Chairman’s Message

We are pleased to present this Annual Report on the activities of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission for 2017. This report is provided as a service to the citizens of the Tri-County Region and to update the respective County Commissioners and Planning Commission members about our activities and accomplishments during the year.

The year 2017 was an exciting year of progress and change for the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission. TCRPC adopted its updated Regional Growth Management Plan in September, the first of its kind for the Commission using scenario planning as an analysis tool to help guide policy discussion, and ultimately, recommendations of the final plan.

Year’s end saw the retirement of Executive Director Tim Reardon whose tenure at TCRPC spanned four decades, starting as a transportation planner. We thank Tim for his dedicated service to the Commission. While his spirit will be missed, TCRPC looks forward to new directions under the leadership of Steven B. Deck, AICP.

The Regional Connections program also continued to provide funding opportunities for municipalities to plan and act locally in the implementation of the RGMP. Five projects were added to the Commission’s program including a transit plan, implementable comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance update, sidewalk study, and corridor study, all of which are intended to support the collective land use and transportation directions recommended through our regional plans.

At the county level, Dauphin County Planning Commission adopted its County Comprehensive Plan in July, with its web-based application also a first of its kind. Perry County Planning Commission proceeded with implementation efforts for its Comprehensive Plan, including furthering the economic strategy.

In addition, staff provided over 500 hours in technical planning assistance to Dauphin and Perry County municipalities through the local planning assistance program beyond regular reviews for subdivision plans and zoning ordinance work. The transportation program generated yet another congestion management plan, and regional freight plan with consultant support. Further details are included in the respective annual reports for these programs.

The Commission’s staff of 12 has worked hard to be a better resource for its municipalities. Through funding, planning tools, and education and training the Commission worked towards going beyond the basic requirements of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). It is our goal to continue to grow as a vital partner in helping build a better future for our region. We look forward to continued strong working relationships throughout 2018.

Very truly yours,

Jim Turner
Chairman, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
About TCRPC

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) strives to improve the quality of life in Dauphin, Perry and Cumberland counties by working with communities, elected leaders and planning partners. TCRPC leads regional planning and transportation planning programs while providing support for the Dauphin County Planning Commission and Perry County Planning Commission.

The commission’s staff pursues a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive regional planning effort to address topics like deteriorating infrastructure, traffic congestion, dispersed development, flooding concerns and many other issues. The commission also works to link land use and transportation planning, as decisions in these two areas are mutually influential.

TCRPC serves 103 municipalities in the region and also works as the staff agency for the Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS). HATS is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Tri-County Region. It has the responsibility to ensure the transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with federal and state regulations while the HATS Coordinating Committee takes official action about the use of federal funds for transportation system improvements in the region.

TCRPC meets these regional needs with a small staff of 12 who provide technical expertise, educational and training opportunities and support in a spirit of collaboration. Details of the Dauphin County Planning Commission, Perry County Planning Commission and Harrisburg Area Transportation Study program activities, which TCRPC staff also administers, can be found in their respective Annual Reports.

Our Mission

TCRPC’s mission is to foster the long-term livability and vitality of our communities, counties and region.

The mission is achieved by encompassing three core values:

- Promote policies, programs, and activities, which recognize the diverse and desirable qualities of individual communities, and the benefits each of these communities brings to the entire region.
- Foster cooperation among local governments to address regional issues through public education, information sharing, and intergovernmental coordination.
- Assure, preserve, and optimize our quality of life by recognizing and adjusting to both external and internal factors that influence our region’s land development and conservation.
2017 Commission Membership

Guiding TCRPC’s work is a 19-member board comprised of the following representation, each appointed by their respective County Board of Commissioners:

- One commissioner from each county;
- Four members from each of the planning commissions of the counties;
- One member from each county “at-large” to represent the entirety of the county; and
- One member representing municipal interests nominated from each of seven regional planning areas (RPA).

Emphasis of the TCRPC program and services is focused on the implementation of the Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), with the regional planning areas serving as the core areas for implementation. RPA representatives serve as ambassadors of the TCRPC mission and are an essential component in maintaining the relationship between the municipalities they represent and the implementation of TCRPC programs.

