-wide goals and objectives from both the county comprehensive plan and multi-municipal plans.
- Fosters intergovernmental cooperation.
- Facilitates efficient decision making.
- Provides a foundation for local municipalities to development and implement regional zoning districts.
- Provides predictability and consistency in municipal land use regulations.

Design Guidelines

The Mercer County Comprehensive Plan includes a section "Visualizing Future Land Uses – A Design Guide for Mercer County's Land Use Plan." This guidance document was prepared to assist municipal officials in visualizing land use recommendations and providing guidance for improvements they may wish to undertake in their local planning work. The Design Guide is organized around eight future land use categories, which promote consistency with the Future Land Use Plan in the Mercer County Comprehensive Plan. These land use categories include:

- Economic Revitalization Areas
- Neighborhood Revitalization Areas
- Mixed Use Growth Areas
- Economic Growth Areas
- Urban/Suburban Preservation Areas
- Community Gateways
- Natural Resource Production Areas
- Natural Resource Protection Areas

Implementation of design guidance in each of these areas will provide for improvement of Mercer County communities and provide general consistency between the goals and objectives of the Mercer County Comprehensive Plan and the efforts of local municipalities in the County.

Consistency Checklist

The following checklist provides guidance to both the Mercer County Regional Planning Commission and to local municipalities to promote consistency between local planning and decision making and the recommendations and strategies of the Mercer County Comprehensive Plan. The Mercer County Regional Planning Commission should adopt and use this checklist or a similar document to review and comment upon major planning actions/decisions and their consistency or inconsistency with the Mercer County Comprehensive Plan.

Consistency Checklist

	The state of the s
Item	Comment
Zonings/Rezoning	Are proposed zonings/rezonings consistent with the future land use plan?
Adjacent Land Use/Zoning	Are proposed zonings/rezonings consistent with adjacent future land use plans and recommendations?
Public Utilities - Sewer and Water	Are development proposals consistent with proposed public sewer and water service areas?
Natural Resources	Does the proposed plan protect environmentally sensitive areas as identified in the comprehensive plan or by state/federal agencies?
Park and Recreation Facilities	Are proposed park and recreation facilities/plans consistent with the comprehensive plan and do they meet the needs of current and future residents of the County?
Greenways	Will greenways proposals or plans meet the guidance and requirements of the Mercer County Greenways/Open Space Plan?
Development of Regional Impacts	Ensure their consistency with the overall Comprehensive Plan and the individual considerations on this Consistency Checklist.
Transportation Improvements	Is the proposal consistent with the Mercer County Transportation Plan?
Downtown Revitalizations	Does it provide for the protection of historic properties? Have the Design Guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan been considered?
Funding Applications – State/Federal	Are funding requests for state/federal planning and community improvement funds consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan?
Neighborhood	Have the Design Guidelines in the
Plans/Improvements	Comprehensive Plan been considered?
Housing	Does the proposal provide for a suitable variety of residential types that will meet affordability requirements?

Land Use Terminologies

The Mercer County Regional Planning Commission should develop a list of consistent terminologies for both municipal zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances. They would provide standards and consistency from one municipality to another and would support the Common Zoning Classifications outlined earlier.

Interrelationships of the Planning Elements

The matrices on the following pages highlight the interrelationships among the various planning elements. This is accomplished by summarizing the possible extent of impact that the highest priority strategies might have on the key issues that have been identified in Mercer County. For further clarity, the following examples of the interrelationships among the plan elements are provided.

- The policy of coordinated land use and utilities planning invites development to desired areas.
- The policy of encouraging locally relevant ordinances and the use of conservation design techniques strengthens the land use plan, as well as the community facilities and service policies of the plan.
- Efforts to increase housing diversity benefit the County by providing greater options in terms of housing type and value, expanding the community's socio-economic and socio-cultural breadth and depth.
- Economic development incentives stimulate community vitality and support for cultural activities and events.
- The strategy of education and training programs integrated with the larger community strengthens the economic policy of developing a trained, flexible, and locally employable workforce.
- Economic development is strengthened by promoting the County's historic and cultural resources, as well as its rural recreational opportunities, through tourism activities.
- Commercial, industrial, and residential development is encouraged to take place near areas serviced by existing infrastructure, resulting in greater efficiency and effectiveness of community service delivery and management.
- Preservation of the County's agricultural lands, open spaces and sensitive environmental resources will allow the continued enjoyment of the area's recreational opportunities, scenic landscapes, and sensitive flora and fauna.
- Utilities service planning and management are needed to protect natural resource quality, e.g. water quality from failing septic systems, and manage regional water supplies and the draw down rates of wells.

