

Tioga County Planning Commission 2025 Annual Report



2025 Board of Commissioners

Marc Rice - Chairman

Shane Nickerson

Sam VanLoon

Planning Commission

The Tioga County Planning Commission is made up of nine citizen volunteers appointed by the Tioga County Board of Commissioners. The Commission is responsible for the review, approval, or disapproval of Subdivision and Land Development plans within the county. The commission is also responsible for reviewing or approving residential and commercial developments, Comprehensive Plans, and Municipal Zoning Ordinance amendments within the County. The Commission meets monthly on the second Wednesday and the meetings are open to the public.

2025 Commission Members

Roger Bunn – Chair

Nancy Smith – Vice Chair

Karl Kroeck

Bill Roosa

Kevin Connelly

Erick Coolidge

Marc Rice

Dawn Avery

Carol Hoke

Planning Staff

Kaye Aumick, Administrative Director

Rachel Courtney, Planning Director

Message from the Planning Staff

The Planning Department is made up of two County staff and the board of volunteers that make up the Planning Commission. The Commission's major responsibility is to guide the organized development of the County. Together, we review major and minor land developments and subdivisions. The tools that are used include; the County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO), the Tioga County Comprehensive Plan, and the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The county SALDO was reviewed and updated 2025 and the amendments were adopted by the Board of Commissioners in January of 2026. The most recent county Comprehensive Plan was revised and adopted in December of 2017 and is due for an update in 2027. Planning for the update has begun and will continue through 2026 with completion slated for 2027.

The Planning Commission also worked to create the Tioga County Data Center Ordinance. It was determined that protecting the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents is a paramount concern. The ordinance was created to facilitate the construction, installation, and operation of data centers in the county.

The Planning staff is always available to answer questions and guide citizens with the subdivision and land development process of the county. We will also direct citizens to the proper local, county, or state departments necessary to assist with any concerns and/or questions involving the land and environment of the county that cannot be answered by this office.

Major Projects Involving Planning Staff

- **Pine Creek Rail Trail Extension (aka Marsh Creek Greenway)** – This project was completed in 2025 with a ribbon cutting ceremony held on October 17, 2025.
- **Trail of the Year** – Following the completion of the Pine Creek Rail Trail Extension Project in fall 2025, the Tioga County Planning Department submitted a nomination for the Pine Creek Rail Trail for DCNR's 2026 Trail of the Year. This recognition highlights outstanding trail projects across the Commonwealth. At the time of this report, the award recipient has not yet been announced.
- **Development of a Stormwater Management Plan (Act 167)** – Partnering with Potter County, with the assistance of a consultant from Larson Design Group.
- **Tioga County Housing Task Force** – Continuing work on the housing issues within the county.
- **Tioga County Trail, Park & Recreation Authority** – During the past year, we began the foundational work to reinstate the County Trail Authority, with official reinstatement planned for early 2026. Once operational, the Authority will play a key role in developing and enhancing trails identified in the County's Comprehensive Plan, supporting a broad range of outdoor recreation projects, and advancing both motorized and non-motorized land and water recreation initiatives. The Authority will also assist municipalities and community partners, while promoting the County's outdoor recreation assets through events and programming, helping to connect residents and visitors with the County's natural resources.

- **North Central Regional ATV Trail Council of Governments (NRAT COG)** - Tioga, Potter, Clinton, and Lycoming Counties collaborated to form as Council of Governments to oversee and manage the Northern Appalachian Regional ATV Trail (NRAT), which was originally established by DCNR. The project serves as an economic driver for rural communities. County Planning is currently acting as a liaison between DCNR, PennDOT, and the NRAT COG until it is fully operational. The Planning Department is assisting interested municipalities by helping them establish ATV/UTV riding ordinances, assisting requests to PennDOT to open state roads for connectivity, and onboarding municipalities to the NRAT COG.
- **2027 Pennsylvania Greenways & Trails Summit** – The Pennsylvania Greenways & Trails Summit is a biennial event jointly led by WeConservePA and DCNR that attracts approximately 250 trail builders, volunteers, advocates, park and recreation professionals, and trail enthusiasts. Host sites are selected through a competitive proposal process. The Tioga County Planning Department, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Route 6 Alliance Heritage Corridor, submitted a proposal to host the 2027 Summit and was selected. Planning will begin in mid-2026, with the event scheduled for September 2027.
- **Hazard Mitigation Planning Team** – The planning team will begin working on the plan update which is due in 2027.