OFFICERS
Chairman: Jim Turner
Vice Chairman: Dan Tunnell
Secretary: Tom Graupensperger
Treasurer: John Kerschner, AICP

DAUPHIN COUNTY
Board of Commissioners: Mike Pries and Jeff Haste
Planning Commission: Robert Spandler, John Kerschner, AICP, Gary E. Lenker, Dan Tunnell
Member-at-Large: Fred Lighty
Southwest Regional Planning Area: Frank Chlebnikow, AICP
Southeast Regional Planning Area: John Foley
North Regional Planning Area: William Hart

PERRY COUNTY
Board of Commissioners: Stephen C. Naylor
Planning Commission: Tom Fridirici, Tom Graupensperger, Danny Kirk, Jim Turner
Member-at-Large: Richard Stees
Northeast Regional Planning Area: Frank Campbell
West Regional Planning Area: Wes Smith
Southeast Regional Planning Area: Robert Rhoades

CITY OF HARRISBURG
Harrisburg City Regional Planning Area: Jackie Parker
Regional Growth Management Plan

Adopted by TCRPC at its September 2017 meeting, the 2040 update of the Regional Growth Management Plan examines the impacts of the next 20 years of projected growth in Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry Counties. The RGMP focuses on guiding physical development to areas in which public investments have already been made, while also protecting and enhancing our natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources. The purpose of the RGMP is to address the broader multi-jurisdictional issues from a regional perspective, to act as an informational resource, and to provide an overarching model for development of more detailed and specific county and municipal comprehensive plans.

As part of this update, TCRPC expanded the use of scenario planning, simulating five different growth scenarios and analyzing each across 10 performance measures using GIS modeling. TCRPC then held six outreach sessions seeking input from our region’s municipal officials, with two held in each county. At the outreach meetings, participants were asked to participate in an exercise to determine which performance measures were deemed most important to the future of our region. The preferred growth scenario was determined by comparing each scenario’s performance under the performance measures deemed most important. In addition to the scenario planning, the RGMP also includes updated mapping of land use and community services, identification of our most important regional issues (as determined by our steering committee), and land use analysis related to employment growth.

The result of our various analyses and outreach efforts demonstrated that although our region has the space and resources available, adopting policies which concentrate our development around existing infrastructure will maximize the benefits while minimizing the negative impacts of our projected growth and be more sustainable in the long term.
Regional Connections Grant Program

The Regional Connections Grant Program, now in its ninth round of grants, was created as an opportunity for TCRPC to support local planning and development efforts that help implement the RGMP. The grants are intended to help municipalities and counties support locally directed, collaborative actions to improve communities, enhance community character, manage growth, maximize existing infrastructure capacity, and link land use and transportation planning decisions to create a more sustainable future for our region. The program has funded twenty-seven (27) projects totaling over $860,000 since 2011, five (5) of which are currently in progress including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>MUNICIPALITY</th>
<th>FUNDING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bus Optimization Study and Shelter Design</td>
<td>City of Harrisburg &amp; Capital Area Transit</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning Ordinance Update</td>
<td>Middle Paxton Township</td>
<td>$32,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementable Comprehensive Plan</td>
<td>Susquehanna Township</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>17th Street Corridor Market Feasibility Study</td>
<td>City of Harrisburg</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidewalk Study</td>
<td>Swatara Township</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>$232,000</td>
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Partnerships

The regional planning program builds upon the message of sustainability (fiscal and environmental) to underscore our connections within the region and with other regions. Emphasis areas are defined by the RGMP, ongoing TCRPC representatives’ input, and long-term emerging regional trends and demographic indicators. To that end, TCRPC staff participates in a variety of regional and statewide committees and task forces, and coordinates with other organizations including:

- Capital Region Economic Development Corporation (CREDC);
- Dauphin County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC);
- Chambers of Commerce – Harrisburg, Hispanic;
- Susquehanna Regional Transportation Partnership (SRTP);
- Capital Area Transit (CAT) and other transit authorities;
- PennDOT, multiple committees;
- PA DCNR, County Conservation Districts, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Kittatinny Ridge, Manada Conservancy, RC&D, Susquehanna River Basin Commission and similar organizations;
- PA Historical and Museum Commission;
- Councils of Government, PA Boroughs Association, counties and municipalities reaching to regions beyond south central PA;
- Emergency Management Agencies – FEMA, PEMA, Dauphin County and Perry County EMA, Dauphin County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC);
- Tri-County Community Action and Tri-County Housing Development Corporation
- Homebuilders/Real Estate organizations;
- Utilities – Capital Region Water, UGI Utilities, Sunoco Logistics;
- Human service and health care organizations – Pinnacle Health, Hershey Med Center, PA Departments of Health and Aging, United Way of the Capital Region;
- Educational organizations – Harrisburg University, Shippensburg University and public library systems;
- Financial/Investment.
Education & Training

TCRPC works diligently to promote a culture of collaboration with an understanding and appreciation of planning and how it can be used as a tool to empower the region’s municipalities. Education and training sessions are one way the commission shares its resources with the public and municipal leaders.

