

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

### Overview

Community facilities and services, as provided by local, county and state government, and by quasi-public institutions such as volunteer fire departments, hospitals and libraries, are most often considered in terms of government or institutional response to meet the needs and demands of the community's residents. As the individual municipal and regional population continues to change the demand for facilities and services will also change. For example, an increasing population may require more classroom space, increased or new police protection, expanded social services, and additional recreation facilities. On the other hand, a stable or declining population, while not requiring additional services, may present a difficulty of paying for existing facilities and services with shrinking tax revenues. This is particularly pertinent to roads which require maintenance regardless of the municipal population. In addition, a change in the composition of the population could require different facilities and services. For example, if the population is aging as a whole, less recreation facilities and more social services may be required.

### Growth and Development

Community facilities and services can also serve as a tool, or as an unexpected trigger, to guide or stimulate community growth and development. Provision of a public water supply or sewage disposal system can be used to foster business development, but unexpected (and perhaps undesired) associated commercial and residential development can result in the area where such facilities are provided. The construction or improvement of highways, often to solve traffic congestion, can have similar effect resulting in even more traffic and a change in community character.

### Planning and Cooperation

The planning and provision of community facilities and services must be undertaken in the overall context of the *Comprehensive Plan* and the community's long-term growth and development goals and objectives. More importantly, the Borough and Township should not act as an island when considering facilities or services, but should cooperate with each other and other local municipal jurisdictions, the school district, and the County to provide and improve facilities and services which are best provided regionally.

### Plan Focus

This section of the *Comprehensive Plan* focuses on those facilities and services which are provided by the two municipalities and the quasi-public institutions, such as fire and ambulance companies, serving the area. Given population increases, the demand for services and facilities provided directly by local municipalities has been continually increasing. For many years in the early history of townships, the main responsibility of the elected officials was maintaining roads, hence the moniker *Road Supervisor*. Boroughs often served as centers for commerce and community activities. In more recent years, state and federal mandates such as sewage disposal regulations, floodplain development requirements, and stormwater management planning, along with the desire to manage development, local municipalities have undertaken land use planning and environmental protection programs.

### Facility and Service Providers

Public community facilities and services in the Milford Planning Area are provided on several levels, and the provision of these facilities and services is dependent on tax dollars, whether in the form of federal and state aid, county supported programs, or locally funded facilities and services. Both public and private funds support institutional facilities and services. Certainly, the facilities and services provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Pike County are vital to Borough and Township residents, but are somewhat beyond the scope of this *Plan*. Nevertheless, County-owned and operated facilities in the Planning Area are discussed in terms of the effect on the community. Should community residents find that state or county facilities or services are inadequate, local municipal officials can serve as a conduit for communication with responsible state and county officials to effect facility and service improvements. In order to provide an overview of the range of facilities and services available in a community, *Facilities and Services Providers Table*, includes a matrix of typical facilities and services which can be provided by various jurisdictions.

### Intermunicipal Cooperation

In recent years, more and more municipalities in the Commonwealth have begun working together on a number of issues and programs. This *Comprehensive*

| <b>TYPICAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES PROVIDERS</b><br>(not specific to Milford / Milford or Pike County) |       |        |        |       |              |
|--|-------|--------|--------|-------|--------------|
| Service  | Local | School | County | State | Quasi-Public |
| Aging Services   |       |        | D      | S, D  |              |
| Domestic Relations   |       |        | D      | S, D  |              |
| Children & Youth   |       |        | D      | S, D  |              |
| Welfare, etc.  |       |        |        | D     |              |
| Education  |       | D      |        | S     |              |
| Parks & Recreation   | S, D  | D      | S, D   | S, D  | D            |
| Judicial   |       |        | D      | S, D  |              |
| Criminal Justice   |       |        | D      | S, D  |              |
| Police Protection  | D     |        | D      | D     |              |
| Emergency Mngt   | D     |        | S, D   | S, D  | D            |
| Roads/Highways   | D     |        | S, D   | S, D  |              |
| Tax Assessment   |       |        | D      |       |              |
| Elections  | D     |        | D      | S, D  |              |
| Land records   |       |        | D      |       |              |
| Libraries, museums   | S, D  | D      | S, D   | S     | D            |
| Fire & Rescue  | S, D  |        | S      | S     | D            |
| Health Care  |       |        | D      | S, D  | D            |
| Utilities  | D     |        | D      |       | D            |
| Land Use Control   | D     |        | D      | S, D  |              |
| Environ Protection   | D     |        | D      | S, D  |              |
| Solid Waste Disposal   | D     |        | S, D   |       |              |

S - provides financial support to other jurisdiction or quasi-public entity  
 D - provides directly to public

*Plan* is a good example of what can be accomplished via cooperation. The provision of community facilities and services offers myriad other opportunities for continued cooperation. Cooperation can result in efficiency of program operation and service delivery, and economies of scale in purchasing of supplies and materials. A council of governments (COG) is the most common type of local municipal organization in the Commonwealth and can, by formal municipal agreement, be used to provide virtually any service or

facility normally provided by an individual municipality. Two examples of COGs in the region are the Lackawanna County GOG and the Abington GOG. The county-wide Lackawanna County COG has been most effective in terms of realizing savings on purchases of materials such as road salt. The Abington COG, with some fourteen member municipalities, meets regularly and has coordinated cable television franchises and the administration of the statewide building code. Township and Borough officials should

fully explore and take advantage of any opportunities to improve facilities and services offered by intermunicipal cooperation.