Committees and Teams with Planning Staff Involvement

- Tioga County Agricultural Farmland Preservation
- PA Wilds Planning Team & PA Wilds Climate Network
- Pennsylvania Route 6 Alliance Heritage Corridor
- Pine Creek Watershed Councils
- Northern Tier Regional Transportation Advisory Committee
- Tioga County Conservation District
- Tioga County Mitigation Advisory Committee

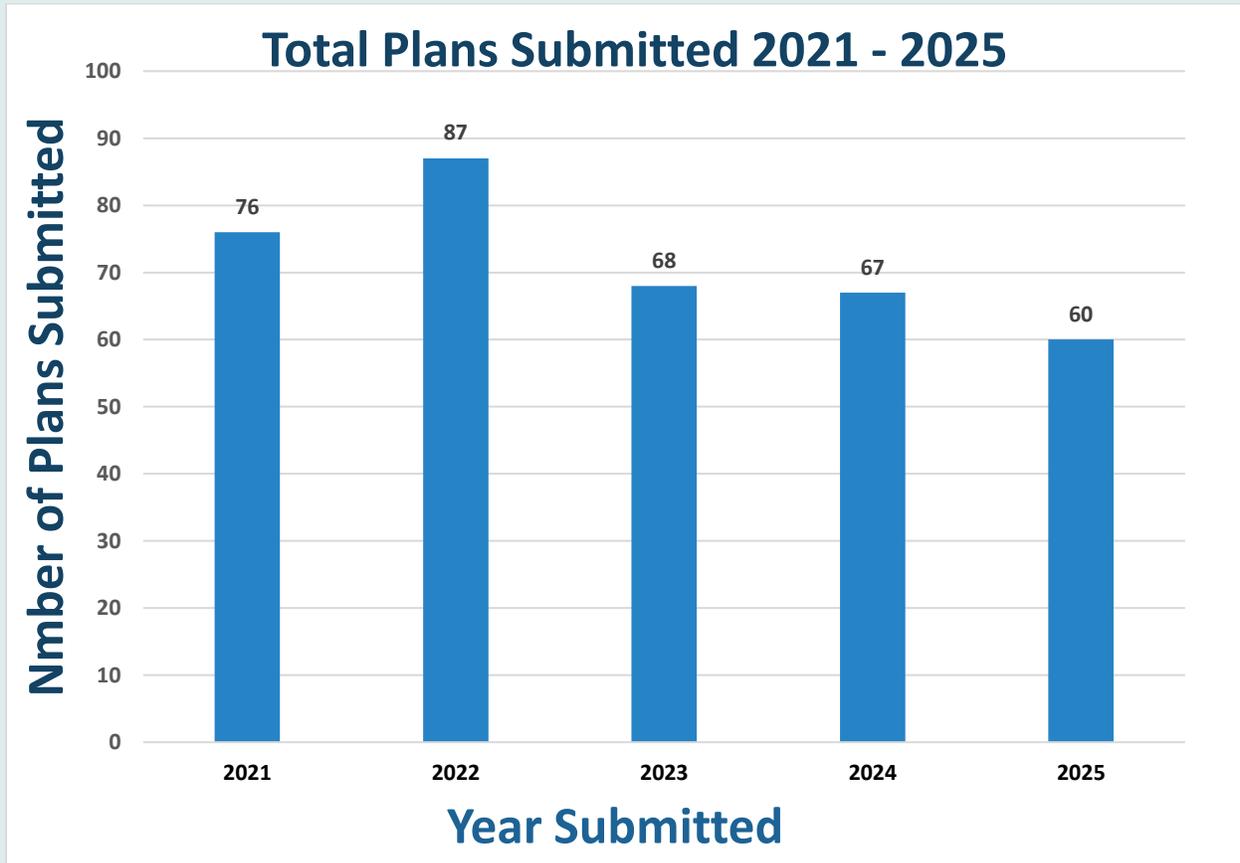
2025 Tioga County Planning Commission Report

This following report is a summary of the Planning activities of Tioga County for the 2025 year. The report will display charts and explain the numbers for Subdivisions and Land Developments. We will also talk about some of the projects that are ongoing within the County.

