

Introduction

Study Purpose

In late 2011, eight municipalities in the eastern portion of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania elected to collaborate in the formation of a group tasked with promoting regional trail planning and development. The Cumberland County Planning Department is also a partner in this group and played a key role in its organization. This study is the first result of this effort and involves the creation of a Regional Trails Master Plan for Eastern Cumberland County—the area being defined as the following participating municipalities:

- Camp Hill Borough
- East Pennsboro Township
- Hampden Township
- Lower Allen Township
- Mechanicsburg Borough
- Monroe Township
- Silver Spring Township
- Upper Allen Township

For the purposes of this project, the term “trail” includes the following:

- Off-road routes, paved and unpaved, available for a variety of non-motorized uses.
- Routes that are part of or adjacent to paved streets, used by pedestrians and cyclists.

1. Introduction

There are many sources of existing data regarding trails, including maps, plans and reports from individual municipalities as well as from prior Cumberland County planning documents. The primary purpose of this project is to compile and organize all of that data into a single, consistent plan, which will allow for the coordination of plans for future facilities on a regional basis. Other tasks include:

- Identifying likely trail destinations
- Recommending additional trail linkages and routes
- Estimating costs for proposed trails
- Recommending management / operational options for trails
- Recommending a common signage theme
- Recommending system-wide priorities / strategies for trail implementation

Regional Context

The project area is roughly bounded by Blue Mountain / Kittatinny Ridge to the north, the Susquehanna River to the east, the Yellow Breeches Creek to the south and the Appalachian Trail to the west. The existing Darlington Trail lies just outside of the project area to the north and the Conodoguinet Creek flows east / west through the middle of the project area. In total, the eight municipalities comprising the project area counts as 120,660 residents, or approximately 51% of Cumberland County's total population. Major highways, including the Pennsylvania Turnpike, I-83, I-81, US Route 11, US Route 15 and PA Route 581 pass through the project area, providing regional connections to downtown Harrisburg and the US Naval Support Center in Hampden Township.

Major railroad alignments extend through the project area as well, servicing the Naval Support Center and the Enola freight yards along the Susquehanna River. The 'Lurgan Branch' is an active line that runs through the southern portion of the project area. The 'Shippensburg Secondary' line is an active line that runs east / west through the project area. West of the project area, the line is inactive and is commonly referred to as the 'Cumberland Valley Railroad'. It has been



Susquehanna River, East Pennsboro Township / Perry County Border.



Capital Area Transit (CAT) Bridge. View from Lemoyne to Harrisburg. A Feasibility Study Evaluating Existing Bridges Across the Susquehanna Will Be Completed in 2013.



Yellow Breeches Creek, Monroe Township / York County Border.



Downtown Mechanicsburg Borough.



Newer Suburban Residential Development, Silver Spring Township.



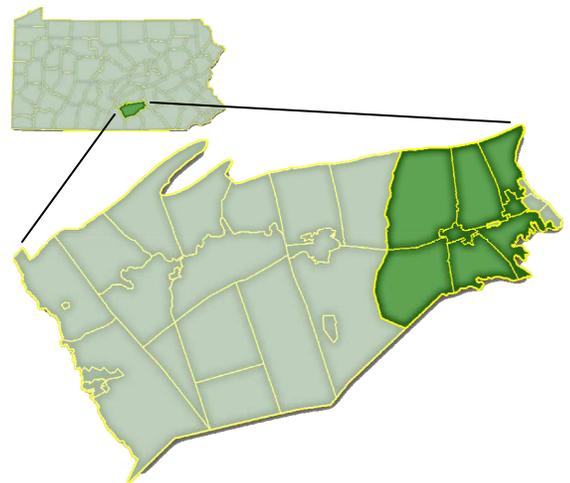
Appalachian Drive Bridge Over the Shippensburg Secondary Line. Silver Spring / Middlesex Township Border.

converted into a trail from Shippensburg to Newville. The trail is owned and maintained by the Cumberland Valley Rails to Trails Council, Inc (CVRTC). The CVRTC is a non-profit, volunteer organization established to promote development of multi-use trails in south-central Pennsylvania. There are currently extensions of the Cumberland Valley Trail in various stages of planning, including one at Shippensburg University and another at Carlisle.

There is active rail service (operated by Norfolk Southern) on the Cumberland Valley line within the project area and no trail exists at this time and no right-of-way has been acquired for trail use.

There is a significant variation in land use within the project area. Camp Hill and Mechanicsburg are established boroughs with well-defined downtown areas and compact residential neighborhoods. Industrial uses are located on the periphery of these boroughs, as well as in the Enola area of East Pennsboro Township. The eastern portion of the project area also contains many post war suburban residential developments and older strip commercial shopping centers.

The western portion of the project area contains newer residential and commercial development, particularly along Carlisle Pike in Hampden and Silver Spring Townships. To the south of Carlisle Pike, agriculture is a principal land use—particularly in Monroe Township. Monroe Township is also in close proximity to the village of Boiling Springs, which is an important destination and trailhead along the Appalachian Trail.



Cumberland County. Project Area Shown in Dark Green.



*Simpson Park,
Upper Allen Township.*