				K	(ey Issu	es in Mer	cer Count	ty				
HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES	Lack of reinvestment in housing and neighborhood amenities	Affordable Housing	Government Fragmentation	Funding for Infrastructure	County-wide Land Use Vision	Lack of Sense of Community	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land	Water Quality	Proactive Transportation Planning	Multimodal alternatives	Workforce Training	Economic Development
Land Use Strategies							•					
Work closely with local municipal officials to prioritize revitalization projects and identify funding sources.	х	x	X	X	Х	X	х		х	x		х
Review municipal zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances to identify provisions that may be viewed as disincentives to revitalization efforts.	х	x	х		х	x		х		х		х
Implement the recommendations of the GIS Needs Assessment Report completed by GeoDecisions in January 2004, including the identification of additional uses of GIS Data.		x		х	х		х	х	х	х	х	
Adopt the updated Mercer County Comprehensive Plan, including the new Future Land Use Map.	х	х	x	х	х	x	Х	х	Х	х	х	х
Evaluate Growth Target areas and other elements of the future land use map in relation to the availability of existing infrastructure on a regular basis.		х		x	X	x	x	х	X			х

					Key Issues	-	in Mercer County	_				
HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES	Lack of reinvestment in housing and neighborhood amenities	Affordable Housing	Government Fragmentation	Funding for Infrastructure	County-wide Land Use Vision	Lack of Sense of Community	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land	Water Quality	Proactive Transportation Planning	Multimodal alternatives	Workforce Training	Economic Development
Coordinate with sewer and water systems officials to ensure that system expansions are consistent with future land use policies.		×	*	×	*			×				×
Encourage a mix of residential and commercial uses in the County's boroughs and cities.	×	×		×	×	×	×	×	×	×		×
Encourage the development or update of local comprehensive plans and continue to assist with funding applications.	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Identify existing Brownfields sites that meet the needs of target industries identified in the Economic Target Location Assessment Study completed in March 2004.				×	×	×	*					×
Provide local municipal officials with Model Ordinances as tools for managing land development.		×		×	×	×	×	×				×
Adopt the draft County Subdivision/Land Development Ordinance (December 2001).	×	×	×		×	×	×	×	×	×		

				K	(ey Issue	es in Merc	er Count	у				
HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES	Lack of reinvestment in housing and neighborhood amenities	Affordable Housing	Government Fragmentation	Funding for Infrastructure	County-wide Land Use Vision	Lack of Sense of Community	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land	Water Quality	Proactive Transportation Planning	Multimodal alternatives	Workforce Training	Economic Development
Community Facilities and Services Strategies					l l							
Coordinate with the 911 Office to encourage the development and updating of Hazard Mitigation plans throughout the County.			X	X		х						
Encourage consistency between water and sewer infrastructure investments and the growth management policies indicated on the Mercer County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.	х	Х	х	х	Х	Х	х	х	Х			х
Support the updating/expansion of water infrastructure capacity in the following locations: Fredonia, Jamestown Borough, West Middlesex, and areas of Greenville. Other areas have also been identified and could be considered; however, first priority should be given to areas that are consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.	X	х	x	x	х	x		X				Х

				ŀ	Key Issu	es in Mer	cer Count	у				
HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES	Lack of reinvestment in housing and neighborhood amenities	Affordable Housing	Government Fragmentation	Funding for Infrastructure	County-wide Land Use Vision	Lack of Sense of Community	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land	Water Quality	Proactive Transportation Planning	Multimodal alternatives	Workforce Training	Economic Development
Support the development of a community based source water protection plan to safeguard public drinking water supply from wells. Specifically target those areas that have been identified in the PADEP Source Water Assessment and Protection Reports in 2002, particularly the "critical area" that has been identified in the Shenango River watershed.	х		х	х	X		х	x				
Expand capacity at the following sewage treatment facilities to meet projected demands: Grove City Borough, Mercer Borough, Coolspring Township, Sandy Lake Township, City of Hermitage, and the City of Sharon.	х		х	х	х	х		х				х
Consider developing a model On-lot Management District Ordinance. The ordinance would specifically state what existing and proposed land uses within the municipality should be serviced by on-lot septic systems and would comply with Act 537 plans.			х		х		x	х				
Work with municipalities to update stormwater regulations to adequately address water quality as required by government agencies.	Х		х	x	х		Х	x				х

