BOROUGH OF HOWARD
CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Prepared for the
Borough of Howard Planning Commission

by the
Centre County Planning Commission

1970

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Chairman and Members
Howard Borough Planning Commission
Centre County, Pennsylvania

Gentlemen:

The Centre County Planning Commission is pleased to submit this report entitled "Howard Borough Comprehensive Plan" which has been prepared as part of the Inter-Valley Regional Comprehensive Development Program.

This report represents the combined efforts of the Centre County Planning Commission, the Inter-Valley Regional Planning Commission, the governing body and planning commission of Howard Borough, as well as other interested individuals and agencies of the Inter-Valley area.

It is hoped that this report and the recommendations contained herein will furnish the Borough with a realistic guide for future development.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert B. Donaldson
Executive Director
STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES
HOWARD BOROUGH

The realization of the Howard Borough Comprehensive Plan will depend largely on the initiative, dedication, and farsightedness of its elected officials, appointed agencies, and interested citizens. Toward this end, it seems reasonable that a Statement of Objectives be adopted by those who will assume the major role and responsibility, in implementing the various proposals contained or implied in this Comprehensive Plan.

The Inter-Valley Regional Planning Commission, at a Special Meeting of July 23, 1969, unanimously adopted four (4) regional objectives to assist the local communities in their evaluation of the local comprehensive plans. Thus, the first four items listed below reflect the Regional Commission's recommended Objectives, while the remaining items include locally oriented objectives.

1. To further the welfare of the people by helping to create an increasingly better, more healthful, convenient, efficient and attractive community environment.
2. To formulate general guidelines for the orderly development of the physical, social, and economic resources of the community.
3. To determine, on a continuing and flexible basis, the future guidelines for orderly community growth.
4. To provide for the orderly integration of state, county, regional, and local goals.
5. To guide the Borough in serving as the physical, social, and economic gateway to the Blanchard Reservoir Recreational Area.
6. To provide a logical overall framework for the orderly expansion of municipal functions and services.
LOCATION

The Borough of Howard is located in the east-central portion of the Inter-Valley Region. It is also located in the southeast part of Howard Township which completely surrounds the Borough (See Map 1, Borough of Howard: Location).

The primary functions of Howard Borough have always been to service the lower Bald Eagle Valley with everyday goods, to act as a dormitory community for persons who are employed elsewhere, to provide a retirement center for farmers, and to act as a distribution center for goods shipped and received by rail and canal. The Borough developed these functions since its location represents the major transportation focal-point for the immediate area.

The recent completion of the Foster Joseph Sayers Dam, with its many planned support facilities, should have a considerable effect on the future of Howard. Since the Borough has such close proximity to the facility, it should play a major role in the development that will take place surrounding the Dam.

HISTORY

Originally, the area surrounding Howard Borough was designated as Centre Township. In 1810 the court recommended dividing the Township because of its size, so it was split with one of the municipalities being Howard Township. Howard Township was named after the English philanthropist John Howard (1726-1790), who devoted his life to betterment of the conditions of prisoners and captives. Why he was chosen for the honor is unknown. After fifty-four years of being part of the Township, the Borough of Howard was created in 1864, the last municipality to be officially established in the Inter-Valley Region.

Throughout its history, Howard Borough has served the Bald Eagle Valley as a commercial goods center, a residential development for persons employed elsewhere, a retirement center for area farmers, and a distribution center for rail goods. The Borough's growth over the years was greatly influenced by such local factors as the iron industry, the lumber and charcoal industries, the Turnpike and Railroad Eras, and brickmaking. The Borough's development into the center of activity for

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the area can be attributed to its location at the intersection of the area's two major highways.

Howard provides basically the same services today as it has in the past. However, the recent completion of the Foster Joseph Sayers Dam should provide the impetus needed to increase the importance of the community at the regional, county, and state levels.

POPULATION

The 1960 population of Howard Borough was 770. The area then represented a typical small rural town. The 1920-1960 population figures for the Borough indicate a slow but rather steady increase in population; however, a declining growth rate has been in evidence since 1940. It is estimated that the 1969 population is about 850, indicating a slight increase over the 1960 figure.

