

Shenango Township, Lawrence County

Three Year Housing and Community Development Plan

I. Executive Summary

Shenango Township, Lawrence County, Pennsylvania is approximately 25 square miles located in the south central section of Lawrence County. Shenango Area's proximity to Pennsylvania State Routes 65 and 108; US Routes 422 and Interstate 376 make it a desirable location for new businesses looking for easy highway access, as well as residents looking for a simple commute to school or work.

The County's municipal leaders, County Commissioners and planning office recently determined that a specific plan was needed to meet the various needs of the local municipalities to conquer the extensive issues brought on by the economic downturn to systematically develop and cultivate neighborhood revitalization. The realization of this decision is noted in the County's Strategic Housing Plan attached to this document.

Based upon Lawrence County's Three Year Housing and Community Development Plan, each municipality is classified into three different community types: healthy, tipping point, and distressed. For all purposes, portions of Shenango Township meet two of the three community types: "Tipping Point Community", which means that it shows signs of strength and only needs minor methods to reestablish its value, thus having potential to be a successful community; and "Healthy Communities," or needing little to no assistance in revitalization.

For the Tipping Point community to become successful there is a need to further develop its possible economic development areas, increasing the potential to draw a quality company, as well as highlight its differences from the Lower East Side of the City of New Castle, an established distressed community located to Shenango's immediate north and intertwined with the Township. As a means of

addressing the comprehensive needs of the community, Shenango Township has developed the following strategy aimed at achieving neighborhood prosperity.

For the purpose of this strategy, the funding mechanism includes both are the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). The specific areas to be addressed in accord with the Lawrence County Comprehensive Plan include 1) Residential (Housing); 2) Infrastructure (Public Community Facilities and Improvements/Public Services); and 3) Economic Development.

The Township will analyze proposed projects in relation to their relevance to this Plan. Specifically, projects must 1) Relate to priority needs, 2) Demonstrate a concentration of low-moderate income households, 3) Provide information regarding cost efficiency, and 4) Show relevance to the County's overall Community Development Plan.

II. Low-Moderate Income Population

According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, Shenango Township is host to 7,479 people housed in the 3,219 housing units. Of these units, 3,014 are occupied (2,573 owner-occupied). Residents of Shenango Township vary in career and income type based on age and residence location in the Township. Because a significant amount of residents are elderly with fixed incomes, the Township began an Elderly Home Safety Program in November 1997 in order to assist with home safety. This program, while no longer in existence, became the basis for the continued rehabilitation program as it exists today.

III. Community Type

To gain an accurate perspective on the needs of the community, the Township participates in a County-wide community assessment on a regular basis. Through this assessment, several needs are identified including 1) housing, 2) public community facilities and improvements, 3) public services, 4) economic development, and 5) human service needs.

In order to address the needs in an appropriate, specific manner, each Lawrence County municipality was ranked accordingly, based on area and need. Please see attachment A for further information regarding these community types. Shenango Township has been determined to include both a "Tipping Point" and a "Healthy Community".

- A. *Tippling Point Communities***-Communities having the greatest chance for success because they show signs of strength, with marketable assets needing only minor stabilization methods to reestablish their value, thus having the ability to turn, forcing current marketability to remain stable, or perhaps, move upward. The community type will determine the method(s) implemented to address the needs of the community.
- B. *Healthy Communities***- Thriving communities which show little to no effect by the economic downturn in markets and has very limited, sporadic foreclosure and blight issues.

In order to address the needs of the community in conjunction with the County's Strategic Plan, an action plan is listed for each type of community, as follows:

1. Housing (See Attached Plan)

- Acquisition, Rehab and Rental for Homeless/Special Needs Housing
- Acquisition and Clearance- Donation to Non-Profit for existing program
- Acquisition, Demolition for Land Banking
- Acquisition and Rehab for Lease/Purchase Program
- Provide Shelter and Supportive Services

2. Public Community Facilities and Improvements

- Recreational Facilities
- Street Improvements/Water Sanitary Sewer Facilities

Currently, the Township has a five-year re-surfacing program. Each year the Township Engineers and the Road Master establish which roads are in need of repair. The Township Department of Roads then maintains and repairs the roads as needed.

The Pennsylvania American Water Company has proposed water line extensions to serve the southern end of the township, and is currently searching for a location for a new water tower. The Sewage Treatment Facilities have recently been expanded, which will allow growth in the Township; however additional lines should be installed throughout many areas in the township, thereby enhancing development opportunities.

Shenango Township is currently looking into funding sources to provide the additional lines throughout the Township.

3. Public Services

Shenango Township is currently a prime location for the New Castle Transit Authority, which runs through the Township several times on a daily basis. Township residents are provided with transportation to sites throughout the Township, and Lawrence County.

The Township understands that its community is ever-changing, and for this reason, is continually evaluating the needs of the residents to best provide necessary services. The Township has provided services such as spring clean-up, food distributions, and recycling programs, and will continue to assess the community assets and needs necessary to provide a well-rounded neighborhood for its residents.

4. Economic Development

As a means of promoting economic development, Shenango Township has extended water and sewer facilities to commercial districts located on U.S. Route 422. This property has been virtually undeveloped due to the lack of these facilities. Over recent years, a light industrial plant, lumber yard, convenience store, truck repair shop, two office complexes, and a car dealership have all been established.

The Township has also updated its Zoning Ordinance and has established a commercial zone aimed at encouraging development. A shopping plaza on Route 65, has in recent years, been unable to attract and maintain businesses. The Township is implementing steps to attract businesses, including a grocery store. Other commercial areas have been sold and/or purchased, to be developed commercially for local businesses.

Short Term Plan:

1. Housing-

- a. Continue Single Unit Housing Rehabilitation throughout the Township using current and future CDBG funds.

- b. Evaluate the condition of local housing to eliminate abandoned, blighted structures
- 2. **Public Community Facilities and Improvements:**
 - a. Continue to develop Shenango Township Park;
 - b. Continue to assess local township roads and water/sanitation systems.
- 3. **Public Services:**
 - a. Continue to provide transportation routes throughout the Township;
 - b. Continue to evaluate community needs for the provision of necessary services.
- 4. **Economic Development:**
 - a. Extend water and sewage facilities to bring businesses into the Township;
 - b. Continue advertisement for commercial areas in the Township
 - c. Continue work on the County's former nursing home facilities to ensure housing and economic development.

Long Term Plan:

- 1. **Housing:**
 - a. Continue Single Unit Housing Rehabilitation throughout the Township;
 - b. Continue to develop a means to provide additional housing stock for the community.
- 2. **Public Community Facilities and Improvements:**
 - a. Completion of Phase III of the Shenango Township Community Park,
 - b. Completion of road improvements, water/sanitation systems within the Township.
- 3. **Public Services:**
 - a. Continue to expand the curb side recycling program;
 - b. Continued assessment of community needs.
- 4. **Economic Development:**
 - a. Promote businesses and housing through the development of commercial areas and the building of new housing developments.