				ř	(ey Issue	es in Mer	cer Count	у				
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Develop a plan review checklist to address stormwater management and incorporate the checklist into MCRPC and local plan reviews.								Х				
Implement Mercer County's Act 101 Solid Waste Management Plan.			Х					Х				х
Support the County's recycling goal through the Countywide Recycling Depot System.			х	х		х						
Natural Resources Strategies												
Implement a GIS/MIS program to supplement current and future planning and development activities with a countywide spatial database of natural resources, including surface waters, wetlands, floodplains, geologic formations, and soils, and recommended protection measures.		X			х		X	х				
Adopt and implement the Mercer County Open Space, Greenway, and Rural Recreation Plan.					x		х	х	х			х
Promote innovative subdivision and land development procedures, land use management practices, and resource protection techniques.	Х	x			х	Х	х	х	X	х		х

				K	key Issue	es in Mer	cer Count	у				
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Establish a date/mileage target for removing stream segments from the DEP Integrated List of All Waters (formerly 303(d) list f impaired waters).								х				
Establish a Landowner Outreach Team(s) of agriculture, forestry, planning and local government representatives to interface with local landowners to educate them and answer questions on conservation programs, techniques, benefits, etc.			x		x	x	x	х				х
Cultural Resources Strategies												
Identify and market historic sites as redevelopment opportunities. Offer incentives for historic site rehabilitation.	x	Х			х	X						х
Housing Strategies Identify local issues and concerns, including property maintenance and code enforcement.	X	х			x	Х						Х
Work with Mercer County residential real estate professionals and developers to identify gaps in the current housing market and develop a strategy to fill them.	x	X			Х	Х						х

				K	key Issue	es in Mer	er Count	у				
HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES	Lack of reinvestment in housing and neighborhood amenities	Affordable Housing	Government Fragmentation	Funding for Infrastructure	County-wide Land Use Vision	Lack of Sense of Community	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land	Water Quality	Proactive Transportation Planning	Multimodal alternatives	Workforce Training	Economic Development
Identify areas in Mercer County for new housing, including infill locations, that are consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Plan and supported by current or planned infrastructure.		х		х	х			х	х	х		х
Identify and prioritize specific housing rehabilitation opportunities in existing neighborhoods throughout Mercer County, especially in the urbanized areas of the Shenango Valley, Greenville, Grove City and Mercer.	х	x	x	X	x	X	x					х
Promote the development of alternative housing types (e.g., upper level loft apartments) in the downtown areas of Sharon and Farrell to attract people back to the city centers and help to restore economic energy and health to the downtowns.	Х	х		х	х	х	x		х	Х		х
Adopt land use regulations (zoning/subdivision & land development) that allow for flexible housing development techniques such as cluster/open space, conservation by design, zero lot line, and neo-traditional housing development	х	x	x	x	x	x	x	х	x	X		х

				ŀ	Key Issue	es in Mer	cer Count	у				
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Establish design guidelines for the villages, boroughs and cities in the county that are consistent with the existing character of their streetscapes.	х				х	х	х		Х	х		х
Economic Development Strategies												
Coordinate with Penn-Northwest to advertise local employment opportunities on the website and encourage its use.			X			х					x	х
Promote Penn-Northwest's listing of available economic development sites, particularly those associated with the KOZ, KOEZ, Enterprise Zones, and KIZ programs.	x		x		X		x					x
Explore marketing and promotion activities to nurture the development of new agricultural and forestry related businesses.					х	Х	Х	х	х			х
Encourage exploration of rural niche business markets including, furniture making, antiquing, wineries, organic farming, specialty cheese making, green housing, and others.			х		X	x	х	х	х		x	x
Establish Main Street programs and affiliated Elm Street programs in towns such as Greenville, Mercer, Sharon, Jamestown, and Grove City.	x	x		х	Х	Х	Х		X	X		х