Tioga County has 39 municipalities; eight of which have their own Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) and 16 having their own Zoning Ordinance. There is no county wide zoning ordinance. For the eight municipalities with their own SALDO the County Planning staff reviews their subdivision and land developments for comment only. All others are reviewed and approved by the County Planning Commission. Minor Subdivisions and Land Developments can be reviewed and approved by the Planning Staff, while major plans are reviewed by the nine-member Planning Commission.

Total County SALDO Plan Submissions

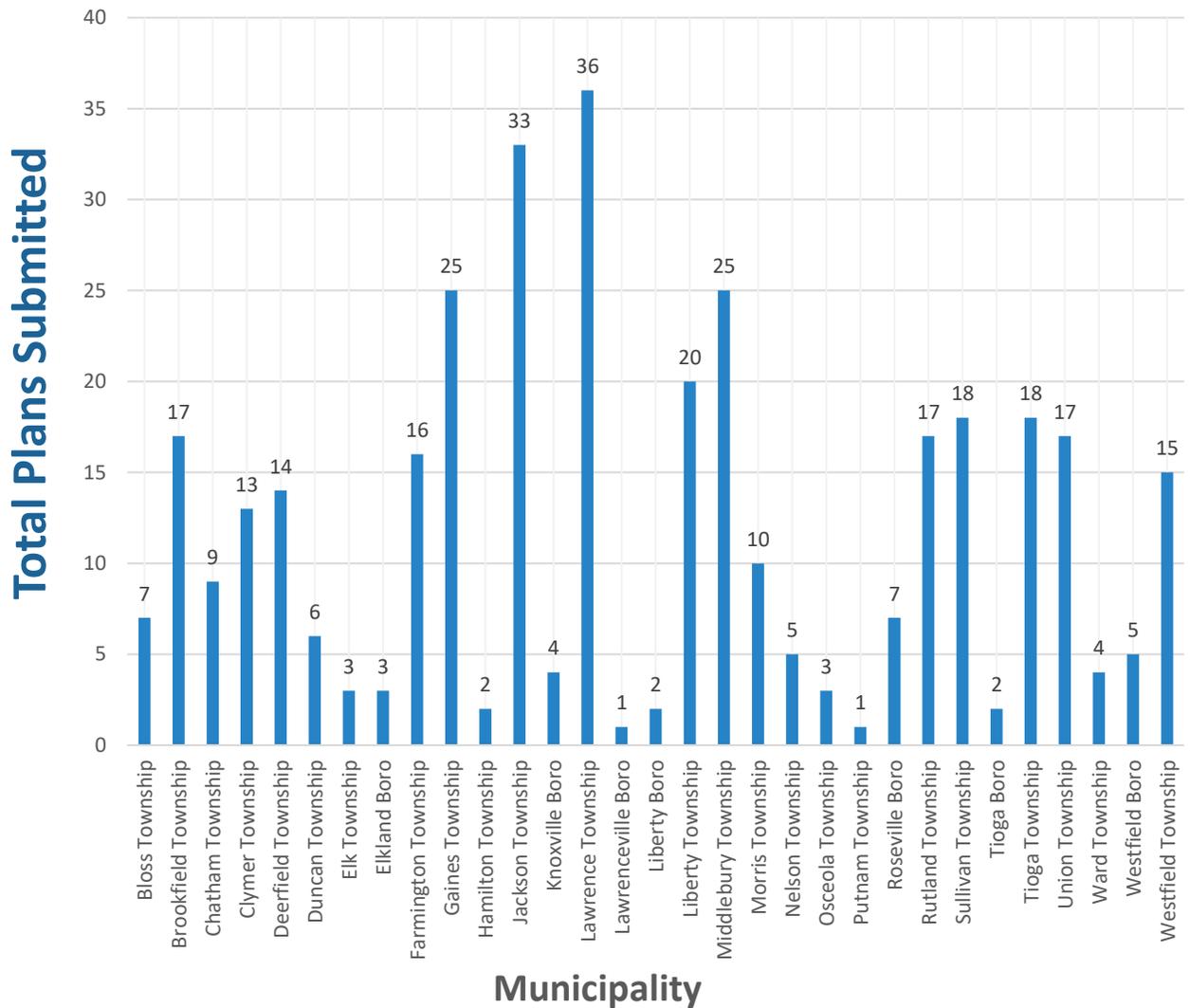
The chart below displays the total number of plans approved during the most recent five-year period of 2021 – 2025, from those municipalities where the county has jurisdiction with its SALDO. The highest number of submissions was seen in 2022 with 87 and the lowest in 2025 with 60. The overall yearly average for the five years is 72 submissions.