The Commission offered ten sessions through its “Lunch and Learn” program partnership with Penn State Extension in 2017. These webinars offered in TCRPC’s Harrisburg office covered diverse issues like planning for intergenerational places, subdivision and land development, pipelines, economic development placemaking, renewable energy, fair housing, municipal tree ordinances and stormwater management.

The Commission continues to partner with the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs and the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI) to offer two courses, one in the spring and the other in the fall. These hands-on courses focus on the nuts and bolts of sound planning practices and techniques and have been well-received by the municipalities across the region. The Commission will continue to offer the courses each year, covering the PMPEI topics on a rotating basis. For 2017 the courses offered were zoning and subdivision and land development review; zoning administration and community planning will be offered in 2018.

For 2017 TCRPC changed its annual dinner to a luncheon format in the hope of better accommodating the busy night meeting-packed schedules of more local officials. Over 100 people joined TCRPC staff on May 4, which featured a keynote address by PennDOT Secretary Leslie S. Richards.

Secretary Richards touched on a variety of transportation issues affecting state and local government, particularly the PennDOT Connects program and how it benefits municipalities and the transportation planning process as a whole. The luncheon event also is a great way to network and discuss the region’s future.
Communications

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission is committed to keeping the community, commission members, elected leaders and partner organizations informed about its activities and programs. In a spirit of transparency and collaboration, the Commission continued its work of expanding its public presence and increasing its communications efforts in 2017.

Website

Usage of TCRPC’s website (tcrpc-pa.org) continued to grow in 2017, with over 9,200 unique visitors viewing the site, up 13 percent over 2016. Total sessions were over 14,600, up 16 percent. Total pageviews were nearly 73,200, up 56 percent. Overall these figures suggest not only that more people are viewing the site, they’re visiting more pages and coming back multiple times.

TCRPC also developed a website for the Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan in 2017. The site had nearly 1,100 unique visitors, with over 1,800 sessions and nearly 21,000 pageviews for the year.

Social Media

Once again, the year marked significant social media growth:

- TCRPC’s Twitter account had nearly 208,000 impressions for 2017, a 40 percent increase over 2016. It averaged over 17,000 impressions per month. In addition, it started the year with 432 followers and ended it with 531, a 23 percent increase.
- TCRPC’s Facebook account had over 18,000 impressions for 2017, a 30 percent increase over 2016. It averaged over 1,500 impressions per month. It went from 215 followers in January to 239 in December, an 11 percent increase.
- TCRPC’s LinkedIn account had over 57,500 impressions for the year, an increase of 160 percent. It averaged nearly 4,800 impressions per month. In addition, the account started the year with 94 followers and ended it with 134, a 43 percent increase.

Media Coverage

TCRPC was mentioned in or contributed to 25 news stories in 2017. They appeared in a diverse selection of media outlets, including ABC27, the Carlisle Sentinel, the Central Penn Business Journal, Fox43, the New Yorker, PennLive, the Perry County Times, the Press & Journal, the Upper Dauphin Sentinel, WFMZ-TV, WGAL-8, and WHP580.

Geographic Information System (GIS)

As GIS technology continues to grow and change TCRPC seeks new ways to utilize different mapping tools for planning efforts, from large-scale regional all the way down to local governments. In 2017 TCRPC began exploring web mapping opportunities through ArcGIS Online as a means to support the new online formats of major planning documents. The update to the Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in July and is hosted completely online. PDF maps within the text body link directly to interactive

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web mapping applications that allow users to turn on and off different data layers.

This map showing access to public parks with a one mile buffer is one of several web maps within the Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan.

As more planning documents reach the time for update and make the shift towards a more innovative format, web mapping will continue be an important tool. At the end of 2017 TCRPC began work on a series of web maps for the 2040 update of the Regional Transportation Plan as well as an offline accessible crowdsourcing application to collect sidewalk data. These applications will be streamlined and unveiled in 2018.