**Schools**

Although local municipalities have no direct control over school district facilities and activities, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) recognizes the importance of school buildings and land to the community. Public schools account for the largest expenditure of local tax dollars. The public school system not only provides education for a community’s children, but also provides adult and community education, library facilities, cultural and social activities, and recreational and sport facilities for the surrounding communities. The MPC requires school districts to submit certain proposed actions related to land and buildings to the municipality for review if a comprehensive plan has been adopted. (See following sidebar.) Most school districts are not aware of this provision and local municipalities must monitor school district activities and notify school administrators about the requirement.

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|--|
| <b>School Districts<br/>and the<br/>Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code</b>  |
| <i>Section 305. The Legal Status of Comprehensive Plans Within School Districts. Following the adoption of a comprehensive plan . . . , any proposed action of the governing body of any public school district located within the municipality or county relating to the location, demolition, removal, sale or lease of any school district structure or land shall be submitted to the municipal and county planning agencies for their recommendations at least 45 days prior to the execution of such proposed action by the governing body of the school district.</i> |

The Milford Planning Area, along with Matamoras Borough, Delaware Township, Dingman Township, Shohola Township and Westfall Township, is served by the Delaware Valley School District. The District enrolls almost 5,600 students and the Pennsylvania Department of Education projects the enrollment to increase to almost 6,100 by 2010 and to 6,600 by 2014. Because the Department of education does not account for immigration in its projections, these numbers may be low. The District maintains seven school buildings including the elementary, middle and high school along

Route 6/209 in Westfall Township, the primary, elementary, and middle school along Route 739 in Delaware Township, and the elementary school along Twin Lakes Road in Shohola Township. The enrollment projections clearly indicate that there will be a need for more classrooms and staff in the next ten to fifteen years, and additional tax revenues will be required to support the construction of the facilities.

**Township Government**

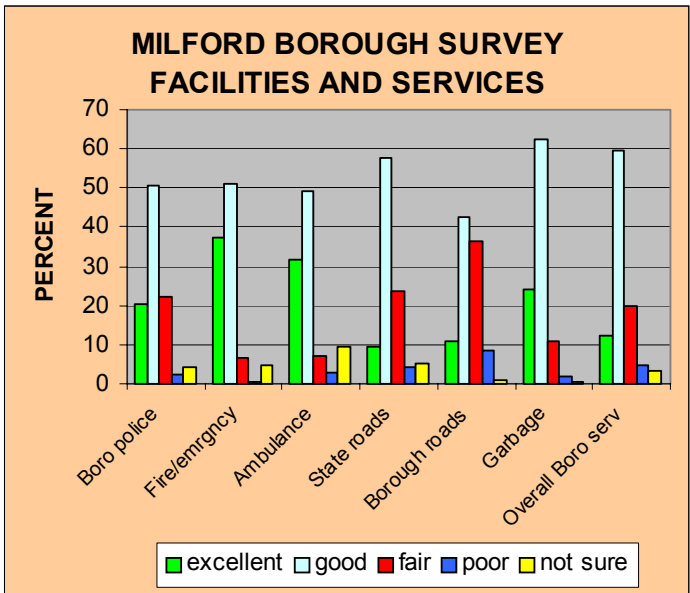
Milford Township is incorporated under state law as a *Township of the Second Class* (a far better moniker than *second class township*). Based on a population density of 300 persons per square mile, township voters can opt for reclassification to a *Township of the First Class*. However, none of the Townships in Pike County have reached this population density. Milford Township is governed by a three-member board of supervisors. State statute provides the option of a five-member board under the home rule system following a ballot referendum supported by a majority of voters. However, relatively few townships have opted for this system, and Westfall Township is the only one in Pike County. The Board of Supervisors appoints township residents to the township planning commission which serves an advisory role to the supervisors. Other volunteer boards may include the zoning hearing board, the parks and recreation commission and the shade tree commission.