The five-year submission total was 358. This total breaks down to 34 Land Developments and 324 Subdivisions. There was a total of 60 submissions in 2025; which was a decrease of seven from 2024, when there were 67 total. Of the 60 submissions; seven were new Land Developments and 53 were subdivisions. During this five-year reporting period the highest submission of Land Developments was nine in 2022, followed closely with seven in 2025.

The chart below breaks down the submissions received in the years 2021-2025 by Municipality. Lawrence Township saw the highest overall submissions with 36 in the five years being reported, while Putnam Township and Lawrenceville Borough each had just one submission during the same time frame. Jackson Township also had a large number of submissions during this time frame with 33. This shows there is a large variance between the Municipalities in regard to areas that are being developed and those that are not. The smaller Municipalities and Boroughs have a much lower rate of submissions.

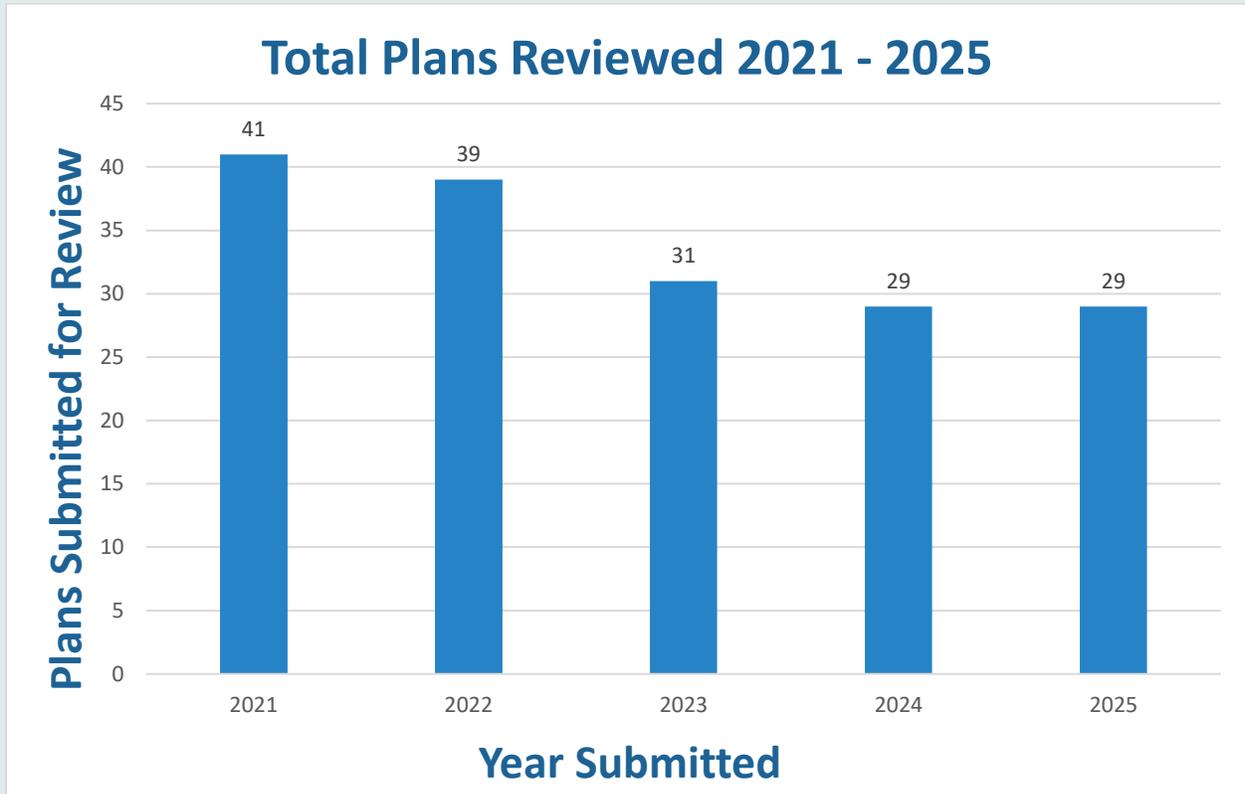
Total Plans Per Municipality 2021 - 2025