Other GIS activities include rolling updates to the agricultural easement layer and layers provide by state agencies through the state GIS clearinghouse PASDA. Staff support was provided for South Hanover Township in the creation of a grid map for the township’s Hazard Mitigation Plan, as well as the following:

- Zoning Dataset for Dauphin & Perry Counties;
- SALDO Dataset for Dauphin & Perry Counties;
- Ag Easement Dataset for Dauphin & Perry Counties;
- Ag Securities Dataset for Dauphin & Perry Counties;
- Various general maps made for municipalities including flood, parcel, roadway, demographics, soils, SALDO, zoning, parks, aerials etc.;
- Various GIS data requests fulfilled for municipalities, counties, nonprofits, schools, and public;
- Regional CAT Route Dataset updated;
- Regional Soils Dataset update;
- Regional Park Dataset;
- Provide maps to DC Conservation and DCCED;
- Regional municipality facility and contacts web application;
- Provide data to multiple municipality initiatives;
- Protected Stream and watershed mapping;
- Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan mapping and analysis;
- Congestion Management Process Plan (CMP) mapping and analysis;
- Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP) mapping and analysis;
- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) mapping and analysis;
- Regional Freight Plan mapping and analysis;
- Mapping for Cost Burdened Properties;
- Outreach mapping for Manada Conservancy;
- Mapping provided for Perry County Trails;
- Tri-County Community Action data of “Blighted Housing.”
Administration

Administration includes activities necessary to execute the Commission Strategic Plan, develop the Commission work program and support its implementation, monitor program progress, prepare and submit required applications and contract documents, fulfill designated regional agency functions, as well as the day-to-day functions of managing the office.

Intergovernmental Reviews

All applicants requesting federal and state grant funds are required to submit their application to a regional clearinghouse for review and comment. This review is to ensure the intended public investments are consistent with the regional goals, policies and direction of our Regional Growth Management Plan, share planning information, and to give opportunity for the public to comment.

Functioning as a designated clearinghouse agency, TCRPC reviewed 37 applications during 2017, totaling nearly $175 million with the majority coming from federal sources ($136 million). The applicants for this funding varied from local governments to private businesses requesting land use consistency determinations and projects included community facilities, conservation, parks and recreation, pollution prevention, water/sewer/gas line system improvements, and clean water/drinking water loans.

Affiliate Data Center

As an affiliate to the Pennsylvania State Data Center (SDC), TCRPC has free access to decennial and economic census data, American Community Survey data, US Department of Agriculture publications and data and other specialized publications of the SDC. TCRPC is obligated to disseminate, promote and assist potential data users including government, business, non-profits and private citizens. As the US Census Bureau continues to publish data, TCRPC will also use it in comprehensive plan updates, assist municipalities in data research, grant applications, transportation planning, and regional planning programs.

Professional Development

TCRPC staff logged 163 hours of training in order to stay current in the field of planning, advance the delivery of our work program, and improve skills to be a resource for the region.

Financial Information

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission is committed to the proper and thoughtful use of public and private dollars entrusted to us for the betterment of the region. The illustrations on the following pages summarize the finances of TCRPC during 2017, which encompass a total budget of $3,195,813. “Pass-through” funding awarded directly to professional consultants for various planning projects through a competitive selection process included more than half of the budget.

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Federal funding makes up over three-quarters of our revenues. State, local county and municipal funds contribute about 25% percent of TCRPC’s operating revenues. Other contributions are comprised of subdivision and land development fees paid by developers and interest income and generate the smallest portion of revenues.

The majority of the expenses involve “pass-through” funding, with labor and burden expenses directed to program delivery for transportation planning, regional planning and county planning support making up nearly 40% of expenditures. The remaining expenses are other direct costs for operations, facilities and equipment.
Finally, the transportation program receives the greatest funding support (63%), while the 34% of the funding is directed toward county planning support and regional planning programs. Special projects cover the remaining 3% of program funding.

Complete details regarding TCRPC programs and expenditures are available in the annual audit report, which is completed by April 30 of each year and in monthly financial statements presented to the Commission.

**OUR MISSION:**
To foster the long-term livability and vitality of our communities, counties and region.
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Garritt M. McCartney  
**Traffic Counting Intern**

*Joined TCRPC in 2017 / **Left TCRPC in 2017

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
2017 Annual Report

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Front cover: New Bloomfield farm / Back cover: Harrisburg International Airport & PA Turnpike bridge (courtesy Buchart Horn)