

# INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**MIFFLIN COUNTY 2035:**  
*A Decade of Progress*



## What is a comprehensive plan?

A comprehensive plan is a long-range visioning document that helps the community manage short- and long-term land use changes, plan for future investments in parks and trails, and identify needed improvements for infrastructure like roads, water lines, and sewer lines. It is used by County and local leaders as a guide for changing local policies, shaping budgets, and coordinating with private and non-profit organizations. A county comprehensive plan allows multiple communities to collaborate on many of the same goals and can create new opportunities to better coordinate land use policies, infrastructure projects, and apply for grants.



## Vision

"Mifflin County will be a place known for its preserved history and rural character, its outdoor recreation, healthy communities and vibrant economy achieved through collaboration."





# PLAN DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

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**JULY – AUGUST  
2024**

- Project Kick-Off
- Plan Advisory Committee Meeting #1
- Research on Existing Conditions Complete



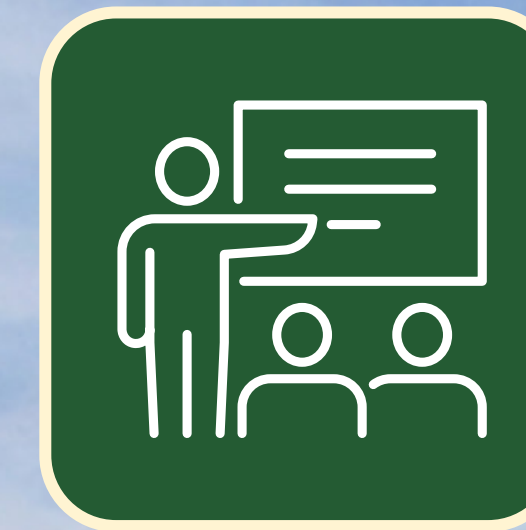
**AUGUST 2024 –  
JANUARY 2025**

- Plan Advisory Committee Meeting #2
- Public Survey Launched



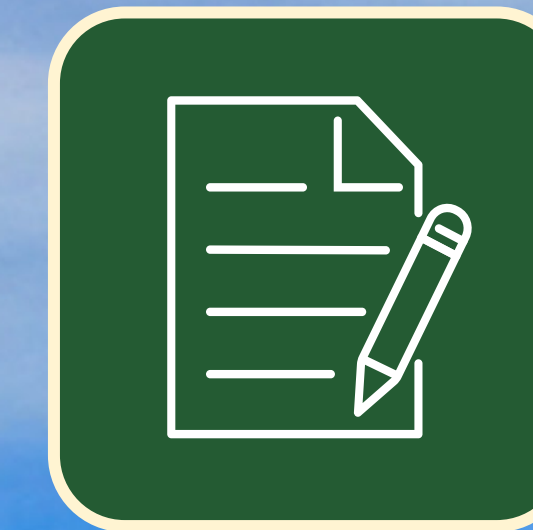
**JANUARY –  
MARCH 2025**

- Public Survey Completed
- Focus Group Interviews Completed
- Public Engagement Summarized
- Plan Advisory Committee Meeting #3



**MARCH – JUNE  
2025**

- Develop Draft Major Plan Elements
- Plan Advisory Committee Meeting #4
- Host Public Open House



**JUNE – AUGUST  
2025**

- Develop Draft Plan
- Present Draft Plan to County Planning Commission



**AUGUST –  
SEPTEMBER 2025**

- Plan Approval Pursuant to Municipalities Planning Code

**YOU  
ARE  
HERE**



# PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

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**58%**

were "Somewhat Satisfied" or "Not Satisfied" with internet availability and reliability



**57%**

would prefer the redevelopment of vacant buildings to accommodate new growth



**29%**

would like to see a local public transportation service added



**64%**

felt housing state of repair is a weakness in the County



**56%**

stated that they feel safe where they live



**85%**

agreed that more activities are needed for young people



**83%**

have lived in the County for more than 10 years



## **PARKS, RECREATION, & ENVIRONMENT**

was selected as the County's greatest strength



**38%**

stated that improving roadway state of repair should be the priority transportation investment