Municipal SALDO Plan Reviews

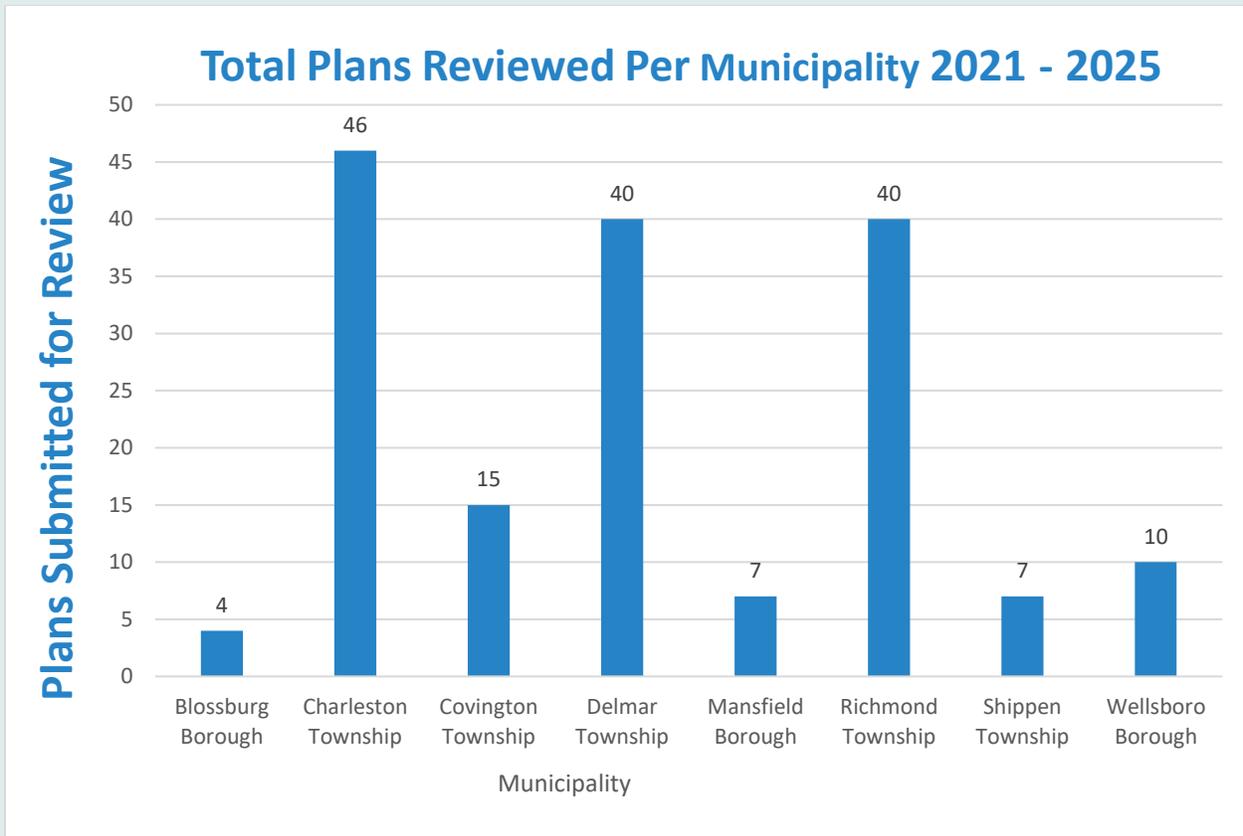
We will now take a look at the Municipalities that operate under their own SALDO’s. These Municipalities request that Subdivisions and Land Developments only be reviewed by the Tioga County Planning Commission. To complete the review, we typically receive a map, project narrative, and Municipal application. Once we have reviewed the plans, a review letter is drafted and sent to the submitting Municipality. This review letter will state any comments or concerns with the subdivision or land development being proposed. The plans will then be taken to the Municipal Planning Commission for review and then to the Municipal Board of Supervisors for their approval.