HOWARD BOROUGH POPULATION
1920-1960
PROJECTED TO 1985

![Graph of Howard Borough Population](image-url)
The 1960 U. S. Census breakdown of population by age and sex indicates that the Borough's percentage of older residents is much greater than the National or even Regional averages. This situation is understandable in a relatively small older town of Howard's nature; the close proximity to goods and services tends to attract and retain this older population. The age-sex comparison also reveals a noticeable lack of young males in the 15-24 age group. This significantly low percentage would tend to indicate an out-migration. Such an out-migration represents a loss.
of a valuable asset to the community, and methods of reversing this trend should be seriously investigated.

The graph, "Borough of Howard Population 1920-1960," includes a projection of population for 1985. The projection consists of a high (1,550), medium (1,200), and low (1,000) figure. The high figure would appear to be unrealistic; the medium figure also appears to be rather optimistic under present conditions. However, if a number of existing problems can be resolved, the medium figure (1,200) could conceivably be reached or even surpassed. A major factor in the municipality's future growth is the adjacent Foster Joseph Sayers Dam. The potential created by this facility may be limited by physical problems within the Borough, including the lack of space for expansion. The amount of future growth will be determined by the Borough's ability to find effective methods for dealing with these problems.

ECONOMY

Any area must have a strong, vibrant economy to grow. In evaluating the economy of an area a number of factors must be analyzed, in order to identify existing problems and to project a reasonable assessment of the economic future of the area. The major factors involved in evaluating the economy of a region are the value of land and any improvements on it, the types of employment and wages available, and the potential for industrial growth.

ASSESSED VALUATION 1961-1965-1968

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>$495,080</td>
<td>$513,150</td>
<td>$533,800</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>17,309,706</td>
<td>19,068,400</td>
<td>20,724,540</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>73,241,105</td>
<td>85,661,980</td>
<td>100,937,760</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
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Source: Centre County Assessment Office
Howard Borough's assessed valuation increased 13% between 1961 and 1968, and the rate of increase per year rose from the 1961-1965 period to the 1965-1968 period. This trend is expected to continue as a result of the impetus for growth created by the Sayers Dam.

OCCUPATION OF THE EMPLOYED RESIDENT LABOR FORCE
BY PERCENT: 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Howard</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>County</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Technical, and Kindred</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers and Farm Managers</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers, Officials and Proprietors except Farm</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and Kindred</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen, Foremen, and Kindred</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives and Kindred</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Household Workers</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Workers except Private Household</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers and Farm Foremen</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers except Farm and Mine</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation not reported</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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Source: "1960 Centre County Labor Force Report," Department of Internal Affairs, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The latest figures available for an analysis of the labor force are for 1960. Although these figures are too far out of date to present an accurate picture of the existing labor force, they do indicate some problems which undoubtedly still exist. In general, Howard's 1960 labor force appears to have been less skilled than that of the County or the Region. Usually the labor force of any given urban area is
more skilled than that of the region in which it is a dominating factor; Howard is an exception. There is an extremely high percentage of the labor force in the "Laborers except Farm and Mine" category.

In 1960 the median family income in Howard was $4,430 which is considerably less than both the Regional ($4,990) and County ($5,202) figures. The 1960 Census figures also indicated that almost 25% of the Borough's families received less than $3,000 a year which is considered the subsistence level of income. This situation is still one of the area's major problems.

The Woolrich Woolen Mill which employs approximately 100 workers (mainly women) is in the process of building a new plant in Liberty Township. There are indications that a new industry will relocate into the existing plant; however, this may result in a net loss in jobs.

The economic future of Howard is much more promising than existing conditions would indicate. With the completion of the Sayers Dam, a new impetus for recreational oriented and residential development will appear. Due to its proximity to the new Dam, Howard should experience considerable increase in importance. The real scope of this new development is difficult to gauge; however, by making improvements now, more growth can be fostered than could be expected to occur naturally.

TOPOGRAPHY

Howard is situated in a rather unique topographic setting, due to a couple man-made features which have left it as an isolated pocket at the base of Howard Gap in the Bald Eagle Mountain. A dike was recently constructed around the town to keep it from being flooded by the Blanchard Reservoir. Today, a relatively flat area about twice the size of Howard Borough is left in this isolated pocket. This "delta" shaped area is surrounded on two sides by the slopes of the Bald Eagle Mountain, and was originally at the edge of the broad Bald Eagle Creek flood plain which will now be flooded by the Blanchard Reservoir. This situation severely limits the areal extent of future development and will force the Borough to grow vertically in the future to accommodate new growth.
SOILS

A soil can be considered undesirable for a given use for any number of reasons. The most common problems relate to slope, depth to bedrock, permeability, depth to water table, susceptibility to flooding, and stoniness. Any one of these limitations can be overcome for any use, given the proper technology and sufficient capital. The existing soil conditions must be known and taken into account before beginning development.