## **INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY TO GREEN SPACE**

was ranked as the top environmental priority



**72%**

would be "Likely" or "Very Likely" to walk or ride a bicycle to destinations near their home if there was a safe sidewalk or trail



## **IMAGE & IDENTITY**

was selected as the County's greatest weakness



# FUTURE CHARACTER AREA MAP

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## Purpose

The purpose of the future character areas (FCA) map is to establish an understanding of future form and use based on analysis of what is occurring on the ground and past planning efforts at the County level. In developing the FCA map, the consultant team assessed and defined the existing development patterns throughout the County through the lens of the County's goals, identified in the comprehensive planning process. The FCA serves as the precursor to the zoning map.

## PLANNED GROWTH



### Village Center

Areas that feature a development pattern combining residential and commercial uses. These areas include both older neighborhoods and main streets built prior to the creation of zoning codes that mandated the separation of land uses, and new construction that has been built to introduce more walkable and/or transit friendly development patterns into previously suburban areas. Village Center areas also feature sidewalks, parking set behind buildings or in parking structures, and parks or community gathering spaces.



### Village Residential

Residential areas that are pedestrian scaled with smaller setbacks and served by public infrastructure. Residential uses are on smaller lots and include a wider variety of housing types, like duplexes and rowhouses. They also feature some neighborhood scale commercial uses, like corner stores and barber shops, integrated into predominately residential streets in mixed-use buildings. Small institutional uses like churches are integrated into this area. Streets have more complete sidewalk networks and are more comfortable for use by pedestrians and bicycle users.



### Suburban Residential

Primarily residential, low-density areas served by public infrastructure, built adjacent to larger population centers. Detached single-family homes with larger setbacks are the main building type here, though there are neighborhood-scale institutional uses like churches integrated into this area. Transportation infrastructure is designed around the automobile and may have inconsistent infrastructure for pedestrians and bicycle users.



### Commercial

Areas that feature a concentration of commercial uses, served by public infrastructure, oriented towards meeting the daily needs of residents, such as grocery stores, banks, and big-box retailers. The development pattern here is strongly oriented towards single-use, low-rise retail buildings featuring large setbacks from the street and surface parking lots. These areas are designed to be accessed primarily by automobile, with infrastructure for pedestrians and bicycle users largely absent.



### Enterprise

Areas tailored to support a diverse range of enterprises, from manufacturing and light industrial operations to commercial and hospitality uses. Designed to encourage investment and job creation, and respond to the evolving needs of businesses, ensuring that the area remains competitive and attractive to new ventures. Older properties can be, depending on location, candidates for redevelopment into residential or mixed-uses.

## PLANNED CONSERVATION AREAS



### Natural Resource Area

Areas, often permanently preserved, that are designed to recharge groundwater, mitigate floods, filter air, purify water, provide recreation opportunities, and retain critical plant and animal habitat. These areas include parks and nature preserves, wooded steep-slope topography, stream corridors, and privately owned woodlands. Development here is very limited to preserve sensitive natural ecosystems and the rural character and consists of structures and infrastructure that support open space and recreation uses, like parking areas, restrooms, pavilions, canoe or kayak launches, and trails. However, additional uses on private land are also permitted, such as timber harvesting, agriculture, and detached-single family homes or seasonal cabins.



### Agricultural and Rural Development Area

Primarily agricultural landscapes with limited infrastructure, characterized by scattered low density residential and commercial development. Development opportunities focus on sustaining farmers and the agricultural economy, including farm support businesses, and retail stores selling agricultural products.



# CRITICAL ISSUES & PLAN GOALS

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## Critical Issues



### OUR COMMUNITIES LACK SUFFICIENT FUNDING

Many municipalities in Mifflin County have small budgets and can sometimes struggle to provide basic services to residents, in addition to being unable to provide local matching funds for the state or federal grants key implementing the recommendations of this plan.