The chart below shows the total municipal plans that were reviewed by the County Planning Commission during the years 2021 – 2025. This number includes both Subdivisions and Land Developments.



There were 41 plans submitted for review in 2021 making it the highest in the five-year time frame of the above chart. The lowest number of plans submitted was in 2024 and 2025 with 29 submissions, there has been a steady decline in submission since the peak in 2021, however the last two years have held steady at 29. The average yearly plan review submittal over the five-year period is 34.

The chart below displays the plans received for review by each municipality during the five-year recording period. This allows us to compare the municipal submissions. This chart also includes both subdivisions and land developments.



Charleston Township had the largest number of plans reviewed by the County with 46, while Blossburg Borough had only four plans submitted during the same time period. Delmar and Richmond Townships have the next highest number of submittals with 40.

The total number of plans submitted for review by the municipalities was 169. Of this number; 15 were land developments and 154 were subdivisions. The highest number of land developments across these municipalities was seven in Richmond Township for the five-year recording period. Richmond Township is starting to see more growth along the Business Route 15 corridor.

County Project Overviews

Pine Creek Rail Trail Extension - Marsh Creek Greenway

The Pine Creek Rail Trail Extension (aka Marsh Creek Greenway) is a 3.2-mile non-motorized trail linking the current northern terminus of the Pine Creek Rail Trail (PCRT) to downtown

Wellsboro. A trailhead building with a visitor's center and a downtown connection to the trail are part of this project. The Patterson Trailhead building was completed in 2025 and features community-centric displays, trail resources, local history, and history of the railroad. The offices of Develop Tioga can also be found within the building.

This project was identified as a priority gap in the 2020-2024 Pennsylvania Trail Network Strategic Plan. The local communities, regional planning organization, and Tioga County have determined that this connectivity to the Pine Creek Rail Trail is a priority. The connectivity will improve the quality of life and encourage active recreation; while providing an alternate means of transportation and enhance the connective tissue between communities throughout the PA Wilds region.

The Southern section of the trail was completed in October 2024 and opened for public use. The historic bridge connecting the trail to Charleston Street was also completed in October 2024 and creates a beautiful entrance from Charleston Street to the trail.