The classification of limitations (slight, moderate, severe) is based to a large extent on the economic feasibility of use. Soils with slight limitations present no major problem for the proposed use. On the other hand, soils with severe limitations will probably not be used because of the prohibitive cost of overcoming their undesirable characteristics. The remaining soils of moderate limitations present some problems which may result in increased cost, unless the planned use is modified slightly.

Two important factors affecting development in this area are the ability of the soils to permit construction of foundations and their ability to accept effluent from septic tanks. With the aid of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's (Soil Conservation Service) Soils Surveys and their soils classification, the soils of Howard Borough have been interpreted for a variety of uses ranging from farms and woodland to home sites and roads. It was discovered that the soils of undeveloped areas of the Borough fall into two categories. The flatter areas of the Borough are generally well suited for home sites, with the exception of the stream banks; while the steeper areas are unsuited for development, due to steepness of slope and a high water table.

REGIONAL FACILITIES

The availability of public services and facilities in an area very often determines the desirability of the area for future growth and development. New industry as well as prospective residents are keenly interested in the quality of area schools, the locations of regional and local parks, the availability of sanitary sewers and water, the quality of local fire protection, etc.
Howard is located in the Bald Eagle Area School District and is served by the Howard Elementary School in Howard and the Bald Eagle Area High School in Win-gate. A recent study conducted by the School District found the Elementary School to be inadequate; while the relatively new high school is capable of handling not only the present enrollment but also the anticipated growth for the next ten years.

Fire protection for the Borough is provided by a local volunteer company. According to insurance and underwriter standards, the company maintains adequate facilities for the area. Because of the Borough's close proximity to Bellefonte, other services are readily available including the County Library and YMCA.

Future plans and projects under development, which will enhance the area, include the completion of the 1,730 acre Foster Joseph Sayers Dam on Bald Eagle Creek, with its many planned support facilities, and a swimming pool planned for the Bellefonte area. Also, the recently completed Mountaintop swimming facility provided additional recreational services. A more complete description of facilities in the Region is available in the Inter-Valley Comprehensive Plan, with recommenda-
dations and a plan for future development on a regional level.

Two major needs are apparent for future development in Howard. In order to meet these needs there must be considerable local initiative.

The Centre County Planning Commission recently made a study for the Borough proposing two parks, one on either side of town to be connected by a green-belt using the old railroad right of way. One of these parks was designed for pic-nicking and play, while the other was designed as a beach area on the Blanchard Reservoir for the local residents. The development of these parks should be com-
pleted as quickly as possible.

The other major area of concern involves the need for a sanitary sewage col-
lection and treatment system and an improved water system. Presently, the Borough is participating in a proposal to design and build a treatment plant and a collection system to serve its residents. This plant and collection system is being built in con-
nection with the Army Corps of Engineers to serve the entire Reservoir area. The existing public water system appears to be in need of upgrading and expansion to meet existing and future needs. One of the major problems is the need for a more dependable source of supply.
The regional facilities and services available to the Borough's residents appear to be generally adequate for the present. With the plans now being formulated by various groups and agencies, it is anticipated that future needs will also be met.

TRANSPORTATION

A community's growth depends on an efficient transportation network. The major systems involved are highways, railroads, and of increasing importance, airport facilities.

The present road system in the Borough includes 2.93 miles of paved access. Approximately 34% of this total is under state control, while the remaining 66% is supervised by the Borough (See Map 5, Borough of Howard: Existing Transportation). The classifications include Major Arterial, Major Collector, and Local, defined as follows:

Arterial - The function of an arterial highway is to move traffic in a rapid, safe, and efficient manner.

Collector - Collector streets drain traffic from local roads and provide access to arterial highways or to local establishments, such as schools and shopping centers.

Local - The primary function of a local road is to provide access to properties adjacent to the street. Secondly, it provides for traffic movement to a collector street.

All roads in the Region were type classified; local conditions were then summarized and analyzed. The result was a plan prepared for each municipality in the Region. Each plan was well integrated with existing and proposed state and federal highways, in order to provide an efficient and functional national, state, county, regional, and township network.