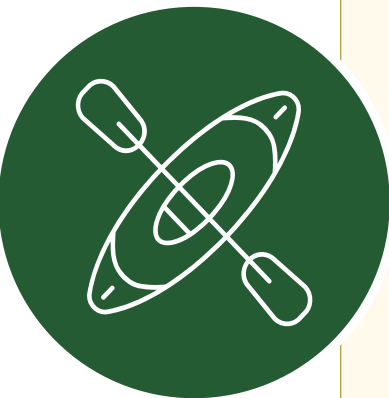
### OUR HOUSING IS OUT OF REACH

Housing in Mifflin County has become unaffordable for many residents. The shortage of housing for seniors, workers, and young families is especially acute, impacting the ability of local companies to hire and retain employees and making it challenging for older and younger residents to stay in their communities.



### OUR TRANSPORTATION NETWORK DOESN'T WORK FOR EVERYONE

There are few transportation options available for residents in Mifflin County who don't own a private car, making it challenging for older residents and low-income families to access jobs, housing, education, and other essential amenities.



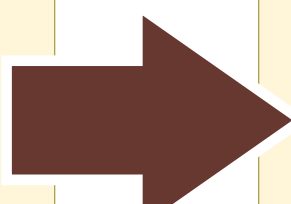
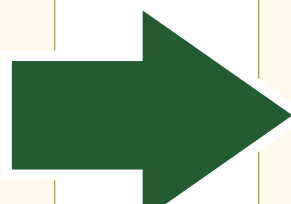
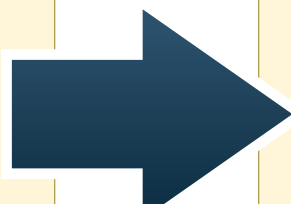
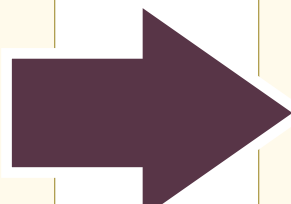
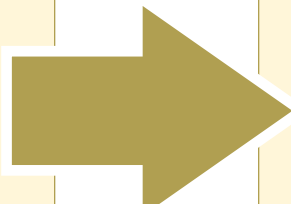
### OUR NATURAL RESOURCES ARE NOT ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE

Mifflin County's abundant natural resources are challenging for some residents and visitors to enjoy due to lack of developed infrastructure, incomplete information about access points, and unrealized potential for recreation-oriented businesses and services.



### OUR ENTREPRENEURS NEED MORE SUPPORT

Mifflin County has an active and growing scene of small businesses and entrepreneurs, but residents currently have few and inconsistent resources to help guide them through the challenges of starting new enterprises or expanding existing ones.



## Plan Goals

### MUNICIPALITIES CONNECTED TO SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

Boroughs and townships in the county can adequately provide basic services to residents and fund infrastructure improvements through a mixture of regional cooperation, long-term fiscal planning, and support from state and federal sources.

### WORKERS, FAMILIES, AND SENIORS CONNECTED TO ATTAINABLE HOUSING

The county will incentivize the creation of new housing for seniors, young families, and the local workforce through regional land use planning, incentivizing redevelopment, and developing partnerships to meet local housing needs.

### RESIDENTS CONNECTED TO THEIR NEEDS THROUGH BETTER MOBILITY

The county will work to create a vibrant multi-modal transportation network that serves all residents by working with local and state partners to address traffic safety issues, build out sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure networks, and improve public transit services.

### RESIDENTS ARE CONNECTED TO THE COUNTY'S ABUNDANT NATURAL RESOURCES

The county will work to create additional opportunities for residents and visitors to experience local natural resources by coordinating with state agencies and local governments to invest in trails and other infrastructure, develop information about local recreation resources, encourage tourism, and the development of recreation-oriented businesses.

### ENTREPRENEURS AND BUSINESS OWNERS CONNECTED TO THE RESOURCES THEY NEED TO THRIVE

The county will encourage the growth of local businesses and entrepreneurship by developing partnerships with local economic development organizations to provide supporting resources, working with state agencies to identify and make investments to support potential economic growth areas, and coordinate with regional and state tourism organizations to promote local businesses.