				K	(ey Issue	es in Mer	cer Count	у				
HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES	Lack of reinvestment in housing and neighborhood amenities	Affordable Housing	Government Fragmentation	Funding for Infrastructure	County-wide Land Use Vision	Lack of Sense of Community	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land	Water Quality	Proactive Transportation Planning	Multimodal alternatives	Workforce Training	Economic Development
Seek opportunities to apply the new Keystone Innovation Zones (KIZ) program. Encourage the development of new innovative businesses with university partners such as Grove City College, Thiel College, and Penn State University-Shenango Campus.	х		х	х	X	X					х	Х
Support the efforts of Team Pennsylvania's CareerLink as a networking/partnering resource for job searches and/or job training.			Х			x					Х	х
Update inventories of local business needs regarding employee skill sets and integrate into school and job training curriculum within the County.	x	x	x			x					X	Х
Consider creating a Train-to-Work Committee, in cooperation with Penn-Northwest, to consist of representatives from the universities/colleges, school districts, interested local businesses, and CareerLink. The committee would be charged with fostering public-private partnering between the educational institutions and the local businesses.	x	х	x			х					х	Х

				ř	Key Issue	es in Mer	cer Count	у				
HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES	Lack of reinvestment in housing and neighborhood amenities	Affordable Housing	Government Fragmentation	Funding for Infrastructure	County-wide Land Use Vision	Lack of Sense of Community	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land	Water Quality	Proactive Transportation Planning	Multimodal alternatives	Workforce Training	Economic Development
Identify specific barriers to new business start-ups and develop strategies and incentives to overcome them, e.g, create a revolving loan fund to micro-finance value-added activities that use unique local assets such as recreation, agriculture, natural/historic tourism, etc.	X		x	x		x					X	х
Explore tax-base sharing, revenue sharing, and cost sharing strategies to reduce local competition for new businesses. [Reference the Homestead Waterfront Development revenue sharing formula as a model]			x	x		x	х	X	x	x	x	x
Transportation Strategies (See LRTP for specifics)												
Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Implementation	X		Х	х	X		Х		X	Х		Х
Urban Recreation Strategies												
Establish municipal and/or regional recreation commissions.	X		х	х	Х	X	х	X		X		х
Coordinate public access to school and other community facilities for recreational programs.	Х	х	Х	х	Х	X	Х		Х	Х		х

					Key Issues	s in Merc	in Mercer County					
HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES	Lack of reinvestment in housing and neighborhood amenities	Affordable Housing	Government Fragmentation	Funding for Infrastructure	County-wide Land Use Vision		Lack of Sense of Community	Lack of Sense of Community Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land	Parcelization of forests and	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land Water Quality Proactive Transportation	Parcelization of forests and Agricultural Land Water Quality Proactive Transportation Planning
Prepare and adopt municipal or regional Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plans to aid in identifying recreation issues, needs, policies, and capital investment priorities.	*		×	×	×		×	× ×		*	*	× ×
Review municipal and multi-municipal comprehensive plans and ordinances for consistency with: 1) the 10-acre/1,000 residents guideline; 2) provisions for recreational land dedication and/or fees-in lieu thereof; and 3) recreational facilities planning	×		×	×	×		×	*				

Developments of Regional Impact (DRI)

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code defines "developments of regional significance and impact" as follows:

"Any land development that, because of its character, magnitude, or location will have substantial impact upon the health, safety, or welfare of citizens in more than one municipality."

Examples of DRIs include large residential subdivisions, shopping malls, industrial parks, waste disposal facilities, and major highways. Development impacts may include traffic, noise, light, stormwater runoff, pollutants, open space loss, commercial market encroachment, and/or water/sewer demand.

There are several existing developments in and around Mercer County that meet the definition of a DRI:

- Prime Outlets at Grove City This shopping area currently draws
 customers from the entire northwest region of Pennsylvania, as
 well as the northeast region of Ohio. In addition to the number of
 jobs provided, the development has a major impact on the
 transportation system. Any expansion of the existing facilities
 could have implications for sewer and water infrastructure.
- *Greenville/Reynolds Industrial Parks* As these facilities are occupied, the economic impact would likely expand beyond the immediate area into many of the surrounding communities.
- The Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport's Aeropark This facility is located just west of the Sharon-Farrell-Hermitage area in Vienna, Ohio. This 500 acre, improved site is adjacent to the Regional Airport and is a designated Foreign Trade Zone and Enterprise Zone. It is a major competitor for new economic development.
- Goddard State Park and The Shenango River Lake Recreation Areas –
 These two park areas already attract visitors from across the
 region. In addition, they can be integrated into a comprehensive
 County-wide tourism plan that focuses on outdoor recreation, as
 well as historic and cultural resources.