The Borough of Howard's "Future Transportation" map presents the proposed system for the municipality (See Map 6, Borough of Howard: Transportation Plan). Recommendations for future improvements include the building of the proposed Jacksonville Interchange on I-80 and rebuilding the road from there to Howard, and a reorientation of the present street network to correspond to the changes in the major
arterial system. This reorientation will require an indepth study, but the actual implementation should involve only minimal changes.

Howard is presently served by a Penn Central main line which runs from Altoona to Lock Haven and on to other eastern points. Presently, this service is limited to freight only.

Howard Borough has excellent access to local air facilities. The Pennsylvania State University airport is located in the southwestern corner of Benner Township; this facility provides private and commuter service to the area. Good private and commuter facilities are also available at Lock Haven. The Mid-State airport, located in the Black Moshannon State Forest, provides major commercial service for the Borough to most cities in the state and major cities along the east coast.

In general, the regional transportation network does not relate to the Borough of Howard; however, the proposed major arterial connection to I-80 at Jacksonville and a subsequent reorientation of local roads should prove to be a significant factor in fostering future development.

LAND USE

Essential in preparing any development plan is a knowledge of the existing types and distribution of land use. The existing land use in Howard is typical of a small rural town (See Map 7, Borough of Howard: Existing Land Use). The Borough's development is characterized by an obvious lack of planning and control. Although no patterns of development exist in the older sections of town, definite patterns do appear in the areas of recent development.

The only industrial use in the Borough is the garment factory owned by the Woolrich Woolen Mills. The plant's location was chosen for proximity to a readily available labor force.

The Borough's commercial development is rather scattered, but is still primarily oriented along old U. S. 220.

The older sections of residential development exhibit little or no pattern. Various types of single and multi-family residences are intermixed. The areas of
recent construction are almost entirely single family residential development.

Since the town serves as a rural center there are proportionately more public service uses than in some other small communities. These uses are, again, scattered and intermixed.

In general, the existing land use in Howard reflects little or no definite pattern of development. This lack of planning presents few problems now because of the Borough's small size; however, serious consideration should be given to planning future development, since more development will multiply the potential for problems resulting from incompatible uses.

FUTURE PLAN

The purpose of a Comprehensive Study is to evolve a future development plan. The plan presented here is based on the physical, social, and economic conditions found in the Inter-Valley Region. Howard's future plan must be considered from a regional standpoint, since the Borough is but one political unit in the Inter-Valley area.

The future land use plan for the Inter-Valley Region proposes that development proceed out from the existing Bellefonte and Milesburg urbanized areas in decreasing intensity toward the rural agricultural area (See Map 8, Inter-Valley: Future Land Use). Development limitations caused by topography, drainage, soils, and future road plans have been considered in this analysis. The problems of providing sanitary sewers, water, streets, recreation, as well as commercial and industrial facilities have also been taken into account.

There are a number of small growth nodes scattered throughout the Inter-Valley Region. Some of these growth areas will undoubtedly be absorbed by the urbanizing areas of Bellefonte and Milesburg. Other growth nodes will continue to grow and maintain their individual identity. Each of these smaller nodes will serve a specific service or function in the future. These functions will vary from community to community, depending upon its location and character.

Carrying this concept to the local level, we should consider Howard Borough
containing two (2) types of residential development areas. These development areas will decrease in density as the distance from the commercial core increases. The development areas, in order of decreasing density, would include Medium Density, and Low Density residential development. Due to the physical limitations in the Borough, this development pattern becomes modified to accommodate the natural terrain and existing land use pattern. These areas of physical limitations should be retained in open space for recreational type uses. The density of the older residential areas could increase, while the area of highest density should be the closest to the Borough's commercial core. The remainder of the area should be maintained for low density use.

No new industrial development is forseen for Howard; although, the existing Woolrich plant will shortly be converted to another industrial use, this should not result in the physical expansion of the site. However, considerable highway and recreation oriented commercial facilities can be expected to develop in the Borough. Any new retail or convenience commercial development should be located in the existing core area, with a reorientation to the new primary route through the town, since it is the most readily accessible area in the Borough.

Growth in Howard is expected to increase rather rapidly in the near future. This growth can and must be channelled and guided in a logical pattern, which will be beneficial to the Borough as well as the Inter-Valley Region. Although there are many ways to accomplish this goal, the plan presented here would appear to be the best alternative and most workable solution, based on the information available and the concept that the Inter-Valley Region, as a socio-economic unit, is the most realistic area in which to formulate a plan of this nature.