**Borough Government**

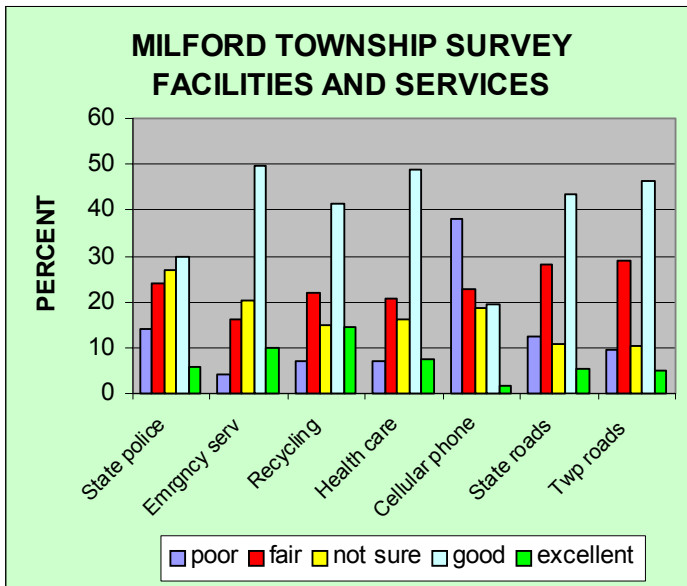
Milford Borough, although incorporated under the Borough Code, operates the same types of programs and provide similar types of facilities as townships. Where boroughs are not divided into wards, seven councillors are elected at large, and this is the case in Milford. Boroughs with a population under 3,000 may reduce the size of council to five or three members by court action, and the Borough Code contains detailed provisions for transition to a different size council. Although the role of the office of mayor has changed considerably over time, with functions formerly performed by borough mayors now assigned to others in borough government under the Borough Code, the office continues to be very important in local government. Even though modern mayors possess less legislative, administrative and judicial powers, they exercise important powers and duties under the Code and are also in a unique position to exercise leadership in the community because of the prestige of the office and its elected status.

**Facilities and Services**

Boroughs and townships in Pennsylvania are responsible for a variety of public facilities and services. Historically, one of the primary functions is the construction, improvement and maintenance of roads. However, local governments have evolved over the years to the point of managing a large variety of facilities and services. Boroughs and townships, via the elected Council and Supervisors, are also responsible for, and in some cases are mandated by state and federal regulations, a variety of other facilities, services and programs. These include, among others, land use controls; environmental protection; police protection; water, sewer and storm water facilities; parks and recreation, and solid waste disposal. The level of service is typically dictated by the density and demographic character of the municipal population, and its tax base. Road maintenance and emergency services are typically the most important services as viewed by residents of small communities, followed by youth recreation programs and facilities.



Survey respondents in the Borough were also largely satisfied with the queried facilities and services, with 60% of respondents rating *overall Borough services* as good and 13% as excellent.. State and Borough street maintenance, and Borough police protection registered the greatest room for improvement.



**Community Surveys**

The Borough community survey and the Township community survey conducted as part of the planning process each asked a question about community facilities and services. In the case of the Township (see the *Township Facilities and Services Figure*) respondents were generally satisfied with the queried facilities and services, with State Police service and cellular telephone service showing the greatest dissatisfaction.

**Township and Borough Facilities**

The following *Facilities and Staff Tables* detail the buildings, land, equipment and staff of the Township and Borough. Staffing at the Township appears adequate as does office and meeting space, with the replacement of a dump truck in the next several years as the primary capital expenditure. Borough office space is tight and the renovation of the Borough Hall and Office Building is planned. Borough operations and programs have become more complex in recent years and additional staff may be warranted. One option would be the hiring of a Borough Manager to coordinate all staff and volunteer council member efforts. A shared manager with Mioford Township or another municipality may be an option and funding for initiating such a program may be available from a state grant.

**Local Road Maintenance**

Milford Borough and Milford Township each employ road crews who provide all normal winter and summer maintenance. Each municipality contracts for larger scale road maintenance and improvement projects, primarily major improvement projects such as paving and shoulder reconstruction. This approach has served well and in terms of cost efficiency is the most prudent



| MILFORD TOWNSHIP FACILITIES AND STAFF |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Township Building</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1.93 acres on Route 6/209</li> <li>- constructed in 1987; excellent condition</li> <li>- offices and meeting room</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Maintenance Buildings</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- located on Township Building parcel</li> <li>- 3-bay equipment garage attached to Township Building, excellent condition</li> <li>- 2-bay equipment garage, excellent condition</li> <li>- salt storage shed, excellent condition</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Other Property</b>                 | - none   |
| <b>Meetings</b>                       | - Township Building  |
| <b>Employees</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- part-time secretary/treasurer</li> <li>- 1 full-time road laborer/equipment operator</li> <li>- part-time road laborer/equipment operators as needed</li> </ul> </li> <li style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- part-time code enforcement officer</li> <li>- part-time SEO (contracted with firm)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>Vehicles &amp; Equipment</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1989 Ford dump, 4x4, plow &amp; spreader</li> <li>- 1996 Chevy dump, plow &amp; spreader</li> <li>- 2000 Ford dump, 4x4, plow &amp; spreader</li> </ul> </li> <li style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2004 Ford pick-up, 4x4, plow</li> <li>- 2002 Cat loader/backhoe</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                            |
| <b>Recreation Facilities</b>          | -none  |
| <b>Comments and Needs</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- replace older dump truck, 2-3 years, approx. \$50,000</li> <li>- no other building or capital equipment plans</li> </ul>  |