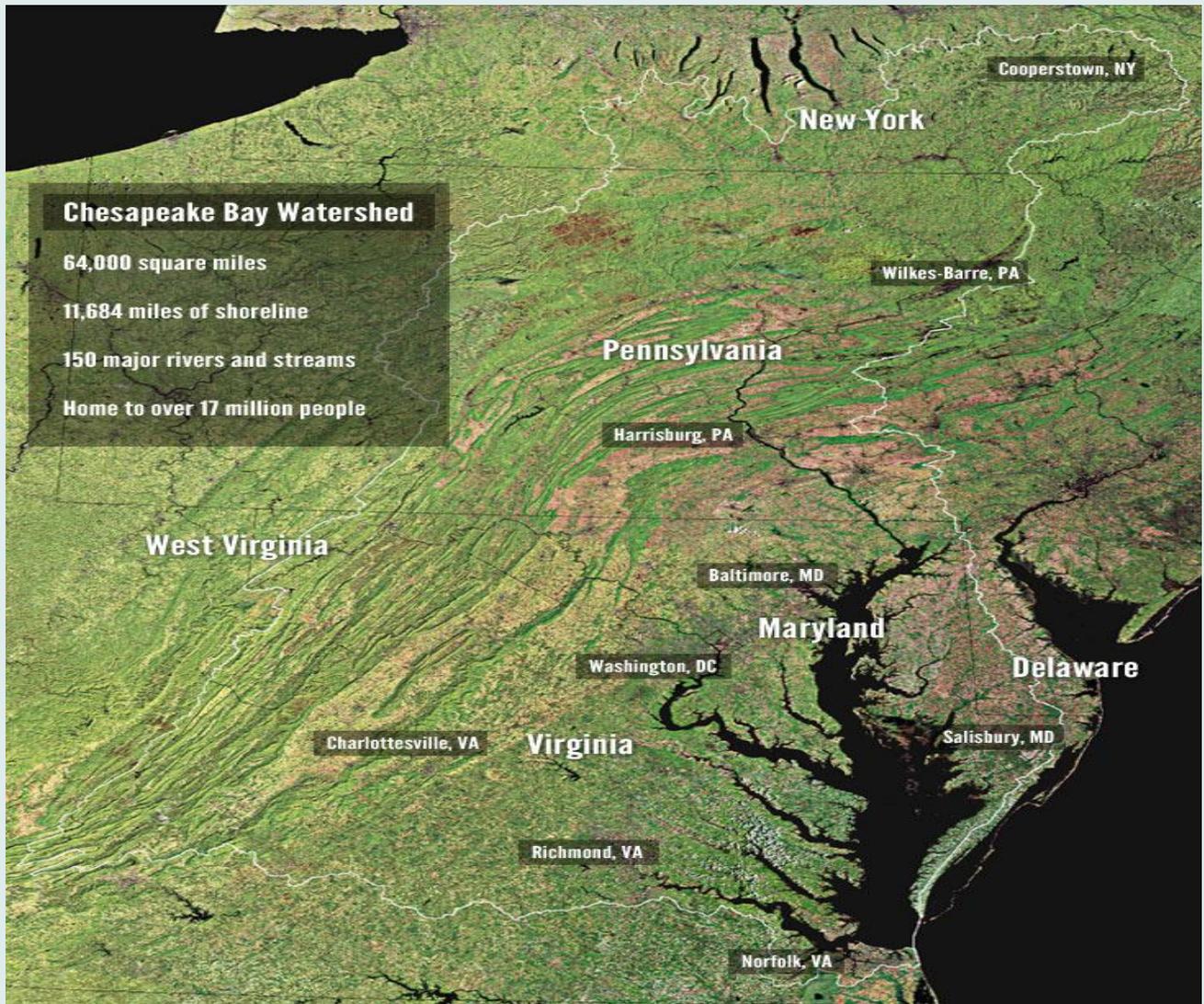
The ribbon cutting ceremony for the Northern section and the Patterson Trailhead building was held on October 17, 2025. The new trail will promote tourism and economic activity in the county by linking to local restaurants, businesses, and lodging.

The trail has been attracting walkers and bikers since it was opened and the use of the trail continues throughout the winter with walkers and cross county skiers.

The pictures below show the new Patterson Trailhead building, the historic bridge and the ribbon cutting ceremony.



Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Project



In 2021 a draft of the County Wide Action Plan (CAP) was created to reduce the pollution loads in our streams, creeks, and rivers. We have secured a contract company and will continue working towards our plans and implementation. The goals are to reduce the nitrogen and phosphorus loads in the county waterways that flow towards the Chesapeake Bay. There are many opportunities within Tioga County to clean area watersheds and headwaters. Just a few of the local watersheds in Tioga County are; Marsh Creek, Tioga River, Corey Creek, Mill Creek, and Pine Creek. All of these watersheds have smaller streams running into them where the process of removing pollutants begins.