Due to the diversity of communities in Mercer County, it is difficult to establish a single set of criteria or thresholds that would determine if a proposed development is a DRI. The table on the following page provides general threshold levels that roughly correspond to the comprehensive plan's future land use categories. They are derived from research from other states, as well as the criteria that has been established in the multi-municipal plans completed by the Wolf Creek COG, Greenville Borough and Hempfield Township, and the municipalities of the Mercer Region.

Type of Development	Shenango Valley and other Urban Areas	Boroughs and Older Suburbs	Natural Resource Areas
Office	Greater than 150,000 sq. ft.	Greater than 100,000 sq. ft.	Greater than 50,000 sq. ft.
Commercial	Greater than 150,000 sq. ft.	Greater than 100,000 sq. ft.	Greater than 50,000 sq. ft.
Wholesale and distribution	Greater than 150,000 sq. ft., 100 acres, or creating more than 500 jobs	Greater than 150,000 sq. ft., 100 acres, or creating more than 500 jobs	Greater than 80,000 sq. ft., 100 acres, or creating more than 200 jobs
Hospitals and Health Care Facilities	New facilities or addition of more than 100 new beds	New facilities or addition of more than 100 new beds	New facilities or addition of more than 100 new beds
Housing	Greater than 100 lots or units	Greater than 50 lots or units	Greater than 30 lots or units
Industrial	Greater than 150,000 sq. ft., 100 acres, or creating more than 500 jobs	Greater than 150,000 sq. ft., 100 acres, or creating more than 500 jobs	Greater than 150,000 sq. ft., 100 acres, or creating more than 500 jobs
Hotels	Greater than 250 rooms	Greater than 150 rooms	Greater than 100 rooms
Mixed Use	Gross square feet of greater than 200,000 (residential units calculated at 1,800 sq ft per unit towards total) or covering more than 100 acres, or if any individual use meets or exceeds thresholds described herein.	Gross square feet of greater than 150,000 (residential units calculated at 1,800 sq ft per unit towards total) or covering more than 50 acres, or if any individual use meets or exceeds thresholds described herein.	Not Recommended
Airports	All new facilities, including runway extensions	All new facilities, including runway extensions	All new facilities, including runway extensions
Attractions and Recreational Facilities	Greater than 500 parking spaces or a seating capacity of more than 2,000	Greater than 500 parking spaces or a seating capacity of more than 2,000	Not Recommended
Post Secondary School	New Facilities or expansion by at least 25 percent of capacity	New Facilities or expansion by at least 25 percent of capacity	New Facilities or expansion by at least 25 percent of capacity
Waste Handling Facilities	New facilities or expansion by 50 percent or more	New facilities or expansion by 50 percent or more	New facilities or expansion by 30 percent or more
Quarries, Asphalt and Cement Plants	New facilities or expansion by 50 percent or more	New facilities or expansion by 50 percent or more	New facilities or expansion by 30 percent or more
Wastewater Treatment Facilities	New facilities or expansion by 50 percent or more	New facilities or expansion by 50 percent or more	New facilities or expansion by 30 percent or more
Water Supply Intakes/Reservoirs	New facilities	New facilities	New facilities
Intermodal Terminals	New facilities	New facilities	New facilities

Type of Development	Shenango Valley and other Urban Areas	Boroughs and Older Suburbs	Natural Resource Areas
Truck Stops	New facility with more than three diesel fuel pumps or containing a half acre of truck parking	New facility with more than three diesel fuel pumps or containing a half acre of truck parking	Not Recommended
Any other development types not identified above, including parking facilities.	500 parking spaces or disturbance of more than 100 acres	250 parking spaces or disturbance of more than 100 acres	100 parking spaces or disturbance of more than 100 acres

Sources: www.georgiaplanning.com; Wolf Creek GOG Multi-municipal Plan; Greenville-Hempfield Joint Comprehensive Plan