In 2022, the county began working to implement the plan that was created and submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) for approval. Cleaning up our local waters is the first step in the cleaning of waters downstream and eventually the Chesapeake

Bay. Tioga County is dedicated to cleaning our waters to ensure safer, cleaner drinking water for the future of generations to come.

In 2023, the county began a partnership with Potter County to develop a much-needed Stormwater Management Plan (Act 167). The development of the plan will bring the county into compliance with the guidelines set forth by the PADEP.

In 2024, the work continued to develop a Stormwater Management Plan (Act 167) and we are getting closer to completion. Public meetings were held and information has been and will continue to be gathered on what is needed and what can be done to assist with the Act 167 plan and how each Municipality can benefit by implementing a plan.

In 2025, the work continued on phase I of the plan that will be completed in early 2026. Phase II work has begun and will continue through 2028. The planning department and the county conservation district are working together to create a phase II plan. Part of phase II is creating a Watershed Plan Advisory Committee with representation from each municipality. This will ensure that plan will be a valuable and impactful resource for stormwater mitigation and management throughout our county.

Tioga County Agricultural Farmland Preservation

We believe that it is important to mention the work that is being done to preserve and protect agricultural lands in Tioga County. The purpose of the program is to protect viable agricultural lands by acquiring agricultural conservation easements to prevent the development of the land for any purpose other than agricultural production. Agricultural Conservation Easements restrict and limit the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use. The county agricultural preservation program ensures that farmers in the county have sufficient agricultural lands to provide farm products for the people of Tioga County and the United States.

The planning staff works with the County Agricultural Farmland Preservation Board to select and preserve these farms. The board guides the staff on each step of the process from farm selections to final easement. The board is made up of seven county citizens that are appointed by the Tioga County Board of Commissioners. These members are comprised of one municipal supervisor, four farmers, one contractor, and one member at large.

The first agricultural easement was in 2001 with a farm consisting of 180 acres located in Deerfield Township. Since that first preservation there have been one to three farms being preserved each year. Tioga County currently has 35 preserved farms totaling 4,407 acres with four farms moving through the preservation process at the current time, one of these will be completed by the end of 2026. The 2026 application period began on January 2, 2026 and will continue until March 2, 2026. After the application period ends all farm applications will be processed and the farms will be ranked. The County Agricultural Preservation Board will be selecting farms for the 2026 preservation process in the spring from these rankings.

Closing thoughts from the Planning Staff

As 2025 comes to a close, we reflect on a year full of meaningful work and accomplishments here at the Tioga County Planning Department. From reviewing land development plans to supporting major county projects, our role is to help guide growth in ways that strengthen our communities, protect our natural and agricultural resources, and enhance the quality of life for everyone in Tioga County. Working alongside the Planning Commission, municipal partners, and regional organizations, we are proud to contribute to a shared vision for the future of our county.

Looking ahead, we are filled with excitement for the opportunities that 2026 and 2027 will bring. We are already planning for the update of the County Comprehensive Plan, advancing hazard mitigation and stormwater initiatives, and preparing to host the 2027 Pennsylvania Greenways & Trails Summit—an event that will bring trail enthusiasts, advocates, and professionals from across the state to experience the beauty of Tioga County. At the same time, we remain committed to supporting residents and municipalities with land development reviews and guidance, ensuring that every decision reflects careful planning and respect for our communities.

Our work is about more than regulations and reviews, it's about helping Tioga County thrive. Tourism and outdoor recreation are at the heart of our economy, and we know that the landscapes, farms, waterways, and small-town character that make our county special are also what draw people to live, work, and visit here. By thoughtfully balancing growth with preservation, we are helping to ensure that the beauty, character, and opportunities of Tioga County will endure for generations to come.

We are grateful for the continued support of the Board of Commissioners, municipal leaders, partner organizations, and the public. Together, we are planning for a future that is resilient, vibrant, and full of promise. We are excited to keep working alongside our communities to turn that vision into reality.